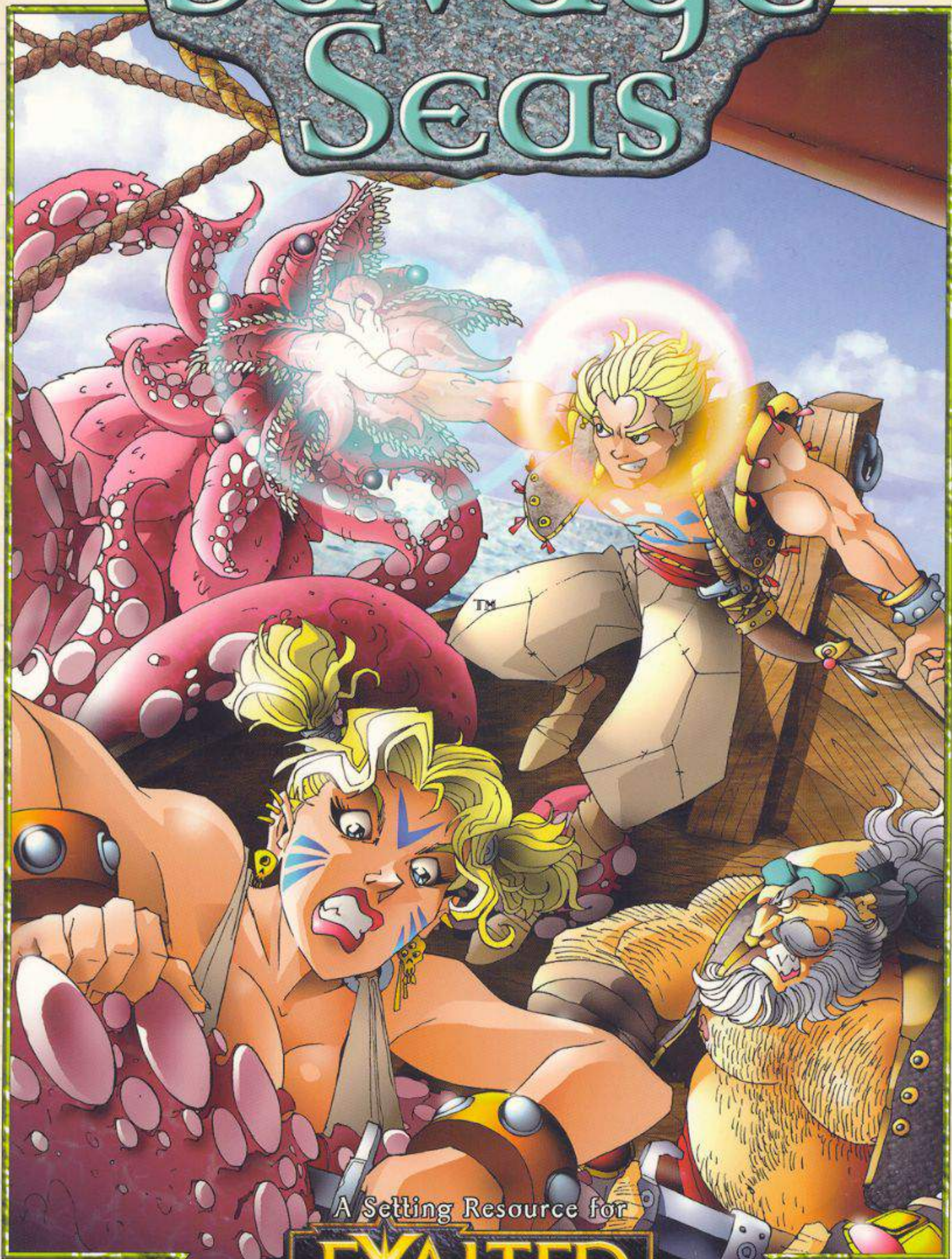


Savage Seas



A Setting Resource for

EXALTED

SAVAGE SEAS

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SAVAGE SEAS



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INTRODUCTION



The battle-barges of Melniboné were rarely seen on the open sea these days, but once they had sailed the oceans of the world like fearsome floating mountains of gold, and they had brought terror wherever they were sighted.

—Michael Moorcock, *Elric of Melniboné*

The world of Exalted is, quite literally, centered on the sea. The Realm, the first and greatest empire the world has ever known, lies across the vast moat known as the Inner Sea. Every year, huge fleets set out across that moat, bearing a world's worth of tribute for the Scarlet Throne. Fully a quarter of the Threshold is covered with water, broken here and there by archipelagos and chains of islands rising from the sea. The commerce between these lands must necessarily be by ship. Most civilization in the world is centered on the shores of the Inner Sea, where the legions and First Age arsenal of the Realm can be quickly brought to bear on threats from barbarian hordes to the armies of the Fair Folk and the Deathlords. Countless ships move up and down the coast of the Inner Sea, and countless pirates prey on them. Many are the gods of the sea, and they are dangerous and alien creatures. While the Blessed Isle and many Threshold principalities would doubtless be able to persevere without international trade — most states are largely self-sufficient — imports and exports

add a vibrancy to economies that their value in jade cannot account for.

It is natural, then, that many adventures of the Exalted should center around the sea. As a way to travel, as a place to adventure, as an economic factor and, by extension, a military one, the ocean is of critical importance to the Solars and Abyssals, as they attempt to carve out new empires from the states of the Threshold, and to the Sidereals and Dragon-Blooded, as they struggle to maintain their grip on power in the dark years since the disappearance of the Empress. Even the Lunars often find themselves on the waves, as they hurry across the world in search of great deeds, fame and power. What better way for a hero to gain empire and immortal glory than to loot the treasure-fleets of the Realm or discover what it is that lies beyond the Western horizon?

None. And thus it is that this book has come to you, an attempt to make this highly playable environment accessible to a public that is not familiar with sailing ships,



war at sea in the ancient world or the financial instruments employed by premodern societies to trade amongst themselves. Hopefully, by the end of this book, you will have an idea of what it is like to live and work on the sea, what glories can come from it and what dangers it hides. Whether it be piracy of the lowest sort or the invasion of the Blessed Isle itself, a trip to the uttermost West or a trip on a shrimp boat to evade a legion patrol, the *Savage Seas* are yours to explore.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is divided into chapters, which attempt to break down sailing and travel on the oceans of the Second Age of Man into discreet bites.

Introduction, this section, is the one that explains what the book is about.

Chapter One: Day-to-Day on the Tides talks about the life of a sailor. From youth through recruitment, through her career to ungentle retirement, Chapter One is a guide to sailing as a profession, detailing the practices and hazards of a nautical existence.

Chapter Two: Sailing Technology details the hardware of sailing; ships and sails. This chapter describes a number of common ship designs and ship riggings and the process of shipbuilding. Chapter Two also recapitulates some of the basic information in Chapter One for the sake of teaching the basic concepts of sailing thoroughly.

Chapter Three: Maritime Trades covers the process of making a living on the sea, either as a merchant, pirate or military sailor. This chapter also includes rules for ship-to-ship combat and boarding actions because, however important day-to-day life at sea may be, it's all to set up a dramatic duel in the rigging of a burning warship.

Chapter Four: Creatures, Gods, Charms and Artifacts is exactly what it sounds like; a treasure trove of material specific to *Exalted*. This chapter covers three major maritime gods, expands the game's aquatic creature list considerably and introduces a number of sorceries, artifacts and Solar Charms that relate to sailing and the sea.

WHERE'S THE LEXICON

Savage Seas is a very complex book, and the amount of specialized vocabulary it introduces is pretty amazing — there are a lot of things on ships that have special names and terms associated with them. Generally, the text makes it clear what the words mean. Most words that aren't explicitly defined (such as fore, aft and so on) are common English words. Any good dictionary or internet search engine will be able to provide you with the meaning of these nautical terms. We'd normally put this material into a lexicon anyway, but the definitions of basic terms alone would take more than four pages, and we decided that actually putting game material into this book was far more useful than including a giant list of words that you can find in any standard reference.

A WORD TO THE NOVICE

This is not a book on ship-handling. Please don't read it and imagine you have a clue what you're doing on open water.

A WORD TO THE JADED

There's surely someone out there reading this who builds sailing ships in their backyard, took part in the Kon Tiki expedition or was master of the tops on the *Constitution*. You'll doubtless find the book riddled with inconsistencies, unrealism and weirdness. This book was written as a guide to nautical adventuring in a fantasy world, not as a guide to ship-handling. Everyone who worked on *Savage Seas* did their best to make a good book on a technical subject. We weren't terribly worried about if the things we said would "get you killed in the real world" or if they passed historical muster. Nobody is reading this book as a reference to real-world sailing.

If you're puzzled by a term and can't find it in the dictionary or don't want to be bothered, there is lexicon of sorts included in Chapter Two, as part of that chapter's explanation of how sailing technology works. However, these definitions are broken up into a number of boxed texts and introduced to help support the discussion of the subject, not necessarily to support use as a general reference, so you're probably better off with the dictionary.

RECOMMENDED FICTION

Maritime adventure is a common theme in much Western epic and fiction, but the reader may not be familiar with all the resources *Exalted* draws upon for inspiration, and so, this list of fiction is included to serve as reference and inspiration to Storytellers and players alike.

The Argonautica by Apollonius of Rhodes. Oxford University Press. Oxford, UK. ISBN 0-192-83583-1. Probably the most famous ocean voyage in Western literature, this book details the heroic quest of Jason and the Argonauts to retrieve the Golden Fleece. This book is excellent *Exalted* fare and well recommended to Storytellers who want to run an *Exalted* game that features a sailing quest.

Tales from the Arabian Nights by Dawood, N.J. Penguin Classics. New York, NY. ISBN 0-140-44289-8. The Arabic folktales and adventure yarns collected in *The Thousand Nights and a Night* often have nautical elements. Obviously, the voyages of es-Sindibad, better known as Sinbad, are the most famous, but *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments* hardly lack for merchant and sailor heroes, making these stories well worth a read.

The Odyssey by Homer. Alfred A. Knopf. New York, NY. ISBN 0-679-41047-3. The neck-and-neck competitor with *The Argonautica* for the most famous ocean voyage, *The Odyssey* is short on technical sailing but long on adventure. This work probably isn't a great resource for strict seafaring adventure, but as a guide to running a story in which the sea is central as a means of travel and a barrier, it is the seminal work. A must-read.

"While the Sea King's Away" and "Their Mistress the Sea" by Leiber, Fritz. Various publishers. Originally printed as part of the *Swords in the Mist* collection and since then recollected under a number of titles, these stories are some of Fafhrd and the Grey Mouser's most exciting nautical excursions. Probably the most famous sailing stories in the pulp-fantasy genre, these are essential reading for *Exalted* players and Storytellers who wish to say true to the game's pulp influences.

The Voyage of the Dawn Treader by Lewis, C.S. Like the *Odyssey*, this book details the ports of call of the *Dawn Treader's* allegorical voyage more than the actual conditions of sail, but this classic likewise provides an excellent example of how to use a sea voyage as the underpinning of a long-running game.

Master and Commander by O'Brian, Patrick. W.W. Norton and Company. New York, NY. ISBN 0-393-30705-0 This first book of the Aubrey-Maturin series is not fantasy nor set in the ancient world, but its lush depiction of sailing has rightly gained it millions of fans. Life on the sea is not so different from era to era, and Storytellers will probably find this series a welcome addition to their libraries.

RECOMMENDED READING

The Craft of Sail: A Primer of Sailing, by Jan Adkins. Walker and Company, New York, NY. ISBN 0-8027-7214-5

This is a brief, easy-to-follow book on the basics of sailing, beautifully illustrated with the author's pencil and ink drawings. If you want to quickly add authenticity to your characters' handling of sailing craft, this book is the one to read.

Wooden Ship: The Building of a Wooden Sailing Vessel in 1870, by Jan Adkins. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston. ISBN 0-395-26449-9

What Adkins' *The Craft of Sail* does for sailing, this book does for shipbuilding. More clear, engaging explanations accompanied by drawings that bring the text to life.

Long Ships and Round Ships: Warfare and Trade in the Mediterranean, 3000 B.C. – 500 A.D., by John Morrison. National Maritime Museum, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London. ISBN 0-11-290311-8

A scholarly, but accessible, concise history of the early days of sail, with an especially useful section on biremes, triremes and other galleys. Volume 2 in the British National Maritime Museum's "The Ship" series.

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The Evolution of the Wooden Ship, by Basil Greenhill. Facts on File, New York, NY. ISBN 0-8160-2121-X

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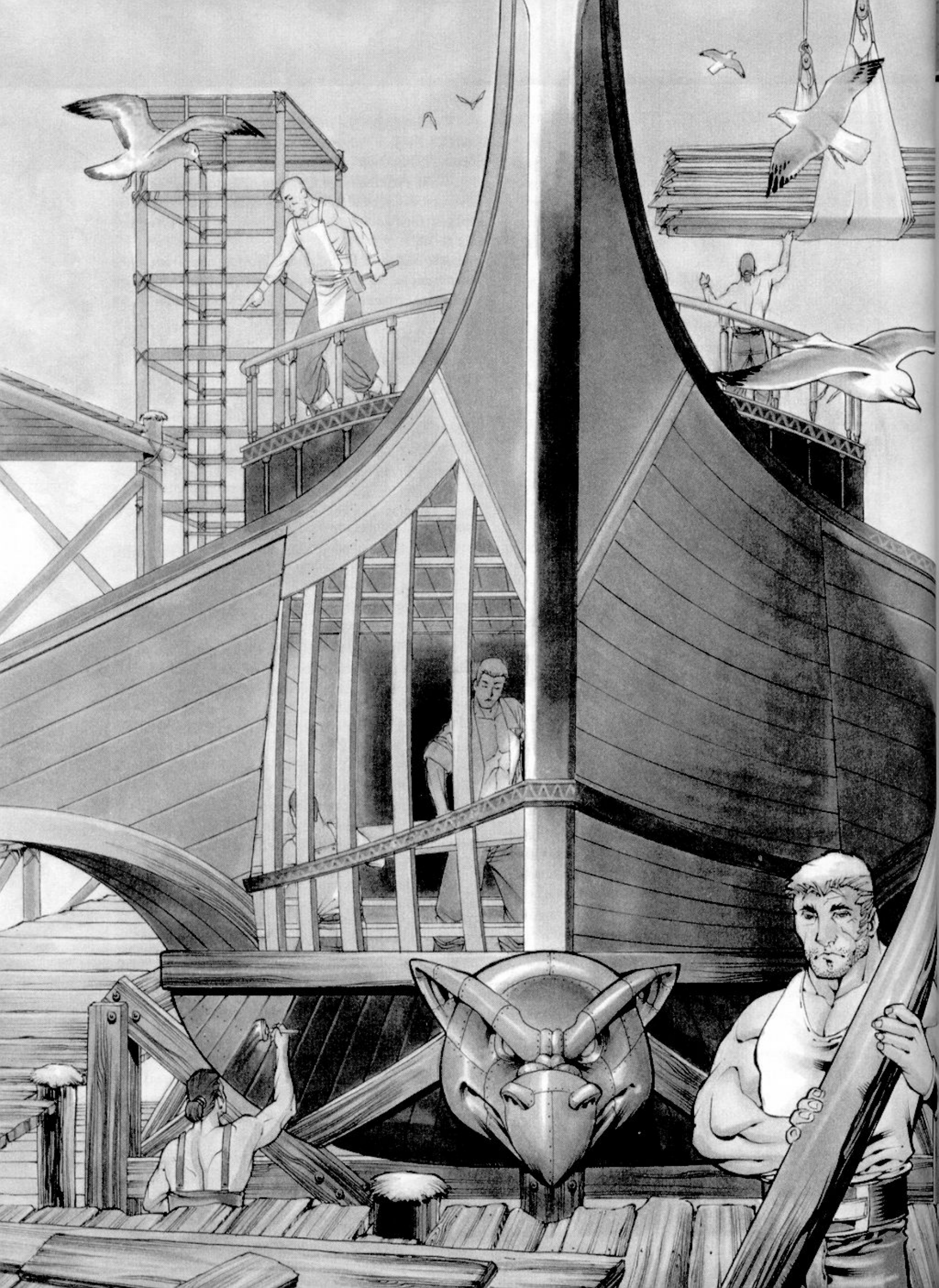
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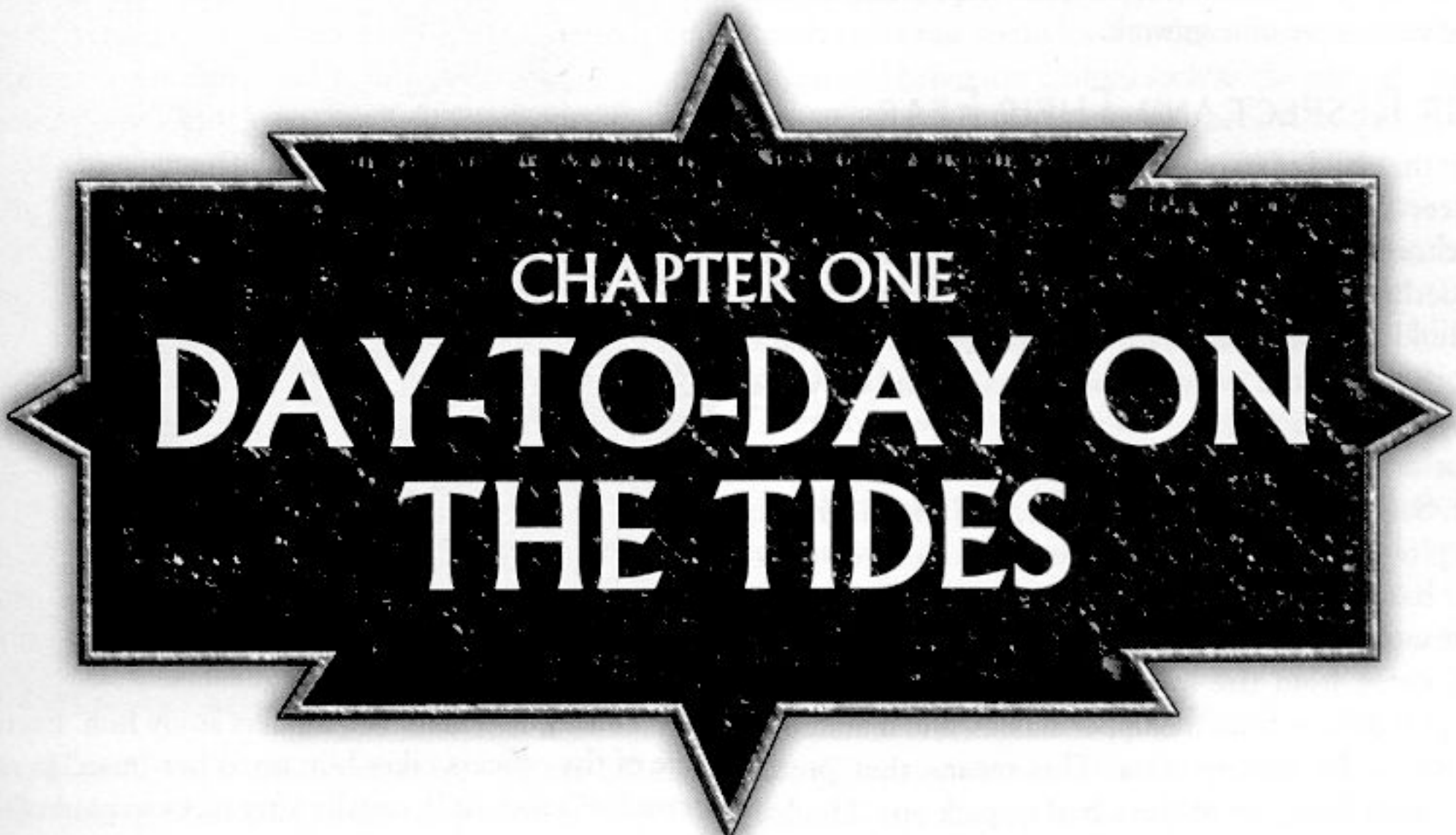
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Illustrated History of Ships and Boats, by Lionel Casson. Doubleday & Company, Garden City, NY. ISBN 0-38-500814-7







CHAPTER ONE DAY-TO-DAY ON THE TIDES



All sailing begins on the land. Despite the great number of people who claim to be *born for the sea*, few people at any given time are actually *at sea*. A child grows up on land, learns on land and, in effect, becomes a person on land.

In addition, life at sea supports and serves life on land. Shipping supplies port cities, and fishing feeds land dwellers. Navies and coastal guards protect the cities and their shipping. Only the most expensive yachts exist for the sake of the sea alone. Therefore, any examination of the sailing must, by necessity, begin on the land.

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF A WHARF RAT

Being the child of a sailor is a lonely prospect. A sailor spends most of his time at sea, and for the child of a sailor, the visits of that parent are seldom and short.

For such children, these visits are the first exposure they have to the sea. A rousing tale by the fire at night, the brief exposure to a parent's love, before putting the children to bed so parents can quench pent-up passions. And so a young wharf rat, as sailor's children are often called, will spend much of her childhood looking off to sea.

By the age of five or six, most young wharf rats have begun working the docks. They run messages and perform small jobs for the harbor master. During this time, they are also making the connections that will be important later in life. By eight or ten, the child will, if she's lucky, secure

a position as a cabin girl. During the next few years, her skills grow, and she learns her way around the ship. By the time she is 14 years old, she has become a sailor in her own right. She gains her rating as an ordinary seaman (assuming she earned it) and, eventually, joins the general ranks of the crew. Those that aren't hired on leave the ship at this time, seeking their fortune under a different captain.

All this, of course, assumes the child lives that long. One in four cabin boys and girls never makes it to adulthood. The sea holds many hazards; there are storms and pirates and rocks. Waves are more likely to sweep a child overboard than an adult. Winds are more likely to blow a child out of the tops, and children do not run as quickly as adults.

The story is slightly different among military sailors. People who join their national navy tend to be more patriotic. There are many who join thinking that a ship is a ship, but civilian ships indulge wild shore leaves more than naval ships. Naval sailors represent their ships at all times, and even on leave, they must appear a cut above their civilian peers. Naval discipline transcends the boundary of the shore. In addition, naval service typically requires a commitment to a mandatory term of service. The knowledge that military sailors are not free to leave is an excellent means of discouraging casual enlistment.

Because of the more noble reputation of the navy (some navies earn this reputation, for others, it is pure propaganda), naval service draws a greater share of career sailors. Many civil



sailors take the job because they need work. More sailors join the navy because they feel a desire to serve their nation. Crews are less mutable in the navy, and so, the ships often operate with a greater sense of teamwork.

THEIR RESPECT AND THEIR FEAR

For the child of an officer, life is very different matter. An officer is a behemoth. She is a powerhouse of discipline and authority. She holds the power of life and death over her underlings. She might hold this power lightly, or she might hold it with an iron grip. Sailors tremble when she speaks, they look the away when she passes, and they live in fear of her discipline.

But under a good officer, the men also brim with respect. Sailors love a talented officer, and an officer who can inspire the men holds great power. A beloved commander has turned the tide of many a hopeless battle. So, who can aspire to such greatness? First of all, officers rarely, if ever, come from the lower classes. Military officials usually pull officers from the upper classes, and merchants recruit from the middle class. This means that proto-officers rarely hang out at the wharf or pick up odd jobs.

The life of an officer's child is otherwise not that different from the child of a sailor. As with common sailors, ship's officer is often a hereditary profession. The biggest difference is that the officer's child is living a higher lifestyle.

But though he lives well, that doesn't mean that he gets any more time with his seafaring parent. An officer spends more time on the ship than most of the crew—her responsibilities are greater, and she often gets less shore leave.

The parent's stories of adventure are mixed with tales of duty and honor, of responsibilities and respect. The officer's yarns are those of leading men and shouldering pressures and worries. They are tales of mattering to the men under them. They are stories of making a difference. All of these stories serve to influence the child.

A future officer begins his career at about the age of eight. At this time, his parent apprentices him onto a craft. He doesn't enter as a cabin girl, but the officer equivalent: a midshipman. The life of a midshipman is not an easy one. The proto-officer pays his dues, and he gets terrible and demeaning jobs. Yet, at the same time, he is learning discipline and order, to follow commands without question and to give them as well—in short, he is learning to be at home in the chain of command.

During this time the officers study him. Eventually, one of the officers takes him on as her "man" (a nautical term for "assistant"), usually after six or so years of service. At this point, he is a full officer.

FOR THE LOVE OF MONEY

Life as a merchant's child is much different from that of other children of the sea. The merchant is the sole ruler of a merchant ship. Such ships do not have the strict military rules of most vessels. This gives a lot of leeway to the precocious child of a merchant. She can go anywhere and ask anything. She can begin learning the ways of the sea when her mind is still like a sponge. As she grows older, her parent will begin giving her duties, first as an officer, then as a bookkeeper. Finally, she will learn negotiation, diplomacy and business. By the time she is 18, she will take control of some of the merchant's trade, running a single ship or store—or even a region. With time, her skills grow.

Eventually, if she is to inherit the parent's business, she will do so (if she is not in line to inherit the business, broken glass can be added to certain of her siblings' meals to remedy matters). Then, she will come into her full power.

YOUR LIFE IN SERVICE

The sea is a great mistress. It is full of power and danger and pain. It can bring wealth and ruin, life and death. Most of all, it can bring enemies. It is hard to predict an attack by sea—ships do not need to follow roads or busy approaches. An enemy can come across the sea in an instant, and so, a nation must be prepared; it must defend itself; it must have a navy.

In the navy, things are similar to the private sector. Discipline is harsher in the navy but only slightly more so (most ships are pretty disciplined). Military ships are more, well, military, but they are still ships, and life on all ships much the same.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING A CABIN BOY

With all the dangers of sailing on the high seas, why would anyone risk becoming a cabin boy?

The reason is that the position holds many advantages as well as dangers. The cabin boys may do the lousiest jobs on the ship, but they are on a ship. They scrub shit and crawl in the bilges, but they also learn many important skills. They gain their sea legs, and they learn their knots. They gain experience in the tops, and they learn the hazards of the sea.

When a person signs onto a ship, the proreus (the officer in charge of ship discipline) gives her a quick rating. This rating isn't a complete one (it's generally just "seaman" or "landsmen"), but it determines the recruit's fitness to sail. If the proreus rates them a landsman, they might still make it onto the ship, but only if there are no seamen left to sign on. They are certain to end up on the oars (or in the waist of the ship if it has no rowers).

So, a person who has earned a rating as a cabin boy has an advantage over the common landsman. Even an ordinary seaman can almost always find work. For an unskilled landsman, things are not so certain.

RANKS AND GENDER

The ranks and positions on a ship are steeped in tradition. Over the years, they have become gender neutral. Therefore, names such as “seaman,” “surgeon’s man” or “proreus’ man” are not indicative of sex. Sailors are not famous for placing sexual equality above nomenclature.

One can see this in most aspects of ship life. You address a female underofficer as “Mister.” It’s typical to call a woman “man” on a ship, et cetera. Even telling someone to “be a man” on a ship has nothing to do with changing genitals.

There is one exception. Titles with the word “boy” instead of “man” in them are not sexually neutral. In these cases, substitute “girl” for “boy,” for example, “cabin girl” and “surgeon’s girl.”

The most obvious difference comes in the officers’ ranks. Whereas civilian ships draw their officers from the middle classes, military officers are all from the local elite. Usually, young officers are from the lowest rung of their class, with few holdings. Others are second- and third-born children of more important families, those not in the immediate line of succession, whose parents bought commissions for them to put them out of the way.

In the Realm, officers are typically patricians. Like the legions and the Immaculate Order, the navy is a place for the Host of the Dragon-Blooded to put Dragon-Bloods who Exalt without the benefit of a Dynastic upbringing — they need only remedy their deficiency of breeding and education in a single profession, rather than in society as a whole. As in the legions, many if not most naval officers are without house or Dynastic upbringing, a characteristic that the Empress encouraged. The imperial navy is completely dominated by appointees from House Peleps, who control all the major positions and many of the minor ones. Likewise, the Merchant Fleet is dominated by members of House V’neef. While the average officer might not owe a lifetime of loyalty to any one of those houses, without the Empress to protect independent Dragon-Blooded, he knows what side his bread is buttered on.

PLUNDERING THE LANES OF COMMERCE

The smell of the sea, the spray and the foam, the snapping of sails and the pitch of the deck. These are what attract sailors to the sea, but for some, there is more. For some, there is another love — the love of the hunt.

Life as a pirate starts much the same way as that of an officer or a normal sailor. Most pirates pull their ranks from legitimate pools of manpower. It is rare that a sailor starts as a cabin boy on a pirate ship, and midshipmen are almost unheard of.

Most pirate ships recruit sailors from normal ports. In such legitimate ports of call, a recruit must display some behavior that attracts the crewmembers of a pirate vessel. Such behavior includes murder, thievery or other such antisocial behavior. Crimes such as cheating at cards, drug abuse or brawling are normal behavior and not shady enough to warrant recruitment.

If the recruitment pool is sparse, pirate crews might recruit members with a press gang. A press gang (which is honestly used by almost all ships if the need is great enough) consists of a large group of armed men. They fall upon a candidate in a dark alley and club her into unconsciousness. They then place her in a secure room below deck and do not allow her out until the ship is out of sight of land.

In pirate ports, and for legitimate privateers, the recruitment process is more straightforward. Legal pirates and privateers can recruit as openly as a legitimate ship can. On these ships, cabin boys and midshipman are more common.

ANY PORT IN A STORM

Coastal cities serve the hungers and the desires of the sailors. They are the centers of life and recreation. In these cities, ships come to resupply and repair, the sailors unwind, gamble and carouse, and the officers recruit and, when it’s necessary, careen the ships.

Coastal cities are centers of trade. Many ships dock in these cities, vessels from all over Creation. This fills the cities with exotica, and many ports are centers of learning and culture. The world of Exalted is a world where differing peoples often look on each other with suspicion, but in some coastal cities, ethnic diversity is so great that seeing members of different races working side by side seems perfectly normal. This is very useful to a Solar that is looking lose herself in a crowd.

The most important feature of a coastal city is its harbor. A harbor is essential for shipping, especially if it can dock many ships. A harbor protects from inclement

SAILORS AND SWIMMING

Climbing into the water is an unnatural act.

At least, this is what most sailors will tell you. If you are climbing into the water, it is because your ship has sunk, and you are already dead. This is *not* something done voluntarily. It is something sailors avoid at all costs.

Now, landsmen have these bizarre ideas. They swim for recreation. They swim because they enjoy it, but most sailors wouldn’t be caught dead in the water (no pun intended). It’s much more common to find landsmen that can swim than sailors. The blasé manner in which landsmen will dive (often fully clothed) overboard stuns sailors.

RELIGION AND SUPERSTITION ON THE HIGH SEAS

On historical Earth, sailors were a superstitious lot. This is a bit different in *Exalted*. Typically, superstition stems from an inherent doubt in the way the universe works. In *Exalted*, everyone knows how Creation works, and if they don't, they know there are people they can ask.

Spirituality in the world of *Exalted* is closer to a blend of science and diplomacy than a religious exploration. Spirits organize themselves in a bureaucracy. They guard well-defined spheres of influence that a person can discover through research and experimentation. Though it is a crime in the eyes of the Immaculates, a person can bargain with and bribe them.

Navigating the spiritual world of *Exalted* has more to do with savvy than philosophy. This does not mean that sailors are a cosmopolitan people. Many sailors violate the laws of the Immaculate Order, worshiping the Little Gods. Secret ceremonies are common in sea ports, and often, entire ships practice the Hundred Gods Heresy while at sea.

Even among the followers of the straight and narrow, the wise pay close heed to the ways of the spirits. Though a crew might make no offerings to the spirits (such a bribe is illegal in the eyes of the Immaculates), spirits often waylay ships anyway. For this reason, ships carry simple protections, such as black birds for protection against Storm Mothers. Protections that have a second, more legitimate purpose (such as crows, which can be used to find land) are ideal, as they give the sailors plausible deniability in the face of Immaculate persecution.

Sailors do not dwell on good or bad luck because they know how to appease spirits and make their own luck. Still, in the world of *Exalted*, most people look to the skies for omens. Sailors are always on the lookout for subtle messages from the gods and spirits of the world. A sea bird is a good omen. Finding all the weevils in your ship's biscuit have suddenly died is not. But at the heart, there is a method to their madness, a core of truth that lends credibility to their beliefs.

weather and waves. It serves as a location for loading and unloading vessels, as well as affecting repairs. A good harbor will entice ships to sail miles out of their way.

Because of this, cities protect their harbors with great care. Many harbors have sandbars near their mouths that the low tides expose. On these sandbars, cities can con-

struct harbor walls at great expense, to hold siege weapons, troops or even firedust cannons. Alternately, the city can sink ships and debris at the mouth of the harbor to build an artificial reef and block passage.

During times of trouble, a city can implement further defenses. Most harbors can be chained. This is very useful for warding off attacks. To do this, the defenders string a single, massive chain from one edge of the harbor mouth to the other. This chain, hanging just below the surface of the water, is an invisible hazard that will tear the hulls of ships to pieces. It can take many hours to chain a harbor.

Another method of protecting a poorly defensible port is to use tactics similar to those used in creating a sea harbor. To make a sea harbor, ships lash themselves together into a giant, nearly complete, circle. By the same token, ships lashed together can artificially extend the walls of a harbor, blocking passage. Men and weapons defend these ships, and troops can move across the connected decks to trouble spots. This means that a foe cannot concentrate their attacks on certain ships. Though defenders may die, replacements are but a short run away.

Closed ports are an exception, not a rule. Most of the time, the harbors are open. To close a port is to choke off the city's lifeblood, and it isn't done except during the direst of emergencies.

ON THE SEA

The sea beckons, and even Solars cannot ignore its siren's call. When the sea gets into a person's blood, there is little that can be done to deny it. The sea is an interesting and violent place. It is fraught with adventure and excitement, and every day could be a sailor's last. It is in the midst of these kinds of hazards that the Solars come into their own.

THE GRIND

Life on a ship is a daily battle against the hungry sea. The wonders that were so common on First Age ships are now all but gone, and just keeping a ship above water is a constant struggle. Add to this the innate hazards of the sea, and even getting from one place to another can be an adventure.

CLOTHES AND UNIFORMS

Clothes and uniforms vary from area to area. Officers tend to dress more formally than regular sailors, and in the navy, officers are generally the only people with uniforms. In the Realm's navy, officers wear elaborate and decorative uniforms. These uniforms are heavy and often unfit for the hottest seasons, but a sharp uniform is a symbol of pride among the officers of the Realm. Certainly, a well-dressed officer is a thing of wonder.

The typical imperial officer dresses in black wool pantaloons and boots. He generally wears a silk shirt and (optionally) a breastplate and gorget assembly under a waterproof leather and wool jacket, dyed stark black and

trimmed with jade decoratives. Treat this jacket as a buff jacket if the officer does not wear the breastplate and gorget or as an armored buff jacket if he wears a breastplate. Officers of the imperial navy wear no hats.

Naval buff jackets have cuffs embroidered with arabesques and elaborate epaulets. The higher the officer's rank, the more elaborate the decoration. Jackets bear the officer's house mon on the left breast in jade of the color appropriate to the house's elemental affinity. If the officer attended the House of Bells, he may substitute a silver bell insignia for his house mon. Officers who have accomplished significant achievements bear a gold and orichalcum imperial mon in place of their house mon. Some officers achieve the imperial mon after years of service. Others earn it for heroism in battle (many posthumously). Sailors who rise to officer rank without training always do so through extraordinary achievements, and therefore, they invariably wear the imperial mon. Such officers are more respected by the common sailor than others, as they have not only risen in rank, but have been awarded the trust of the empire as well and have earned every bit of respect a sailor can give them.

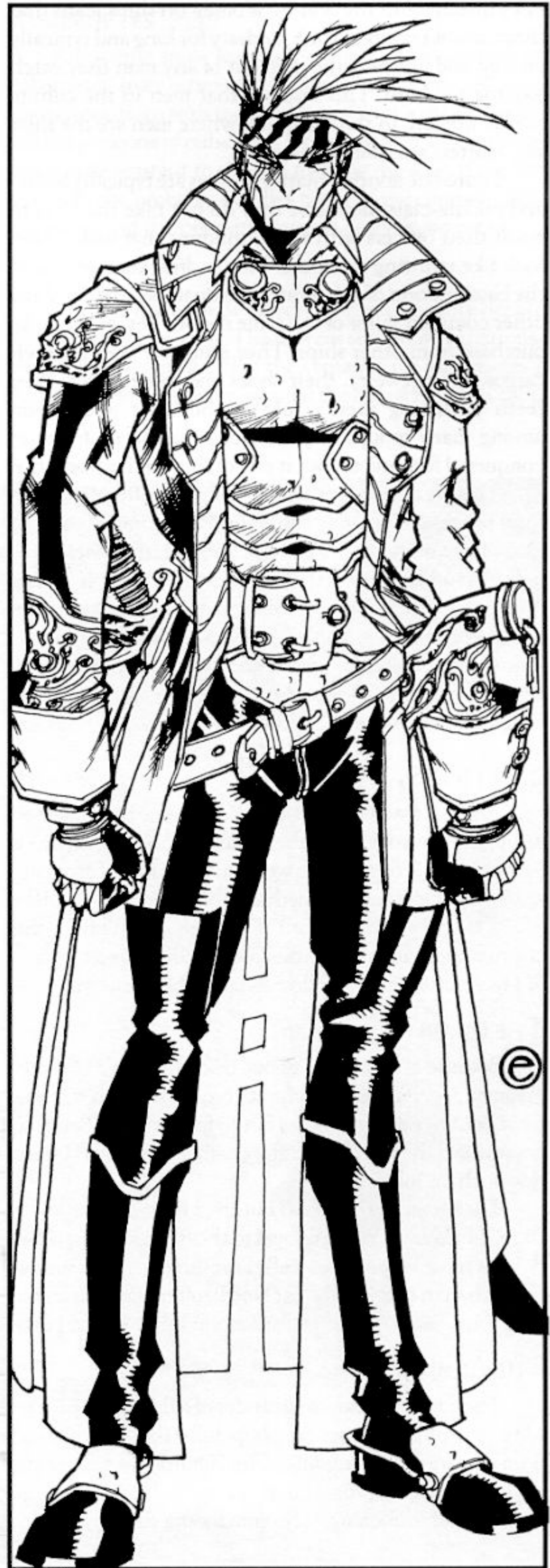
In times of war, some officers don armor, but at sea, this can be a dubious choice for the unExalted. Among those unExalted officers that can swim (there are a higher percentage of swimming officers than seamen), it is rare for them to wear armor beyond their naval jacket. For those officers that cannot swim, armor is a logical choice. The Exalted also typically wear armor, as most Dragon-Blooded who serve in the imperial navy are Water-aspected or otherwise have protections against drowning.

The Merchant Fleet uses similar-pattern uniforms, but the officers wear brown jackets and pantaloons with dark green shirts, rather than the blue-water navy's all-black gear. The uniforms were originally identical, but House V'neef changed the Merchant Fleet's uniform as part of the purging of its ranks after assuming control of it some 60 years ago.

Throughout other navies of the world, this trend continues. The more loyal the nation is to the Realm, the more closely its uniforms resemble the imperial navy's (at least in spirit). Shoulder boards, medals and scroll work are just the beginning for many such uniforms. The uniforms of areas that have no allegiance to the Realm vary wildly, from the broad, triangular shoulders of the Lookshy navy, directly copied from Shogunate-era uniform designs, to the triple-shoulder cloaks of the Coral Archipelago.

Sailors, on the other hand, dress much less elaborately. They typically wear the bare minimum clothing for the climate. In the South, baggy pants and a sash are often enough, with an occasional band around the forehead to keep off the sweat). Farther north, shoes, sandals and light shirts become common. The farther north one goes, the heavier this clothing becomes. Many sailors are bundled up quite well in the Far North.

Dress for women and men is much the same. There is very little privacy on a ship, and topless female sailors are



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not unheard of in the South. Women on ships learn that they cannot maintain their modesty for long and typically give up and just beat the crap out of any man they catch looking too hard. This assumes that men in the culture pursue women. In those cultures where men are the shier sex, matters are simply reversed.

Pirates are another matter. Pirates are typically lower- and middle-class men, and they do not take the time to outfit their officers with fancy uniforms that make them look like strutting peacocks. Pirates dress themselves, so the base uniform of any pirate is comparable to that of any other common sailor of the same region. Yet, pirates take purchase from other ships. They slaughter men for their cargos, their jewelry, their shoes and, often, even their teeth (assuming there's gold in them). It is common among many groups of pirates to take the uniforms of conquered foes and use what pieces they find salvageable.

This practice can make for a bizarre outfit, a look that most pirates deliberately cultivate. Many pirates have the coat of one uniform, the pants of another, the footwear of a third and a bit of salvaged armor or two. It is not uncommon to see pieces of two damaged coats sewn together to make a whole one. Those that dress in this fashion are obviously pirates, and often, they only do so when at sea or in pirate ports. In legitimate ports, they break out their normal clothing.

STATIONS, EVERYONE!

A ship is a well-oiled machine. Everyone has a place on a ship, and everyone *knows* their place on a ship. Discipline is everything, and this makes a well-run ship a model of organization. It is important to understand this organization and the role of every person on board. There are exceptions to this organization, naturally, but they are not common. Most ships of a reasonable size will follow the same basic hierarchy.

THE CHAIN OF COMMAND

Because a ship is all about discipline, the chain of command is vitally important. It's crucial not only to know what you are supposed to do, but to follow any orders that come down the line. When the chain of command breaks down, chaos follows.

The chain of command outlined here is common to the Realm and all nations loyal to the Realm. Many other nations have adapted it as well. Threshold nations, such as the barbarian tribes of the Far North, often have their own hierarchy, but the system must accomplish the same goals.

THE ADMIRAL

The admiral is the commander of a fleet of ships. The state typically appoints her, hopefully (but not always) from experienced captains. The admiral serves as the captain of the ship on which she sails. This ship is the flagship and is in charge of commanding the fleet.

SCURVY

Do the people of Exalted know what causes scurvy?

Not precisely, but they have figured out how to prevent it. All ships carry vegetables and fruits to stave off the effects of scurvy. In the First Age, scholars knew a great deal about nutrition and diet, but most of that knowledge is lost. In the modern day, all that most people know is that limes and oranges are the most effective means of combating scurvy, but that all fruits and vegetables help to keep a man healthy. Those with a Lore of ••• or higher understand the basic concepts of nutrition.

The number of admirals in a given navy depends greatly on the size of the force. The Realm, for instance, has many fleets and, therefore, many admirals, with a hierarchy all their own. Smaller nations may have only a single admiral. Some merchant fleets appoint admirals of their own. This practice isn't common, but it is not unheard of.

THE CAPTAIN (TRIERARCH)

The captain (known by the title trierarch in the Realm, Lookshy and other First Age survivor states) of the ship is the ostensible queen of the craft. She commands the ship and gives all the orders. Hers is the final word on any matter.

The captain is not always a seaman and often does not actually know how to sail a ship. In many nations, especially poorer ones, the captain of a ship is a wealthy individual who can afford to pay many of the ship's expenses and may know nothing about running one at sea. This does not merely hold true for merchant vessels, but many navies as well.

In these situations, the captain acts as an overall commander, allowing the kubernetes to run the ship. While this is the ideal, many captains can't help but flaunt their power and attempt to second-guess the kubernetes. These ships are often poorly run and easy prey to pirates and enemies. On pirate ships, if a captain is unfit to lead, she will be mortally wounded in battle. Occasionally, the enemy actually delivers this wound.

UNDEROFFICERS

Underofficers are not required on every ship. An underofficer is an assistant to the captain. He helps the captain plan and operate the ship but has no authority not given by the captain. In most situations, he operates with the captain's authority.

Smaller ships usually have no underofficers. On larger ships, however, one or two underofficers are essential for the efficient operation of the craft.

KUBERNETES

The kubernetes is the pilot of a ship. She navigates the ship and handles much of the actual sailing. On a ship with a talented captain, she is the second in command. On a ship with a figurehead of a captain, she is in charge whenever the ship is at sea.

The kubernetes is the master of a ship. She oversees all aspects of the ship's operation. She knows everything that is going on at any given time and is often seen as a figure almost supernatural in aspect. The kubernetes is usually distant from the crew, but when she speaks, the crew strains to listen.

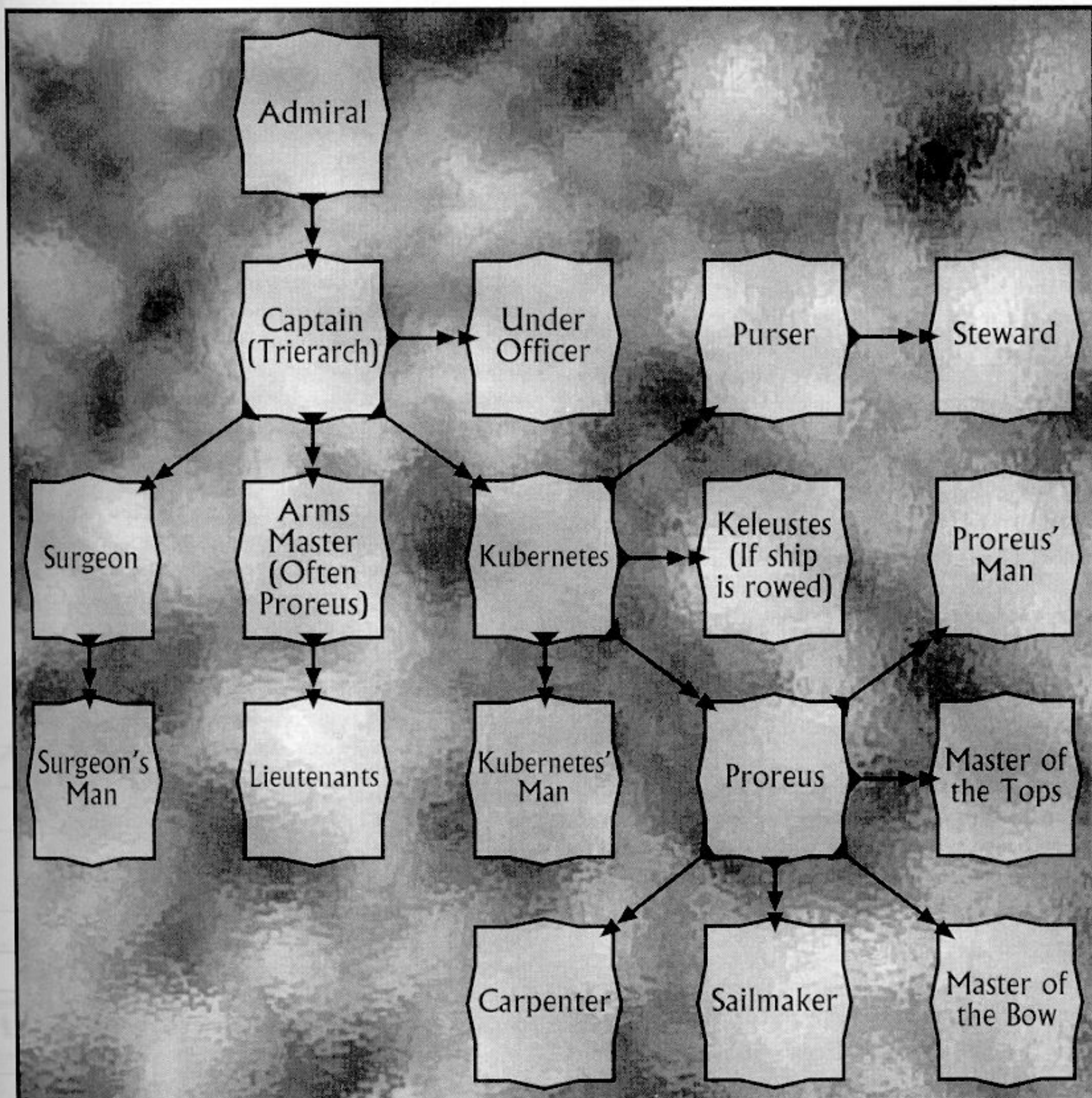
On smaller vessels, the kubernetes and the captain are often the same person.

KUBERNETES' MAN

All people must learn somewhere. The position of kubernetes' man is one of learning. The kubernetes' man (like all positions with the word "man" in the title, it can be held by someone of either sex) is training to be a kubernetes and acts as assistant to the one running the ship. If she has any skill, she probably handles many of the routine tasks. She will stand the opposite watches of the kubernetes.

PROREUS

There is not a single person on the ship more deeply feared than the proreus. The proreus serves two functions. First of all, he repeats all of the captain's (or kubernetes') orders. While the person running the ship speaks in a calm





and collected voice, the proreus' voice could wake the dead in the depths of the Underworld.

The second function of the proreus is to instill discipline. It's the proreus that will beat you out of your bunk if you miss your watch. It's the proreus that will flay your back if you steal liquor from the ship's stores. It's the proreus who will draw the blade at your execution. There is not a single officer more feared than the proreus, and he earns every bit of this fear.

The proreus usually stands in the rear of the vessel, with the captain or kubernetes. When the kubernetes needs a good set of eyes to help navigate hazards, the proreus will often take a position in the bow.

PROREUS' MAN

The proreus select his man for his voice and his ability to instill discipline. He is the assistant to the proreus, training to one day hold the position. He stands opposing watches to the proreus.

THE KELEUSTES

The keleustes answers directly to the kubernetes. It is the keleustes' job to command the rowers. The keleustes sits in the aft of the ship, assisted by a flute player or drummer, to set the time. Obviously, on ships without oars, there is no keleustes.

KELEUSTES' MEN

The keleustes has two assistants among the rowers. They are the keleustes' men.

ARMS MASTER

The arms master answers directly to the kubernetes and is in charge of every weapon on the ship. Typically, she locks these weapons in an arms locker below deck. She is in charge of most every aspect of the crew involving combat. Though she takes orders from the kubernetes, it is she who drills and organizes the men to repel boarders. It is she who leads the charges. It is she who orders the bows fired. Firedust weapons are not common, but if the ship has such weapons mounted, the arms master is in charge of those as well, and she will often fire them personally.

LIEUTENANTS

The arms master often cannot do her job alone. Ships can have hundreds of sailors, every one of them a combatant. On large ships, the arms master will have a lieutenant or two. Each lieutenant commands a portion of the men. This allows the arms master to concentrate on the big picture.

PURSER

The purser is a very important officer. The purser is in charge of all the ship's finances and all the ship's stores. The purser is in charge of watering the ship (filling the water

barrels and dumping out brackish water to freshen the supply). The purser is also in charge of provisioning the ship.

In a large navy, shore-side personnel often handle this, and the purser only receives the goods, but on more independent ships, the purser is the end-all and be-all of ship supplies. Men know them for their tremendous underworld contacts and their ability to keep neat books — typically more than one set.

STEWARD

The steward is the purser's assistant. He is typically studying to be a purser himself.

STANDING WATCHES

Officers must stand watches like any other sailor. Unless they are idlers, an officer needs to be at his post at all times. Because this is impossible, officers alternate watches with their assistants. This means someone is occupying every important post at all times.

For more on how watches work, see page 26.

COOK

Answering to the steward, the cook is in charge of preparing all the food on the ship. Since the crew eats ship's biscuit more than any other food while at sea, the cook is in charge of preparing this incredibly bland food in new and exciting ways. It's not unheard of for a crew to throw a bad cook overboard.

CARPENTER

One of the most important people on a ship during combat, the carpenter is in charge of all repairs. Vessels are not the sturdiest of things, in *Exalted*. They have fallen far since the First Age. Ships often spring leaks when their sails take on sudden, heavy winds or hit rough seas. Then, it falls to the carpenter to seal the leaks and keep the ship afloat. The carpenter's job is never done, as ships spring leaks all the time.

CARPENTER'S MAN

The carpenter's man is studying to be a carpenter. She helps the carpenter in all repairs.

SURGEON

Another important member of the crew, the ship's surgeon is in charge of maintaining the health of the crew. He doesn't merely patch holes, he is in charge of disease prevention, general welfare and most every aspect of keeping a crew healthy. His hardest task is usually convincing the purser to buy enough fruits and vegetables.

SURGEON'S MAN

The surgeon's man is responsible for helping the surgeon in all his daily tasks. Often more of a nurse than a physician, the surgeon's man is usually studying to be a surgeon herself.

SURGEON'S BOY

The surgeon's boy (or girl) is in charge of all the nastiest jobs involving the sick and wounded. He cleans up vomit and congealing blood and wipes up the pus and the feces of sick sailors. He has a thankless job, but the surgeon's boy usually becomes a surgeon in his own right.

WEAPONSMITH

Large ships and military vessels will often have a weaponsmith aboard. The weaponsmith answers to the proreus and is in charge of maintaining and performing simple repairs on weapons. Since you can't put a forge on a ship, he is more commonly a skilled bowyer/fletcher than an actual smith.

SAILMAKER

Answering to the proreus, the sailmaker is usually a common sailor that also happens to be a skilled seamstress. She is in charge of maintaining the ship's suit (its full set of sails), so, whenever a sail is damaged, she is relieved of other duties in order to repair it.

MASTER OF THE TOPS

The topsmen are a skilled and nimble bunch, often a bit more flamboyant than the rest of the crew. The captain selects the master to rule the tops. He is always a topsman and is often the most popular crewmember in the tops. A talented captain knows that selecting the proper master of the tops is a sure way to earn the men's support, and she carefully studies the popularity of the topsmen before making the selection. This position is rare on ships without many topsmen.

MASTER OF THE BOW

The master of the bow is the first among the foremast jacks. Like the master of the tops, her selection is a popularity contest more than a contest of skill. Of course, being unskilled is a sure way to become unpopular.

MARINES

Many ships will have marines on board. Marines are the troops used defend or attack during shipboard actions. Marines answer to the arms master and lieutenants. When not in combat, marines tend to cause more trouble than they solve. Marines are idlers, but they work during emergencies. During an actual fight, normal seamen supplement marines.

TOPSMEN

Topsmen work the rigging of the ship. They spend much of their day in the air, often going hours without actually touching the deck. Their job is a dangerous one, and the sailors that gravitate to it are something of a flamboyant group.

During the First Age, riggings were much more complicated, and being a topsman was the rule and not the exception. Regardless, the modern topsmen consider themselves a cut above the rest of the crew. Ships with Abalone rigging have the most topsmen.

FOREMAST JACKS

The foremast jacks work the front of the ship. They are usually able seamen, and they are in charge of mooring the vessel. They also handle much of the running rigging. Being a foremast jack means being very skilled, and it is, therefore, a prestige position on a ship.

THE AFTERGUARD

The afterguard is a general pool of sailors working in the rear of the ship. They are generally ordinary seamen who work on any task that needs doing. It is a busy position, and hard work, but a sure path to able seaman.

THE ROWERS

In ships with banks of oars, the rowers work the oars. They are typically freemen, and most landsmen end up here. Rowers are necessary to bring a ship up to combat speed. They sometimes row on long voyages because a relatively lightly worked group of rowers can make a big difference on the speed of the ship. These rowers work in light shifts and only when the speed really matters.

Most rowers are *not* slaves. Very few nations use slaves for rowers. Rowers aren't expensive, and loyal rowers can be trusted with weapons during combat. Rowers are uncommon on Abalone- and dragonwing-rigged ships.

LEARNING THE ROPES

How does a person become a sailor? How do they earn promotions? How do they earn their ratings?

This all depends upon whether they are officers or sailors.

OFFICERS

Officers begin as midshipman. They join a ship at the age of eight or so, and they begin learning the basics of sailing until they earn the attentions of an officer.

So, now, she is approximately 14 years old and a carpenter's man or a kubernetes' man or some other officer's apprentice. It takes a minimum of another four years to be promoted to her master's position, sometimes much, much longer (15 years or more).

Promoting a sailor to an officer is extremely rare. When it is done, it is either into the position of proreus or keleustes,

but most of the time, these officers come from the same pool that the captain and other officers are drawn from.

LANDSMEN

Landsmen come to the sea without any knowledge of sailing. On an oared ship, they often go straight to the oars. The landsman is the lowest person on the ship, given the tasks that the crew won't even give the cabin boy. Landsmen scrub bilges, they make oakum, and they keep their heads down. If they are talented, they earn their ratings as an ordinary seaman after six months. Others have to wait a year or more before they earn their new rating.

ORDINARY SEAMEN

After a sailor has become an ordinary seaman, she usually either continues working the oars (they rarely have enough landsmen to do the job by themselves), or if she's a cut above the rest, she'll move into the afterguard or the tops.

Sailors spend a good deal of time as ordinary seamen. It's usually a year or more (sometimes much more) before they earn the rating of able seamen.

ABLE SEAMEN

Able seaman is the highest rank that most sailors achieve. Able seaman is an honored and trusted position, and such men are skilled in any ship duty not handled by an officer (they aren't expected to know how to navigate, for instance).

Sailors typically spend years as able seamen. Only after many years can a seaman break through to the next level and become a master mariner.

MASTER MARINERS

A master mariner is the most talented sailor on the sea. Few people achieve this rank, and those that do are usually old salts, so at home at sea that they are no longer comfortable on land. The master mariner is the ultimate sailor, respected by everyone on the ship. Master mariners know their place, and few would openly challenge an officer's decision, but if a master mariner discreetly lets an officer know that she disapproves of a course of action, then the wise officer takes heed.

THE ASP'S OUT OF THE SACK

The sea is a terrible and dangerous place. There is no room on a ship for slackers and poor discipline. Punishments on a ship are harsh and quick. For a freeman, most punishments come in the form of strokes. If the ship has a grate over the hold, the crew picks it up and props it against the wall. Crewmembers then lash the person to be punished to the grate. The proreus or one of her men doles out the strokes.

The proreus performs these with a limber bamboo cane, colloquially called "the asp," which is typically stowed in a sack in her quarters. When the proreus punishes a person, it is said that "the asp's out of the sack."



Strokes are painful in the extreme. More than 10 or 20 strokes is an extremely severe punishment.

Lesser offences can end with the offending party holystoning the deck (the holystone being a rock used to scrub the deck). It's an unpleasant task and one not favored by the crew. The stone's name refers to its size (about the size of a copy of the Immaculate Texts) and the position it's used from (on one's knees). Making oakum is also a good punishment. (See "Leaks and Caulking," on this page, for more details.) The greatest of all punishments, short of execution, is marooning. When a sailor has truly angered her crew and her captain, they maroon her on a deserted island.

Slaves are another matter. Slave punishments can be very brutal. Slave punishments occur frequently. They are given lightly and, sometimes, for no particular reason. Fear of pain and death keeps the slaves in line.

The most common crime of a slave is negligence. When a slave is negligent, the proreus beats him with a cane. The proreus ties him to the grate, just like with a freeman. She then beats the slave until he's bloody — the number of strokes is usually "until the proreus tires."

In case of mutiny, there is burning. When the ship reaches an anchorage, crewmen nail the slave to the ground with crooked sticks. The proreus then applies fire, by degrees, first to the feet, then to the head. This punishment is extremely painful, and the screams of the slave carry a great distance. For very aggressive male slaves, gelding is usually an efficient deterrent. The procedure is just the same as with a stallion. The slave then becomes much more docile. If a slave tries to make too many escapes, the proreus will have him hobbled. This procedure involves removing half of the slave's foot. The ship's surgeon performs the amputation, overseen by the proreus.

A more humane method of keeping slaves from running is to place great iron rings around their ankles or neck. These are tremendously heavy, and if the weight is judged right, the slave is still capable of doing his work but incapable of running at any great speed. Of course, if he falls overboard, it won't matter whether or not he knows how to swim.

A CAREER AT SEA

Many sailors stay with the same ship all their lives. This is especially true on smaller vessels, such as fishing boats, where the crews are very close. Such sailors have long and fruitful careers. Other sailors move around a lot. They leave one ship, sign on to another and see where they end up. On any ship, there is significant turnover. This is normal and to be expected.

Sailors who frequently change ships often want to see the world. Most ships follow very predictable routes, and it's hard to find one that will keep going to new and interesting places. Many sailors get bored seeing the same old places. Others are loners and don't fit in well. Finally, some

RATINGS AND THE SAIL ABILITY

So how does all of this translate into game terms?

Well, obviously, a landsman has no sailing skill at all. By the time a character picks up one dot in Sail, she is qualified as an ordinary seaman. Two or possibly three dots translates to the qualifications for an able seaman. Anything higher makes one a master mariner.

But Sail Ability does not determine a character's rating. Her proreus determines that. A good proreus knows when to raise a sailor, but if she is a constant disciplinary problem, don't expect him to be raising her up any time soon. Not even a captain challenges a proreus' rating unless something is really going wrong.

frequently wake up hungover in an alley, stinking of alcohol and monkeys, long after the ship has sailed.

Or, of course, maybe one's a Solar Exalt, one step ahead of the Dragon-Blooded.

RUNNING A SHIP

It takes a lot of care and experience to run a ship. Many things have to happen, sometimes at a moment's notice, to bring a crew safely home from sea. It is this level on inherent danger (and the tremendous value of a single ship) that necessitates the level of discipline and harsh punishments at sea.

LEAKS AND CAULKING

Ships leak. It's difficult for a modern person to imagine exactly how much an ancient ship leaked. Ships in the world of *Exalted* are not well-made craft. The level of technology is not high enough to guarantee a watertight hull. Rarely does a day go by when the ship's pumps are not used. Heavy winds, rough seas and general wear and tear are always popping seals. The pressure of taking wind into the sails can be enough to spring leaks, and putting a craft under full oar will do it almost every time. Heaven forbid the ship actually hits anything.

Ships stay afloat because of their carpenters. The carpenter is always aware of his ship's condition. Many carpenters are so good at their jobs and so familiar with their craft that if a ship takes on too much water, they will awake from a deep sleep, just because the craft is swimming differently. There's a common saying on sailing ships in the world of *Exalted*. "If you're afraid to get wet, don't become a carpenter." It pretty much sums the job up.

Individual boards compose a ship, and unstopped, water will pour in between these boards as if through a sieve. Caulking makes a watertight seal between the boards of the hull, but this caulking, called oakum, is very primitive stuff.



Every time pressure warps the hull, whether from a storm, wind in the sails or going to full oar, the hull settles and changes shape. As the hull changes shape, several, sometimes dozens of these seams burst. These leaks appear small at first, a trickle if the leak is close to the waterline, a spray if it is deeper. If a carpenter catches them small, works fast and can stay ahead of them, these small leaks are nothing to worry about. In fact, a carpenter and her carpenter's men are used to these sort of leaks — they plug several every day.

If left unrepaired, the leaks will become bigger and bigger until water is pouring into the craft. At this point, it is hard to stay on top of the damage, and a crew's skill is tested. Sailors work the pumps as fast as possible. Spare hands prepare caulking. The carpenter and her crew work as fast and as hard as they can. If things go beyond this stage, it's probably best to abandon ship.

Leaks are fixed by reapplying the same caulking that holds the ocean out in the first place. Caulking is the most important tool of a carpenter. When rope becomes old and worn, crewmembers unravel it and tear it apart into strands. These pieces of hemp are oakum. Oakum is a primary ingredient in caulking and necessary to the operation of a ship. Making oakum is a terrible job. It is painful and often leaves the fingers bleeding. No one wants to do it. It is a common punishment, and prisoners are responsible for producing a certain weight in oakum each day (a pound is the standard).

The carpenter mixes oakum with hot pitch and shoves the subsequent caulking between the boards of the hull with wedges or other thin tools. If she does so properly, then the leak will stop and the hull will seal.

The job of the carpenter is a hard one. There are many demands, but everyone on a ship knows that their lives depend on the carpenter, and the position, therefore, commands a certain amount of respect.

PROVISIONING THE SHIP

A ship without food and water will not travel far. A ship without carpenter's stores will almost certainly sink. A ship without a cargo is next to useless. It is therefore crucial that a ship's purser is doing his job and doing it well. If he is not, then the ship is destined for disaster.

The cargo of a ship is the most significant part of the ship's provisioning. If this cargo is human, then it more or less takes care of itself and must only be housed and fed. If it consists of animals, they must be cared for. If it is inanimate, it must be stowed properly.

It's also important to feed the crew, and it takes about two pounds of food a day to feed a crewmember. Crewmembers must be fed meat every other meal (more in colder climates). If they are not, they will become weak and useless at sea. Of the rest of the food, a crew must eat fruits and vegetables, or it will get scurvy. The rest of the food is ship's biscuit.

Ship's biscuit, being the most common single food eaten, is the one that the cook spends most of her creativity on. There are hundreds of recipes to turn these bland rectangles into appetizing meals. A good cook will often brag about her recipes for ship's biscuit. Otherwise, these pieces of hard bread are completely without taste.

For meat, a crew can look forward salted pork or beef, dried or smoked fish, fresh fish, eggs and the occasional chicken. The salted, dried and smoked products are usually stowed before leaving port. The crew can catch fresh fish while sailing (though this is labor intensive and the ship must travel very slowly). If the ship is carrying chickens, they will lay eggs. Chickens become food when they no longer lay.

Fruits and vegetables come pickled, though these are rare and expensive. They can also be dried, and dried peas are always a crew favorite, but the drying process can be applied to many other legumes or to fruits and vegetables. Fresh fruits and vegetables usually spoil after a week or so, depending on the temperature.

A sailor needs about a gallon of water a day, depending on the temperature. Crews in the North need less, while the crew of ships in the South need more. If a sailor goes for more than two days without water, she will die. Good water is plentiful, and most navigators know many good places to water. Ships that can stop to water often, since the water begins to taste horrible after a day or two. Potable water keeps the crew happy.

COSMOLOGY

The world of **Exalted** is not like Earth. It is not round. It does not orbit its sun. It is a flat world and the center of its universe. The operation of the celestial bodies and their movements through the heavens is of vital importance to sailors, who use the sun and the stars to guide them. A brief treatment is therefore in order.

The sun travels across the sky. It doesn't just move from east to west daily on the same path, but rather, each day it crosses the sky in a slightly different path. It drifts south and then north again. It moves to the south, reaching its farthest southern point during Ascending Water, and the warmth of its rays are denied of all the land north of the Southern deserts. Then, it moves north again, and its rays melt the winter snows until it reaches its most northern point, during Descending Fire.

Beyond the sun lie the planets. They wander the skies seemingly at random. Each follows its own course, and the plotting of these courses can predict the future. Most of the planets are visible only at night, when they are visible at all, the exception being the Maiden of Serenity, who is visible at dawn and dusk.

Beyond the sun and all the planets lies the sky. The sky is dotted with the stars, but they are too far away to be much of a help to navigation. Only the North Star, placed at the

very northernmost axis of the stars is of great use. Thankfully, the gods set the North Star high in the sky, so that it is visible in almost all places, even above distant mountains.

NAVIGATION

The sea is a dangerous place. There are pirates and serpents and storms. It seems that most everything at sea means to harm or destroy a ship. But the greatest threat to a ship is miscalculation, for the smallest one can send a ship hundreds of miles of course, getting the crew hopelessly lost.

For a coaster, navigation is a simple thing. The pilot merely tracks the landmarks she sees and compares them to a good rudder (sort of a navigator's log of a given course). It's not hard to do, and even though a good pilot guards her rudders jealously, in the end, a captain can sail a safe, simple route without a true navigator after she's done it a few times.

A local pilot steers the ship to anchorage through dangerous waters (called conning). To a pilot (as opposed to a navigator) the visual cues are far more important than charts. Locations of reefs, landmarks, the colors of the water — even the local wildlife — all contribute to piloting a ship. But when a ship goes far to sea, beyond the distance where the landmarks (or even the land) are visible, things get more complicated.

The world of *Exalted* is not round, and this means one can only plot latitude off an object close to the world. The stars are so far away they look the same everywhere, and so, a sextant would serve no purpose. Luckily, the sun is close enough to the world to measure its angle, and it still guides sailors to this day.

The second major difference comes from the compass. A compass doesn't point to the North, it points to the center of the world. This means that plotting a course to the Blessed Isle is insanely easy, but plotting one anywhere else is a bit more difficult. So, how do ships plot their location and course?

Before they can start work, every navigator needs certain bits of equipment to do his job. He must have a backstaff and charts with which to use it. He also needs a compass, and usually has an extra jade magnet needle with which to repair it. He has dividers (which are more accurate than rulers) to keep a measurement of a set distance and charts and rudders to record courses. Finally, he has a log that shows the position of the moon and all the tides for the lunar year.

The first step in plotting a ship's position is discovering its latitude. The navigator does so when the sun is directly overhead, using a backstaff. The navigator measures how many degrees above the Southern horizon the sun appears. He then compares this height to a series of charts. The day of the year, the angle of the sun and approximate longitude of the ship (the sun appears directly overhead a bit earlier in the East and later in the West) will give the ship's latitude. Luckily, the navigator only needs to know the longitude in a general sense. See figure 1.

Here lies the greatest problem in navigation. The navigator must collect the rest of a ship's data at nighttime.

The compass points toward the Elemental Pole of Earth, but there is no clear way of determining the direction of North during the day (the path of the sun isn't precise enough to get an accurate reading).

And so, the navigator waits until sundown. At sundown, the navigator can compare the reading on the compass to the position of the North Star. This allows the navigator to draw a line from the Pole of Earth to the ship's current position. This also allows the ship's true bearing to be determined. From here, he can plot a course. See figure 2 for an illustration of this.

There is one hitch. The ship is traveling between the time the latitude is measured and the true bearing and line to the Pole of Earth is determined. This means that a certain amount of judgment is necessary on the part of the navigator, to determine the ship's true position.

A navigator can also determine a course and position by dead reckoning. In dead reckoning, the navigator tracks the ship's true bearing throughout the night (and estimates it throughout the day). If she can keep the errors in this process to a minimum, all that she needs to know to determine the ship's location is the speed and bearing of the ship and a set point of origin.

She measures the speed of the ship by "heaving the log." The navigator throws the "log" (a float) off the rear of the ship. The rope attaching the float to the ship has knots tied in set intervals along its length. When the float strikes the water, an assistant (usually the kubernetes' man) turns over a 28 second glass. When the sand has run into the bottom of the glass, the float is stopped. One can tell the speed of the ship by how much rope played out in 28 seconds.

The use of knotted ropes to measure speed and the influence of current and wind make dead reckoning inherently inaccurate. In game terms, double the difficulty of any navigation using dead reckoning. The wise navigator knows to hold onto his compass and backstaff at all costs.

WATER COLOR

The lighter the water, the shallower it is. The topsmen and the pilot inform the kubernetes when the water

RUDDERS

A rudder is a chart, but it is also much more. A rudder not only consists of maps, but it is also a day-to-day, or even an hour-to-hour, log of the journey. The navigator or pilot keeps a rudder, and every relevant detail is noted. Naturally, rudders note all course changes, plottings, bearings and speeds, but they also record tides, currents and watering locations. They record dangerous natives, monsters or spirits as well. Even bribes and negotiations are detailed. A rudder is not just a map, it's the description of an entire journey.

FIGURE 1.

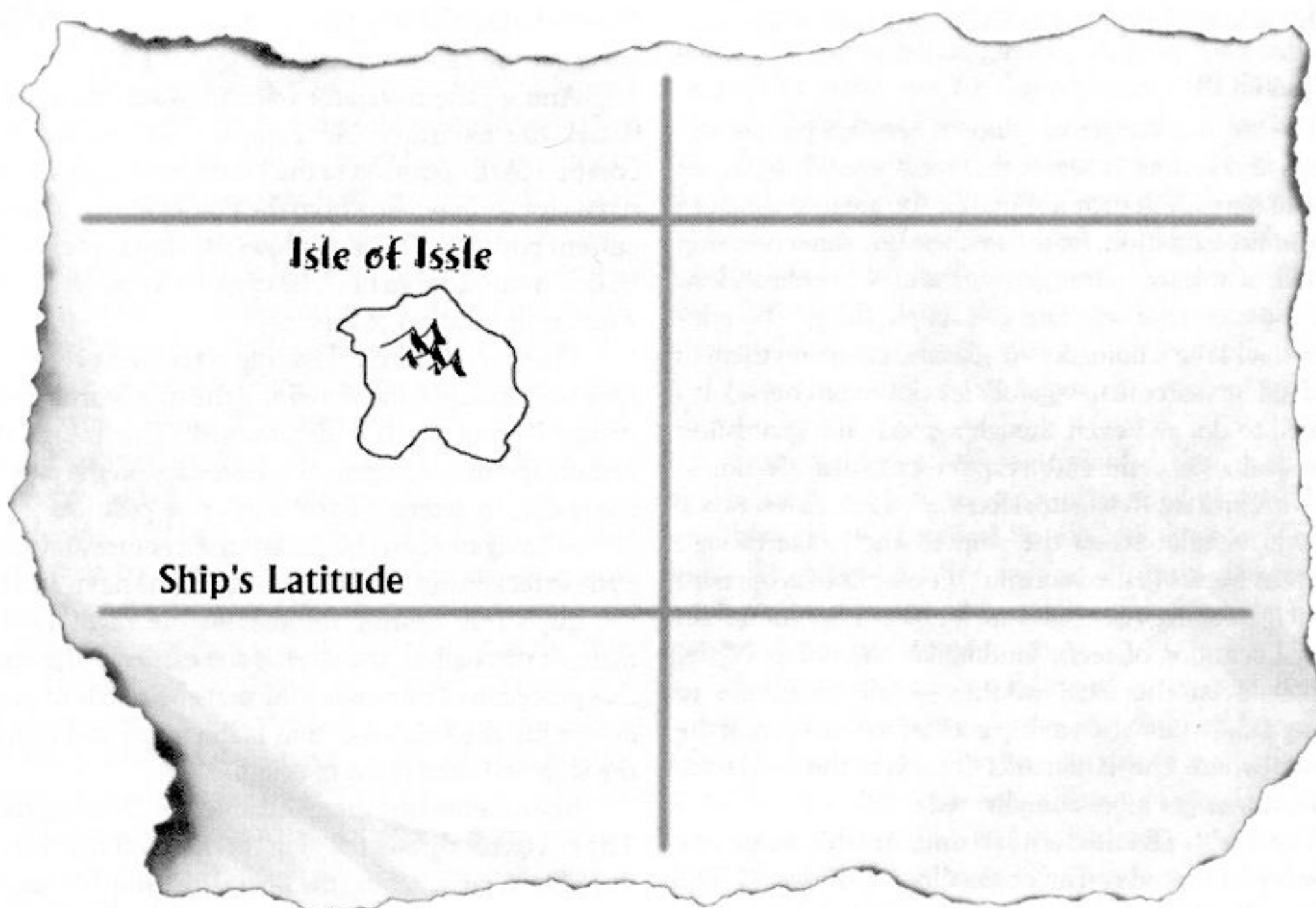
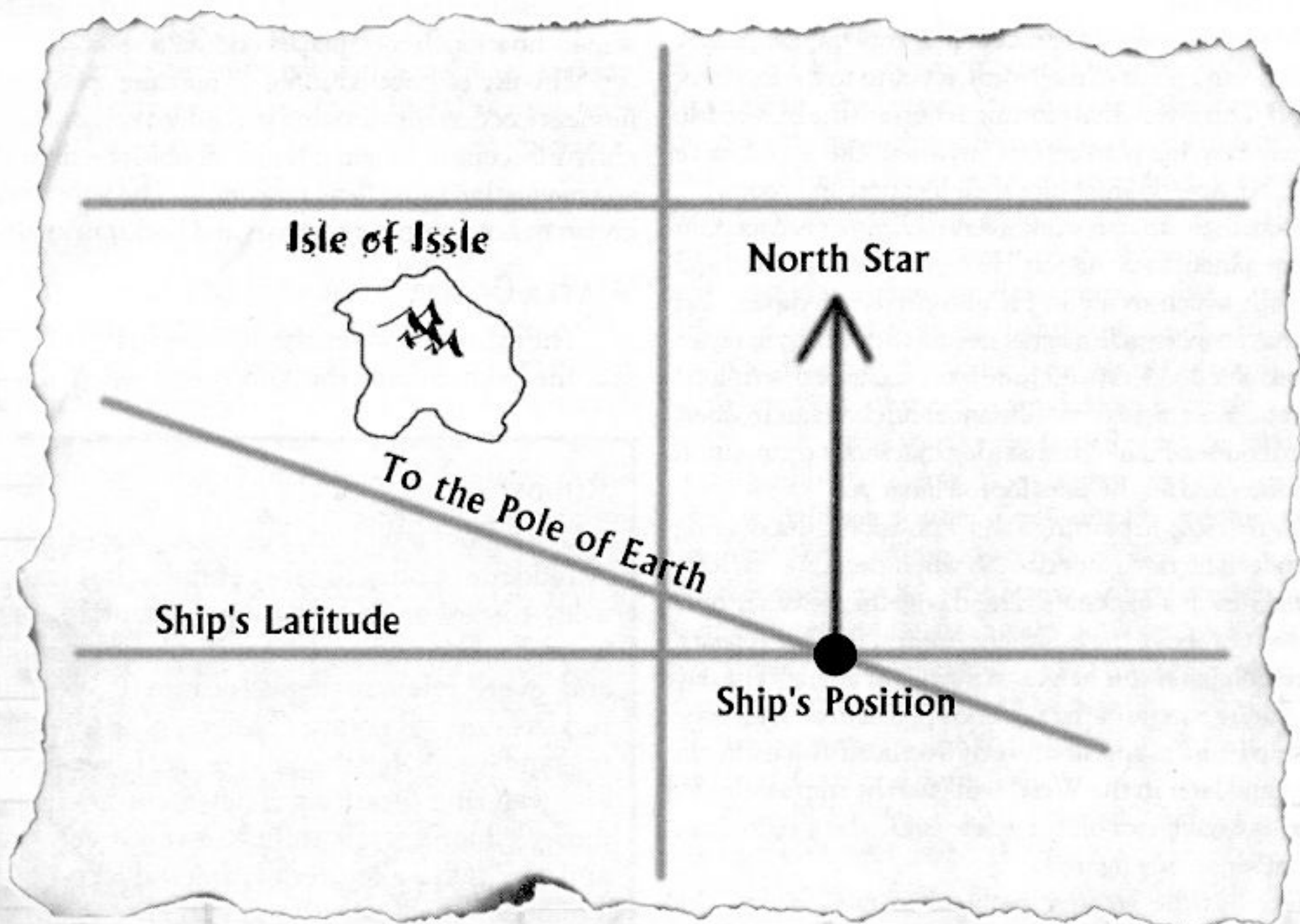


FIGURE 2.



BEARING AND CHARMS

There are two types of bearings. There is a ship's true bearing, which tells what direction the ship is pointed, and there is a ship's apparent bearing, which tells which direction a ship is pointed, relative to the Elemental Pole of Earth. A ship on a true bearing is traveling in a straight line. A ship on an apparent bearing, unless it is heading directly to or away from the Pole of Earth, is a curved line because the ship is constantly turning to keep the Pole of Earth at a certain point on the compass.

Apparent bearings are much easier to follow, but they are almost impossible to plot, as few people in the world of *Exalted* can even begin to tackle the math. Others have plotted apparent bearing courses in advance, and a navigator can follow them easily on charts. A navigator doesn't just invent them on the spot. In fact, probably 95 percent of all ships courses will follow these charted apparent bearings.

The Solars' Perfect Reckoning Technique Charm (and other similar Charms used by other types of *Exalted*) greatly increase the accuracy of navigation. For one thing, a Solar can use it to determine her true bearing accurately throughout the day. For another, she can use it to determine North and the direction to the Pole of Earth at the same time as latitude, and therefore, she can plot an accurate position all at once.

beneath the ship is becoming shallow. The navigator, kubernetes or pilot can take soundings to determining the actual depth of the water. This sounding is done by lowering a weight into the water with a knotted rope attached. When the weight hits the bottom, the number of knots submerged indicates the depth.

Soundings are important in unknown waters as they keep the ship from grounding. At night, the crew must take soundings often, and the ship must move very slowly when navigating shallow waters.

OTHER NAVIGATION TRIALS

The waters themselves move. This movement can cause all sort of difficulty, especially when dead reckoning. Currents will move a ship off course. They foil attempts to judge a ship's speed. They can wreak havoc, especially when a navigator is judging how a ship has traveled between noon an evening, when North can be determined.

CHARTS, NAV LINES AND NAVIGATION

We've all seen them on ancient maps (and maps designed to look ancient). They are these strange dotted lines, crisscrossing the ocean and stopping where they hit land. They are nav lines, and they can make a navigator's job much easier.

To follow a nav line, the ship merely follows the coast or sets out in a known direction until the navigator judges the ship has reached a line. Then, the navigator sets the bearing of the ship to follow that line until it crosses another nav line or until it comes near its destination. The ship follows nav lines, as many of them as necessary, until it reaches its destination. It takes more time because the ship must travel farther, but in the end, it is much safer.

Of course, nav lines look a bit different in *Exalted*. As a ship moves through the water, the relative direction to the Elemental Pole of Earth changes. This means that if one places the Pole of Earth firmly in a position relative to one's craft and keeps it there, one will follow a curving line (unless this position is directly in front or directly behind). This curve forms a perfect circle if the Pole of Earth is directly abeam. If it isn't, then it forms a flattening curve, if one is moving away, and a steepening curve, if one is moving closer.

Nav lines cover naval charts, and a ship will follow them if it can. It makes navigation that much easier.

This means that it is impossible to know a ship's speed or heading accurately. If the current is moving five knots in the direction the ship is traveling, it will carry the ship along with it, foiling attempts to judge the vessel's speed. If it's moving perpendicular to the ship, then the ship will be moving in a different direction than it's actual bearing.

CALIBRATION

It is unwise to take to sea during Calibration. The spirits are angry, the weather is unpredictable, and the numbers never seem to add up during navigation. It is a lucky individual (and no one is lucky during Calibration) who can find a ship that will put to sea for even five times its normal price.





A good navigator can estimate the currents of the ocean. She will figure these movements into her courses. To a lesser extent, the tides will also effect the movement of a ship. It can be very difficult to leave a harbor when the tide is coming in. Usually, a ship must leave under full oar or, if it has no oars, be hauled out by an oared ship or wait until the tide is going out.

SAILING A SHIP

When a ship is trying to get from one location to another and time isn't crucial, then it will try to sail there. Even if a ship has oars, rowing is difficult and exhausting for the crew.

Though it is preferable to rowing, sailing is a slow and inefficient means of moving a ship in the Second Age of Man. Riggings are primitive, and sails don't catch the wind very well. For many craft, it's impossible to beat into the wind without a Charm of some sort.

WIND STRENGTH

The winds are measured by force. Though people in *Exalted* do not use these terms, it might help a player and Storyteller to understand:

Ships prefer to sail in a gentle breeze. Increased winds do not lead to equally increased speeds. As the wind picks up, the kubernetes must shorten the sails, so as not to snap the spars (or even the mast). In fact, even in a gale, a ship might only have doubled its normal speed.

You measure the direction of the wind in points. A 0 point wind is dead ahead of a ship. A 4 point is to either side. An 8 point wind comes from directly behind.

The direction a boat is pointing relative to the wind's direction is called its *point of sail*. If a boat is sailing with the wind behind it, up to about 2 points (or approximately 60°) to either side of directly away from the wind, it is said to be *running*. (Hence the phrase, "running before the wind.") From there to about 3 points (or around 80°) away from the direction the wind is coming *from*, a boat is *reaching*. Still closer to the wind, from there to the closest angle to the wind at which the boat's sails still function, a boat is *beating*. ("Beating upwind.") When a boat is steered so close to the direction the wind is coming from that the sails no longer provide thrust, and instead flap and flutter uselessly (or *luff*), the boat is said to be *in irons*. How closely a boat can steer to the wind without being in irons depends on the vessel and how it is rigged.

A ship moving toward the wind is "beating." For many ships, this means they are dead in the water (or even being blown backward) unless a Charm is in use. A ship moving with the wind at 3 or 4 points is reaching. While this is the ideal for more sophisticated ships, many ships in the world of *Exalted* do not present enough sail to the wind while reaching to achieve the full potential of a First Age sailing ship. A ship that is reaching heels to one side as the wind

in the sails presses the ship over. Ships in the Second Age of Man, especially oared galleys, waste most of the wind while reaching, and therefore, they do not heel much.

A ship is at its best when running with the wind. In this case, the wind is behind and it is using all of its sail. If a kubernetes is trying to sail in heavy winds, his player must make a Wits + Sail check every four in-game hours to determine whether the ship starts losing spars. The difficulty is 1 for winds force 4-6, 2 for 7-8 and 3 for 9 or higher. If the roll does not succeed, then a spar is lost. If the roll fails by more than one success, the mast is lost. In a hurricane, a roll is necessary even with the sails furled — the kubernetes might not have prepared for the blow.

When rowing, oared ships can get a good increase in speed. Ships with oars almost always row in combat. These ships can row at a more sedate pace when sailing from point to point as well because even a small amount of effort can increase a ship's speed. Because rowing is so important to a ship's maneuverability in combat, it's a common tactic to try to shear off all the oars on one side of an enemy vessel.

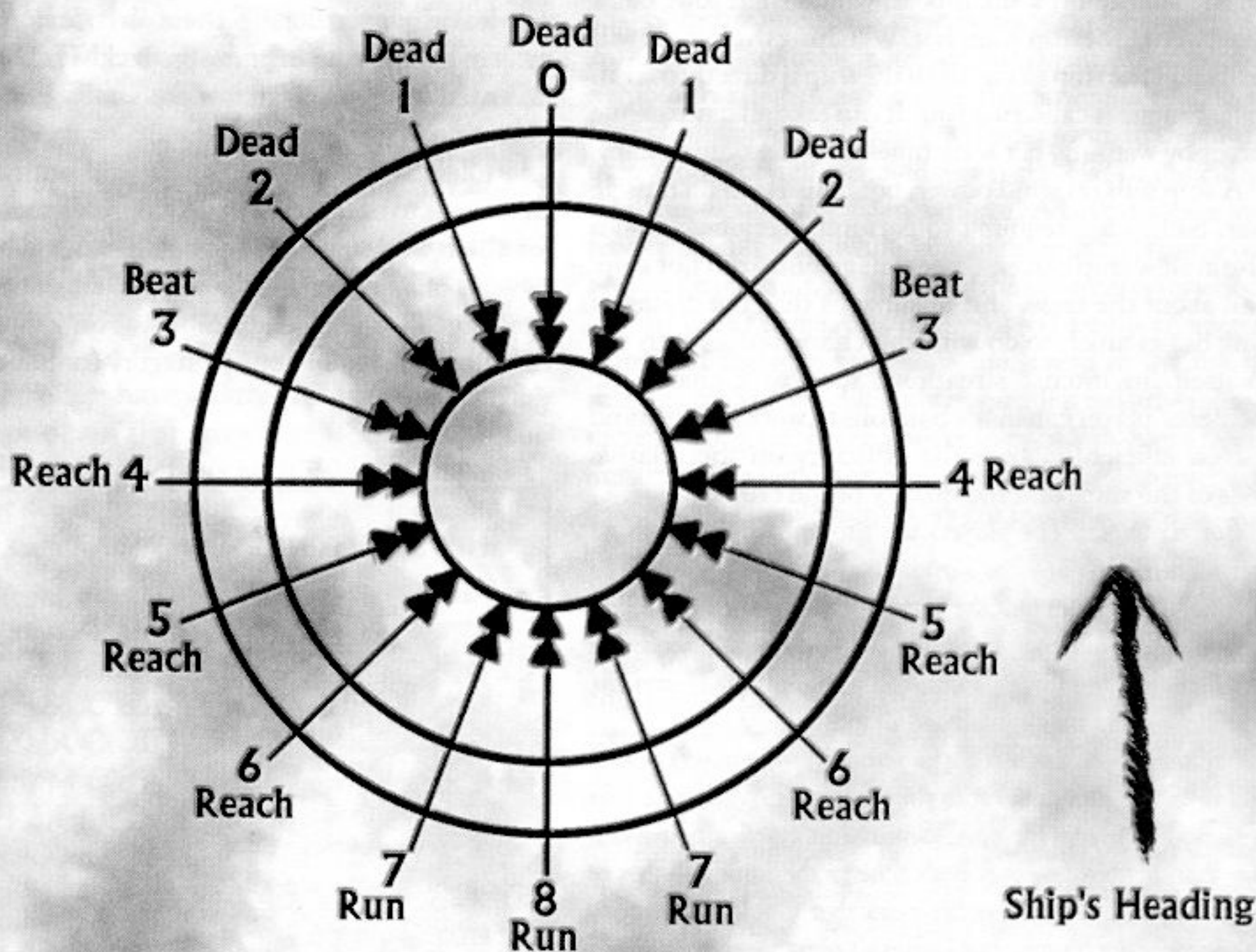
A ship that does not wish to move can fix itself to a location. Most of the time, ships are moored to a wharf when docked, but when the ship needs to hold position elsewhere, it can drop anchor. Dropping anchor is easy. Weighing (raising) anchor is much more difficult and usually takes 4-10 men for small ships and many more for larger ones.

NAVIGATION AND THE SAIL ABILITY

The rules state that navigation uses Intelligence + Sail. This is fine for most Storytellers, and it accurately models *piloting*, but some might wish to make it more difficult to *navigate*.

There are two options. The Storyteller can require that the navigation be done using Intelligence + Lore instead. This represents the intensity of the math that navigators must use. The other is to require the navigator to have a Sail specialty in navigation. Both of these options represent the difficulty of navigation and make a skilled navigator that much more important.

As a rule of thumb, the player of a navigator using apparent bearings must make an Intelligence + Lore roll at standard difficulty every time the ship starts onto or departs a nav line. A navigator needs one or more successes every day when plotting a direct course. The number of successes required depends on the conditions of the sea and how difficult it is to judge currents and the ship's progress from noon until the bearing is taken. Either way, a navigator is still taking constant measurements to stay on course. Normally, this roll should be difficulty 2, for waters the navigator is familiar with, or 3, if the navigator is unfamiliar with the sea. Raise this difficulty if the weather is bad (preventing sightings) or the navigational equipment is poor.



WIND SCALE

Force	Wind Speed (Knots)	Wind	Wave Height (Feet)	Appearance of the Sea
1	1-3	Light Air	—	Ripples.
2	3-6	Light Breeze	—	Small wavelets. Crests don't break.
3	7-10	Gentle Breeze	2	Large wavelets. Crests begin to break.
4	11-16	Moderate Breeze	4	Small waves.
5	17-21	Fresh Breeze	6	Moderate waves. Chance of spray.
6	22-27	Strong Breeze	10	Large waves with foam. Some spray.
7	28-33	Near Gale	14	Sea heaps in mounds and white foam is blown in streaks.
8	34-40	Gale	18	Moderately high waves of greater height. Foam is blown in streaks.
9	41-47	Strong Gale	23	High wave with crests that topple. Dense streaks of foam. Visibility may be affected.
10	48-55	Storm	29	Very high waves with overhanging crests. Foam is blown in dense streaks. Surface takes a white appearance. Visibility is affected.
11	56-63	Violent Storm	37	Exceptionally high waves. Sea is covered with streaks of foam. Wave crests are blown into froth. Visibility is affected.
12	64+	Hurricane	45	Air is filled with foam and spray. Sea completely white. Visibility very poor.

The anchor is also a way of moving the ship. If the ship has unfavorable winds and needs to leave port, the crew can place the anchor on a small boat, which then rows out a distance. They then drop anchor. Weighing the anchor will actually pull the ship along, until the ship is directly over it. This technique is called *warping*. It can take all day to leave a harbor by warping, but sometimes, it is the only option.

A ship sails on wind power, but it also sails on muscle power. Sailors are required to perform every task, and a well-run slow ship can easily outsail a poorly run fast ship. It's all about the crew, and this means that the drama of sailing has as much to do with the characters as with the ship itself. In intense situations, such as a chase, the kubernetes' player can make Sail rolls to work the ship and the crew efficiently. Base the difficulty on the relative speeds of the ships and the quality of the crew.

For Example: The players wish to outrun a fast pirate vessel. Their ship is slow, and their enemy is fast. The Storyteller determines that the players have a difficulty of 3 on their Sail roll, while the pirates have a 1. Aaron reminds the Storyteller that the Circle's crew is very seasoned, and the Storyteller lowers the difficulty to 2.

Matthew's character is the kubernetes, so he makes a Wits + Sail roll. The Storyteller rolls for the pirates. Matt rolls four successes. The pirates roll three. Since Matt's difficulty was one higher than the pirates, they both achieve the same number of extra successes. The Storyteller rules that Circle manages to keep ahead of the pirates, but it doesn't increase the distance.

WATCHES

No one wants to work, and sailors are no different. If you leave most sailors to their own devices, they spend most of the day wasting time on deck. That's why captains invented watches. Watches are vitally important to the operation of a ship.

Idlers are people who sit around until there is work that needs to be done, then do it. Usually, idlers need light for their work, and so, they only work during the day. Several officers are idlers. The purser, the carpenter and the surgeon are good examples. The keleustes and the captain don't really fit any category (unless the captain is

SHIP'S WATCHES

Watch	Hours
1	8:00-Noon
2	Noon-16:00
3*	16:00-18:00
4*	18:00-20:00
5	20:00-Midnight
6	Midnight-4:00
7	4:00-8:00

*Dog watches.

also the kubernetes) because they basically do their job whenever necessary. No seamen are idlers, only officers.

For everyone else, there are watches. Watches are the schedules that sailors follow to do their jobs. The proreus divides the crew into port and starboard watches. They then alternate throughout the day.

The crew alternates through the watches. One watch (port or starboard) takes the first, and then rests for the second. During the dog watches, whoever is not on duty eats. The proreus or her man times watches with a half-hour glass. Every half-hour, the glass is turned and a bell rung. This means that there are eight bells in most watches. Officer's work out the shifts among themselves, but an officer and her assistant generally alternate the watches so there is always someone on duty (unless they are idlers). There is no master timepiece. The half-hour glass determines everything.

TAPPING THE GLASS

A sailor might be tempted to tap the glass to make her watch go by quicker. She wouldn't be the first. A good proreus will catch anyone foolish enough to do this, and then, the sailor will be lucky to merely be forced to holystone the deck.

HAZARDS AT SEA

Life at sea is dangerous. A crew is always on the lookout for a potential disaster. The difference between a good crew and a bad crew is whether or not it spots the danger in time. There are many prosaic hazards. The following are the most common.

REEFS

Reefs will tear a ship apart quicker than you can say, "Man the pumps!" Any ship hitting a reef is going to be in a bad way. Any ship hitting it under full sail or, heaven forbid, full oar is in for an exciting time. Fortunately, cartographers have charted most major reefs. A good navigator doesn't go anywhere near a reef if she can help it. In addition, reefs are visible in the water (shallow water is lighter colored), and a lookout will usually spot one in time.

STORMS

The whipping wind, the surging seas — in a moment, a sailor's fate can be sealed. Storms are some of the most dangerous events in a sailor's life. They are unpredictable and deadly. A storm can turn from bad to ugly in just a few minutes.

When a storm hits, the kubernetes must decide whether or not to put to port. This decision can be a tough one. Sometimes, there is no good port, and even if there is, if the ship puts to port, then it will lose

valuable time. If the ship stays at sea and the storm turns ugly, then the kubernetes' bad judgment might have just killed the entire crew.

When sailing in a storm, the kubernetes will reef the sails. This involves shortening them so that they take less wind. If the storm looks bad, she will probably have the sails furled completely. In the worst of all storms, a hurricane, the crew will take down the spars. As the mast usually has no piece longer than 12 feet, they will dismantle it as well. Then, the men do what they must to survive. If everything is properly stowed, then the ship's center of gravity should be low enough to keep it from capsizing.

Keeping one's feet in a storm is a difficult thing. They say a sailor should always keep one hand for herself. This means that she should always have a free hand to grab a railing. For a sailor in a storm, it's best to keep both hands for herself. A player must make a Sail check for her character for every half hour on deck in a storm or every time she tries to move. This check can be avoided if the character lashes herself to something solid. The difficulty of the check is 1 for winds force 4-6, 2 for 7-8 and 3 for 9 or higher. If the roll fails, the character is blown overboard. There is little hope to retrieve a sailor in a storm. The difficulty would be 4, at best, and the Storyteller should probably require some sort of stunt for a character to even try.

Spars can be lost during storms as well. See "Sailing a Ship," page 24, for details.

FIRE

Ships are essentially great boxes of tinder, waterproofed with highly flammable materials. Fire is a major hazard aboard a ship. When a ship is set on fire, the crew must immediately begin fire suppression. Bucket brigades form. In the event of a fire, the Storyteller should assign the blaze a difficulty. A small fire would have a difficulty of 1. A large deck fire might have a difficulty of 2, while a fire in the sails and rigging could very well exceed a 3. The player of the kubernetes (or whoever has the deck) makes a Wits + Sail roll for his character to command the men and judge the spread of the fire. If it succeeds, reduce the difficulty by one. If it fails, the difficulty increases by one. Make checks every 15 in-game minutes until the fire is out or the crew abandons ship. An unchecked fire increases in difficulty every five in-game minutes.

SCURVY

Scurvy stems from a lack of nourishing fruits and vegetables in the diet. If a crew isn't eating well, it will contract scurvy. Essentially, the glue that holds a crewmember's body together loses its cohesiveness, and the person begins to fall apart.

A person will begin to contract scurvy after five months of bad diet. This does not mean *no* fruits and vegetables. It means *little*. That means that a sailor that doesn't eat well at sea but does in port may still contract scurvy, depending on how regularly the crew gets to shore.



Scurvy begins with symptoms weakness and joint pain. Hemorrhages under the skin form black and blue spots. The hair follicles gain hard red spots around them. Small lesions form all over the skin at about the five-month mark. Gums become swollen and bleed. Teeth loosen and fall out.

A person with scurvy does not heal well, and his blood doesn't clot well. The only cure for scurvy is a good diet.

Interestingly, only the bodies of humans, monkeys and guinea pigs are unable to manufacture the proper nutrients. All other creatures are immune to scurvy.

To represent scurvy, decrease a character's Stamina by 1 for every two weeks beyond five months of bad diet. When the character's Stamina reaches 0, he dies. The Exalted do not suffer from scurvy or other dietary deficiencies.

Scurvied characters heal bashing damage at a normal rate. Lethal and aggravated damage do not heal at all (or rather, they heal, but their healing is negated by the character's further degeneration).

LINES

The winds change. Sails sag, and lines go limp. The crew scrambles to work. As they fight to readjust the sails, the wind changes again, and lines pull taut. There is a splash of blood and, then, a scream, a scream so filled with horror and pain that the entire crew stands stunned for a moment. A man is down, and his right hand, still caught between a line and a belaying pin, is crushed beyond recognition. The surgeon shakes his head as the crew begins to recover from the shock and move into action. He'll have to amputate the hand.

The deck of a ship vibrates with activity. When under full sail, dozens of sailors scramble about to use the wind to its greatest effect. This activity is what sailors live for, but it also makes the deck of a ship a dangerous place for the unwary.

The amount of force it takes to move a ship is tremendous, and much of that the force is being distributed along the rigging. It isn't hard for a careless sailor to be standing in the wrong place when a line goes taut. If he is, he'll be lucky to survive.

Killing or maiming players' characters with a simple narrative is not the best way to earn friends in a gaming group. However, killing off a crewmember on a botched sailing roll is a good way to impress upon the players that the sea is a dangerous place and that their mistakes handling the ship have a human cost.

FALLING OVERBOARD

Sailors do not believe in going into the water. Most of them cannot swim. When a sailor goes overboard, there is not much that can be done and little time to do it. When a sailor hits the water, the movement of the ship quickly leaves her behind. If someone notices immediately, the crewmembers will scramble. They will toss lines. If they can get the sailor to grab a line before

she recedes out of range, then she just might make it. They normally won't heel around and go back — turning a ship around, or even furling its sails, can take four or five minutes on a good day, with an efficient crew. The ship can attempt to turn around or stop and send out a boat, but by the time it does, the sailor will usually have drowned. Only a swimmer can stay afloat that long. Hopefully, someone on the ship will know if a sailor can swim.

PIRATES

The sea is filled with predators. Some of them are predators of the deep oceans, such as sharks and squids and serpents. Some of them are inanimate, such as reefs and sandbars and rocks. Others are predators of chance, such as broken lines and storms and fire. But no one preys on humanity as well as humanity itself.

There are sailors who live off the bounty of the ocean. There are sailors who rely on it for trade and food and the lifestyle they love. And then, there are the others, the sailors who go straight for the throat and suck the lifeblood from the sea. These are the pirates, and they are the sea's greatest terror.

In the waters around the Blessed Isle, sailors might feel safe. The Merchant Fleet of House V'neef patrols the waters for their protection. There are men who have dedicated their lives to guaranteeing the safety of shipping. In fact, all around the world, there are nations with navies guarding not only their sovereign rights, but the safety of their trade. However, the ocean is a big place. A vast, limitless, dangerous place.

Most ships in the world exist for one reason: to make money. They transport goods from one location to another. They haul cargos. They move people. They bring wild and exciting goods from far away places. They are the heart of trade.

If a ship stays in the well-protected lanes, it might be safe, but the money doesn't lie in playing it safe. Real money comes from taking risks, from traveling beyond the safety of the coastal fleets and into the open seas — into the hands of the pirates.

Pirates such as the Lintha Family prey on shipping. They seek fat, unprotected ships, and they swoop in to attack. They take the cargo, often the ship itself, and then, they leave. As more and more of the Dragon-Blooded's attentions go to their internal struggles, the power of the pirates has increased. They have become bolder and more ruthless, and the merchants of the world have noticed.

Few ships are unprotected these days. Now, most every ship has a detachment of marines, ready to repel boarders. This practice has not served to stave off pirate attacks, it has just made them bloodier.

For more information of specific pirate groups, see Chapter Two.

MUTINY

Discipline is brutal on the high seas. Officers beat sailors, sometimes daily. The captain denies rations, lays out punishments and exerts her will. This is necessary to keep a ship in line. It is vital to the operation of the vessel, but sometimes, the discipline goes too far.

When a crew decides that it has had enough, its members will turn on the officers. They will attack them with belaying pins and gaff hooks and fists and even their teeth. They will depose the tyrants from their ship, and they will take over themselves. But what if *you* are the tyrant? And what if you haven't done anything wrong?

It happens to the best officers. A group of brutal buccaneers will sign onto their ship with the intention of taking it by force. They will stir the flames of mutiny and attempt to incite the entire ship to rise up against the captain. Those that don't agree meet tragic ends.

Most weapons on a ship are locked away, and so, well-prepared officers should be able to hold their own. Unfortunately, when the smoke clears and the dead litter the deck, the ship must still make it home, crewed only by the handful of the survivors.

It is best to keep an eye open for mutiny. A loyal sailor in the crew can bring the information necessary to root out the mutineers before they can sow their seeds of poison and dissent. A mutiny is most vulnerable in its infancy, and a good captain knows how to listen to the mutters of the crew and how to read their faces. A good captain knows that even the most loyal crew can be turned by a cunning enough viper in its midst, and such a captain will find that traitor early.

APPEASING THE SPIRITS

Often more dangerous than pirates, spirits are a terrible threat to ships and shipping. Some are benevolent and do their duties well. Others destroy vessels on a whim, capture crews and extort officers. They are always there, looking to flex their power.

Negotiating with the little gods is usually the purser's job. She will offer anything within reason to get the ship back underway. Spirits love black birds and black cats, they love fine pearls and polished rocks. They love woods and exotic spices. They love a great many things. In addition, most spirits will want beautiful things broken in their honor, the smoke of burning incense and prayer papers, blood poured out for them, and the thighbones of meat animals wrapped in fat and burnt.

Most spirits encountered at sea are water or air spirits. For water spirits, a black bird is often a quick sale. For air spirits, fragrant woods and spices are popular, as is burning incense. Water spirits love fine oils and wines. Many spirits have a taste for liquor or the blood of exotic animals, and *all* gods love prayers and respect.

A good purser is ready for any eventuality. She knows her waters and their spirits and knows what they love. She knows



For the



their tastes and how best to satisfy them. She knows whether they respect strength or subservience and how to wheel and deal with them.

A purser negotiates with a Manipulation + Bureaucracy roll. If her player achieves more successes than the spirit, the purser will usually make the quick sale. If the spirit wins, then the price will be correspondingly higher.

Sometimes, a purser will have nothing to offer but praise and flattery. The player of a golden-tongued purser can roll his Manipulation + Presence in an opposed roll against the spirit's Willpower. If the purser achieves more successes, then the spirit will allow the ship to pass unmolested. Obviously, this won't work on gods that have some specific grudge or mission, it's just an abstract way to deal with random shakedowns by bored spirits.

MEGALOMANIACS

In an ideal world, the captain rules her ship with an absolute hand. She is the lord of all she surveys, and her sailors follow her with absolute and unquestioning loyalty. There is no one with a steadier hand on the reins and no fairer judge at a trial. But sometimes, the captain is a lunatic. Sometimes, the crew is under the brutal hand of a tyrant. Sometimes, the crew follows the dictates of an obsessed sociopath. Sometimes, the hand at the reins is a broken one.

There are times when a crew must look at its situation and ask, "How far is too far?" There are times when it has to examine the option of mutiny, but a mutinied crew has few options. The crewmembers cannot return to their homes. They cannot risk capture. It is unwise to even stay in the same waters. A mutinied ship has no home, no harbor and no allies. It has nothing to look forward to but fear and flight.

Most mutinied crews flee straight away. They take to the seas, and they never look back. After that, they have to consider their options. Many turn to piracy. Some attempt to become privateers, legitimate or not. The ships that don't turn to piracy find some quiet place to settle down. The crew sells or burns the ship, then crewmembers pretend that they have never been sailors, that they know nothing of the sea.

A wise crew will find a subtler form of mutiny. Accidents happen on ships, and captains are not immune. Weights fall from great heights. Lines go taut unexpectedly. Poison accidentally finds its way into a captain's ear. There are many ways that a man can fall upon misfortune.

This option is most likely when the officers are involved. It is hard for a crew to kill a captain without anyone becoming the wiser. The cook and the ship's surgeon, however, can do it without anyone batting an eye. In some cases, entire crews conspire to quietly dispose of a captain. When they return to port, who is to question the story of sailor and officer alike?

DWELLERS OF THE DEEP

Its scales glisten in the sun. Its eyes are yellow, like sun-dried bone. It is a vast and dangerous predator of the deep, part natural creature, part spirit. Its heart is dark and dangerous, full of alien evils. It does not rightly belong in any world. It is a creature touched by all worlds, at home in none.

Hunger and hate drive it. It knows only destruction and death. It kills anything it finds on or under the sea. It kills whether it is hungry or not. It kills for sport. A sea monster is a terrible creature, feared by all sane sailors. Known hunting grounds of sea monsters are well marked on maps. Rudders recounting an encounter with one are scrawled in shaking, half-crazed hands. When sailors see one of these terrifying beasts, they either die or are forever changed. Sea monsters inspire more terror than the greatest storm, the wildest pirates. They are horror incarnate.

See Chapter Four, page 99, for more details on sea monsters.

RETIREMENT

When a sailor becomes too old to be of any use, she must consider retiring. Few sailors live that long. Life at sea is dangerous, especially in the world of *Exalted*. Maybe one in five sailors makes it to retire of old age. Some sailors find jobs as stewards or valets of captains. The rest retire to the shore, where they spend their days looking wistfully out to sea.

A sailor who is too old to put to sea is a sad and pathetic creature. If she is particularly well prepared, she will have planned for her retirement. She will have purchased lands or saved money. She will have the resources to survive. If not, she had better hope she has children to support her.

More commonly, sailors retire not because of old age but because of crippling injuries. Life is even bleaker for these wretches. If they are lucky, they receive a large sum of money from their government or their captain. Similarly, most pirates have a policy of giving extra money to someone who has lost a limb. It helps, but if they are unable to sail, it is never enough. Many governments give out pensions to crippled sailors, and these are better, but they often suffice for little more than gruel and a tiny bed in a boarding house. These pensioners are the lucky ones. The world overflows with broken sailors. They fill the streets, they perform odd jobs, and they often die, cold and alone in alleys, where there is no one to care or even look their way.

AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN

There are the shores. There is the deep blue sea. But not everything about being a sailor falls into these two categories. There is a gray area in between into which many sailors fall.

COASTERS

Many sailors never leave sight of land. These coasters are a breed all their own. They sail the shores of the world, hauling cargo and people from place to place, traveling where the trade takes them. Coasters are a different breed of sailor. They are often looked down upon by their brethren, but they have skills all their own.

Navigating the coasts of the world is very different from navigating the deep blue sea. What one needs to navigate the coast is a good pilot, and the skill set is very different from a navigator's. A good pilot does not waste time plotting his coordinates with backstaff and compass. He knows that this will do him no good. Coasters sail by landmarks, and they very rarely run afoul or become lost. A good pilot *observes* and by observing, can determine his location better than any navigator.

A pilot knows his waters better than he knows the way around his cabin. Everything is a clue to a pilot; the color of the water, the behavior of the birds, the shifting of the wind, the sound of the wave and the echoes of the rocks, even the smell of the wind. A pilot pays attention to all these things. When he has made his observations, which can take an hour or more, he can place the location of the ship with frightening accuracy.

Coasters suffer from the same hazard as other ships. They must still contend with pirates, storms and creatures of the deep. Crews still mutiny, they still suffer from brutal

discipline. Crewmembers on a coaster can lose a limb to a line as easily as anyone. The main danger unique to coasters are spirits. Your typical blue-water sailor needs only worry about sea and air spirits. Coasters must also worry about land spirits and all the spirits unique to the coast. Harbor spirits and spirits that guard particular stretches of land are something that most sailors never need to deal with. The creatures can be very unique and are as hard to predict, or harder, as any spirit.

BROWN-WATER SAILING

A brown-water sailor navigates the rivers of the world. Other sailors look down upon brown-water sailors, but their job is just as difficult, if not as dangerous. Moving ships up and down a narrow and shallow river is a trying and often intuitive task, as river conditions change faster and more radically than any other waters.

A brown-water sailor does not have to worry about heavy storms. A brown-water sailor does not have to worry about sea monsters. Even the spirits are familiar to the brown-water sailor, as she encounters the same ones time and time again. The worst a brown-water sailor has to worry about are brown-water pirates.

As with blue water sailing, piracy is the most deadly hazard of river sailing. Brown-water piracy is just as rampant as blue water piracy. Brown-water pirates can descend on a ship without warning. They can hide around a bend or camouflage themselves near the shore. Often, they are upon a ship before it even knows they are there. The only good thing about brown-water pirates is that they are less likely to take a boat as a prize. River boats are worth much less than ocean vessels, and it's often easier to sell multiple cargos than a cargo and a stolen vessel, and so, they deal in greater volume.



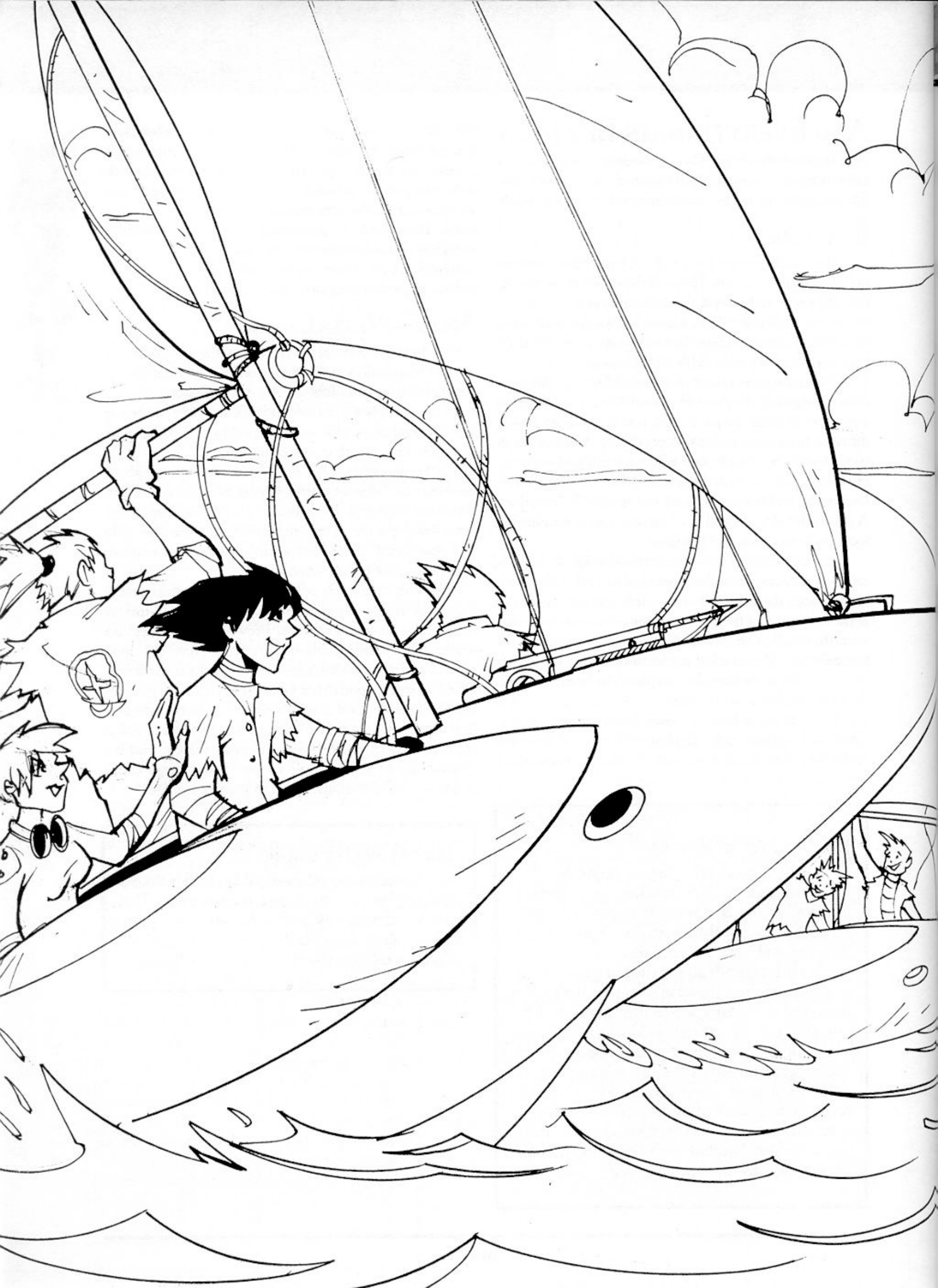
KNOWING YOUR WATERS

Being a good pilot means being familiar with your region. A Storyteller is encouraged not to allow just anyone to make a piloting roll. A pilot's relationship with her waters is an intimate and often lifelong affair.

If a pilot spends all her time in a certain set of waters, the Storyteller might allow her player to make Intelligence + Sail rolls to pilot without any sort of specialty. Ideally, however, each pilot should take a separate specialty in each region in which she intends to pilot. A nation is a good size guideline to how much territory a specialization can cover. Taking a specialization in (Piloting: Realm) would make the character familiar with the waters of the Blessed Isle, for instance.

BROWN-WATER SAILING

Brown-water pilots should probably take a specialty in their river, just as coasters do. The main difference is that a brown-water pilot relies much more heavily on his intuition. Piloting rolls on the river are Wits + Sail.



CHAPTER TWO SAILING TECHNOLOGY



Since the earliest days of its history, Creation has been dependent upon ships and the men and women who sail them to knit together its far-flung reaches. Now, as then, commerce, diplomacy and warfare all rely on the vessels that ply the Inner Sea, the Western Ocean and the rivers that lead into the interiors of the world's landmasses.

The art and craft of sailing and shipbuilding has, over the centuries, reached a high degree of sophistication, though, as with many other fields, what remains today is a mere shadow of the wonders that were commonplace in the First Age. Yet, much of what was learned then still influences current ship designs and sailing techniques, albeit on a smaller scale and without materials whose secrets of manufacture have become lost.

HOW SHIPS WORK

In order to talk about some of what comes later in this chapter, we first need to cover how ships and boats work, in the general sense. This isn't a course in shipbuilding or seamanship, but we present enough detail for players and Storytellers to deal with nautical technology in a realistic way, given the context of the Exalted world.

FLOATING (AND SINKING)

When an object is lowered into water, one of two things will happen. Either the object will begin to float at

some point, or it will continue downward until it is completely submerged. Objects that float begin to do so when they have *displaced* a volume of water equal to their weight — in other words, when the portion of the object that is under water occupies the same amount of space as a quantity of water that would weigh the same as the *entire* object. It is for this reason that the weight of a ship is referred to as its *displacement*.

The earliest watercraft floated simply by being made of materials that were, themselves, lighter than water. For example, rafts were constructed by lashing several logs together side-by-side or from bundles of reeds, often affixed to wooden or bamboo framing to provide rigidity. Another early type of watercraft was the dugout canoe, which was nothing more than a thick log hollowed out from the top, often fitted with an *outrigger* (a smaller log floating parallel to the main one and connected to it by horizontal poles) on one or both sides to provide added stability.

These simple craft suffered from serious limitations, however. Since they were dependent on their materials for flotation, the amount of additional weight, be it passengers or cargo, that they could carry was severely limited. They were also limited in size, as any attempt to build them beyond fairly modest dimensions was impractical, in terms of the materials needed, of the difficulty of handling the unwieldy resulting craft or both.



A better solution emerged in the form of the *boat*: a relatively thin watertight shell or *hull*, enclosing a volume and keeping it separated from the water. A hull can be open to the air at the top, as is common in small craft, or it may be covered with a *deck*. A boat floats not because of its materials, but because of its hollow shape — when lowered into the water, it quickly displaces enough water to begin to float, due to its large volume in comparison to its weight. Most modern vessels in the world of *Exalted* are based on this principle.

Boats offer many advantages over the more primitive types of watercraft. Because of their superior buoyancy, they can carry much larger burdens than log or reed rafts of similar size and can do it in greater safety. Boats can be built in widely varying sizes, from small one-man craft to large ships fit to sail the open ocean laden with trade goods, raw materials or troops. Also, boat designs can be readily specialized for particular purposes, cargos or sailing conditions — a grain barge built for traveling inland rivers, for example, will be very different from a sea-going warship.

For all their advantages, boats face one disadvantage not shared with their earlier cousins: Unlike craft built from naturally buoyant materials, boats can sink. For this reason, many of the advancements in their design and a lot of the devices they have been equipped with over the centuries have been aimed at reducing the chances of a ship ending up on the bottom or at dealing with the consequences if a vessel *does* begin to sink. Some of these design features and devices are covered later in this chapter.

To understand how a boat sinks, remember the discussion above regarding why things float. The heavier a floating object becomes, the greater its displacement and the lower it will sit in the water. If it continues to become heavier, a floating object will eventually vanish beneath the surface entirely and sink.

In most cases, boats sink because of water getting into the hull. Water inside a boat contributes to the boat's weight, same as anything else, and once too much of it accumulates, down she goes. (Craft made of naturally buoyant materials such as wood may take longer to sink

BASIC SHIP TERMINOLOGY

- amidships:** The center portion of a boat, midway between *bow* and *stern*.
- athwartships:** Across the boat, from side to side.
- beam:** The distance across a boat from side to side at its widest point.
- bilge or bilges:** The lowermost part of the interior of a hull, where water that leaks or spills into it will gather.
- bow:** The front of a boat's hull, often (but not always) somewhat pointed.
- deck:** A "floor" installed inside a hull. Small vessels may have none, or may have nothing more than a platform bridging over the *bilges*. Larger craft may have multiple decks, similar to multiple floors in a building.
- draft:** The distance from the *waterline* to the lowermost point of the boat beneath the water's surface.
- freeboard:** The distance from the *waterline* to the lowermost point of the boat's *gunwales* above the water's surface.
- gunwales:** The upper edge or rim of a boat's hull. Pronounced "gunnels."
- stern:** The back of a boat's hull.
- waterline:** The level water reaches on a boat's hull, with the boat floating upright in calm water. Will move up or down as the weight on board varies.

SAILORS' DIRECTIONS

Sailors use specialized terms to describe directions in relation to which way their boat or ship is pointing. The full circle surrounding a ship is divided into 16 *points* — 4 points are the equivalent of 90 degrees, 2 points make 45 degrees, and so forth. Using this system of points and the following terms, a sailor can describe any direction so as to be instantly understood by her crewmates.

- abaft the port/starboard beam:** Toward aft from directly to one side or the other. To interpret "three points abaft the starboard beam," start from directly to the right (the starboard beam) and rotate 3 points toward the stern.
- abeam:** Directly to the side of the boat. "On the port beam" is directly to the left.
- aft:** Toward the stern.
- ahead:** In front of the boat. "Dead ahead" is directly in front of it.
- astern:** Behind the boat. "Dead astern" is directly behind it.
- fore:** Toward the bow.
- off the port/starboard bow:** To one side or the other of dead ahead. "Two points off the port bow" is 2 points to the left of straight ahead.
- port:** To the left, when in the boat and facing forward.
- starboard:** To the right, when in the boat and facing forward.

once filled with water, depending on how heavily they were loaded.) There are many ways by which this might happen or conditions that can contribute to its likelihood. Some of the most common are:

Taking on water: Water entering through the hull, whether by slow leakage or by the hull being breached due to battle damage or collision with some obstacle (such as a reef, a rocky shoal or another vessel).

Overloading: While it is possible to simply overload a boat to the point where it sinks under the sheer weight of its contents, this is unlikely to happen unless those loading the boat are *really* incompetent.

A much more likely scenario is for a boat to be loaded with more weight than it should be, reducing its freeboard to unsafe levels. This might be done by the master of a merchant ship, betting the greater profits of a larger cargo against the possibility of encountering bad weather en route. Or it might be the result of unplanned circumstances, such as a small boat taking on the survivors of a shipwreck. Whatever the reason, an overloaded vessel runs a much greater risk of being swamped by a wave breaking over it or of dipping its gunwales below the surface as it moves, allowing water to rush in.

Unbalanced or poorly secured cargo: Even if its load is well within safe limits, a boat can be endangered if that load is distributed poorly. While competent seamen will not likely load a boat or ship so unevenly as to be a problem when it leaves port, it's possible for a cargo to shift dangerously en route. This shifting is often caused by conditions that are already perilous, such as when a storm or heavy seas heel (tilt) the boat sharply to one side. Inadequately secured cargo can break loose and move toward that side, the shift in weight making the boat heel over even further, maybe even sinking it immediately if the added tilt is enough to allow water to enter over the gunwales. Even if it's not enough to sink the boat, the off-balance load will make steering and otherwise handling it more difficult and increase the chance of some other disaster occurring. Even worse, loose heavy cargo may continue to move around with the motion of the boat, creating a safety hazard for anyone in its path and possibly even damaging the ship as it slams repeatedly into the inside of the hull or other parts of its structure.

Weather: Severe weather conditions are one of the leading causes of sunken or otherwise wrecked ships, both in the real world and in the world of *Exalted*. While coastal or river-going vessels can often take shelter near (or even on) shore when storms threaten, a ship on the open sea has nowhere to hide from a sudden squall or an approaching hurricane. Storms can damage or destroy a boat directly, through the action of wind and waves or even lightning strikes. They can drive a ship off course, causing it to run aground or to strike reefs or rocks. Torrential rainfall can threaten to swamp a vessel, especially a small one, by

accumulating in the hull faster than the crew is able to remove it. Tall waves can break across a ship's deck, sweeping crew and objects overboard and adding to the flooding of the hull. And wave action, extreme winds or a combination of the two can exert such force on the hull and sails that a boat heels over enough to allow water to enter (possibly complicated by shifting cargo, as already described) or even *capsizes*, rolling over fully onto its side or to an inverted position.

PROPULSION

In order to be of much use, a watercraft needs some method of propulsion. In the world of *Exalted*, this is usually by means of poles, paddles, oars or sails (or some combination thereof), though other options also exist. Surviving First Age ships can also have Essence-driven propulsion systems, but they are covered in the descriptions of such vessels later in this chapter.

Poles are exactly that — long, slender, usually wooden poles that are used to propel and steer small watercraft in shallow water by simply pushing one end against the bottom of the body of water being navigated. This is normally done by a crewman reaching the pole over the side of the vessel, gripping the pole with both hands. A single crewman can do this by himself, or two or more crewmen can work together to propel a craft by this method, each with a pole of his own.

Paddles come in two varieties, single and double bladed. A typical single-bladed paddle consists of a rounded wooden shaft (usually five feet or shorter and of a thickness that fits comfortably in the hand), with a broad, flattened "blade" on one end. The shaft and blade may be all one piece, carved out of a single block of wood, or the paddle may be assembled from separate pieces.

To use it, a paddler grips the shaft in both hands and dips the blade end into the water, then pushes (or *strokes*) the flat of the blade through the water in the direction opposite to the one he wants the craft to move in. At the end of each stroke, the user lifts the paddle from the water, swings it back in the opposite direction and then repeats the pattern. In a narrow boat, such as a canoe, a paddler swings his paddle across the hull between strokes, making them on alternating sides of the craft so that it is propelled in a straight line. On broader craft, such as rafts or small boats, one or more pairs of paddlers will sit on opposite sides of the craft to achieve the same "balancing" effect.

A double-bladed paddle is similar but often somewhat longer and with a blade on each end. (The two blades may face the same direction, or one may be twisted 90 degrees to the other along the shaft's axis.) Such paddles are normally used only on narrow craft, such as canoes and kayaks, where a paddler can alternately reach the blades into the water on opposite sides of the hull without having to change her grip on the paddle's shaft. This eliminates the need for the





paddle to be swung across the hull between strokes, allowing the paddler to produce more thrust with less fatigue.

Oars are similar in construction to single-bladed paddles, though usually somewhat to substantially longer. What makes an oar different from a paddle is that while paddles are hand held, an oar is supported somewhere along its length (normally closer to the user than to the blade) by a pivot point on the side of the craft. (The pivot arrangement is usually either a metal yoke attached to the oar, with a pin that fits into a socket along the side of the boat, called an *oarlock*, or a pair of vertical wooden pins attached to the boat, called *tholepins*, which the oar's shaft sits between.) With the oar acting as a lever and the pivot point as a fulcrum, an oarsman's effort is more efficiently converted into thrust than with a paddle.

In small boats, a single oarsman mans a pair of oars, one on each side of the hull, and, with skill, can control the speed and direction of the boat quite effectively by varying the amount of effort applied to the oars individually. This same principle applies to the largest of oared vessels, collectively known as *galleys*, which have a large number of oarsmen down each side of the ship, with one or more manning each oar. A well-trained crew can handle such a vessel with far greater precision and greater maneuverability than a sailing ship — and without dependence on the wind's direction, giving it a very substantial advantage in ship-to-ship combat.

Sails are the predominant means of propulsion for both coastal and blue-water vessels, for several reasons.

First, they provide essentially “free” thrust, when compared to the other methods already discussed. Instead of relying on muscle power, sails produce thrust from the pressure of the wind against them. A sailing ship, therefore, needs a relatively small crew compared to a galley, which, depending on size, requires dozens or even hundreds of oarsmen, who must be fed, sheltered, paid (in the case of professionals, such as on military vessels) or paid for (in the case of slaves) and so on.

Second, a sailing vessel can carry far more than an oar-driven craft of similar size. Aboard a galley, all those oarsmen take up a great deal of space, which could otherwise be devoted to passengers or cargo. Also, while a galley needs to be relatively low to the water for its oars to be effective and should be of shallow draft to be maneuverable, the hull of a sailing craft can be deeper and ride higher, increasing its capacity greatly.

Third, even the best oarsman has a limit to his endurance. With crew rotations, a sailing vessel can keep going indefinitely, so long as the wind keeps blowing. Oars are most useful over relatively short distances, especially the high-speed dashes that often carry a war galley into battle, but for long hauls, sails are far more practical. Even galleys rely on sails when traveling great distances, such as when crossing the Inner Sea.

Sails do introduce their own difficulties, however. The most obvious is that they're dependent on the wind to be of any use — no wind, no thrust. Also, the wind's direction may not be cooperative with the direction one wishes to travel, requiring a course that zigzags, or *tacks*, back and forth across the wind's path in order to make slow progress upwind, since sails cannot propel a vessel directly into the wind. Sails also subject a vessel to the danger of being capsized by violent winds, a danger that only increases in a storm, as rough seas and waterlogged, heavy sails make a ship that much easier to overturn.

To navigate successfully, a sailing craft needs two design features in addition to a mast and rigging. First, it requires some means of steering and, second, a way of resisting or reducing *leeway*, the sideways motion caused by the pressure of the wind against its sails and general structure.

Steering is typically handled in one of two ways. A *steering oar* or *steering board* may be hung off the back of the craft, on one side or the other of the stern (or, on some craft, on both sides). The oar or board is angled to one side or the other to turn the boat. This arrangement is a common one on smaller vessels, but it is also found on some larger craft, notably triremes. As they are not permanently attached to the hull, steering oars or boards can easily be lifted clear when the vessel is beached.

The other common type of steering apparatus is the *rudder*, a wooden plank or panel suspended vertically off the stern of a vessel in such a way that it can be pivoted to one side or the other. A rudder is usually connected to a horizontal lever, called a *tiller*, which runs forward from its upper end (or else from the top of the vertical shaft to which the rudder is attached, on some craft), allowing the rudder's position to be easily manipulated.

Leeway can be dealt with in several ways. On some small craft, an oversized rudder is sufficient, handling steering and resistance to sideways motion at the same time. This is sometimes supplemented with a *daggerboard*, a vertical plank that projects downward through a slot in the vessel's bottom, usually forward of amidships. A daggerboard can be pulled up to avoid damage when a vessel so equipped is being beached or to improve maneuverability when the craft is being paddled or rowed and resistance to the bow moving sideways would be a hindrance, not a help. (The rim of the slot must be built up so that it rises above the waterline, to prevent water from entering the hull through it.) On craft with daggerboards, the rudder is also often designed to be lifted or retracted.

Another way of handling leeway is with *leeboards*: large, oblong, flat wooden panels affixed to each side of the hull. Leeboards are mounted so that they can rotate around a point nearer to one end. In use, the board on the leeward side of the hull is rotated so that it projects down into the water, while the windward leeboard is turned the other

way so that it is raised clear of the water's surface. Leeboards are found on small to medium-sized craft.

On large vessels, the hull itself is often designed to reduce leeway. A hull which forms a deep "V" shape in cross-section can be effective, though it suffers in terms of internal capacity and buoyancy. Much the same effect can be had by leaving the hull's cross-section unchanged but adding a deep finlike projection which extends downward from the centerline at the lowermost part of the hull. This projection is called a *keel*, though it is not to be confused with the heavy centerline timber of the same name which forms the backbone of many hulls. (This finlike keel may be of one piece with the keel timber, or it may be a separate piece or pieces mounted to it.) Another alternative is to have the bottom of the keel timber itself project shallowly into the water over most or all of the hull's length. This is somewhat less effective than the deeper fin, but it permits the vessel to operate in shallow water or to be beached without damage.

Daggerboards and projecting fin keels can also make a vessel less likely to be capsized by high winds against the

sails, thanks to their resistance to being forced sideways through the water. Broad-beamed hulls also are resistant to capsizing, compared to narrower craft. Many larger vessels also carry *ballast*, heavy material such as rock, sand or gravel, in their bilges to help prevent capsizing as well as to add stability in general.

Sails can be made from any sufficiently strong type of cloth, though other properties can make one type of fabric preferable to another. The most common material used in sailmaking is canvas because of its high strength and relatively low cost. It does have some drawbacks, though — it's heavy and grows heavier still when wet, and it can take time to dry out. Where expense is less a consideration, sails can be made from silk — it provides strength but weighs much less per square yard, holds far less water when it becomes wet and dries quickly. There are also First Age sail materials still in use on some vessels. Nearly indestructible in comparison to canvas, silk or any other fabric now made, as gossamer as spiderwebs, holding no water (and drying essentially instantly) when wet and not subject to



SAILS AND RIGGING TERMS

boom: Horizontal *spar* at the foot of a *sail*, used in many types of rigs.

cleat: Wooden or metal fitting around which a *line* is wrapped to secure it.

halyard: *Line* used to raise and lower a *sail* or a *spar*. Typically, a halyard runs through an eye or a pulley high on the *mast*, so that hauling down on the halyard raises the sail or spar to which it is attached. Part of the *running rigging*.

leeward: In the direction the wind is blowing toward. "With the wind."

line: Rope. The ropes used in *running rigging* need to be strong but also flexible and resistant to wear, as they often need to make tight turns around pulleys or repeatedly rub against objects as sails are trimmed.

luffing: When a *sail* is pointed too close to directly upwind, it will flutter uselessly and provide no thrust. Such a fluttering sail is said to be luffing.

mast: The vertical pole that supports the *sail(s)* and rigging. Usually made of wood, commonly pine for its combination of light weight and resilient strength. Larger masts are typically sectional.

running rigging: *Lines* that are used to raise, lower and trim *sails*. On small vessels, they are often simple ropes running through a pulley or two. On larger craft, more complex block-and-tackle arrangements are needed, to deal with the weights and forces found there. See *halyard* and *sheet*.

sail: Expanse of cloth supported above a vessel by its *mast* and rigging in such a way as to provide the craft with thrust by interacting with the wind. The sides of a sail are referred to as its *head* (top, of four-sided sails, or top corner, of triangular sails), *foot* (bottom), *luff* (forward edge) and *leech* (aft edge).

sheet: *Line* used to adjust, or *trim*, the position of a *sail* in accordance with the speed and direction of the wind and the course and desired speed of the vessel. Named according to the sail it is attached to — a *mainsheet* is used to trim a mainsail, a *foresheet* controls a foresail, and so forth. Part of the *running rigging*.

shrouds: *Lines* running from the top or near the top of a *mast* down to each side of the vessel, to strengthen and steady the mast. Part of the *standing rigging*.

spar: Any of the various wooden poles, other than the *mast*, used as part of a vessel's rigging, including *yards* and *booms*, among others.

standing rigging: *Lines* that support and steady the *mast* but are not adjusted in the normal course of sailing. See *stays* and *shrouds*.

stays: *Lines* running from the top or near the top of a *mast* down to the bow and stern of the vessel, used to strengthen and steady the mast. Part of the *standing rigging*.

windward: Toward the direction the wind is blowing from. "Against the wind."

yard: Horizontal or angled *spar* from which a *sail* is hung, used in most types of rigs. May be "free," or may be attached to the *mast*, depending on the rig.

mildew, rotting or other common hazards, such sails are highly prized and incredibly expensive (when they are available for sale at all).

TYPES OF SAILS AND RIGGING

Over the centuries, many different shapes and sizes of sails have been tried, along with as many different methods of rigging, and even now, there are plenty of one-of-a-kind types in use, especially on small "home-built" coastal vessels. But there are several common types which, with variations, account for most of the world of Exalted's sailing craft. These are sails and rigs derived from First Age designs, adapted to wood and canvas in place of the impossible-to-duplicate materials of those lost days.

Imperial Rig: Though its name comes from its use on most vessels of the Realm's imperial navy, this rig is one of the most popular types found on civilian ships and boats as well, due to its excellent performance and ease of handling.

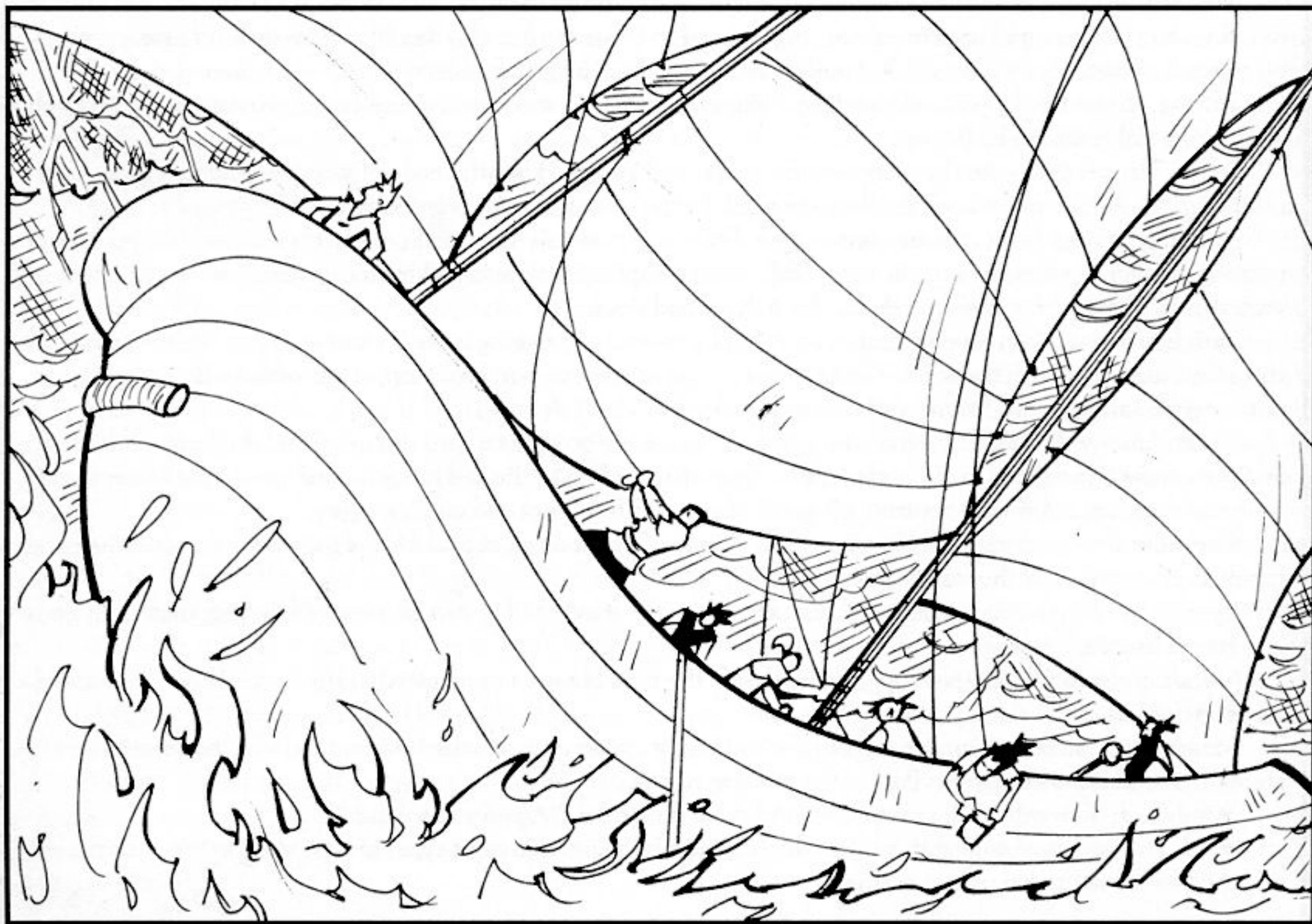
On an imperial rigged vessel, the mast is usually mounted, or *stepped*, fairly far forward, closer to the bow than to amidships. The sail is a large, irregular four-sided shape, with its luff attached to the mast either with a loose lacing of cords or with *mast hoops*. A boom runs along the sail's horizontal foot, its forward end swivel-mounted to the mast. The foot may or may not be laced to the boom, but either way, it's tensioned to it by means of a line called an *outhaul*, which runs from the sail's outer corner to the boom's end.

The defining feature of the imperial rig, though, is the *gaff*. This is a specialized spar that angles upward and back from the mast, supporting the similarly angled head of the sail, which is normally laced to it. Where the gaff meets the mast, the end of the gaff forms a U-shaped fork that rides up and down the mast as the gaff is raised and lowered. (The gaff can also swing from side to side to follow the motion of the boom and the sail.) The major advantage provided by this rig is that a larger, more effective sail can be used than otherwise would be practical or manageable for a given mast height, the gaff allowing the width of the sail from luff to leech to be greater than it could be otherwise.

Imperial rigs are very easy to handle, with running rigging consisting of three lines. In addition to a sheet used to adjust the angle of the boom in relation to the hull, there are two halyards. One, the *throat halyard*, is used to raise and lower the gaff (and the attached sail). The other is the *peak halyard*, which supports and tensions the upper portion of the gaff, maintaining it at the proper angle.

Vessels with this type of rig perform exceedingly well while running or reaching and can also beat upwind quite well. The broader, lower sail and shorter mast also have less leverage against the hull than taller rigs, and so, imperial-rigged ships are less likely to capsize when struck by violent winds.

(Note: The imperial rig is based on the real-world gaff rig.)



RIGGING AND THE FIRST AGE

During the First Age, riggings became extremely advanced as weapons and artifacts became so small that more and more of the deck became free. With the advent of the Contagion, it became impossible to build these weapons. Their knowledge became lost, and ship combat was forced back into a dark age.

But this doesn't mean that the knowledge of riggings was lost. Though ships reverted to the use of rams, marines and, sometimes, siege weapons, shipbuilders still understood the concepts of more advanced riggings—therefore, even though it is impossible to build a warship with the trappings of old (without an Empress' ransom in First Age weaponry), riggings are still fairly advanced. They are much more advanced than might be expected from triremes, biremes and the like.

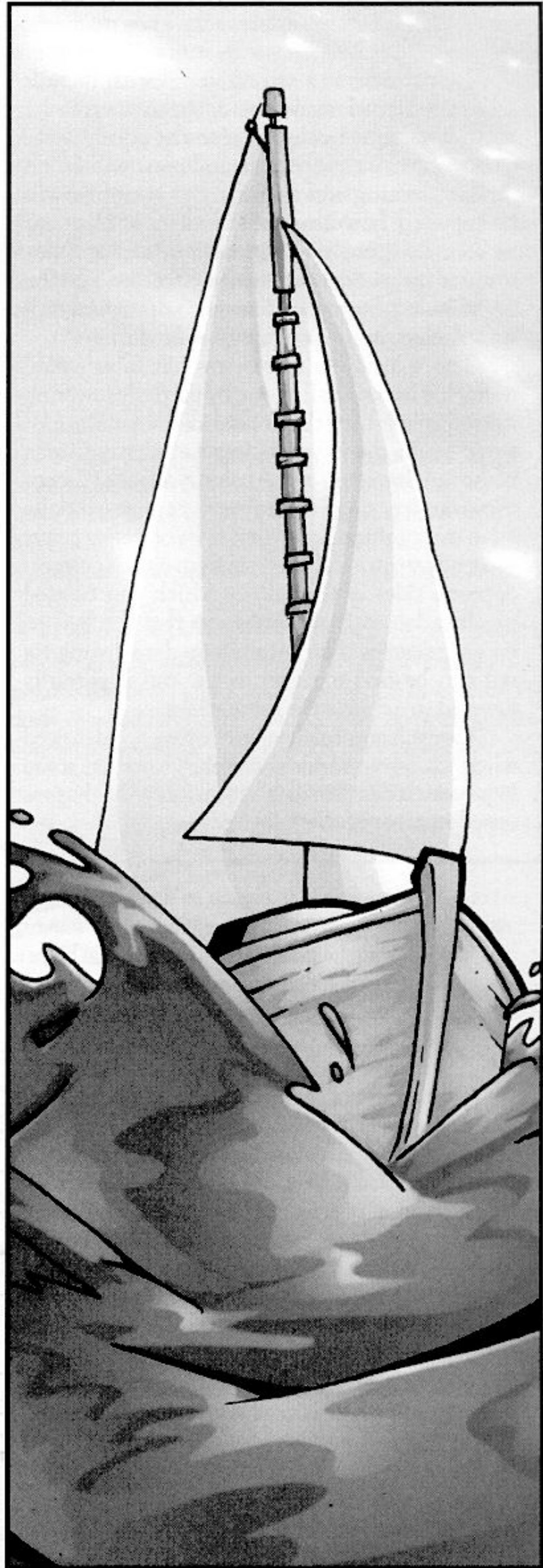
Abalone Rig: This rig can be found on vessels of all sizes all over the world, but it is especially popular on deepwater craft in the Western Ocean, due to its simplicity and its high efficiency—it makes the most of the available wind, important when traveling the long distances between the island ports and the rest of Creation or when trying to outrun a pirate attack. The sail is a large triangle, often approximately twice as tall from head to foot than it is wide at the foot, with its luff attached to the mast with laces or mast hoops. There is a boom at the sail's foot, rigged identically as in the imperial rig. The mast, taller than on an imperial-rigged vessel carrying the same square footage of sail, is usually stepped approximately halfway between the bow and amidships.

Only two lines make up Abalone running rigging: a sheet to control the boom and a halyard to raise and lower the sail. This simplicity allows a very small crew (or even, on small craft, a single sailor) to handle the rig without difficulty, and it also makes lowering or shortening the sail fast and easy, which can make the difference between life and death when storms strike far out to sea.

Abalone-rigged vessels perform about as well as those with imperial rigs when running or reaching, and can steer somewhat closer to the wind when beating. However, the taller mast and sail pose a greater danger of capsizing, and a deeper keel (or some other stability-enhancing measure) is needed to compensate for this.

(Note: The Abalone rig is based on the real-world Marconi rig.)

Foresail: A foresail can be added to either an imperial or an Abalone rig, to increase performance at the expense of a somewhat more complex rigging. (On craft using a foresail, the "regular" sail is referred to as the *mainsail*.)



SHORTENING SAILS

In high winds, a sailing vessel with its sails fully raised is in danger of being capsized or, at the very least, being heeled over to the point where cargo may shift, passengers and crew will be on difficult footing and steering and handling will be impaired. Lowering the sails completely is not an answer, though — without *any* forward motion, a ship's rudder becomes ineffective, and the vessel may be turned sideways to oncoming tall waves, placing it in even worse danger.

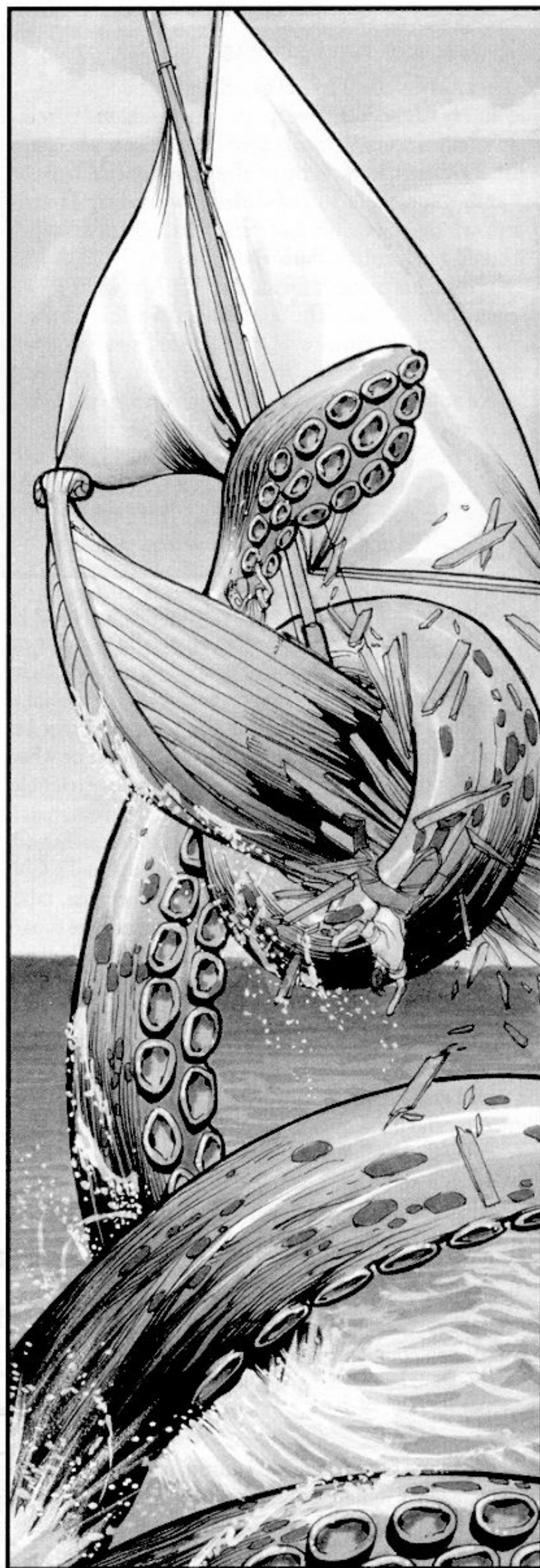
The solution is to *shorten sails* (also called *reefing*). This is usually done by partially lowering the sail and lashing the excess sailcloth at the foot to the boom, thereby reducing the height and area of the sail. Imperial- and Abalone-rig sails (except those on very small coastal or river boats) usually have two or three horizontal rows of *reefing points* — sturdy strips of fabric sewn in matched pairs on opposite sides of the sail — which can be tied together beneath the boom to reef the sail to varying degrees. The battens of a dragonwing-rig sail can be tied together as the sail is partially lowered to achieve the same effect.

Foresails are usually simply lowered and stowed when excessive winds threaten. However, some large vessels carry smaller “storm foresails” that are raised in place of the full-sized ones.

Foresails are normally triangular in shape and are supported not by the mast, but by the *forestay*, the standing rigging running from the mast down to the bow that helps to steady the mast. The luff of the foresail is either laced to the forestay or connected to it using small hoops similar to miniature mast hoops. The running rigging of a foresail consists of a halyard used to raise and lower the sail up and down the forestay and a foresheet attached to the “free” corner of the sail where the foot and the leech meet. Foresails are usually “loose-footed” — they have no spar at the foot, and instead simply billow to leeward, restrained by the foresheet.

The addition of a foresail increases performance in general and lets the vessel be steered closer to the wind. On vessels intended to use a foresail, the mast is usually stepped slightly aft of where it would ordinarily be.

Dragonwing Rig: The dragonwing rig is the one currently popular type that is not copied from First Age designs, though some believe it is much older than that. It combines the low profile (and resulting stability) of the imperial rig with the ability, due to its unique construction, to sail closer to the wind than either imperial or Abalone sails can without the use of a foresail. Its performance is good to excellent, depending on materials, and it



is very simple to handle. For all of these reasons, it is especially popular on small, shallow-water craft where a deep keel is impossible and a single sailor must do everything by herself.

With this rig, the mast is normally stepped toward the bow, but not quite as far forward as with an imperial rig. Also, the mast is often a bit thicker and sturdier than those used with other rigs, so that it can stand on its own without a need for stays, which would interfere with this type of sail.

Dragonwing sails are suspended from a yard that slopes upward from front to back, and instead of a boom at the foot, several light, stiff wooden *battens* run from luff to leech at regular intervals to control the shape of the sail. Each batten, other than the bottommost pair, is kept close to the mast by a loose loop of line called a *parrel*, and the battens are linked together by lines called *checks* that run from the forward end of each to the center of the batten below, to reduce forward strain on the sailcloth between battens. (See illustration.) It is this structure that results in the rig's unique properties, though it also makes the sail's construction more complex than other types. The running rigging consists of: a halyard, which raises and lowers the sail; a pair of *topping lifts* (also called *lazy jacks*), which support the lowermost pair of battens and are used in reefing the sail, either by raising the foot or by holding it at the same height as the head is lowered; an *inhaul*, which adjusts how far the luff protrudes forward

of the mast; and a somewhat complex sheet arrangement, which branches into separate *sheetlets* attached to each batten at the leech end. This arrangement allows both the angle of the sail and its shape (as the wind tries to belly it out) to be easily controlled.

The sail itself is now usually of canvas, but the dragonwing's structure permits other materials to be used that would be difficult or impossible with other sail designs. In particular, matting woven of light, flexible reeds has been used to construct these sails when canvas was unavailable or the boat owner was unable to afford it.

(Note: The dragonwing rig is based on the real-world junk rig.)

BUILDING SHIPS

There are many different approaches to the building of ships and boats, and much depends on the type of vessel being built, its size and who is doing the building. In this section, we'll look at some common methods used to construct the various craft found in the world of Exalted.

TYPES OF HULL CONSTRUCTION

With very few exceptions, such as bark canoes or skin kayaks, the boats and ships of the world of Exalted are made of wood. Hulls are typically built up from multiple horizontal courses of planks, much in the way that a wall





is built up using multiple rows of bricks. Each course of planks is called a *strake* and can consist of a single plank down each side of the hull, common on smaller craft, or multiple planks joined end to end, as is necessary when larger vessels are constructed.

There are two ways in which each strake can be joined to the previous one. In *lapstrake* hulls, the lower inside surface of each strake overlaps the upper outside surface of the strake below it and is joined to it with long metal nails (secured by bending over their protruding ends) or stout wooden pegs (secured with wedges hammered into their slotted ends) passing through both planks. Both types of fasteners are called *trenails*. Lapstrake construction, also called *clinker-built* construction, is the simpler of the two methods, but such hulls are heavier for a given size (due to the overlapping planks) and less streamlined, both of which result in a slower vessel. Lapstrake hulls are also more prone to leakage caused by impacts against the outside of the hull, as such impacts will tend to separate the plank struck from the one above it.

In *flush-laid* or *carvel-built* construction, the strakes are joined so that the lower surface of each is mated to the upper surface of the strake below it, resulting in a smoother hull contour. Matching holes are often bored into the mating surfaces of the planks to accept wooden pegs called *tenons*, which reinforce the joint by keeping the planks in alignment, and either trenails or metal spikes are used to attach the planks to the crossribs of the ship's *frame*, or underlying skeletal structure. Flush-laid construction requires a higher level of craftsmanship, as the planks must be carefully shaped — their inner surfaces are planed to match the vertical curvature of the frame, and their mating surfaces must be carefully beveled to fit closely with those above and below — but it results in hulls that are lighter, faster and stronger.

Smaller lapstrake craft are often *shell-built* — the *keel* (the heavy central timber at the center of the bottom of the hull, the “backbone” of the craft) is laid first, and then, the hull is built up from it, with the internal framing and bracing timbers added later. Larger ships, and almost all carvel-built craft, are *frame-built* — the ship's skeleton is built first after the keel is laid, and then, the hull is built on the completed frame. Some craft are built using a combination of these methods: The first several strakes of the hull are built before the framing is added, or only some of the crossframes are put in place, then the hull planking, then the remaining frames added last.

Simple, flat-bottomed craft, usually small harbor, coastal or river vessels, forgo such complexity, and their hulls are commonly nothing more than flat planks nailed to a rudimentary reinforcing frame in a rectangular or trapezoidal shape, with outward-angled sides.

BUILDING A SHIP

The building process begins, of course, with knowing what kind of craft is to be built. How big is it going to be? What is it going to be for? Where will it be used? These questions all need to be answered before construction can begin.

Once the answers to those questions are known, the planning of the vessel can proceed. Some small craft need little actual preplanning, as the boatbuilders and the generation before them that they were apprenticed to and the generation before *them* and so on have been building boats to the same general specifications for hundreds of years, and the only real variables are the size of the craft and how it is to be fitted out once the hull is constructed. Such “traditional” designs, often fishing boats, water taxis and other harbor, river or coastal craft, seldom have any formal plans, though building a miniature version in full detail is often part of an apprentice's training.

Military and commercial shipyards, on the other hand, often build a wide variety of craft to custom order or must construct a large number of mostly identical ships over a span of years or decades. They need a more reliable method of planning the shape and exact dimensions of a vessel in advance and, then, turning those plans into a finished ship.

The most common means of doing this is the *half model*. A master shipwright will carve the shape of one half of the vessel's hull, as split from front to back at the centerline, out of a block of wood, taking into account the answers to the questions above and applying his own expertise in good ship design. This is a *scale model* of the full-sized hull, its size being in some fixed proportion to that of the finished ship. Once a satisfactory half model has been completed (and, in the case of ships built to order, also approved by the client), careful, precise measurements are made of the model and mathematically scaled up to allow the cross-frames of the new vessel to be laid out.

Some designs, especially naval ship plans that are used over and over again, are drawn out on paper in painstaking detail, with the full-size measurements already worked out. These plans are often bound into large books, with drawings covering every aspect of the ship's construction — each cross-frame's assembly, for example, will be drawn separately, showing its exact measurements.

Whatever form they take, once the plans are in place, construction can begin. This starts with the master shipwright selecting suitable timber and directing his workers in shaping the keel from it, often doing some of the more exacting parts of the job himself. Traditionally, though, the *true* start of a new vessel's construction occurs with the *laying of the keel* — The keel is placed on large wooden blocks or other suitable supports capable of taking the weight of the completed hull, carefully aligned and secured in place by temporary bracing. From there, building proceeds according to one of the hull-assembly methods already discussed.

A TYPICAL SHIPYARD

While they may vary greatly in size and general layout, there are a number of features that almost all shipyards will have in common.

First are the construction areas for the vessels themselves. Small to medium-sized craft may be built in the shelter of "boat sheds" that partly or fully enclose them, while larger ships are usually built out in the open. These work areas are almost always arranged so that the stern of a vessel under construction is close to and faces the water, enabling a completed hull to be launched easily. As a vessel is built, wooden support scaffolding is erected around it, both to steady it and to provide convenient platforms for the workers to stand on. Stout beams supporting block-and-tackle hoists are also often attached to the scaffolding, to enable the handling of large, heavy timbers and other components. When the hull is completed, the scaffolding is often extended to the water's edge, along with wooden rails or skids, to form a *slipway* along which the new vessel is launched. (In yards that build multiple ships to the same plan, the scaffolding and slipway may be erected more permanently, rather than being torn down and rebuilt for each new hull.)

Two necessities in a shipyard are both concerned with the shaping of lumber into pieces needed for construction. One is an area for accurately cutting planks and timbers from raw lumber or larger timbers. A large, two-man saw is wielded vertically, by a skilled shipwright from above (who is mostly responsible for guiding the saw along the desired cut) and, usually, by an apprentice below (who is responsible for supplying most of the muscle power and becoming coated in sawdust). The cutting area may either be a permanent heavy scaffold, which logs and timbers are hoisted onto so that the lucky apprentice can get under them, or a *sawpit*,

which permits the piece to be cut to remain at ground level but makes for somewhat worse working conditions from below.

The other is a *steam chest*, typically a wooden box about two feet high, two feet wide and 30 to 40 feet long, mounted on supports and with a wood- or coal-fired brick boiler connected to it. The ends of the box can be opened to allow planks or timbers to be placed in it, and once the box is closed, the boiler is fired up and the steam allowed to saturate the contents. This moisture will soften the planks or timbers, allowing them to be bent, curved or twisted as needed to conform to the hull's shape. These pieces must be secured in place quickly once they are removed from the chest, as they will quickly lose their relative malleability as they cool and dry. The workers must also work carefully and wear protective gear so that they don't injure themselves with the literally boiling hot wood.

A large shipyard may have multiple sawing rigs and steam chests, to support having several vessels under construction at the same time. In many yards, "standard" sizes of planks and timbers are cut and stockpiled for later use, needing only to be cut to the needed length when used.

A small shipyard may be headed by a single master shipwright, who oversees all the operations of the yard as well as directly supervising the construction process. Larger yards will employ several, and each vessel being built will be overseen by one of them. The bulk of the yard's personnel are journeyman shipwrights of varying degrees of experience, shipwright's apprentices and, in large yards, unskilled laborers. The majority of the work is done with hand tools, some of which would be familiar to any carpenter or woodworker, but many of which are highly specialized for the shipbuilding trade.

Keels are almost exclusively made of oak or other similarly hard and durable woods, as a failure of the keel will usually result in the loss of the vessel. Hull planking and framing timbers are also often made of such woods, though pine is also frequently used because it is much lighter while nearly as strong (though not as hard or as durable). Decks and bulkheads are also often of pine or similar woods, as they are subjected to lower stresses and the savings in weight take precedence.

As the hull is built, it must also be *caulked*, to waterproof the seams between planks. A slight bevel is often planed into the outer part of the mating surfaces of the planks, creating a small groove into which caulking material can be

driven. The most common material used is *oakum*, cords of hemp fibers coated and saturated with pine tar, though, depending on what is locally available, other similar vegetable fibers and resins may be used. The caulking material is driven into place with a specially shaped metal tool called a *caulking iron*, which is struck with a mallet to tightly pack the caulking into place. Second and even third layers of caulking are often added after the first, using irons with progressively broader faces to prevent each from entering the crevice as deeply as the one preceding it. This work is deeply tedious and is usually performed either by apprentices or by relatively unskilled laborers. Once the caulking is finished, the hull is then painted, usually with two or more

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coats, to further waterproof the planking and to help to seal the caulking in place. The paint also helps to repel wood-boring seaworms and other destructive aquatic life.

Once the hull and its internal framing are completed, the supporting beams and planking of the deck (or decks) are added. A well-designed deck is not only strong in terms of supporting the weight that will be placed on it (be it crew, passengers or cargo), but also contributes to the strength of the hull, by providing additional cross-bracing and rigidity. Decks also help to keep water out of the hull — the main (uppermost) deck is caulked just like the hull planking, and lower decks often are, too. *Bulkheads* (the “walls” dividing the belowdecks space into cabins, holds and other spaces) are also installed along with the decks, as well as any other interior structures (such as the system of oarsmen’s benches found on galleys).

The mast and rigging, as well as any other *superstructure* (parts of the ship which protrude above the uppermost deck), are often added after the hull is launched, both to minimize the weight of the ship as it is moved down the greased rails of the slipway and to prevent them from being damaged during launch. If ballast is to be used, it is also often loaded after launching, to help keep weight down.

Once the new hull has been successfully launched, it is “fitted out,” usually while tied up at a pier. Ballast, most commonly in the form of small stones, broken up rock or gravel, is loaded into the spaces provided for it at the bottom of the hull. The mast is raised, either by means of a dockside hoist or a temporary framework erected on deck and *stepped* (spiked or bolted into place). The foot of the mast normally stands upon the keel or else the *keelson* (a reinforcing timber mounted directly to the top of the keel) and passes through openings provided for it in the deck or decks. It is during fitting out that any remaining superstructure is added, as well as equipment that is not part of the ship’s structure, such as anchors, oars, cooking facilities, furnishings for passengers and crew and so on.

A typical yard can build a large vessel in eight to ten months, though this can vary quite a bit depending on the size and skills of the work crew, the weather and other working conditions. Smaller craft take proportionately less time to complete. Yards that effectively mass produce vessels, such as the facilities of the Realm’s navy, can be considerably faster about it when need be.

KEEPING SHIPS AFLOAT

The hard work of a ship doesn’t end when she’s launched, it only changes hands. Maintaining a ship and keeping it from quickly deteriorating under the punishment of weather and waves is a full-time job for its crew, as well as requiring the occasional return to a shipyard’s care. And beyond the demands of regular upkeep, sailors need to be ready to deal with the disasters that can strike far at sea, where the only help they can depend on to reach port alive must come from their own skills, preparedness and resourcefulness.

RELIGION, SUPERSTITION AND SHIPBUILDING

Religion and ritual are a part of shipbuilding, just as they are with many other activities in the world of *Exalted*. Prayers and offerings are as intrinsic to the building of a new craft as sawing timbers or caulking seams, and talismans and charms are seen as being as necessary as mallets and augers to a ship’s successful completion.

The traditions and practices of the shipwright’s art are older, however, than many of the current belief systems found across all of Creation. Even in the Realm and other places where the Order of the Immaculate Dragons holds sway, the spiritual aspects of shipbuilding are an eclectic blend of the prevailing local religion and propitiations of more ancient and primal spirits and beings.

When a master shipwright lays the keel of a new trireme for the imperial navy, she will doubtless call upon a member of the Immaculate Order to invoke Sextes Jylis, the Dragon of Wood — but she will also be certain to give thanks to and seek the blessing of the spirit of the mighty oak tree from which the keel was hewn. When a sailmaker sits down to continue his work from the previous day, he will likely pause to silently ask the spirits of the winds to be kind to his work, both now and when sailors’ lives are depending on it. He may even include a few stitches, or a bit of colored thread, that have nothing to do with the physical needs of the sail, but everything to do with ensuring the spirits’ favor. Daana’d, the Immaculate of Water, and Mela, Dragon of Air, will certainly be asked to watch over a newly launched merchant ship as it leaves the slipway and enters the waters of Arjuf Harbor for the first time. Yet, the vessel also carries, secreted in the hidden spaces throughout its hull, talismans and good luck charms meant to ward off the dangers and ancient monsters of the deep.

Though the other magical or spiritual precautions taken may vary greatly from place to place, there is one practice that can be found almost anywhere — and without which many shipwrights and sailors will refuse to put a ship to sea. In any given harbor, more vessels than not will sport a carved figure of a woman on their bow, and the hair of that *bow spirit* will be painted red. This is to keep away the jealous, cruel and capricious Storm Mothers, powerful water spirits who are responsible for the sinking of many a ship, but who have no power over red-haired women.

MAINTAINING A SHIP

With diligent care, unless it meets with some catastrophe, a ship can last 30 years or more, depending on the quality of its original construction and materials. What follows is a general summary of how a ship is properly cared for. Keep in mind that these are generalizations and averages. Individual vessels may need some tasks to be done more or less often, depending on where they travel, how they were built, the weather they've encountered recently and other circumstances.

DAILY MAINTENANCE

Some of the work of keeping a ship in good repair needs to be done more or less continuously because neglecting it can lead quickly and directly to serious consequences. The following are tasks that need to be done every day, or at least should be, weather permitting. (Some of them are dangerous, pointless, or just plain impossible when in the midst of a storm or when heavy seas are sending waves crashing across the decks, while foul weather can make some of them even *more* vital.)

Caulking: Keeping the hull from leaking — or, more accurately, keeping it from leaking *more* — is an exercise in constant vigilance. All wooden hulls will leak, though a newly constructed, well-built vessel may not leak too badly. Through caulking leaks as they occur, as well as visually inspecting and recaulking seams as needed, leakage can be kept to a minimum, and the useful life of the hull ultimately extended.

Preparing oakum: All that caulking means there's a constant need for fresh oakum, which is made by taking lengths of hemp fiber, cut and unraveled from worn-out ropes, and working pine tar or other similar plant resins into it by hand. This work is, as you might expect, mind-numbingly tedious and is usually assigned to the most junior crewmembers or even as a form of punishment for sailors guilty of some minor offense.

Removing bilgewater: Water that *does* get into the hull will collect in the bilges and should be removed regularly, before excessive amounts accumulate. (Depending on the weather and the condition of the hull, this might need to be done more than once a day.) Larger craft are usually equipped with one or more *bilge pumps* to draw bilgewater up through pipes to the main deck, where it can be discarded overboard or used as needed. (Drinking it or cooking with it is not recommended, but it can be useful for tasks such as fire-fighting or washing down the decks.) These pumps are hand-operated devices not unlike those sometimes used on land to draw water from wells and water tanks. On smaller craft not equipped with pumps, water is *bailed* overboard using buckets or other containers.

Inspecting sails: In normal day-to-day use, sails wear, and the process is often sped up by exposure to storms or excessively high winds. They can fray at the edges or

develop small tears, or stitching can start to pull out. If left alone, small problems like these will develop into big ones quickly, ultimately ruining the sail.

Daily inspection can catch signs of wear before they become serious, so that a sail in need of repair can be taken down and replaced with a spare. The worn sail can then be seen to by the ship's sailmaker (the crewman in charge of fixing worn and damaged sails), so that it can be ready again for use by the time another replacement is needed. With this kind of careful maintenance, a sail can last many times longer than it would if neglected.

Inspecting and maintaining rigging: The lines and pulley blocks that make up a ship's rigging are subject to wear and weathering. They should be inspected daily along with the sail or sails, so that problems can be taken care of before they become serious.

Stays will stretch over time and need tightening in order to provide proper support to the mast. Their lower portions are often coated with tar to keep water from spray and high waves out of them, preventing rotting, and that tar will need reapplication as it dries out and cracks. Sheets and halyards often start to become abraded in places, and reversing them end-for-end can make them last longer by moving the sections that are starting to wear away from the causes of that wear. Pulley blocks, usually wooden with a metal axle, need oiling to work smoothly and to keep the wood from drying out and cracking. Cut ends of lines, wrapped with cord and dipped in tar, will eventually fray or start to unravel anyway and need to be trimmed back and redone. Some lines and blocks will simply need to be replaced from the ship's supply of spares. All of these are examples of the kinds of problems that are found and dealt with as part of a daily rigging inspection. Failure to perform this maintenance can result in a snapped mainsheet or a jammed halyard block when the ship can least afford it and could doom a vessel and its crew when some part of the rigging fails in battle or when trying to ride out a storm.

WEEKLY MAINTENANCE

Other tasks needed for the proper care of a ship are of a less pressing nature but still need to be done if the vessel is to remain in good order. The following can usually be done more or less weekly, though circumstances might demand that they be done more often or less.

Scouring the deck: Painting the deck is impractical, both because the constant foot traffic would quickly wear the paint away and because repainting it would result in wet, slippery paint underfoot. So, instead, an alternative method of preserving and caring for the deck planking is needed.

As it turns out, scouring the deck with water and a block of soft holystone does the job nicely. With water to lubricate it, the stone is abrasive enough that it removes dirt and spillage from the deck's surface, but not so abrasive that it grinds away the wood itself. It is rough enough, however, to open the pores in the wood and spread the resin released





over the surface, helping to preserve it. A pine or teak deck that is stone-scoured regularly will take on a smooth, silvery-gray appearance and will resist mold, mildew and rot.

In hot, dry weather, when the sun is baking the planking, the deck should be scoured more often to maintain it in good condition. Some of the water also works into the planks, keeping the wood from drying out and shrinking, which would both weaken the deck and tend to open its caulked seams, causing it to leak.

Painting: All of the wooden parts of a ship *other* than the deck are protected from the elements by a coat of paint. The constant exposure to sun, wind and weather, not to mention seawater, takes a real toll on this protective coating. Scraping away loose, cracked or flaking paint *somewhere* on the vessel and replacing it with a fresh coat will need to be done at least weekly on all but the newest vessels.

One part of a ship that gets *daily* attention to its paint is the bow spirit. Every sailor knows what can happen if that red paint on her hair should happen to peel or chip without receiving prompt attention.

"SEASONAL" MAINTENANCE

Some maintenance needs to be done only once every several months, with the interval depending a lot on what waters the ship normally travels. The primary example of this is keeping the hull clear of accumulated sea life.

Over time, the submerged portion of a ship's hull will become home to assorted kinds of marine plants and animals. Removing them periodically is important for several reasons. At the very least, they will increase drag on the ship as it passes through the water, reducing its speed. If allowed to accumulate for too long, they can add significantly to a vessel's weight, taking up capacity that could better be used for passengers or cargo. Even worse, some kinds of marine life, left unchecked, can do real damage to the hull.

The most common nuisance is the slimy coating of green or yellow-green algae that forms on the hulls of many vessels. Found in all but the coldest Northern waters, salt or fresh, this slime adds to drag but generally does no harm to the hull. Compared to other types of unwanted passengers, it is easy to clean off, but it is also quickest to return afterward.

Some kinds of seaweed can also cling to a ship's bottom, often finding a foothold in the accumulated algae adhering to the hull. This is also more of a nuisance than a danger, further increasing drag and slowing down the ship, but some species of weed, if they take root in the hull's seams or crevices, can be moderately destructive over time if not removed.

On the animal side of things, the most serious nuisances are shellfish and barnacles. Barnacle larvae and the young of many kinds of small shellfish are free-swimming creatures, but when they are ready to enter the adult stage, they will attach themselves to almost any convenient solid surface. This can be anywhere—a rock, a pier, the skin of a whale or other large creature or a ship's hull. A shellfish, depending on the species, then either begins to grow a shell or to enlarge the one it

already has. A barnacle builds a protective home by secreting a hard ring of calcium deposits onto the surface around itself, which it continues to lengthen into a hollow cylinder as its body grows. These hard protrusions attached to the hull can add a lot of drag to a ship's streamlined shape.

Shellfish of one kind or another are found in most bodies of water, salt or fresh, though most species are specific to one or the other—salt water will kill most freshwater types, and vice versa. Barnacles, on the other hand, are found only in salt water and will die quickly if the ship they're attached to sails into a freshwater river.

Killing the creatures, unfortunately, does not always solve the problem, though it at least stops them from multiplying. The real difficulty comes from the shells and barnacle-rings left behind. While some kinds of shellfish cling to a surface with their soft bodies and will drop away after they die, others secrete a cement that they use to bond their shells to the surface they live on, leaving them permanently attached. This bond can be incredibly strong—the glue that barnacles use to cement themselves and their homes to a surface took even First Age savants a long time to duplicate. Removing either type of obstruction from a hull is difficult work, and usually results in a least some damage to the underlying surface.

Another type of animal hull parasite, however, is far more of a threat to a ship's well-being. There are several species of aquatic, wood-boring worms, known collectively as *shipworms*, that will burrow into hull planking and live there. A heavy infestation of these creatures can lead to serious problems, ranging from badly weakened planks to accelerated wood rot to leakage where a seam has been damaged by the worms' burrowing. The paint applied to ships' hulls is generally effective at discouraging shipworms from tunneling in, but it needs to be reapplied from time to time as it peels, flakes and wears away. Surface damage to a hull also provides worms with an opportunity to enter, by breaking through the coating of paint and exposing bare wood to the water. Repainting a hull requires a ship to spend time either beached or in drydock, which is not always feasible due to expense or opportunity, and so, all but the most fastidiously maintained vessels often harbor at least a few of these creatures.

A stopgap measure that *can* be taken while a ship is afloat is to apply a mixture of pine tar and wood ash to areas of the hull where the paint is damaged or has worn thin. It will deter worms from burrowing and kill any already present by cutting them off from the water, suffocating them. This solution is only a temporary one, however, as the mixture will not last nearly as long as paint will and will need to be reapplied as often as once every two to three months. Shipworms *are* saltwater creatures, and being in fresh water for a fairly short time will kill them, but it will not, of course, undo the damage they have already done, nor will it prevent a hull from being reinfested once it enters salt water again.

BEACHING

When small craft require an overhaul or extensive repairs, they can simply be hauled up onto dry land. For larger vessels, however, this is either impractical or impossible. With medium-sized ships, *beaching* them can often provide adequate access to the hull for servicing purposes. The largest craft must be *drydocked* (see below) in order for any kind of serious repair or maintenance to be performed on their hulls.

The majority of shipyards include an area where the shore slopes gently down into the water, and the ground (both above and below the water) is either naturally sandy or has been surfaced with smooth, dressed stone. At high tide, craft can be floated into this area and then allowed to settle onto the surface as the tide goes out. Depending on the size of the vessel and what sort of work needs to be done on it, it can be beached with its bow, its stern or either side toward land. Often, wooden skids or supports are put in place to support the hull as it settles. Such supports can help to prevent damage to keelfins and rudders and can also prop the vessel at the angle needed to access the part of the hull needing attention.

Small craft, and even shallow-drafted larger vessels such as triremes, are routinely beached even when not in need of servicing. The usable life of small boats can be greatly extended by removing them from the water when they are not in use. Triremes are drawn up on shore stern first (their rams make beaching them from the bow problematic) overnight whenever possible, both to allow their crews to camp on shore and out of the cramped confines of their ship and to permit the hull's pine planking to dry out somewhat. The weight of the water that can soak into the hull of a trireme is not inconsequential. In our real world, at least one battle between fleets of triremes was largely decided by one fleet having had the opportunity to dry out its ships, gaining a speed and maneuverability advantage over its enemy's more numerous but badly waterlogged hulls.

Periodic cleanings and inspection of the condition of the hull are the best means of dealing with all of these problems. Hull cleaning can be done in a number of different ways, with varying degrees of effectiveness. The crew of a ship needing only to remove algae and the odd weed can give their vessel's hull an interim cleaning even while under way, by lowering sailors over the side wielding stiff-bristled brushes on long handles. (If the vessel is too large for the brushes to reach all the way under, a brush head may be attached to a pair of ropes running off one side of the ship, down under the keel, and back up to the other side, allowing

DRYDOCKING

A drydock is a facility used for conducting major maintenance or repairs on vessels too large or too deep-keeled to be beached. Drydocks are usually found as part of a major port or a large shipyard.

As the word implies, a ship in drydock is fully out of the water, so that the entirety of its hull is accessible. A typical drydock consists of a long, narrow rectangular basin, open to the harbor at one end and large enough to accommodate the ships it's meant to service. The open end is provided with a means of closing the basin off from the harbor beyond, usually in the form of a massive, watertight swinging gate.

First Age drydocks could be built anywhere, using Essence-driven pumps to fill or empty their basins at will. Now, drydocks are possible only where the tides are sufficient to rely on them to fill and empty the docks' basins.

Before a ship is placed in drydock, the dock is prepared to receive it, with supports and scaffolding, similar to those used when the ship was constructed, put in place to support the hull. The ship is then floated in at high tide and guided into place in the supports. As the tide goes out, the exact positioning of the ship and the supporting framework is adjusted, until, at low tide, the hull stands fully out of the water, cradled in the supports. The drydock's entry gate is then closed, and caulking material is used to more completely seal it against the dock's entrance. The ship can then remain in the dock for as long as is necessary. Pumps similar to a ship's bilge pump are used to remove water that leaks in with each rising cycle of the tides.

When the ship is ready to leave drydock, the procedure is reversed. At low tide, the dock's entry gate is unsealed and opened. As the tide rises, the dock fills with water, and the ship is floated out at high tide.

the brush to be manipulated beneath the belly of the hull.) While not as good as a more thorough scrubbing, this "wet" cleaning can be good enough to keep algae and weeds from building up and even to dislodge young shellfish or barnacles before they gain much of a foothold.

A more effective method is to scrub the hull while it is partially or fully out of the water, allowing the crewmembers to reach it more easily and to better see what they're doing. Freshwater vessels can often be beached easily, as can many saltwater craft. In quite a few saltwater ports, low tide leaves ships resting on the harbor bottom, their hulls mostly or fully

exposed by the receding water. A thorough cleaning and scraping can also be done in drydock, though such facilities are usually used for more extensive maintenance.

For freshwater craft, scrubbing the hull once every four to six months is sufficient in most cases, though more frequent cleaning or interim "wet" cleanings may be needed if the vessel operates in warm waters, where marine life grows more quickly. To minimize the buildup of barnacles and keep an eye out for shipworm damage, seagoing ships' hulls should be cleaned and inspected at least once every four months, more often if they travel to warmer climes.

OVERHAULING

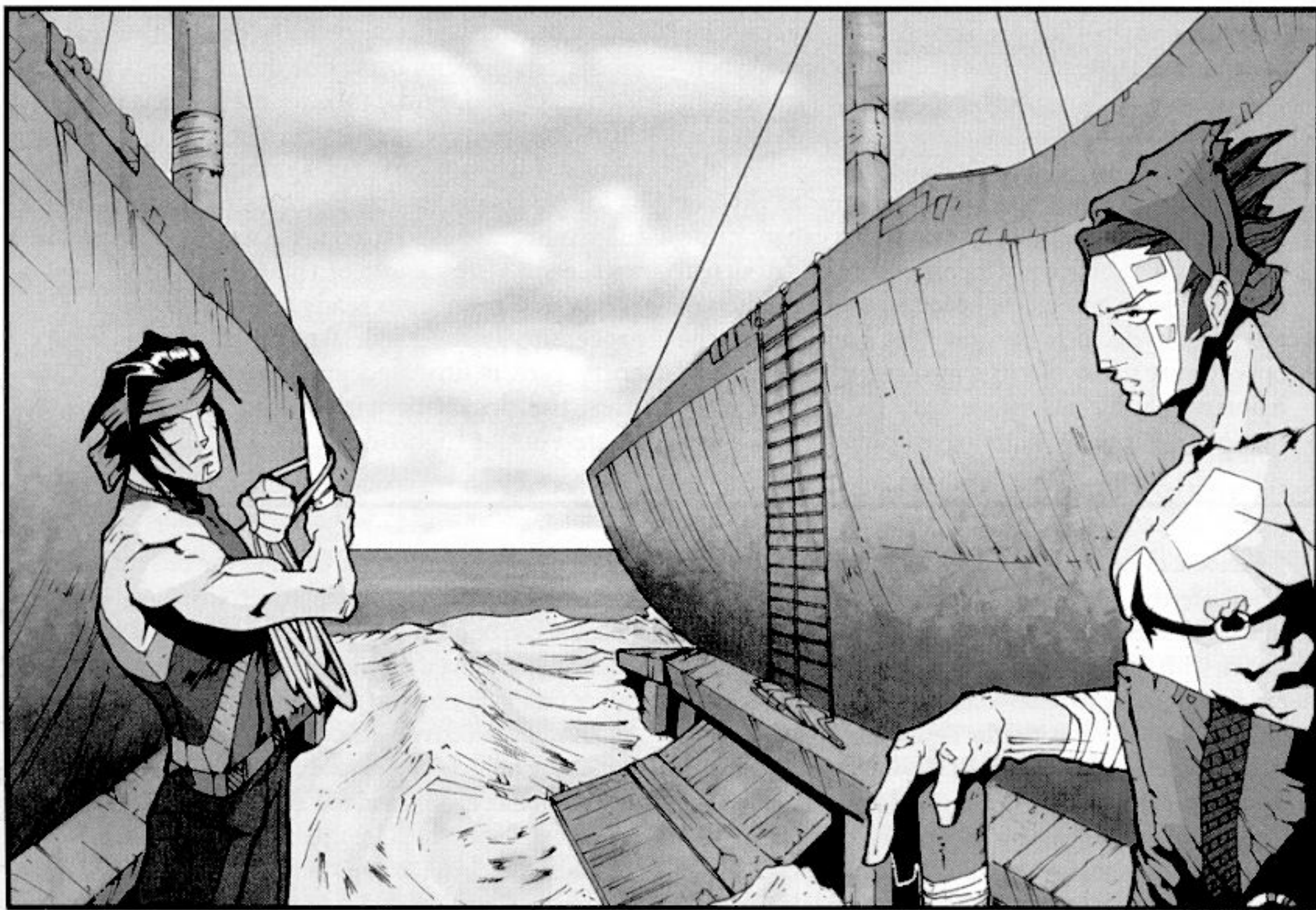
No matter how well a ship is taken care of by its crew, it will eventually need a trip to a shipyard for more advanced maintenance. For seagoing vessels, an overhaul will generally be needed every three to five years. Freshwater craft can go longer without such servicing but still should be examined by a shipyard or boatbuilder every five to seven years. (These estimates assume that the vessels are in the water all the time. For craft that spend significant time beached or otherwise "dry," the time between overhauls can be extended accordingly.)

Depending on the shipyard and the vessel, the way in which an overhaul will be accomplished can vary. Smaller craft can simply be hauled up onto dry land, where they can be examined easily and any needed repairs can be done

without difficulty. Medium-sized vessels can be beached for examination, scraping and painting or minor repairs, or they can be floated onto a support platform and dragged up into a slipway for more extensive work. Larger ships are more difficult to deal with and may have to be placed in drydock (see the drydocking boxed text) in order to be properly overhauled.

During an overhaul, much of the wear and tear that happens to a ship's hull can be repaired or remedied. It is scraped down thoroughly, and any barnacles or other encrustations are removed. The planks are examined for shipworm damage, and any burrow openings that are found will be filled flush to the surrounding wood with tar, to prevent water from entering and causing rot. The hull's caulking is inspected and redone where needed, and badly damaged planks can even be replaced altogether. Finally, the hull is repainted, to reseal the wood against seepage and renew its protection from worms.

Other parts of the vessel will be looked at as well. The mast is checked for dry rot, cracks or any other problems and can be reinforced or replaced if necessary. Decks and bulkheads are also repaired as needed, and framing timbers showing cracks or other signs of trouble can be reinforced or, in some cases, replaced. By the time the overhaul is finished, a craft can be almost like new, depending only on how much time and money its owner was willing to put into repairs.



DEALING WITH DISASTER

Even a well-cared-for vessel can meet with disaster — though, to be sure, a ship that's been properly maintained is vastly more likely to survive the experience. Preparedness is everything, if a ship and crew are to successfully deal with the crises that can strike without warning. Knowing what to do and having what's needed to do it are what make the difference between dead sailors and dockside-bar storytellers.

FIRE

Despite the fact that they're surrounded by water, fire can be a very real and serious threat aboard watercraft. Almost all the parts of a vessel can burn, and fire damage to the wrong ones can leave a ship stranded or send her quickly to the bottom.

There are many ways a fire can get started aboard a vessel. Accidents can happen when meals are being cooked. Sailors or passengers can be careless while smoking. (Many ships' masters forbid smoking below decks, for exactly that reason. This is even more crucial on warcraft that carry stocks of highly flammable and explosive firedust.) Lightning may strike, which is more likely than you might think, in a storm at sea where a ship's mast is the highest point for 100 miles.

Regardless of how the fire starts, the most important thing is to put it out quickly. Fire-buckets filled with sand are kept in convenient places on a well-prepared ship, especially near the cooking facilities, where burning grease would only spread around if water were thrown on it. Water from the bilges can also be used to fight fires, and buckets are lowered over the side on ropes to get more. On blue-water vessels, the one source of water that shouldn't be used indiscriminately is the ship's drinking water — putting out a fire a few seconds faster won't matter much when the crew is later dying from thirst because their water supply has run out.

Once a fire is out, the damage it caused needs to be assessed. If structural timbers have been weakened, they need to be shored up to prevent them from collapsing or buckling (see "Structural Damage," below). If deck planking has been burned, it should be patched or replaced before someone falls through and injures herself. Charred wood should be cut or scraped away where possible, both to be sure a fire won't rekindle and because it's much more likely to catch fire again, compared to an unburned surface. Finally, fire-fighting supplies should be replenished, so that they're ready for use the next time.

HULL DAMAGE

A vessel will sometimes be damaged by an impact that cracks or splinters one or more hull planks but does not break all the way through. This damage can lead to severe leaking and also poses the obvious threat that the damaged plank or planks could give way, opening an actual hole in the hull.

A wise crew carries a cache of lumber on board to be used in dealing with emergencies such as this (and the

other types that follow), along with a supply of nails, spikes, trenails and other fasteners. Together with a set of hand tools such as saws, hammers, mallets and augers, such supplies can turn a hopeless situation into a survivable one. Nonessential wooden items on board, such as cabin wall panels, furniture and crates in the hold can also be sources of emergency repair materials.

The first priority when a hull is damaged in this way is to make sure it doesn't get worse. From inside the hull, wooden patches and bracing can be nailed into place to reinforce the damaged planks and caulked to stop or slow down leakage. Patches should also be placed on the outside of the hull whenever possible, to further reinforce the affected area and protect it from additional damage. (The best means of doing this will vary with the type of vessel, weather conditions and other factors and, so, is left up to the ingenuity of the players. Ideally, the vessel should first be beached or brought into port, but a mid-ocean repair could be attempted by lowering one or more crewmen over the side, if circumstances make it necessary.)

HULL PUNCTURES

Damage that actually penetrates, or *breaches*, the hull is obviously much more threatening. Depending on the size of the breach and how much other damage may have been incurred at the same time (see "Structural Damage," below), this is the sort of disaster that, in the worst cases, may doom a vessel regardless of any actions taken by her crew.

Assuming it's not dealing with such an already lost cause, the first thing a crew needs to do is to slow or stop the flooding, by any means necessary. Some holes can be plugged by the application of nothing more than muscle power, with crewmen wrestling a patch or plug into place against the force of the incoming water. Alternatively, if a breach is at or just below the waterline, it may be possible to raise it out of the water, by steering the ship so that it heels it the right direction or even by temporarily moving personnel and heavy objects to the opposite side of the ship. Many blue-water vessels also carry a *Storm Mother's blanket* — a large, well-oiled sheet of heavy yeddim leather that can be spread across the outside of the hull to cover a breach, providing at least a temporary respite from flooding. (Placing and securing the "blanket" can be difficult and dangerous, especially in the middle of a storm or a battle, but what's a little derring-do in the face of otherwise losing the ship?) However it's accomplished, once the inrush of water has been slowed or stopped, the crew can attempt to make a more permanent repair.

STRUCTURAL DAMAGE

A vessel depends on its frame timbers for its structural integrity. When a ship is slamming, twisting and bucking its way through heavy seas, it is the ribs, crossbeams, and vertical joists that make up its "skeleton," along with its keel, that must absorb all those stresses and keep the hull intact.





A particularly violent wave impact (or just the accumulated stresses over a ship's lifetime) can cause a frame timber to crack — or even to snap completely through. When this happens, it can soon lead to further failures, as adjoining timbers are forced to take up more of the load. The end result can be the buckling or even the complete collapse of the hull and the loss of the ship.

A vessel's crew must act quickly, if it is to prevent this kind of chain-reaction catastrophe. When a frame member cracks or breaks, it should first be shored up with temporary supports, using lumber from the ship's emergency supplies to hold off further collapse. Once things are stabilized, a longer-term fix can be made, by "splinting" the failed timber with additional lumber and possibly replacing the temporary shoring with a more permanent added support beam.

MAST AND RIGGING DAMAGE

The most vulnerable parts of ships are their masts, sails and rigging. In a violent storm, sails can be shredded, lines can be snapped, or parts of the rigging can be torn completely loose and carried overboard. The mast itself may be cracked, shattered or even broken off completely. If a crew is not prepared to deal with these sorts of problems, it could find itself stranded in mid-ocean, with no way of reaching shore before its supplies run out.

Lost sails and rigging are the easiest problems to deal with — or, at least, they should be. A well-stocked ship will carry extra sails and spare rope, as well as replacements for necessary fittings such as pulley blocks. Normally, these spares should be enough to repair the damage wrought by a storm.

If a vessel is unlucky enough to lose all of its sails in a single voyage, one can be improvised using sacks, bedsheets, clothing or almost any other cloth available on board. The resulting sail may not be pretty or as effective as what it's replacing, but it will get the ship to safety a lot faster than a bare mast.

Running out of rope is a much more serious problem, as there's not a lot that can substitute for it. Fortunately, the average sailing vessel carries enough of it that running out is unlikely. In case of a shortage, even the old ropes meant to be cut up for oakum could be used. If a ship truly *does* run short and doesn't have enough rope to at least replace lost running rigging, handling the sails becomes very difficult and requires some ingenuity on the part of those trying to sail the ship. The most difficult line to do without is probably the halyard used to raise and lower the sail, and if at least *some* rope remains, that is how it should be used. (If the ship is large enough that its mast can be scaled by a crewman, the sail could be raised and then lashed or spiked in place, freeing up the rope for use elsewhere.) If there is no rope available for the sheet, the boom could be manipulated, though awkwardly, by attaching the end of a spare spar or other wooden pole to it.

Substitutes for other items, such as pulley blocks, cleats or even a gaff or a boom, can often be improvised using the

materials available on board. The replacements will likely be harder to work with, but at least the ship will be sailable.

Damage to a ship's mast is more crippling than any damage to its rigging, however, depending on the severity and location. In general, the closer the damage is to the top of the mast, the less difficulty it causes, because the higher it is, the more intact mast there is below it to work with.

The best approach to a mast damaged close to the top is to cut away the cracked or broken portion, then remount the masthead hardware on the newly shortened mast. (While it might be possible to reinforce the damaged portion, it isn't worth the risk of it giving way under stress and possibly causing more damage or injuring someone.) The ship can then run with shortened sails, reducing its speed somewhat but not impairing its ability to navigate.

If the damage is further down, shortening the mast is no longer an option. A cracked or broken mast can be "splinted" by nailing wooden reinforcements along its sides, spanning the damaged portion, then tightly wrapping the repair with rope or heavy cord. (In the case of a break, this can be done using either the original broken-off piece, if it is available, or a substitute length of wood.) If done well, this kind of repair can be quite strong, and the ship can navigate almost normally, though some care should be taken to avoid overstressing the mast.

A mast broken off close to the deck, or even flush with it, makes for a more difficult situation. To supplement the splinting technique (assuming enough of the stump is above the deck to make splinting possible), additional wooden braces can be installed to steady and strengthen the mast, angling down from it to the deck beams. (More stays can be helpful, also, if they can be added without getting in the way of the sail.) A mast that has been reerected like this will not be nearly as strong as it was originally, and the ship must be sailed carefully. Tacking upwind should be avoided if possible, and to further reduce the stresses on the mast, shortened sails are recommended.

If a mast is lost entirely, some creative improvisation will be called for. A spare boom or other similar length of wood might serve as a makeshift replacement, mounted in similar fashion to the broken-off mast, above. If no suitable mast substitute is available, shorter pieces of lumber could be used to erect a framework or scaffold from which a sail could be hung. In any case, these sorts of jury-rigged arrangements will not be able to stand up to anything close to the stresses the original mast could. Tacking upwind will be either not a good idea or simply impossible, and the best that can realistically be hoped for is a broad reach, maybe three points to either side of the direction the wind is blowing toward.

On the largest ships, the mast is often constructed of several sections spliced together in similar fashion to the "splinting" description above. This can mitigate the difficulties of a damaged mast, as the cracked or broken section can simply be replaced. Vessels mounting such multipart masts typically carry spare segments for just such emergencies.

EXAMPLE SHIPS

In the world of *Exalted*, there are thousands of ships and boats currently in use, of far more varied designs than can be covered in this book. What follows is a sampling of some important or interesting types, which can be used as-is or as starting points for *Exalted* players and Storytellers to make up their own vessels.

While the manufacture and use of the advanced materials of the First Age is a lost art, the shipwrights of *Exalted*'s world *do* have some advantages over their counterparts in our own world's age of sail. Preternaturally tough, strong or resilient woods from the forests of the deep East make some designs possible that would be structurally unsound using the ordinary wood of our world. The weight and expense of such timber, its scarcity and the difficulty of working it preclude its use for all but critical timbers and frame members — ultra-tough vessels constructed entirely of Eastern woods are very unlikely, if even possible given current techniques. Even ships making limited structural use of such materials are expensive and somewhat rare.

Also, while the majority of vessels are constructed using nothing but the skill and craftsmanship of their builders, some Terrestrial *Exalted* do practice the shipwright's art and have developed unique Charms and sorceries to aid them in their work.

Taking these factors into account, it is not surprising that some all-wooden ships of the world of *Exalted* would not be feasible in our world without the use of structural steel. The use of superior Eastern woods also makes possible some of the extraordinarily long booms and spars found on larger vessels, made necessary by the nearly universal emulation of First Age single-mast designs.

The entry for each vessel is in the following format.

SHIP TYPE

Role(s): What the vessel type is generally used for (warship, courier, cargo ship, etc.)

Length: The overall length of the vessel, in feet.

Beam: The beam (maximum width) of the vessel, in feet. Does not include non-fixed protrusions, such as oars.

Draft: The depth of the lowest point of the vessel below the waterline, in feet. This assumes a "typical" load of crew, supplies and, where applicable, passengers and cargo.

Rig Type/Closest Tack: The type of sailing rig the vessel is equipped with, and the closest the vessel can tack to the wind.

Speed: The "speed" of sailing craft cannot be given in absolute terms, as they are, after all, dependent on the speed and direction of the wind. This attribute is a measure of the *relative* speed of one vessel as compared to another, under the same wind conditions, and it is influenced by the hull design and rigging type of each craft. A vessel with more dots in Speed will both sail faster in a given wind and accelerate faster from a standing start (as when casting off moorings and setting sail from a dock).

Maneuverability: This is a relative measure of how difficult a vessel is to handle precisely, as compared to others. While this is seldom a factor on the open seas, it can be critical when attempting to outmaneuver an opposing vessel in battle or when performing more mundane actions such as sailing a boat up to a dock. A craft's maneuverability rating functions as a difficulty modifier to Sail rolls, with large, ponderous vessels requiring more successes to pilot with precision.

Standard/Minimum Crew: The number of sailors making up a "full" crew, and the minimum number needed to safely navigate the vessel. If a vessel is undermanned (has less than a minimum crew), the difficulty of Sail rolls is increased as follows: One additional success for the first "missing" crewman, two more for the second, and so on. This is meant to reflect that the lack of a hand or two is not terribly debilitating, and on craft normally meant for small crews, even a single sailor can generally handle the boat, though with a bit of added difficulty. Large ships that normally require larger crews to control them will become virtually impossible to sail with only a crewman or two, however.

Soak: The soak values of the vessel's hull, given in bashing/lethal format. A ship's mast has soak values equal to those of its hull, and riggings and sails have a fixed soak: 2L.

Health Levels: The amount of damage it takes to damage (breach) or destroy (breach with major structural damage) a vessel's hull, given in damage/destroy format. A ship's mast can take damage equal to the vessel's damage rating before being severed, and its sails and rigging can take one quarter of that, rounded upward.

Description: Information on the vessel's layout, capabilities, interesting features or other details.

FAST COURIER

Role(s): Military, diplomatic or civilian courier; pirate scout vessel; fast-attack craft

Length: 36 feet overall; center hull 36 feet, port/starboard hulls 30 feet each

Beam: 36 feet overall; center hull 4 feet, port/starboard hulls 2.5 feet each

Draft: 5 feet (with daggerboard); center hull 12 inches, port/starboard hulls 10 inches

Rig Type/Closest Tack: Abalone with foresail/2 points

Speed: •••••

Maneuverability: -2

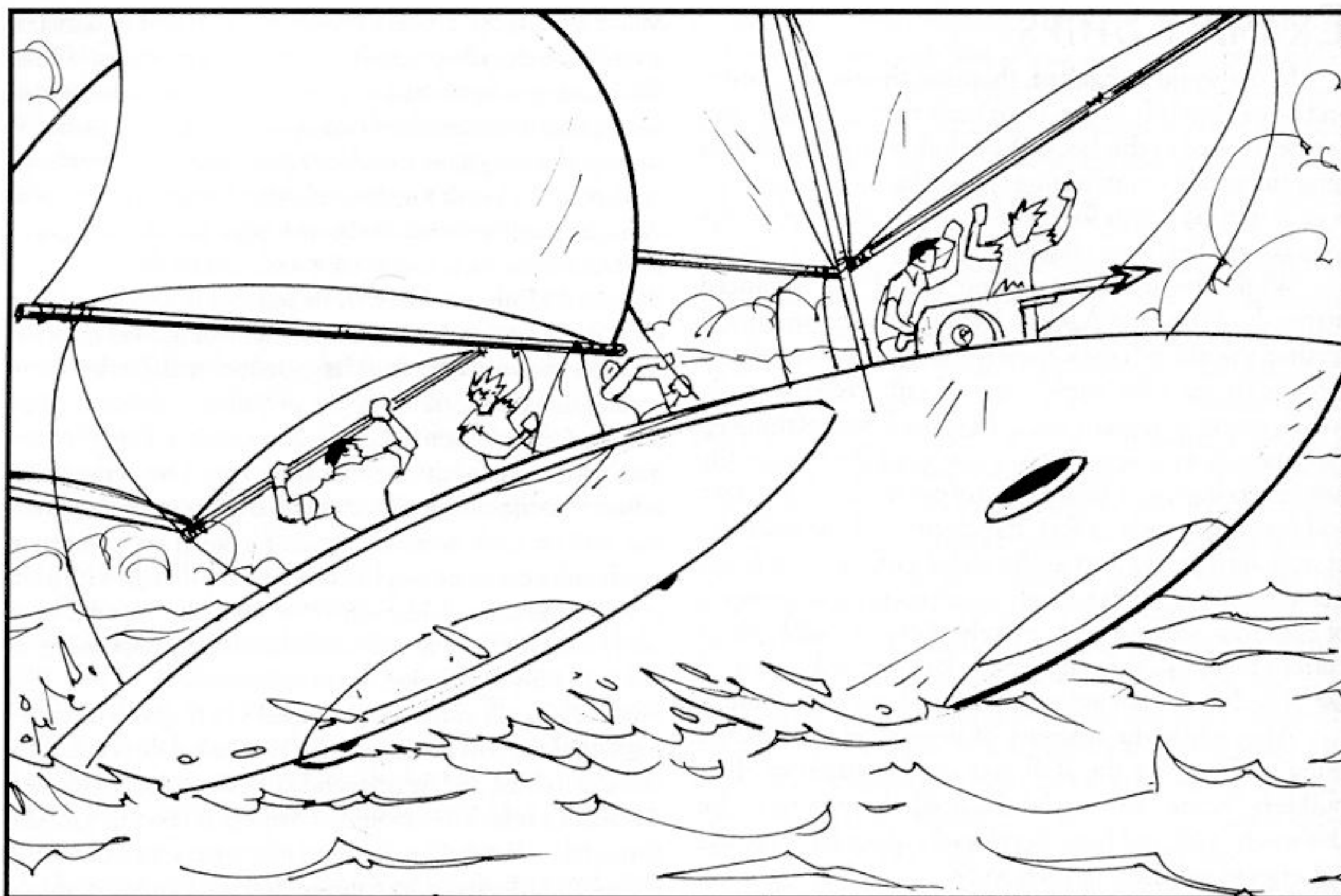
Standard/Minimum Crew: 5/3

Soak: 4L

Health Levels: 4/8

Description: This is a light trimaran (three-hulled) design built for one primary purpose: *speed*. It carries a towering mast for a vessel its size, but that height is offset by the tremendous stability of its widely spaced trio of hulls. Leeway is controlled by a broad, deep, retractable daggerboard located forward of the mast in the center hull and the equally deep, narrow, flip-up rudder at its stern. The hulls'





shallow draft and sleek, narrow shape make for little drag, and help the boat to skim lightly across the water, outdistancing most other vessels in almost any wind.

The mast is stepped about 12 feet back from the bow of the center hull and is reinforced by a forestay and a pair of shrouds. The three bows are aligned straight across, and two sets of connecting struts join the hulls, one just forward of the foot of the mast and the other just ahead of the outer hulls' sterns. The forward struts carry a narrow walkway on top, allowing crew to cross from one hull to another.

The hulls are carvel-built and covered over for most of their length with a slightly arched, waterproofed deck. The aftmost six feet of the main hull are open, to provide a cockpit for the boat's pilot, and the tiller and mainsheet are handled from there. The six feet just aft of the mast are also open, the raising and lowering of both sails and the trim of the foresail being done from that position, as is the raising and lowering of the daggerboard. The port and starboard hulls each have a five-foot-long open section just ahead of the forward connecting struts, each with room to accommodate a single crewman. Each of the four crew spaces is sealed off forward and aft to keep water out of the rest of the hull, and each has a six-inch-high *coaming* (raised rim) running around it to help keep it dry.

Being the somewhat exotic thoroughbred that it is, this vessel can be a little tricky to handle at first, though not severely so (+1 difficulty to Sail checks, modifier removed after one full day's experience piloting the craft).

When reaching in strong winds, it is strongly recommended that the windward hull be manned, to help counterbalance the wind's force.

This vessel's speed makes its usefulness as a courier obvious. It is also favored as a scout craft by pirates, as it can cover a lot of ocean quickly and then just as quickly report back on the ships it has sighted. As a fast-attack craft, its main job is to harass and slow down enemy vessels (or piracy targets) so that its larger and slower allies can overtake them. With a Dragon-Blooded or two riding the outer hulls, it can be frighteningly effective in that role. Even without the use of magic, it can employ archers to shoot at a target vessel's crew or fire flaming arrows at its sails.

These vessels are not yachts; the design is stable but not comfortable. They are used to chase pirates and run messages. The crew sleeps strapped into the ship's two two-foot-wide sleeping mats, and the vessel's light weight and high mast mean it follows every undulation of the sea's surface. The closest thing to personal storage they offer is the 3' x 3' x 3' area for diplomatic mail, which is normally filled with provisions in the military versions. These vessels don't even have a galley — they carry precooked or cold food. Even for naval vessels, these are rough living conditions.

These vessels are scouts, couriers and fast attack vessels. Based out of a harbor, they patrol and deliver messages and, if they have Exalted aboard, chase pirates. The tightly bonded hard-living crews of three to five sailors who man these vessels command a great deal of mystique. Crewing

one of these in the Realm is also an excellent way to get promoted; being assigned as one of five crewmembers on a ship where two of those crew are Exalted is an excellent way to end up in the personal entourage of one of the Dragon-Blooded. The glamour, social possibilities and constant heroism required of these crews makes them an inordinately dangerous political force in the imperial navy, far beyond what one would expect from packet couriers and scouts.

SMALL YACHT

Role(s): Pleasure craft; personal or official coastal/river transport

Length: 53 feet (with rudder); hull 48 feet

Beam: 16 feet

Draft: 9 feet (with rudder); hull 3 feet

Rig Type/Closest Tack: Dragonwing/3 points

Speed: ••

Maneuverability: -4

Standard/Minimum Crew: 4/1 (Additionally accommodates four passengers and one servant)

Soak: 6L

Health Levels: 10/20

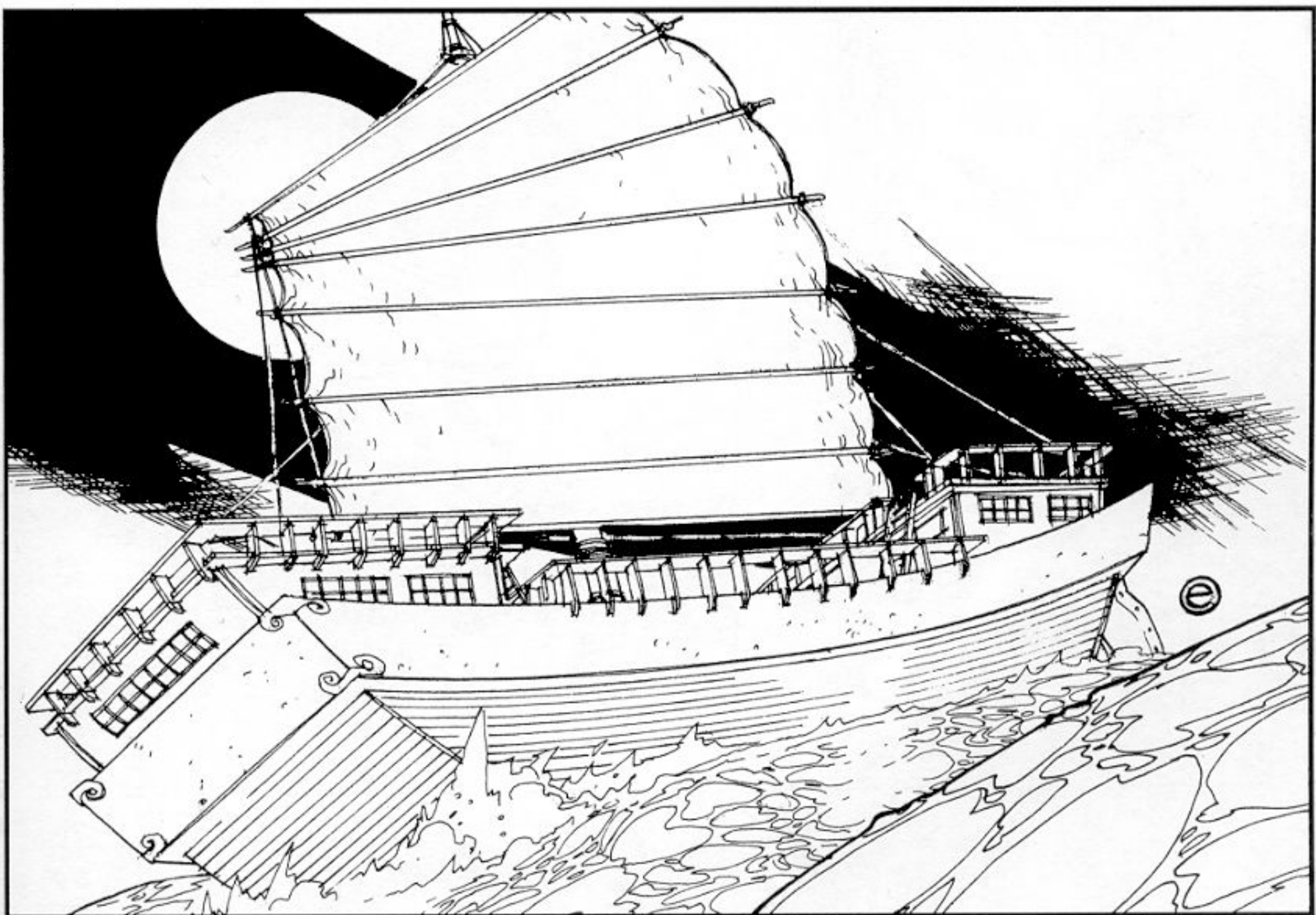
Description: This yacht is small but luxurious, meant to carry a well-heeled individual and his family or guests in the comfort they're used to enjoying on land. With a broad, nearly flat-bottomed hull and an almost blunt bow, this craft is built for roominess and stability, if not speed.

Though the main deck is actually flat, the upper edge of the hull sweeps slightly upward at the bow and stern, lending some visual grace to the design.

A pair of spacious cabins are located fore and aft on the main deck, with about 16 feet of open deck between them. The mast is stepped just aft of the forward cabin, and a canopy can be spread over the open deck in bad weather or simply to provide shade. Each cabin is large enough to generously accommodate two adults, the aft cabin normally being for the owner (and spouse or companion), and the forward for either guests or the owner's children. Below decks are the crew and servant's quarters, the cooking facilities and the cargo holds, accessed by a hatchway just forward of the aft cabin, toward the starboard side. The ladder coming up from below continues upward along the front of the cabin, leading to the pilot's deck atop it.

As with most examples of its hull type, this vessel has no protruding keel, but depends instead on a retractable daggerboard under the bow and an extremely broad, fairly deep rudder for leeway control. The rudder can also be retracted if needed, the vertical shaft connecting it to the tiller able to slide up and down in its brackets. With these features and the shape of the hull, the craft can be brought into very shallow water, allowing it to dock at virtually any port or to take refuge near shore or in sheltered coves when bad weather threatens.

If the vessel used as an official craft, the forward cabin might be set up as an office instead of sleeping quarters.



Another alternative layout separates it down the centerline into two cabins.

LARGE YACHT

Role(s): Pleasure craft; personal or official blue-water transport; small pirate corsair

Length: 73 feet

Beam: 18 feet

Draft: 12 feet (fixed deep fin keel)

Rig Type/Closest Tack: Imperial with foresail/2 points

Speed: ••••

Maneuverability: -3

Standard/Minimum Crew: 4/2 (Additionally accommodates six passengers and one servant)

Soak: 6L

Health Levels: 10/20

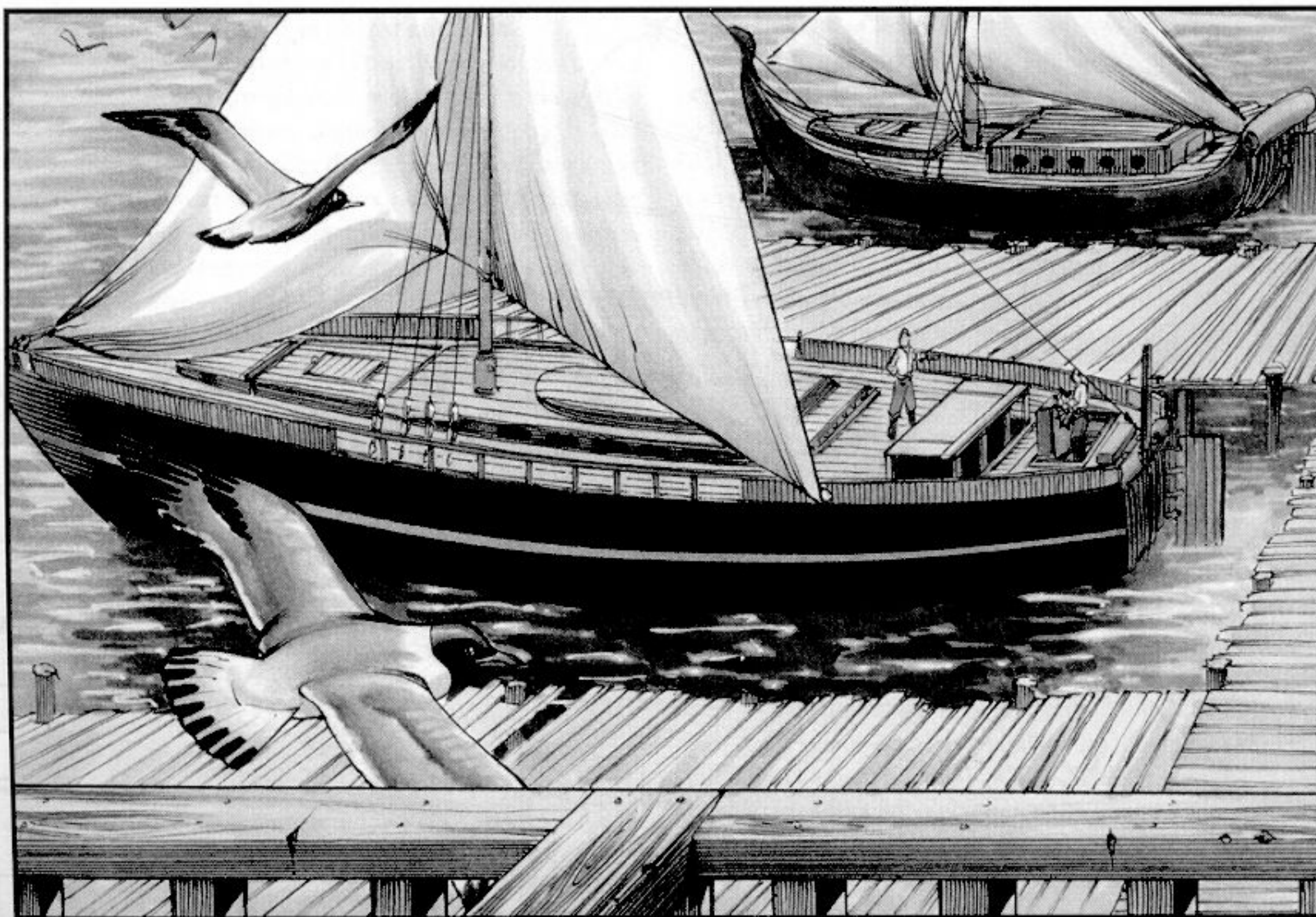
Description: If the small yacht (above) is all about stately luxury, then this vessel is all about getting there quickly and in style. Long and sleek and beautiful, with a tall mast, a lot of sail area and a deep keel to balance off all that sail while keeping leeway to a minimum, this vessel is representative of the kind of yacht that those with money, power or both might use for their sea voyages.

A low cabin, its sides provided with several windows down each side, occupies much of the main deck, leaving a triangular foredeck, a narrow passage down each side and several feet at the stern of the main deck open. This

cabin is actually the upper 18 inches of the passenger and crew accommodations, as well as the cooking facilities — the hull's shape does not allow enough clearance for the "below decks" spaces to be fully below the main deck. The forward cargo hold is accessible both from a foredeck hatch and from the crew quarters, and the main access to the cabin section is via a set of steps leading down from the aft deck. Three two-passenger cabins are provided, as well as a small "salon" usable for dining or entertaining.

On the aft main deck is the pilot's position, from which the mainsheet and tiller are handled. The foresheet can be run back through several pulleys to the pilot as well, though it's much more common for the foresail to be trimmed by a crewman stationed further forward, who is also responsible for raising or lowering the sails.

As a pirate corsair, the superior speed and maneuverability of this type of vessel (as compared to most small to medium-sized merchant ships) make it an obvious choice. Such craft also provide ample room for boarding parties — the cabin can easily be modified to accommodate a dozen or more pirates in place of passengers, even more over short voyages where sleeping or cooking facilities are unnecessary. The Lintha are reported to have fitted at least one raider of this type with a *light implosion bow* (see p. 126) on its modified foredeck, enabling it to easily strip a target vessel of its sails, as well as to soften up the resistance of its crew.

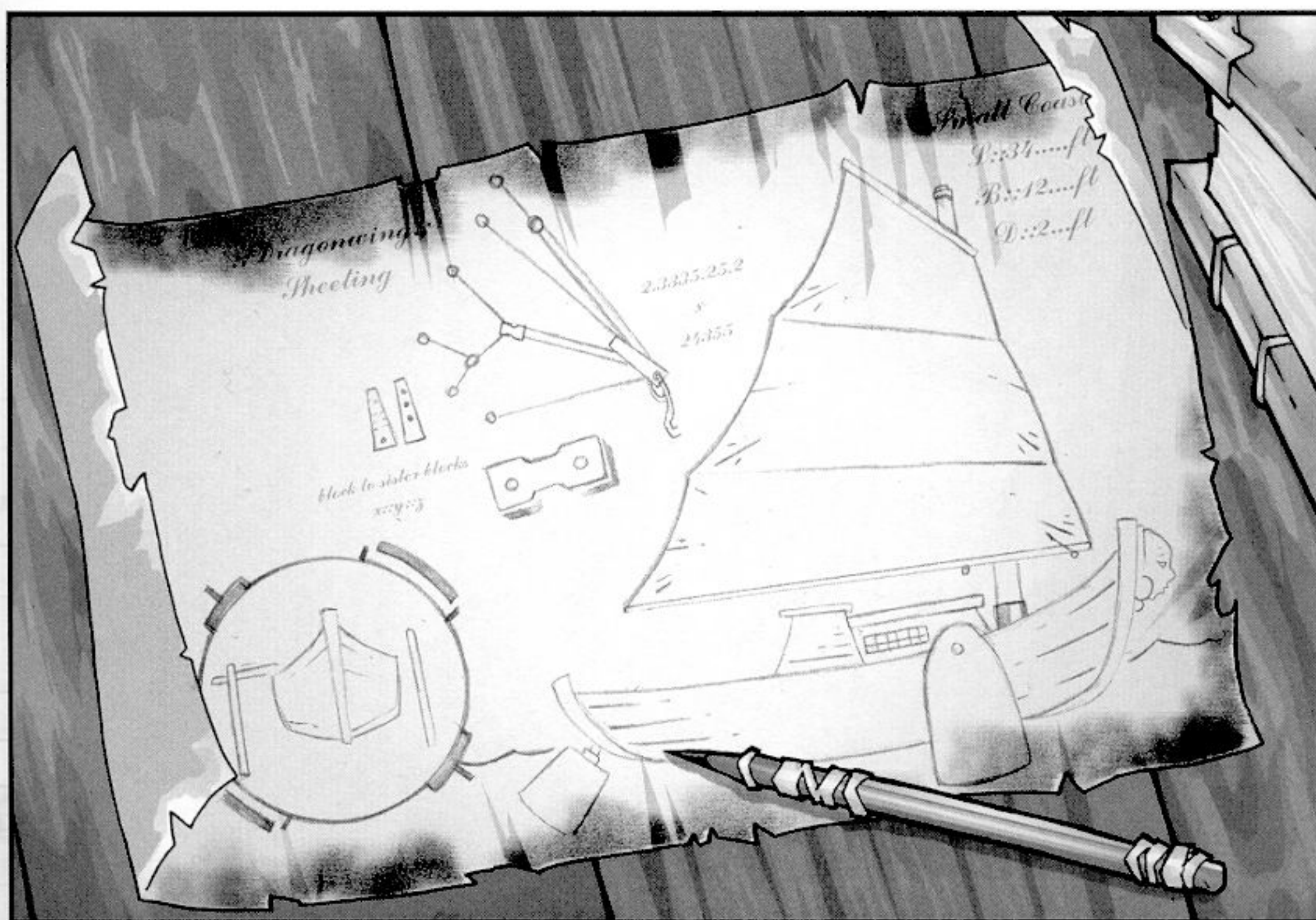


SMALL COASTER**Role(s):** Fishing boat; local coastal cargo/passenger carrier**Length:** 34 feet (not including steering oar)**Beam:** 12 feet**Draft:** 2 feet (5 feet with a leeboard lowered)**Rig Type/Closest Tack:** Dragonwing/3 points**Speed:** •••**Maneuverability:** -3**Standard/Minimum Crew:** 3/1**Soak:** 5L**Health Levels:** 8/16

Description: If you were to take a count of all the watercraft in the world of *Exalted*, vessels the size of this one or smaller would far outnumber larger ships. Of these smaller craft, the majority might never travel more than 50 or 100 miles from their home ports—and often less than that. These are the fishermen's boats, the river taxis and the short-haul, shallow-water merchant craft carrying people and produce to larger ports from coastal villages hard to reach by land. They might not go far from home or never venture beyond sight of shore, but added all together, these small vessels log far more miles annually than their larger, seagoing cousins.

This particular example's hull is clinker-built and comes to a point at both bow and stern (a design type called a "double-ender"). The bow rises a bit higher, for plowing through breaking waves near shore, and the keel is nearly

flush to the flattened curve of the bottom, protruding only a uniform inch or two over the vessel's length. The mast is stepped about a quarter of the way back from the bow, and a pair of large, oblong leeboards are mounted to either side of the hull just aft of there. As is common custom, the leeboards are brightly painted with geometric designs, their patterns a clue to the boat's home port. At the stern, a steering oar angles down into the water, secured to the rail starboard of the stern post. The hull's shape and minimal draft, the use of an oar instead of a fixed rudder and the ability of the leeboards to be rotated clear of the water combine to allow craft such as this to visit the shallowest of ports or to be beached easily when needed. The dragonwing sail is efficient even in light winds, and one sailor can easily pilot this type of boat alone.

COASTAL TRADER**Role(s):** Coastal/river merchant vessel**Length:** 70 feet**Beam:** 26 feet**Draft:** 5 feet**Rig Type/Closest Tack:** Imperial/3 points**Speed:** •••**Maneuverability:** -3**Standard/Minimum Crew:** 10/4**Soak:** 6L**Health Levels:** 10/20



Description: Vessels such as these often carry goods being shipped greater distances along a coast, perhaps from a middling-sized port to a larger market farther away from the goods' point of origin. Once lighter craft such as the small coaster and their cargos converge in a regional trading port, it's the job of vessels like this one to carry those cargos onward. Though they can be larger or smaller and of differing shapes, rigging types or other details, this craft is representative of many of them — a medium-sized cargo hauler small enough to go where it needs to go but with enough carrying capacity to make the trip worthwhile.

The carvel-built hull has full, rounded lines and comes to a broad, rising point at the bow and a somewhat sharper one at the stern. There is a large flat area in the center of the bottom, making for stable, upright standing in ports where the outgoing tide leaves vessels resting on the harbor's floor, and a keelfin extends aft under the rise of the stern, ending in the rudder. The mast is stepped well forward and is steadied by a forestay and a pair of slightly swept-back shrouds. Aft, the ship is piloted from a raised, railed platform standing above the main deck, nestled into the upsweep of the stern. The semi-enclosed area beneath the platform provides some foul-weather shelter for the rest of the crew, and tentlike side and front curtains can be hung to further keep the weather out. Vessels of this design that operate in colder climes often have this area fully enclosed to form a crew cabin, heated by a coal or wood

stove. Wide and stable and capable of carrying a great expanse of sail, ships of this type are known for being reasonably speedy without being difficult to sail.

Below the main deck, the cargo hold runs the full length of the hull, floored with removable slatted deck panels that straddle the bilges and ballast. Large hatches amidships permit easy loading and unloading of the hold, and additional cargo, especially items too large or awkwardly shaped to be stowed below, is often carried on deck, lashed in place to prevent it from shifting.

In response to piracy or other predations against trade, House V'neef has been known to dispatch vessels of this general type as decoys, their holds filled with fighting sailors of the Merchant Fleet, ready to become an unpleasant surprise for boarders expecting a "defenseless" merchant ship. Fifty or so marines can be carried with basic provisions and bunking arrangements or, for short journeys, up to 100 men could be ready to boil up from below decks to overwhelm any attackers and carry the fight back to the pirates' own vessel.

BLUE-WATER MERCHANT

Role(s): Seagoing merchant vessel; troop carrier

Length: 106 feet

Beam: 23 feet

Draft: 7.5 feet

Rig Type/Closest Tack: Imperial with foresail/3 points



Speed: •••

Maneuverability: -4

Standard/Minimum Crew: 22/6

Soak: 6L

Health Levels: 12/24

Description: Carrying cargo and passengers across the Inner Sea or the Western Ocean, and braving the storms and other dangers that can arise along the way, calls for a larger, heavier class of vessel than the “coasters” detailed above. This is an example of a typical seagoing merchant ship, of the sort that carries on most trade between the Blessed Isle and the varied city-states of the Threshold.

The hull is carvel-built for strength and resilience, with a broadly rounded bottom for stable grounding at low tide in shallow ports. Beneath the rise of the bow, a centerline fin, its lower edge flush with the bottom of the keel, helps to control leeway and add stability, as does the one beneath the stern.

On the main deck, the upward sweep of the stern carries a large, enclosed deckhouse, which could be fitted out as living space for the crew or, alternatively, could be passenger space, with the crew quarters below decks. The ship is piloted from the railed platform atop the deckhouse, with the foresheet being handled from further forward, near the mast. Below the main deck is an intermediate level that could be used for cargo, crew or passengers, and below that is a lower cargo hold and the bilges.

Ships of this general type also serve as a troop carriers. Fitted out with suitable bunks and ventilation, the intermediate deck easily houses a 125-man talon of imperial legionnaires, with the lower hold sufficient to carry their gear and supplies. When converted for military use, these craft often carry weapons such as firedust-charged fire cannons or even implosion bows on deck, though the latter are usually reserved for use aboard actual fighting vessels due to their rarity.

LARGE MERCHANT SHIP

Role(s): Heavy seagoing merchant vessel; large troop carrier

Length: 194 feet

Beam: 60 feet

Draft: 10 feet

Rig Type/Closest Tack: Imperial with foresail/3 points

Speed: ••

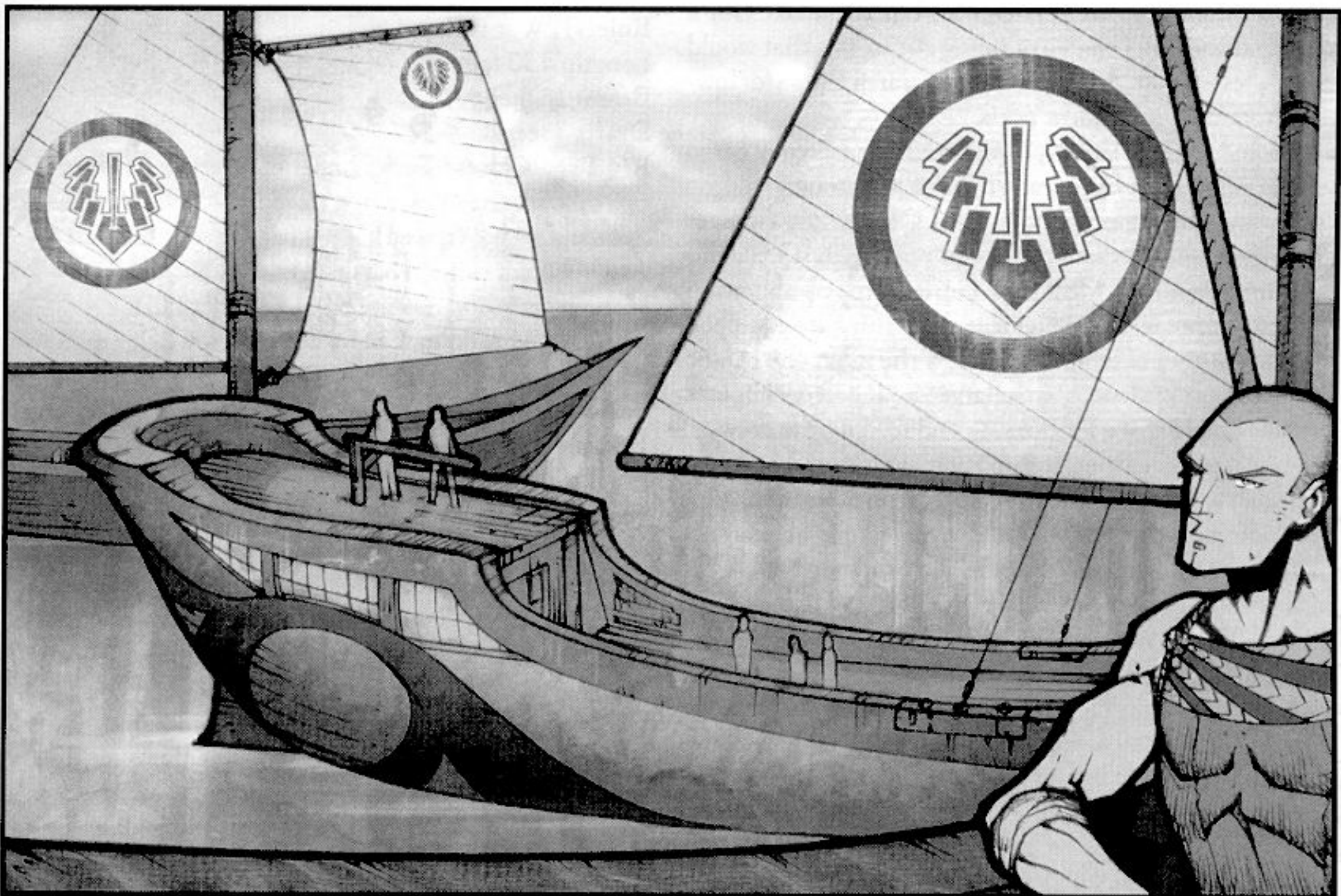
Maneuverability: -5

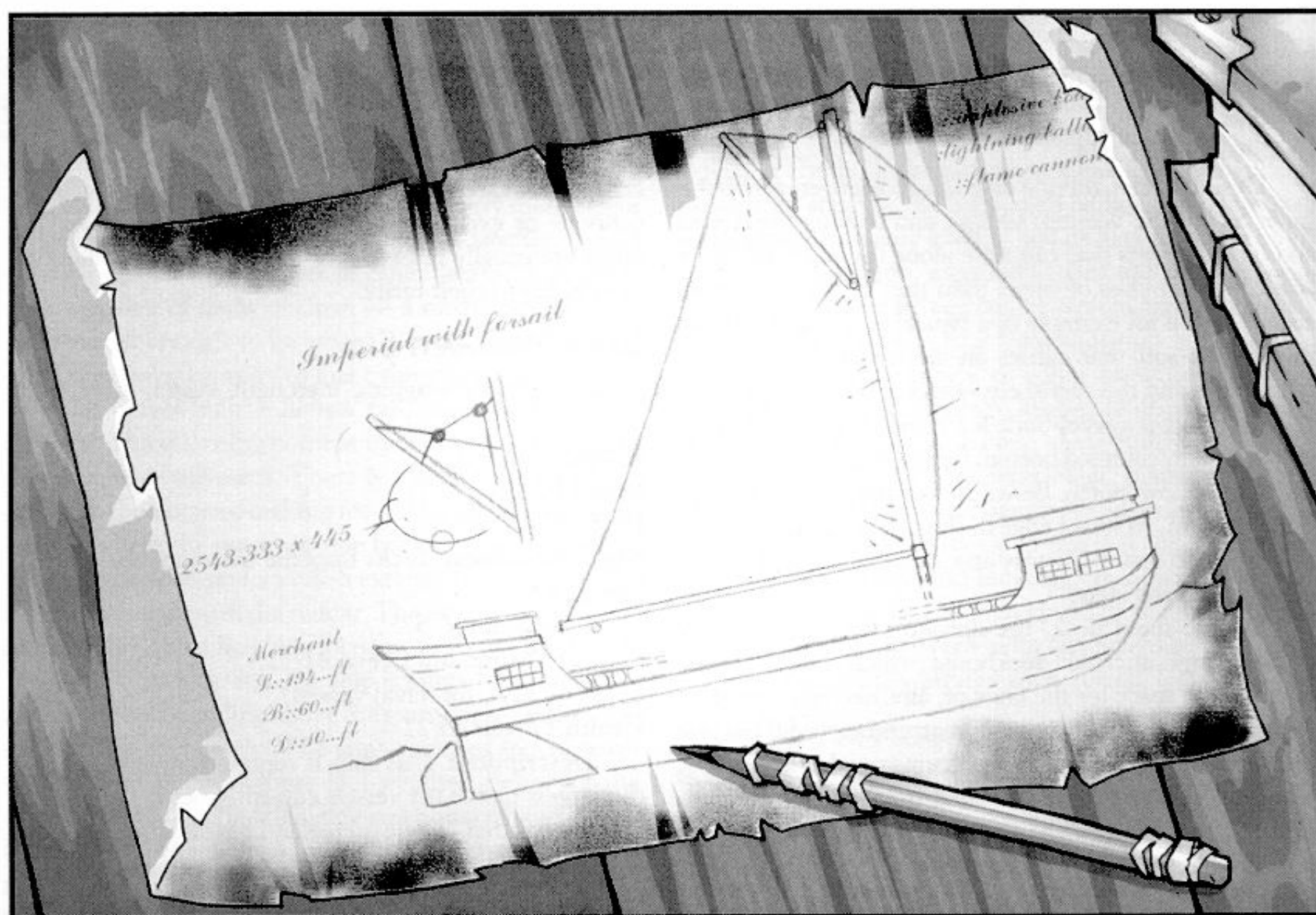
Standard/Minimum Crew: 41/12

Soak: 6L (10L for naval vessels)

Health Levels: 15/22

Description: This ship is representative of some of the largest merchant vessels currently being built in the world of Exalted. While there may be a few larger examples to be found, ships of this type are approaching the limits of what is practical given the current state of shipbuilding technology and the limitations of what can be done with





a single-masted rig. Their size makes them slower and clumsier than their smaller cousins but also makes for a stable, strong hull capable of riding out storms that would destroy lesser craft. A large, flat bottom area allows for low-tide grounding in shallow ports.

Some ships of this type are fitted out as heavy cargo vessels, often with large watertight deck hatches, loading cranes and other specialized fittings. Others are passenger craft, their intermediate decks equipped with staterooms and dining facilities. Most are set up for some combination of those purposes. Whatever role these ships are equipped for, the entirety of both decks below the main one can be devoted to payload space, as the large fore and aft deckhouses provide ample space for housing and feeding the crew.

As a troop carrier, a ship such as this could carry a 250-man wing or even a 500-man dragon of legionnaires, depending on the length of the voyage and the amount of gear the soldiers are bringing with them. Conversion of a civilian vessel to a troop carrier takes a couple of weeks. These vessels also form the backbone of the imperial blue water navy. The military versions of vessels such as these are typically fitted out with on-deck weaponry, though the likelihood of First Age devices being committed to the defense of these larger craft is much greater. These ships normally carry a lightning ballista and two light implosion bows, along with a number of heavy fire cannons for close-in defense.

IMPERIAL TRIREME

Role(s): War galley

Length: 130 feet

Beam: 18 feet

Draft: 3 feet

Rig Type/Closest Tack: Imperial/3 points (under sail — can take any heading when rowed)

Speed: ••••• (rowed); ••• (under sail, fully crewed); •••• (under sail, no oarsmen)

Maneuverability: -0 (rowed); -3 (under sail)

Standard/Minimum Crew: 200/35 (rowed); (minimum crew for sailing is 5)

Soak: 6L

Health Levels: 8/16

Description: The trireme is the principal fighting vessel of the Realm's imperial navy and for good reason — actually, several good reasons. The current design is the culmination of centuries of development and is possibly the ultimate expression of an oar-driven warship.

The trireme hull is designed to maximize two properties — speed and maneuverability. The broad, shallow cross-section minimizes resistance as the ship glides through the water, and the vessel is constructed almost entirely of pine, to reduce weight while providing the springy resilience necessary for the primary battle tactic used by such craft — ramming. When under sail, as when traveling long

distances, their shallow draft and light weight help triremes to move well, despite their somewhat undersized imperial rig. Under oar power, they can accelerate — and *decelerate* and even reverse direction — like nothing else afloat and can make snap maneuvers no sailing vessel can match, all while ignoring the strength and direction of the wind. The advantages a trireme holds over a sail-driven craft in combat are obvious.

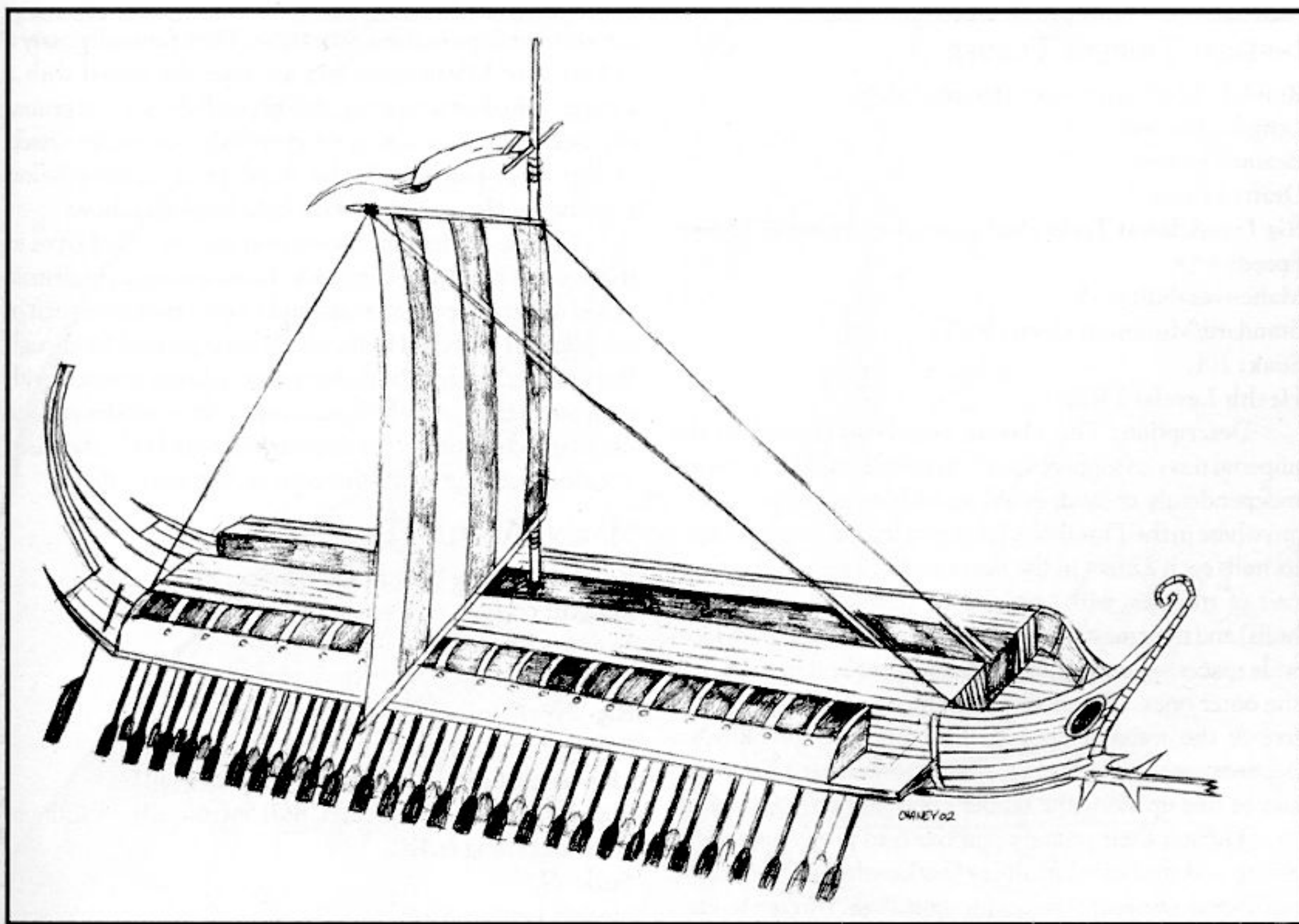
The ship's keel extends some 10 feet forward of the bow, forming a reinforced *ram* tipped with a heavy brass piercing spike. In battle, the ram is driven at high speed into the side of an enemy vessel, penetrating its hull below the waterline (30L damage at full rowing speed). In addition to its ram, an imperial trireme is often armed with a pair of foredeck-mounted brass fire projectors, a form of multi-barreled firewand. These are commonly fired at the target ship as it is rammed in an attempt to set it aflame, as well as to discourage any ideas its crew may have of trying to board the trireme. The vessels have small stern platforms that carry sailcutters or (in elite units) light implosion bows.

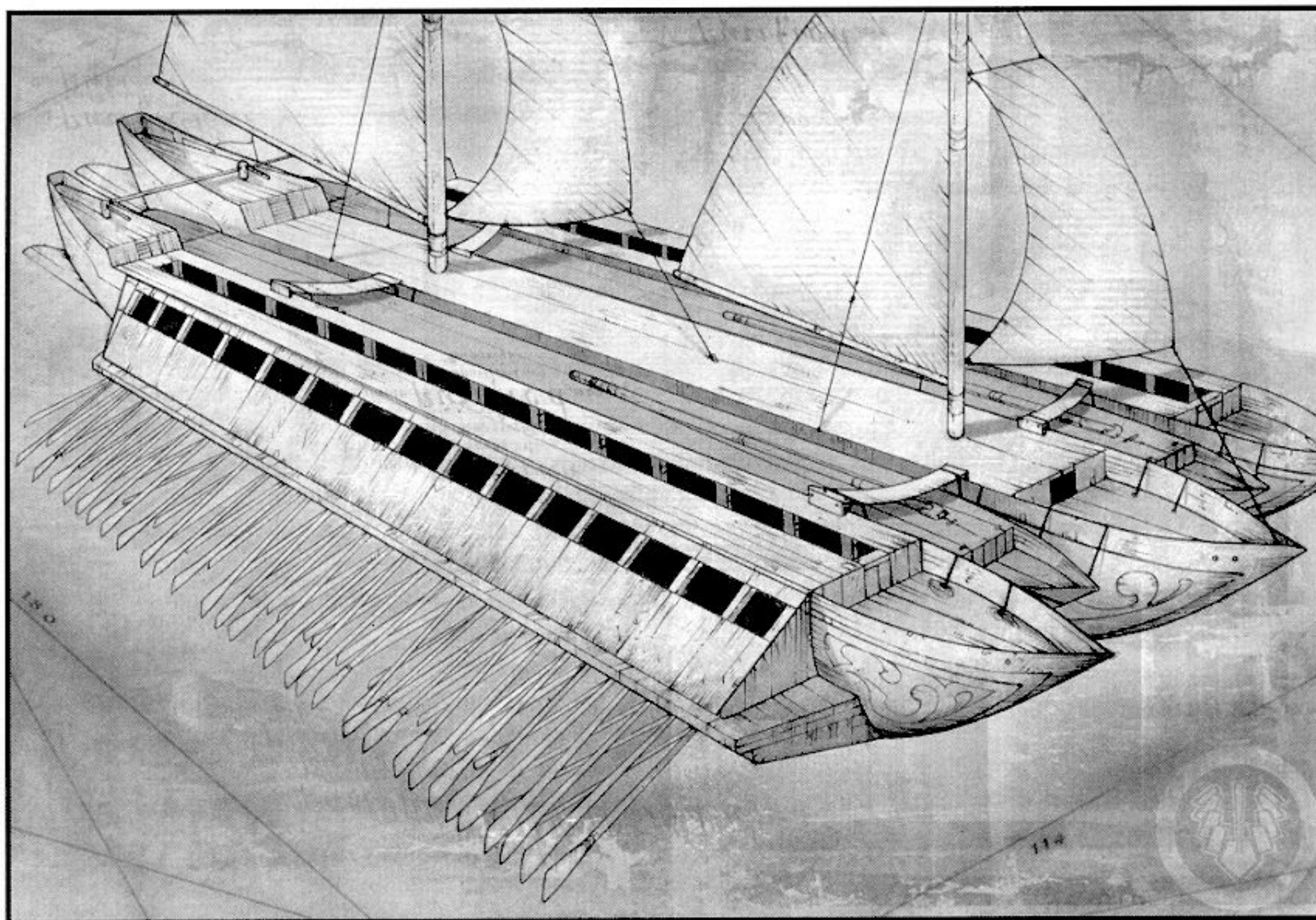
A standard imperial trireme is propelled by 170 oarsmen, arranged in three *banks* down each side of the ship, set one above another with an ingenious system of benches and outriggered supports for the upper tier's oars. These men are not slaves or prisoners — they are paid professional seamen and for good reason. The only

exception is some imperial vessels, particularly those carrying important personages. These are staffed by the soul-dead leavings of the Fair Folk, who will obediently work themselves to death if so ordered, thus allowing excellent combat performance, though such crews are expensive. Otherwise, rowing a galley with so many (and such closely spaced) oars requires a high degree of cooperation and synchronization — and all it would take to turn a high-speed attack run into a tangled disaster would be one disgruntled slave oarsman.

In addition to the oarsmen, a trireme typically carries five officers and 25 crew and a 25-man scale of marine heavy infantry. An imperial trireme *squadron* consists of five vessels, carrying between them a full talon of 125 marines.

All of that speed, maneuverability and oar power does come at a price, however — triremes are not roomy vessels and do not have enough cargo space to carry much in the way of supplies, nor are they equipped with cooking facilities or crew quarters. On shorter voyages that remain in sight of land (so long as said land is in the hands of friendly, or at least neutral, forces), trireme crews go ashore nightly, either putting into port or beaching their craft stern-first and camping on the beach. When a trireme squadron must travel longer distances or when there is no safe place for its crews to put ashore for the night, the squadron will be augmented with a tender (see following).





IMPERIAL TRIREME TENDER

Role(s): War galley support/supply ship
Length: 180 feet
Beam: 114 feet
Draft: 12 feet
Rig Type/Closest Tack: Dual imperial with foresail/3 points
Speed: •••
Maneuverability: -5
Standard/Minimum Crew: 93/17
Soak: 10L
Health Levels: 15/30

Description: This class of vessel was created by the imperial navy to support squadrons of triremes in operating independently of land, enabling such forces to be sent to anywhere in the Threshold. It is a very large trimaran design, its hulls each 22 feet in the beam and 180 feet in length. A pair of triremes, with oars *shipped* (retracted inside their hulls) and their masts lowered, can be docked in the 24-foot-wide spaces separating the tender's center hull from each of the outer ones. (The docked triremes can even be hauled free of the water if needed, if repairs to their hulls are necessary or to allow them to dry out somewhat.) Two more can be tied up along the tender's port and starboard sides.

Though their primary purpose is to provide sleeping, eating and medicinal facilities for the triremes' crews and repair-and-resupply services for their ships, trireme tenders

are also warships in their own right. They normally carry a full talon of 125 marines and are typically armed with a variety of firedust weaponry, though such devices are primarily used for close action against other ships. Certain vessels of this type, particularly the flagships of upper-echelon officers, are also equipped with light implosion bows.

Trireme tenders are also among the few vessel types in the world of *Exalted* to carry more than one mast. A tall mast rigged for an imperial mainsail and foresail rises from each of the port and starboard hulls, which are separated far enough from each other that the two sets of sails do not interfere with each other. Each of the hulls also carries a large rudder, and the steering and piloting of the ship is coordinated from the raised afterdeck running across the stern of all three of them.

MARINE ASSAULT BIREME

Role(s): Marine boarding/landing craft
Length: 65 feet
Beam: 17 feet
Draft: 3 feet
Rig Type/Closest Tack: Imperial/3 points
Speed: •••• (rowed); ••• (under sail)
Maneuverability: -1 (rowed); -3 (under sail)
Standard/Minimum Crew: 66/15 (rowed); (minimum crew for sailing is 4)
Soak: 6L
Health Levels: 8/16

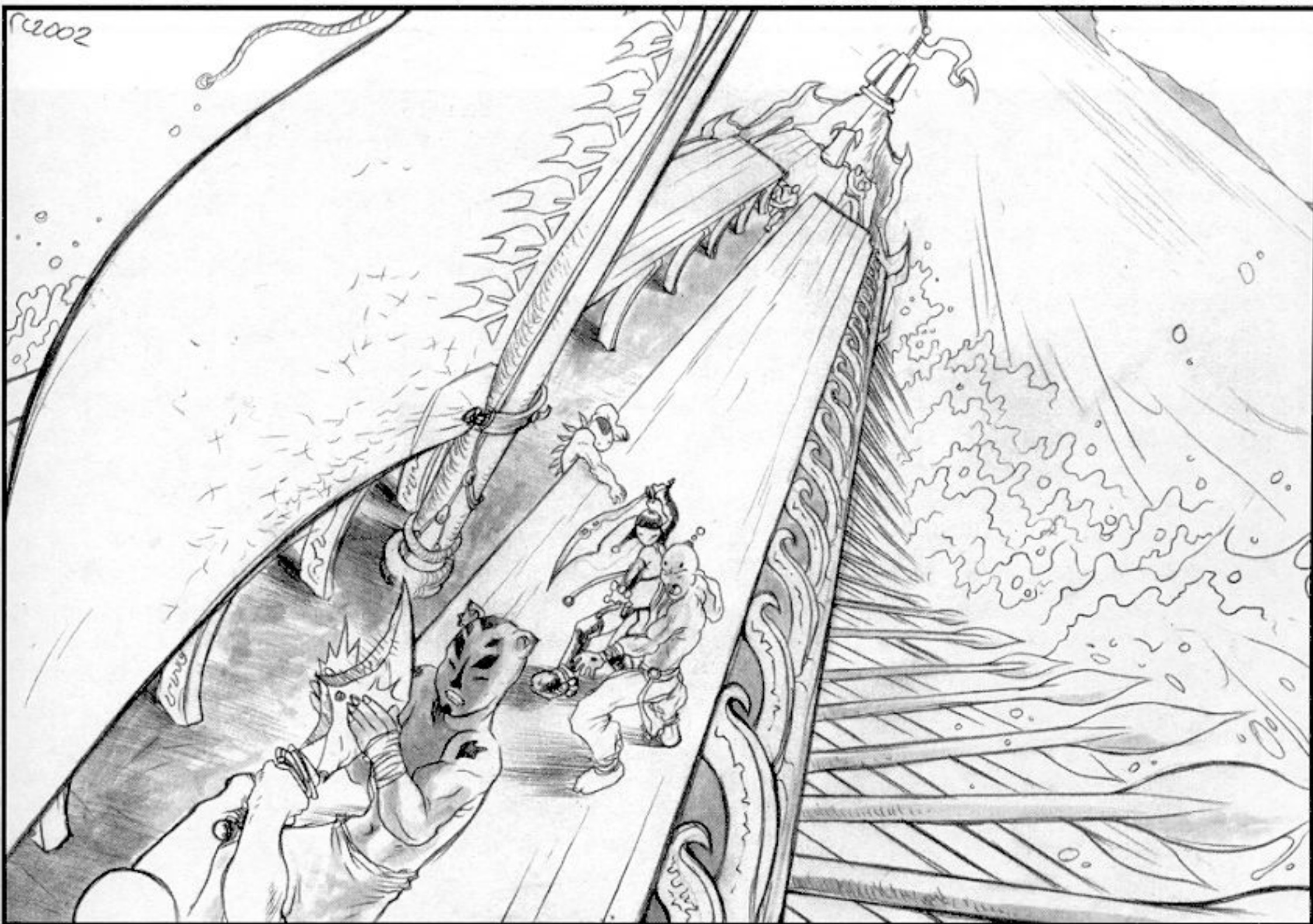
SQUADRON OPERATIONS

With the exception of detached vessels assigned to duties such as harbor patrol, imperial triremes nearly always operate in squadrons of five. Their battle tactics are optimized for multi-ship flanking and interception maneuvers, the “wolf pack” swarming a target vessel and attempting to disable its rigging before one of the squadron pierces its hull with its ram. When multiple squadrons operate together as a fleet, the same tactics are applied on a larger scale, often to devastating effect.

The trireme's strength is also its weakness, however. Its design is specialized for its combat role at the expense of all other considerations, including cargo capacity and seaworthiness. The low, shallow-drafted hull has less freeboard than other craft of similar size, while also being less effective in resisting leeway. When a storm threatens, a trireme squadron must make all possible speed for land or, barring that, try to evade the worst of the bad weather.

When triremes must operate further than two or three days away from a friendly port or other source of resupply, the lack of cargo space becomes a serious issue. In order to keep the large crews fed and, more importantly, supplied with drinking water, a squadron of triremes will be accompanied by a tender, a vessel specialized for supporting them (see the tender's description). Standard operations call for a squadron to pause once per day, typically at dusk, so that its ships may be resupplied and their crews fed. Two triremes at a time tie up outboard of the tender's outer hulls so that their crews may disembark and eat a meal aboard the larger craft, while the other three remain on guard against attack. When the crews return to their own vessels, they take with them rations of food and drinking water to sustain them through the next day.

Scales of marines are rotated between trireme and tender duty daily, as triremes are not equipped to house them in even troopship-level comfort. A marine who has spent at least every other night in a proper bunk will be a much more effective fighter when the squadron goes into combat.





Description: While triremes are very good at sinking ships, they are not nearly as useful for capturing ships afloat. They are also less than optimal for delivering invading troops ashore, as they must turn around and back up if they wish to beach themselves so that their marines can disembark.

This craft is meant to fulfill both of those functions. It is built to similar lines as a trireme and shares many of its sailing characteristics. However, it is smaller, about half as long as a trireme and with two tiers of oarsmen down each side (for a total of 56), and it foregoes the ram for an upswept projecting prow meant to facilitate beaching. The marines' fighting deck (above the oarsmen) is provided with armored side-panels behind which troops can take cover from enemy archers while returning fire through arrowslits. Grappling lines and poles for use in boarding actions are stowed in convenient locations on deck, and a boarding/disembarking ramp can be dropped down to either side from the foredeck, the underside of its outer end equipped with sharp spikes to provide purchase on an enemy deck.

For boarding actions where room will be needed on deck for fighting, a scale (25) of marines will typically be carried. For beach landings or port invasions, a double-scale (50) or more troops could be carried, at least for relatively short distances. The oarsmen do double duty as skirmishers, providing backup to the heavier troops or defending their ships once they are

grounded, guarding the marines' means of retreat should it become necessary.

The bireme's design also allows up to four of these craft to be ferried by a trireme tender, permitting them the same extended range as trireme squadrons.

DAWNING SUN INDOMITABLE, FIRST AGE

HEAVY WARSHIP

Role(s): Capital warship

Length: 203 feet

Beam: 122 feet

Draft: 9 feet

Rig Type/Closest Tack: Auto-retracting dragonwing/2 points (under sail — can take any heading when under power)

Speed: ••• acceleration/••••• top speed (under power); ••• (under sail)

Maneuverability: -1 (under power); -4 (under sail)

Standard/Minimum Crew: 74/12 (or 1, but that one crewman must be a Solar Exalted)

Soak: 50L (and see special rules in the "First Age Ships" boxed text, above)

Health Levels: 50/100

Description: This is a class of First Age warship of which only a very few examples are known to still exist in sailable condition — and none are fully intact. They were the flagships of the Old Realm's navy and, as such, were among the primary targets of the Dragon-Blooded rebellion.

FIRST AGE SHIPS

Ships of the First Age were constructed using materials and techniques that are no longer understood or reproducible in the world of Exalted. Their hulls and structural members are made of imperishable substances that are immune to the ravages of wind or waves, are invulnerable to the damage wrought by sea life on wooden hulls and are virtually impossible to damage or destroy without the use of powerful sorceries or First Age weaponry.

In game terms, First Age vessels' incredible durability is represented in three ways. First, their materials are immune to "normal" damage — enchanted weapons, Charms, sorceries or First Age artifacts are necessary if an attack is to have any effect on them. Second, they are immune to magical effects such as Rain of Doom, which do not damage objects made of Essence or the Five Magical Materials. And third, First Age craft always take damage as if they were living things, not inanimate objects. Dice of damage scored against them must be rolled for successes,

and Charms or other effects that multiply damage against objects do not apply.

These vessels' soak and health levels also reflect their substances' uncanny properties. Their soak is much higher than that of modern vessels, as it is extremely difficult to damage them through blunt impact. Cutting, burning or otherwise causing their materials to "unravel" is almost always required before anything more than cosmetic damage can be done.

Because the secrets of their creation have been lost, damaged First Age ships are also virtually impossible to fully repair. Patches can often be applied, and broken pieces replaced with inferior substitutes made from ordinary materials, but such repairs are in no way as durable as the original substance. Even the powerful materials used in the Realm and Lookshy are poor imitations of First Age product. Many otherwise impervious vessels now bear several such flaws, usually carefully concealed to hide their weak spots.

These ships are of a trimaran design and are likely one of the inspirations for modern three-hulled vessels. The hulls are long and sleek, their imperishable materials formed in almost organic shapes that would be difficult or impossible to duplicate with wooden construction. They are not particularly massive, either in truth or by appearance. Indeed, while impressive in size and in the sweeping lines of their form, to the eye these ships give an impression of *lightness* rather than of ponderous weight.

The arching struts connecting the three hulls bring to mind images of archers' bows and flying buttresses — or even the wings of a bird in flight. The port and starboard hulls (each 163 feet in length and 19 feet in the beam) project 40 feet forward of the center hull (also 163 feet in length but with a 31-foot beam), adding to these ships' unusual, exotic appearance.

In the gaps between the center hull and the hulls to either side of it hang a pair of drive assemblies, each an arrangement of three 20-foot-diameter paddle wheels mounted in-line with each other. When these ships sailed using their Essence-driven engines, these assemblies would be lowered partly into the water so that the wheels' rotation would drive the ship forward (or backward, at the pilot's choice). Maneuvers were carried out by varying the speed of the paddle wheels on one side relative to the speed of those on the other, and tight turns performed by running the wheels in opposite directions.

It has been many years since any of the known vessels of this type have operated under power, however. Those that are still in use depend exclusively on their sails, as the secret of activating the engines has been lost.

Or so it is believed. In reality, activating the drive system requires nothing more than for a Solar Exalted to take the pilot's position in the center hull and invest 10 motes of committed Essence into the ship via its controls. For so long as this Essence remains committed (i.e., until control of the vessel is voluntarily relinquished or until another Solar Exalted invests Essence to replace it), the Exalted investing it remains master of the ship and retains the ability to activate and control the ship's drive, either directly by operating the controls or by issuing orders to the spirit bound up in the heart of the ship. The Essence used to actually power the ship is gathered by this spirit and stored in a sort of "battery" constructed of orichalcum and various crystalline materials, from which it is drawn to power the engines and the ship's weaponry.

Originally, these vessels were armed with an array of First Age weaponry, of which light implosion bows were among the weakest. While the armament varied among the individual ships, typical weapons included larger, heavier versions of the implosion bow as well as lightning ballistae and various other elemental discharge weapons. These weapons did not require Essence expenditures from



THE LEGEND OF THE DAWNING SUN INDOMITABLE

Among the folklore of the sea and the old stories told among mariners is the legend of the ship for which this class of vessel is named, the *Dawning Sun Indomitable*. As with many such tales, there is a truth behind it, obscured though it may have become over the centuries of its retelling.

During the Terrestrials' purge of the Solar Exalted, the Dragon-Blooded of the *Indomitable's* crew mutinied, rising up to slay their officers and take the ship for themselves. Though the Solars fought valiantly, their defeat was a foregone conclusion due to the Terrestrials' superior numbers and was made even more certain when some of the ship's weapons were brought to bear against them. In the end, the *Indomitable's* master, mortally wounded and the sole remaining Solar aboard, managed to fight his way to the piloting-chamber. With the last of his strength, he gave the ship's spirit one final command before dying: "Steer for the open ocean, and keep going until the end of Creation or until someone relieves me." Unable to dissuade the great dreadnought from its course, the Dragon-Blooded were forced to abandon ship and watch helplessly as their would-be prize vanished into the distance and the gathering twilight.

There are many variations on the story, and the roles of heroes and villains of the tale depend on who is telling it, but on one thing all agree: that out there, somewhere at sea, to this day the *Dawning Sun Indomitable* may still be wailing for her slain master and waiting for someone worthy to come and take his place.

their users, as they were tied into the ship's own power-distribution system.

Now, most such weapons have been removed from the surviving ships of this class and either mounted aboard modern vessels or added to the defenses of the strongholds of the wealthy and powerful. What remains of their First Age armament, augmented with firedust weapons and marines, still makes these craft the most fearsome warships afloat, along with the simple fact that they can ram any wooden vessel with impunity while ignoring most of what their enemies can bring to bear against them.

SWIFT MIDDAY BRILLIANCE, FIRST AGE LIGHT WARSHIP

Role(s): Fast, light warship

Length: 84 feet

Beam: 33 feet

Draft: 9 feet

Rig Type/Closest Tack: Dragonwing/2 points (under sail — can take any heading when under power)

Speed: ••••• (under power); ••••• (under sail)

Maneuverability: -1 (under power); -3 (under sail)

Standard/Minimum Crew: 15/4 (or 1, but that 1 crewman must be an Exalted of any type)

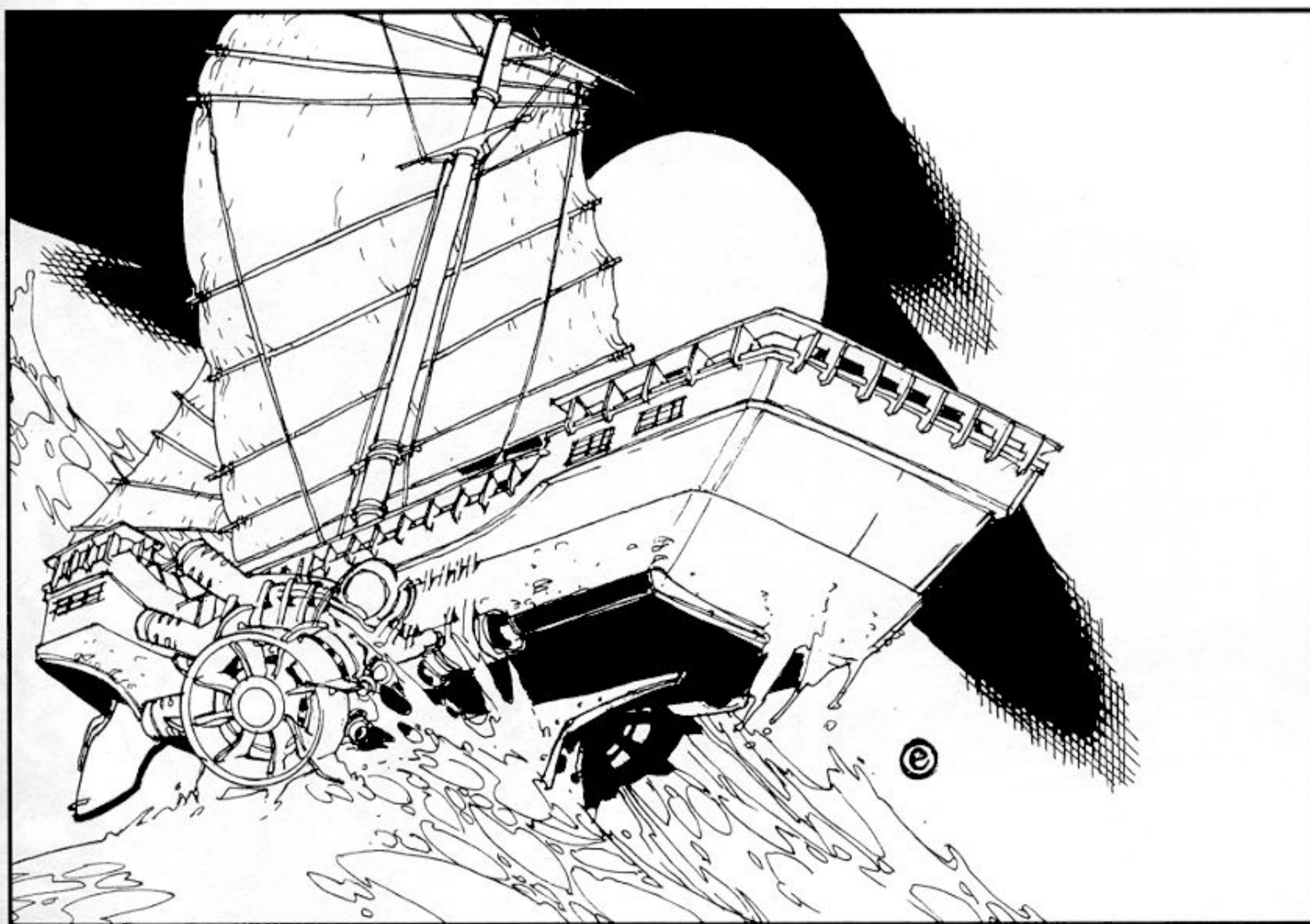
Soak: 30L (and see special rules in the "First Age Ships" boxed text, above)

Health Levels: 35/75

Description: Compared to other First Age fighting craft, there are more surviving examples of the *Swift Midday Brilliance* class still afloat than of any other type. This is not to say that there are large numbers of them — there are no more than a few dozen — or that more than a handful are substantially undamaged and retain at least most of their original complement of weapons. But still, thanks to the very large numbers of these vessels that were originally produced, if a given inhabitant of the current world of *Exalted* has seen only one First Age hull, it was probably a ship of this class.

The lines of these craft share the same near-organic grace of their larger counterparts but on a much smaller and simpler scale. The single hull is 81 feet in length and 19 feet in the beam, and carries a broad, curved rudder at its stern. A pair of paddlewheels, each 12 feet in diameter, are mounted on opposite sides of the hull amidships, and the ship's mast stands midway between there and the bow. By gripping the controls mounted at the pilot's station aft and investing 5 motes of Essence, any type of Exalted may gain control of the ship's Essence-based drive system and, with practice, can manipulate the speed and direction of the wheels' rotation so as to maneuver the craft almost effortlessly. (The 5 motes remain committed until either the character chooses to relinquish control of the drive or another Exalted assumes control, after which point they may be regained normally. Characters who are not some type of Exalted cannot activate the drive.)

The drive system may be used for a total of six hours in the span of a day, starting from when it is first activated. (Once six hours of use are accumulated, the drive will not operate again until a full day has passed from when it was activated. If less than six hours of propulsion are used in a given day, the remainder does not carry over to the next day — the available usage resets to six hours again when the day has passed. This is due to the nature of the



Exalted

apparatus by which the vessel accumulates and stores Essence.) When the drive is not in use, the paddlewheels freewheel near-frictionlessly and do not impede the craft's progress while under sail.

Originally, these vessels were typically armed with three light implosion bows, two on the foredeck and one aft, just forward of the pilot's station, and a pair of lightning ballistae. These weapons did not receive power from the ship, and required the expenditure of Essence by their users, as in the weapons' description in Chapter Four. On most surviving specimens of this class, one or more of each of these weapons has been removed for use elsewhere, and the drive system often functions erratically, depending on the quality of the savant-engineer maintaining it.

OTHER SUGGESTED VESSELS

The following vessels will not be covered in full detail, but are given here as suggestions of other types of craft that might appear in any *Exalted* game.

Cynis Pleasure Barge: When House Cynis wants to throw a particularly exclusive orgy, or it wants to make a spectacle of its excess for an entire city to see, there are few better ways to do it than aboard a floating palace of hedonism in the middle of the harbor. Rowed by slaves and furnished and decorated elaborately (if not necessarily tastefully), the house likely has built a series of these over the years, each larger and more excessive than its predecessor.

Paddlewheel Water Taxi: This vehicle is a small, open boat, usually less than 25 feet in length, that, instead of being propelled by oars, is driven by a pair of hand-cranked paddlewheels mounted on opposite sides of the hull. Such craft are often used to ferry people and small quantities of goods from point to point across a harbor or dockyard where narrow passages would make the use of oars difficult.



CHAPTER THREE

MARITIME TRADES



This chapter discusses the various sailing trades and their role on the sea. Mercantilism, the navy and piracy are all discussed in depth, with attention to enlightening the reader and giving them the tools necessary to run a sea-based series.

MERCANTILE

The world is a big place. It is a *huge* place. It is so big that it is unlikely that any mortal will ever see the whole of it in his lifetime. It is a looming, soaring, exciting, dreadful, *wonderful* place. Many exotic and amazing things fill the world, and the farther away you are from home, the more exotic and wonderful they seem.

And thus the need for mercantilism. What is common and boring in one place is amazing and exotic in another. What would sell for almost nothing in one place would sell for a king's ransom in another. The smart merchant knows this and attempts to capitalize on it.

The worldwide network of commerce and communication that once sewed Creation together during the First Age has long disintegrated. Foreign goods range in price from very expensive to fabulously expensive. Only the richest can afford such luxury. And at the center of it all is the merchant.

MERCANTILISM

Food, raw materials and exotic imports are all critical to a functional economy. Though a country can stand on its own, nothing invigorates a nation's economy like a steady flow of imports and exports.

DIFFICULTIES OF TRADE

Because of the astronomical cost of trade and the poor international communication, there is little in the way of centralized international trading. The Guild is as close as it gets, and even it does more to promote more speculative trading by its membership than to try to organize the whole of the world's goods. This means that each individual merchant is buying the goods she thinks she can sell at a higher price elsewhere and then attempting to do so. Since there is no way other than experience and savvy to judge the value of such an operation, the entire endeavor is more speculative in nature. A merchant never knows whether there is a market for the goods until they arrive at their destination, making the whole notion of trade a risky business.

The speculative character of trade is increased by its cost. It takes an expensive ship and a great deal of manpower to move goods to another nation. At the destination there are tariffs and taxes, bribes and fees. A merchant must pay for all of this before making a single sale, and then, once she has reached her destination, she must find a buyer and attempt to clear a profit.

And thus, foreign goods cost a great deal. It is unwise to transport goods that people produce at the destination. No one will pay that much money for goods that are not unique. Goods must be different and exotic, and it's difficult to judge the demand for exotic goods. They must catch the fancy of people to whom they are foreign.

Being a merchant is part savvy, part fortune telling, but for those that succeed, there is great wealth to be had.

SUPERCARGOS

Many merchant houses do not own enough ships to handle all of their business. Others simply do not wish to deal with the troubles of maintaining a fleet. Still others cannot afford to. These merchants hire ships to move their goods from one place to another. Someone must protect these goods from the crew, who might otherwise pilfer the contents.

The factor (the person who owns or is in financial charge of the cargo) will usually hire a supercargo to protect the shipment. A supercargo is a person assigned to sail on the ship and keep an eye on the cargo itself. She is responsible if the shipment turns up short.

The amount of work a supercargo does depends a great deal on her and her employer's relationship with the ship. In some cases, she will spend all day in the hold, opening crates and checking contents, making sure that everything is as it should be. On other, more trusted ships, she will merely check a few times a day, keeping an eye on any particularly suspicious crewmembers.

If cargo turns up missing, the supercargo will go immediately to the captain, who will usually begin caning sailors until the missing cargo reappears. If a supercargo shows up at her destination short, it is her head on the (hopefully proverbial) chopping block.

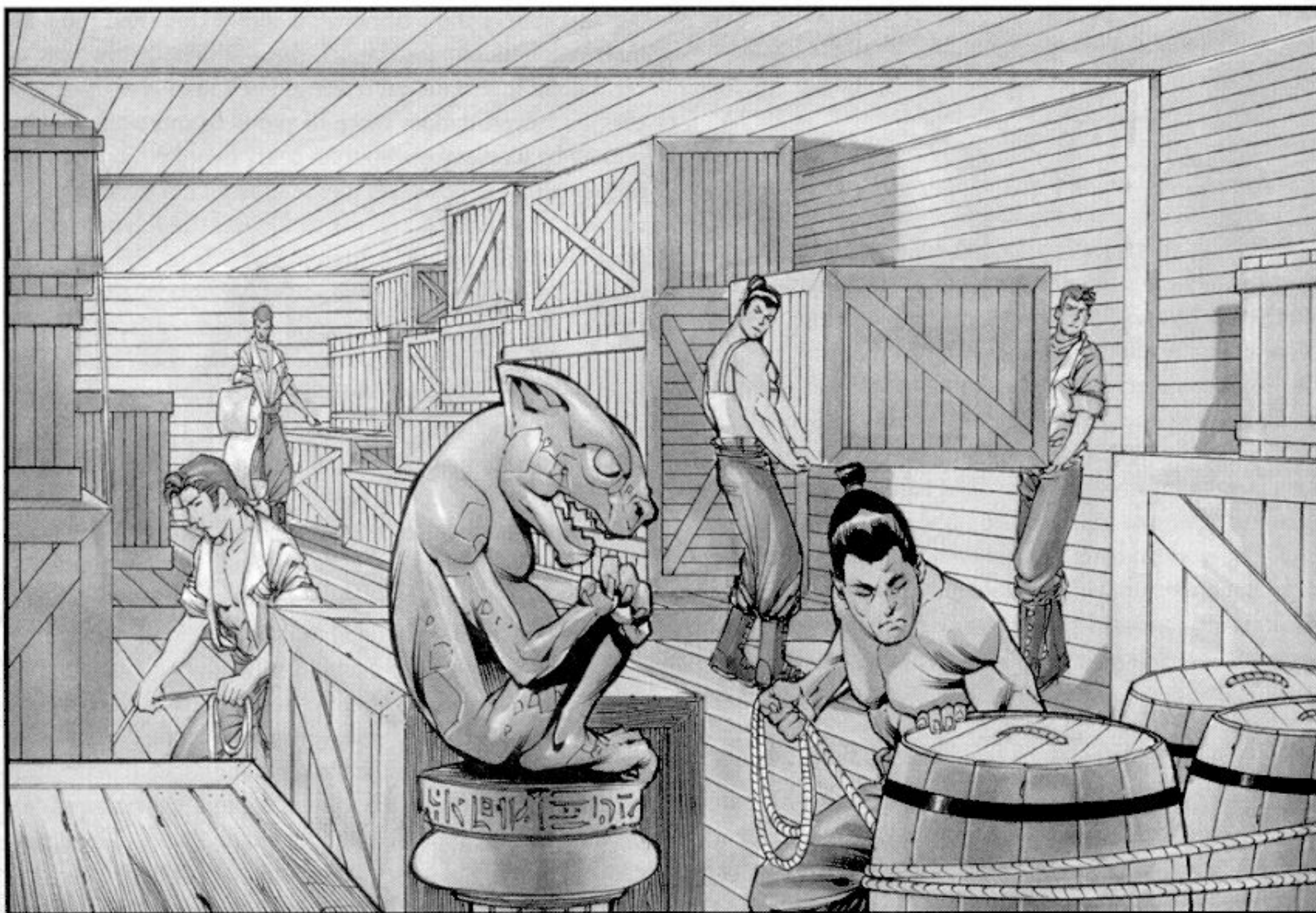
LETTERS OF CREDIT

Though often necessary, transporting money is extremely dangerous. Pirates are always on the lookout for groups of ships (often called *jade fleets*) hauling jade and silver from one place to another. One alternative is the letter of credit, a financial instrument similar to a certified check.

A large, financial body, usually one of the Great Houses of the Dynasty, the Empress or the Guild writes out a letter of credit and honors that letter, paying cash when it is presented at some other location. It has the advantage that it can be non-transferable, and, therefore, nearly useless to pirates. It can also be written to a specific goal, such as the purchase of grain, and if so, it is useless for any other end.

The problems with a letter of credit are twofold. First of all, there is always a fee in purchasing one. Generally, a letter of credit will cost 110 percent of the value of the letter. This is to defray the cost to the person honoring it. The second is that the person or organization must have a presence both at the origin of the journey and its destination and sufficient funds on hand to honor the letter for it to be any good.

Most merchants get letters of credit from respectable organizations; the organizations that issue them are of impeccable financial reputation. It's rare that the merchant with whom the bearer wishes to do business does not honor these documents. It's not difficult for a respectable merchant to cash in a letter of credit, and to refuse one is to refuse business.



Letters of credit are useful whenever there is a need to move funds. If a captain hauls a cargo somewhere but can't find a good cargo to bring back, it's not uncommon for her to get a letter of credit, so that she doesn't have to worry about hiding a bulky sum of cash on the ship.

BONDED CARGO

It is easy to think of the world of **Exalted** as a primitive and unsophisticated place, and yet, its people have many sophisticated financial ideas. The bonded cargo is one of them.

Bonding a cargo essentially insures it against theft or destruction. When a cargo is bonded, the owner seeks out a bonding company and hires it. The bonding company will assess the value of the cargo and the danger of the journey. The bonding agent will then charge a flat fee to bond the cargo. If the cargo is lost, the owner receives a sum equal to the value of the missing goods.

In more civilized lands, bonding a cargo is the rule, not the exception. It is relatively inexpensive, at least on safe waters, and helps hedge against disaster. If a merchant loses something as valuable as a ship, it can be devastating. To lose a costly cargo as well can mean the difference between financial ruin and eventual recovery.

The bonding company will present a bill of lading and a supercargo (see above). When a person hires a ship to haul their cargo, he usually allows the bonding company to provide the supercargo and doesn't bother presenting one himself. In the potentially dangerous world of **Exalted**, bonding cargo is very important, even in safe waters. Many merchants and ship owners are living from cargo to cargo, barely making ends meet. For them, the loss of a single cargo can mean financial ruin.

Needless to say, people can make good money protecting cargos for a bonding agent. This can lead to many an exiting trip for the guards, as crewmembers, pirates and thieves all try to lift the cargo before it reaches its destination.

BILL OF LADING

A bill of lading is a signed document stating the exact contents of a cargo. Not necessary when a captain is hauling her own cargos, these documents are extremely important when bonding a cargo or hauling someone else's goods. All parties sign the bill after the ship receives the goods and the purser has checked them. Upon delivery, the cargo is rechecked and the bill signed again. Any discrepancy falls to the supercargo to explain.

PUSHING WOOD

Cargo wrangling is one of the most difficult tasks on a ship. There are no powered winches in the world of **Exalted**, and there is no set container size. Crates often approach a ton in weight, and the crew must manhandle them with strength and leverage alone. The entire crew must pitch in to move cargo.

After the cargo is below decks, it must be stowed. Stowing cargo is as much an art form as a science. The weight of the cargo needs to be evenly distributed throughout the ship. It needs to balance to assure the ship an upright profile in the water. Even after the ship sails, stores dwindle, and one must take care that the ship doesn't begin listing.

But not all cargo is so safe. Many ships carry dangerous cargos. Firedust, vicious animals and ancient artifacts can turn against a crew quickly, destroying a ship. Crews come to relish "boring" cargos.

THE GUILD AND SHIPPING

People have said a great deal about Guild caravans, but rarely Guild fleets. Is this because they are less interesting? Is this because they are, inherently, more tedious?

Absolutely not.

Guild shipping deals with great dangers every day. Many pirate groups hate the Guild, and it isn't unusual for pirates to target Guild fleets specifically. Guild fleets live in constant fear of these attacks. The Guild bonds its own cargos, so even if the individual merchants are safe, every attack hurts the Guild as a whole.

In addition, there are the usual hazards of the seas. Spirits often fail to understand the difference between a welcome merchant and a belligerent invader, and so, even those spirits that are friendly to the natives can harass Guild fleets. Then there are the great dangerous beasts of the deep. A single merchant ship can pass unnoticed, but a dozen merchant vessels and their warship escorts do not have that luxury. The great Guild fleets cause a tremendous disturbance when they pass, and if there is a beast in the area, they *will* attract its attention.

This leaves the Guild walking a fine line. If it sends out its ships alone and unescorted, they might make it through

A TYPICAL GUILD FLEET

A typical Guild fleet is designed much like one of the great caravans. It consists of 10 large merchant ships and 30 blue-water merchants. These ships are escorted by eight triremes and 10 biremes for protection.

The Guild fleet will sail along its course, putting in every night (or every few nights) at small, insignificant port cities. The majority of the ships will drop sea anchors while one or two blue-water merchants, with a healthy marine contingent, will put into the port itself. If there is no harbor, they will make anchorage and send in long boats to feel out the market. After making the initial survey, the long boats will be loaded with goods the village needs and an impromptu market will be set up.



THE GUILD'S SHIPS

Experts estimate that the Guild owns more than 5,000 merchant ships. In addition, they place the Guild escort fleets at totaling more than 1,000 warships. If these numbers are accurate, then the Guild might potentially be the most powerful naval force in the world.

About 10 percent of the Guild merchant fleet consists of large merchant ships. About 30 percent are blue-water merchants. Forty percent are coastal traders. The remaining vessels are composed of various smaller, faster craft.

Of the escort fleet, there are 17 First Age light warships in reasonable condition. Of the rest of the ships, perhaps 40 percent are triremes. Fifty percent are biremes. There are a handful of trireme tenders, but the Guild does not take much stock in them. The remaining ships are various small craft manned with marines.

HIERARCH CHORMUND

Calling Hierarch Chormund a large man is like calling the Guild a large group of merchants. Chormund is as round as he is tall. He waddles when he walks, and when he laughs, he ripples like quicksand in an earthquake. He wears his hair long, and he keeps his face clean-shaven. He dresses in heavy wools and sweats all the time. Chormund has an aggressive, touchy manner, and his breath reeks of garlic.

Chormund has taken it upon himself to oversee all shipping for the Guild. He earned his initial fortune on the sea and considers the waves his one true love. He owns many yachts on which he spends his time, and he can still captain a boat in a pinch. Chormund tries to keep abreast of all sea-trade issues, even those that don't involve the Guild, and most hierarchs are comfortable bowing to his expertise.

Chormund is a glutton with many vices. He prefers drugs to alcohol, disdains gambling and likes young boys and girls equally. Rumors say his sexual tastes are brutal, but at all other times, he is a friendly and affable man, and most people take to him quickly. Chormund has homes all over the world but tends to gravitate to Nexus.

the natural hazards untouched, but if a pirate vessel spots one, it is doomed. If the Guild sends a great fleet, it will almost certainly run into problems with the creatures of the sea.

All things considered, the Guild prefers to send out great fleets. It's up to individual Guild merchants to deal with their own cargos, but the syndics favor numbers, based on the success of the caravans. Despite the lessened need to defer operational costs, these fleets still follow well-defined routes. They tend to stay close to the coasts, so they can put into port every night. They try to avoid the big ports, putting in at fishing villages and other small settlements. They make anchor offshore (rarely do these settlements have a decent harbor or quay) and send longboats to set up market. These fleets do a great deal to replenish the villages' supplies of hard-to-make goods, and these communities greet them warmly.

THE DYNASTY

Despite the vast financial domination of the Guild, it is not the only player in the world's mercantile sandbox. The Great Houses and the Empress herself are power-houses of trade, and the wise do not ignore them.

HOUSE V'NEEF

Not actually a merchant house, House V'neef does brisk business selling off goods and ships seized from pirate attacks. House V'neef also deals in some shipping, where its wines are concerned, and yet they are much more concerned with keeping the seas safe for others than plying

LORD GRUSTRION OF HOUSE V'NEEF

Lord Grustrion is a friendly but socially unskilled man. He stands 5'8" tall and wears his thinning blonde hair short. He has an uncomfortable smile. He is attractive enough, but he laughs at all the wrong times, has trouble with eye contact and is socially awkward. These shortcomings have held him back from what would otherwise be a successful political career.

Grustrion is a skilled sailor, a born psychologist and a natural judge of politics. He is the type of man who would make an excellent assistant. He can read the political lay of a room at a glance, but he is incapable of doing anything about it. Every time he tries to implement one of his plans, he manages to do nothing but humiliate himself. If it weren't for this social clumsiness, he would likely be running the Merchant Fleet. Instead, he is doomed to obscurity.

Grustrion is the lord of V'neef's pitiful merchant marine. The fleet is not big enough to warrant calling him an admiral, but at least he gets to do what he loves, command ships at sea.

the trades themselves. Experts estimate that House V'neef has 40 ships dedicated to the sea trade, no more. See page 78 for more details on House V'neef.

Five of the fleet are large merchant ships. Fifteen are blue-water merchants. Ten are coastal traders. The remaining vessels are composed of various smaller, faster craft.

HOUSE RAGARA

House Ragara, being the wealthiest house in the Realm, also has the largest merchant fleet of any of the royal houses. It can put over 500 merchant vessels to sea at any given time, with half that many ships in escort. House Ragara trades to ports around the Blessed Isle and beyond, and many people draw parallels between it and the Guild.

In fact, of all the houses, Ragara might be the closest ally of the Guild. Ragara understands the value of an unregulated economy, and its members are strict proponents of lessening government controls on imports and exports. Ragara works so closely with the Guild, in fact, that in many ways, the house is an extension of the Guild's interests.

Yet, Ragara is in competition with the Guild. Despite their recent amiable relationship, they do compete in

many arenas. Ragara is too big and too successful for the house and the Guild to be more than opportunistic allies.

About 10 percent of the fleet consists of large merchant ships. About 30 percent are blue-water merchants. Forty percent are coastal traders. The remaining vessels are composed of various smaller, faster craft.

HOUSE PELEPS

Perhaps the most likely candidate for sea trade, House Peleps is forbidden from dabbling in this arena. This does not stop it from stowing away goods on its naval vessels from time to time, but for the most part, House Peleps relies on the other houses of the Dynasty for all shipping.

OTHER INTERESTS

Many smaller interests, tiny Guilds unto themselves, still operate throughout the world. Some of these are on friendly terms with the Guild proper. Some are bitter rivals. Mercantile warfare is a dangerous thing in the world of *Exalted* — the combatants don't just limit themselves to undercutting markets and slashing prices. Merchant guilds summon spirits and set them upon rivals. They hire assassins. They vandalize storefronts and brutalize bystanders.

TALAAARAH SOUTHERN IMPORT/EXPORT GUILD

Headquartered in the city of Chiaroscuro, the Talaarah is a powerful Southern mercantile house. It deals extensively in firedust, and its ships sail throughout the South and to the Blessed Isle. They do not travel far to the east or west, though their shipments make it to Nexus.

The Talaarah have good relations with most of the nomadic peoples of the South and can often export firedust and other Southern goods more cheaply than the Guild. They travel extensively throughout the South and are welcomed in most every village and settlement. In many cases, they are more popular than the Guild.

The Talaarah's real money comes from smuggling. Located next to Paragon, Talaarah smugglers are extremely active inside Paragon borders. Though the citizens of Paragon do not purchase many goods, more transient members of Paragon's population and the city's nobles still require a black market, and Talaarah is there to comply.

The Talaarah Guild is fairly large. Experts think that they have close to 100 ships with half as many escort vessels. Nine of these vessels are large merchant ships, 28 are blue-water merchants, 50 are coastal traders. The remaining vessels are composed of various smaller, faster craft.

Of the escort fleet, there is one First Age light warship in good condition that serves as the guild's flagship. Of the rest of the ships, perhaps 18 are triremes, and 19 are biremes. The remaining ships are various small craft crewed by marines.

ADMIRAL DRAGELIAS OF HOUSE RAGARA

Dragelias is a plain, average-looking man. He is of average height and average build. His hair is a neutral light-brown color. His eyes are brown, and his nose is a bit wide. He dresses neatly and smells perpetually of cinnamon, for some reason he will never reveal. When he talks, he talks quietly. When he gestures, he gestures in a muted fashion. He is of indeterminate middle age.

Dragelias is a passable businessman, but he is a weak sailor and a bad politician. He is not clever at parties, and no one takes to him quickly. Most people consider it a miracle that he has risen as far as he has. Those people have never done business with him.

Dragelias is a master of blackmail. He has something on nearly everyone in his house. He is adept on getting dirt on anyone. Dragelias can have almost any position he wishes, and as long as there are deals to be made, he will excel at it. Dragelias could probably have a higher position in his house, but he knows his limits. He is happy with his little empire. He is content to live within his own potential. Dragelias has settled for being admiral of his house's merchant fleet. As outnumbered as he is by the Guild, he can still get contracts. As beset upon as he is by enemies, they always just seem to shrink away and lose interest.



GUILDMASTER RAFEE BATEEQ

Guildmaster Rafee Bateeq is a cunning and dangerous man. At 5'9" and 145 pounds, he is athletic and a skilled fighter. Bateeq has dark hair and eyes and a smoldering intensity that makes women swoon. He carries himself with a dangerous grace and is always armed.

Bateeq is a competent enough guildmaster. He is an excellent caravan master but a horrible sailor. Many say that he's afraid of water, though never to his face. He is at sea on only the rarest of occasions.

THE WESTERN TRADE ALLIANCE

Based in Abalone, the sailors of the Western Trade Alliance must deal, on a daily basis, with raiders out of the Coral Archipelago. These men are, literally, some of the finest-trained combat sailors in the world. Three or more pirate vessels will sometimes attack a ship on a single journey.

This has led to something of a rivalry between the merchants of the Trade Alliance and the Coral pirates. There is a great deal of respect between these two naval forces, and pirate captains have been known to let Trade Alliance ships go unharmed (minus their cargo) if their captains were particularly clever. This doesn't mean that

there aren't hard feelings between the two forces — both sides have spilled more blood than can be measured.

Still, the Western Trade Alliance specializes in fast ships and light cargos. No guild has a higher success rate for running pirate blockades. It favors single, unescorted ships that can outmaneuver pirates without thought of losing consort vessels. This makes Western Trade Alliance ship captains independent and creative thinkers, and it may be that there are no greater sea commanders in the world.

The Western Trade Alliance has less than 50 ships, all of them small and fast. What they lack in volume they make up for in sheer audacity. It's said in many circles that most all their sailors are men because only a man has the balls to be a Western Trade Alliance sailor.

Eleven of the ships are rigged blue-water merchants, and 20 are biremes. The remaining vessels are composed of various smaller, faster craft, such as the fast courier.

HOUSE MARGARD

First and foremost, House Margard denies any association with Northern raiders. It base itself in the town of Cherak, far south of any actively raiding nations, and it proclaims its legitimacy loudly and to anyone who will listen.

That being said, Margard does a bustling sea trade and has managed to anger or make enemies with almost everyone in the world. At the heart of this is its ability to acquire almost any object that raiders of the North have stolen and sell it back to its original owner at a "reasonable price."

The Guild and many of the social elite of the North, East and the Blessed Isle have declared open war on House Margard. Margard seems to enjoy this state of affairs, since it has the protection of most Northern rulers. A person isn't really a member of the house until he has a story of at least one assassination attempt.

The Realm itself refuses to move on Margard. It is simply too useful, and so, the merchant house enjoys its life of selling lost goods back to their owners and denies being the front for one of the most extensive piracy operations in the known world.

In fact, the house probably isn't involved in piracy. Most people, or at least those it hasn't pissed off, believe it merely has strong contacts with the real pirates. Margard seems to be able to get any item raided by pirates from the North, and no one believes that the pirates are *that* organized. More likely, House Margard simply has buyers and contacts located everywhere.

Five of its fleet consist of large merchant ships, 16 are blue-water merchants, 19 are coastal traders. The remaining 10 vessels are various smaller, faster craft.

Of the escort fleet, four are triremes, and five are biremes. The remaining 15 ships are various small craft crewed by marines.

MASTER CIORE

The great and renowned Master Ciore, leader of the Western Trade Alliance and one of the most skilled naval commanders of all time, is also renowned as the most inept hand-to-hand fighter in the world. Perhaps this is why he is so skilled at ship combat. If someone were ever to board his flagship, he would be as great a danger to his men as the enemy.

Ciore is a slightly plump man who loses his breath at the slightest exertion. He is tan and well groomed, with sun-bleached hair and dark eyes. He is pleasant, if not charming, and the men find him likeable enough. Women find him harmless.

Ciore is a born sailor and a natural naval tactician. With a proreus to lend authority to his orders, he can inspire men and lead with great vigor. Otherwise, he has a hard time motivating. Luckily, motivation isn't a problem; Ciore's men adore him. There are few men sailing with the Western Alliance who haven't had their lives saved by Ciore at one time or another, and most of them would lay down those lives for him in a heartbeat.

LADY MERTA

Merta is an imposing, powerful figure of a woman. Most men who meet her, with her 6'6" frame, huge bosoms, gray eyes and flowing blonde hair don't know whether to be aroused or terrified. Though she might not be what most men would call beautiful, she is certainly captivating, and men quake to follow her every command. Few can ever tell if they are motivated by fear or by lust.

What most people do not know is that Merta is secretly a Lunar Exalted. Powerful and deadly, she has managed to hide this fact her entire life, and even before the disappearance of the Empress, the Wyld Hunt never managed to catch her scent. Not even those who know her secret are certain how she has managed this. Some believe she possesses a First Age artifact that conceals her Exalted nature.

Merta is a competent leader and a ruthless foe. House Margard has known unparalleled success under her command. She is a shrewd businesswoman and a terrifying diplomat.



NAVAL SERVICE

The call of the sea means many things to many people. To some, it means pushing wood and carrying freight, money and commerce. To others, it means suckling at the sea's jugular, taking ships and looting cargos, raiding and slaughtering.

But to a select breed of sailor, the sea means dedicating one's life to the protection of one's lands and one's nation, service to the ideals of the nation's military and

spilling one's blood for the greater good. It means sacrifice and dedication. Naval life is more than a career, more than a lifestyle, it is living an ideal and living it well.

CAREER NAVY

Once a character joins the navy, he is usually (depending on the government) in for a mandatory term. Many, many young men and women leave as soon as this term is up. The military life is not for them — they want a freer lifestyle. They leave to pursue a life at sea that is more forgiving to drunken binges and barroom brawls.

But others discover that life at sea is not their only joy. They thrive in the more structured military environment. They yearn to climb the ladder. They are in for the long haul, and every time they come to the end of their term, they re-up. At 40 years old, if they are still alive, they might retire with a pension.

The career naval man is rare indeed. Such men are dedicated and disciplined. They love the life. They are a cut above their fellow sailors, and they know it. All they care about is the sea and their patriotism, and that's the way they like it.

DISCIPLINE

On the surface, naval discipline is much the same as discipline on other ships. When it comes down to it, life on any ship is hard, and the punishments are brutal. Transgressors are lucky to get away with a simple caning, and a caning is one of the most painful punishments you can give a human without leaving permanent damage.

The difference between naval discipline and normal sea discipline is that naval discipline extends to the shore. When a ship hits port, the men want to cut loose. They drink, they have wild sex, they gamble and take drugs. They delve into whatever form of hedonism strikes their fancy, and they don't stop until they are blind, oblivious, broke, unconscious or incarcerated. When the dawn comes, they rarely remember what they did or where they went. They return to the ship or beg their jailers for release with a bleary self-satisfaction. Then they either go back to sea or start all over again.

In the navy, a sailor can be court-martialed for such behavior, and the lucky are merely destined to serve a term in the dungeons. A navy man (regardless of her gender) knows that she is representing the navy at all times. She might get away with a little hedonism, just a little, if it's impossible to trace her back to her ship. Otherwise, she will try to keep it reined in, for a wild night will result in lashes. Arrest will often result in a court marshal. In the wildest crimes, the court-martial will result in death.

Navy men know their limitations and make discipline a part of their every waking hour. They might get drunk, visit the harlotry and gamble, but they never let it get out of control.



HER MAJESTY'S IMPERIAL NAVY

The most powerful sea-based force in Creation, the Realm's navy is perhaps the greatest maritime power the world has ever known. One would certainly have to go back to the First Age to find its equal, and even then, it might be difficult to find a navy with the numbers and dedication of the Realm's.

The imperial navy is a potent fighting force. No navy is more dedicated or has a higher moral. No officers are more true, no sailors more loyal. The Realm's navy is a shining example to all who look upon it.

But now, it has become a pawn in the game of houses. With the disappearance of the Empress, more and more, the navy promotes House Peleps or House V'neef and their interests. It is a sad state of affairs, disheartening to the men, but they are determined to hold true to their traditions and their ideals.

PROMOTIONS

The lower and middle classes of the Realm fill the enlisted ranks of their navy. Officers are always patricians and often Dragon-Blooded or unExalted members of the Dynasty. It's certain that a Dragon-Blooded officer will rise higher in the ranks than any other. An unExalted captain is almost unheard of.

Promotions work as they do on most ships. Occasionally, an enlisted man will jump to officer. This promotion is almost always to the rank of proreus or keleustes, but a handful of enlisted men have made the jump to kubernetes' man. Usually, this happens when an enlisted man takes control of a ship under terrible conditions, when all the officers are dead, and somehow brings it home.

Regardless, only patricians can be officers. There are no exceptions to this rule, and so if an enlisted man makes the jump to officer, he is always elevated to the patrician class.

PENSIONS AND PAY RATES

A sailor who makes it to retirement gets enough of a pension to survive for the rest of her days (Resources •). A sailor who loses a limb and is discharged because of it, who loses a limb and then retires normally or who earned many awards during her career can retire with a comfortable pension (Resources ••). A sailor who lost a limb and earned many awards during her career can retire with an affluent pension (Resources •••). Widows or widowers collect their spouse's pensions.

But sailors aren't the only ones to earn pensions. Naval officers, though patricians, are often second and third children, with little or no hope for inheritance. Therefore, they earn pensions as well. An officer who retires can look forward to a comfortable but unextravagant pension (Resources ••). An officer who has many awards or one that has lost a limb can retire with an affluent pension (Resources •••). Captains and higher all retire with healthy pensions (Resources ••••). Successful captains typically receive preferential leasing agreements from the Throne unrelated to the terms offered their house and can look forward to life politically independent of

the house elders. As with the enlisted, an officer's widow or widower can draw her pension, though it is expected that Dragon-Blooded will decline this unless they actually loved their spouse. To draw a pension, a sailor or officer must serve for 20 years or retire early due to injury. Most Exalts serve for at least 50 years, and an Exalted officer is eligible for honorable retirement after a century of service.

Pay rates are one level lower than pensions, to a minimum of a Resources •. It may occur to some that admirals receive no more than captains. They *do* earn more, just not enough to change their Resources. Admirals tolerate the small difference because they are always powerful political figures in their own right and rarely need

LORD HIGH ADMIRAL PELEPS SORUGAN

Standing 6'2" inches tall and weighing in at 270 pounds, Sorugan is an imposing figure of a man. He is barrel-chested and powerfully built, with arms that could snap timbers and legs that could kick through decking. Sorugan is completely bald, hairless with the exception of eyebrows and eyelashes, which are coal black. The years at sea have left his skin pitted, cracked and wrinkled, but his dark brown eyes are still young.

Sorugan frightens small children, and animals despise him. He is nevertheless an understanding and evenhanded man, though a person must weather shouting and many explosive curses before she can begin to tell. Sorugan might not be the orneriest man in the Realm, but he's certainly in the top 10.

It's a miracle that he has any power at all, but as they say, a man can make captain on his own, but it takes a wife to make admiral. Sorugan has such a wife, a beautiful and politically savvy woman named Ierana. Ierana attends all the parties and makes all the connections. She has charmed the spouses of every person in power in House Peleps, and through her dealings, Sorugan wields great influence.

But Sorugan didn't get his position just by pissing fire and marrying well, he is certainly the man for the job. A powerful Water-aspected Dragon-Blood, Sorugan is a masterful tactician and a consummate sailor. He is a born leader and a natural logistician, and as any enemy will tell you, it isn't just children he can make cry.

Sorugan wears his uniform all day long, and it usually looks that way. When he's not terrorizing his subordinates, he can be found in the courts of the Realm, discussing policy and guarding the interests of his men and his house. Sorugan takes his job very seriously, and his word is his bond.

Naturally, being the lord high admiral, Sorugan is not associated with any specific fleet. His flagship has a 10-ship consort, to escort him as he makes rounds of the fleets.

their naval pay. Their large house stipends and extremely favorable leases on money-earning properties more than make up for their base pay packages.

FLEET ORGANIZATION

There are six fleets in the Realm's navy. These six fleets each have responsibilities and duties in certain waters. These duties can be general or specific, and they are meaningless in times of emergency. If the Scavenger Lands launched a massive assault on the Realm, you could bet that the Wood Fleet wouldn't be waiting to repel the attack alone.

The majority of these fleets fall under the control of House Peleps. The only exception is the Merchant Fleet, controlled by House V'neef. Most officers that rise to power come from the house that owns the fleet, but this is not a hard and fast rule. Hard work and dedication can earn one any rank but admiral (and that can be earned through politics).

THE EARTH FLEET

Numbering some 748 ships, the Earth Fleet is in charge of guarding the Blessed Isle itself. Acting as a defensive line and a coast guard, the Earth Fleet spends more of its time guarding against smugglers and incompe-

tent captains than foreign threats. Its duties tend to overlap those of the Merchant Fleet, and even though the Earth Fleet is restricted from attacking pirate ships, practically, it will do what is necessary to defend the Realm's shores.

The Earth Fleet is the most relaxed in the Realm. Its discipline seems shoddy and its uniforms ragged. It is the lowest rung of the Realm's navy, and the men know it. They are, nevertheless, no less dedicated to their jobs.

Of the Earth Fleet, there are 22 First Age light warships and three First Age heavy warships in reasonable condition. Of the rest of the ships, perhaps 30 percent are triremes, 40 percent are biremes and five percent are trireme tenders. The remaining ships are various small craft crewed by with marines.

THE AIR FLEET

Upon first hearing its name, many believe this fleet is composed of First Age air ships, but like all of the Realm's fleets, it is merely named for the pole toward which it serves. Stationed in the northern waters of the Inner Sea, the Air

FLEET ADMIRAL PELEPS ERALIN, THE SEA WITCH

A weathered and ugly old hag, Eralin is nonetheless a skilled admiral. Standing just over 5' tall (and killing any who dare guess her weight), Eralin could stand 5'6" if she had enough men to lever her spine straight. With white hair and a terrible complexion, she looks like nothing so much as a Storm Mother, and she wears her "Sea Witch" moniker with pride.

The Sea Witch is a Water-aspected Dragon-Blood of considerable power. A sorceress, she is said to command the weather and the seas with ease. She also has a knack with spirits and seems to be on good terms with every water spirit around and about the Blessed Isle.

The Sea Witch is the widow of the former fleet admiral of the Earth Fleet. When her husband died, she took over the fleet and continued to patrol the waters. The truth of the matter is, no one in House Peleps dared tell her she wasn't admiral. After a few weeks of deliberation, they decided to just give her the title.

The Sea Witch is a decent leader, a good sailor and a woman of great power. She is *not* a good fighter. She travels everywhere with two bodyguards (her "mussels," as she calls them) who would defend her to the death. Powerful Fire-aspected Terrestrial Exalted, they are not to be trifled with.

FLEET ADMIRAL RAGARA FERIA

A beautiful woman, Feria stands 5'8" tall with a slender build and a come-hither look. Feria moves with a seductive and swaying gait, and many a man has lost his heart upon seeing her.

Despite her reputation as a man-eater and a ruthless politician, Feria is actually a very sweet woman. Did she use her sexuality to get into her current position? Absolutely, but she has a place in her heart for every man and woman she seduced to climb the political ladder, and she keeps mementos of all of them in her cabin.

Feria is a skilled fighter and a talented Fire-aspected Dragon-Blooded. She leads well at sea, and her tactics are sound. Her sailors, both male and female, love her with complete devotion, and she commands loyalty few commanders can achieve. This is not a simple matter of her sexuality because her charisma transcends both sex and sexual orientation. She is brilliant and charming, and she genuinely cares for those she commands, and that is a much more powerful force than a surge in the loins.

Feria is a loyal and powerful woman. She is monogamous in her relationships and honest in her dealings. Unfortunately, with the disappearance of the Empress, her house has asked her to use the fleet for its purposes. So far, she has done so, but as one of the few people from another house granted power by the Peleps, she takes this trust very seriously, and the time is coming when her loyalties will be tested.





Fleet numbers some 1,399 ships. These ships keep peace in the Northern waters, but mostly, they serve as the first line of defense from the recent attacks of the raiders of the North.

Well versed in fighting the tactics of the Northmen, these ships patrol the waters, looking for the telltale silhouette of the raiders' longships. When raiding parties are spotted, the ships of the Air Fleet respond quickly and without mercy. They carry talented marines to combat the Northmen in boarding actions (their favored tactic), and they usually win.

The Northmen have learned that it is better to slip past the Air Fleet than to waste energy fighting it, and so, most of these battles happen when the Northmen are on the way home, drunk on rape and pillage and spoiling for more action. The Air Fleet sees a great deal of combat, and its sailors and marines quickly become blooded veterans.

Of the Air Fleet, there are six First Age light warships and four First Age heavy warships in reasonable condition. Of the rest of the ships, 30 percent are triremes, 40 percent are biremes and five percent are trireme tenders. The remaining ships are small craft crewed by marines.

THE WOOD FLEET

Stationed in the East, the Wood Fleet is composed of 1,555 ships charged with patrolling and keeping the peace in the waters around the Scavenger Lands. Practically, it does less to guard the Scavenger Lands and more to guard *from* the Scavenger lands. Still, it is an important force for peace in the East, and the merchants of the area more or less respect that.

FLEET ADMIRAL PELEPS POLIN

Standing 5'10" tall and weighing in at 150 pounds, Polin is a strong, fit man. He couldn't win any muscle contests, but he takes care of himself, and he is a competent fighter. A Dragon-Blooded Aspected of Water, Polin loves the sea. He is only really at home on a ship, and the paperwork of his position has never sat well with him.

Polin is neither an ugly man nor a pretty one. He is pleasant enough, and he has a certain flare with the men. His leadership skills are strong, but his grasp of the big picture has never been good, and neither has his grasp of economics. Since he has taken over the Wood Fleet, he has turned it into a profit-generating arm of the military. Not a month has past that he has not managed to make the fleet pay for itself, but he could safely get much, much more.

Polin was born to be a pirate. The more sedentary and bureaucratic life of an admiral does not sit well with him. Still, he is competent if not excellent, and the money he is generating for House Peleps has made him quite the star among his superiors. No one realizes how far he has fallen short of his potential.

More recently, the Wood Fleet been a strong arm of House Peleps, insuring that the house's interests are met in the East. Shakedown patrols have been harassing ships going in and out of the Scavenger Lands, and they have levied impromptu "taxes" on shipping. For the most part, no one has complained. The ships sailing into and out of Nexus have been happy to pay these demands, which have been modest to date. The increased presence of the Realm's navy has actually dropped pirate activity in the area and, correspondingly, bonding fees have dropped. Everyone's been very careful not to let the navy know this.

So, whenever it shakes down a ship, there is much crying and gnashing of teeth. Merchants weep and complain and put on a grand show of despair. So far, the navy is convinced that it doesn't dare take more, but in reality, its extortions have yet to exceed the drop in bonding fees. Many of the pursers have figured this out, and they have told their captains. Among those who know the truth, it has become a big game. The captains are happy to have things operate so smoothly, and the merchants are just happy to have their cargo protected.

And so, for the moment, everyone is happy. Even the regional military alliance has kept clear of the matter. Though they chafe at the interference, the merchants have been strong enough to hold them back.

Of the Wood Fleet, there are 24 First Age light warships and four First Age heavy warships in reasonable condition. Of the rest of the ships, perhaps 30 percent are Triremes, 40 percent are biremes and five percent are trireme tenders. The remaining ships are various small craft manned with marines.

THE WATER FLEET

Stationed in the West and the Far West, the Water Fleet is composed of 1,272 ships at the moment (the number fluctuates). Of all the fleets, it is the one that receives the most funding because it is the fleet that takes the heaviest casualties. It is the Water Fleet that deals with the most dangerous creatures, the most recalcitrant spirits and, worse, the most organized set of pirates in the known world.

The primary purpose of the Water Fleet is to guard the Western islands from themselves. The Coral pirates and the Lintha Family are some of the most brutal buccaneers on the open sea, and they prey primarily on the other islands of the West. For centuries, the Water Fleet has patrolled these areas, rooting out pirate coves where it could and protecting shipping as best it can.

Since the Empress's disappearance, this task has become more difficult. An expensive enough operation at the best of times, this fleet's funding has dwindled. Now, it is all that the fleet can do to serve as a screen for the Blessed Isle against the hundreds of pirate ships that sail the waters every day. The Western islands are on their own, and the fleet has rallied to protect shipping in the Inner Sea.

This is easier said than done. Hundreds of ships leave and enter the Blessed Isle every day, and all of them expect protection. In addition, the spirits and monsters of the deep

FLEET ADMIRAL LEDAAL CALIN

Calin is an older man. Standing at 6' even, he has lost most of the muscular bulk he had in his youth. His hair has gone gray, but he still has a certain dashing charm. If he wanted to, he could be a lady-killer, but Calin is a family man and a devoted officer. He has no time for other pursuits.

Calin is a fine leader and popular with his men. He is a brilliant strategist, and it is only his consummate skills that have gotten him appointed to such a powerful position in another house's military. Still, House Pelep's navy is the *imperial* navy, and it must keep a certain amount of its positions filled by other houses, for appearances (it is said that the Empress had something to do with his appointment). When the Empress disappeared, there was a movement to remove Calin, but there is simply no one else willing and able to do his job. To remove him would spell disaster, and Peleps knows it.

Calin is a good man at heart. He would sacrifice his life for a single man if his duty allowed it, and even with his duties, he has often dived overboard to save a drowning sailor. Calin is rare among the navy. He is a phenomenal swimmer.

A skilled Dragon-Blooded Aspect of Air, Calin is a dangerous foe and a powerful ally. He speaks quietly, most of the time — so quietly that people must strain to hear him. Still, when he takes on his command voice, he could make a graveyard snap to attention.

Calin has one duty for his house, and that is to observe the activity of Deathlords and Anathema on the sea. Many think that one or the other has been causing the problems of late, and Calin's job is to figure out which. Still, this duty only extends to information that could help defend the Realm. As an admiral, Calin is more loyal than anyone from House Peleps.

have become restless of late, and they have begun preying on ships without warning or reason. The Water Fleet has been struggling to keep its head above water, so to speak. Still, even with repairs and replacements funded from the personal coffers of House Peleps, the Water Fleet has dropped in number by about 100 ships a year since the Empress' disappearance.

And yet, the fleet perseveres, guarding shipping and fighting battles. The sailors appease the spirits when possible and fight rearguard maneuvers when they can't. Morale is not good in the Water Fleet — the men are fighting a losing battle, and they know it.

Of the Water Fleet, there are 18 First Age light warships and one First Age heavy warship in reasonable condition. Of the rest of the ships, perhaps 30 percent are triremes, 40

percent are biremes and five percent are trireme tenders. The remaining ships are various small craft manned with marines.

THE FIRE FLEET

Stationed in the South and numbering some 1,382 ships, the Fire Fleet has a fairly relaxed duty. They sail through warm waters, put in at exotic ports, see little

FLEET ADMIRAL PELEPS LUNDAER

Lundaer is a no-nonsense woman. Though she might have been pleasant looking in her youth, as middle age approaches, the bloom has gone off the rose. Standing 5'2" and weighing a scant 100 pounds, she is not a powerful-looking woman, and yet, her personality makes her seem much larger than she really is.

Lundaer wears her dark hair pulled into a ponytail. Her uniform is always crisp and neat, and she moves in economical, abrupt motions. Lundaer has a gruff, angry voice and looks perpetually annoyed.

Lundaer has never married, though she keeps a stable of lovers. Sex is a perfunctory act to her, without sentiment — she keeps men to satisfy her needs, and what they do in their spare time is of no concern to her. She isn't jealous and only becomes angry at betrayals of a political nature. She tends to think the worst of mankind, and that serves her well, as she is never disappointed.

Lundaer is competent as a leader. What she lacks in talent and skill she makes up for in her work ethic. Lundaer is always on the job. She never seems to tire and only appears to only need two hours of sleep a night. She burns through aides quickly, but she understands that most humans can't maintain her pace, and so, she doesn't think ill of them when they request transfers. A former aid of Lundaer can look forward to a good job afterward.

Lundaer is a Dragon-Blooded Aspect of Wood. She is not the most skilled or dangerous of the Terrestrial Exalted, but she understands this and arranges her schemes accordingly. Lundaer's greatest asset is her ability to accurately judge the abilities of her human assets. She can look at anyone — be she a servant, an ally or even herself — and understand exactly what she is capable of. Lundaer carries no illusions about herself or others. She is extremely logical.

What few people know is that Lundaer has become addicted to bliss as well. She has realized the implications of her fate and accepted them. She now serves her dark lord or lady to the best of her ability because she knows she has no choice.



action and take few casualties. In short, the Fire Fleet is the most sought-after billet in the Realm's navy.

Sailors clamor to get into the Fire Fleet. With the exception of the summer heat, which is tolerable, there is no drawback to service in these waters. Relations with the Southern coastal cities are good. Storms are uncommon, and the local monsters are not terribly active. Even the region's spirits seem friendly and approachable, at least compared to the spirits in other areas. Pirate activity can be rough, when the Linthas break through the Water Fleet, but that is all the Fire Fleet deals with.

But there is a dark side to the Fire Fleet. Some unknown party in the South has been quietly introducing crewmembers to an exotic and highly addictive drug. For years this has been happening, and now, entire crews would fall to their knees weeping if the supply were cut off. No one knows this is happening, except for the people involved. No one is sure how much of the Fire Fleet is addicted. No one knows who is doing it.

But whoever it is, it is a being of immense evil. Once a person is addicted to this drug, called bliss, they cannot kick the habit. Attempting to do so leads to certain and painful death. Many of those in this being's grasp suspect that the figure supplying bliss is a Deathlord, but some believe it is a much more powerful creature.

Of the Fire Fleet, there are 15 First Age light warships and three First Age heavy warships in reasonable condition. Of the rest of the ships, perhaps 30 percent are triremes, 40 percent are biremes and five percent are trireme tenders. The remaining ships are various small craft manned with marines.

THE MERCHANT FLEET

The only major fleet operated by another house, the Merchant Fleet is the possession of House V'neef. Numbering 902 ships, the Merchant Fleet is ostensibly responsible for hunting pirates and serving as customs police in the Blessed Isle's waters. With all the fleets out there acting as a screen, this job is a manageable one. For the many ships that make it through the screen and for the few pirates operating out of the Blessed Isle, there is the Merchant Fleet to deal with.

The Merchant Fleet operates in two ways. First of all, it randomly stops and searches ships that it finds in its waters. If it finds anything suspicious in the hold or if the ship's bill of lading looks forged, then the Merchant Fleet will impound the ship. Otherwise, it lets the ship go.

The Merchant Fleet's second method is to actually patrol, looking for pirate attacks. If a pirate is spotted, it sails in immediately. If alerted to an attack after the fact, it gets reports from survivors and attempt to hunt down the culprits. In this, it is quite fierce.

Most pirate attacks on the Blessed Isle happen on land. The Water Fleet catches the majority of the pirates interested in hunting ships (the more prestigious form of

FLEET ADMIRAL V'NEEF RIRION

Ririon stands at a gangly 6'6" tall, weighing 155 pounds. He looks more like a circus performer than a military man, with his awkward face and his long limbs. He has unruly red hair and, despite being almost 70 years old, is still unable to grow a beard better than a teenager.

Ririon is a dedicated naval officer. He is intelligent and thorough, and while he isn't the most brilliant strategist in the world, he makes up for it with thorough and elaborate plotting. His men like him, even if they do make fun of him behind his back, but he doesn't inspire any particular loyalty.

Ririon is a family man, though many say this is because he is too socially awkward to take lovers. He spends a great deal of time away from the fleet and with his family, but he has good delegation skills, so the fleet rarely suffers. Ririon is a poor fighter, though he does have some talent as a Dragon-Blooded. Aspected to Water, his skills are more concentrated on sailing than on personal combat.



piracy). Most of the pirates that are successful near the Blessed Isle have learned that raiding small plantations is more profitable because it takes longer for the Merchant Fleet to notice land attacks.

Of the Merchant Fleet, there are eight First Age light warships and four First Age heavy warships in reasonable condition. Of the rest of the ships, perhaps 30 percent are triremes, 40 percent are biremes, and five percent are

trireme tenders. The remaining ships are various small craft crewed by marines.

FLEETS OF THE THRESHOLD

There are many naval fleets in the Threshold, just as there are many port cities. The biggest and most notable exception is Nexus, which has no standing navy. So far, this lack hasn't hurt Nexus because no one has dared to invade it, for fear of the Emissary and because any attack must pass Lookshy and its navy.

Though the people of the Threshold are a diverse bunch, the port cities tend to be those closest to the Blessed Isle and therefore they are the cities most heavily influenced by the Realm. It is easy to draw certain parallels—most of the navies of the Threshold have the same basic methods of handling pay and promotions. Pensions vary more widely, but usually only in whether or not they exist, not in their pay rates. Unless noted otherwise, these fleets have similar pay and promotion habits as the Realm's navy. The Realm is, after all, the model for most naval organizations in the world.

MENETHIL'S MERCENARY NAVY

Stationed in Nexus, Menethil's navy is the largest naval mercenary force in the world (and as far as most people are concerned, the only naval mercenary force in the world). Numbering 106 ships, it serves wherever it is needed in whatever numbers are necessary. Buyers come from all over the world to hire five, ten or even more ships. Occasionally, the entire fleet is hired.

Being the only notable mercenary fleet in the world, it is never wanting for work. The Menethil navy has seen every corner of the world. Its men are quick, intelligent and dedicated to whoever holds their contracts. They have a good reputation, both for loyalty and for ability, and few are disappointed with their service.

There are no social ranks in Menethil's navy. Menethil himself was a commoner once. Any sailor can become an officer if she shows enough ability. Pay rates are similar to other navies, though (like pirates) the crew gets a portion of purchase, and it sells captives into slavery. There is no pension in Menethil's navy, though those losing a limb get an extra share of the spoils.

Hiring a few of these ships requires at least Resources •••, depending on the season, the mission and the distance of the deployment. More requires Resources ••••. Hiring the entire fleet requires Resources ••••• and can sometimes permanently reduce that to ••••, depending on the demand for the ships and how much the principles feel they can charge.

Of the ships, 33 are triremes, 41 are biremes, and nine are trireme tenders. The remaining ships are various small craft and scouts.

ADMIRAL MENETHIL

Menethil is a 6' tall, 225 pound man. He has dark hair and eyes, and he was once quite dashing, although he is getting a bit long in the tooth. He speaks loudly, and he gestures widely. He is a boisterous and hilarious drunk, though he is serious most of the rest of the time.

Menethil was borne a peasant and worked his way up the ranks of a pirate ship until he controlled it. He spent much of his youth building his pirate armada, and then, one day—no one knows why—he decided to go legit. He settled in Nexus and paid large sums of money to those sailors and officers that didn't wish to follow him. Then, he hired on replacements and started his mercenary navy.

His reputation is sterling, and his career has been good. The fleet has grown steadily since its inception. All in all, he has had a good life. He has settled down and has a family, to which he is devoted (though he usually has a lover to do the things he'd never dream of asking his wife). All in all, he is as normal a man as you'll find between the River Harlot's Legs.

But Menethil has become ever more troubled lately. Someone is sabotaging his ships and way-laying crewmembers. These attacks have increased of late, and he is beginning to wonder what is going on. Either he has an enemy, or someone is priming the way for competition. Either way, it doesn't bode well to Menethil.

LOOKSHY'S NAVY

Lookshy's navy, while not huge, is inordinately large for its population. Numbering 279 ships (five of them restored First Age vessels), the navy is primarily in charge of guarding the city's immediate waters. The sailors drill constantly and are well-trained, disciplined men.

Life in Lookshy's navy is fairly quiet. It sees little action, but when it does, the men respond like seasoned veterans. For their troubles, they receive pay, pension and promotions much like the Realm's navy — both are modeled after the same Shogunate-era military structures.

In the Lookshy navy, there are four First Age light warships and one First Age heavy warship in reasonable condition. Of the rest of the ships, perhaps 30 percent are triremes, 40 percent are biremes and five percent are trireme tenders. The remaining ships are various small craft manned with marines.



ADMIRAL SOGRUN

Sogrun is a tiny man at 5'4" tall and 110 pounds. He has dark hair, but he shaves his head clean. He wears a neatly trimmed goatee and has sky-blue, liquid eyes. If he ever smiled, he might be handsome.

Sogrun takes his job very seriously. He joined the navy as a cabin boy at the age of six (he lied about his age). Despite his low birth, Sogrun became proreus of a ship at the age of 25. During one battle, all the officers perished, and the crew was devastated. After rallying the men and defeating the enemy, he managed to motivate them to sail the ship home, despite their wounds. As a result he was promoted to proreus, without ever having served as proreus' man, and received an estate outside the city.

Since then, his career has been no less prestigious. He took command of his first ship at the age of 32 and rewarded Lookshy with success after stunning success. At the age of 41, he became admiral of the fleet, the first ever of lower-class birth.

Sogrun is a stellar naval tactician and a powerful Dragon-Blooded. An Aspect of Water, he is absolutely at home on the sea. The circumstances of his blood are a little murky, as there must have been a member of the officer's corps in his bloodline somewhere. Regardless, he is the only Terrestrial Exalted anywhere in his family line.

Sogrun has no private life. He has never taken a wife, and no one can even prove that he has taken a lover. He has no hobbies other than the study of naval tactics and spends almost no time on his estate. Indeed, he seems a bit uncomfortable whenever he is on land. Sogrun's job is his life, and he should never be underestimated.

PARAGON'S NAVY

Numbering some 660 ships, Paragon's navy is probably the most disciplined in the world. Considering the magical oath that citizens of Paragon take, this is not surprising. Oaths to the Perfect include stipulations requiring obedience to the chain of command, and so, a sailor in the navy of Paragon is absolutely obedient and absolutely loyal.

The Paragon navy has a proud tradition. It harkens its forms and ceremonies back to the Old Realm, just like the Realm and Lookshy. The men are a proud lot, and few sailors who join do not end up making a career of it. They have pensions, pay scales and promotions in the same style as the Realm.

The navy spends most of its time hunting for smugglers and pirates. Because of its diligence, the waters out to 100 miles from Paragon are exceptionally safe. The navy is friendly with Realm ships, and they are always welcome in the port.

ADMIRAL GIMELECH

Standing 5'10" and weighing in at 225 pounds, Gimelech is an imposing figure of a man. His dark skin and blond hair give him an exotic appearance, and his brown eyes could burn through metal. An unattractive man, there is something about Gimelech that bellies his otherwise bland features. A person knows, upon looking at him, that Gimelech is a man to fear.

Gimelech is a good tactician and a strong leader. His men fear him as much, if not more, than the Perfect. Yet, they respect him as well. Gimelech is a man of power and strength, of discipline and duty. He is completely and brutally without a sense of humor. He never smiles. He never yells. Still, a whispered word of displeasure from this man carries across his flagship like a shiver.

Gimelech has a wife, named Esthebeth (pronounced "Est-a-beth"). She is a hardworking and devoted woman. She dotes on her husband as much as he allows, and when he is displeased with her, she goes under the switch without complaint. She has given him 13 children, all of them healthy and strong.

When Gimelech is not at sea, he is often in meetings. His family sees him rarely, and when it does, family members are on their best behavior. Gimelech meets with the Perfect often, more than most other people in the city. He is one of the few people who has standing permission to ask for an audience.

The Perfect's forces are about 40 percent triremes, 30 percent biremes and the rest small craft. Because the navy of Paragon is oriented toward local defense, it uses only a handful of trireme tenders. Instead, most naval squadrons are based out of coastal cities.

CHIAROSCURO'S NAVY

Numbering 512 ships, the Tri-Khan's navy is a well-drilled force. It hunts pirates and guards the waters, much like any other navy, and frequently escorts Guild ships into and out of port. While the Realm is supposedly the Tri-Khan's greatest ally, the navy knows that its true allegiance lies with the Guild, and it will perform almost any favor for its local syndics.

Life in the Tri-Khan's navy is disciplined but fair. The sailors come from a more disciplined people anyway, and so, the naval life is not a hard adjustment. Pay and promotions are much like the Realm's, but sailors and officers of the Tri-Khan plan for their own retirement and receive no pensions.

In the navy, there is a First Age light warship bought from the Realm to serve as the fleet flagship. Of the rest of the ships, 40 percent are triremes, 40 percent are biremes,

ADMIRAL NARES

Nares is a small man, measuring in at 5'6" and 110 pounds. He has a sickly cast to his dusky skin, and his hair is a lusterless brown. Nares is not a good-looking man. He isn't even a plain man. Looking more like a weasel than a naval officer, Nares has long since gotten use to people addressing his aides as "admiral" and overlooking him entirely.

Nares is a passable tactician, a decent logistician and a brilliant politician. No fewer than five factions of the local elites think that they control the navy through him, and despite his actions, they always think that he has best served their political goals by the time he finishes talking. Everyone underestimates Nares, and that is his greatest weapon.

Nares was set up in an arranged marriage. It was political in nature, and although he respects his wife, there is no love lost there.

and five percent are trireme tenders. The remaining ships are various small craft and armed yachts.

THE VARANGIAN NAVY

Stationed in Yane, the Varangian navy numbers some 497 ships. It patrols the coast out to about 50 miles, and any ship entering this area can expect its sailors to board and inspect its cargo before it can make harbor. The Varangian navy appears much like any other navy when examined from the outside. The men patrol, they fight, and they love their shore leave. It isn't until you examine the structure of the navy that the differences show up.

Each Varangian citizen labors under a complex astrological write up. This not only determines social class, but what jobs may be worked. While this horoscope does not force citizens to work specific jobs, it closes many doors to them, and the navy is no exception.

To join the navy, a person's astrological chart must be examined. If it is determined that there are enough water signs to warrant it, she is allowed to join. If the applicant is of the lowest classes, she becomes either a rower or a sailor, according to her caste. If she becomes a rower, there is no chance of her ever being promoted. If she is a sailor, then she can work her way through the jobs on the ship and one day become a master mariner.

Officers are a different matter. They fall into one of five categories. The categories are command (admiral, trierarch, underofficer, kubernetes and kubernetes' man), discipline (proreus, proreus' man, keleustes, keleustes' man), builders (carpenter, carpenter's man, cooper, weaponsmith), bookkeepers (purser, steward, cook) and warriors (arms master, lieutenant). While an officer can

ADMIRAL LALLIMES

Lallimes is 6'6" tall and weighs 250 pounds. He is a powerful man and would have made an incredible general, but there was far too much water in his horoscope to warrant anything but the sea. With dusky skin and red hair, he is a powerful, striking man. Women grow faint when he strides by, and men quiver in fear when he talks.

Lallimes was born under a powerful rising star. Not only was he destined to run ships, but there was little doubt that he would take over as admiral one day. There was simply no person more blessed to lead ships in combat than him, and he has risen to the occasion. Through careful and painful study, he has become a stellar strategist, despite an initial difficulty with the subject. He has worked hard on all aspects of sea warfare and has gained a mastery, if not an aptitude, for all of them.

Lallimes loves the blade. His primary hobbies involve swordplay, and despite the fact that he has no Exalted blood in him, Lallimes could probably take on most Exalted without breaking a sweat. What he lacks in charmed ability, he makes up for in raw, unadulterated talent.

Many foreigners point out his initial problems with the sea and his obvious talent with the sword as proof of a flaw in the Varangian system. Lallimes maintains that it proves the system's worth. Is he a natural born general? Of course, but the stars showed his destiny, and despite his problems, he has mastered every skill necessary to lead the navy. The stars have never let him down.

Lallimes has six wives. He enjoys spending time with them and his family.

hope to be promoted within her group, the stars have ordained that she never leaves it.

Pay rates are similar to the Realm. A retiring sailor or officer can take a pension, but if she dies, her spouse has no right to the money. If she has a surviving child who is old enough to take control of the family, he can collect the pension for one year, until he can establish his own career.

The Varangian fleet is almost entirely composed of triremes. Though there are some converted blue-water merchants providing ocean patrol, the trireme is the vessel around which Varangian naval astrology revolves, and the culture has difficulty dealing with other types of vessels.

THORNS' NAVY

The living world knows little of the state of Thorn's navy. At one time, the city controlled 356 ships, most commissioned in the military buildup prior to the recent war with the Scavenger Lands. This was before the coming of





the Deathlord Mask of Winters. Now, the wise avoid the city. Any sailor approaching its waters feels the chill of the shadowland, and most crews would mutiny before entering.

Some have spotted ships, great hulking ships that row through the perpetual mist of the area with tattered sails. Some think that these ships are the Deathlord's navy. Others think that they are ghost ships, filled with the damned souls of those who opposed Mask of Winters. Still others believe both stories.

THE CORAL ARCHIPELAGO'S NAVY

The Coral Archipelago's navy is the largest in all the West. Numbering some 183 ships, it would seem almost impossible to maintain with the archipelago's population. However, the Coral Archipelago must turn its attention to the sea, for its land is so poor. This, added to pensions in line with the Realm's and a policy of don't ask, don't tell pertaining to the pasts of applicants, means that many foreigners come to the Coral Archipelago to put in their 20 years and earn their pensions. Certainly,

they might not ever achieve high rank, but few of them have a noble enough bloodline to achieve rank in another navy, and those who are fleeing a dark secret can find blissful anonymity in the Coral navy.

The Coral navy accepts only male recruits. Apart from a general prejudice against foreigners, anyone can achieve any rank in the navy. The only social class in these islands is that of wealth, and while wealth can buy you a commission in the navy, hard work and valor can earn it as well.

In the Coral navy, perhaps 30 percent of ships are triremes, 40 percent are biremes, and five percent are trireme tenders. The remaining ships are various small craft manned with marines.

THE WAVECREST ARCHIPELAGO'S NAVY

Numbering some 45 ships, Wavecrest's navy is in charge of guarding the waters of the Wavecrest Archipelago. Smuggling not being much of an issue, the Wavecrest navy mainly battles the Coral pirates. The current rivalry between the navy and the pirates is intense, to say the least. Captains of either side will often take great risks to sink an enemy ship, and this is useful as a tactical ploy to break up enemy formations.

All sailors and officers of the Wavecrest navy are male. They make standard pay scales and pensions, but there are no class restrictions on who becomes an officer. Promotions come because of merit and merit alone, and it is the practice that all officers come from the ranks of the crew. There are no midshipmen in the Wavecrest navy.

ADMIRAL TIRAK

Standing 5'10" and weighing 145 pounds, Tirak would not normally be a man to strike fears into the hearts of others. Still, there is something about the dark-haired, dark-eyed man. He has a sinister, dangerous look, and only the bravest man can meet his eyes and not look away. Tirak doesn't walk, he stalks, and the wise know to scatter when they see him coming.

Tirak never fights his own battles — he had bodyguards for that. When someone annoys him, he will simply turn his back and allow his men to do their business. When someone really makes him mad, he will hire assassins to kill off their entire family.

Tirak likes to think himself an intellectual. He enjoys playing Gateway, and most people are wise enough to let him win. He is a passable naval tactician, mostly through the diligence of his advisors, and he disdains drugs and gambling. Tirak likes women and gets his sexual thrills from torturing them. An avid homophobe, he also discreetly kidnaps homosexuals and tortures them for sport. This aspect of his personality is a secret, however, and he goes to great lengths to conceal it.

Lately, Tirak has been negotiating with the Deathlord of Onyx. Though he thinks that he is acting independently, the Bodhissatva Anointed by Dark Water has been gaining an increasing hold on his dark vices. Tirak does not realize how far into the Deathlord's control he has fallen.

CAPTAIN BURUKU

Standing 6'8" tall and massively built, with beautiful bronze skin and purple hair, Buruku looks like some sort of demigod. Women blush at the sight of him. Men quiver in fear and respect. He is handsome beyond measure and graceful beyond reason.

Buruku is not an admiral, as there is currently no admiral of Wavecrest's fleet. Still, Buruku is the first among equals. The Feathered One takes Buruku's counsel, and the captains listen to his orders. If war breaks out with the Coral Archipelago, as appears inevitable, he is the obvious choice to be the next admiral.

Truth be told, it's obvious that he has more than a little god blood in him. He simply radiates a power that a normal mortal cannot match. It is a good thing that he is talented at his job because he might just be too charismatic to replace if he wasn't.

Buruku has no wife, but many lovers. Men and women vie for his sexual attentions constantly, and he is generous with the men. He seems to have no interest in women.

Wavecrest's navy consists of 15 triremes and 26 biremes. The remaining ships are various small craft.

THE SKULLSTONE ARCHIPELAGO'S NAVY

The Skullstone Archipelago has a large navy for a population of its size. Before the coming of the Deathlord Bodhisattva Anointed by Dark Water, this nation's navy numbered 48 ships (it still does, this is just not known by outsiders). No one knows how much damage or production has affected the navy since then. There *are* ships sailing in good repair. They have walking dead manning the oars and living sailors manning the lines. The few battles with these ships have been devastating to their opponents, and even pirates leave them alone now.

Now one knows the details of pay scales, pensions or promotions within the current navy. No one knows who commands the force, though there is talk that the infamous pirate Moray Darktide will soon be recruited for the role.

THE HASLANTI LEAGUE'S NAVY

Known for its exotic forms of transportation, the Haslanti League does not have what you would call a standard navy. Though Icehome is a port, the port is only open for three to four months a year. The rest of the time, ice closes it completely.

Instead, Icehome has a standing force of 45 ice ships and over 100 airboats (hot air balloons). Relatively safe from attack by the sea, the League can mount a staggering and surprising counterattack on the ice or in the air. However, as it has no real navy, further discussion is beyond the scope of this work.

CHERAK'S NAVY

Being a loyal tributary of the Realm, Cherak keeps a small, but well-trained navy, steeped in the Realm's traditions and protocols. Numbering some 107 ships, the Cherak navy is mainly interested in stopping the activities of Northern raiders. Cherak has few import and export regulations, so there is little need to look for smugglers. Mainly, the men fight Northern raiders and drill, waiting for the day when they can come to the aid of the Realm.

As Cherak's navy is organized much like the Realm's, a Cherakite sailor can expect similar pay scales and pensions. Officers are almost exclusively from House Ferem, but the occasional minor noble comes from the ranks, so promotion to officer is not unheard of.

In the navy, there are 33 triremes, 44 biremes and two trireme tenders. The remaining ships are various small craft manned with marines.

PIRACY

The wind in your hair, the smell of your prey's fear on the wind, the thrill of the chase and the desperate pitched battles; these are the things that call to a pirate. Pirates yearn to fight

ADMIRAL FEREM HELKAR

Helkar stands 7' tall and is built like a brick wall. If he wasn't a well-known Dragon-Blooded, many would probably suspect him to be a Lunar Exalted. His ferocity in battle is superhuman, and even when not calling upon the Charms of his blood, he can perform miraculous feats. With blonde hair and blue eyes, most of the women of Cherak lust after him, despite his grizzled face.

Helkar is an Aspect of Fire. When asked why a Water-aspected Dragon-Blooded wasn't put in his position, he will tell all who listen that fire is necessary during all the damn winter sailing. He will then launch into a 10-minute, profanity-laced monologue about how cold it can get at sea. He then buys everyone within earshot a drink "to warm them up" and tries to have sex with the first woman who pauses in his vicinity.

Helkar has no wife, though there are usually a few of his lovers hanging about his estates taking care of things. He will have sex with anything female that moves and try to eat anything that doesn't. If he gets drunk enough, these lines begin to blur, and he'll often try to eat anything that moves and have sex with anything that doesn't. The only real constant is that he will check a person's sex before trying to bed her. He never gets drunk enough to forget *that* detail.

Helkar is a decent naval strategist, though he tends to rely too heavily on his personal ability during boarding actions. He is popular among the men, worshiped by the women and idolized by children. It is said that only a stone could *not* like Helkar.





on heaving decks and in burning tops. They live for the spoils of battle and the adoration of lovers. They spend all their money in glorious orgies of gambling, drinking, drugs and sex. They live a life that most everyone envies (if secretly).

Most every child has dreamed of being a pirate or of being kidnaped by a handsome pirate queen or prince. The pirate is a character of romance and mystique, but what are their lives really like? Do they really live this high and glorious a lifestyle?

The answer is yes.

RAIDERS

The most common of all forms of piracy because of its popularity among large populations of Northmen is raiding. Raiders concentrate on land-based attacks. They rarely attack ships at sea, passing by even the most enticing prospects in favor of a land assault. Raiders are not skilled at sea-based combat, often tying their ships together into great, artificial islands when fighting one another.

Raiders are the scourge of nearly everyone in the world living near water. In the chaos that followed the disappearance of the Empress, they have spread their influence from the Far North to everywhere their ships can land. They hit every coast in the known world, then rape and slaughter, looting and pillaging everything in sight. When everything is burning or bundled for easy carrying, they leave.

Raider attacks are fast. Not as fast as pirate attacks, but fast enough. Whole villages burn to the ground before word even arrives that raiders are in the area. Naval forces and troops never seem to arrive in time. Even on the Blessed Isle, where they use watchtowers and heliography to warn of attacks, help almost never arrives in time, but they keep the raiders from hitting multiple targets in the same area. This is a marvelous accomplishment when compared to the rest of the world.

PRIVATEERS

The most legitimate form of piracy is privateering. A privateer is a pirate that has the legal right, in the form of "letters of marque and reprisal," to attack enemy shipping. A government pursuing hostilities with another state typically grants these documents in an attempt to hobble its enemy's economy by disrupting trade. Though these documents are never acknowledged by the enemy government in question, privateers can practice their attacks openly, knowing that when they return to their home port, they can brag and sell their purchase.

Privateers answer only to their nation's Admiralty Court, a body of government and military officials that regulate privateering. The Admiralty Court hears charges against privateers and generally makes sure that the government gets its cut of all purchase (typically half of the take — privateering also serves to subsidize the war effort). It is the Admiralty Court that revokes letters of marque and reprisal and executes privateers that have

crossed the line. For these lawless men, the Admiralty Court is the only law.

But for the most part, Admiralty Courts are lenient. Notoriously lenient, in fact. So long as no blatantly friendly ships are attacked and so long as the government gets its cut, the Admiralty Court will almost certainly look the other way. After all, it is war.

REBELS

Another popular source of piracy comes from political rebels. When a population is in revolt, legitimate merchants will often turn to piracy as a way of showing their disdain for the local government. Rebels often have a more noble bent. They are fighting for an ideal, not simple profit. Rebels usually find a friendly (or at least neutral) port where they can sell purchase and prize ships without fear of retribution. Many ports make amazing amounts of money off of a nearby rebellion, and so, finding buyers is rarely hard. Often, the Guild will step in to buy a rebel's plunder if no one else will.

This isn't to say that all rebels are noble and good. Certainly, many rebellions are aimed at benevolent governments, and even when the cause of the rebellion is justified, a great many people turn to piracy simply because they have an excuse, but for the most part, rebel pirates are a cut above the rest.

PROFITEERS

The final form of piracy is the one most familiar to people. These adventurers strap on weapons and unleash themselves upon the shipping lines of the world. With a sword and a snarl, they make themselves ready to seize ships and raze crews. They are the plague of the sea, more dangerous than spirits. They are more deadly than the weather and more cunning than the creatures of the deep. Man has never faced more danger than he faces from his fellow man.

Pirates will attack any ship, anywhere. They don't care if it's a big ship or a small ship, they are only concerned with plunder and purchase. They care nothing for life or limb or pleas for mercy. They are a force of chaos and destruction upon the high seas. They take without asking, they kill without mercy, and they celebrate without reservation. They are pirates, and everyone fears them.

A DAY AS A PIRATE

A day in the life of a pirate is not too terribly different from the day in the life of any other sailor. Well, except that any other sailor doesn't wake up *hoping* to get into a pitched battle at sea. Pirates serve watches, just like anyone else. They eat mess. They throw dice. They play cards, and they try to avoid work. When the proreus isn't listening, they gripe and make up perverted and deprecating nicknames for her and her men. They behave like sailors everywhere.



The biggest difference is that most sailors are looking to stay out of trouble. Pirates work on account, and pirates that stay out of trouble starve to death. A pirate's whole life revolves around trouble. A day without trouble is a day closer to being a pauper. A pirate wants nothing of the easy life. With the possible exception of the the most speculative trading fleets, there is no one in the world spoiling for adventure more than a pirate.

Still, they can't take a ship every day. Most of their time they spend just being sailors. They row, they pull lines, and they climb the tops. They have salt water for blood, like sailors everywhere, and they are happy just to work a ship, while waiting for the next big purchase.

HITTING THEIR MARKS

There are two kinds of targets: sea-based targets and land-based targets. How pirates go around picking their targets depends on the type.

Sea-based targets consist mainly of ships. Though a pirate ship might occasionally hit a more exotic target, like a sea monster, ships are pirates' bread and butter. Informants finger many targets. They will sell a ship's bill of lading, course and schedule to pirates. Pirates hunt these ships for their treasure, and hunting them is easy — they know their time of departure and their route.

The rest of the ships, pirates find by dumb luck. This isn't as difficult as it sounds. Some navlines appear on all

or almost all nautical charts, and these lanes of shipping absolutely *cluttered* with ships. Navigators have a hard enough job as it is without ignoring precalculated courses. There are shipping lanes all over the world, and in these narrow channels move 99 percent of the worlds shipping. To ignore these lanes is to invite disaster. A crew would rather risk capture than venture out on its own, where it might fall prey to spirits, monsters and bad math, becoming lost or damaged where there is not hope of rescue.

A pirate can't help but become richer in such a target-rich environment. Of course, the navies of Creation patrol these lanes, and so, this is a double-edged sword. The best news that a pirate can hear is an informant telling him of a fat ship heading away from well-traveled lanes. *That* is a target.

The second type of target is the land-based target. Pirate ships hate paying for food. People can defend land targets more closely, but cattle ranches and farms are *prime* targets for a crew whose stores are getting low.

SPENDING THE PURCHASE

So what do pirates do when they seize their prey? Their holds may be full of spices more valuable than their weight in jade, but the paperwork is going to be somewhat lacking. How do you convert the booty into cash?

Most pirates become very good at acting like merchants. If a ship takes a cargo, all the pirate really has to do



is find some port that has never heard of this particular cargo and pretend that it is his. If one of the pirates is skilled at forgery or knows crooked buyers, then not even this pretense is necessary. If they have time, they generally give the purser a little negotiating room, but sometimes, this isn't possible — the ship may need to be restocked, and crewmembers with plans may be eager to share out.

When you get the money, it's time to distribute it. Most pirates are rather egalitarian when it comes to sharing out the purchase. Officers get more, but not that much more — after all, they will have these sailors behind them with swords during the next battle. Most crews will divide the purchase into shares. Normal sailors get a full share. Landsmen, cabin boys and midshipmen might get a half share. Officers often get a share and a half. The captain probably gets two shares — in peaceful situations, the captain probably maintains the ship out of her cut. On ships where there is more combat, ship repairs are probably deducted before the purser shares out the money.

Selling prize ships is more difficult than selling goods. Ships often come with papers, and even if they don't, someone who keeps coming to port to sell ships will be immediately suspect. That's what pirate-friendly ports are for. People in these ports don't ask questions, and if they do, it's for an entertaining story, not information with which to hang a seller. Pirates get to know these ports intimately, as do people who like purchasing ships cheaply. If you're really interested in getting your prize yacht back, go to the nearest pirate port. As long as you don't intend to make a fuss, you'll probably find someone there eager to sell it back to you.

RAISING THE RANKS

Pirates rise through the ranks like most sailors. Landsmen become ordinary seamen. Ordinary seamen become able seamen. Able seamen become master mariners. And most importantly, an outstanding sailor can become an officer. Among pirates, as among no other sailors, birth status and wealth mean little — pirate officers rise through the ranks.

Promotion to captain is a little more difficult, however. A captain *owns* her pirate ship. Pirate captains only vacate their posts through attrition, but a captain with a chronic love for life can always be cured by the gentle application of a shiv between the ribs. It's a homebrewed cure, but like most old wife's cures, it's one that's bound to work. When a captain is replaced due to murder or misfortune, the kubernetes or one of the underofficers usually takes her place, usually after a brief and often bloody power struggle.

Pirate kings and the like follow much the same pattern. A person able to control a large group of pirates is notoriously hard to kill, and if he does throw off this mortal coil, every captain in his fleet will likely vie for the job. If you can be quicker, stronger, more charismatic and dirtier than all the comers, then you too can be a pirate king. As a bonus, new captains will replace all those you killed

getting the job, and they are likely grateful for the power vacuum they filled.

LETTERS OF MARQUE AND REPRISAL

Letters of marque and reprisal are two-edged swords. First of all, they allow one to take any ship and cargo the enemy puts to sea. If one is successful, they allow one to sell them at any friendly port, and if the story of the fight is entertaining enough, one might get some free drinks to boot. On the other hand, there is always the Admiralty Court looking over a privateer's shoulder. It expects half of everything a privateer makes and is happy to take prize ships as payment, should the purse not be deep enough.

Getting letters of marque and reprisal is a simple thing. A pirate finds a government that is at war with its neighbor and then convinces it that she is a loyal subject — bribes may prove useful in this. If things go well, the privateer will receive his letters of marque and reprisal, and his new life can begin.

The first six to twelve months as a privateer are often careful ones. Admiralty Courts aren't happy with people who raid where they aren't supposed to be raiding, and so, they will pay close attention to new privateers. If a privateer passes muster, he will eventually pass beyond notice (except for when it's time for the government to take its cut, of course).

ARMING A SHIP

Arming a ship can be easy or difficult. Troops arm most ships. Troops carry bows, lead boarding actions and otherwise do all the work. Arming most ships is simply a matter of buying enough weapons to pass around.

There are more exotic weapons available, however. Siege artillery converted to maritime use, firedust flamethrowers, First Age weapons and harnessed sea monsters are all possible weapons. A pirate with enough money and courage can obtain these weapons as well. Some are rarer than others, but *most* are available in the larger pirate and free ports of the world, if the purser knows where to look. They all cost, though. Sometimes, they cost more money than a person can earn in a lifetime, a loved one, a crewmember or even a limb. Sometimes, they cost one's soul.

FAVORITES

Naturally, the favorite of all pirate vessels is the trireme. The trireme is fast, maneuverable and deadly. A second favorite is the bireme. It is a highly maneuverable craft, capable of speed and agility. The fast courier is another favorite.

As a rule of thumb, pirates prefer fast vessels. All of their craft should be a bit faster than their typical prey. If they are hunting ships with a speed of ••, they should make sure their ship has at least a speed of •••.

PIRATE BANDS

Throughout the world, there are the hunters, and there are the hunted. The sea is no different, and on the sea, there is strength in numbers. These hunters will gather together because their prey will gather together. They hunt in packs, and these packs are known as pirate bands. There are many bands of pirates in the world of *Exalted*. Some of the larger ones are mentioned here.

RAIDERS

The vast stretches of the North are home to many people. Most notable are the Wyld barbarians, but there are other barbaric tribes scattered throughout the lands. The armies and ships of the Realm have stifled these barbarians for many generations. They have had to content themselves preying upon one another, raiding and pillaging over petty rivalries and imagined insults.

But with the disappearance of the Scarlet Empress, the forces of the Realm have fallen upon themselves, becoming pawns in the great game of houses. In this current climate, the barbarians have become increasingly bold. As the Wyld barbarians have increased their raids south, so have the more mundane raiders of the North.

These Northmen have taken to building longships and striking south. They have taken to forming armies and marching on their neighbors. They rape, they pillage, and they loot. They are a plague upon the world, and if the Realm doesn't pull together soon, they will face the wrath of the Northmen.

LINOWAN PIRATES

Perhaps the most unique of all brown-water pirates, the Linowan ply the rivers in their canoes, raiding when they want, trading the rest of the time. Based in the forests and rivers of the Northeast, these savage and yet noble people are brutal and skilled warriors. What they lack in technology, they make up for in heart, strength and skill.

Linowan pirates ostensibly ignore ships flying special blankets. Those who trade regularly with the Linowans have such blankets. There is business in counterfeits, so Linowan pirates have taken to asking ships where they got their blankets. If the answer is unsatisfactory, they capture and sacrifice the crew. It is therefore advisable not to fly a counterfeit blanket. That way, the most the ship will lose is its cargo.

CORAL PIRATES

Infamous throughout the West, the Coral Archipelago earns few friends with its policy of writing letters of marque to anyone willing to pay the fee. The only people safe from the depredations of the Sea Lord's privateers are those carrying papers stating that they are exempt from attack, and these papers are changed every moon to prevent counterfeiting.

Upon seeing a pirate vessel, a captain bearing such papers shouts that she has papers of free passage. The pirates then send over a representative to make sure that everything is in order. If it is, they release the ship. If it isn't, the representative usually pretends it is until she is safely back on board her vessel. Then, the pirates launch the attack.

As a matter of policy, the Coral Archipelago gives all its allies papers. However, in a progressive profit-making decision, the current Sea Lord has severed all alliances except with the Guild. Even there, the archipelago only grants a few choice syndics papers, giving them a monopoly on trade. Everyone else must purchase papers, but for everyone's convenience, diplomats from the Coral Archipelago work in every major port.

Privateers must give half their purchase and half the sale price of their prize ships to the Sea Lord. Most consider this a small price to pay for such a good port in which to sell their goods. There are Guild representatives in the port at all times, and if a privateer can't find a buyer, the Guild is always happy to buy any purchase at half cost. Even though this means a loss, many captains are happy to get rid of a troublesome cargo.

Many pirates gravitate to the Coral Archipelago. Even those that aren't privateers can purchase interim letters that makes them an official privateer just long enough to sell off a cargo or a prize ship. The price for interim letters is 60 percent of the price of the goods.

Because of the rapidly changing and essentially unorganized nature of these pirates, it is difficult to estimate their numbers. At any given time, there are between 100 and 150 ships operating under Coral's letters of marque and reprisal. Many of these are foreigners who have come to the islands to give themselves an air of legitimacy.

THE LINTHA FAMILY

The Lintha Family closely guards its secrets. Located on a constantly moving sargasso sea, the Lintha Family strikes out everywhere in the West and the South. No ships are safe from Lintha pirates. No routes are too dangerous, and no purchase is too far, should the profit be high enough.

The Linthas are located in Bluehaven, a network of wrecks and ships transformed into a thriving city in the heart of their sargasso sea. The location of the city can be determined with a complex and secret formula, and its course is only divulged to captains, who are the only ones permitted to see the charts. The captains can find their way there, but not even they can get through the sea. That requires a skilled pilot familiar with the secret, changing paths of the sargasso. Like harbor pilots in more mainstream ports, they come out to bring in visiting ships of family members.

The Linthas use a family structure to name ranks. The lowest ranking members are sons and daughters. More powerful members are aunts and uncles, while grandfathers and grandmothers hold the highest positions. Anyone can buy



their way into the family, the price determining their initial rank. The release of death, however, is the only way out.

The number of Lintha ships is unknown, mainly because no one knows for certain what percentage of Lintha ships actually act as pirates. It is known that they have between 200 and 400 ships operating at any given time, but conspiracy theorists have placed the number of ships in their control at over 1,000 — most of them operating as normal merchants, gathering intelligence. While these numbers are far-fetched, no one has ever refuted them.

THE BLACK BAND

Operating out of a hidden cove, somewhere between Paragon and Yane, the Black Band is one of the most prosperous and successful pirate bands in the south. Far enough away from Lintha to be able to work in relative peace, this group of pirates has some 49 ships and operates as far from its home port as the Blessed Isle itself.

The Black Band is a friendly and affable band of buccaneers. These pirates protect their own and their friends, and they are welcome in most taverns in the South. To cause damage in a establishment frequented by them is to invite their retribution, so owners of taverns, brothels and gambling houses throughout the South court them, often giving the pirates services for free.

Most authorities have a certain fondness for the Black Band. Its members don't cause trouble, and the crime rate drops when they are in the area. They party and cut loose, but what sailors don't? In addition, if a large group of the band is located in a city, it will almost certainly not be preying on that city's shipping at the time. The Black Band doesn't shit where it eats.

Of all the pirates in the world, those of the Black Band are probably the most accepted. They are polite, and they

ATTERUM, PIRATE KING OF THE BLACK BAND

Standing 6' even and weighing more than he'd care to admit, Atterum is well liked throughout the South. With dusky skin and red hair, he has a pleasant, round face and an easy manner. He always has a joke handy for the men, a complement for the ladies and a coin for the children. His purse is always open, and he appears to have enough love and joy in his heart for everyone.

Atterum is a devil with the ladies. He is a charmer who always seems to have a large stable of lovers. None of these women ever seem to become jealous of one another — they are strangely at peace in each other's presence.

Atterum always wears makeup of some kind. Few people have figured this out, and no one but his lovers know why, and they aren't saying anything. The few people who know write it off as a harmless quirk.



try not to hurt anyone. In times of trouble, they often throw in a helping hand. When drinking, they buy several rounds for the house. All in all, they are as likeable a bunch of robbers as you'll find.

Lately, more and more members of the Black Band have been associating with members of the Realm's Fire Fleet. No one knows why.

THE FLOATING DEAD

No one knows much about this new band of pirates. Only emerging three years ago, many think this group originates from Thorns. Crewed by walking dead and led by living officers, this band's pirate ships seem to be as bent on killing crews as they are on taking prize ships and purchase.

Experts know little about this new menace. The ships come in under full oar, and their sails are often torn and rotting. Dead cram the decks, and their officers, with the exception of the occasional Abyssal Exalted, have a look of distant madness in their eyes. The sailors have desperate strength, and the living often weep while they attack.

The Wood Fleet has been attempting to put a stop to these pirates, but every pursuit ends in mysterious mists that consume all ships. When the mists clear, the pirates are inevitably gone. Because of this, sailors know almost nothing about them. The ships that local nations have captured had every crewmember killed. No one even has a good grasp of the pirates' numbers.

PIRATE PORTS

Pirates need pirate ports. These are places of refuge and business. They are places of release and relaxation, of vice and joy and of despair and hatred.

Pirates need land. They need it as much as they need the sea. They need a place to sell and spend their purchase. They need a place to recruit and gather information. They need a base of operations. Pirates house themselves in most every port in the world, some openly, some in secret. Pirates need a port like a story needs a beginning.

AZURE

Perhaps the best-known pirate port in the world, Azure caters to the needs of any pirate. The people know how to entertain a crew there. They know how to get them laid and liquor them up and take their money. When it comes right down to it, liberating a pirate of her money quickly and efficiently is the primary job of a good pirate port.

Though it's a great place to visit, Azure isn't the best place in the world to do business, unless you are an official Coral pirate. Selling anything that looks like purchase is *certain* to attract the attention of the Admiralty Court, and gods forbid you try to sell a prize ship without papers. Selling pirated goods in Azure is a dangerous business for someone that doesn't have letters of marque and reprisal. The officials won't hurt you; they really *want* you to do it.

They'll just take 100 percent of everything you try to sell as your fine and send you on your way.

However, if a pirate is desperate enough, she can get temporary letters of marque. This allows her to sell her goods, she must just donate 60 percent to the Admiralty Court. If a crew is desperate for a place to sell, it's a good way to go. Otherwise, most pirates would rather find somewhere else.

These temporary letters are good, but they aren't a *carte-blanche* permission to raid ships the Coral pirates protect. If you raid a protected ship, you can get a temporary letter and sell the goods. To be honest, the Admiralty Court *loves* it when a crew does this, as they get paid both for protection and for the looting. Still, if it happens more than a couple of times, the Admiralty Court will have to step in. It'll issue a crew full letters of marque and reprisal, whether the pirates want it or not, and make them follow the rules.

BLUEHAVEN

Perhaps the most romanticized city in the world, very few people have ever been to Bluehaven, much less know anything about it. Located in a drifting sargasso sea, many pirates refer to it as "The Floating Market." Since no one knows much about it, the rumors grow wilder with every telling. Every pirate dreams of seeing Bluehaven, most just aren't willing to join the Lintha Family to do it.

The Lintha Family owns Bluehaven, and only they know how to get there. Most pirates who dream of seeing this place have already established themselves and aren't willing to sell their soul just to see the sights. Anyway, sometimes, dreaming is nicer than knowing.

If getting to the city is difficult, getting through the sargasso sea is damn near suicide. Only the most unusual captain, even among the Lintha Family, can even take a crack at it. This means that one of the most specialized and invaluable members of Lintha society is the harbor pilot. These skilled gents are savvy in the ways of the sargasso sea and can sail a ship safely through. They row out to meet ships in longboats. Then, like any other harbor pilot, one of them takes over the ship and sails it into port.

The port itself would be a letdown to most pirates. It's just a port, after all. If anything, it is a bit skimpy on certain luxuries. Land, for instance. The Linthas make do, and they do it with lavish wealth from around the world. If Bluehaven is a bit of a prison in its form and claustrophobic layout, it is a prison fit for a hierarch.

NEXUS

Though its inhabitants would never admit it, Nexus is the greatest pirate port in the world. The people of Nexus couldn't care less what you do for a living, so long as it's profitable. Sure, they don't like you pirating in their waters, but no one does. Take your dirty business into your own backyard, and Nexus is anxious for you to show up with the spoils. It's not unusual for establishments to cater





directly to pirates and other criminal elements, and there are many proud “buccaneer bars” in Nexus.

You can buy or sell anything in Nexus. If a pirate craft comes into town with a shipment that just “fell off a boat,” the only thing the residents of Nexus care about is the price, the quality and the volume. In fact, successful pirates are even more popular in Nexus than discrete ones because people know that they will be a source of many future prize ships.

The only problem with being a pirate in Nexus is that they aren’t protected either. If a captain tries to sell a prize ship in Nexus and the *real* owner catches her, she can expect the best thugs money can buy will try to take it back. The law in Nexus is what people make of it, and revenge is a time-honored tradition in this great city.

But most of all, Nexus is simply the best place in the world for shore leave. The establishments are plentiful. Quality ranges from the easily accessible to the highly refined and tasteful. Most every vice can be satisfied in Nexus, for a price, and most of them can be done openly, without worrying about pesky laws. A sailor in Nexus is in for the time of her life.

Nexus is easily accessible to even deepest-keeled ships.

CASSUS

Located somewhere between Paragon and Yane, the town of Cassus is well hidden and protected. This port is very secret, and only pirates of the highest repute are led here. The Black Band spends a good deal of time in Cassus, as does the Lintha Family and the highest grade of freelancers.

Cassus has no supporting rural life. There are some cattle ranches located near the city, but the inhabitants import almost everything else. Cassus knows that discovery invites the attention of many navies hostile to piracy. It does its best to keep a low profile.

In fact, this isn’t very difficult. Cassus is only on very select charts. It is not visible from the sea, and even the inlet to the harbor is impossible to spot unless you know what to look for. Rudders containing details on how to make it to Cassus are closely guarded, and if one is lost, some of the most skilled and ruthless pirates in the world will hunt for it. Even the Lintha Family is careful to keep the port hidden, as it helps extend the pirates’ reach into the East.

Otherwise, Cassus is like any other pirate port. It has bars and whores and drugs and gambling. One can get almost any need satisfied here, and satisfied well.

NORTHERN PORTS

As a final note, many areas of the North are open minded where piracy and raiding are concerned. Though none are big enough to deserve mention, there are villages and small town all over the North where a pirate can get his pipes cleaned and sell his goods.

NAVAL COMBAT

It is inevitable. Ships are going to clash. Crews are going to fight. If this wasn’t the case, then this book

wouldn’t really be necessary. No, the heart of good maritime storytelling revolves around desperate struggles and brutal battles — these battles need to be resolved.

There are many different types of combat at sea. Luckily, most of them can be broken down into two categories. These are ship-to-ship combat, where the craft themselves fight, and boarding actions, where it is crewman against crewman.

SHIP-TO-SHIP COMBAT

These rules represent a simple, abstract set of guidelines for managing ship-to-ship combat. They do not involve maps, tabletop miniatures or square roots. They are designed to simulate one sort of combat well — a ship fighting one or more enemy ships. It is assumed that the larger context of the battle, for example as part of major naval engagement, will be described by the Storyteller and not roleplayed out. These rules do accommodate small skirmishes as well (see “Multiple Ships on Both Sides,” below), but they are generally designed for use in a narrative rather than a tactical context.

SOME CONCEPTS

Before beginning the section on ship-to-ship combat, it’s best to lay out some of the concepts involved, to give the reader an idea of the important ideas behind the system.

DAMAGE

Damage is very high compared to the strength of hulls. A solid hit from a ramming trireme can sink nearly anything other than a First Age vessel. Once ships are damaged, they are probably lost, as ships are not compartmentalized and damage control is extremely crude. A ship’s rigging is likewise an easy target, especially for implosion bows (a type of First Age weapon), and vessels relying on sailcloth for propulsion will not last long against determined enemies.

DISTANCE

Distance is measured in two units in this system: “range bands,” which represent the ranges of various categories of shipboard weapons, and “successes,” which are a measure of how many Wits + Sail successes it takes a ship to cover a given range band. Ships are said to be a certain number of successes apart, which will put them in one of several range bands

TIME

Time at sea is measured in *long turns*. Long turns are about three minutes in length. During a long turn, weapons with a rate of 1/3 or faster can fire three times, weapons with 1/10 or faster can fire twice, and weapons with rates of fire above one shot per 10 turns can fire once. During a long turn, player characters and other heroic figures can take three full turns of action in one long turn, though generous Storytellers may, at their discretion, allow passive participants powering up pre-combat Charms or otherwise taking non-combat actions to take more than three turns worth of actions, but they are not required to do so. This is an artificial constraint to prevent the short turn used in *Exalted*’s

RANGE BANDS

Range Band	Distance	Distance in Successes
Visual	1,500+ yards	60+
Very Long	700-1,500 yards	30-60
Long	200-700 yards	10-30
Short	Less than 200 yards	Less than 10

normal combat system from making naval combat either absurdly, blurringly fast or mind-numbingly dull.

MOVEMENT

Movement is entirely relative. Ships are trying to move together, to move apart or to maintain their distance. Roll the commanding character's Wits + Sail for each ship, modified by the crew's Ship Handling Ability (see the Crew Abilities boxed text) and the ship's maneuverability. Ships can try to *open* the distance between them (adding the successes to the distance between the ships), *close* the distance (subtracting the successes from the distance between the ships) or *keep their distance* (applying extra successes to try to negate the other captain's successes in opening or closing the distance between the ships). Just apply the Wits + Sail + Ship Handling to the distance between the ships — it's effectively an elaborate extended contest. If the ships begin at long or extended range, give the faster ship a number of bonus dice equal to the ship's dots of speed advantage.

Normally, movement is resolved simultaneously, with everyone rolling and adding or subtracting successes from the distance between the ships. Ships that are keeping their distance get to apply their successes last, so that they know if they want to add or subtract successes. Ships can ignore successes to avoid overshooting, so ships running to increase their range don't have to worry about exceeding their desired range band because the player rolled too well, and ships keeping station don't have to worry about extra successes. If there's some sort of trust issue, then have the players of the commanders of the vessels write "closing," "opening" or "keeping distance" on a piece of paper they turn upside down, and then, have everyone reveal their choices all at once.

If facing multiple opponents, subtract one die from the controlling character's Wits + Sail pool for each ship *including the first*. For example, if a blue-water merchant was running from three triremes, the player of the character controlling the merchant would be rolling his character's Wits + Sail at -3. If there are multiple ships on one, have the beleaguered captain's player roll once and compare it to the movement rolls of all the enemy vessels. These penalties reflect the difficulty of keeping multiple attackers at bay at once. Note that this penalty, combined with the generally poor maneuverability of sailing vessels compared to rowing vessels, means that it is nearly impossible to evade imperial trireme wolfpacks.

MULTIPLE SHIPS ON BOTH SIDES

If there are multiple ships in the engagement, there are two ways to deal with the matter.

The first is to simply break up the ships into a series of one-on-several engagements. The side with superior numbers decides how their forces split up, pits one or more of its ships against every enemy vessel, and then, fights are effectively two different battles. If one group vanquishes its foes and wants to aid its fellows in another group, then it's up to the Storyteller to determine how many successes the new combatant is away from the ongoing fight.

The other solution, useful if one of the ships has escorts that won't leave the target or if there are consort ships involved, is to treat the multiple ships as if they were one. Make Wits + Sail rolls for maneuvering all the grouped ships, and then, take the worst result as the result for the group. Combat proceeds as normal.

INITIATIVE

There is no initiative in the *Savage Seas* ship-combat rules. Instead, there are three *combat sequences*, where various weapons fire. If individual Exalted want to get into the act and fight with stunts and bow work and whatever else they have, then have all the Exalted participating in

CREW ABILITIES

Crews, taken as a whole, have several Abilities. They are **Ship Handling**, **Combat Skill** and **Ranged Attack**. Each crew should be rated in each of these Abilities and given a dot equivalent. Normally, the player of a heroic or commanding figure will be making the rolls, but a high-quality crew aids considerably in accomplishing tasks. Whenever the player of a "commanding character" or "firing character" or "leader" is directed to make a roll relating to sailing or fighting aboard the ship, add the appropriate quality of the crew to the commander's dice pool. Crews may have different ratings in the different Crew Abilities. For example, a crew could be Elite at Ship Handling, adding three dice to all the pilot's player's Wits + Sail rolls to control the ship while also being Green at Combat Skill, meaning the crew adds nothing to its leader's player's roll during boarding actions.

Nota Bene: Regardless of which system for navigation you're using, the crew's Ability rating in Ship Handling doesn't add to the navigator's rolls. It doesn't matter how good the foremast jacks are if the navigator's math stinks.

Green	X
Blooded	•
Veteran	••
Elite	•••



individual heroics take one turn of action at the beginning of the combat sequence, before any other weapons. Roll for initiative and otherwise run this turn of combat exactly like a normal combat turn.

ATTACKING

All weapons attack once during the first combat sequence. Weapons that can fire two or three times a turn fire during the second combat sequence, while weapons that can fire three times per turn fire in the third combat sequence. All combat within a combat sequence is presumed to be simultaneous, and everyone gets a chance to attack before damage takes effect.

To attack, the player whose character commands the weapon (usually the ship's arms master) must roll Perception + Archery. Remember to add the Ranged Attack Ability of the crew and to subtract two successes if the ship is making evasive maneuvers. Also remember that, if the weapon has been knocked out of action one or more times, the crew must be rallied and that the weapon has a penalty to the ship's Ranged Attack rating. Don't worry about range modifiers in nautical combat, the target is either in range or not.

DAMAGE

Determine damage as normal — if the attack hits, add extra successes to the base damage of the weapon and subtract the hull's soak. Roll the remainder as damage, and determine how many health levels of damage have been done.

Here's where the system gets different from normal. Ships are big, and attacks hit small parts of them. Apply the damage to each attack as a one-time event. Don't keep a running tally of the ship's total health levels. Either the attack does enough to damage the hull, enough to destroy the hull, or it isn't worth tracking. The health levels required to damage or destroy any given hull are listed on with the individual hull.

Damage: If the attack does enough health levels to damage the hull, there are problems. Water is flowing freely into the hull, and it will quickly become a problem. Every long turn that a ship is suffering from such damage, apply a cumulative -1 penalty to all handling-related rolls due to the fact that the hull is filling with water. The player of the ship's carpenter can roll Wits + Craft to try to block the hole, at a difficulty equal to the number of health levels beyond the "Damaged" point the attack inflicted, but the difficulty cannot exceed 5. The penalty remains until the water is pumped out of the hull. If the water-shipping penalty reaches -10, the ship sinks.

Destroy: The hole is far too wide to patch, and the ship will soon be at the bottom. The ship is at an immediate -3 for shipping water, it gains an additional -3 per long turn afterward, and when the penalty for water shipped reaches -10, the ship goes under. Obviously, this is cumulative with the shipped water penalties above, so a ship already holding water is likely to go down quite quickly.

First Age hulls are compartmentalized. The -1 and -3 penalties from letting water into the hull don't accumulate, they're only taken once, so to sink a First Age ship, one must do quite a bit of damage repeatedly.

HEROIC FIGURES

Ships in the world of *Exalted* often carry heroic figures: gods, Exalts, demons and what have you. In boarding actions, they command units (see below), but when there isn't a boarding action taking place, they're still on the ship. Such characters can take three normal *Exalted*-length turns of actions during each three minute-long naval turn. If it is for some reason important, these actions take place, one each at the very beginning of each of the turn's three attack sequences. There are no firm rules for heroic figures. If the Exalt can run across water and slash ships open with her giant blade, then just resolve that on the combat turns and apply the damage against the target's hull normally at the end of the combat sequence. Likewise, if she's firing missile weapons or spells from the ship's deck — just resolve that normally, converting naval range into yards to determine the range for her attacks. If the character wants to take command of some part of the ship (steering, directing weapons, whatever), then let her do that, though her player may have to make some rolls for the character to actually secure the position. If the hero is commanding units during a boarding party, then that's resolved as boarding, below. Things will get far too wild once magical beings get into the action to predict or limit, so just try to play it by ear.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Naval warfare is more that two ships catapulting stones at one another until one sinks. The following rules are guidelines for resolving special situations including burning ships, ramming attacks and attacking rigging.

ARCHERY AGAINST SHIPS

Given the soak values, it would seem to be relatively easy to sink some ships with arrows. While it is true that arrows fired from powerful bows can easily pierce some ship hulls, the shot required to let water into the hull is very difficult, and not much water is going to follow even a frog crotch. Unless the Storyteller is being generous or the character has a simply marvelous stunt in mind, the Storyteller should probably limit archers and knife tossers to attacking rigging, picking off enemy officers or otherwise making heroic feats. See the "Arrows (Swarm)" listing on page 118 for details of massed arrows as a weapon.

RAMMING

Ramming is a special type of attack, where a ship with a ram smacks into another vessel. Ramming is not done during the combat sequence, but during the movement phase. To ram, a ship must close to the point where its range is zero successes. At that point, a ship can, at its option, ram. Extra successes that would take the ship below zero suc-

cesses in distance are effectively extra successes on its attack roll, adding to the damage of the ram. Ships that want to wind up for a solid strike can stop at zero, then the pilot's player can roll next turn, hoping to outperform the ship trying to get away and ram it very solidly. Rams do 30L damage, plus extra successes. Two ships trying to ram one another while not getting rammed just compare successes, with the winner able to launch a ram with a number of extra attack successes equal to his remaining successes. Two ships ramming one another in a game of chicken where neither party wimps out add their successes below zero distance together for *each* attack. Ouch.

The player of the character commanding the ramming ship may make an immediate reflexive Wits + Sail roll at difficulty 3 to disengage the ships. If unsuccessful, he can try again next turn, but if the ship sinks before the ram is torn loose, the trireme will go down with it. Remember to add the bonus dice for crew quality to the disengagement roll. A botch means the ram is hopelessly stuck, which is bad, as the attacking craft will go to the bottom with the target. If the players of characters commanding the troops on the rammed ship (see "Boarding Actions," below) can make successful Wits + Athletics rolls (add the crew's Combat Skill Ability), they can grapple the ramming ship and board it. The difficulty of this roll is 3, raised to 5 if the ramming vessel has fire projectors that it's shooting off to prevent boarding.

Ramming without a ram is very ill advised, unless it's an imperishable First Age hull crunching up triremes. Ramless ships do an amount of damage equal to their "Destroyed" rating and take an amount equal to the target's "Destroyed" rating. Extra successes add to damage as normal.

Generally, only one unit can try to grapple a rammer, either the one closest to the ram, or the one the Storyteller says does it. Heroic figures can automatically board enemy vessels that have rammed their ship to fight alone (three turns of combat per long turn, resolved via the normal combat rules), or they can hope to successfully grapple the rammer and leading a boarding party (resolves with the boarding party rules, below).

GRAPPLING

Ships that are at zero successes distance can also grapple. Like ramming, this is an action using the Wits + Sail of the character commanding the ship, adjusted by the crew's Combat Skill Ability. Assuming the target can evade, then it is resisted reflexively by the Wits + Sail + Ship Handling of the target's controller and crew. Remember to add the ship's maneuverability penalty, if any, to the resistance attempt. If the target succeeds in evading the grapple attempt, it slips the noose and can't be grappled until next turn. If it fails, it is securely grappled and cannot cut itself free without a stunt or a thorough victory in a boarding action. Grappling is like clinching for ships—neither of them can do anything, but neither of them can move or take evasive

maneuvers. Grappling one's burning ship securely to the enemy flagship to spread the fiery love and make it a sitting duck for attacks is a classic way to go out with a bang. Ships that have lost their rigging or oars are powerless to resist a grapple and are automatically seized and held fast. Ships cannot attempt to grapple and ram at the same time. If a ship grapples successfully, one or both sides can make boarding attempts during the combat sequence.

ATTACKING RIGGING

Rigging and sail is the most vulnerable target on a sailing vessel and is often the first target of pirates (and their cousins, revenue cutters) trying to stop the ship and confiscate its cargo. Weapons such as implosion bows, fire arrows and sailcutters can quickly leave sail-powered vessels dead in the water.

Rigging has a fixed soak, 2L. Rigging has a number of health levels equal to the ship's "damaged" hull value. Unlike the hull, however, which ignores attacks that do not damage it, the rigging accumulates damage from attack to attack. Ships will automatically repair a number of health levels of rigging per turn equal to the crew's Ship Handling Ability. If the rigging takes more damage than it has health levels, then the ship is immobilized as the sail falls. (Oared ships can move as normal.) Rigging that has been taken down cannot be raised again for at least a full turn. Ships that have lost their rigging and sail are unable to roll in the movement phase (unless they have oars). Needless to say, stripping away the target's sails with a sailcutter or implosion bow is often a prelude to ramming.

ATTACKING WEAPONS

If in short range, then an attacker may target weapons mounts. No weapons in common use, not even First Age relics, are accurate enough to hit a target the size of a weapons mount at long range while mounted on a rolling, pitching naval vessel.

Few weapons are accurate enough to attack other weapon mounts successfully. Modern weapons attack at -2 successes when attempting to hit something as small as a weapon mount. First Age weapons suffer no such penalty—this means that ships mounting many First Age weapons can disarm one another rather easily. This was, in fact, the job of implosion bow batteries back in the days when there were enough implosion bows around that people talked about what batteries of them did.

Weapon mounts have an effective soak equal to twice the ship's soak because they're sturdy and well protected, but the crewmembers are generally exposed. However, weapons may be damaged by area-of-effect attacks such as firepots, implosion bow shots and the like. Apply area-of-effect damage to the crew as well as the weapon. If the damage is enough to seriously injure the crewmembers, it is soaked with the crew's Ranged Attack Ability + the soak value of the armor they're wearing. This means that a 6L standing



fire or 12L implosion blow shot is enough to injure almost any mortal. If the weapon takes any damage successes, then the Storyteller can rule the weapon out of action.

Out of action weapons can be remanned as soon as the next turn (weapons hit by fire attacks will obviously have to wait until the fire goes out unless the crew are fire-resistant). All that is required is that the player of the character controlling the gun crews make a Charisma + Presence roll at difficulty 2 to get the crews back in action (the crew's Ranged Attack Ability adds to this roll). The player can make up to three of these rolls during a single long turn, as heroic actions at the beginning of each combat sequence.

However, even if the weapon is brought back into play, casualties and rattling reduce the effective Ranged Attack Ability of the crew by 1 in regards to *that weapon only* for the remainder of the battle and possibly longer (if skilled gunners are killed, new ones won't magically appear at the end of the battle). Weapons that are knocked out of action leave combat at the end of the current combat sequence, after getting a chance to fire. If the crew's effective level with the weapon drops below Green (X), then the weapon is knocked out for the rest of the battle.

ATTACKING CREW

Attacking crew is a time-honored naval tradition. Weapons such as implosion bows, arrows and firepots can sweep large stretches of deck. Boarding parties can be cut down to size with a few well-placed firepots, rather than through a bloody, brutal and uncertain melee. Each attack against crew must target a particular unit (see the Boarding rules, below, for guidelines on breaking the ship's crew up into combat units). Apply the attack in lethal damage to the target unit's soak, with the unit's commander adding his Charisma to the soak value of the unit's armor. For every health level inflicted by the attack, reduce one of the target unit's Ship Handling, Combat Skill or Ranged Attack Ability by one level, as the attacks frighten, disorganize and injure the target unit. The defender chooses which Ability decreases. If a unit's Combat Skill goes below Green (X), then the unit is dispersed. There may be survivors, but they are frightened men crouched here and there, not a fighting unit. Situations where the attacker doesn't want to diminish the functionality of the ship's crew in combat should be handled with the rules provided for attacking weapons and rigging.

ATTACKING OARS

When triremes fight, they often attempt to shear off one another's oars as a prelude to ramming. This tactic requires a successful ram attack, but instead of rolling damage, the trireme simply shears off the oars on one side of the enemy vessel, immobilizing it until at least three long turns are spent switching oars about to regain mobility. Few vessels will survive those three turns. This attack has no effect on ships without oars.



FIRE

Ships often try to set one another on fire. The primary goals of setting fire to a ship are to injure the people on board it through burns and smoke inhalation, to damage fittings and to render the vessel inoperable by making so much of it hot and impassible that essential ship functions can't be carried out. The actual part where it burns to the waterline isn't relevant to combat — that takes hours.

These rules count only for standing fires — those caused by firepots and fire arrows. Other fire attacks, such as those of firewands, are of very short duration and do not cause secondary fires. This is unrealistic, but then, we don't worry about how dry the ship's timbers and sail are either. Ships can have a number of points of standing fire burning on them equal to their soak before they are in any danger. It doesn't matter if multiple attacks caused them, it just matters that they're burning on the ship. Every point of standing fire above the ship's soak that is burning at the end of the long turn adds one point to the ship's fire total. This fire total is then reduced by the crew's Ship Handling Ability or by twice that if the crew is doing nothing else but fighting fires (including not operating weapons or maneuvering). The remaining fire points, if any, carry over to the next turn.

If a ship accumulates fire points greater than its number of "Damaged" health levels, it is seriously aflame. All actions by the ship and characters on it are at -2 dice due to heat and smoke. If the number of accumulated fire points exceeds the ship's "Destroyed" health levels, then the ship is ablaze along its entire length. Without magic, the fire cannot be extinguished. Any rigging is ablaze and nonfunctional, and sailing ships are unable to maneuver. Likewise, any oar benches are thoroughly ablaze, and the ship cannot make way, though some heroic fool may still cling onto the rudder. The crew must abandon ship or die, and heroic individuals who choose to stay onboard are going to suffer the effects of being in a bonfire — 6L per turn if unresisted and Stamina + Resistance rolls to resist smoke inhalation as well.

Note that fire attacks happen *in addition to* the other effects of the fire attack. A firepot, for example, will attack the crew or hull, and fire arrows may attack the crew, hull or rigging. Meanwhile, the ship will also burn.

DEFENDING

Roll the ship's commander's Wits + Sail to counter attacks. Remember to subtract the ship's maneuverability penalty, if any. Roll once and apply this result to all incoming attacks for the rest of the combat sequence. This is not without a price, however. Dodging imposes a flat -2 success penalty on all attacks launched *from* the dodging ship during the combat sequence. This is an automatic defense, and the ship does not sacrifice anything but accuracy if it chooses to take evasive maneuvers.

BOARDING ACTIONS

Perhaps the most difficult type of combat to represent are boarding actions. The reason is simple: Boarding actions can involve upward of 400 armed combatants. That's 400 men and women hacking into one another in a pitched battle. To play out the entire combat would mean that a single turn would take hours, if not days of real time.

Still, all is not lost. This section gives the Storyteller a quick and dirty skirmish combat system to simulate fights between small units of men. It plays fast and should provide simple play that still provides plenty of drama and excitement.

COMMANDERS

Units need commanders. Ideally, you'll want to split the fighting complement of a ship up along organization lines, so if there is a talon of fighters, they'd be split into five scales. But it's also fine to fudge things a little so that every player's character commands a group of men. It's no fun to be stuck on the sidelines during a huge battle. Whatever the actual breakdown of command, it's probably a good idea to divide the enemy into an equal number of units. This is optional and solely for the purpose of ease of play. If the Storyteller decides that the enemy would have more or less units, she should follow her best judgment. If there are more enemy units, then the players will tend feel like they are being double-teamed, whereas, if there are less units, the players will be ganging up on enemy units.

UNITS

Each unit needs a commander — a person to lead that group of troops. A unit can be as big or as small as necessary to handle the combat; the size is primarily a function of how many combatants are on the commanders' side and how many commanders these are divided between. There can be many sub-commanders in a unit or none. These things are really only important for roleplaying — don't worry about the effects of an insignificant underlings or if one unit has 10 percent more troops than another.

Every unit has a Combat Skill Ability rating. This rating is added to the commander's attack. A commander with an Elite unit adds three dice, whereas one with a Green unit adds no dice to his attack. The only other thing one must note is the damage rating of the unit's weapons. If the unit is using mixed weapons, then try to estimate the average damage. If half the unit is wielding weapons that do +3L and the rest +1L, then the unit does +2L damage. If the unit is using random and improvised weapons, the Storyteller will just have to make a judgment call. The damage of a club would be a good guideline.

INITIATIVE

The player of every commander rolls initiative. This is handled just like normal combat, but the unit's rating



is based on the commander's Wits + Perception, rather than Wits + Dexterity. After initiative is determined, units act in the order of their commander's initiative. Reroll initiative every turn.

MOVEMENT

The length of a turn in mass combat is somewhere about one minute — one combat sequence in a ship turn. If things are happening on multiple ships and timing is an issue, boarding action turns take place at the very beginning of every combat sequence of the naval turn. Don't worry about it too much, but realize that a crew can really move around in that time. Ships are not large, and so, any unit can move until it is blocked. When a unit moves across the ship, another unit will either be in its way, or it will reach its destination. When a unit is blocked, it must deal with the obstruction before moving on. This determines the maximum distance a unit can move, not an arbitrary number.

Keep movement logical and dramatic. One side tries to board, the other tries to repel, and a heated melee ensues. This is the type of movement you want. Let other people move to block units without worrying much about initiative order if it seems appropriate. Keep things interesting and dramatic. These rules are sketchy and minimalistic to act as a framework for the Storyteller's description, they are not an exact simulation of man-to-man combat.

THE ATTACK ROLL

When a unit attacks, the commander's player rolls Wits + Presence, adding the appropriate dice for her unit's experience. Just as with normal combat, the Storyteller can assign penalties to the attacker's roll before the defender defends. These include things such as shields, terrain and cover. Use normal combat penalties as guidelines.

If an Exalted commander wishes to use a Charm, she may. If this isn't a combat Charm, the Storyteller can adjudicate the Charm however he sees fit. If it is a combat Charm, add a number of dice to the unit's attack roll equal to the hero bonus the commander would have granted if she were a hero fighting in the ranks. In the case of a powerful multi-target Combo, double the heroic dice the character adds.

THE DEFENSE ROLL

The opposing commander's player can roll Wits + Presence to defend, adding dice for her unit's experience as well. If the attacker has successes left, then he has achieved a successful attack. The defense roll is like an action in normal combat, with all that entails. Exalted characters using Charms to defend their units add their heroic status dice to the roll. Defense rolls are just like a dodge or a parry. That means that you split dice pools and characters can

abort to a defensive stance if they haven't acted yet that turn. This acts like aborting to a full dodge (meaning the unit can react to more than one attack).

DETERMINE DAMAGE

If there is a single success remaining after the defense roll and any dramatic moments, the attack was success. At this point, the damage is resolved, and if there was ever a time that the driving force of a commander's personality came into play, it is now. Commanders inspire their troops with their rousing cries and furious example. In a rage, they hack into the enemy.

To determine damage, use a commander's Charisma + extra successes in the attack. Add to this the damage bonus of the weapon.

APPLY SOAK

If the unit is wearing any armor, apply its soak value against the type of damage the weapon does. In addition, subtract the commander's Charisma, as her force of personality inspires her troops to persevere in the face of great hardship.

ROLL AND APPLY DAMAGE

Roll damage. Don't worry about bashing versus lethal damage at this point, just use lethal soak for everything. The difference is that all or almost all members of units

HEROES

It should only rarely come into play, but occasionally, characters make it into the troops who are larger than life, yet don't occupy a command role. A Storyteller may feel compelled to represent these heroes in the attack roll. The method of doing so depends on the power level of the hero.

If the hero is a normal mortal, simply represent her through storytelling. If the unit makes a brilliant attack, she is right there at the cutting edge. If the unit moves to defend a fallen commander, she is the one that takes a position standing over the body. Make the hero cool, but don't let her effect the dice.

For everyone else, give the unit extra attack dice based on the power of the hero.

X	Mortal Officer
•	God-Blooded or Heroic Mortal
••	Dragon-Blooded
•••	Celestial Exalted

Use this rule only rarely. If a character is *this* powerful, men will gravitate to her command, even if it is during the heat of battle. Anyone who grants dice to the outcome of a battle has a good chance of becoming effective commander of a unit, rather than adding bonus dice to one. Men follow these personalities, they don't fight beside them as equals.

destroyed by bashing damage will recover. Units destroyed by lethal damage will include dead or mortally injured characters, especially since troops cannot exactly rout and flee during shipboard combat.

At any rate, for every success, apply casualties to a unit. Each damage success reduces one of the unit's three Abilities (Ship Handling, Combat Skill or Ranged Attack) by one. The defender gets to pick which one. In real terms, casualties amount to 10 percent of the attacking unit's current number. Also, for every damage success, reduce the unit's experience level by one. When the unit drops below Green Combat Skill Ability value, it is dispersed and unable to fight on. Each reduction in unit skill level represents a 10 percent casualty rate, so Green units will disperse after 30 percent casualties, and Elite units will fight on quite a while longer. Note that there will be

survivors from dispersed units, they just won't be doing anything useful due to injury, confusion or fear.

Heroic figures and unit commanders may take damage effects and become casualties. If a hero dies, her unit loses her heroic bonus dice. If a commander takes wounds in a duel, his own wound penalties will effect all the rolls his player makes for the unit.

CONTINUING ACTION

Action continues through the turn in descending initiative order. All effects are applied at the end of the boarding action turn, so if two units attack one another, the casualties are applied before the units attack again (therefore reducing their damage). When a turn is over, the combat continues after the naval combat sequence (if any) is resolved, if either side wishes to continue fighting.

DRAMATIC MOMENTS

Dramatic moments are the heart of a good battle scene. Commanders square off, men fight their way to fallen comrades. Men capture flags and sabotage ships. The outcome of an entire battle can sometimes be decided by the actions of one man.

So what happens when a commander wants a dramatic moment? Simple, she can buy one. During any successful attack, before damage is resolved, a commander's player can spend successes to buy a dramatic moment. It is up to the Storyteller to determine the cost, but a commander must sacrifice successes, and therefore damage, to fight his way to a hated enemy or a prime location. This represents him using his troops in such a way to sacrifice the ability to inflict casualties for a greater goal. This is the heart of good drama and should be encouraged. Alternatively, the commander's player can state what he is trying to achieve, and the Storyteller can determine his success by the amount of successes he spends, after the fact.

A Storyteller might decide that achieving a dramatic moment requires many successes. For instance, fighting his way across a ship might take more successes than a commander can generate in one attack. Like all extended actions, the commander can save up successes toward this end, earning his way to the goal a turn at a time.

Of course, a character can also use this method to avoid a dramatic moment. Sometimes, the opposing commander doesn't want to fight in single combat or wants to keep the player's character from acquiring a goal. If the commander opposing the character wishes to prevent the dramatic moment, her player can also sacrifice successes on her own attack roll to directly reduce the number of successes spent.

Dramatic moments are a method of both adding excitement to a battle and putting control into the players'

hands. A Storyteller should encourage dramatic moments. They add great flavor and adventure to battles that could otherwise be nothing more than a number crunch. This cannot be stressed enough. There are two things to consider when assigning the cost of a dramatic moment.

First of all, the cost should be appropriate to the goal. A commander purchases a dramatic moment by sacrificing damage that might lead to a quick end to the combat. This means that it has to be worth it. If a Storyteller charges a commander four successes to buy a dramatic moment, the player should feel, when it's over, that she got the good end of the deal.

The other consideration is just how cool the moment is. The cooler the player's description, the cheaper the dramatic moment should be (or if the player has simply told the Storyteller how much he is willing to spend, the greater the effect should be).

Example: The player says, "I want to move my unit to defend our fallen captain." The Storyteller might take a look at the situation and decide that it would take several successes to make it that far and through that many battles. If the player, on the other hand says, "I look through the smoke and the haze of the battle and realize that he was right, we were meant to be together. I am overwhelmed at having spurned his love the day before, and tears of profound anger and regret fill my eyes. I suddenly realize that it's too late and I've already lost him, and my heart breaks. With an incoherent scream of despair, I abandon my unit and begin hacking my way to his body, the tears blinding me and washing the blood of my enemies in streaks down my face." Well, a Storyteller probably shouldn't charge more than one success for that. He might even give it for free. The commander's unit, inspired and saddened by this profound moment, should probably follow its commander and form a protective circle around her. That way, she can have another dramatic moment next turn, cradling her fallen captain in her arms.





CHAPTER FOUR CREATURES, GODS, CHARMS AND ARTIFACTS



This chapter details the “crunchy bits” of *Savage Seas* — the beasts, gods and magic that make sailing on the savage seas of *Exalted* different and more dangerous than travel on even our own world’s risky waves. These components have as many uses as can be imagined for them — they are the foundation for encounters, adventures and elements of character backgrounds, and they help to describe the world and give a sense of what life within it is like. While they are primarily for Storytellers, players will obviously find them useful as well; the Charms and artifacts make excellent additions to nautical characters, and even just reading them will help players whose characters have a relationship with the sea develop a better idea of their experience in the game world.

BEASTS OF THE OCEANS

Just as there are countless beasts that inhabit the land, so the seas of Creation also teem with life. A small number of aquatic creatures are listed in the main *Exalted* rulebook: the river dragon, the siaka and the squid. These additional beasts cover most of the classic anime and pulp-fantasy sea monsters and should allow a Storyteller running a seafaring game to run quite a few encounters.

ATTACKING LARGE CREATURES

Extremely large sea creatures suffer penalties simply due to their ponderous bulk; it’s much easier to hit something the size of a house than it is a smaller creature, no matter how nimbly it tries to avoid the attack. Generally, for every 10 combined points of Strength and Stamina the creature has, attackers can add an extra die to their attack rolls against it.

Example: A cachalot has a combined Strength and Stamina of 37. Anyone attacking one of these great beasts would add three dice to his attack rolls (after splitting dice pools for multiple actions, etc.) because of its tremendous size. So a character with a normal Archery pool of 9, who splits his pool for three attacks, would roll 9, 8 and 7 dice for each of the three attacks, instead of 6, 5 and 4 dice.

SEA BEASTS

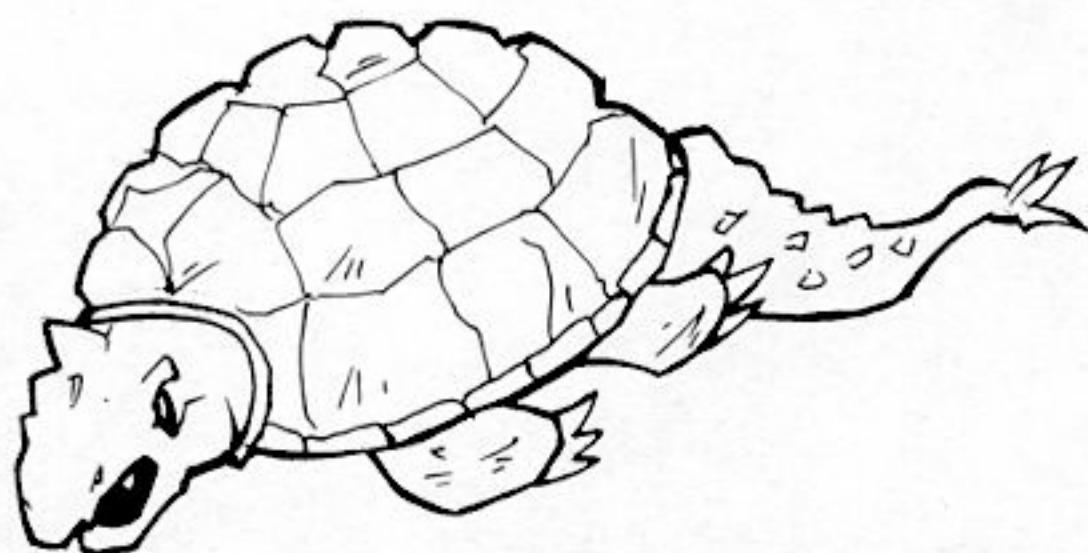
Creature	Physical Att. Str/Dex/Sta	Willpower	Health Levels	Attack Spd/Atk/Dmg	Dodge/ Soak	Abilities
Benthic Scavenger	6/2/8	3	-0x2/-1x2/ -2/-4/I	Bite: 6/7/6L, Charge: 2/6/10B	2/12L/20B	Athletics 1 (Swim +1), Brawl 3 (Bite +2), Endurance 2, Presence 1 (Intimidate +2), Resistance 4
Cachalot	17/2/20	6	-0x6/-1x4/ -2x4/-4x2/I	Bite: 3/5/17L, Ram: 4/6/25L	2/10L/20B	Athletics 2 (Swim +3), Awareness 2, Brawl 2 (Bite+1, Ram +2), Endurance 4, Intimidation 5, Presence 5, Resistance 3
Clawshell	6/2/8	4	-0/-1x2/-2/ -4x2/I	Bite: 3/5/4L, Pincer Grab: 5/7/8L, Pincer Smash: 6/8/10B	4/10L/16B	Athletics 2 (Swim +3), Awareness 1, Brawl 2 (Pincer +1), Endurance 2, Presence 1 (Intimidation +1), Resistance 3
Dolphin	5/4/5	4	-0/-1/-2x3/ -4x3/I	Bite 5/7/5L, Ram: 6/6/9B, Stunning Wave: 3/5/6B	7/2L/5B	Archery 1 (Stunning Wave +2), Athletics 3 (Swim +3), Awareness 3 (Underwater +3), Brawl 2 (Bite +1, Ram +1), Dodge 3, Endurance 3, Resistance 1, Stealth 2
Giant Eel	4/3/4	5	-0/-1/-2x2/ -4x2/I	Bite: 4/6/4L + shock, Lightning Bolt: 5/4/10B	6/2L/4B	Archery 1 (Lightning Bolt +2), Athletics 3 (Swim +2), Awareness 1, Brawl 2 (Bite +1), Dodge 3, Endurance 1
Lesser Shark	6/3/6	3	-0/-1x2/ -2x3/-4x2/I	Bite: 4/6/6L	6/3L/6B	Athletics 3 (Swim +2), Awareness 3, Brawl 2 (Bite +1), Dodge 3, Endurance 2, Presence 1 (Intimidation +2), Resistance 2, Stealth 2
Octopid	9/3/8	2	-0/-1x2/ -2x2/I	Bite: 7/7/7L, Grab: 5/7/ clinch	8/4L/8B	Athletics 2 (Swim +1), Awareness 3, Brawl 3 (Bite +1, Grab +1), Dodge 3 (Distort +2), Stealth 4 (Chameleon +2)
Orca	8/3/10	4	-0/-1/-2x2/ -3x2/-4x3/I	Bite: 5/7/8L, Ram: 6/6/12B	6/5L/10B	Athletics 3 (Swim +2), Awareness 3, Brawl 3 (Bite +2, Ram +1), Dodge 3, Endurance 4, Presence 2 (Intimidation +1), Resistance 2, Stealth 3
Pelagic Dragon	10/4/9	4	-0x2/-1x3/ -2x2/-4/I	Bite: 6/7/8L	4/4L/9B	Athletics 3 (Swim +2), Awareness 1, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Presence 3 (Intimidation +2)

SEA BEASTS (CONTINUED)

Creature	Physical Att. Str/Dex/Sta	Willpower	Health Levels	Attack Spd/Atk/Dmg	Dodge/ Soak	Abilities
Pelagic Phantom	2/1/5	2	-0/-1/-2x2/ -4x3/I	Sting: 6/3/1L + poison	1/2L/4B	Athletics 1 (Swim +1), Awareness 1, Brawl 1 (Sting +1), Resistance 2, Stealth 5 (Translucent +2)
Razor Fish School	1/3/1	2	-0/-1x2/ -2x3/-4x4/I	Bite: 6/6/1L	4/0L/1B	Athletics 2 (Swim +1), Awareness 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 1
River Spider	2/4/4	2	-0/-1x2/ -2x2/-4/I	Bite: 8/6/6L	7/4B/4L	Awareness 3, Brawl 1 (Bite +1), Dodge 3, Endurance 3, Resistance 2, Survival 2 (Tracking +2)
Sea Adder	1/3/2	2	-0/-2/-4/I	Bite: 6/7/1L + venom, Spit: 4/6/venom	4/1L/2B	Athletics 2 (Swim +1), Awareness 2, Dodge 1, Martial Arts 2 (Bite +2), Presence 1 (Intimidation +3), Stealth 4
Sea Dragon	15/2/12	3	-0x3/-1x4/ -2x3/-4/I	Bite: 4/5/12L	3/6L/12B	Athletics 3 (Swim +2), Awareness 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 1, Presence 3 (Intimidation +1)
Sea Serpent, Greater	10/3/8	3	-0x2/-1x2/ -2x3/-4/I	Bite: 6/6/10L, Constrict: 4/7/14L	5/4L/8B	Athletics 3 (Swim +2), Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Endurance 2, Presence 2 (Intimidation +2)
Sea Serpent, Lesser	6/3/6	2	-0/-1x2/ -2/-4/I	Bite: 5/7/6L + poison	5/3L/6B	Athletics 3 (Swim +1), Awareness 2, Brawl 2 (Bite +2), Dodge 2, Presence 1 (Intimidation +1)
Snipper	1/2/2	3	-0/-1/-2/ -4/I	Pincer Snip: 6/7/3L	6/3L/6B	Athletics 1 (Swim +2), Awareness 1, Brawl 3 (Pincer +2), Dodge 2 (Scuttle +2), Resistance 1
Stonefish	1/2/2	2	-0/-2/-4/I	Spine: 4/3/1L + poison	4/4L/6B	Athletics 2 (Swim +2), Awareness 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Resistance 3, Stealth 4 (Look Like a Rock +3)
Whale	12/2/14	4	-0x3/-1x3/ -2x3/-4x2/I	Bite: 2/4/12L, Ram: 3/5/18L	2/7L/10B	Athletics 3 (Swim +2), Awareness 2, Brawl 2 (Bite +1, Ram +1), Endurance 3, Presence 2 (Intimidation +1), Resistance 2

Note: Unless otherwise stated, assume sea beasts possess Intelligence at 1 dot, Perception at 2 dots and Wits at 3 dots. For beasts, use the provided Atk value for both attacks and parries.

• **Benthic Scavenger:** These giant brethren of the common turtle are ponderous and slow seeming, but can make short dashes of surprising speed and agility. They prefer to drive predators away from kills, rather than hunt on their own and are typically hostile and aggressive. Benthic scavengers rarely dodge, preferring to doggedly continue to attack, trusting their thick shell to protect them from harm. Surly and nasty of disposition, these great beasts have never been successfully tamed without the aid of magic, and few would want to try.



• **Cachalot:** These great denizens of the sea are found in all of Creation's oceans and are perhaps the largest predators of the seas. Interested in little other than eating, they tend to ignore surface vessels unless they get close — at which point they will almost inevitably attack, to stave off a possible attack by the ship's crew. While it is uncommon for whalers to go after one of these monsters, fleets of ships seeking to take the great beast sometimes pursue them; a cachalot is a source of oil for lamps, meat, fine skins and a host of other products. A cachalot's tactics against ships are brutally simple: Get up to ramming speed, and hit the ship as hard as it can, relying on the thick bone plate that covers the front of its skull and its ponderous mass to smash most ships into wreckage and to capsize or roll larger vessels. Even First Age hulls are not totally immune to



such attacks; while the hull might remain intact, the crew and fittings inside rarely do after a cachalot broadsides it. Against other creatures of the deep, a cachalot relies on its size and a powerful bite; its favorite prey is the giant squid. Cachalots are large enough that those attacking them get an extra three dice in their dice pools.

• **Clawshell:** Clawshells are giant crustaceans, with shells as long as 12 feet and legs that reach out to span nearly twice that. Two great claws are their primary weapons, but they have a sharp set of teeth hidden behind their mouth palps. Clawshells are inquisitive creatures and spend much of their time on the shore exploring... Unfortunately, what they are usually curious about is whether something tastes good or not. They are likely to try and take a bite out of anything they find that moves. If a clawshell decides it likes the taste, it settles in for a meal. If not, or if the potential snack puts up too much of a struggle, the clawshell will typically wander off, unless injured, at which point it will try and kill whatever managed to harm it. Clawshells (especially smaller ones) are domesticated in some parts of the South and West, where they are used as cargo haulers and steeds. Even domesticated clawshells have an aggravating habit of trying to take a bite out of whatever is moving near them, however, and as a result, they need a skilled handler to keep them under control. Clawshells are never fully domesticated, willing to take a gouge out of anything that gets too close.

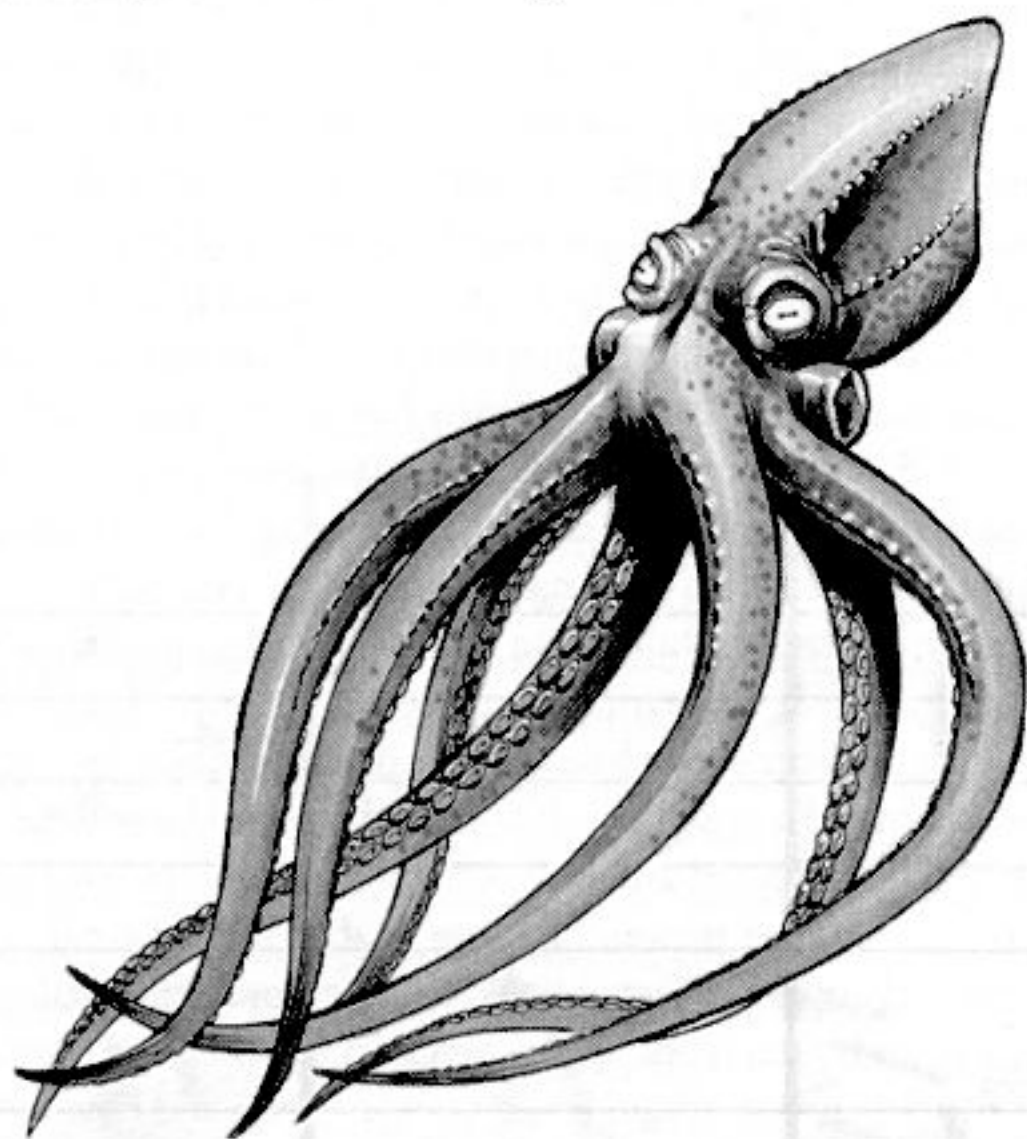
• **Dolphins:** Perhaps the only creatures of the sea that can truly be called man's friend, Dolphins range throughout the oceans, although they prefer the warmer climates of the Southern seas. Dolphins are renowned for their playfulness and friendship with humans and Fair Folk alike, as well as for their cunning and intelligence. Tales abound of dolphins rescuing some hapless human from harm, although other stories are told of dolphins ignoring or even attacking humans. House Cynis and House Sesus are well known for taming and breeding dolphins, and there are rumors that the methods of reward used go well beyond what most animal trainers would consider conventional. Dolphins can see in even the darkest depths of the ocean, and some have an ability to stun prey at a distance. This power is most effective against fish, but mortals sometimes fall prey to it as well (damage from a stunning pulse is recovered at the rate of one health level per turn, not the normal rate of one every 12 hours). Dolphins with this ability can use it no more often than once every third combat turn, and this ability can only be used underwater.

• **Giant Eel:** Stretching up to 15 feet long, giant eels normally make their homes in reefs and other rough undersea terrain of the Southern sea, although some are reputed to exist in the frigid Northern waters as well. Creatures of Water, eels have been blessed by the spirits of the Air as well; giant eels can surround themselves with a halo of lightning and even throw lightning short distances (no more than 100 feet). They use both techniques when hunting — the halo is used to stun fish so they can be killed

and eaten, and lightning bolts are used to drop low-flying birds out of the sky. Only very large eels can use their lightning more than once every three turns. A lightning strike does 10B + successes damage against a single target if thrown or 10B (do not add additional successes) to everyone within 10 feet of the eel if in the water. This damage can only be soaked by Stamina and any magical protections the victim may have; armor provides no defense against it. Giant eels take half damage from any lightning based attack and are immune to their own strikes, even if reflected or parried back upon them.

• **Lesser Shark:** Lesser only in relation to their cousins the siaka, these killing machines are mostly coastal dwellers, rarely moving out into the deep oceans that are their brethren's domain — familial relations are no protection from the great siaka. Some fishermen hunt lesser sharks for their skins and rich meat, others simply to cut back on the predation on the schools of fish they normally harvest. Lesser sharks are not normally man-eaters, but they certainly won't pass up an opportunity to feed, and blood in the water will send them into a terrible feeding frenzy.

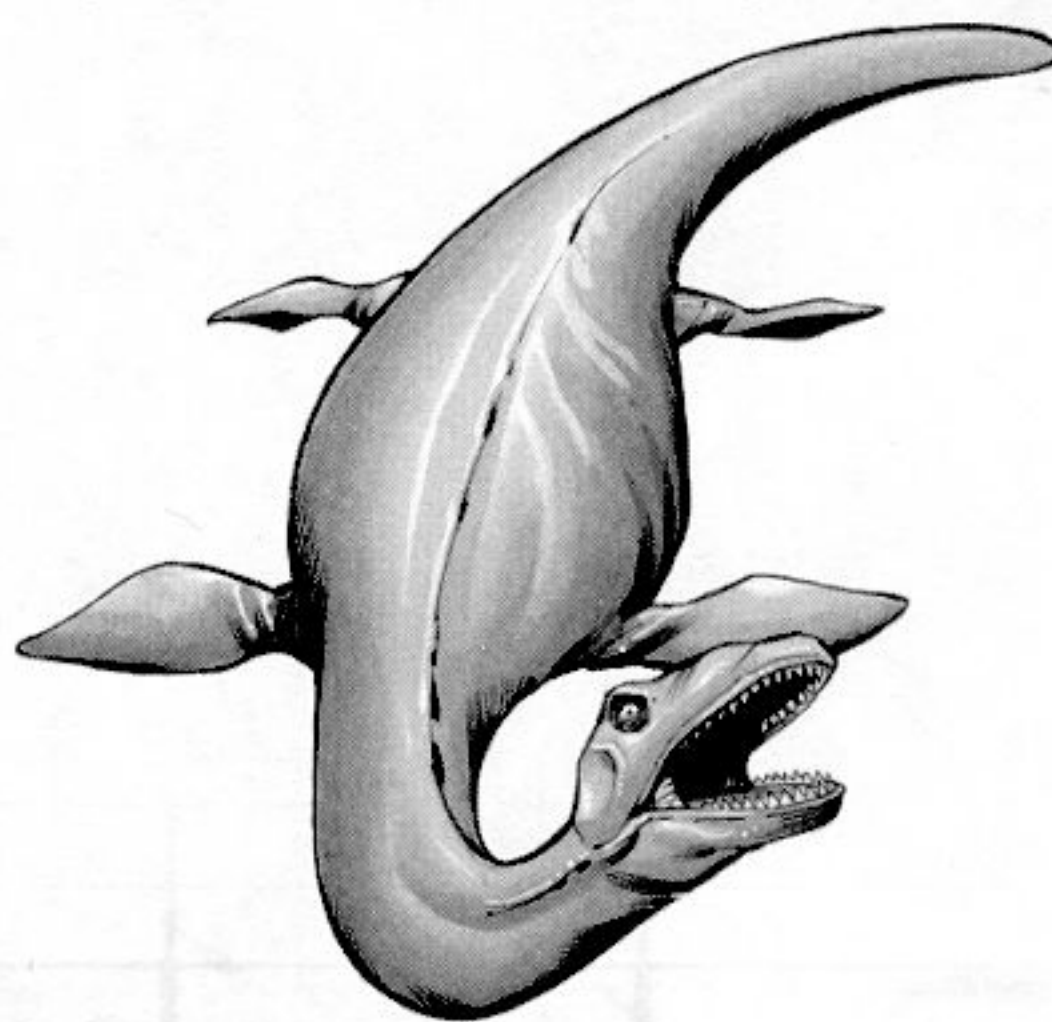
• **Octopid:** Tentacled horrors of the deep, octopids are cousins to the squid — and are just as feared. Octopids lack the inky emissions of their cousins, but have the ability to camouflage themselves, changing their color and even their shape to a limited extent (this is reflected in their high Stealth). Octopids are, themselves, rarely hostile but are frequently the pawns of other powers and can be directed to attack ships or even small villages close to the shore.



• **Orca:** Silent and deadly hunters of the Northern seas, orca have a curious relationship with dolphins, attacking and eating them on some occasions and fighting and playing alongside them on other occasions. Adult orca range from 35 to 40 feet long and are air breathers, although they can

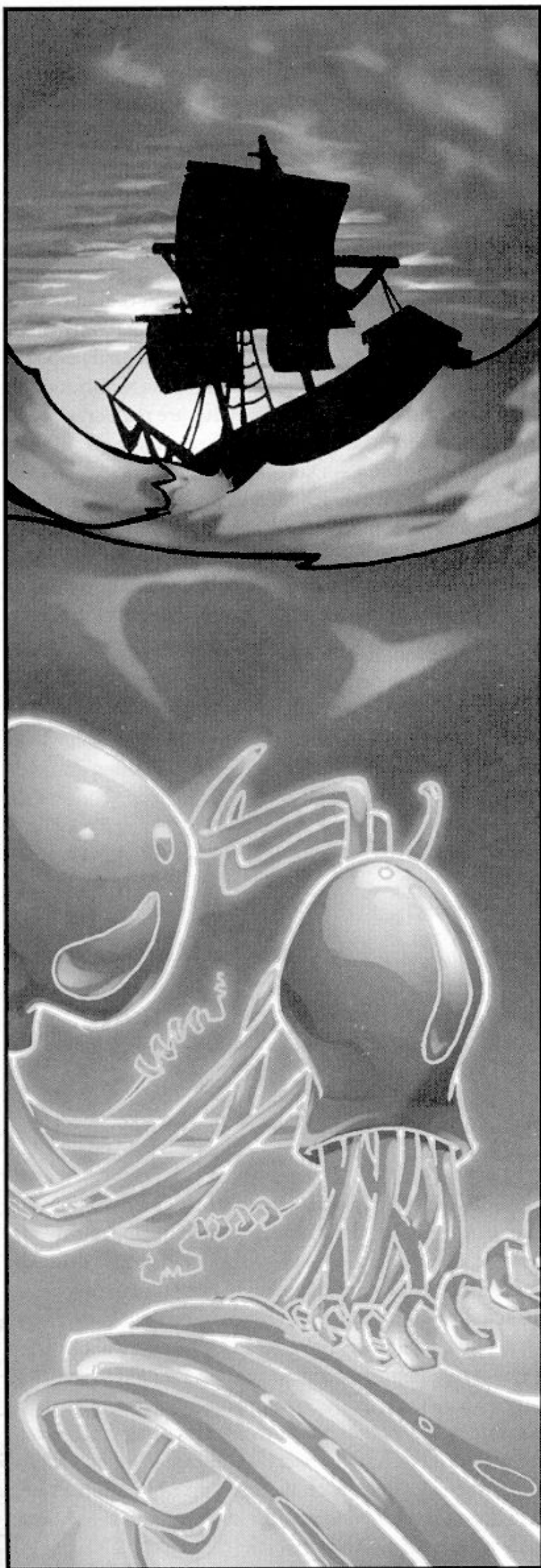
submerge for long periods of time while hunting. Intelligent and cunning, orca will rarely attack mortal ships unless provoked or starving. When they do, they will typically try to ram the ship, hoping to drop crewmembers off the side to be set upon and eaten. Orcas hate siaka and other sharks and will rarely forgo an opportunity to attack them, even if outnumbered. This hatred seems to extend even to siakamen and shark spirits, for orca and these creatures are rarely found in the same waters.

• **Pelagic Dragon:** Although the mighty pelagic dragon can reach up to 100 feet long, most of that length is in its serpentine neck and tail. Its comparatively small head is still large enough to contain a mouth easily capable of swallowing a human whole. Pelagic dragons normally hunt larger fish such as swordfish but are perfectly happy plucking sailors from the decks of nearby ships as well. Pelagic dragon meat is sweet and in high demand, but few whalers or fishermen go after them, except in times of desperation, for the costs of failure are far too high. A pelagic dragon enraged is easily capable of sinking most fishing vessels — and many of the larger whaling ships as well. Pelagic dragons are large enough that those attacking one get an extra two dice in their dice pools.



• **Pelagic Phantom:** Great ghostly clouds hanging in the water trailing their nearly invisible stinger-threads, pelagic phantoms are rarely a threat to ships, although some of them have been known to raise their stingers and attack low-slung ships that inadvertently ram them. Divers and swimmers have far more to worry about from these living haunts of the deep; they are hard to see until one is almost in them, at which point it can frequently be too late. (If a character fails to see the pelagic phantom, he is treated as having been ambushed from behind for the first turn, after which he can fight normally). Seeing a pelagic phantom underwater is a Perception + Awareness task, with a difficulty of 3.





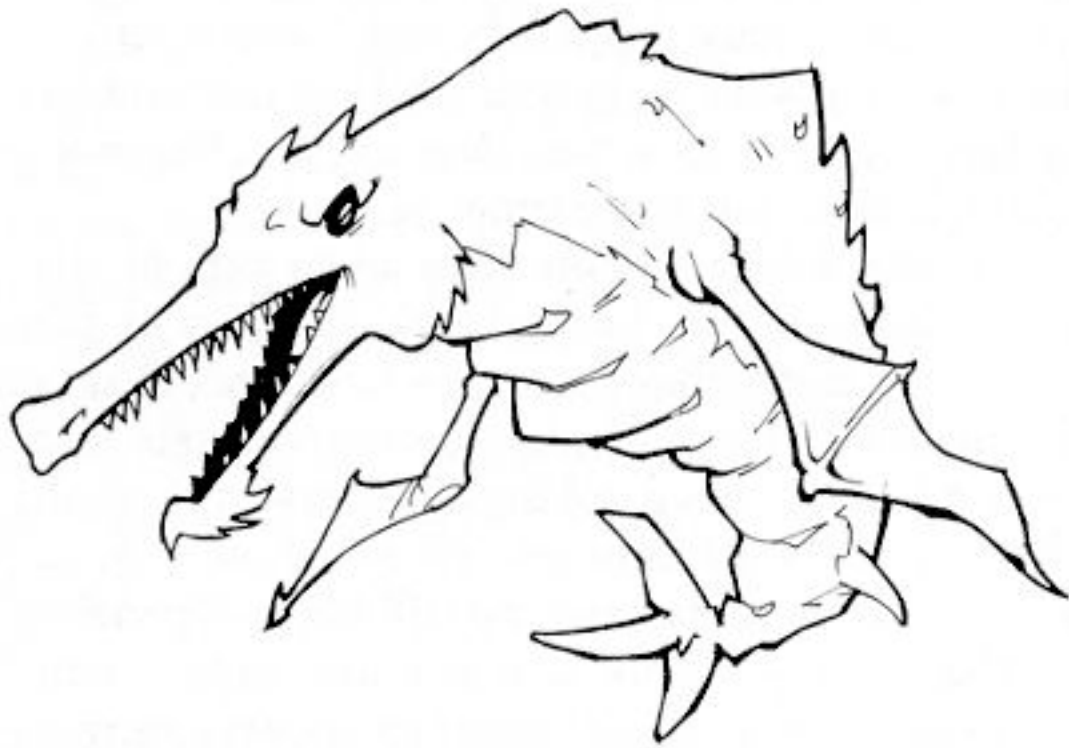
• **Razor Fish:** Fortunately rare, even in the Southeastern rivers that make up their homes, razor fish are wandering clouds of animate hunger, stripping anything they find down to the bone. An individual razor fish is an annoyance, but they normally travel in schools of dozens or hundreds. The attack of a razor fish school cannot be parried, only dodged. The statistics above reflect an average-sized school of razor fish; larger schools will have more health levels and a higher Brawl rating. An individual razor fish has identical stats, but cannot inflict health levels of damage on a bite and has only one health level.



• **River Spider:** River spiders normally grow to the size of a large dog or small pony, and can be found skating on the surface of many slower-moving rivers or lakes, where they hunt fish and small birds. They have little interest in humans, in general, but will attack if provoked. Although not easily domesticated, some river communities have tamed small numbers of them, using them as hunting retrievers or as guard creatures. They can be trained to watch a waterway or shoreline for intruders and return to a particular place if they see anything they think is unusual (which usually means just about anything).

• **Sea Adder:** Ranging from five to seven feet in length, Sea adders are said to be distant relatives of the coral snake. Their mottled skin and natural cunning make them extremely dangerous hunters; a favorite technique is to hang from a branch, appearing much like a liana or dead limb, waiting until prey gets close enough, then puff a blast of deadly venom into the prey's face. If cornered, a sea adder will rise up on the tip of its tail and lash out at opponents, biting those close or spitting venom at those farther away (it can spit accurately up to 20 feet away). Although preferring still salt waters and often found in the brackish marshes and swamps of the Southwest, sea adders are ocean-going and have been discovered throughout the Southern reaches of Creation. Only those places where snow lasts for more than a few weeks are safe from these cruel predators. Popular legends claim that sea adders exude poison from their very skin, and as a result, no fishing captain will risk his crew in waters known to be inhabited by them, fearing accidental exposure.

• **Sea Dragon:** Savants argue about whether or not the sea dragon is a relative of the river dragon or some altogether different species. Sailors care only that it is bigger, meaner and even more lethal than its coastline-hugging namesake. These aquatic eating machines share the same blunt-nosed, tooth-filled jaws, flippers and hostile attitudes of their smaller cousins, but their tail is much longer, ending in a flat paddle-like extension that propels them through the water with great force. Sea dragons rarely attack large vessels, but smaller ships can be far too tempting a target for their small minds, especially fishing vessels filled with a catch. Sea dragons are large enough that those attacking one get an extra two dice in their dice pools.



• **Sea Serpent:** Sea serpents are generally organized into two different families; greater and lesser. Both types can range upward of 40 feet in length, subsist mostly on fish and seals and dwell mostly in coastal waters, although lesser serpents are sometimes found on larger rivers, and greater serpents are sometimes found in the open ocean. The lesser sea serpent averages a foot or two in diameter and typically attacks with its poisonous bite, but it is reticent and generally avoids humans. They are usually found aboard ship when hungry or cold. Greater sea serpents are much more aggressive and will often attack passing vessels to grab a crewman or two for a snack. Greater sea serpents are usually not venomous and are much more likely to attack by constricting their targets. Greater sea serpents are longer and thicker than their cousins—and faster in the water. They normally attack by constriction, sometimes taking entire small boats or slender ships in their grasp and squeezing till the hull buckles, then snapping sailors out of the water and wreckage.

• **Snipper:** Sometimes called scuttles or clownshells, snippers are small crustaceans, a foot or two in diameter, that dwell in tidal pools and along shorelines. Water breathers, they can exist on land for extended periods, an ability they use to go and hunt when prey in their waters is scarce. Snippers derive their name from the two razor-sharp claws they use to attack. More than one sailor or fisherman is missing a finger or toe due to carelessly letting a snipper get

too close in their youth. Some shore dwellers hunt snippers for their delicate and tasty meat or for their shells, which can be polished to a brilliant luster and are used in jewelry and decorations, but most are content to simply avoid the clever crustaceans and keep their hands intact.

• **Stonefish:** Stonefish are a major hazard to those who walk the shorelines in the South. Normally staying to the reefs and rocks of the coastal waters, stonefish are often cast up onto shore by the receding tide, there to wait until they are brought back out by the rising tide. Their stony skin and irregular shape makes them nearly indistinguishable from any other rock on the shore. This is how they feed; unsuspecting small fish get too close and are eaten. They have one significant difference, however; stonefish are equipped with three sets of poisonous spurs located in fins along their back. These deadly spikes rise up and inject their venom into anyone unlucky enough to step on them, causing terrible pain and rapid death. Stonefish will normally try to hide or run from any kind of combat, but if pressed, they will try to impale attackers upon their poison spurs. Stonefish are sometimes hunted for their poison glands—a very dangerous prey indeed, given the speed of the toxin they carry and the likelihood of the hunter being stung.

• **Whale:** Representative of any of a dozen different breeds of these great creatures, most whales are not aggressive toward humans, although those who have escaped a whaler's attack may be disposed to try and destroy any large ships they come across. Whales are large enough that those attacking one get an extra two to four dice in their dice pools, depending on the exact breed (Storyteller's discretion).

FAIR FOLK OF THE DEEP

The oceans are home to numerous Fair Folk, both above and below the surface. Fair Folk nobles have been known to take on the role of pirates and raiders, captaining ships of quicksilver that glide on obsidian edged oars or are drawn by gossamer sails. While a handful are allied with the Lintha pirates, more are independent, answering only to themselves and their hungers. Some take the more mundane roles of merchants or smugglers, choosing a guise that, while perhaps less glamorous and grand, is perhaps more suited to their long-term goals. Commoners have been seen as cooks and as marines, as makers of sails and nets and as explorers or trade negotiators. While water fey are prized for their ability to work underwater and for their influence over the sea, all manner of fey are, while not exactly welcome, tolerated for their strengths. A fire faerie who can dampen blazes before they grow out of control or a wood fey who can coax split planks back into a whole are valuable assets to the wise ship's master.

Not all, or even most, Fair Folk dwell on the surface of Creation's oceans, seas and rivers, however. Tales are told of vast underwater cities deep below the waves, centered around undersea Demesnes and populated by dozens of nobles and their retainers. Some of these enclaves



POISONS OF THE SEA

Poisons and venoms are common weapons in the arsenals of sea creatures, ranging from the relatively mild poisons of the river spider and pelagic phantom to the extremely powerful toxins of the sea adder and stonefish. These poisons are often used by fishermen and especially by whalers, but only with great care; some toxins can be safely used on fish that will end up being food, others can be used with care, and many will leave the entire fish fouled and inedible or hazardous. In addition, while few spirits mind a whaler using poison on his harpoons, many grow upset when a fisherman uses canisters of dilute sea adder venom to kill whole schools of fish at a time.

The rules below apply to any Exalted, god-blooded or Fair Folk who is injected or otherwise exposed to these venoms. Mortals bitten by any of these creatures can usually only hope for a swift death (see p. 243 of the **Exalted** rulebook for more information); in particular, no mortal has been known to survive the sting of the stonefish without immediate mystical aid of some kind.

• **Pelagic Phantom Sting:** The stinging tendrils of these floating creatures carry a powerful toxin in them. Beyond its immediate poisoning of the bloodstream, the toxin induces horrible wracking spasms of pain throughout the affected limbs that can last for hours; these pains can cripple the victim temporarily, leaving him unable to keep himself afloat or defend himself from other predators. Mortals' players can attempt a Stamina + Resistance roll to avoid the effects of the phantom's sting; difficulty is 3, and the damage, penalties and duration suffered are doubled.

• **River Spider Venom:** Although its effects are milder than the toxins of some creatures, river spider venom can still be dangerous. The bite of the river spider causes severe bouts of nausea and vomiting that sometimes last days or even weeks. Anyone whose player fails her Resistance roll takes 10B health levels of damage and will suffer -2 on all dice pools for a period of time equal to 36 hours, minus three hours for every point of Stamina and Resistance the victim has. Someone whose player makes her Resistance roll will still suffer four levels of bashing damage and will be sick for an hour (-1 to all dice pools). A mortal bit by a river spider suffers double the bashing damage, and the sickness penalties last three times as long.

• **Sea Adder Venom:** Sea adder venom is a powerful paralytic. Exalted, god-blooded or fae whose players fail their Stamina + Resistance checks (difficulty 2) suffer 3L damage immediately and find it hard to move, taking a penalty of -6 to all dice pools for 10 minutes. Those whose players succeed suffer 1L damage and still face a -2 penalty to their dice pools for five minutes. Subsequent doses of the venom will cause further reduction in dice pools. Few mortals survive even a single exposure without immediate help, and almost none have withstood multiple bites.

• **Lesser Sea Serpent Venom:** The poison of the lesser sea serpent is much weaker than might be expected for a creature of its size, but it is still easily capable of killing those who lack special defenses against such things. Because of the amount of venom they carry, lesser sea serpents are sometimes hunted, and even domesticated, by those who would harvest their venom.

Venom Type	Difficulty	Success	Failure	Duration/Penalty
Pelagic Phantom Sting	1	1L	2L	2 hours/-4 (or 10 minutes/-2 if roll succeeds)
River Spider	1	4B	10B	48 - (Stamina + Resistance x 3) hours/-2 (1 hour/-1 if roll succeeds)
Sea Adder	2	1L	3L	10 minutes/-6 (4 minutes/-3 if roll succeeds)
Lesser Sea Serpent	2	3L	6L	1 hour/-3
Stonefish	4	2L	7L	4 hours/-4

Difficulty: Number of successes needed on a Stamina + Resistance roll to overcome the effects of the poison.

Success: Amount of damage taken if the roll succeeds. This damage cannot be soaked and is not rolled.

Failure: Amount of damage taken if the roll fails. This damage cannot be soaked and is not rolled.

Duration/Penalty: Penalty applied to all dice pools, and the length of time the penalty lasts.

trade with the surface, exchanging pearl, coral and long-lost treasures from sunken vessels for slaves or other goods. Others lurk on the fringes of human society, plotting the downfall of Creation from their undersea havens. Of the latter, the most dangerous by far are the siaka-men.

Aquatic faerie commoners are barely recognizable as Fair Folk — their skin is thick and scaly, their hands are clawed and webbed, their eyes are unlidded and staring. The fishfolk diplomats are often alluring and beautiful, in a disturbing sort of way — maidens with fish tails instead of legs or women with beautiful fine-scaled blue skin, garbed in raiments of pearl and coral beneath heavy cloaks. While the fish-eyed workers and the alluring diplomats may be docile enough, like all faerie soldiers, the siaka-men hate all mortals, and many survive in breakaway colonies independent of their noble masters. The lure of treasures from the deep, of corals and pearls taken from depths too great for any man to survive, of artifacts recovered from sunken First Age warships and trading vessels and of dark secrets whispered to the siaka-men by Undertows or other spirits that dwell in the depths is too great for those who would believe they can outwit the fishmen. Use the stats below, rather than the generic hobgoblin stats, for siaka-men.

SIKA-MAN

Description: This warrior race forms the bulk of the armies of the Fair Folk of the West. Ravenous, merciless and physically powerful, siaka-men are all temper and appetite. Kept in line only by their inherent subservience, there are several species of them, but the differences are largely cosmetic, and many bands of siaka-men are composed of members from several different subspecies. Whatever their breed, siaka-men all have greenish- or bluish-gray rough leathery skin devoid of all hair, a broad, pointed snout and head, with little to no neck worth mentioning, and a vast mouth full of sharp teeth. They have no ears to speak of, hearing instead through a pair of listening holes on either side of the forehead, and gill slits adorn their necks. A siaka-man's broad hands and feet are webbed to assist in swimming. A broad tail helps propel the siaka-men through the water. Only in darkness would their form ever be mistaken for that of a human and only with the help of a large cloak.

Though they are rarely found far from salt water, siaka-men survive equally well on land or in the sea. They are typically found dwelling in the waters around coral reefs and atolls, but some have taken up residence on small islands in the West. Most rely on their fearsome bite and powerful fists to take down prey, but a sizable number use weapons as well, making wicked impaling swords, axes and other weapons from the sharpened bones of whales or scavenging weapons from shipwrecks. Handfuls have even taken up trade with unscrupulous merchants, exchanging treasures unearthed from the depths for weapons and exotic foods; alas, such relationships rarely last long, as the thoughts



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of the siaka-men inevitably turn eventually toward wondering what the merchants would taste like. Siaka-men serving faerie overlords seldom carry weapons, fighting only with their formidable bite.

Siaka-men seem to have no real culture or society to speak of; members wander in and out of bands apparently without notice or warning, and band members seem to make little allowance for others, or even their own, safety. They appear to be interested solely in food and the means to acquire more food and in serving their fae overlords, if they happen to have any at the time.

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 2, Stamina 5, Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Appearance 1, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 4, Temperance 1, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 3 (Swim +3), Awareness 2 (Smell +2), Brawl 3 (Bite +1), Dodge 2, Endurance 2 (Underwater +2), Melee 2, Resistance 2, Stealth 2 (Underwater +1), Survival 5 (Underwater +1)

Base Initiative: 5

Attack:

Bite: Speed 5 Accuracy 6 Damage 8L Defense 3

Fist: Speed 5 Accuracy 5 Damage 5B Defense 5

Kick: Speed 2 Accuracy 4 Damage 7B Defense 4

Weapons (wild specimens only):

Short Spear: Speed 6 Accuracy 5 Damage 8L Defense 4

Chopping Sword: Speed 5 Accuracy 5 Damage 9L Defense 3

Dodge Pool: 4 Soak: 5L/8B (Thick skin, 3L/3B)

Willpower: 6 Health Levels: -0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-3/Incap

Other Notes: Siaka-men are often extras. When they smell blood, siaka-men reduce wound penalties by 1 and become totally fearless and extremely aggressive.

SPIRITS OF SEA AND SKY, GODS OF SURF AND STORM

Although sailors take steps to propitiate the earth gods of the reef and shoal, and the spirits of fire are never far from the thoughts of any, the greatest concern and trouble is placed upon the spirits, elementals and dragons of water and air, for it is these spirits that can wreak havoc on a sea-going vessel. If an air elemental withholds the winds, a ship can be becalmed until its crew is forced to cannibalism; a sea elemental can send unfavorable tides and currents or rise up in mighty waves until the ship's crew is killed or takes steps to satiate it. Alternately, the small gods of the sea can be of great help to sailors, warning of reefs and shoals, keeping the seas calm and the currents swift and bringing good breezes to fill the sails.

For these reasons, propitiating and seeking out the blessings of these little gods is of primary concern to a ship's captain. Ship's rudders contain not just maps and guides to currents, shoals and reefs, but descriptions of the spirits that inhabit an area and what needs to be done to secure their

favor — or at least blunt their wrath. These notes are sometimes sketchy, often misleading and, in some cases, downright inaccurate. Some captains, knowing that their ships' journals are of such importance, will put false information in them, making sure that if the books are ever stolen, the thieves will receive small consolation for their efforts.

NARESH, ARBITER OF NORTHERN STORMS, LESSER ELEMENTAL DRAGON OF WATER

Description: Naresh's duties in the Celestial Bureaucracy encompass overseeing the dispatching, timing and intensity of storms in the frozen seas of the North. Where some dragons have become indolent and soft, allowing their responsibilities to falter while they indulge other interests and peccadillos, Naresh enjoys his work and finds it to be little burden or hindrance to his other interests. His passion is music, which helps account for this; his chambers are filled with music night and day, provided by spirits or the occasional talented mortal. And so, he is able to indulge his passions while pursuing his duties, at least most of the time. He occasionally becomes distracted by one performer or another or by rumors of some great new artist, seeking to learn as much as he can about her and, if she seems promising, making great efforts to secure a performance or even her presence in his court. Normally, he is gracious if refused, although he offers much and makes an excellent, if demanding, patron for any musician, but in some cases, he becomes haunted by the concept of a particular performer and pursues her obsessively until his desires are satisfied. When pursuing one of his obsessions, only the most important of his duties can distract him from his goal — or possibly some new talent that rivals or surpasses the one he pursues.

When he is attending to his duties, Naresh is a harsh but fair administrator, neither sparing islands or ports simply because they have been savagely pounded by storms in the past, nor sending fiercer storms than he should to places that have slighted him in some fashion. He is known to be rough with those placed under him, expecting strict obedience and no mistakes from his tools and employees. He is not immune to bribes or blandishments of favor, especially if they have to do with music, musicians or musical instruments, but rarely will he utterly forego his responsibilities for a mere bauble or trinket.

Naresh makes his home in a palace constructed completely of ice on an island in the Far Northwestern ocean, where snow lives year-round. Orca spirits and great white eagles that carry the Northern gales in their wings guard the island. His glistening home is populated by air and water elementals, by spirits of storm and gale and by a few hardy mortals who are willing to brave his beautiful but frigid mansion and his tempestuous nature.

Like the storms he directs, Naresh is a beast of dark grays and blues, with a seemingly ever-shifting and -changing form. Lightning flashes from his eyes and sparkles

off his massive claws. His voice is the rumble of thunder in the distance, when he is at peace, and the sharp crack of a nearby strike, when he angers. He favors amethyst and chalcedony over all other precious stones and feels that teak is the greatest of woods. On their rare occasions when he takes human form, he prefers that of a young minister, appearing strong of body and wise beyond his years.

Nature: Connoisseur

Attributes: Strength 12, Dexterity 6, Stamina 14, Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4, Perception 5, Intelligence 6, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 2, Conviction 3, Temperance 4, Valor 4

Abilities: Archery 4, Athletics 4 (Swim +2), Awareness 4, Brawl 5 (Claw +1, Grab +2), Dodge 4, Endurance 5, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; Flametongue, Guild Cant, High Realm, Seatongue) 4 (High Realm +1, Old Realm +1), Martial Arts 3 (Dragon Form +2, Strike +1), Presence 5 (Intimidation +1, While Exercising Office +1), Resistance 5, Socialize 5, Stealth 1

Backgrounds: Allies 4, Artifact 5, Backing 5, Followers 5, Influence 5, Manse 5, Resources 5

Charms: All listed Charms

Cost To Dematerialize: 80

Base Initiative: 7

Attack:

Bite: Speed 10 Accuracy 11 Damage 16L Defense 10*

Claw: Speed 9 Accuracy 14 Damage Clinch Defense 9*

Smash: Speed 7 Accuracy 11 Damage 12L + Tackle Defense 11*

Lightning: Speed 13 Accuracy 13 Damage 24L**

* Naresh can make three attacks a turn without splitting his dice pool, in any combination, save that he cannot make two bite or smash attacks in the same round.

** Naresh can throw lightning at a target once every three turns, to a range of a 100 yards. This attack cannot be blocked, only dodged.

Dodge Pool: 8 **Soak:** 19L/26B (Dragon hide, 12L/12B)

Willpower: 9 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 7 **Essence Pool:** 120

Other Notes: None

ZHUZIAO

Description: Zhuziao claims to be lord of the deep waters, master of the dark depths. The only form he has ever been seen to take is that of a tremendous squid or octopid, with tentacles 100 feet long and a beak that can snap a warship in half. Unlike many members of the Ocean Court, he takes no other form when dealing with mortals. His domain is the darkest waters, where light never shines and what life exists is strange and hostile. He rules the tentacled beings by default, the result of an ancient pact with Kireeki (see below), but his power over them is as much a result of brute force as any bonds of fealty or natural obedience.

Although he claims no real interest in the actions of mortals, Zhuziao jealously guards those wrecks that fall into his domain — ships sunk in deep water are his, and those who would attempt to salvage or scavenge from them do so at their peril. He can sometimes be persuaded to give up some treasure or artifact, so long as he is offered some object he is convinced is equally as priceless in exchange. Whether this is some kind of test as to the depth of the petitioner's desire for the object, some strange mercantile sense or merely a test of cleverness is unknown. Certainly, there are tales of clever Dragon-Blooded, spirits and even mortals outwitting Zhuziao, exchanging some well-spoken bauble or trinket for a much-desired First Age weapon or treasure. These tales usually end with Zhuziao either chuckling in his odd voice and wishing the clever protagonist well or ripping the fool apart for his temerity. Which response is earned seems to depend on what the protagonist wants the treasure for, but even this is uncertain; it appears that Zhuziao has a strange sense of what an honorable reason is.

Nature: Curmudgeon

Attributes: Strength 14, Dexterity 9, Stamina 18 Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 0, Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 3

Virtues: Compassion 4, Conviction 5, Temperance 4, Valor 4

Abilities: Athletics 5 (Swim +3), Awareness 6, Brawl 7 (Bite +1, Grab +2), Bureaucracy 5, Dodge 4, Endurance 6, Linguistics (Native: Old Realm; High Realm, Rivertongue, Seatongue) 3, Lore 10, Occult 6, Presence 4 (Physical Intimidation +1), Resistance 5, Socialize 4, Stealth 3 (Camouflage +2)

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Artifact 5, Backing 2, Followers 4, Influence 2, Manse 5, Resources 5

Charms: Affinity Element Control (Water), Banish, Benefaction, Camouflage, Dreampeak, Essence Bite (cold of the depths/drowning), Geas, Hand of Destiny, Harrow the Mind, Hurry Home, Imprecation, Instill Obedience, Landscape Camouflage, Landscape Travel, Malediction, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Paralyze, Principle of Motion, Scourge, Sense Domain, Stillness, Stoke the Flame, Summon Food, Tiny Damnation, Tiny Gift, Weather Control

Cost To Materialize: 84

Base Initiative: 12

Attack:

Bite: Speed 9 Accuracy 18 Damage 24L Defense 16

Grab: Speed 12 Accuracy 18 Damage Lethal Clinch Defense 18

Zhuziao can make three attacks in a turn without splitting his Brawl dice pool, but can make only one bite attack in a turn. Principle of Motion adds only single extra attack. He can attack beings he himself has clinched.

Dodge Pool: 12 **Soak:** 21L/30B (Scaly, slippery skin, 12L/12B)





Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 7 **Essence Pool:** 126

Other Notes: Zhuziao has a Manse deep in one of the darkest portions of the Southern oceans, a place where no man has ever gone. He is often accompanied by a retinue of giant squid or octopids. The only spirits in his employ are squid and octopid spirits or dark and unpleasant water elementals. Zhuziao has, over the centuries, accumulated a horde of treasure, artifacts and goods that is perhaps unrivaled by any other, but he makes little use of it. Most of it rests in the rotting hulks it originally sunk into his domain in, undisturbed except for cataloging.

BASHIXUN, LORD OF THE SURF

Description: God of crustaceans, the shoreline and shoreline fishermen. Called the Old Man of the Sea by some, the Wise Crab by others. Bashixun most often takes the form of a coastal fisherman, a warrior dressed in articulated plate armor made of chitin and well adorned with spikes and hooks or a perverted old man. His natural shape is that of a gigantic cross between a lobster and a crab, with two massive fighting claws, a pair of smaller claws underneath and eyestalks that see in all directions.

Over the centuries, the Wise Crab has used his position to become a purveyor of knowledge in all its myriad forms. He lusts after new pieces of information, ancient books and scrolls and other bits of lost enlightenment, from the most influential book of sorcerous lore to the worst ill-written missive of love, and will pay or trade for any bit he doesn't yet have. He makes little use of this information and seems to make little or no distinction between truly valuable tomes such as spell books and near-worthless junk. If there is anything he desires as much (or more) than lore and knowledge, it is female companionship, including (or perhaps especially) that of human females, and this is perhaps the only thing that can get him to part with some piece of his collection. Everything is carefully organized and laid out in his atoll Manse, and he instinctively knows if something is missing. His servants are few, mostly spirits of education and lore (and, of course, his children, lobster and crab spirits).

Nature: Collector

Attributes: Strength 14, Dexterity 8, Stamina 12, Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2, Perception 4, Intelligence 6, Wits 6

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 4, Temperance 3, Valor 4

Abilities: Archery 5, Athletics 6 (Swim +3), Awareness 6 (Notice Details +2), Brawl 6 (Claw +1, Grab +2), Dodge 4 (Scuttle +1), Endurance 6, Investigation 4 (Learn Secrets +1), Lore 8, Occult 6, Medicine 4, Melee 4 (Great Axe +3), Presence 4 (Physical Intimidation +2), Resistance 4, Stealth 3

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Artifact 3, Backing 4, Contacts 5, Followers 2, Influence 3, Manse 4, Resources 4

Charms: All listed Charms

Cost To Materialize: 70

Base Initiative: 14

Attack:

As Crab:

Large Claw: Speed 18 Accuracy 14 Damage Lethal Clinch Defense 9

Lesser Claw: Speed 11 Accuracy 18 Damage 16L Defense 16

As Mortal:

Fist: Speed 7 Accuracy 9 Damage 10B Defense 6

Kick: Speed 9 Accuracy 10 Damage 12B Defense 3

Great Axe (Shell-Cutter): Speed 11 Accuracy 18 Damage 20L Defense 15

Dodge Pool: 13 **Soak:** 21L/27B (Chitin armor, 15L/15B)

Willpower: 9 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 6 **Essence Pool:** 115

Other Notes: None

KIREEKI, HUNTRESS OF THE WAVES

Description: Kireeki has domain over most of the large predators of the ocean, including dolphins, orca and mantas. She claims no dominion over the siaka or the shark — and desires none, hating them with a fierce, cold hatred that is unsettling to observe. She long ago reached an agreement of sorts with Zhuziao (see above), and so, she does not exercise whatever powers she might have over the tentacled hunters of the depths, and he does not send them against her favored children, the mammalian hunters of the surface and lighter depths. Her normal form when dealing with mortals has markings like those of an orca, black and gray, with white patches around each eye. Smooth of skin like a dolphin, Kireeki resembles a nubile human female from the hips up — only the fringe of tentacles where her ears should be and the fin-like crest that adorns her bald head distinguish her from a mortal woman. Instead of legs, however, Kireeki has a mass of tentacles, some over five feet in length. Her natural form is that of a great orca, with paired tentacles that trail from beneath her flukes.

Considered by many the friendliest of the Ocean Court, or at least the most approachable, Kireeki has been known to aid those who petition her properly (she is fond of ice wine and rose honey, it is said), but she is still a goddess of predators and ruthlessly hunts and slays those who offend her or those she thinks would make good sport. She occasionally takes mortal lovers, though rarely, and quickly tires of them; when she discards them, it may be with treasures and gifts or with a quick snapping of razor-sharp teeth. Her favored hunting grounds are the frozen reaches of the Northwestern seas, but she can be found almost anywhere her children pursue prey.

Kireeki is a cunning hunter who makes ample use of her Charms to track and slay her prey. She uses Stoke the Flame to incite fear and terror in her prey, causing them to wear themselves out in the chase or to foolishly turn and strike when she is ready for them. She uses Words of Power, Confusion and Hoodwink as a dolphin uses its stunning pulse — to daze and distract her opponent while she swoops in for the kill or to facilitate an escape if necessary. Her Landscape Travel Charm lets her double her movement rate in the water, whatever form she takes, and her Transport Charm lets her move herself and her hunting pack into position. She uses her Stoic Endurance Charm to reinforce the creatures she hunts with, to make sure they can keep up during long chases.

Nature: Huntress

Attributes: Strength 14, Dexterity 8, Stamina 12 Charisma 4, Manipulation 5, Appearance 4, Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 6

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 3, Temperance 3, Valor 5

Abilities: Archery 3, Athletics 6 (Swimming +4), Awareness 6 (Underwater +3), Brawl 5 (Bite +1, Grab +1, Punch +1), Dodge 4, Endurance 4 (Swimming +2), Linguistics 4 (Native: Old Realm; Guild Cant, High Realm, Riverspeak, Seatonque), Melee 4 (Bident +2), Occult 3 (Water Magics +2), Presence 3 (Physical Intimidation +2), Resistance 4 (Poisons +2), Socialize 3, Stealth 4

Background: Allies 3, Artifact 4, Backing 2, Followers 5, Influence 3, Manse 4, Resources 3

Charms: Affinity Element Control, Benefaction, Confusion, Hoodwink, Host of Spirits, Hurry Home, Imprecation, Instill Obedience, Landscape Travel, Largess, Lend Authority, Malediction, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Portal, Principle of Motion, Sense Domain, Shapechange, Stoic Endurance, Stoke the Flame, Tiny Damnation, Tiny Gift, Tracking, Transport, Words of Power

Cost To Materialize: 65

Base Initiative: 14

Attack:

Orca Form:

Bite: Speed 16 Accuracy 14 Damage 20L Defense 14

Ram: Speed 24 Accuracy 14 Damage 24L Defense 14

Humanoid Form:

Fist: Speed 14 Accuracy 13 Damage 14B Defense 13

Tentacle Grab: Speed 16 Accuracy 13 Damage Lethal Clinch Defense 12

Bident (Bane of the Shark): Speed 14 Accuracy 14 Damage 18L Defense 16

Dodge Pool: 12 Soak: 18L/24B (Orca hide, 12L/12B)

Willpower: 8 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 7 **Essence Pool:** 122

Other Notes: Kireeki usually travels with a hunting pack of orca, dolphins and predator spirits. Sometimes, favored mortals are brought with her, riding orca on special harnesses.

(Those unable to breathe water on their own are granted the use of one of a handful of artifacts she has unearthed over the years that allow humans to survive underwater unaided.) These hunts are sometimes tests of worthiness for those who would petition Kireeki's favor and are brutal chases against dangerous prey; others are languid lopes against a much easier quarry (but never without difficulty). Her Manse is an underwater grotto in the Northern seas.

COMMON OCEAN SPIRITS

The following spirits can be encountered over much of Creation's oceans; they are generally not confined to any one area and are only a small sample of the diversity of little gods that can be encountered on the waves. A host of spirits is involved in every aspect of the sea; there are spirits that keep the tides in motion, spirits who make sure the skies stay cloudy or sunny as required, spirits that test sailor's courage or generosity or skill and spirits that exist only to slay the unwary or the foolish.

DOLPHIN SPIRIT

Description: Playful warriors of the ocean, dolphin spirits spend much of their time cavorting with their mortal counterparts, hunting fish and playing infinitely complex games with each other that, to mortal eyes, resemble nothing so much as intricate children's games but have much deeper meanings to their kind. Dolphin spirits spend much of their time materialized, and many choose to shapeshift into human form and spend months or even years among mankind, learning man's customs and ways — and where all the best parties are. But these spirits are not all games and merriment. Dolphin spirits are as much killers and predators as they are revelers, and those they target find their jokes cruel and dangerous at best and their laughter mocking and spiteful. Even those they call friend are astonished by the casual cruelty and callousness dolphin spirits display toward enemies or prey, especially when compared to the efforts they will put forth to assist their friends or even total strangers in trouble.

Dolphin spirits are easily distracted by things of beauty or even simple toys, but such distractions rarely last long. They are known for the ease with which they take mortal lovers — and the even greater ease with which they discard them. Conversely, while they may forget an enmity over time, they never forgive one and are quick to pick up vendettas long forgotten once reminded of them. They are repulsed by the smell of coffee and dislike roses.

Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 4, Stamina 6, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 4, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 3, Conviction 4, Temperance 2, Valor 4

Abilities: Archery 2, Athletics 3 (Swim +3), Awareness 4 (Underwater +3), Brawl 3 (Bite +1, Ram +1), Dodge 3 (Underwater +1), Endurance 3, Melee 3, Presence 2, Resistance 2, Socialize 3, Stealth 3, Thrown 2



Charms: Benefaction, (Dreamscape), Dreampeak, Harrow the Mind, Materialize, Principle of Motion, Shapechange, Stoic Endurance, Tiny Gift, Touch of Grace, Tracking, Words of Power, Worldly Illusion

Cost To Materialize: 40

Base Initiative: 8

Attack:

As Dolphin:

Bite: Speed 8 Accuracy 9 Damage 6L Defense 8

Ram: Speed 12 Accuracy 8 Damage 12B Defense 8

As Mortal:

Fist: Speed 9 Accuracy 9 Damage 6B Defense 9

Kick: Speed 6 Accuracy 8 Damage 8B Defense 8

Javelin: Speed 9 Accuracy 8 Damage 8L Defense 7

Thrown Javelin: Accuracy 7 Damage 9L (Rate 2, Range 30)

Dodge Pool: 7/8 **Soak:** 6L/9B (Tough skin, 3L/3B)

Willpower: 6 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/-4/
Incap

Essence: 2 **Essence Pool:** 77

Other Notes: None

ERISTRUFA, DEMON OF THE FIRST CIRCLE

Description: Inhabitants of the black oceans of Malfeas, the eristrufa are mist-demons, creatures of the fog and shadows. Eristrufa are normally summoned by sorcerers to track down and slay enemies that are known to be riding the shorelines or traveling by ship. Occasionally some number of them escape captivity or are sent by the Yozis to rid their masters of some annoyance in a particularly awful fashion.

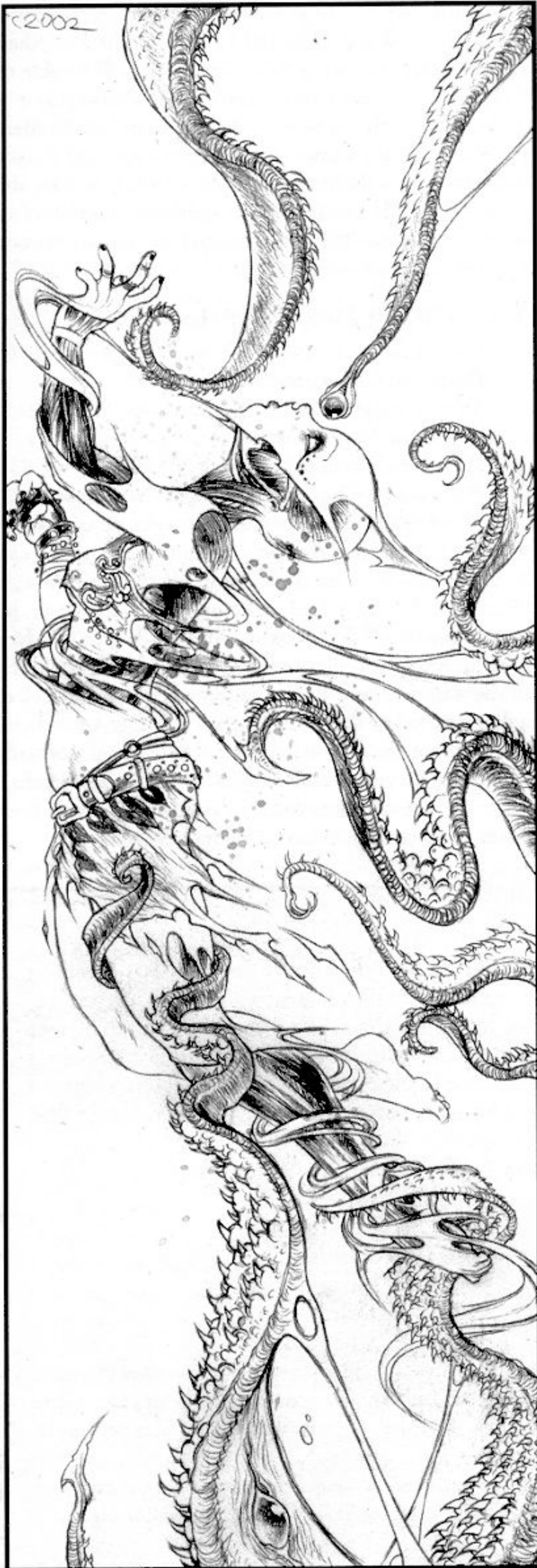
The normal form of an eristrufa in Creation is of that of a dense fog bank several miles deep that can move against the wind or tides when it desires. (A number of eristrufa will occasionally join together, creating a fog bank dozens of miles long, capable of covering an entire island.) Those who stumble into the demon when it is in this form (voluntarily or otherwise) are beset with disturbing sounds not quite out of the range of hearing, the mournful, muffled tolling of ship's bells and occasional hideous laughter or moaning sobs of agony. Sleepers in this bank dream the dreams of the damned and awaken more exhausted than when they laid down to rest. Directions become muddled, and ships drift off course, the eristrufa following their path to make sure the crew gets no relief. Eventually, the victims are driven mad by their torment and set upon one another or run their ship up against a reef or shoal. Islands or port towns attacked by these tormentors are left desolate ruins, destroyed by their inhabitants, or empty testaments to madness unchained. Often, the ghostly former inhabitants of the latter reside in the untamed lands that surround their residences, maddened furies still attached to their dwellings in an inexplicable fashion, easily enraged into attacking anyone who dares enter the place they once called home.

TAHAMOKU, THE ISLAND-BEAST

Perhaps Tahamoku was the prototype for tortoises and turtles, or maybe, it was the antecedent of the great pelagic dragons; like all of the behemoths, the reasons for its creation are lost with the Primordials. Even the source of its name is lost in antiquity. Today, Tahamoku slowly drifts through the waters of the Southwestern seas. This creature is so vast it feels no need to defend itself; indeed, there may be no creature now alive that could slay it in combat; how do you kill something that, when surfaced, resembles nothing so much as a good-sized coral island?

Tahamoku's vast bulk has more than once been mistaken for an island. Tales abound of sailors desperate for shore fall who have brought themselves up alongside, and even camped on the great beast's back for days or weeks until, on some unknowable whim, the creature dove for the depths or raised one of its two ponderous heads up to blearily take a look at what was floating alongside it. Over its millennia of existence, huge coral and barnacle outgrowths have grown up along its shelled back, furthering the illusion that it is just another of countless islands in the West. At times, years pass between its submergings, and Tahamoku becomes home to trees and wildlife. At some point, a small band of water fey commoners took up residence on the back of the behemoth and has lived there ever since, growing stranger and more Wyld over the decades as they fed off the weird dreams of this singular creature.

When the Dragon-Blooded rose up against the Solars, three Dawn Caste generals were tracked to great Tahamoku by their own honor guard, who slew them in a pitched battle. Instead of trying to carry their corpses back to the Realm or Sijan for burial, the Sidereal in charge of the attack decided to entomb the Solars and fallen Terrestrials in the very flesh of Tahamoku's back, beneath the stony shell. Demons were summoned and bound to never leave the island and to create a suitable tomb for the Dragon-Bloods' fallen comrades and former liege-lords. The demons have continued the construction for centuries, using their magics to carve an increasingly complex series of tunnels and passageways in the very flesh of this great beast. Whether this causes the behemoth any sort of pain is unknown — and irrelevant to the demons. Indeed, they probably get some perverse satisfaction out of the idea of the torment they may be causing it.



If the eristrufa loses its patience or sees that this tactic is not going to work for some reason, it can take the form of a mass of writhing tentacles, some of them 20 feet long, hanging in mid-air. Some of these tentacles bear eyes, others grasping and piercing claws or cutting edges. All of them are strong and covered with powerful suckers that can rip the skin right off the body with their force. An eristrufa in battle is a raging whirlwind, lashing out at anyone with the temerity to approach it, wrapping opponents in tentacles or impaling them on claws.

Some legends suggest that they may have a third form; details differ, however, on whether they can take the shape of a dolphin, a beautiful fae lord or lady or a rainbow. Any, all or none of these may be correct, but in any case, wary ships' crews worry upon seeing a lone dolphin or a rainbow in a sunny sky.

Eristrufa will not set out against a victim on a Venus' Day (although if they are already attacking a target, they won't back off, although the madness will lessen a bit), and they cannot change forms when the moon is full in the sky. They cannot abide the smell of freshly harvested garlic and will not embrace a home or ship that has large amounts of it. None know what it is that eristrufa eat, if, indeed, they eat anything at all. An offering of blood will sometimes cause them to forego destroying an entire vessel or village, if they have no specific target, but nothing short of powerful sorcery or death will cause them to give up their intended target.

Attributes: Strength 8, Dexterity 4, Stamina 6 Charisma 1, Manipulation 4, Appearance 0, Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Virtues: Compassion 1, Conviction 3, Temperance 1, Valor 4

Abilities: Awareness 3, Brawl 3 (Claw +1, Grab +2), Dodge 4, Endurance 2, Presence 3 (Physical Intimidation +2), Resistance 2, Stealth 1

Charms: Confusion, Cunning Thief, Dreambane, Essence Bite (chilling cold), Ghostly Presence, Harrow the Mind, Landscape Travel, Materialize, Measure the Wind, Principle of Motion, Shapechange, Sustenance, Will-o-Wisp

Cost To Materialize: 30

Base Initiative: 8

Attack:

Tentacle Grab: Speed 8 Accuracy 9 Damage Lethal Clinch* Defense 9

Tentacle Slash: Speed 6 Accuracy 9 Damage 10L Defense 6

*The damage from this clinch increases by 1 every turn it is maintained.

Dodge Pool: 8 **Soak:** 6L/9B (Scaly, slippery skin, 3L/3B)

Willpower: 7 **Health Levels:** -0/-0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/-4/Incap

Essence: 3 **Essence Pool:** 60

Other Notes: A materialized eristrufa can switch between its material body and its mist shape as a dice action, which costs 1 mote and requires no roll. In its mist form, an eristrufa has no Strength, but can "touch" any target that is in its



“body,” for purposes of Essence Bite, Cunning Thief or Sustenance. Only fire attacks have any effect on an eristrufa in mist form, and they deal no more than one health level of damage unless powered by a Solar; attacks such as Blazing Solar Bolt or Fiery Solar Chakram will do normal damage.

MAGICS OF THE SEA

A wide number of Charms and sorceries are useful to Exalted who brave the seas. Combat Charms help fight off pirates and the creatures of the deep, Awareness Charms help find land and avoid enemies, and of course, Sail Charms are indispensable.

Unless noted otherwise, the following Charms are intended for Solar Exalted, although Dragon-Blooded often have Charms that perform the same or similar effects.

AWARENESS CHARMS

PIERCING THE NIGHT'S VEIL PRACTICE

Cost: 5 motes

Duration: One scene

Type: Simple

Minimum Awareness: 3

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Sensory Acuity Prana

This Charm allows the user to see in darkness as if she were in broad daylight. The Exalted needs no light source of any kind, so long as this Charm is in effect; whether down in the deepest cave or under a new moon on a cloudy night, she will see with normal clarity and detail. Charms

used to increase her vision will work just like they normally do; if she uses the Hundred Leagues Sight Procedure (below) after activating this Charm, she will be able to flawlessly focus on a target dozens of leagues away, as if in daylight. As with the Sensory Acuity Prana (see *Exalted*, p. 196), the Exalted is not more or less susceptible to bright lights or sudden flashes. If she enters a torch-lit tent, she will see normally, and if suddenly startled by the flare of an anima banner, she will be blinded no longer than someone using his ordinary senses would.

VISION OF THE MURKY DEPTHS METHOD

Cost: 3 motes

Duration: One scene

Type: Simple

Minimum Awareness: 4

Minimum Essence: 2

Prerequisite Charms: Keen Sight Technique

The Exalted shifts his vision so that he can see in water as if in air. For the duration of the Charm, he can adjust his vision to see in water, in air or to see through them both. While shifted to see in either water or air, he sees normally. When looking through both (as when peering over the railing of a vessel to see if there is anything in the waters below or when looking up onto the deck of a ship from below the water's surface to locate a guard), he sees without the distortions and shifting that normally occurs, but his vision is halved (see “Vision in the Depths,” this page). It takes one turn to change sight over from water to air or from either to seeing in both.

VISION IN THE DEPTHS

The realms below the surface of the sea are rightfully called “the murky depths.” Air-dwelling creatures see poorly below the waves, when they can see at all. Even the clearest water, near the surface, vision becomes hazy within yards and impenetrable not long after that. At depths greater than 60 feet or so, colors fade, and everything appears green, blue or black unless under direct illumination (a Solar's anima is an excellent source of light in these depths, at least in clear waters). Farther down, even sea dwellers cannot see without aid; stories are told of great luminous creatures of tentacles and fangs that use the light they create as lures and tools to hunt one another.

Condition	Clear Vision Ends	Murky Vision Ends
Clear water, sunny day, near surface	30 yards	50 yards
Clear water, sunny day, middle depths	10 yards	15 yards
Clear water, sunny day, deep water	0 yards	0 yards
Murky water, sunny day, near surface	5 yards	10 yards
Murky water, sunny day, middle depths	0 yards	3 yards
Light source	2-5 yards*	5-10 yards*

*Depending on the strength of the illumination (any light source underwater will almost have to be magical in nature; even a completely watertight lantern would operate for only a few minutes before running out of air). A Solar's anima flare will light clearly out to about 4 yards and dimly to 10 yards. Underwater, light does not carry well; light sources can only be seen for about 10 times their murky vision range.

Ranges are halved on cloudy days and reduced to one-fourth at night. Muddy bottoms, storms, algae blooms and a host of other things can render water murky; in general, the farther from shore, the more likely that the water will be clear.

HUNDRED LEAGUES SIGHT PROCEDURE

Cost: 5 motes
Duration: One scene
Type: Simple
Minimum Awareness: 5
Minimum Essence: 2
Prerequisite Charms: Unsurpassed Sight Discipline
 Whereas, before, the Exalted could extend his vision out to a mile or more using the Unsurpassed Sight Discipline, with this Charm, he can see further than even the sharpest-eyed mospid. The user of this Charm can clearly focus and notice details out to a range equal to his (Essence x 20) miles. Anything within that range can be seen just as if it were close to hand — even the furthest objects will appear as if they were no more than 100 yards or so away. This ability is rarely of use on land, where terrain ensures that the Exalted will never actually be able to see that far, but at sea, the information gleaned may prove vital.

SAIL CHARMS

SEEKING THE EARTH'S BOUNTY METHOD

Cost: 6 motes
Duration: One turn
Type: Simple
Minimum Sail: 4
Minimum Essence: 2
Prerequisite Charms: Perfect Reckoning Technique
 By casting his will forth upon the waters, the Chosen can uncover where the nearest safe harbor or beaching site is located and how to get there. Although the approach to the harbor will be clear of hazards and the beach there usable for small craft (even if the vessel itself cannot beach), the harbor will not necessarily be safe for the crew. There might well be monsters in the bay or surroundings, the nearby natives (if any) may be unfriendly, or other hidden dangers may exist.

FIRE'S KISS RESISTANCE PRANA

Cost: 6 motes, 1 Willpower
Duration: One day
Type: Simple
Minimum Sail: 4
Minimum Essence: 2
Prerequisite Charms: Wind-Defying Course Technique
 Fire is rightly feared on all sea-going vessels. Even a ship with a First Age hull is filled with furnishings and supplies that will burn — and the crew has nowhere to go. Even small fires are tolerated only because of necessity, and the galley on a ship is the most carefully designed part of most vessels. This Charm renders a vessel completely immune to the ravages of fire altogether; while it is in effect, no natural fire can start aboard the ship. Although existing fires will not be affected, neither will they spread further, confining them-

selves to destroying what they are actually burning at that moment; any fuel added to the fire will simply refuse to burn. Magical or elemental fires can be set normally, but they will burn for half as long and take half the effort to douse than usual. While burning, they will inflict whatever damage they normally would, however.

IGNORE THE WIND'S COURSE TECHNIQUE

Cost: 10 motes
Duration: One scene
Type: Simple
Minimum Sail: 5
Minimum Essence: 2
Prerequisite Charms: Wind-Defying Course Technique
 By dint of this Charm, an Exalted helmsman can not only tack deeper into the wind than any mortal helmsman, she may ignore its direction completely. So long as the Charm is in effect, her vessel moves as if the wind were full in its sails, no matter what direction the winds actually blow or what course the helmsman sets. Anyone watching the Exalted's vessel while it sails in defiance of the winds will obviously know that some sort of powerful magic is in use.

MAST'S UNBREAKABLE WILL PRANA

Cost: 4 motes
Duration: One scene
Type: Simple
Minimum Sail: 3
Minimum Essence: 2
Prerequisite Charms: Wind-Defying Course Method
 A ship's mast is its life; without the mast, a sailing vessel is utterly subject to tide and current, and few vessels survive an attack or sudden squall that wrecks the mast. By way of this Charm, the Exalt can render the mast of a ship he is on immune to even the greatest winds or the strongest attacks. Only actions taken by Deathlords, extremely powerful elementals or spirits and the most powerful Exalted (those with a permanent Essence of 6 or greater) can hope to destroy a ship's mast while this Charm is in effect.

HARDEN THE HULL PRACTICE

Cost: 3 motes + 2 per (Essence)L of soak
Duration: One scene
Type: Reflexive
Minimum Sail: 4
Minimum Essence: 2
Prerequisite Charms: Storm-Weathering Essence Infusion
 Unseen hazards and dangers are a threat to every sailing vessel. Using this Charm, an Exalt can reinforce the hull of her vessel to resist these unforeseen problems. For every 2 motes of Essence she spends, the hull gains lethal soak equal to the Exalted's permanent Essence. This Charm can be applied multiple times to the same vessel in a scene, but under no circumstances can the soak gained through the use



of this Charm exceed the highest Stamina + Sail total of any Exalt who used this Charm on the ship during the scene.

SHIP'S HULL MAINTENANCE TECHNIQUE

Cost: 10 motes, 2 Willpower

Duration: One day

Type: Simple

Minimum Sail: 4

Minimum Essence: 3

Prerequisite Charms: Harden the Hull Practice

Breaches, cracks and holes in the hull will send even the largest ship to a watery grave. By means of this Charm, the Exalt can stave off this doom, if not prevent it altogether. The Solar summons his Essence and lets it flow into the hull, temporarily sealing any breaks or missing portions of the hull and making it seaworthy again, for a time. While this Charm is in effect, the vessel will act in all ways as if it were whole; water will be kept out of holds, and the ship will maneuver and travel just as if undamaged (if subjected to further damage, however, the ship will continue to deteriorate, until it is incapable of floating at all). The Charm requires something resembling an intact vessel to work; it cannot replace whole missing sections of a ship, nor can it turn the skeletal remnants of a ruined hulk back into a functioning vessel on its own.

SURVIVAL

EARTH'S UNCEASING BEACON

Cost: 2 motes

Duration: One scene

Type: Reflexive

Minimum Survival: 2

Minimum Essence: 1

Prerequisite Charms: None

By means of this Charm, the Exalt can instantly know in what direction the Elemental Pole of Earth lies, at least in a general sense. The player must make a Perception + Survival roll for the character. With even a single success, the character will have a general idea (able to point in the direction of) of where the Pole of Earth is located. Each additional success makes this sense of direction more precise; with three or more successes, the Exalt will know exactly where the pole is in relation to his current location, with sufficient clarity to be able to navigate with the aid of a compass and map. Any additional successes beyond three may be applied as bonus dice to any rolls involving navigation or plotting a course, until the end of the scene.

TERRESTRIAL CIRCLE SPELLS

The sea is one of the places where sorcery is most useful. A sorcerer can call up or banish winds, defend a ship from sea gods, divine a vessel's location and possibly even preserve a ship in the case of a terrible accident. As a result sorcerers, even mortal and god-blooded with minimal control over the

elements, are fairly welcome aboard ships. Despite the often cool reception that sorcerers receive elsewhere in the Realm, on a vessel of the imperial navy, they will be welcome guests, especially if they have a talent for weather working.

CALLING THE WIND'S KISS

Cost: 10 motes +2/hour of wind (maximum 20 additional motes)

The sorcerer calls the elements to do his bidding, and a wind is summoned up to fill the sails of his vessel. The spell lasts a number of hours equal to the casters permanent Essence, plus an additional hour for every 2 additional motes of Essence spent on the spell. For as long as the magic lasts, the ship will travel at its maximum safe rate of speed and will always have the wind at its back in battle. An air elemental with a permanent Essence at least as high as that of the sorcerer who cast the spell can take control of the winds away from him, if it desires. Alternately, the sorcerer can send the winds against an enemy vessel up to (permanent Essence x 3) miles away; if this is the case, the enemy ship will always suffer the effects of having to tack into the wind or will be deprived of wind altogether. Only one effect can be active per casting of the spell; if the sorcerer has cast it once, he can help his own ship or hinder an enemy ship — but not both. The sorcerer can bid the winds begone at any time, but only countermagic, neutralizing the wind's effects with conjured winds of her own or summoning an elemental to take control of them will enable another to counteract the actions of this spell.

MAST SHATTERING SPELL

Cost: 20 motes

The sorcerer utters a word and points at a vessel within easy unaided viewing distance (he must be able to clearly make out the crew on the deck for this spell to work). The targeted ship's mast cracks and shatters into a cloud of foot-long splinters that spray out in all directions. If the vessel has more than one mast, the ship's main mast is the one that shatters. When the mast shatters, any crew on the deck suffer injuries from falling rigging and the blast of splinters. Unless protected by some kind of magic, everyone on the deck will take lethal damage equal to (the sorcerer's permanent Essence x 2). This damage can be soaked normally. A variant of this spell works against the vessel's oars instead of its mast; the oars on one side of the vessel are all shattered, with similar effects, although damage scored against the crew is limited to the caster's permanent Essence and is only suffered by the oarsmen on that side of the target ship.

Masts that have been magically reinforced may survive this spell; the player of the sorcerer casting this spell must make an Essence + Occult roll (difficulty equal to the permanent Essence of the Exalted, spirit or elemental that protected the mast. A good default is difficulty 2 or 3); if the roll fails, the sorcery is unable to overcome the Charm or enchantments protecting the mast and fails.

WATER'S ALLY

Cost: 15 motes

For a day and a night, the caster becomes a kin to water and can exist in water or air with equal ease. She can swim in the water at the same speed as she moves upon land, may breathe water or air and can see underwater just as she can in the air. She is not affected by the water's crushing depths or its chilling cold. While in the water, she may add two dice to her Stealth dice pool as she blends into the deep colors. The spell provides no protection against predators or other active threats of the ocean. It merely adapts the caster for existence in the water. A sorcerer has to deal with the creatures of the depths on her own.

WATER'S CHILLING GRASP

Cost: 15 motes

The sorcerer causes a number of chill tentacles of water equal to twice her permanent Essence to rise up from the waters that surround a nearby vessel (no further than 100 x permanent Essence yards from her) and attack the crew of that ship. Each tentacle is up to 30 feet long and attacks once a turn without direction, randomly attempting to grab a crewmember, lifting him up from the deck and constricting him in its cold grasp. Each tentacle has an Initiative of 6 and an Attack of 5, and each does 8 bashing damage per turn that a foe is in its coils. The tentacles attack as a group; roll one attack, and compare it to each defender's dodge or parry separately (so, if the tentacles roll 3 successes, each defender needs to roll 4 successes to avoid being grabbed). Only one tentacle will attack each target. If attacked, the tentacles do not dodge or soak and take 20 health levels of damage before dispersing. Edged weapons do half damage to the tentacles, fire-based weapons do double. If the sorcerer wishes, he can take an action and directly control one of the tentacles (using his own Melee pool to attack, at a two dice penalty), or he can reform a tentacle that has been "slain," although this takes the entire turn. The tentacles last for a number of turns equal to the caster's permanent Essence + 2 and then dissolve, leaving the enemy vessel awash in water and any victims either in the ocean or dashed to the decks (50 percent chance of either). Players of victims who fall to the deck must make a Dexterity + Athletics roll (difficulty 2) to avoid their characters taking an additional 8B damage from the fall. Victims that fall into the ocean take no damage but will have to be rescued and will start drowning if they cannot swim. If attacking in group combat, add the caster's Essence rather than her Charisma to a single attack roll, and add 2 to the damage of the attack for each tentacle after the first.

CELESTIAL CIRCLE SPELLS

STORM RIDER ENCHANTMENT

Cost: 30 motes

With the aid of this spell, a ship can travel in even the mightiest storm without fear or danger, even taking advantage of the storm's power to lend speed to its journey. Cast when a ship first encounters a storm, it renders the vessel totally immune to the storm's effects (if cast while the ship is in the storm, this spell has no effect). For the duration of the Charm (which lasts as long as the storm or three days, whichever is shorter), no lightning will strike the ship nor waves dash over its decks. The enchanted ship will sail safely over the deepest swells and the highest waves and remain calm under even the fiercest winds. The ship has only slight control over where it goes but will, at the least, keep somewhat on course for its destination if the navigator and helmsmen are competent (this requires Wits or Stamina + Sail rolls for each, with the difficulty ranging from 2 to 4 depending on the ferocity of the storm. The player or Storyteller may choose whether to use Wits or Stamina, as both quick-thinking or dogged determination can see one through a storm safely). If the storm is traveling in the same general direction as the vessel was heading, the ship will benefit from its passage, typically cutting one to two days (or more in the case of truly savage storms, up to a week) from the length of the journey.

SUMMON SPIRIT BOAT

Cost: 30 motes base, + 2 motes per additional day of existence.

The sorcerer calls forth a sailing ship constructed of pure Essence to take him where he wants to go. This spirit-crafted vessel will remain in existence for a week and a day (plus one day for every additional 2 motes of Essence spent), during which time it will go wherever the sorcerer commands, without need of crew or navigator. A simple command such as "Take me to the city of Lookshy by the most direct path" will suffice to set course and set the vessel upon its journey. If the sorcerer desires, he may place the vessel under the command of another by merely commanding the ship to take her orders as it would his own. He may also place restrictions upon this gift, as desired; the ship will understand moderately complicated conditions and restrictions placed upon its usage and follow them accordingly. The vessel appears fully stocked with provisions and takes whatever form the sorcerer requests, so long as it is a fine one; the spirits will not create a crippled looking scow or an aged rowboat, instead interpreting these commands in ways that better suit their aesthetic sensibilities. There are limits to the size of the vessel this spell can create; ships as large as a large yacht or a small coaster are within its ability, but a ship as large as a blue-water merchant is beyond the spell's ability to construct.





While on a course, the vessel travels at three times the normal speed for a ship of its kind, even against the wind or tides, and it will cleverly avoid reefs, shoals and other submerged hazards. It provides no inherent protection against predators or the weather, but local spirits will generally not harass those aboard such a ship unless ordered to do so by another sorcerer who holds sway over them, or their superiors in their spirit court. If attacked, the spirit ship has twice the soak and health levels of vessel of its type, but it is not armed and will attempt to run, not fight.

SWIFT JOURNEY

Cost: 25 motes

This spell enables the vessel it is cast upon to travel incredible distances in just a single day. When it is cast, the sorcerer specifies a destination, which must be no further away than 1,500 miles times the caster's permanent Essence. So long as the final stopping point is within that range, the journey will take no more than a full day from the time the spell is cast. The crew and passengers will notice nothing unusual about their journey, save that it takes such a short time; while this spell is in effect, only great powers such as elemental dragons, the gods and perhaps elder Sidereals and the like can interfere with the ship until it reaches its goal.

WEAPONS OF THE WAVES

Although desperate times lead to desperate measures, mariners scorn many weapons used by landfolk. They work in a dangerous, crowded environment, surrounded by salt water. Wooden hafts and weapons are quickly ruined by the salt spray and water, and steel weapons need constant maintenance to keep them in working order. Armor is heavy and all too subject to corrosion or ruin at the hands of the waves as well, making it uncommon; though few sailors can swim, fewer still are willing to increase their risk of drowning by encasing themselves in armor.

Weapons commonly used aboard ship are typically shorter and heavier than those used by shore-based soldiers. Unlike infantry, the need for lighter-weight weapons isn't as great, since the weapons are rarely carried long distances (Realm marines are a significant exception to this rule, as they are often used as expeditionary forces ashore). Many shipboard weapons are also of unexceptional, if not downright poor, quality; they need to be replaced much more frequently than infantry weapons, due to damage caused by sea spray and hard use, and the cost of outfitting crews with fine weapons that they may use only a handful of times before they must be replaced (or fall overboard in a fight) is high. Brass, copper and bronze are still common materials in the manufacture of weapons used by crews, with steel or iron weapons reserved for the marines or infantry. Though these weapons are inferior in combat, their materials are

usually cheaper than steel or iron, and they are more resistant to damage by saltwater.

Axes, short swords, clubs, hammers, khatars and short spears are all commonly issued to crews and marines when a boarding action is anticipated. Between fights, weapons are commonly kept locked up in an armory or locker, to prevent their misuse and exposure to the elements. Some officers will carry a sword or other weapon at all times, either as a sign of their rank or (on less well-managed ships) as a precaution against mutiny or assassination. Knives are all but ubiquitous aboard ship; nearly every crewman (certainly all of the topsmen and foremast jacks and almost everyone else, excepting only the rowers) carries some sort of heavy-bladed knife tucked into their belt or in a sheath along one leg for cutting and chopping while in the rigging, and it is rare that there isn't at least one within grabbing distance almost anywhere on a ship.

Ranged weapons are more problematic. Javelins are commonly used by marines as ships close, and many crewmen (especially on pirate vessels) outfit themselves with one or more throwing knives, but bows are uncommon, mainly due to their size and vulnerability to sea spray (although not as susceptible to water as a composite bow, the string of long bows and self bows can be ruined by water, rendering them useless until restrung). Still, their range, ability to fire a number of different arrows (including fire arrows, see below) and fast rate of fire makes them too useful to ignore, and most ships carry a number, carefully wrapped and maintained, in the armory.

Some vessels carry heavier weapons. Siege weapons such as catapults, firedust cannons and ballistae are used on military vessels, merchant escorts and pirate marauders, both to attack other ships (usually the larger and slower vessels; triremes are often simply too fast to keep a heavy weapon targeted on) and to pound shore installations. Although useful in some situations, such weapons are expensive and heavy, and they take up valuable deck space that can often more profitably be used for other purposes, such as hauling cargo. Sometimes, there is no alternative to a ballista or a fire projector, however, and so, while not ever present, neither are heavy weapons an uncommon sight.

ARROWS (SWARM)

Rather than resolve fire for every archer in a group, simply treat archer attacks as a form of skirmish combat, rolling an attack against the defending unit, which doesn't get a defense roll, but if either ship is taking evasive maneuvers, then the regular effects for that apply. Use the damage of the arrow plus the commander's Charisma (rather than the archer's Strength), and add +1 to that for every two archers after the first (+1 at 3, +2 at 5, +3 at 7, etc.). Archers can attack only weapons and crew. Archers will generally only have arrows enough for 10 to 12 attacks — or perhaps 20 if they are heavily provisioned.

FIRE ARROWS

Despite the danger, fire arrows are sometimes used against enemy vessels. The simplest fire arrow is just an ordinary arrow (usually a broadhead or pointed arrow) with the head wrapped in rags soaked in whale oil that is lit just prior to launching. Fire arrows are standing fire weapons, doing an additional 3L damage every turn for a number of turns equal to the attacker's extra successes or until extinguished. This damage is applied every turn and is separate from the arrow's damage. Armor soaks as usual. The range of fire arrows is halved due to the extra weight of the oil-soaked rags.

SOUTHERN FIRE ARROW

These fire arrows are less common, but safer, though by no means safe. They use an alchemical mixture developed in Chiaroscuro several centuries ago that burns and spreads when released. These arrows have only a small point, behind which is a bulbous hollow, resembling that of a fowling arrow, filled with the mixture. When fired, the impact ignites the mixture, bursting the bulb and spreading flames in the nearby area. A hit does the archer's Strength + 2 bashing damage and a 5L standing fire attack. Due to the weight and poor balance of the arrow, range is halved. A half-dozen Southern fire arrows costs Resources •• in the South, ••• elsewhere. Fire arrows are a real specialty weapon, and they may be difficult to find outside the South, even in martial metropoli such as Nexus. Because of their hazard, these arrows are normally kept in a heavy, metal-lined wooden case; this case holds up to 12 arrows and weighs 10 pounds fully loaded.

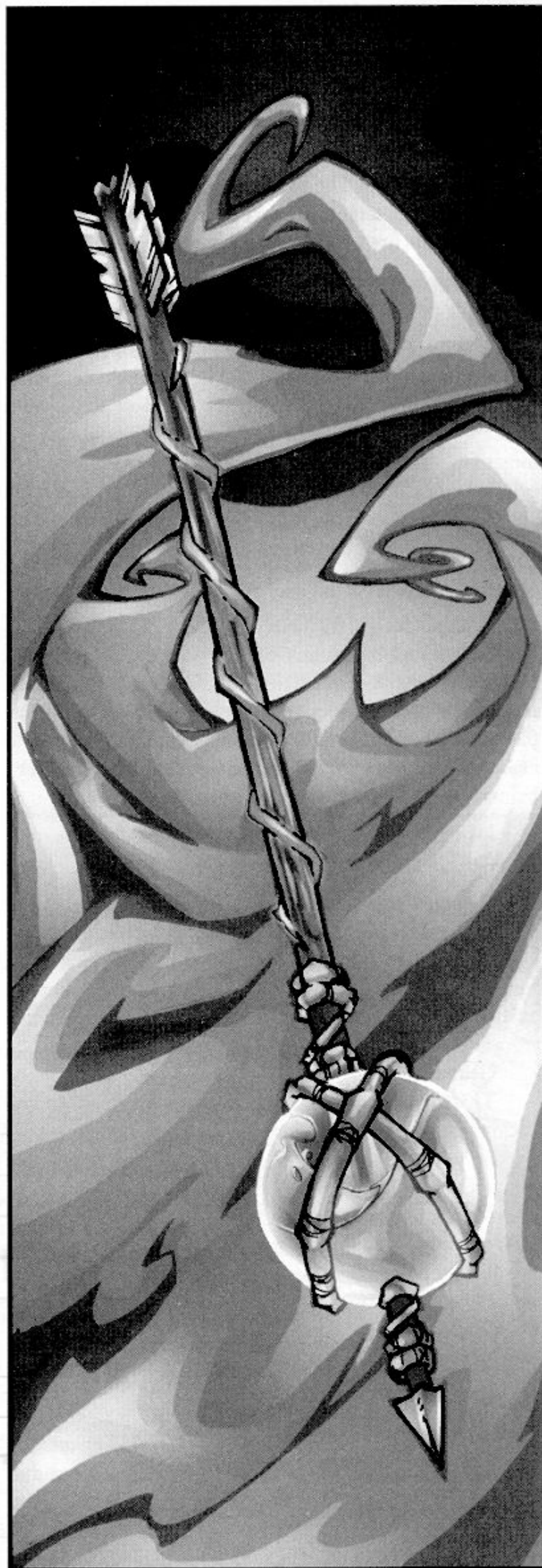
FIRE ARROWS (SWARM)

Fire arrows do damage as normal for an arrow swarm; the Charisma of the character leading the archers, plus the damage modifier of the arrow, soaked with the Charisma of the defending leader plus the lethal soak value of the defending unit's armor, or 2L if the target is rigging. Don't worry about the fire damage to attacked units. Fire arrows attacking rigging add 3 dice to the attack roll.

Don't worry about the standing fire damage of a fire arrow swarm directly against struck units. Worry about it against the ship. Regardless of whether or not the attack targets the crew or the rigging, the fire arrows' damage is 2L (for fire arrows) or 5L (for Southern fire arrows). Add +1L of fire for every 3 archers beyond the first. This standing fire persists for a number of turns after the attack equal to the number of extra successes on the attack roll.

CATAPULTS

Catapults are the primary heavy armament for many ships, especially in the Threshold, where more effective weapons are hard to come by. Catapults come in two sizes, light and heavy, but they both function the same; a powerful torsion skein (tightly wound rope) is wrapped





around a long wooden lever, at the end of which is a cup, onto which can be loaded a variety of projectiles. The lever is cranked back, creating large amounts of tension in the skein, and locked into place. The cup is loaded, and then aligned with a target. When fired, the tension in the skein is released, and the lever flies forward, until stopped by a padded braking bar. The payload continues forward, hopefully striking the target. Archery Charms cannot be used to improve shots fired with a catapult.

LIGHT CATAPULT

A relatively small design that can be fired and operated by a single person, if necessary (a crew of three can recock and reload the catapult much more quickly). The light catapult is usually mounted on the centerdeck on most ships, on a turntable mount that allows the catapult to fire on almost any target (in some navies, the turntable has locking pins that prevent the catapult from being fired in a direction that could endanger the masts or rigging). The turntables do not elevate or depress, as release trajectory is a function of the catapult.

HEAVY CATAPULT

A larger design, throwing almost twice the payload of the light catapult. Usually carried only on large vessels, heavy catapults have much the same mounting and traverse features as their smaller cousins. Because of their larger payloads, heavy catapults have larger areas of effect; increase the radius of area-of-effect weapons (such as gravel, below) by 50 percent, rounded up.

CATAPULT PAYLOADS

Stone

A single large stone, sometimes banded with brass or steel but usually just carved to a generally spherical shape. Usually fired to try and break holes in the deck (and, hopefully, the hull as well), these weapons do basic damage as shown below. Stones do half damage if they hit units of troops. Stones can be shot at the hull or at weapons.

Gravel

This might be actual gravel, but more likely, it is a load of caltrops, small metal pyramids with sharp edges, designed so that, whatever way they fall, they land point up. When flung from a catapult, this is not quite true; they normally fall point down, which can cause injuries and death among the crew of the targeted ship. A gravel shot will attack everyone in a 10-foot radius; compare the dodge attempts against the number of successes rolled on the initial attack. Gravel attacks do (catapult base damage - 3), plus any extra successes left after the dodge is compared. In naval combat, gravel can be fired at the crew, at the hull or at the rigging.

For Example: Lyssa and Timor are crew on a ship that is attacked by a heavy catapult throwing gravel. The attacker rolls four successes. Lyssa and Timor both dodge to try and get out of the way; Lyssa rolls three successes (leaving one), and Timor rolls only one success. Lyssa suffers 12L damage, while Timor suffers 14L, soaked as normal.

FIRE WEAPONS

Fire-based weapons are dangerous weapons at the best of times; fire is hard to control and often burns everything within range, rather than just the desired target. They are exceptionally dangerous aboard ship. A careless moment with a firepot or other flame weapon can spread fire aboard your own ship (see "Fire," p. 95), and it can be hard to grapple and take a ship that is already burning. Few other than the navies of major countries such as the Realm will use fire weapons without great provocation; the risk to one's own ship is too high. Pirates almost never use flame weapons, except as a threat; they want to take the ship as intact as possible. Even the Realm and Lookshy hesitate before ordering fire arrows or firepots brought up and readied.

Fire weapons can be broken up into two basic types: point and standing.

Point fire weapons wash over a target, burning it, and then are gone; examples would include firewands (see *Scavenger Sons*, p. 37) and most elemental fire sorcery and Charms. They may ignite flammable materials they strike, but any continuing damage comes from that material burning, not the weapon itself.

A standing fire weapon leaves a burning element of some kind; fire arrows (p. 119) and firepots (p. 121) are both examples. They will continue to do damage until they are removed or extinguished or until they burn out. If not extinguished, a standing fire will burn for a number of turns equal to the extra successes rolled by the attacker.

For Example: Arella launches a normal fire arrow into an opponent, scoring four successes. The arrow will do Strength + 7 damage (+2 for the broadhead arrow, +2 from the fire and +3 for extra successes rolled) immediately and will continue to do an additional 2L fire damage each turn for the next three turns unless removed or extinguished. The damage is soaked normally.

Any botch with a fire-based weapon exposes the attacker's ship to the attack, just as if it had hit the target (the number of 1s rolled can be used as "extra successes" for determining how long standing fire weapons will burn, in this case).

Firepot

A firepot is a heavy clay pot filled with whale oil. Lit before firing, the pot sprays burning oil everywhere in a five-foot radius. Anyone splashed (use the same mechanism as with gravel, above) suffers a 6L standing fire attack for as many turns as the attacker scored extra successes. This applies against units of troops and the ship as well. The firepot will also ignite any flammable materials in the radius of its attack. Canny pirates sometimes launch an unlit firepot at prospective targets, hoping to cow them with the obvious threat that the next pot could be lit. Firepots can be fired at the hull, at the crew or at the rigging.

Firedust Charge

Firedust charges are fairly rare weapons; each uses as much firedust as 10 shots with a firewand (and costs Resources ••, ••• away from sources of firedust). A firedust charge explodes on the deck (or just above it), doing damage to a unit of troops. Because of the difficulty in timing the fuse and launching just right, attacks with firedust charges are at +2 difficulty — the attack needs two extra successes to hit correctly; otherwise, the charge detonates early or late and has little, if any, effect (Storyteller's discretion).

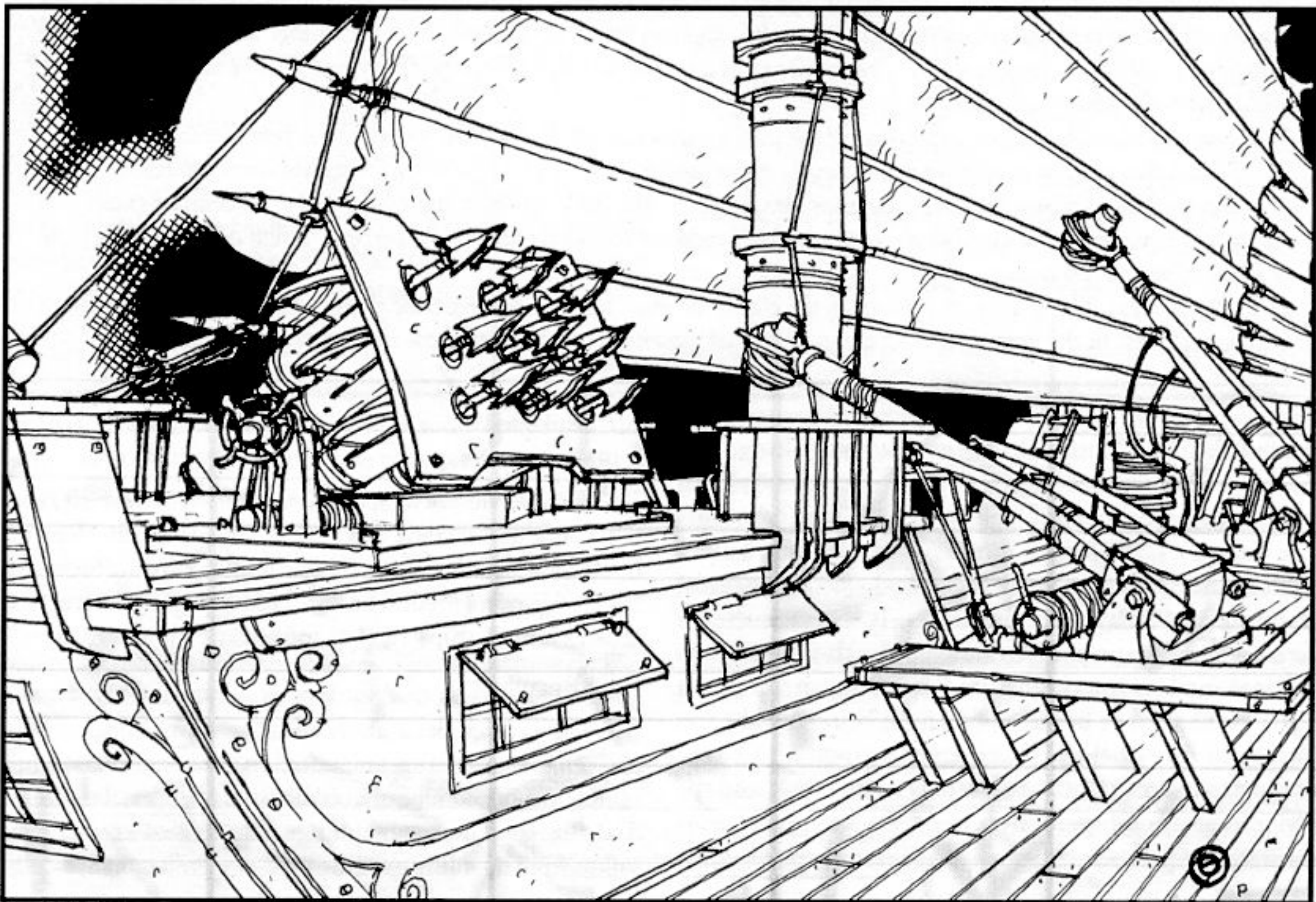
BALLISTAE

Ballistae are also known as javelin-launchers or -tossers, and they come in light and heavy varieties. A pair of torsion skeins are tightened with winches, then used to propel a

heavy javelin or spear against a target. Most often these javelins are wooden, but brass or steel ones are sometimes used against fortifications. Ballistae are usually mounted on fast-moving swivel mounts that afford them a high degree of mobility; they can usually fire in any direction and at flying as well as swimming targets (360 degrees of rotation, up to 20 degrees of depression and 75 degrees of elevation). Metal javelins launched from a ballista treat the lethal soak of whatever they hit as half its true value when the damage is applied but require an extra turn to load and fire (they're heavy). Ballistae can fire at the hull and at weapons.

SAILCUTTER

A specialized weapon, usually seen only on military vessels and some pirate ships, a sailcutter is built from a pair of light ballistae mounted on a common swivel mount. The two ballistae are canted at a slight angle from each other, so the two javelins will travel on a slightly spreading path. The javelins are connected with a stout chain, usually about 10 feet long, with sharp blades inserted at regular intervals. When fired, the two javelins pull the chain taut. Launched against a ship's sails, the chain is fully capable of tearing large holes in it, leaving it useless. Sailcutters will also damage the target's running rigging, spars and topsmen as well as its sails. If directed against the crew on the deck, the chain can cut a wide swath, leaving mangled and torn bodies





Name	Accuracy	Damage	Rate	Range	Naval Rate	Naval Range	Crew	Resources
Arrow Swarm	Per bow	Per arrow	1	100	3/turn	Short	Varies	•
Fire Arrow Swarm	Per bow	2L	1	100	3/turn	Short	Varies	•
Lt Ballista	-0	7L*	1/5	300	3/turn	Long	2	•••
Hvy Ballista	-1	11L*	1/10	400	2/turn	Long	3	•••
Lt Catapult	-2	10L	1/10	350	2/turn	Long	3	•••
Hvy Catapult	-3	15L	1/15	400	1/turn	Long	5	••••
Sailcutter	-2	6L	1/5	80	3/turn	Short	4	••••
Fire Projector	-0	12L	Special**	15***	N/A	N/A	1	••••
Hvy Fire Cannon	-3	20L	1/10	50***	2/turn	Short	4	••••
SHvy Fire Cannon	-4	25L	1/20	65***	1/turn	Short	6	•••••
Shore Cannon	-1	30L	1/40	1,200+	1/turn	Very Long	10	•••••

*Halve the soak value of the hull when applying the damage of a ballista.

** Fire projectors have four barrels, each of which is loaded with a charge equal to three shots from a firewand. Only one shot can be fired in a turn. Once emptied, each barrel takes one turn to reload. The projector cannot be reloaded in a turn during which it is fired.

*** Fire projectors and fire cannons, like firewands, have no extended range. The listed range is their maximum range in yards. Beyond that, they have no effect.

Accuracy: This value is added to or subtracted from the character's Dexterity + Archery total when rolling for attacks using the weapon.

Damage: This value is the basic amount of damage done by the weapon. Extra successes are added to this number to determine damage when a character attacks with the weapon.

Rate: The maximum number of times the weapon can be fired in a given period of time. Most siege weapons have rates less than one per turn (for example 1/5). This means the weapon must be reloaded and aimed before it can fire again, which will take the crew that many turns (for example a weapon with 1/5 fires on turn 1. It will be incapable of firing again until turn 7, as it will take 5 turns (about 15 seconds) to reload).

Range: The range interval of the weapon in yards. Ranged weapon can shoot out to their range without penalty. They can fire at up to twice their range with a -2 penalty, and can fire at up to three times their range at a -4 penalty. The exception to this is fire projectors and fire cannons, which have no extended range. They can fire out to the listed range without penalties but no further.

Naval Rate: The weapon's rate of fire if it is used in naval combat. See page 90 for an explanation of naval rates of fire.

Naval Range: The weapon's range in naval combat distances. See page 90 for an explanation of naval combat distances.

Crew: The number of trained crew members needed to fire the weapon at optimum speed and accuracy (more will not help). For every crew member a weapon is short, increase the reload time by 50 percent. If half or more of the crew is missing, reduce the accuracy by -1.

Resources: The minimum Resources the character must have to purchase the item. Many siege weapons have additional costs, in the form of trained crews or special materials/ammunition needed for proper functioning.

in its wake. A sailcutter's chain attacks everything in its path; compare the dodge rolls of anyone in its path against a single attack roll. Further, a sailcutter that hits the target's sail does double damage (applied before adding dice for additional successes), for purposes of determining how intact the sail is. If the sailcutter is fired against a unit of troops, apply the damage as normal. Sailcutters can be fired at crew or rigging.

An Exalted or other supernatural being could parry the sailcutter with the aid of a magical weapon or a Charm; if the parry succeeds, the sailcutter's chain is cut, and the two pieces fly off harmlessly.

FIRE CANNON

The heaviest of weapons not invented in the First Age, fire cannons are rare even in the fleets of the Realm, Lookshy and Chiaroscuro. These massive guns are fueled by huge amounts of firedust and are used almost exclusively for attacks against ships' rigging and against shore targets.

FIRE PROJECTOR

Larger examples of the firewands used in the South, fire projectors are sometimes mounted on either side of boarding ramps or, more commonly, on the bows of imperial triremes. They are fired during ramming operations to keep enemy sailors from boarding over the ram. Fire projectors typically

have four barrels, each of which is touched off individually (only one per turn), allowing for a sustained blast of fire when necessary. Each barrel uses a charge of firedust equal to three shots of a firewand, and each takes a full turn (during which no other action can be taken by the loader) to reload. Fire projectors aren't powerful enough or long-ranged enough to figure in ship-to-ship combat.

HEAVY FIRE CANNON

Often ornately decorated, heavy fire cannons belch a tremendous gout of flame from their cast iron or brass bodies. The flame kills men and lights ships aflame, making them feared weapons. Each shot of a heavy cannon uses 20 charges of firedust and costs Resources ••, ••• outside the South. Heavy cannons are normally mounted two to a ship in partial casement mounts on either side of the keel, pointing out the bow. Imperial triremes can mount a single heavy cannon, mounted along the ship's keel, but this practice is not common. Instead, each has two fire projectors on the bow. Heavy fire cannons have extremely limited traverse: +/- 10 degrees left or right, 15 degrees up, 5 degrees down. Heavy fire cannons can be fired at the hull or at weapons only.

SUPERHEAVY FIRE CANNON

Superheavy cannons are nearly the largest weapons installed on ships; even a warship the size of the massive large merchant ship (see p. 57) can carry only a single cannon this large, mounted along the keel and firing out through the bow. The gun fires a tremendous blast of flame, capable of burning through the hull of a trireme. Each shot uses 45 charges of firedust and costs Resources ••••, ••••• outside the South. These guns have no traverse or elevation; they are on a fixed axis. They are curiosities in this configuration, and few navies use them. The Realm's navy uses a number of them on sophisticated pedestal mounts on their First Age heavy warship hulls to supplement the First Age weapons. Superheavy fire cannons can be fired at the hull or at weapons only.

SHORE CANNON

Shore cannons are always mounted in batteries as part of coastal defenses or fortifications; while a large First Age ship might be able to mount one or two, few who possess such a craft would sacrifice the chance to mount First Age weapons instead. Shore cannons typically fire cut stone or cast brass balls. Each shot requires 60 charges of firedust and costs Resources ••••, ••••• if it must somehow be gathered outside the South. Harbor guns have very long ranges, often as far as several miles. They also enjoy greater flexibility in targeting than shipboard weapons. The fact that they are used in shore fortifications means that the gun mounts can be heavier and more versatile. A typical emplacement can traverse 30 degrees to the left or right and can elevate or depress up to 15 degrees. Shore cannons can be fired only at a ship's hull.

ARTIFACTS OF THE WAVES

The sea is a hostile environment, where man cannot survive without special tools. Just as men today make tools in an attempt to tame (or just survive) the fury of the sea, so too did the savants of the First Age make tools that allowed the navigators and sailors of the golden age to travel and prosper on the seas. Like all such treasures, most were lost or their functions forgotten. Those that remain are valuable relics of a bygone age, used sparingly and treasured as irreplaceable (or replaceable only at great expense, in the case of minor baubles produced at the behest of the Dynasty).

CARGO PRESERVATION SPINDLES (ARTIFACT • TO •••, DEPENDING ON SIZE)

Keeping cargo and food stores safe is one of the hardest jobs a crew has; water seeps into holds, rats and other vermin are a constant threat, and spoilage can ruin food on long voyages no matter how carefully stored or cured. In the First Age, crew and passengers used a variety of methods to keep their cargo and packages safe; many of these tools have survived in one fashion or another to the present day, but by far the most common are these spindles.

Cargo preservation spindles come in a set of four, ranging in size from slender spires a handbreadth high to slender pillars that stand nearly as tall as a man does. Despite their length and proportions, they are all of the same basic form: a five-sided spindle, coming to a sharp point at either end. The shorter end of the spindle is normally set into a socket carved into the decking or a specially placed holder like a candlestick for smaller spindles. One is placed in each corner of a room or hold where cargo is kept. How large a spindle is determines how much area it can protect; small spindles will cover only a small room the size of a typical passenger's cabin, while the tallest will protect a large cargo hold.

To use the spindles, the owner must first introduce them to the cargo to be protected. The long end of each spindle must be forced into the corresponding corner of the crates to be protected (far enough to leave a mark, not far enough to damage the crate or contents). As this is done, the contents are described in general detail; the magic allows for some variation, but radically different materials from those described won't be protected. A smuggler can easily find the firedust he had secreted in the cargo totally ruined, surrounded by otherwise dry and intact goods.

Once this is done, the cargo is protected from almost all manner of damage that could affect it. Food will neither rot nor be infected or eaten by vermin of any kind (although food taken from its container will age and decay normally). Water, even the thickest of brines, will be unable to affect the goods in any way. Crates will stay in place under all but the heaviest seas, and even if toppled, their contents will be





undamaged. The spindles will not prevent theft, but anyone touching the crates or packages protected will know immediately if anything has been taken from them. Fire will not take hold on any box or crate under the protection of the spindles. This protection is only effective as long as the cargo remains in the hold or room where the spindles are placed. A container that leaves the confines of the area bounded by the four spindles is no longer protected until it is returned, although there are no other effects (food removed from their protection does not suddenly spoil, for example).

Although not as powerful as some weapons, the spindles are not easy to make. Carefully faceted prisms of each of the five types of jade are bound together with bands of orichalcum and pins of moonsilver. Each facet side is carved with the symbol of the Elemental Dragon the jade is aligned with, along with requests for the Dragon to look over and protect the contents of the warded containers. Cargo preservation spindles are not in general production today, both because of the care needed in their enchantment and manufacture and because of the difficulty in getting any kind of quantity of moonsilver or orichalcum. Large numbers of them have survived to the present day, however, and many ships, particularly those of the Realm, carry one or more sets to protect their belongings and cargo.

ARMOR OF AQUATIC PUISSANCE

(ARTIFACT ••••)

Soak: 10L/12B

Mobility Penalty: -2/0

Fatigue Value: 1

Commitment: 8

These curious suits of articulated plate armor appear not so much to be forged as carved. Regardless of what type of metal the armor is made out of, it will be heavily inlaid with a rare form of sparkling black jade that glistens as if wet, even in the sun. The armor is built to tolerances and stresses that cannot be duplicated today; all of the suits known to exist date from the time preceding the Contagion. The armor's helm is a massive casque, a single piece of blue jade that locks into the shoulder yoke with a twist. The whole of the armor, excepting the faceplate, is carved in an ornate pattern of scales and fins; the faceplate is typically carved to resemble the face of a fierce warrior, bearded and angry.

Although not as strong as other forms of enchanted articulated plate, this armor has a number of advantages that make it extremely useful to an Exalted that spends much time upon the waves. First and most importantly, when the helm is locked in place, the wearer can breathe normally in even the deepest waters. The armor does not deal with other needs (water, food, etc.), so the practical limit is that this effect can be used for Stamina + Endurance hours in a row before it must be removed. The wearer can alter the buoyancy of the armor at will, allowing him to quickly surface or sink without penalty. The armor doubles the wearer's normal swimming rate underwater, and the wearer suffers no mobility penalties underwater

(although ranged combat is just as difficult as it would be for someone not wearing it). He can see underwater just as if he were in air (clouds of silt, squid ink and other materials can block vision, just as fog or smoke would above water, however). This armor has sockets for two hearthstones.

Although not as common as more conventional kits of armor, this armor does exist in some numbers. Both the imperial navy and the forces of Lookshy are known to have several suits, and the more aquatically inclined Dynastic houses each have at least a couple of suits. A number of others are rumored to be in the hands of the Guild, and the Lintha pirates are known to have at least two. Outcastes working as pirates or merchants may own others, but if so, they are quiet about it. No Abyssal is known to own a suit of this armor (unsurprisingly), but the deathknights may have comparable suits of their own design and manufacture.

STEELSILK SAILS (ARTIFACT ••)

Highly sought after by those who favor speed and agility in the wind and durability in battle, these rare sails were supposedly made out of the silk of wood spiders or other spider spirits. Gossamer fine and light but strong as metal, steelsilk is nonetheless very stiff and makes poor armor. The art of manufacturing steelsilk sails has been lost, and those who possess examples of it guard them highly, often keeping them locked up except when the ship needs speed above all else. Steelsilk sails are most renowned for their ability to withstand punishment; storms that will leave silk sails in tatters, fires that will turn wet canvas sails into ash and weapons that would cut even reinforced canvas into ribbons all fail to damage steelsilk. Steelsilk sails add +1 to all Sail rolls for keeping control of the ship in a storm or for gaining or losing speed, and they allow a ship to sail two points closer to the wind and are all but impenetrable by mundane weapons; a ballista might punch a hole in a steelsilk sail, but arrows, knives, javelins and other weapons are turned. Sails made of steelsilk have 15B/10L soak, take 20 health levels to damage and 40 to destroy. They take only half damage from wind, waves and fire. Repairing steelsilk sails requires a Charm such as Crack-Mending Technique; no other way is known today to mend steelsilk once it is damaged.

STORM SAPPHIRE (ARTIFACT ••• FOR LESSER STONES OR •••• FOR THE BLACK STONES)

Storm sapphires are giant sapphires, most the size of a man's fist or larger. The most powerful storm sapphires are black, but they come in all colors, with green sapphires (the least powerful) being the most common. Storm sapphires have the power to quell storms, calming the sea and sky under even the most savage conditions. This power does not come without a cost, however. To stop a storm, an Exalted must power the sapphire with her own life force. Each use of a sapphire costs the user motes of Essence, Willpower and health levels as shown on the chart below. These health

STORM SAPPHIRE EFFECT TABLE

Storm Strength	Cost to quell storm	
	Blue or Green Sapphire	Black Sapphire
Storm	20 motes, 2 Willpower, 2 health levels	20 motes, 2 Willpower, 2 health levels
Greater storm	25 motes, 2 Willpower, 3 health levels	25 motes, 2 Willpower, 2 health levels
Gale	25 motes, 3 Willpower, 3 health levels	25 motes, 3 Willpower, 2 health levels
Greater gale	30 motes, 4 Willpower, 3 health levels	25 motes, 3 Willpower, 3 health levels
Hurricane	—	30 motes, 4 Willpower, 3 health levels
Greater hurricane	—	35 motes, 4 Willpower, 4 health levels
Tsunami	—	40 motes, 5 Willpower, 4 health levels
Greater tsunami	—	45 motes, 5 Willpower, 5 health levels
Island killer	—	50 motes, 6 Willpower, 6 health levels

A character who lacks sufficient motes or Willpower can, for the purposes of using the storm sapphire only, convert health levels into motes or Willpower (one health level = 10 motes of Essence or 1 Willpower). This can only be done if the user lacks sufficient resources to power the stone otherwise; he cannot choose to burn health levels in order to leave himself with some motes after the storm dissipates.

levels cannot be soaked or reduced if the stone is to work properly, although they can be healed normally.

The user of a storm sapphire can attempt to judge how strong the storm is going to be (a Perception + Occult roll) before trying to stop it; the difficulty of this task depends on the intensity of the storm, how quickly it springs up and whether or not the storm has magical foundations (difficulty starts at 2 and ranges up to as high as 5 for an extremely fast moving, powerful storm that comes upon the user unawares). Magically summoned or influenced storms are actually easier to predict and control using the sapphire; reduce the severity of the storm by one level for purposes of determining how much it will cost to dissipate it, and reduce the difficulty of judging the storm by 2 (minimum difficulty of 2).

Lesser stones (green through light blue) can disperse most storms but can do nothing against the strongest ones; the power of a storm sapphire either works or does not. The darkest blue stones and black stones can disperse any storm, but the cost in life force is dependent on the storm — and the Exalted, spirit or god-blooded using the sapphire will not know how much of her existence she will have to devote before choosing to battle the storm.

Stories are told of Kae Jen Windkiller, an outcaste who used a Black Storm Sapphire to quell a hurricane that threatened the Wavecrest Archipelago three centuries ago. Others speak of Buyer of Lapis, a water spirit who used one to stop a storm that endangered her mortal lover, at the cost of her nature, and who became afterward an ordinary mortal woman. This tale is told somewhat differently in the spirit and mortal communities; spirits use it as a cautionary tale about loving mortals too deeply, and mortals tell it as a great love story, about a spirit willing to give up her immortality for the man she loved.

The creation of a storm sapphire involves the sapphire itself, which must be utterly without flaw, the blood of a Storm

Mother and a wind spirit that has never seen a mortal before being captured. The enchantment takes a year and a day and must be performed on a ship floating in the clear waters of the uttermost West, out of sight of any land. Naturally, there are few in existence, and they are highly prized and sought after by Exalted ship captains and fleet admirals.

Storytellers are certainly encouraged to **not** use this artifact to slay out of hand any player's character who has the temerity to try and stop a major storm unless there is some compelling reason to do so. Only the greatest storms, the ones of legend, are sufficient to kill a Terrestrial Exalted, and even those cannot withstand the might and power of a Solar focused through a storm sapphire. Draining the Exalted of motes of Essence or Willpower in addition to four to six health levels is more appropriate, in general, than killing the character. Storyteller characters are, of course, another matter entirely; an Storyteller character who sacrifices his life to save the players' characters is a hero, a noble martyr... or a villain who redeems himself in death.

CORD OF WINDS (ARTIFACT •)

A relatively common artifact, produced by even mortal sorcerers. Partially discharged examples can be found on many ships, even relatively small ones, as they have been created in large numbers over the centuries. The cord of winds is normally a silken cord, usually light blue but possibly of any color, adorned with a number of knots. Each knot holds a minor air elemental bound up in it; if released, an elemental will serve for a day and a night, raising wind when asked. After its service is up, the wind is free to depart. Any attempt to detain the elemental will be poorly received and may well bring retribution down upon the offending party, at some point. Most cords will have 20 knots in them when first created, of different sizes and complexities. The smaller, simpler knots hold



elementals that are little more than breezes; the elementals bound in the larger, more complex knots are more powerful. Unraveling a knot in a hurry is an extended Wits + Sail task; the difficulty of the task depends on the power of the air elemental bound up in the knot. A simple breeze's knot has a difficulty of 4, while the knot securing a powerful zephyr or gale might have a difficulty of 10, although such powerful elementals and spirits are only rarely bound up in a cord of winds; most elementals or spirits bound will have a permanent Essence less than 4. Any knot can be untied given time, if one is patient enough not to cut it in half.

WAVECLEAVER DAIKLAIVE (ARTIFACT ••)

Speed +3 Accuracy +2 Damage +5L
Defense +1 Minimum Strength: ••

Wavecleavers are uncommon weapons, wielded mostly by Terrestrials of House V'neef and House Peleps, although most houses have a small number of them. Perhaps the shortest of daiklaives, rarely exceeding three feet in blade length, wavecleavers are perfect for work belowdecks, where cramped quarters and low ceilings are the norm. Their thick blades and strong edges make them useful tools as well as weapons; even steel cables or chains will rarely withstand more than a single hack from the curved blade of a wavecleaver. Wavecleavers typically have sockets for two Hearthstones, as Exalted on the water are more likely to rely on the gem-like talismans for survival.

LIGHT IMPLOSION BOW (ARTIFACT ••, ••• IF HEARTHSTONE OR REAGENT POWERED)

These fearsome weapons are First Age relics whose workings remain beyond the full understanding of any savant or engineer of the present day, though their use is simple once the operator becomes familiar with their functioning. The player of a character without prior experience with these devices must make an Intelligence + Lore check at difficulty 3 for his character to decipher the controls. Resembling a ballista mounted atop a heavy gimbaled pedestal, these mechanisms appear to be made of a dark, glossy, wine-red wood, with elaborate inlays and fittings of the Five Magical Materials and adamant (an incredibly strong, glassy material used during the First Age).

When properly used by a character capable of channeling Essence (any Exalted type and also Fair Folk and possibly others), these weapons launch projectiles of pure Essence. (Characters unable to channel Essence cannot operate these artifacts.) They are fired using Archery and have +3 accuracy, a rate of 1 and a range of 500. Before firing, the user may select the type of damage to be done, and the amount is dependent on how many motes of Essence the user channels into the weapon. For 1 mote, the projectile inflicts either 7B or 5L damage (depending on the control settings) on everything within a 10-foot radius of its target. In naval combat, these settings allow



for attacks against rigging with the weapon, and it can also be used against units or troops. For 2 motes, the range and area of effect remain the same, but the damage settings increase to 15B or 12L.

The weapon's pedestal must be mounted securely to a solid surface for it to fire, but the bow has an arc of fire extending 360 degrees horizontally and 90 degrees vertically (30 degrees below and 60 above horizontal). Some versions are powered by hearthstones, and some by alchemical reagents. Typically, however, they are manned by one of the Dragon-Blooded, who powers it with his own Essence.

Light implosion bows must be maintained, though they are less demanding than the more powerful lightning ballista. An implosion bow must be overhauled every 100 shots by a character with Lore ••• and Occult ••. The overhaul includes the replacement and repair of some mechanism made with rare components. It costs Resources •••, and the components are unlikely to be available outside the Realm and the largest Threshold cities.

LIGHTNING BALLISTA (ARTIFACT ••• FOR A COMMON VERSION, •••• FOR A HEARTHSTONE OR ELEMENTAL POWERED VERSION)

Lightning ballistae made up the primary heavy armament of larger First Age warships, with implosion bows and other weapons acting as secondary weapons. Powerful, although shorter ranged than some other devices known to have existed, lightning ballistae are capable of damaging even the heaviest First Age hulls, and the few still seen in service are carefully guarded. When fired, the lightning ballista releases a powerful blast of lightning that sears and scorches whatever it hits, instantly burning wood and flesh to ash, and melting

steel or stone. Lightning ballistae are heavy and complex affairs, built largely of brass and silver, and require complex fuels and reagents in addition to the investiture of Essence to fire. Typically, a lightning ballista can be fueled for up to twenty firings at a time before requiring servicing and maintenance.

Maintaining a lightning ballista is not for the unlettered; and a character must have Lore •••• and Occult ••• in order to keep the weapon properly tuned and charged. Normally, parts for maintenance cost Resources •••• every 100 firings, and the fuels and reagents used cost Resources ••• for 20 shots. These materials would be difficult, but not impossible, to find outside of a large city.

Lightning ballistae are commonly mounted centerline on the hull, just aft of the prow, on a swivel mount that allowed the muzzle to fire on a 270 degree arc, with a traverse of 45 degrees (15 down, 30 up). Only a small number of ships carried more than one lightning ballista, and few have survived to the current day. The most common were powered by the Exalted crew, but examples are known to have existed that were powered by captured (or willing) air elementals or through the use of a Hearthstone. Lightning ballistae powered purely by Essence require 3 motes per shot. Those that use bound elementals use 1 of the firer's motes and 1 of the elemental's motes. Those powered by Hearthstones require a Hearthstone of Fire or a Hearthstone of Air to function. Either sort of stone must be above Manse •• to provide sufficient power. All lightning ballistae are designed so that the firer must be able to manipulate Essence to activate them; they are powerless in the hands of the unExalted.

Although fired using the Archery Ability, Archery Charms cannot be used to enhance the operation of a lightning ballista.

ARTIFACT SHIP WEAPONS

Name	Acc.	Dmg.	Rate	Range	Naval Range	Naval Rate	Min.	Artifact
Light Implosion Bow	+3	7B/5L or 15B/12L	1	500	Long	3/turn	None	•• or •••
Lightning Ballista (common)	+2	20L	1	1,000	Very Long	3/turn	Occult ••, Archery •	•••
Lightning Ballista (elemental)	+2	20L	1	1,000	Very Long	3/turn	Occult •••, Archery •	••••
Lightning Ballista (hearthstone)	+2	25L	—	1,000	Very Long	2/turn	Occult ••, Archery •	••••

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