FELIX ISAACS
THE WILDSEA
EXPANSION
STORM & ROOT

The hinges protested as she pushed on the door, years of rust grinding remorsefully before giving way in the face of determination.

The workshop had never been the most impressive place and now, without the lanterns moth-fuelled and with the amberglass windows boarded up, it was less impressive than ever. But as with many places on the waves, it was what you did with it, what you used it for, what wonders and memories you could make within it that really mattered.

Tarak coughed, a spray of tiny amber pieces scattering over the old workbench below her before she swept them unceremoniously onto the floor. Yes, the waves had taken their toll, but it was a toll she'd been happy to pay.

In their place she dropped her pack, bulging with seven reaches-worth of oddities, and turned to the wall - to the drawing board where all this started, so many years ago.

Grandfather would have approved.

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This one goes out to an aunt and an uncle who have supported me every step of the way

...And the two best kets

OVERVIEW

For the average wildsailor, the rustling waves present an endless challenge. There are ruins to explore, cultures to encounter and befriend (or run from), settlements ranging from the meanest spit to the largest city-draped tallshank, and reach upon reach that show off the complexities and oddities of the seascape before them. There's always something new to be found over the horizon, and even for the longest-lived sailors it's likely death will claim them before boredom ever could.

But, for some, that challenge is never quite enough.

They want take to the skies, seeing the waves they know recede into a child's toy. They want to delve deeper than anybody ever should, to places that haven't known light since the Verdancy's earliest days. They want to struggle; to *strive*.

It's these sailors, these foolhardy, wonderful types, that this expansion caters to.

The Expansion

Storm & Root focuses on two things more than anything else. The skies above the wildsea, and how one might get there, and the deeper reaches of the undercanopy, the sink and the drown. There are a lot of other things thrown in for good measure, of course, but most of the new Bloodlines, Origins, Posts, Hazards, Reaches and Rules revolve around these two in-play ambitions. Within this book, you'll find...

- Mechanics for Pressure, the natural consequence of delving deeper than you should
- Mechanics for Scrutiny, the uncomfortable attention a flying craft draws in a world where they remain something of a rarity
- Expanded aspects for existing background choices from the core book
- New background options for the kind of wildsailor that loves to push the boundaries of exploration
- Hazards and reaches themed not just around the heights and depths, but other unusual areas and presentations of the rustling waves

Recapping The Rules

Rolls are made using **d6 dice pools**, quickly assembled from the information you have on your character sheet and the situations your characters find themselves in. Dice rolled in this way help to direct the conversation toward outcomes of **triumph**, **conflict**, or **disaster**. Whatever the result, the story moves forward.

Tracks are used as a visual reference for many aspects of your character, their relationships with various factions and developments in the wider story. Their boxes are marked or cleared by your actions.

You'll also collect **resources**, anything from salvage and charts to living secrets and forbidden spices. These resources are tracked on your character sheet, and can be combined or sacrificed for various effects. Their precise uses and qualities are drawn out as your group's own unique version of the Wildsea develops.

This particular expansion also makes use of some larger random tables, where choices are made by rolling 2d6 and reading the results in either order (so a 6 and a 3 would give you either 36 or 63). These are referred to as d66 rolls.

Options & Warnings

The Wildsea is designed to be approachable for as many individuals as possible. If, for any reason, there are certain aspects of the game that are difficult to engage with, we've added a set of seals behind text that focuses on the **spiritual**, the **arconautic/magical**, and the **technologically advanced**. If those are elements you wish to avoid, just watch for the seal.

In addition, this expansion touches on some of the themes of religion as it might appear upon the rustling waves. All of this content is optional, and it's still entirely up to an individual group to decide whether deities or worship have any place in their own version of the Wildsea. All religiously-themed content will be marked with the spiritual seal ( ) to make it easier to identify without close reading.

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CHAPTER 01
THE WILD BLUE

"... And do you know what he told me?"

Gatherings of rattlehands weren't exactly rare; the junction-house had hosted them almost every evening since they'd made port several years ago, and many of the locals whispered that they spent more time there than they did in their own workshops. And there was, many of them would admit, some truth in that.

"I bet I do!" That was Remington, bearded and chortling, three glass eyes catching the firefly's light.

"I bet you do too!" The first speaker, Levin, leant forward over the table and slammed a fibrous finger down. "I bet we all do!"

They grabbed their drinks and, as group, raised them toward the sagging beams as they shouted in chorus.

"Stick a gasbag on it!"

Their laughter spilled out across the highport, and out into the wild blue skies.

Core Concepts

This section highlights three new fundamental concepts you should be aware of when adding airships to your game and exploring the wild blue. None of them are complex, but they're all important!

Reliable Flight Is Rare

There's a reason the inhabitants of the wildsea choose to brave the wooden waves rather than take to the skies as a matter of course. Many reasons, in fact; the vicious predators of the upper air, the vagaries of high-altitude wind and weather (and the increased attention from living storms), the difficulty inherent in a smooth takeoff and landing, and even the lack of food and fuel once safely aloft. And that's to say nothing of the mechanical problems even *reaching* the heavens presents, where scraping the right materials together to make a skyworthy craft that will survive more than a couple of journeys might take a lifetime.

Methods of Flight Are Varied

But engineers, as it's often said, are an inventive and dedicated bunch. Without much in the way of reliable long distance communication, thousands of would-be aeronauts have had their own ideas of how to tackle the problems presented above. Many fail, but those that succeed do so in their own unique ways. A wildsea airship might be lifted by an armoured balloon filled with curious gasses, by oversized wings of canvas and wood, by the ghosts of birds, or voltaic repulsion, or... well, you get the idea. Though a few solutions to common aeronautical engineering problems have caught on, every airship is fundamentally a prototype.

The Sky is Vast, and Wild, and Free

Once you do manage to get airborne, all the old rules seem to change. You're utterly exposed after a lifetime of being surrounded by branch and leaf, but at the same time your vision is unparalleled; crews make discoveries from the air that would be nearly impossible from the wavetops. Aeronauts find themselves gliding through entirely new ecosystems, adapting to threats and pressures they'd never have considered before. And the world seems to open up - the horizons pull back, and the very concept of distance seems to shrug and shift and settle into a new paradigm. If you can see something, you can get there.

New Systems, New Rules

Along with additional setting information, this chapter contains a rundown of several important new systems for crews and Fireflies to take into account when they make for the heavens. Among other things, you'll find rules for...

- **Scrutiny**: A new kind of danger unique to the wild blue, representing how an airship draws attention from both the skies above and the waves below as it travels. Scrutiny is mostly handled by the Firefly during a journey, using a combination of expanded cut rules and a unique kind of track.
- **Lift systems**: One of the two core components needed to get airborne, lift systems can be added to an existing wildsailing ship as modifications or can have an entirely new ship built to make use of them. There's a cost for crews to pay each time they take to the air, usually handled by changes to ratings, resources, or cargo.
- **Bafflers**: The second new component airships rely on for a chance at a safe journey, bafflers draw attention from the ship to keep the crew safe from physical, spiritual, or sometimes even psychological dangers.
- **Drifting**: All but the oddest ships find it impossible to drop anchor while airborne, resorting to docking at a highport or returning to sea-level if crews need to rest or repair. But there's also the option of drifting - letting go of the controls, doing what needs to be done, and hoping you'll still recognise the landscape below when you're finished.

"A re-fit, Carachan! I authorised a re-fit! Not a... whatever this is!"

Ohm had never seen their captain so angry, spined beard bristling and petals shaking furiously. But despite the cactoid storm breaking across his decisions, Carachan didn't look perturbed in the least.

"It's an upgrade, cap'n."

"How, man! How is this," a thick fibrous arm gesturing at the gasbags and propellers affixed to their trusty ship, "an upgrade?"

Spiders danced under Carachan's skin as he swung himself up to the deck and into the pilot's cabin, fingers skittering across newly installed levers and gauges. The ship juddered, lurched...

... And lifted free of the little dock. Just a few feet, but enough to show promise.

"Well, we couldn't fly before, could we?"

And that was the day Ohm learned that blossoms could smile.

The World Above

It started, as it so often does, with the rattlehands.

On long voyages through safer seas, the mind tends to wander. Sure, there's the occasional gash in the hull to repair, or broken weapon to piece back together, or tentacled monstrosity to throw screaming back into the leafy darkness below... But such things are expected, after a fashion, and for most rattlehands it's the prospect of the new that excites them. Of a challenge to be overcome with the application of trial, error, and complex mechanical interplay.

And when a ship gets stuck in voracious bracken for the fourth time in a week, or bursting pitchers shower the decks with acid, or a living storm strikes and quickly recedes out of reach, the mind tends to wander into ways that such inconveniences might be avoided. And gazes lift, inexorably, to the heavens.

Airships

There's no sense in talking about 'early' airships, or how air travel was slowly rediscovered, because it wasn't; it burst back into the world in fits and starts and crashes, in the howling of terrified crewmates and the joyous laughter of those unshackled from the waves.

In some regions it started with gasbags, envelopes filled with lighter-than-air gasses. There were a few explosions, and quite a few vessels that rose and rose to the point they were lost among the hungry stars, but iteration left crews with ballast systems and (reasonably) reliable chemical converters. In others it was all about mimicking the wings of existing aerial predators, or taking long-used kitesail designs and adapting them for entire vessels rather than single sailors.

Techniques advance and disappear, fall out of fashion and come round again. But the most important truth for a would-be aeronaut is eternal, something they'd do well to keep in mind.

In the wild blue, **every ship is a prototype**.

Sawing the Skies

You'll almost never catch an airship without some kind of bite (for traversing the waves and cutting through obstacles, no matter how much of a last resort that might be, as well as for use as a weapon). The conventions hammered into crews by hundreds of years on the rustling waves don't die easily, after all.

And the sky may be uncrowded compared to the wilds below, but it is anything but empty.

Lift Systems

The vast majority of airships are really just normal everyday wave-cutters with some kind of lift system bolted on by an entrepreneurial engineering sort. One airship, engine struggling to power its huge canvas wings, might pass another, floating sedately with the wind under a taut gasbag. A week later it might be shot down by a third, a sleek pirate craft cursed into the air by tortured spirits nailed to leviathan-bone struts, before the crew are rescued from the churn of the waves by a fourth, a solo aeronaut in a cage pulled by kites.

While there are outliers, most lift systems can be broken down into several broad categories...

- **Lighter-than-air**, using some sort of chemical mixture (usually gaseous) to counter a ship's weight.
- **Flail-wing**, using huge amounts of energy to generate repeated motion and accompanying lift.
- **Fixed-wing**, relying on clever gliding, rising air, or engine-generated thrust to keep a vessel aloft.
- **Obscure**, tapping into voltaiomagnetism, arconautic puissance, or spiritual energy.

Bafflers

It's due to the all-too-common feeling of being observed that the second great revolution of air travel came about - if something can watch, it can be confused or distracted. With limited options for stealth while airborne that don't involve climbing high above the clouds or heading back down to the waves, bafflers represent the next best thing; a way to shift that gaze from your ship (even if only temporarily).

A baffler might take the form of...

- Coloured flags and streamers, to at least offer a more vivid target than a ship's main hull or crew.
- Chemicowork rockets, trailing plumes of coloured smoke as they travel before exploding in noisy, phosporescent bursts.
- Patchwork crew, sacks of dried leaves and twigs shaped into rough approximations of sailors, given a mote of movement through the addition of a whisper before being hurled over the rail as bait.
- False clouds, either budded from captured storms or whipped up with alchemical nous, to hide a vessel's precise location.
- Ritual and superstition, an old favourite among the less technologically inclined (and with a questionable success rate).

The Danger Inherent

The variety of lift systems and airship constructions does have a drawback - for most ships, the processes of takeoff and landing are almost as dangerous as flying the wild skies themselves. Getting airborne without losing some part of the ship to a branch-strike or an opportunistic predator from the tangle is a momentous occasion; landing without crushing some part of the hull or injuring one of the crew nothing short of a miracle.

Aeronauts

So you've carved a path across the rustling waves, from port to wreck to mountain-top island. You've taken down pinwolves, connected distant cultures, plundered the ruins of the old world and fled, hell for leather, from leviathans.

But what comes next?

For some, it's the lure of the sky. It's an ocean up there (or it might as well be), and for all of the dangers and opportunities you've faced on the rustling waves there's a mirror to them in the heavens above. How freeing must it be to sail through clouds rather than branches, to reach over the side and catch not leaves and beetles but wisps of storm-stuff and falling rain?

For others, it's the hint of the forbidden. Every sailor sees, at some point in their travels, a treasure or bounty that's just out of reach. Maybe it was a protoleviathan glimpsed behind cirrostratus tides, or a manor hanging from the branches of a dizzyingly high tallshank. Maybe it was an airship, travelling alone through the high yonder.

Ambition alone isn't enough to turn a wildsailor into an aeronaut... But it's a damn good start.

Preparing for the Skies

Every dream of flying starts on solid ground. Or, in the case of wildsailors, the deck of a ship crashing through an immense treetop sea (which is some of the least solid footing you can find, when you think about it). The most successful aeronauts start training long before they're reached the skies, and there are a few widely accepted ways to get yourself ready for a life in the wild blue. The most common of these are...

Vent-Gliding

Sporevents throw out massive amounts of heat and fungal particles, either in a constant stream or in organovolcanic belches. Grab yourself a tethered kitesail or a sturdy piece of fabric to catch the updraught and time your jump right, and you'll be able to get a sense of what it's like to rise at speed... And to have to land again afterwards.

Ropework

An innocuous name for a dangerous practice, this involves crews roping themselves together (and to their waiting ship) and heading off on foot into the thrash or tangle, bandaged against the crezzerin exposure and alert for predators. The goal is to make it as far as possible without anyone falling - because if one falls, you all fall, and there are no branches to catch you up above.

Cabin Surfing

The simplest exercise for the would-be aeronaut, this is as easy as climbing up to the most exposed point of a vessel (usually the top of a cabin, hence the name, but sometimes a crow's nest or the arm of a cargo crane) and trying to stay upright using nothing but balance alone, against the buffeting wind and the jostle of a ship at speed.

Finding an Airship

You could spend your life hanging out at a junction in the middle of a busy port and never catch sight of an airship. Many areas of the sea simply don't suit them - the skies are too wracked with storms, or full of whatever local aerial predator people run from the shadows of, to make the average port an attractive stop-off or resting place.

That's not to say you'd be completely out of luck. Almost all airships are converted from existing wildsailing vessels or recovered wrecks (because in a world where useful building materials are at a premium, nobody wants a good hull to go to waste). Many crews cut the waves as a matter of course, only taking to the skies when conditions are optimum or they need a quick burst of height or freedom.

And the skies are capricious - even craft designed as airships from blueprint to final nail sometimes touch down at wave-level ports for a quick set of repairs, or for the crew to rest, relax, or trade.

If you're looking to sign on as an aeronaut for the first time, keep an eye out for...

- Ports with high buildings, complex spires, or specially made landing pads.
- Mountainside settlements, far from the waves, that still seem to have a healthy flow of trade.
- Tallshank cities (for it's extremely rare that a port built so high won't have some form of airship docking facility).
- Areas of 'wealth' - the wilds might not have a formal currency, but you can still judge an individual by how much useful *stuff* they accumulate, and high rollers tend to have expensive tastes that require regular long-distance travel to satiate.

Wisdom From Above

Old aeronauts are a rare breed - few enough who sail the rustling waves get to retire to a life of comfort, and that's even less of a likelihood for those that spend their lives tangling with the wild blue. But there are always exceptions, and wisdom from those old aeronauts filters down from time to time, tossed around in junctions and trade posts as maxims to live by if you want a long and fruitful career.

"Don't watch the stars"

Stargazing from the deck of a ship, or from an open-topped shadow-spring, is regarded as one of the most relaxing ways an off-duty sailor can spend their time. But what aeronauts learn is that the stars pay you little mind when there's a whole sky that separates you and them; when you're up close and personal, they tend to gaze back.

And stars never blink. *Supposedly*.

"Feathers mean food"

One of the most common reasons for an airship to make their way down to the waves mid-journey is to collect supplies. Say what you like about the waves, but they offer a bounty of edibles for those that know where to look, and who know how to safely cook off the crezzerin running through most wildsea fare.

Not so the skies - with few plants to snag hold of and little opportunity to passively hunt, aeronauts have to make do with whatever they have stocked in their mess halls and larders. But a good roped harpoon and a strong throwing arm has the capacity to bring in a bird or two as you travel, and an extra day of being able to stretch out those rations might be the difference between touching down at port and putting down a mutiny at 20,000 feet.

"Keep a hand on the rail"

Good advice for moving around the deck of any ship, whether it's above, on, or deep below the thrash, but particularly useful when aloft. Patches of bad air and unexpected gusts can drop or toss a ship with very little warning, and nobody wants to find themselves level with the clouds without a deck below their feet.

"Signal first, shake later"

It's extremely bad form to pull up alongside another airship as it travels without announcing yourself first. You're liable to be mistaken as a pirate, a plague-craft, or both, and more than one vessel has been blasted out of the sky for forgetting basic courtesy. Signalling arrays, firefly lanterns, semaphore flags - they're all good investments for a sensible crew.

"If you think you saw it, you probably saw it"

The scrutiny of the wild blue can get to a sailor if they're not careful, worming its way into their mind and playing tricks on their senses. Still, it's better to be safe than sorry - if you see something that might be a threat, even if your nerves are jangling and your thoughts scattered to the winds, let your crewmates know. At the very least they can reassure you that you're not in immediate danger.

Or that you are.

Life At Great Height

For a wave-cutting wildsailor, the wild blue above is a realm of mystery and oddity that rivals the depths below. They might glimpse the creatures that live there, hear rumours of highports and satellite cities and drifting leviathan-back islands mesas, but the heights will be forever just out of reach.

Unless they take the leap into the unstable world of aeronautics, and experience it for themselves... At which point they'd find that life at height was exactly as strange as they might have imagined.

Floating Islands

Though relatively uncommon, most wildsailors have seen a floating island at some point during their time on the waves - a chunk of metal or wood or unearthed rock far higher than it has any right to be. The most sensible of them tend to theorize that they're the cousins of sailing stones; the more superstitious that they're held by invisible forces one could never hope to understand. Both are wrong, and both are right.

The majority of floating islands rely on one of three forces to stay airborne...

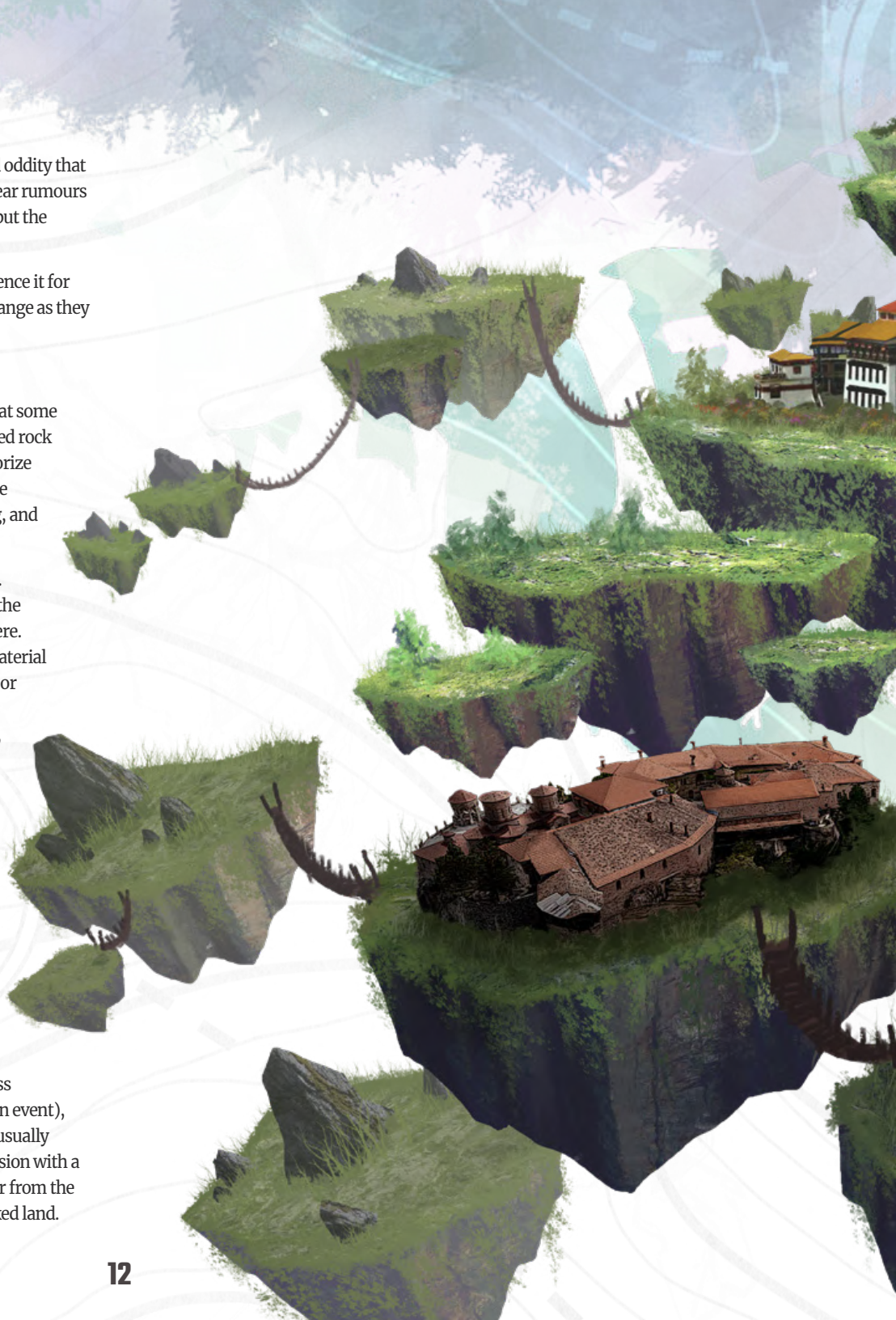
- **Natural lift**: Usually as a result of a build-up of aeronautic gases within the island itself, or the curious properties of vegetation that's taken root there.
- **Uncanny magnetism**: A scattering of lodestones or a seam of ferrous material within the island is repelled by magnetic forces from below the canopy, or within the surrounding mountains.
- **The application of technology**: Sometimes balloons, sometimes rotors, sometimes alchemical compounds running through channels like slurry - technological experimentation creates as many bizarre oddities in the skies of the wilds as it does among the canopy.

Some of these landmasses drift at random, or on paths of their own design. Others hang unnaturally still, as much a fixture as a mountaintop-island or a tallshank. Some even orbit other objects, tumbling through the skies in oddly serene patterns.

Spits in the Sky

... But they all fall eventually.

Calling them islands keeps the inhabitants happy, but even the most stable-looking floating island is, like any other spit, one disaster away from slipping below the waves. Though rarely affected by rootquakes (unless an island held by magnetism loses its below-canopy repulsor during such an event), a whole host of other hazards and issues can bring an island down from its usually lofty perch. Overcrowding (of people, animals, or buildings), a mid-air collision with a leviathan, sometimes even piracy or sabotage - floating islands might be far from the usual dangers of the wilds, but they're no safer than any other branch-choked land.



Crags, Spires & Tallshanks

The more traditional methods of high-altitude access are, admittedly, less mysterious, but they're also far less likely to come crashing down out of the sky at a moment's notice. The relative scarcity of airships across the waves leaves many of these most dizzying places unblighted by highports and runways, but in certain reaches they're becoming an increasingly common sight.

Crags

These are mountaintop islands with peaks tall enough to scrape the clouds, solid stone edifices with slopes running down to past the treeline and to the Under-Eaves itself. Usually colonised by ridgeback communities or vicious creatures, they offer dependable access to the skies for anyone willing to climb them. A crag might take the form of...

- A densely populated ridge covered in farming communities, stony sides cut into massive steps to provide as much flat land as possible.
- An overgrown jag of rock, free from the ironroots and canopy but possessed of its own little ecosystem, undisturbed by visitors since the earliest days of the Verdancy.
- A sloping stair of stone and glass, shot through with seething fissures and shaking with barely suppressed volcanic activity.

Spires

Buildings that, through either accident or design, offer a path to the skies by dint of their sheer immensity. Some are little more than oversized spits, ruins caught up in the branches that might shift or topple with the next rootquake. Others are purpose-built, post-verdant constructions assembled by budding aeronaut communities or those with too much time on their hands. A spire might take the form of...

- An ancient statue caught up in the tangle, arms stretching upwards and palms converted into highports for take-offs and landings.
- A rickety collection of scaffolding wood and reclaimed scrap arranged into a haphazard pyramid, base propped up by the crowns of ten different ironroots.
- An impressively tall structure, built by ketra engineers over many years, that uses a reclaimed pre-V drilling rig as a base for further towers.

Tallshanks

Adopted by those that believe the Verdancy heralded a move not just away from the roots, but towards the sky, the upper branches of tallshanks are thick and resilient enough to hold entire cities - an airship port or two is hardly an additional burden. Navigating through the branches can be difficult for newer crews, but many tallshank-dwellers aggressively cut runways and channels through the leafy crowns to mitigate such problems. A tallshank might take the form of...

- A four-mile willow with a network of settlements hanging under its branches, pneumatic pistons shifting a curtain of leaves back and forth for airships to pass.
- A craven oak with steps cut into the outer bark and elevators running through the interior, both leading to a temple complex spreading among the branches.
- A stunted sprawlshank casting shadow over miles of the canopy, crackling branches thick with spider-silk and jewelled with wrecked airships.

Lethe's Antler was a family-run highport, the little town it sprouted from barely holding thirty people. The dockers knew most visiting ships by name, hailed their crews with signal-flares and coloured flags from a distance, woke the port's snoozing doctor if the signals spoke of danger and its eager rattlehand apprentice if a hull was so much as dented. Free of charge, their services were - such tiny places lived and died on their ability to offer a memorable welcome.

It wasn't ready for the Haubera as it sailed gracefully into dock, and it took half of the townfolk to jury-rig a network of ropes and chains to hold it as it settled awkwardly between two struts. But they worked, and they managed, and when the ship's bay doors creaked open, the head docker stepped forward smartly with writing-slate in hand.

The first shot snapped the slate in two. The price of open invitations in the blue is a harsh one to pay.

Highports

Found scattered throughout the wild blue, perched on crags and aerial islands and tallshank crowns, highports provide both solid ground and a welcome respite from constant movement. Though similar in what they offer to most wave-shackled ports, highports do display a couple of important differences.

The first comes in the docking services that they offer; with airship designs as varied as they are, ports created to house them come stocked with a variety of bays, gantries, chains, and cradles suitable for crafts of all shapes and sizes.

The second comes in the goods on offer. Wave-level settlements rarely put much stock in fuel, trusting ships to gather what they need as they travel given the panoply that the waves have to offer. But the wild blue is an emptier place (of materials if not of danger), so many highports have their own set of warehouses stocked with ceramic batteries, canisters of gaseous chemicals, and even aviaries brimming with trained yoke-birds.

A highport might come in the form of...

- A series of wooden platforms built like a cage within a tallshank's branch-spread, the path toward them kept free of greenery to give airships an easy approach to the safety it offers.
- A hollowed-out island floating high above the waves, the interior slung with cables and grappling cranes hanging like the tendrils of some kind of grand stone jellyfish.
- A cluster of building built onto the back of a docile floating leviathan, the 'docks' little more than a smooth runway along the creature's shell.
- A cliffside monastery surrounded by orbiting stones, coloured streamers and blinking firefly spotlights guiding ships safely through the area's natural defences and into a converted pre-V temple.
- A tanker-style ship with deck sitting a hundred feet above the tangle that it cuts through, port and starboard hulls hinged open to reveal row after row of smaller airships on an internal landing pad running the width of the craft.

Satellite Cities

The ultimate escape from the rustling waves, satellite cities are built so high up in the wild blue that they're almost entirely invisible to those on the wavetops (though they might be seen by night, mistaken as slow-moving stars or distant, glowing predators).

It takes more than a typical airship to make it within docking range of a satellite city - at the altitude they sit at, the winds are eternal and ferocious, and the cold a constant, gnawing threat. For some, even the air is a problem, the atmosphere so thin that every breath feels like a failure and even the mildest exertion leaves one dizzy and shaking.

Few have the ability to construct a satellite city that will actually stay at the heights it's designed for, and even fewer the will to live in almost total isolation from everything the world has to offer. But there's a place on the wildsea for everyone, even if it ends up being miles above everywhere else.

A satellite city might come in the form of...

- A floating kosmer settlement, all enclosed walkways and glittering old-world glass, inhabitants masked against the constant scrutinous gaze of the stars above.
- A ketra-made liftrig, torn from the depths and dragged into the endless blue after years of careful chemical engineering and patient preparation, the perfect antidote to hundreds of years of darkness.
- A pre-V orbital station, if the world before the wilds had the technology for such aerial extravagances. Perhaps there are even survivors there from the time before, descendants of those that watched the Verdancy eat the world and knew they'd never go home again...

Port to Port Travel

With the danger of landing directly on the wild waves, meandering is less of an option for aeronauts. Most airship journeys begin at one port and end at another, with few or no unscheduled stops along the way.

For sensible crews, that is. For wildsailors, the journey is often as important as the destination; an airship might take off from one port and scud through the cloudlayer for a while before a watcher calls out a warning or an opportunity, sending the ship crashing down toward the canopy to salvage or fight before heading back up to the wild blue.

Rest & Night Flying

While a traditional wildsea ship can drop anchor for the crew to get some downtime, airships face some challenges in that regard. If they can glide or hover, they might be able to drift without losing altitude, allowing a crew to rest while the winds carry their ship. If they can't, and the ship requires forward motion to stay at height, then sleeping in shifts and travelling through the night is more commonplace. Not the safest activity, all told - ships moving at night are beacons in an empty sky, their lights outshining the stars and visible for miles around.

Fighting at Height

When you're flying, the only solid ground you'll have to rely on is the ship's deck - or, that's how it might seem at first. Through good use of tethers and some scrambling around, the outside of your ship's hull and the tops of cabins or engine housing can be a useful staging area for a fight. Don't forget the insides of your ship too - corridors are effective chokepoints, useful for funneling boarders into, and a cargo bay can offer excellent cover (in the form of whatever boxes and oddities you're hauling) as well as space to move.

When you're taking on marauders that have their own ship, it's often sensible to take the fight to them before they can back you into a corner... As long as you're confident you can get back to your own ship before they break away, of course.

Navigating by the Stars Above

Though it's common wisdom that staring too hard at the stars may cause them to stare back, they nevertheless act as an excellent aid to cartographers and navigators.

Constellations

There are as many stories and constellations as there are leaves in the seas. Each place has their own stories and traditions. However, there are some stories with similar themes and characters which might crop up more often than others...

Kelda and Sar: A story about a pair who became a single individual to avoid the punishment of disapproving ancestors. Kelda and Sar now share each other's experiences at all times, even when they are in separate bodies.

Tomo and the Slink: A story about a child who could share the senses of their pet slink.

Solpod's Garden: After a fire, Solpod planted the one seed that survived. Singing a song to it all night, when they awoke, an entire forest had grown.

Miniak's Lullaby: A simple lullaby Miniak sang to her children. When a raging storm threatened her home and family, she sang the lullaby the calm the skies.

Tertia's Comet: When the comet was in the sky, Tertia could rend a passage into the spectral realm with the throw of a dart.

Pretel's Shadow: A spectral nail holds Pretel's shadow in place, doomed to spend the rest of their life pinned to the trunk of a tallshank.

Navigating by the Waves Below

For those that find the stars distasteful, or that have a healthy respect for their own sanity, casting questing eyes downward to the thrash is a safer option when it comes to navigating the skies.

Tide-Mapping

Though the waves aren't as distinctive as the constellations (with their sky-facing facade changing with every passing rootquake), there are certain features that stay solid enough to act as useful markers. These might come in the form of...

Distinctive Tallshanks: Perhaps notable through the shape of their crowns or the particular brand of ironroot they grew from, tallshanks reach high enough to be easily seen from a distance by air.

Lighthouses: A source of light less hungry than the stars, as useful to airship watchers as they are wave-cutting crews. Lighthouses also have the dual benefit of (usually) being attached to a settlement of some kind.

Rifts: Though a dip in the canopy is harder to see while aloft than a rise, rifts are deep enough to be more noticeable than usual troughs and important enough to mark down on just about any chart a sailor might come across.

Long-Tides: Easier to spot from the air, these are the currents of the canopy - the way leaves angle and branches grow, an echo of ancient salt and forgotten pathways.

Surviving the Wild Blue

Flight as a method of travel might sound like heaven compared to the experience of cutting the rustling waves - no branches to contend with, no rifts lurking over the next ridge, and no insects swarming the ship every time it disturbs their nest or crosses some pheromonal territory line.

And this is all true, but unfortunately, every danger of the waves is replaced with one of equal potency from the skies themselves. There may not be branches to scrape the hull-sides or tangle the bite, but there are crosswinds and storms that'll do far worse. There are fewer beasts and insects, but those that do call the skies their home will be able to see the opportunity your presents from miles away - as will marauders, with airships of their own. Even rifts have their own aerial counterpart, made all the more terrifying by their complete and utter invisibility.

Cruising the blue may be a different experience to cutting the waves, but it's by no means an easier one. While airborne, you'll most likely have to deal with...

Crezzerin

An ever-present danger of the waves below, the threat of crezzerin is thankfully diminished once a crew puts some distance between themselves and the waves. But diminished isn't the same as absent, and for some, it's the unexpected and occasional appearance of crezzerin that makes it all the more dangerous.

While some creatures that haunt the skies carry large doses of crezzerin within their own bodies (or in the trails they leave), the most potent and unexpected danger is crezze**rain** - chemically tainted downpours that soak a sailor to the skin in moments, drenching them before they even know to run for cover.

Rising above the clouds and travelling at the highest possible altitude helps keep a ship safe from crezzerin in all forms, but might also expose a crew to something far older, far hungrier, than the natural alchemy of the waves.

Winds & Weather

Every sailor has stories of weathering a living storm, but that's nothing compared to the prospect of flying straight through the heart of one. For an airship, there's nowhere to take shelter from the vacillating moods of the blue - when a storm hits, or a sporewind, or a blizzard, it hits *hard*.

And that's to say nothing of the winds themselves, a near-invisible presence that shepherds those previously mentioned hazards through the skies and acts as a potent force in and of itself. A gust can push a ship off course, while a crosswind might make manoeuvring more difficult, but when a gale blows in, or a (thankfully rare) hurricane, less solid airships can be knocked out of the sky and literally torn to pieces before they even hit the waves.

Darkness, Light, Cold, & Heat

It's not just exposure to the weather that aeronauts need to worry about, but to the basest of elements themselves. A sunny day can become unbearable without anything around to temper the heat, and once nightfall comes, the heavens get cold in a way few sailors will ever experience outside of winter.

Night brings its own additional problems too - crews have to weigh the inherent dangers of running in utter darkness, or the unknown attention that spotlights and moth-lanterns might bring.

Skyborne Obstacles

Sometimes naturally occuring, sometimes made by cruel or wary intelligences, there's very little else as surprising (or potentially journey-ending) as crashing directly into something mid-flight.

Luckily for aeronautic crews, most obstacles are out in the open and easy enough to see. But some are hidden, by accident or design - perhaps enveloped by hanging clouds, invisible in the dark of night, or rigged on spider-silk, plant filament, or spirit trails.

Aeronaut Marauders

Far less common than wavecutter pirates, but by no means rare enough that a crew shouldn't expect to encounter them at some point.

Marauders tend to get picky when they have access to an airship, preferring to engage thrash-level targets where they can swoop down, bomb, or blast their mark and then board and loot from a position of aerial superiority. Tackling another ship that has the ability to fly would lead to a chase, or a fair fight - hardly the best way to make a buccaneering living.

But there are always exceptions to the rule. Sometimes through honour or a personal code, sometimes due to unusual tactics that work best against other airships, some aerial marauders won't think twice about starting a fight amid the terrifying emptiness of the wild blue.

Vegetation

The Verdancy did more than cover the skin of the world - it dug deep to its core, and spread branches out into the atmosphere too. Or, at least, that's how aeronauts and horizoneers might tell it.

There are far fewer plants to contend with in the sky than there are in the thrash or tangle, and if a sailor doesn't look down they might go a day or two without seeing one at all. But, as scarce as they are, they're not entirely absent - floating islands are often overgrown with wilds-like tangle, the spawn of seedlings ejected by the waves below or haphazardly introduced by goods-traders. Some clouds play host to mosses, ivy, or flowers, bending the rules of the world with arconautic excess to exist in a realm that should by rights spit them out. And, of course, no sky above the wilds would be complete without plants that have perfectly adapted to it - ambulatory predators that scud by on acid jets and lash out with tendrils, gaseous pitchers and spore-winged horrors. The skies may be a break from the wilds below, but they're not a perfect escape from them.

Flying Beasts

For seasoned aeronauts, it isn't the challenging howl of a creature approaching that they fear, but the rumbling growl and unexpected scrape of something that's already made its way onto the hull - or into the vessel itself. The most dramatic pay-off for the seeming safety of the skies is that airships become a target for hungry beasts and questing insects, unhomed spirits and hunting plants. Food is scarce in the upper airs, and any ship travelling without protection might as well be transporting a whole cargo of dinner bells.

The upside is visibility, just as the downside is. When most threats can be sighted at a distance, emergency landings, altitude changes, or speed increases can often do the trick of avoiding them.

But the creatures of the sky are vigilant... watchful. The crews that live the longest learn the difference between a hazard avoided and one that's biding its time.

Wild Blue Rules

The remaining pages of this chapter cover mechanics related to flight and the open skies, building on the narrative elements already introduced. In brief, these pages cover...

- **Flight**: Split into several sections, detailing the takeoff and flight styles that are important to understand when attempting aerial travel, as well as information on aerial stunts, landings, and the effect of atmospheric and environmental conditions.
- **Journeys Through the Wild Blue**: With a new watch table, additional options for characters as they take the helm, and new systems for dropping anchor or drifting while aloft. This section also contains a new position characters can take during a journey, Looking for Trouble, which gives them the ability to piece together omens and portents into dangerous but profitable encounters.
- **Scrutiny**: A new system for those that want to bring additional danger to the skies. The Scrutiny section introduces the concept of watchers, and the watchful eye track that monitors their attention.

Further Relevant Reading...

As well as this chapter's mechanical section, for the best grasp of the rules you'll want to have a look over specifics of...

- **Lift systems**: The ways to get a wavecutting ship into the air with a degree of safety, found on page 112 within the ship creation chapter.
- **Bafflers**: An optional but extremely useful extra, bafflers allow for a crew to fend off or distract a watcher from above or below... temporarily.

Flight

Like most other movement in the Wildsea, flight for both characters and airships is handled in the **theatre of the mind** - there are no rules for precise airspeed or how sharply an individual can turn, as such minutiae tend to get in the way of telling a good story at the table.

But that doesn't mean there aren't *some* rules to follow! The mechanics of flight are broken down into **styles**, special keywords that tell a player how their ship or character acts when airborne. The styles are split up into two groups: **Takeoff Style**s and **Flight Styles.** Styles appear in both aspects related to flight and airship lift systems.

Understanding these two style groups allows you to confidently take to the air with a ship or character, though there are a couple of additional rules to remember that are specific to airships (especially where journeys are concerned).

This section also covers **Atmospheric Elements** that a Firefly can leverage to make flight easier or more difficult for both ships and crew, as well as advice on calling for rolls and dealing flight-related damage.

Takeoff Styles

The first moments of a flight are, in some ways, the most important. They may also be the most dangerous.

When a ship or character takes off, they leave the safety of solid ground behind. For characters, it's as easy as the player telling the rest of the table that they're taking to the air. For ships, it's not quite as easy – there's a good chance the process will deal some damage to a ship's ratings. *You'll learn more about the potential for rating damage later on in this page, but for now just remember that almost everything on the waves is made of scrap, hope, and ingenuity – airships included.*

Characters gain a takeoff style through taking an aspect (or gaining a temporary benefit), while airships do so through their lift system (a component required when constructing an airship). But whether you're a ship or a character, whatever gives you the power of flight will specify **one of the two takeoff styles detailed below**...

Float

Most commonly achieved with: Balloons, insect wings, arconautics

Essentials: Allows a takeoff without any forward momentum, the ability to rise vertically into the skies (and descend the same way).

Rush

Most commonly achieved with: Rockets, feathered wings, aerial sails

Essentials: Allows a takeoff if the character or ship has momentum, whether from running, skimming across the waves, or hurling yourself off a cliff.

***Example**: Klyka is more of a rattlehand than an aeronaut, but he has have managed to get his hands on some lighter-than-air balloons. Attaching them to a harness in a way that didn't feel terrifying took most of the night, but as dawn breaks he's ready to try them out. The temporary aspect he gains from his creation gives him Float takeoff style, so he can lift gently off of the ground at a moment's notice.*

***Example**: The Stinking Remora is a simple airship, a converted wavecutter with a set of Brute Turbines bolted on to the rear. When the crew want to perform a takeoff manoeuvre, they start by gathering speed on the waves – with enough distance and momentum, the turbines give them the necessary lift to leave the branches behind.*

It's possible for a ship or character to have access to both Float and Rush if they have appropriate aspects or lift systems. Having both is a massive benefit, making crash landings and awkward takeoffs far less likely.

Rolling for Takeoffs

Taking off is an action, just like any other: whether you have to roll to make it into the skies depends entirely on the situation. The rules here hew to the Wildsea standard – if the takeoff is **difficult**, **dangerous**, or **dramatic**, it will likely require a roll.

For characters this is an action roll. Taking off from the wavetops might be aided by the Vault or Wavewalk skill, and Flourish could lead to some impressive ways of leaving solid ground too. For some characters, Brace or Sense could be useful too – especially those that rely narratively on catching a gust of wind, or fluctuation of magentic fields.

For ships, a ratings roll is more appropriate. Speed is most suited to airships with the Rush style, and Tilt to those with the Float style, but these are only guidelines – taking off through a patch of overhanging branches might have a player rolling their ship's Armour, for example.

Takeoff Costs

Though taking off may require a roll in poor conditions, there's no additional cost associated with it for the majority of wildsailors.

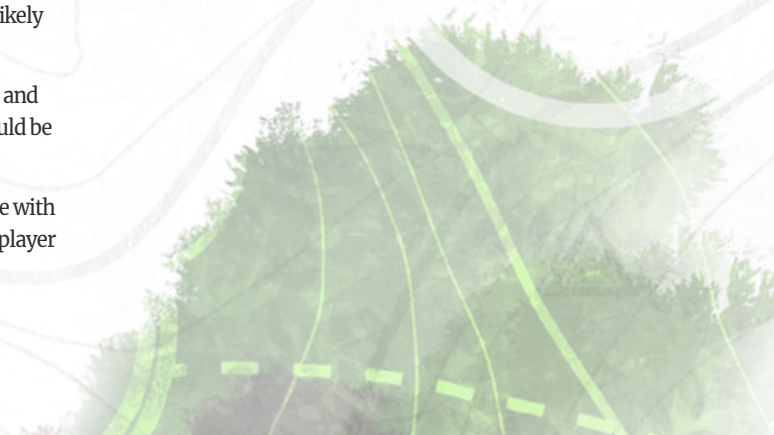
Airships, however, are a different story.

For even the most well-constructed skygoing vessel, takeoff is a dangerous proposition. A ship might not shake itself *completely* to pieces, but some damage is to be expected.

Because of this, every airship lift system has a takeoff cost, a particular rating that's impacted every time the ship pulls itself aloft. **Taking off deals a mark of damage to this rating as a matter of course, no matter the atmospheric conditions at play.**

***Example**: The Salmon Run travels the wild blue using Canvas Wings, a lift system that gives the Rush takeoff style. The takeoff cost for Canvas Wings is Speed, meaning that the ship takes a mark of damage to its Speed rating when it lurches up into the skies.*

If a takeoff is *particularly* difficult, the ship may take damage to another rating as well, or to the cargo, or the wildsailors it carries. This usually comes into play when a ship has to make a ratings roll due to adverse atmospheric elements, and ends up with a conflict or disaster result (a disaster will also usually prevent the ship from taking off at all). *You'll learn more about these atmospheric elements on page 24, and page 23 offers a method of avoiding takeoff costs in the right situation.*



We fly by the stars, by the patterns they weave, the frozen and the moving and the pulsing lights above.

We fly by the winds, by the breath of the heavens, the cloud shovelling, sail tearing, storm shepherding howls of the blue.

We fly by the birds, by the paths they carve out, through updraught and bug-snap and crosscut and style.

And we fly by the waves, by the trees far below, the branch swell and bloomtide that held us in youth.

The trees are a sea...

But the skies are an ocean.

Flight Styles

Things are easier once you're airborne, or so the more confident aeronauts assure nervous newcomers.

The way you fly once you're in the air is determined by a second keyword, referred to as your Flight Style. There are four of these and, as with Takeoff Styles, they work pretty much the same whether they're being used by a single wildsailor or an entire airship. The only difference comes with Journeys - certain flight styles allow particular actions to be used while airborne, such as Dropping Anchor or Forging Ahead. This information is found in each of the boxes below.

Flight styles are gained either through an aspect, a temporary benefit, or a lift system, just like takeoff styles. **The flight styles on offer are...**

Glide

Most commonly achieved with: Fixed-wing attachments, parachutes, aerial sails

Essentials: Allows for smooth aerial movement and graceful descents, but you can't *gain* height without some kind of environmental factor working in your favour (such as a useful updraught, handy thermal, or the heat of a wave-level sporevent).

Additional Mechanics for Airships: Gliding allows a vessel to travel through the air without its engines running. It also allows ships to Cut a Path while airborne, making steady progress on journeys.

Flap

Most commonly achieved with: Natural wings, mechanical attachments

Essentials: It may be a little ungainly, but it's reliable; your aerial motion relies on constant effort and repeated movements, usually in the form of flapping wings (though an undulating motion or repeated mechanical impulse give the same kind of effect). You can ascend and descend in a controlled fashion, and perform aerial manoeuvres, but you're probably not going to be winning any contests. You also need to keep moving while airborne (unless you have something else that lets you stay in one place, such as the ability to Hover).

Additional Mechanics for Airships: Flapping allows a vessel to Cut a Path while airborne, letting it make decent progress on journeys through the wild blue.

Hover

Most commonly achieved with: Rotor blades, anchored spirits, magnetic forces, balloons

Essentials: Allows for movement at roughly walking speed while airborne. More importantly, Hover allows a user to stay airborne *without* motion or momentum, hanging in the skies without any external support. Strong winds may still buffet or displace a hovering ship or individual, though.

Additional Mechanics for Airships: While it's not fast enough to make notable progress on a journey through the wild blue, hovering does allow a vessel to Drop Anchor without first landing, making it possible for the crew to rest on longer aerial journeys. This also allows use of the new Drift journey action, detailed on page 27.

Soar

Most commonly achieved with: Aerial jets, raptor-style wings, chemical catalysts

Essentials: The apex of flight - you can ascend, descend, and perform aerial manoeuvres with speed and style. You also need to keep moving while airborne (unless you have something else that lets you stay in one place, such as the ability to Hover).

Additional Mechanics for Airships: Soaring allows a vessel to both Cut a Path and Forge Ahead while airborne, giving crews just as much control during journeys through the wild blue as they would have on the waves below.

Flight Style Specifics

Though their specifics are different, each of the flight styles allows a character or ship to make some sort of progress through the wild blue.

***Example**: Moranir is using his kitesail to make his way over the waves to a distant pirate vessel. His particular kitesail's aspect gives him the Soar flight style, so he makes his way across the waves toward his target at an impressive pace.*

***Example**: The Dogged Courage isn't the most impressive airship in terms of speed, but it's a reliable old warhorse. The lift systems it has installed give it access to Flap and Hover, so during journeys the crew can Cut a Path to their heart's content and take a rest by Dropping Anchor without ever having to touch down.*

Flavouring Flight Styles

Whether you're gliding, hovering, flapping, or soaring, the narrative element of flight is very much up to the table. A character with the Glide flight style might be assumed to move with a modicum of grace, but malfunctioning repulsor mechanisms could have the same mechanical outcome (control over aerial movement and descent) without *any* of the associated elegance. As with every other aspect, benefit, or lift system, feel free to flavour them to fit your table and the tone of your play.

***Example**: Leth is combining two of their aspects, and wants a more 'natural' way of getting aloft. Their character is a thorn, a master of plantlife, so they combine one of the thorn's vine-based aspects with the rigid kitesail. The resulting aspect gives them the Glide flight style, but rather than being based on gear it's flavoured as whirling vines giving them a helicopter-like effect as they descend from heights.*

Rolling for Flight

Once you're up in the air, momentum and practice take over. You may have to roll to perform some kind of complicated or dangerous aerial stunt (and you'll find more on those on the next page), but the act of simply getting from A to B while aloft doesn't require a roll.

... Usually.

As with any other action, movement through the air may well require an action or ratings roll if the situation is **difficult**, **dramatic**, or **dangerous**. Making your way up to the peak of a volcano suddenly becomes a lot more intense when it's spewing superheated gases, for example.

***Example**: Gramish is trying to fight his way through a storm, travelling from a highport runway to a nearby cargo crane. The Firefly asks him for a roll with a cut to take off, which he manages, but actually making headway once his wings have pulled him off the ground is a different story. The next roll, for moving from the area above the runway to the crane, comes out as a disaster - he's blown back, whipped further away from his destination by the winds.*

The Effort of Flight

A small but important convention - if you're a wildsailor flying for long periods, especially if your flight is powered by your own muscles, you're going to get worn out. Excessive flying may lead to a Firefly asking you to mark whatever aspect or benefit gives you the ability, or imposing dice rolls and cut for actions that wouldn't normally pose a problem.

Flight in Play

Inge: I check the harness and handles of the kitesail. Does this thing look safe?

Firefly: Not in the slightest, but for now it's the only option you've got.

Inge: Stellar. In that case, I give my companions what might be one last look, and start my run-up to the side of the ship - I'm going to try to use that sporevent off our port side to grab some height and make it up to the mesa's top.

Todd: Without slamming into those thorns.

Inge: That was definitely implied. Rush and Glide styles - I'm rolling for this, right?

Firefly: You are indeed. It'll be easier for you once you're properly airborne, but I'm giving a cut of one for you to launch yourself off of the railing and catch the lift from that vent.

Inge: Well that's 1d6 from Grace, 2d6 from my Flourish skill, and the kitesail adds a die too... 4d6 gives me... A 6! Nope, there's a cut. Damn... A 5! Still pretty good!

Firefly: Definitely good enough - the spores from the vent catch the underside of the kitesail and send you soaring into the air, but you get a proper lungful of them as they do so. Mark a point of Toxin damage, but you're airborne!

Inge: Right, I'm going to angle myself toward that mesa's plateau and make as much progress as I can before I start to descend.

Kyllian: I think that's the point where I zip past her, to be honest - I still have that temporary trait from the batwing brews, so I'm marking that track for a burst of Float and Soar styles. I'll head for the mesa too, and wave as I pass.

Inge: You didn't think to mention that before I jumped off of the damn ship?

Aerial Stunts

If the ability to fly isn't already enough to show off with, you can always dazzle and impress by pulling some dangerous stunts while mid-air. Or maybe there's a more practical purpose - a corkscrew roll may seem ostentatious, but it might also be the best way to avoid an incoming chemical missile.

***Example**: Hewitt has a Cloudwire aspect, an impressive bit of kit that lets him use distant clouds as an aid to flight through the use of thin filament wire. He wants to show off to a village of potential fans, so decides to do some wire-augmented cartwheels. He makes an action roll using his Grace edge, the Vault skill, and an advantage from having the Cloudwire. The resulting acrobatic display wows the crowd, and earns him some adoring followers.*

There's no specific list of stunts a character or ship can pull while airborne - they're primarily for the theatre of the mind, just like any other form of impressive movement. Describe the feats you attempt to pull off as you think they'd look, and allow the Firefly to bring in the dice or impose cut or as they would in any other situation.

Rolling for Aerial Stunts

Stunts and complex manoeuvres require a roll in almost all situations, unlike general aerial movement. They're inherently dramatic, after all! But, importantly, if they're being used as part of an action to do something else (such as attack or defend in combat), there's no added penalty or extra steps to follow.

***Example**: Vessa's airborne, but she's not in the wild blue - she's zipping between the branches of the thrash in hot pursuit of a springfox. The Firefly tells her she's approaching a thorny thicket of vines, and asks what she's going to do. Afraid of losing her quarry, she opts to plough straight through them, performing a spiralling stunt to try to keep as much speed as possible. The Firefly muses over the situation for a moment and then asks for an action roll, with an additional cut due to the increased danger.*

Action rolls taken to perform aerial stunts can be easily boosted with the Flourish or Vault skills, perhaps even Brace or Wavewalk if conditions are right.

Airship Stunts

Without having to rely on branches for support or buoyancy, airships have a far more impressive range of motion than most traditional wavecutting vessels. If conditions are good, barrel rolls, loop-the-loops, and dizzying dives are all within the ability of even an average pilot. **Airship stunts require a ratings roll to pull off successfully,** following the same rules as stunts for solo fliers. It's usually the character At the Helm that initiates stunts, but some might also involve the engine room or deck.

The important thing to remember here is that if you do roll for a stunt, **a result of conflict or disaster doesn't inherently mean a crash**. You might pull the stunt off just fine, but fail to achieve the desired effect. Alternatively you might subject ship, crew, or cargo to extreme or destructive forces, either through speed or through some kind of mid-air collision. **This might damage cargo, crew, or even the ship itself.**

The Tilt and Speed ratings will be your go-to for airship-based stunts, but some manoeuvres might rely more on Armour, Stealth, Saws, or even Seals to pull off correctly.

***Example**: The Salmon Run's crew are trying to evade a pursuing ship through a cloudbank. At first they attempt stealth, dropping altitude quickly to hide, and the Firefly asks for a Stealth rating roll with no cut - the conditions are perfect for this kind of roll, with the clouds offering excellent potential cover.*

An unlucky roll leaves them exposed as wind moves the cloudscape, but the crew react quicky - they pull the ship into a sharp ascent and then go further, looping over to end up behind their pursuers. This is a much trickier manoeuvre, and the Firefly asks for roll with a two-cut, suggesting Tilt.

Recklessness and Fragile Cargo

Sometimes there's nothing better to do in the face of an incoming attack than damn the crew and push the ship to its limits - sure, there might be some patching up to do in the future, but at least there *is* a future.

In these situations, **a player can ask the Firefly to take their recklessness into account**, reducing the amount of cut on a roll in exchange for damage to something *within* the ship, caused by the stunt itself. This might be...

- A piece of cargo being shattered against the hold's wall
- A member of the crew taking light or medium Blunt damage as they're thrown around or hit with unexpected acceleration
- A passenger or member of the undercrew being knocked overboard

***Example**: The pilot of the Salmon Run doesn't think much of that two-cut, given that their Tilt rating isn't the highest. They ask if they can perform the manoeuvre recklessly, and the Firefly agrees - they can push the ship past its limits and risk some damage to the crew.*

The pilot takes this option (with the blessing of everyone else at the table) and throws the ship into a vicious climb. It works out, but the crew do take some damage - one character in the engine room takes Acid damage from the engine spilling over, and the rest take a mark of Blunt damage from being knocked around the cabin.

Landings

And you thought getting *into* the air was tough...

A ship or character's takeoff style also doubles up as information on how they most comfortably land. Something with the Float style can usually float back down to land, and something with the Rush style will need to both decrease speed and hit the ground, or waves, before it comes to a stop. **There's no inherent cost or damage associated with landing unless things go poorly.**

Rolling for Landings

Like takeoffs, landings in less-than-perfect conditions will require a roll. A conflict or disaster result here might mark tracks, damage cargo or resources, or even have the character or ship overshoot their expected landing area.

***Example**: The Salmon Run managed a decent flight, but all good things come to an end. When landing with perfect conditions (such as a favourable wind, or a smooth-carved runway) the ship might take no damage at all, coming to a stop with the minimum of fuss. But if the conditions are worse, or the landing site is cluttered with obstacles or other hazards, it's a different story - most landings of this type will at least jostle the Salmon Run's cargo, or give the crew a serious scare.*

When solo aeronauts roll to land, they might benefit from the use of Brace, Vault, or Wavewalk. Airships will likely rely on Tilt if they land delicately, Armour if it's a heavy impact, or even Saws if they want to land while maintaining some speed.

Crash Landings

Circumstances in the wild blue can change in an instant, and landings aren't always planned. **Landing in a way that doesn't suit your takeoff style counts as a crash landing, and will always inflict damage of some kind.**

Like any other rough landing this might come in the form of damage to tracks, ratings, resources, or cargo, or a lasting injury of some kind. The specifics are up to the Firefly in these situations. **Even a triumph can't avoid this additional negative** - the ship or character is being forced to do something they just weren't designed to withstand, and the 'triumph' is that they stay mostly in one piece.

***Example**: Moranir has a jet-fueled kitesail with the Rush takeoff style. It's an impressive bit of kit, but he's not in the position to appreciate it - he's been rendered temporarily unconscious by a mid-air collision with a pteranha. Without his guidance, the kitesail drives him down into the waves with incredible force, a crash landing that doesn't afford him the ability to carefully decelerate. The Firefly doles out three marks of Blunt damage to represent the impact of the suboptimal landing.*

Airships & Highport Docks

One of the benefits of a highport is that they're specifically designed for easy takeoffs and landings. **When using a highport, airships can ignore the usual takeoff cost from their lift system, and don't take additional damage from crash landings.**

***Example**: The Kaboska is making its way through a ruined settlement chained to a cloud of ghosts, the buildings swinging haphazardly. It might seem like a terrible place to land, but some enterprising sorts have built a highport up there - despite the pervasive air of danger, takeoffs and landings are surprisingly easy as long as airships use the highport runways.*

Flight in Play, Alternate

Todd: I think it's about time we tried out this Ironshard Sail... We traded enough for it, so we might as well get some use out of it!

Laura: As long as you're happy to take the controls, this whole skyfaring lark is still something my character is far from convinced about. As a hacker...

Firefly: Don't worry Laura, there's going to be more up there to saw through than you think! And Todd, if you want to take off you most definitely can. Do you know the procedure?

Todd: Yep - I'll accelerate until we're at a good speed and then pull down on this shiny new lever here, engaging the magnetovoltaics for the sail and pushing us up into the skies. I don't need to roll for it, right?

Inge: Yeah, that's right unless the terrain is really against us. You'll still have to pay the takeoff cost though.

Firefly: So, good news and bad news - you don't have to roll to make it into the air, but as soon as you do so, alarms sound from that writling encampment behind you. The moment you pass into view, one of their portside emplacements fires, sending a hail of shrapnel toward the ship.

Todd: God damn! Right, well I'll add a mark to the Tilt rating for that takeoff cost, and then... Well, hang on, people! I'm going to use that same rating to barrel roll and pull to the side, staying low to the waves so they can't track us as well.

Firefly: A risky move, but one that might work. Take a cut of one and make your roll!

Laura: In character, this was a terrible idea... Out of character, let's absolutely do this!

Atmospheric & Environmental Conditions

The skies aren't always friendly, and their denizens are anything but. No matter how experienced an aeronaut is, or how capable a ship, the environment is as dangerous up in the wild blue as it is down on the waves below.

The conditions you're flying in help to determine whether takeoff, landing, stunts, or even the basic ability *to* fly requires a roll of some kind. Luckily these rules aren't something you as a player have to worry about unless they're specifically featured in an aspect or lift system - outside of those instances they're solely the domain of the Firefly, aiding them on deciding when a player should roll, and how much cut should apply.

A List of Conditions

The boxes below detail a few common conditions, and whether they have a positive or negative impact on the experience of flight. **Flying with one or more positive conditions in play might lower the cut for a difficult stunt, or remove the need to roll for a manoeuvre entirely. Flying with one or more negative conditions in play will add to cut, force rolls where they wouldn't normally be needed, or reduce the impact of flight-related actions**. There may be other drawbacks or benefits too, depending on the specifics of ship, character, and condition - never be afraid to ask!

The following examples are far from exhaustive, but should cover the most common conditions wildsailors and airships are likely to encounter as they move to, or travel through, the wild blue.

Favourable Winds (Positive)

Essentials: It's a wonderful day for flying! All styles of flight are easier to accomplish.

Beneficial Thermals (Positive)

Essentials: Taking off is significantly easier with the breath of the wilds buoying you up.

Known Magnetic Fields (Positive)

Essentials: Metal airships, and aeronauts that rely on magnetism or mechanisms, have an easier time of it.

Soft, Lush Leaves (Positive)

Essentials: A boon for both takeoffs and landings without a highport nearby.

Fog or Sporeclouds (Negative)

Essentials: Make it more difficult to judge takeoffs and landings, and pick out airborne targets.

Storms (Negative)

Essentials: Winds buffet and lightning singes the air - a terrible condition for all takeoff and flight styles.

Unpredictable Forces (Negative)

Essentials: Everything magnetic, on both airships and aeronauts, goes haywire.

Harrying Fliers (Negative)

Essentials: Whether in pursuit or all-out attack, stunts are more difficult to pull off with active interference.

***Example**: The Quotidian Quillfish is built for aerial combat, and as it engages an oversized nightbarrel in the upper atmosphere the pilot attempts a loop-the-loop, designed to put it behind the predatory bird and give the crew on deck a clear shot. This isn't the easiest manoeuvre, and normally the presence of a nearby aggressor would increase the cut on the roll, but the bird is already reeling from a previous shot. Taking the area's favourable winds into consideration as well, the Firefly asks the pilot to roll without cutting; despite the danger the stunt might bring, there's a lot working in the Quillfish's favour.*

Specific Conditions

The list of options on the left surely won't cover everything the skies have to throw at a crew. Just as in any other circumstance, the Firefly is expected to weigh the positives and negatives of a situation in terms of danger, difficulty, and dramatics when asking for rolls.

***Example**: The Stinking Remora is carrying a cargo of caged predatory plants, ready to be released back into the wilds far from the settlement they were harassing. The plants produce their own lighter-than-air gas as part of the feeding process, and the Firefly rules that this actually makes aerial travel easier, especially takeoffs. On balance, the cargo has ended up making the ship a little lighter.*

When considering a new atmospheric or environmental condition, Fireflies shouldn't just focus on whether it makes things harder or easier for those in the air. The interesting potential interplays a condition might have with ship components or aspects are just as important.

Damaged Lift Systems

An additional concern for airships, if a lift system has taken structural damage there's a good chance it could count as a negative condition - or worse.

***Example**: Gourd's Run uses a gas-bag to takeoff and land, but a raider's harpoon punctured it during their most recent journey. Until it's repaired, the Firefly decides that all landings outside of a highport count as crash landings.*

Wildsailors don't suffer penalties if the aspect that offers them a takeoff or flight style is marked - some of them require a mark to even activate in the first place - but they might if they have an injury that would get in the way of a smooth flight.

Conditions Are Personal

An important reminder - while a terrifying storm might be an obvious negative for most aeronauts, an airborne Tempest would feel right at home. When the Firefly makes a call on what the conditions are, and whether thy're positive or negative, they should take into account both mechanical and narrative factors at play.

Example: *Brea is a kitesailor by trade, but she also has a couple of aspects from the screw post. While she and her companions attempt to glide down the side of an iron-rich mountain range, the Firefly rules that conditions are turning bad due to the unpredictable magnetism of the deposits below. And for her companions, that's true - but Brea can see magnetic forces thanks to one of her aspects.*

She reminds the Firefly of this, and they reverse the decision where she's concerned, ruling that while her companions may have some extra trouble she's entirely unaffected.

Conditions in Play

Laura: It's looking rough out there...

Firefly: You've got that right. Rain lashes at the window, and lightning crackles in the distance. You're moving deeper into the storm.

Kyllian: Let me guess - the ship isn't going to like this very much?

Firefly: Right again. as well as the decreased visibility, the storm's going to add a cut to any stunts you take while it's still in full force. Guess you're not going to be dodging lightning any time soon.

Inge: Wait - I don't think we need to!

Todd: What, we're just going to let ourselves get hit? I know I'm usually the full steam ahead kind of guy, but...

Inge: No, I mean, the storm's still going to be a problem. But that lightning, specifically? We have a lightning rod! We haven't used it in a while because we've been down under the thrash, but up here it's going to work brilliantly for keeping us safe!

Firefly: You know what? You're entirely right! With that rod, lightning strikes don't only leave the ship unharmed - they actually charge your ceramic batteries too. While you're in the storm, with the engines getting that much extra juice, I think it's fair to say you can Forge Ahead even with the lift systems you have installed right now.

Todd: Travel at speed again? I am totally there. Nice catch, Inge! Now, I think it might be my turn at the helm...

Grimnebulin had gone over the rail once; it wasn't an experience he was in a hurry to repeat.

It'd been a marauder attack, pirates in hawk feathers and stolen bones dropping from the branches of a tallshank they were passing under. More than one of them had missed the ship's deck during their initial attack, but he'd heard no screams - a glance over the edge revealed figures gliding away, arms spread wide and strips of canvas rippling in the wind.

But when one of them had pushed him over, moments later, he'd had no such preparations.

Grimnebulin had spent most of his life with the waves little more than a stone's throw away, his switch from experienced wildsailor to accidental aeronaut the result of a captain's whim.

And even after his years on the waves, and many more in the blue, that fall had been the closest thing to eternity he'd ever experienced.

Journeys Through the Wild Blue

A far more recent fad than personal flight, and one that requires significant investment from a crew to pay off. The process of converting an existing wavecutter into an airship may *look* as simple as sticking a gasbag on top, but there's (hopefully) a lot more work involved.

All airships rely on **lift systems** to keep them aloft, each of which allow a ship to use a certain style of takeoff or flight once installed (you'll find a list of lift systems on page 112).

Sky-High Travel

Though far removed from the wildness of the waves, the basic rules for engaging in a journey at height remain the same - you choose a course, set off in the right direction (hopefully), mark some tracks and make some watch rolls, and end up somewhere different to where you started. Easy as that!

... For the most part, anyway. The next few pages cover how travelling by airship differs from cutting the waves, giving new options that will particularly suit crews with their hearts set on exploring the wild blue.

*These additional options aren't the only new set of rules for aerial travel. Airships tend to attract attention as they travel, most of it negative or potentially dangerous. This facet of air travel, **Scrutiny**, is handled separately in the final section of this chapter. You'll find a detailed rundown of the system, and the hazards it brings, on page 32 - until then, all you need to know is that soaring the skies isn't nearly as easy or relaxing as the birds make it seem.*

Extra Rules Overview

There's more detail on each of these rules over the next handful of pages, but as a quick reference this section covers...

- **Drifting**: For ships that can drop anchor without landing, an opportunity to drift slowly while the crew are at rest, potentially increasing (or decreasing) the number of marks on the Journey track.
- **Watch Results**: A new set of results for sailors that take a spell on watch during an aerial journey, taking into account their increased range of vision and different potential encounters.
- **Altitude**: A system related to the cloud layer that splits the sky into layers, much like the waves below. Altitude only begins to matter once ships travel through the cloud layer.
- **Looking for Trouble**: A new system for those that want problem after problem, allowing crew to gather sightings during a journey and tie them together into an always-dangerous, but profitable, encounter.

Ratings in Flight

Each of of a ship's ratings is still useful during flight, though the circumstances they're rolled in might change.

- **Armour**: This works exactly as it does on the waves, protecting a ship from harm.
- **Seals**: Seals keep the environment within a vessel safe for the aeronauts that rely on it.
- **Speed**: Another simple one, usually used to make changes to a flying vessel's airspeed (or to allow a ship that relies on gliding to take off safely).
- **Saws**: Still used to cut through obstructions (though this is far more difficult while airborne), but can also be used to stop mists and cloudbanks from obscuring a pilot's vision by disturbing the air ahead of the ship.
- **Stealth**: Used to help a ship go unnoticed, either by dampening engine noises or by hiding within floating obstructions or sun glare.
- **Tilt**: The king of aerial ratings, rolled for smoother takeoffs, landings, and tricky manoeuvres.

Drifting

For some airships, motion is a requirement; those that rely on engine thrust and aerodynamics to stay aloft find it hard, or even impossible, to 'stop' without tumbling from the skies. This makes **dropping anchor**, usually one of the simpler elements of a journey, a trickier proposition while aloft.

Though it's *possible* for a ship to be tethered to floating debris or some kind of sturdy aerial plant in the wild blue, the safest course of action for such vessels is to descend to the waves and drop anchor as normal. It's a good excuse for chars and surgeons to gather some wavetop resources, the undercrew will likely appreciate the break, and most importantly there's no risk of falling out of the sky if something goes wrong.

Rest in the Blue

But if a ship has the Hover flight style, or some kind of aerial anchor system (such as those found on page 119), the crew have a few more options at their disposal.

The first of these is to **drop anchor while airborne**, hanging in the air and making minor corrections to stay in one place. It may not be quite as restful as a full stop on the waves below, but it'll get the job done.

The second is to **drift**, to stay aloft (and maybe power the engines down if the ship runs on some kind of lighter-than-air lift system), letting the winds take the vessel wherever they blow. it gives the crew a chance to rest, work, or sleep, and may even bring them closer to their destination.

Drifting Rules

This is treated as dropping anchor in all ways but one - **the Firefly makes an additional 1d6 roll behind the scenes**. On a **6**, the ship drifts in a direction that actually helps the crew out, adding a mark to the Journey track. On a **5** or **4**, the ship stays pretty much where it is - it makes no progress, but loses no progress either, hanging in the sky for the duration of the scene. On a **3**, **2**, or **1** the ship drifts far off course, clearing a mark from the journey track.

This roll can be affected by the kinds of weather the airship is subjected to - **a storm or strong winds might have the Firefly decide to roll 2d6 instead, and take the lower result**.

Watch Results

Though the mechanics of going **on watch** are identical when airborne as they are at wave level, the results you might end up with are a little different. When a player makes a watch roll from an airship, the Firefly might choose to use the results table to the right in place of the usual wavecutting table found in the core book.

Crowded Skies

One thing you'll have to decide as a group when you play is whether the skies of your personal wildsea are crowded, at least compared to the skies of our own world. How common are floating islands and other airships, aerial predators and drifting sky-plants?

If you want the skies to stay sparse, one easy way is to increase the amount of travel that a single watch roll covers. This is an entirely narrative change, as there are no fixed durations for such rolls in the first place (by design). It just means that if your players are set on encountering a *lot* of sky-based things, there might still be days in between the actual sightings themselves, rather than hours or minutes.

Watch Roll Results for the Wild Blue

6 Peace

There's a reason they call it the wild blue - it may well be more vast, perhaps even more uncharted, but it's rarely more peaceful. You might experience...

- A genuinely clear day, giving the crew time to take a **montage**. Useful for healing and repairing.
- A **sighting** of a distant threat or opportunity, too far away to be an imminent concern.
- Moments of idle **gossip**, spinning rumours into whispers and stories into amendments to existing charts.
- The rhythms may be new and unfamiliar, but the undercrew singing a **sky shanty** keeps spirits up.
- An unexpected **breakthrough** while staring out at the skies, marking several boxes on a project.
- The **undercrew** squabbling over some petty issue, enough for choice words but not for flying fists.

5 4 Order

Intact structures are uncommon in the heavens, but fragments and oddities abound. You might experience...

- A signal from a distant **airship**, attempting to establish contact.
- The glint of a **satellite city**, far above the clouds.
- A **highport** spiked with docking bays, runways, and landing struts, the perfect place to rest.
- A **floating ruin**, held aloft by unusual plantlife, ancient engines, or complex magnetic interplays.
- A lone **aeronaut**, a kitesailor or balloonist caught by the winds and thrown off course.
- An airship **wreck**, empty of life and still drifting through the skies like an ornate tomb.

3 2 1 Nature

Crews are as surrounded by the natural world at height as they are within the depths, it's simply spaced further apart and less likely to tangle the ship as it moves. You might experience...

- The attention drawn by the ship increasing **Scrutiny**, unexpectedly marking a Watchful Eye.
- A **mountaintop island,** or other geographical feature that stretches high enough to need avoiding.
- A **wonder** of the skies, something to sing about or record with fervour. Heals mire.
- A **horror** of the wild blue, perhaps making the crew face the emptiness - or life - of the sky. Marks mire.
- An encounter with one of the **creatures** of the upper air.
- The sight of something **leviathan-like** heading in the direction of the ship.

Altitude

The Wildsea doesn't track a ship's altitude in numerical terms, but there are three 'layers' that might come in useful for crews that intend to spend a lot of time in the air. These segment the sky in a manner similar to the layers of the sea, coming with some associated rules for higher altitudes that add a dash of danger to proceedings. The three layers of altitude on offer are...

- **Below the clouds**
- **Within the clouds**
- **Above the clouds**

Choosing Altitude

Every time the character **at the helm** chooses an airship's speed during a journey, or performs a stunt, **they can also choose the altitude they're travelling at**. Airships that take off from the waves naturally enter the area below the clouds, but leaving from a highport might allow a ship to enter the areas within or above the clouds immediately.

Unless otherwise stated, airships are assumed to travel below the clouds. Other altitudes only come into play when the crew, or Firefly, chooses.

The Layers of the Sky

The altitude a ship travels at determines whether there are special rules in play. The rest of the page covers what each altitude means, in narrative and mechanical terms.

Below the Clouds

Flying below the clouds keeps you close to the rustling waves (which is still quite high in real-world terms, given the general height of the wildsea's canopy). It might describe a ship skimming just above the branches or clearing them by an easy hundred feet - precise measurements don't matter as much as narrative effect and general feeling.

Mechanically, there are no special rules for travelling below the clouds - it's the default for a reason.

Within the Clouds

The domain of storms and unsettled air, the heights one must climb to in order to reach this kind of altitude are dizzying. Creatures and settlements are rare, but those that do manage to carve out a niche at this level are often fascinating sorts.

Mechanically, flying within the clouds is an excellent way of staying out of sight, but obscures the crew's own vision at the same time. Murksight and other uncanny senses make navigating this layer of the sky a little easier.

- Cut when making rolls based on vision or awareness, unless a character has an aspect that would allow them to see through dense clouds.
- Encountering obstacles when Forging Ahead will almost certainly lead to a nasty crash, adding the same crash landing rules from page 23 onto any other effect the obstacle may have (even if the ship doesn't *technically* crash or land, the evasive manoeuvres needed to avoid a sudden looming threat will be stressful on ship and crew).
- Increase impact on rolls to hide from anything outside of the ship's immediate vicinity.

Above the Clouds

A frigid void that's altogether too close to space, the skies above the clouds are almost entirely empty of traditional life. Explorers in this hostile realm may find guarded satellite cities (page 14), or even be pursued by hyperadapted predators, but the biggest threat at such a height are the heavens themselves.

Mechanically, flying above the clouds implies a ship is at the highest it can comfortably cruise, where the air gets thinner and the wind grows icy teeth.

- Cut when making rolls to hide or evade the notice of other vessels or creatures travelling above the clouds, but increase impact on attempts to hide from anything below them.
- Crew on deck for long periods of time will begin to suffer without some form of Frost resistance or warm-weather gear, taking injuries based on the extreme cold and wind-chill. Staying close to a sources of heat, or going below deck, can avoid this.

Atmospheric Changes

The cloud layer of the wild blue may be a useful reference point when it comes to altitude, but that doesn't mean it's always *there*, or that it always presents exactly as the rules on this page describe. If you want to move away from the 'typical flight experience', feel free to spice it up with the options below - or to use them as conditions!

None of these alternate effects are likely to last for an entire journey, and may be predicted by a character that's weather-watching or skilled in the skyfaring arts.

Cloudless Skies

The wildsea has cloudless days from time to time, depending on region, season, and atmospheric effects (and narrative appropriateness, of course). While a ship can still choose to travel above or below where the missing clouds would *usually* be, they take a cut when attempting to hide or evade the notice of any individuals that might see them - wherever they fly, they're exposed.

Thunderheads

A sky wracked with storms is hardly the safest place to fly. Travelling above the clouds will be a reasonably normal experience for most, but when attempting to take a route within or below them the ship will be at risk of massive Volt damage from lightning strikes.

Wild Winds

Essentially the opposite of thunderheads, such winds haunt the upper atmosphere and rarely make much of an impact on the lower skies near the thrash. Travel below the cloud layer is treated as normal, but going any higher than that risks massive Blunt damage to the ship if it's caught by a particularly strong blast.

Jet Streams

Though mostly uncharted, jet streams can cut the time taken for a journey dramatically if they're used by a competent pilot. When travelling within a jetstream, the character at the helm doesn't decide what altitude the ship flies at (with the Firefly determining this instead, as the ship stays within the stream's current). They do make an additional mark on the Journey track whenever they make progress, though.

"Do you ever wonder where all the birds went?"

The engineer looked up from the ship's spilled innards, wiping greasy curls away from her brow. Her assistant did ask rather odd questions from time to time, but they were usually about fuel ratios and interchanges, or at least something vaguely mechanical.

"Where they went? They're in the waves, lad, nesting in branches and flapping about the place. Hordes of them round there."

"Yes, but... Why are they scared of the skies?"

Looking for Trouble New Optional Station

A new station that can be used as an airship is making progress (similar to Tending the Engine and Cartographizing from the core book), **Looking for Trouble** allows the crew to take advantage of the height they're travelling at while on an aerial journey to spot specific threats that might be of great import... But the rewards won't come without a price.

The Trouble Track

Designed to be filled during aerial journeys, the trouble track is a **vertical three-box track** that you can put in the notes section of the ship or character sheet.

Marking the Trouble Track

Any time the ship makes progress on a journey (whether through cutting a path or forging ahead), a member of the crew that's not on watch or at the helm can go **Looking for Trouble**.

When a wildsailor looks for trouble, they **mark a box on the Trouble track**, and **write a brief description of what they saw** next to that filled box.

***Example**: Grendyl is looking for trouble as his ship soars above the treetops. His player marks one of the boxes on the trouble track, and writes 'Birds trailing smoke' next to it. An omen, a threat? He won't find out until the final box is marked, but it doesn't look good.*

The things seen can be positive, negative, or nebulously in-between, but the one thing they **can't** be is *investigated* - they have to be fleeting, sightings of a potential greater threat or reward.

When The Trouble Track Is Full

When all three boxes are marked, the crew can decide together what trouble they find. They do this by **combining two of the three small phrases** and using them as a description of some **event or location** they pass over (or under, if it's in the clouds). The fleeting glimpses come together, and the truth is revealed...

And that truth is always something bad. It's called 'looking for trouble' for a reason, after all.

***Example**: Grendyl's crew have glimpsed signs of trouble throughout their journey. They've seen 'Birds trailing smoke', 'A storm on the horizon', and 'Wreckage quickly consumed'. They decide together that taking the first and last of these glimpses and putting them together reveals a manufactory ahead on a spit of stone, circled with shrieking mechanical birds that dive in and out of the thrash.*

Once the event or location is created, clear every mark on the track and erase the written glimpses beside them.

The Final Phrase

Whatever small phrase isn't used to create the trouble encounter is converted into a whisper, given to the character whose player created it.

The whisper doesn't have to be the exact phrase that was written down, but it should be closely related to it.

***Example**: Grendyl's crew have used two of the three phrases to find some trouble. The leftover phrase, 'A storm on the horizon', is converted into a whisper for their char, the character whose player created that particular phrase. Deciding it's a little bit wordy for a whisper, the Firefly shortens it to 'An Approaching Storm', and the char's player notes it down as a resource on their character sheet.*

A Break for the Firefly

Looking for Trouble is an entirely player-facing mechanic, so the Firefly doesn't have input into the kind of event or location the crew come up. They'll still be describing elements of it, and controlling any hazards that appear - they are the Firefly, after all - but the actual creation portion is entirely up to the other players by default.

Limits on Trouble

As long as the players create something that explains the signs they've been seeing, they've done a good job. But how do they interact with it?

Locations created by Looking for Trouble don't have to be investigated immediately. They might be marked on a chart of some kind and returned to later, or even used as valuable information to offer to pirates or plunderers. **Engaging with an encounter generated by looking for trouble is always optional.**

The Upside of Looking for Trouble

The upside is that whatever event or location the crew have discovered, it will **always be able to give them something valuable** as pay-off for plunging into danger. The precise nature of the reward is up to the Firefly, but positively-tagged cargo, additional milestones, survivors willing to join as passengers or undercrew, or plot-critical information are all good choices.

The Downside of Looking for Trouble

It's in the name! Encounters generated by Looking for Trouble always present a hazard to face or a challenge to overcome, by their very nature.

Optional Extras

A garnish of potential additions, you only need to use these particular rules if they suit your table's preferred style of play. Discuss as a group before using...

Flight Plans

Having charts to follow is a real boon, especially on longer journeys - it's easy to drift off course over time, especially if you're moving across shifting or unfamiliar territory. **Owning a relevant chart adds an additional d6 to watch rolls, with the watcher choosing which of the rolled results they prefer.**

Night Flying

Travel at night through the skies is just as dangerous as would be down below, and no amount of porthole shutters and engine muffling can hide an airship's presence forever. **When you make a watch roll at night, the Firefly rolls for the threat of potential encounters with 2d6 as standard, rather than the usual 1d6, and takes the lowest result - the more dangerous outcome.**

Far From the Waves

Whispers and charts are easy enough to snatch and scribe on the move, but salvage and specimens are another story. **When you would gain salvage or specimens from undercrew choices that rely on close proximity to the waves, add a negative tag to what they acquire.**

Threats at Distance

The increased field of view gives crew far more time to react to hazards and obstacles spotted on watch. **While cutting a path, the first ratings roll made to deal with a new threat gains an additional 1d6 of advantage.**

Looking for Trouble in Play

Firefly: So a 6 is Peace, which is probably a nice break after the journey you've had. I'm happy to run this as a montage on the ship if there are things you want to get done...

Todd: Oh, no no no! I just marked the final box of our trouble track, and I am *itching* for a fight.

Laura: You're always itching for a fight!

Todd: That's not true! It's just... most of the time?

Firefly: Well, leaving Todd's inclinations toward violence and skulduggery aside, what did you see as you looked for trouble?

Kyllian: I'm going to go with 'A Geyser of Liquid Crezzerin', spurting from the side of a broken thrash-level tree trunk.

Kyllian: Oh, we could combine that with the 'Herd of Fleeing Foxes', maybe? Some sort of small-scale ecological disaster to deal with?

Inge: Or the 'Abandoned drilling equipment'. Maybe they were mining a tree for something and hit a vein of liquid crezz?

Todd: I really like that second one, maybe there's an empty work-site down there we could swing by and steal some heavy machinery from.

Kyllian: That would be pretty useful, actually. So then, if we do that, I get the foxes one as a whisper?

Firefly: That's right. Laura, you good with this?

Laura: If we can take that peace montage afterwards, yeah, I think that works for me. I'm never going to turn down more raw materials to work with for tools.

Firefly: Great! In that case, Kyllian, you can add your trouble result as a whisper, and Todd, tell me what this work site looks like as you draw a little closer...

Huddled in her cabin, shades drawn over the amberglass porthole, Klyka knocked back another slug of spike wine and reached, trembling, for the nearest book.

She never thought she'd miss the rustling waves.

'It's just another sea', she'd told her husband as she signed onto the Dry & Dapper. He'd nodded, wary, but he was an old school ridgeback - she doubted his feet had ever touched a wavecutter's deck, let alone that of an airship. Of course he'd have reservations. It's one of the reasons she loved him, that he cared enough to worry even while knowing she stayed away from the most dangerous routes.

A flash of lightning from outside. The moth-lantern flickered, and Low Sour swam on the page before her.

And she'd been right. It was just another sea, the wild blue. Just as unpredictable, just as full of life.

Perhaps that was the problem.

Scrutiny

For sailors that have spent their entire life surrounded by the crush of branch, leaf, and blossom that makes up the rustling waves, the openness of the wild blue can be a shock to the system. So much freedom in direction, in altitude, in when you move and when you drift... What else could the wild blue be but a heaven?

But experienced aeronauts know better.

Because with that freedom, that open expanse, comes the inability to hide your presence - the exposure of being a single speck in a sea of blue, or a moving light against the stars. You can see everything from up there, *and everything else can see you*.

This is where **Scrutiny** comes into play, a mechanic designed to represent the danger of being a lone point of life and interest while travelling the vast skies. Scrutiny represents the world of the wilds taking notice, the attention that might bring, and the psychological impact of knowing that the longer you fly for, the more exposed you are.

Watchers

Watchers are legendary threats that aeronauts whisper of when they've had a few drinks too many, creatures that blur the lines between myth and leviathan. They're real, these watchers, named and seen, but they couldn't possibly be as potent as the stories make out.

At least, one hopes they're not.

Watchers are split into two categories: **those from below**, and **those from above**. Watchers from below dwell within the leafy wilds, but care little for wavecutting vessels or submersibles - their eyes are firmly turned skyward. Watchers from above treat the wild blue as their home, for the most part, and either resent the presence of airships in their territory or see such vessels as interesting playthings.

Not all watchers are leviathan-sized (though some certainly are), but all share an uncommon level of power and tenacity that's on par with such creatures.

Watchers in Play

At the beginning of an aerial journey, the Firefly can choose up to two watchers that are active along the route, typically one from above and one from below. This choice is made in secret; a watcher might be taken from the suggestions starting on page 36, adapted from some of the hazards found within chapter 5, or be a creation entirely of their own to suit the table's wants and fears. *There's an example of a watcher to the right.*

The Hungry Stars (Watcher From Above)

While the stars may appear to be little more than points of light in the night sky, to a trained eye there's something else there. A yearning, maybe... Or a hunger.

Cut Imposed: On rolls taken out under the stars at night.

Unmarked: An empty feeling stirs among the crew as night approaches, a peculiar restlessness that nothing seems to sate.

Marked: It's harder to think in the starlight - crew forget what they were doing a moment ago and struggle with tasks they've performed a thousand times. Hunger is a constant distraction.

Burned: Hunger runs rampant throughout the ship, even among those who have barely glimpsed the sky - illnesses, cramps, and cases of mild to severe poisoning are common. The starlight drains and desiccates.

Being Watched

The very act of being watched imposes cut in certain situations, related to the nature of the watcher.

A cut of one is usually enough, applied even if the crew aren't yet aware of the influence of the watcher. Fireflies don't have to give specifics on why a certain action is cut if they want to preserve the mystery of the watcher.

Watchers also change the tone of a journey depending on whether their corresponding **Watchful Eye** is unmarked, marked, or burned. What's a Watchful Eye? Well...

Watchful Eyes

Once the crew's airship has left port (or launched itself dangerously from the wavetops) and the Firefly has decided which watchers are going to be used for the journey, it's time to make a Watchful Eyes track. This is a special two-box track players should add to their ship sheet, used specifically to monitor the attention they've garnered from the Firefly's chosen watchers. The topmost box representing a watcher from above and the lower box a watcher from below.

Here's an example of how that track might look for a crew heading skyward at night, in an area known for pirate gangs...

The Hungry Stars (↑)

The Portlock Pirates (↓)

In the above example, if the crew stay active throughout the night as they journey, they're likely to draw the ire of the stars themselves. If they focus on the acquisition of cargo and resources they may well run afoul of the Portlock Pirates, a local marauder group noted for their jealous greed.

Name or Not?

In the example above, each Watchful Eye is named after the watcher it tracks, but this doesn't have to be the case! The Firefly might not give out the names immediately if the crew aren't aware of the potential threat they face, or might give a false name until they learn more about the dangers they're facing.

Gathering Information

The crew also have the option to gather information on the watchers that threaten them throughout their aerial journeys. This can come as a mechanical reward for certain cut results (see the section on the right for more details there), but could also be due to clever deduction on the part of players or active investigation from the crew. **The name and situation in which a watcher imposes cut might both be obscured from the players until they've gathered enough information.**

Information on a watcher might even come in the form of whispers related to the entity, or specimens it leaves behind after it affects the ship or crew.

Marking the Watchful Eyes

By default, the Watchful Eyes begin a skyward journey unmarked - they're the *potential* of a threat rather than the immediacy of it. But as the crew start performing actions or manoeuvres that risk drawing attention to themselves, there's an increasing chance that something *will* take notice - this marks, or burns, the Watchful Eyes, worsening the general situation and giving the Firefly the opportunity to throw a wrench in the works at inopportune times.

Cut Results & Drawing Attention

As soon as the Watchful Eyes are down on the sheet, **cut** becomes far more important. **Whenever a player cuts a result when making an action or ratings roll, that cut result has a chance of drawing attention**. Specifically, the actual **results that get cut from a roll** are what matter - cutting a triumph (a 6) is actually useful for the crew, reducing Scrutiny and representing the watchers turning their gaze elsewhere. Cutting a conflict (a 5 or 4) is far worse, and cutting a disaster (a 3, 2, or 1) is... Well, a whole new kind of disastrous.

Look for the Low

When checking cut results for Scrutiny, **look for the lowest one out of every result that's cut**.

For example, a cut of two on a difficult action that removes the results 6 and 4 would count as cutting a conflict for Scrutiny - the lower result.

Which Eye To Mark?

If a roll is affected by cut imposed by a watcher, any marks or burns go on that watcher's eye. If there's no cut imposed but the cut still points to a mark, the most appropriate Watchful Eye gets the privilege.

The crew of the Dragonfly's Spin are on the way to a distant festival when they run through the fringes of a sporestorm. They're forced to make a ratings roll, Tilt, to keep the ship steady. The roll ends up with a result of 3 (which isn't great news for the ship in the first place) and a cut result of 5 - a conflict, enough to draw attention from one of the Watchful Eyes. They're close to the waves, so the Firefly decides that the Portlock Pirate eye is the most appropriate - the ship's drastic manoeuvres are enough to draw their attention.

Cut Results & Scrutiny

6

Cutting a Triumph - Lucky Escape

If the lowest result you cut is a 6, you've just barely managed to avoid drawing attention to yourself through your actions. You can either...

- Clear a mark from any one Watchful Eye.
- Gain a shred of information about one of the watchers (supplied by the Firefly).

5 4

Cutting a Conflict - Drawing Attention

If the lowest result you cut is a 5 or a 4, you've drawn a modicum of attention to yourself. You can either...

- Mark one of the Watchful Eyes.
- Burn a Watchful Eye that's already marked.
- Gain a shred of information about one of the watchers (supplied by the Firefly) if both eyes are already burned.

3 2 1

Cutting a Disaster - Full Attention

If the lowest result you cut is a 3, 2, or 1, then you've drawn full and immediate attention from one of the Watchers. You can either...

- Burn one of the Watchful Eyes.
- Gain a shred of information about one of the watchers (supplied by the Firefly) if both eyes are already burned.

Scrutiny Effects

The actual in-play effects of Scrutiny depend on a combination of four things...

- The chosen watchers
- The state of the Watchful Eyes
- The information gathered by the crew
- The Firefly's Scrutiny Actions

The first three of these blend together to create a particular atmosphere for the journey, with the influence of the watchers on tone and narrative being added to as the eyes are marked or burned, and lessened (or at least understood and mitigated) as the crew gains more knowledge about them. Here are a few examples, using both the Hungry Stars and Portlock Pirates and displaying the state of the Watchful Eyes as a reference for each.

Example - Both Unmarked

The crew are aware of a growing sense of disquiet as night approaches, and being out on deck under the stars makes them feel oddly hollow. They might also see unfamiliar ships in the distance when travelling close to the waves, or spy wrecks picked clean of valuable parts that seem ominously fresh. As they gain information on the watchers, they might try to avoid the deck at night, or fly within the clouds rather than below them.

Example - One Burn, One Mark

Every evening fills the crew with dread, and each night is a gauntlet for the vessel as well as the sailors upon it. Planks splinter and fade, edibles wither or crumble to dust, and a sense of all-consuming hunger settles over everyone aboard. The influence of the pirates is less dramatic, but every time the ship dips below the cloud layer, the crew find they're being tailed by smoke-belching ships with grasping cargo cranes and huge grappling catapults. Information might allow them to lessen the power of the stars by creating their own lights, or lead the Portlocks into difficult terrain.

Scrutiny Actions

Until this point, the Scrutiny rules have had an overwhelmingly narrative effect that rather a mechanical one (save for the additional cut in situations related to the chosen watchers). And for some tables, some crews, this might be where to leave things - keeping the effects of Scrutiny non-mechanical allows for some good flavour and interesting experiences on aerial journeys, a counterpoint to the openness of the sky that should help hammer home that it might not be chock full of plants, but it's still an unknowable and mysterious region.

But Fireflies do have the option of taking things further, in the form of Scrutiny Actions - specific negative effects they can hit a character, ship, or entire crew with **by clearing a mark or burn on one of the Watchful Eyes**.

Clearing a mark (or reducing a burn down to a mark) gives an immediate negative effect. This can be used to add an unexpected spice of danger to an otherwise easy stretch of travel, or to complicate a scene that's already in motion by adding a new element for the crew to contend with. Clearing a burn is more powerful, giving the crew some major consequences to work through that might require a scene to address on their own. The watchers listed over the next few pages each come with a few suggestions of specific scrutiny actions, but the lists below can be adapted to fit any watcher.

The Firefly Might Clear a Mark to...

- Deal medium damage to a single crew member
- Deal light damage to an entire crew
- Inflict mire or add negative tags to resources
- Temporarily disable part of the ship
- Reduce the impact of certain actions for a time
- Negatively affect Journey or Project tracks
- Affect passengers, undercrew, or cargo negatively
- Increase cut imposed by the relevant watcher

The Firefly Might Clear a Burn to...

- Deal heavy damage to a single crew member
- Deal medium damage to an entire crew
- Inflict mass mire or destroy certain resources
- Inflict injuries on crew, undercrew, or passengers
- Inflict serious structural damage on the ship
- Temporarily disable certain skills or languages
- Burn ship ratings or aspect tracks
- Have the watcher board the ship as an encounter

Dealing with Scrutiny

Whether the effects of Scrutiny are narrative or mechanical, they're something most crews will want to avoid. Here are a few ways they can go about this...

Use Bafflers

Bafflers are a new airship-specific fitting created to avoid drawing Scrutiny, or to clear marks and burns before the Firefly has a chance to. You'll find a list of bafflers on page 116, each of them costing stakes and all of them able to be used in multiple ways.

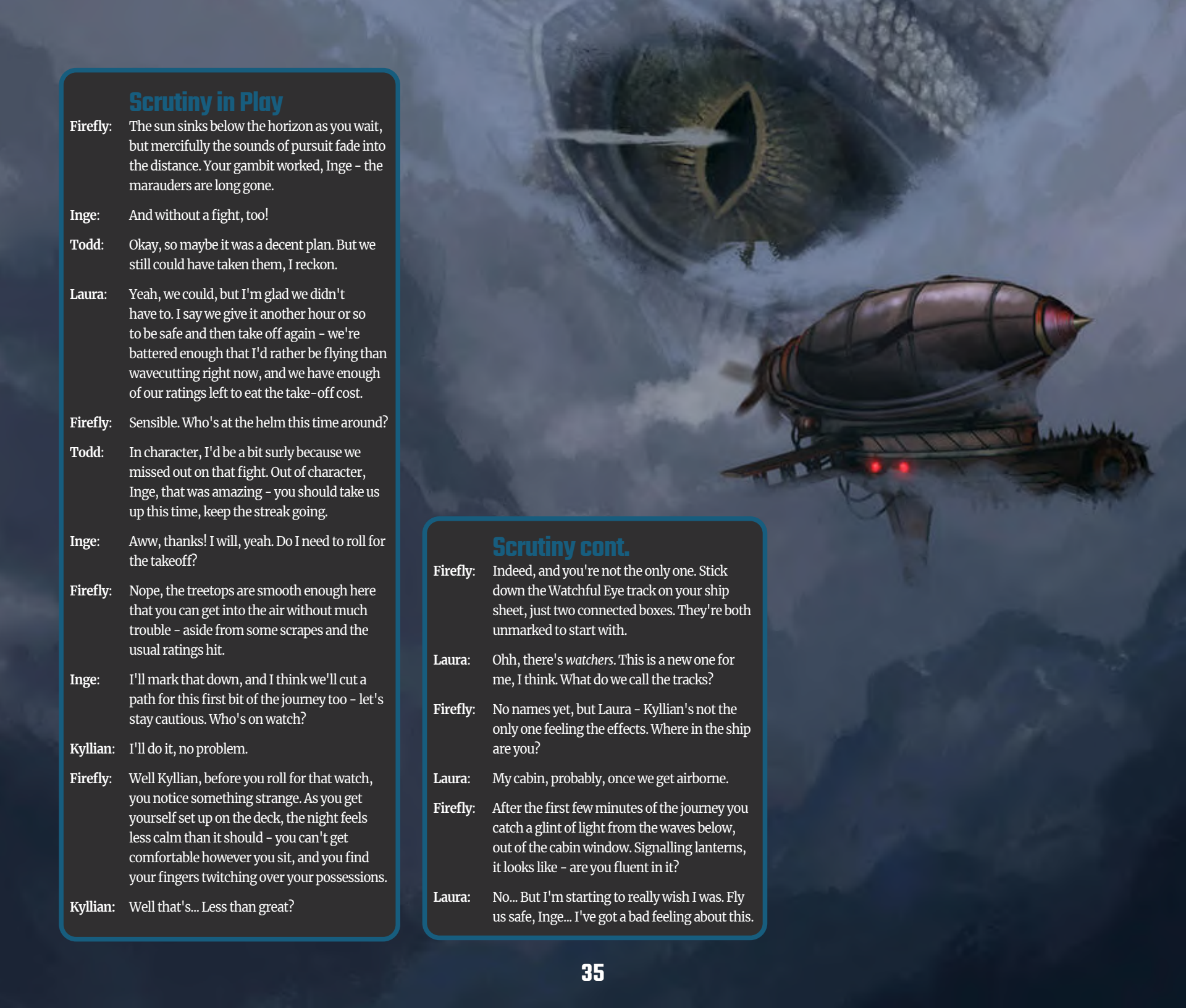
Land

Sometimes the simplest solutions work - ending a journey early, or landing and travelling the waves for a spell, might have watchers lose interest in a ship entirely, clearing marks, reducing burns, or removing the Watchful Eyes track completely.

Confront a Watcher

This is probably not the best idea, but some crews will definitely see watchers as a nail to be hammered. Confronting some watchers directly is impossible - the Hungry Stars, for example, are out of reach for even the best-equipped airship. But others, like the Portlock Pirates, are a tangible threat that can be engaged with, and maybe even beaten back.

The word 'back' here is important, though - **the watchers are impossible to fully triumph over by default** (though attempting to do so might be a great campaign seed). Overcoming them might leave one of the Watchful Eyes empty for a journey, or even a few journeys, but the watchers will always find some way to regain a hold on their territory and come back with a vengeance. *This approach takes an experienced Firefly, as the watchers have no hazard entries to rely on for extra information.*



Scrutiny in Play

Firefly: The sun sinks below the horizon as you wait, but mercifully the sounds of pursuit fade into the distance. Your gambit worked, Inge – the marauders are long gone.

Inge: And without a fight, too!

Todd: Okay, so maybe it was a decent plan. But we still could have taken them, I reckon.

Laura: Yeah, we could, but I'm glad we didn't have to. I say we give it another hour or so to be safe and then take off again – we're battered enough that I'd rather be flying than wavecutting right now, and we have enough of our ratings left to eat the take-off cost.

Firefly: Sensible. Who's at the helm this time around?

Todd: In character, I'd be a bit surly because we missed out on that fight. Out of character, Inge, that was amazing – you should take us up this time, keep the streak going.

Inge: Aww, thanks! I will, yeah. Do I need to roll for the takeoff?

Firefly: Nope, the treetops are smooth enough here that you can get into the air without much trouble – aside from some scrapes and the usual ratings hit.

Inge: I'll mark that down, and I think we'll cut a path for this first bit of the journey too – let's stay cautious. Who's on watch?

Kyllian: I'll do it, no problem.

Firefly: Well Kyllian, before you roll for that watch, you notice something strange. As you get yourself set up on the deck, the night feels less calm than it should – you can't get comfortable however you sit, and you find your fingers twitching over your possessions.

Kyllian: Well that's... Less than great?

Scrutiny cont.

Firefly: Indeed, and you're not the only one. Stick down the Watchful Eye track on your ship sheet, just two connected boxes. They're both unmarked to start with.

Laura: Ohh, there's *watchers*. This is a new one for me, I think. What do we call the tracks?

Firefly: No names yet, but Laura – Kyllian's not the only one feeling the effects. Where in the ship are you?

Laura: My cabin, probably, once we get airborne.

Firefly: After the first few minutes of the journey you catch a glint of light from the waves below, out of the cabin window. Signalling lanterns, it looks like – are you fluent in it?

Laura: No... But I'm starting to really wish I was. Fly us safe, Inge... I've got a bad feeling about this.

Haliko's grapple had been hooked over the rail, rope wrapped twice. It was more of a safety precaution than most would have taken for hull-work, even this high up.

Still, he couldn't help but feel uneasy as he lowered himself over the edge of the ship, into the storm.

The wind pulled at his clothes like a beggar's hands. He had no tongue to taste the air with, but the chitin struts between his inner and outer shell were sensitive enough to act like one - the skies dripped with probable lightning.

Words from above. A warning, or encouragement? Either way, it barely mattered. If he didn't find out what had stopped the engine, they'd all find rest among the waves soon enough.

Watchers From Above

The Firefly has three options when choosing which watchers will have influence on an aerial journey; they can **take a hazard entry** from chapter 5 and use that as the basis for a unique threat, they can **create something from scratch** the perfectly fits the reach or territory that the crew are travelling through, or they can **choose from the example watchers on the following pages**. For your first time with the Scrutiny system, the last approach is probably the best - the watchers presented here can be used or adapted for the majority of sky-based environments. *The structure shown below can also help Fireflies as they create and employ their own watchers during an aerial journey.*

The Hungry Stars (Watcher From Above)

While the stars may appear to be little more than points of light in the night sky, to a trained eye there's something else there. A yearning, maybe... Or a hunger.

Cut Imposed: On rolls taken out under the stars at night.

Unmarked: An empty feeling stirs among the crew as night approaches, a peculiar restlessness that nothing seems to sate.

Marked: It's harder to think in the starlight - crew forget what they were doing a moment ago and struggle with tasks they've performed a thousand times. Hunger is a constant distraction.

Burned: Hunger runs rampant throughout the ship, even among those who have barely glimpsed the sky - illnesses, cramps, and cases of mild to severe poisoning are common. The starlight drains and desiccates.

Scrutiny Actions

- **Clear a mark** to have all edible resources on a single character gain the Withered, Spoiled, or Rotten tag.
- **Clear a mark** to have a companion turn on its owner, dealing damage directly to them and taking damage itself at the same time.
- **Clear a burn** to have one of the ship's rooms entirely collapse from the outside, exposing it to the skies and rendering it almost impossible to use.

Nyr (Watcher From Above)

Not all mortal fears come in leviathan-sized packages, nor do all legends bear the stain of exaggeration. Nyr is exactly as aeronauts describe - a singular creature, a bat not of prodigious size, but of limitless ferocity.

Cut imposed: On rolls taken within the ship, or to listen.

Unmarked: Wildsailors with sensitive ears can pick up the high-pitched sonar pulses of something hunting among the clouds, or so high as to be invisible.

Marked: Flocks of other aerial creatures, from birds to pteranha to insects, flee past the ship for the relative safety of the waves. Headaches and earaches among the crew are common.

Burned: Nyr has identified the ship as a worthy target, screaming challenges or warnings that pierce the mind. If it finds the right moment the creature dives in, using clouds or darkness as cover, to tear chunks off of the vessel with its claws and teeth.

Scrutiny Actions

- **Clear a mark** to deafen or disorient a single crew member, inflicting light Blast damage.
- **Clear a mark** to have living cargo break free.
- **Clear a mark** to have Nyr fly by, tearing at the ship and damaging two ratings at a time.
- **Clear a burn** to have a passenger or member of the undercrew driven to madness or quaking fear.
- **Clear a burn** to have Nyr break into the ship, stalking the corridors and shouldering its way through doors and walls. Nyr's wounds close and scar in moments, inflicting mire, but dealing enough damage to the creature might force it to retreat.

The Heavencogs (Watcher From Above)

A slipped flywheel or misaligned punchcard is most often a source of simple mechanical faults in ordinators and complex machines, especially those without a skein of soul for self-correction. But for the Heavencogs, these slight mistakes compound, forming and fracturing mechanical minds before pushing them toward an oddly logical pseudoreligious fervour - if the heavens are (should certain pre-V texts be believed) the dwelling place of the old world divine, then their absence in the world points to a throne unoccupied.

Cut Imposed: On rolls taken to research, learn, or study, and on repairing or altering mechanisms.

Unmarked: Signalling arrays on board blink at random, as lights flicker and mechanisms stir in unruly ways. The night skies are occasionally lit by bursts of rapid signalling from unseen ships, almost too fast to be able to interpret, but a diligent watcher will pick out questions that seem addressed to the sky itself.

Marked: Blocky, utilitarian airships hang motionless on the horizon, seemingly held aloft by harnessed magnetism. Signalling arrays become almost entirely unreliable. Ironbound and corron wildsailors feel a deep sense of something being utterly wrong.

Burned: Machines aboard the airship begins to glitch, skip, and malfunction, and the ship (if it can) beams out constant welcoming signals despite the crew's best efforts. Those distant ships drift closer - they have all the time in the world.

Scrutiny Actions

- **Clear a mark** to hit the ship with precise cannonfire from a great distance, dealing Volt or Blast damage.
- **Clear a mark** to have a machine or ship's system break or malfunction.
- **Clear a mark** to have signalling equipment mesmerize or confuse a member of the crew.
- **Clear a burn** to have a machine aboard the ship wrench itself free and attack the crew.
- **Clear a burn** to have the floating ships send a boarding party of construct pirates, their goal being to strip the ship of anything that might give lift, fuel, or greater height.

Ghast Aeroviathan (Watcher From Above)

Airborne leviathans tend to have much shorter lifespans than their wave-dwelling counterparts, but are also more likely to cling on in some way past the point of death. A ghast leviathan (or more technically 'aeroviathan', to use the common parlance of the skies) is a massive spirit anchored to its old bones, usually found floating through the upper air like a macabre set of ossiferous clouds. Ironic, perhaps, that the presence of so much death can bring about such pseudolife, but it's not the kind of irony many crews can stop and appreciate.

Cut Imposed: On rolls taken to interact with ghosts or spiritual presences.

Unmarked: There's an increase in spiritual energy, enough that ardent grind their teeth and anchored shudder. The source is impossible to pin down, but it has to be something prodigious in size.

Marked: Ghosts cross paths with the ship like silent whales, suggestions of limb and wing and fin that catch vessels in their wake.

Burned: Spectral eyes fill portholes and doors open to long-dead stomach cavities. The ship creaks like old bones, labours to rise and turn, smells like a sky-burial. The ship isn't just sharing the wild blue with ghosts now; it's suffused with them.

Scrutiny Actions

- **Clear a mark** to deal medium Salt damage to a member of the crew, and immediately erase their memory of the event.
- **Clear a mark** to drop the temperature of the ship's interior to dangerous levels for a short time.
- **Clear a mark** to inflict mire on two separate crew members, who each see the same spectral presence in different places.
- **Clear a mark** to have aetheric currents knock the ship off course, clearing a mark on the Journey track.
- **Clear a burn** to deal heavy Salt damage to a crewmate as their ghost attempts to escape their skin.
- **Clear a burn** to have a portion of the ship lose tangibility, turning translucent and unreliable.
- **Clear a burn** for a ghast aeroviathan to attack the ship, dealing massive Salt and Blunt damage.

Scrutiny Actions in Play

Firefly: Every minute you travel, the feeling's getting worse. You know it's the stars now, so you just need to wait it out until morning, but how are you protecting yourself from the worst of it?

Todd: It's my turn on watch, so I'm staying out on deck but I'm keeping my eyes on the waves - I'd rather see those ships below us than that blasted sky.

Inge: And I always thought the night sky was so pretty... I'm still at the helm, so there's not much I can do unless I want to close my eyes and take us off course.

Firefly: But the helm is enclosed, at least - there's amberglass between you and the starlight.

Kyllian: I'm out on deck and trying to make something, some concoction that might dull our senses. I'm rolling with Veils and Concoct, and using my Milkweed and my Crezzerin'd Ink. Any cut for that?

Firefly: There most definitely will be, but as you get your ingredients out you realise something's gone very wrong. I'm clearing a mark on the watcher from above, the stars, to take a Scrutiny action. Kyllian, all of your edible resource now have the Rotten or Withered tags, I'm afraid.

Kyllian: Oh, god damn! The ink's fine then, but that Milkweed will have withered... And so much else I'm not even going to look at yet. I'm guessing that's a cut for the starlight, and another one for the withered Milkweed?

Firefly: That's right.

Kyllian: Oh... Oh no... That's a 1, a 1, a 2 and a 4. A disaster with a twist. With Scrutiny active...

Firefly: Yeah, that's not good. That eye I just cleared? I'm burning it. Things are about to get *bad*...

Watchers From Below

Just as much as a threat as those from above, watchers from below are attracted to the unexpected points of light and life that ships passing overhead represent. As with the watchers on the previous page, these specific examples are meant to supplement the adaptation of hazards from chapter 5, or the Firefly's own creations made to suit the particulars of a journey.

Coalflower Jin (Watcher From Below)

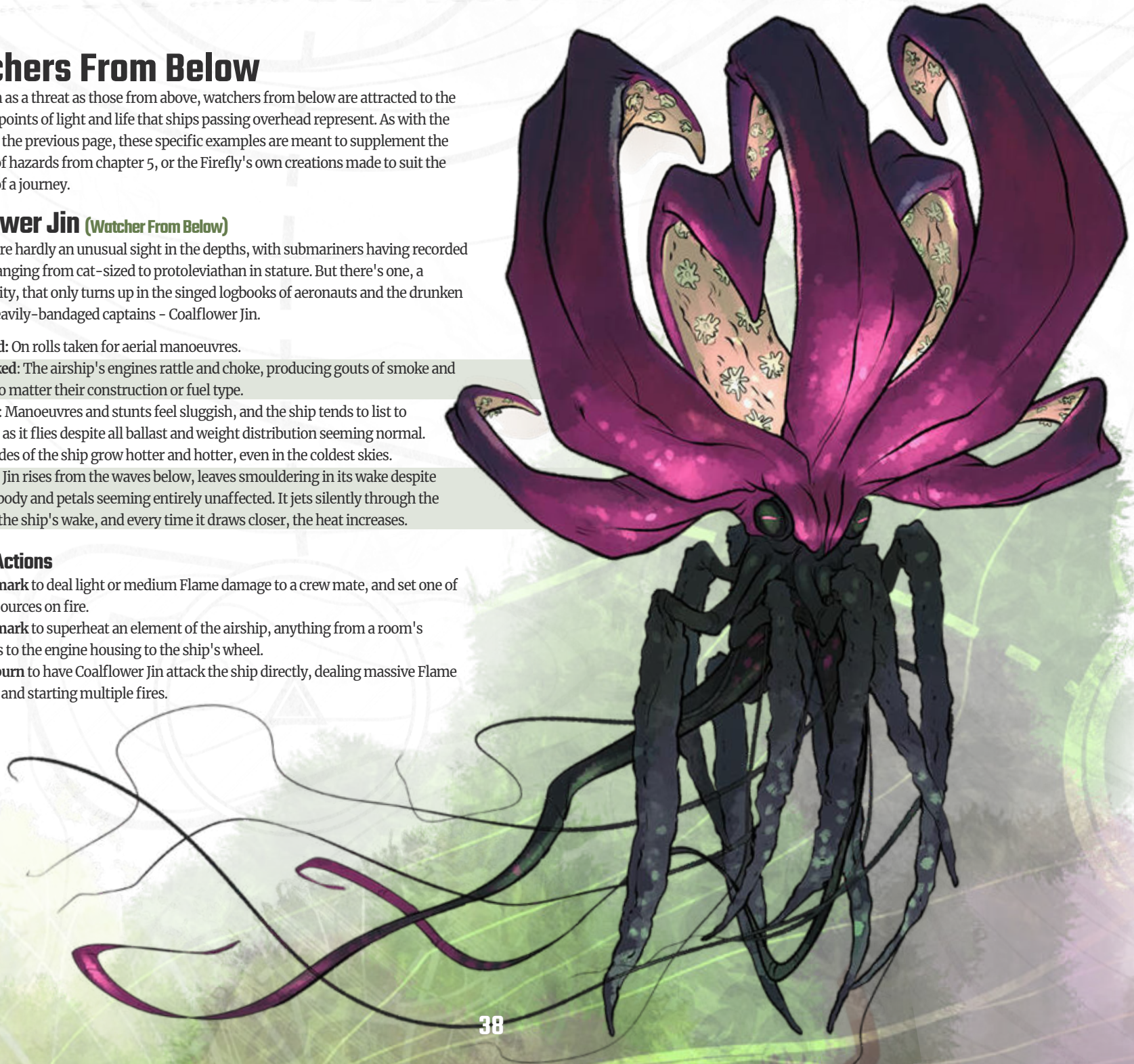
Petalsquid are hardly an unusual sight in the depths, with submariners having recorded variations ranging from cat-sized to protoleviathan in stature. But there's one, a singular entity, that only turns up in the singed logbooks of aeronauts and the drunken tirades of heavily-bandaged captains - Coalflower Jin.

Cut Imposed: On rolls taken for aerial manoeuvres.

- **Unmarked**: The airship's engines rattle and choke, producing gouts of smoke and steam no matter their construction or fuel type.
- **Marked**: Manoeuvres and stunts feel sluggish, and the ship tends to list to one side as it flies despite all ballast and weight distribution seeming normal. The insides of the ship grow hotter and hotter, even in the coldest skies.
- **Burned**: Jin rises from the waves below, leaves smouldering in its wake despite its own body and petals seeming entirely unaffected. It jets silently through the skies in the ship's wake, and every time it draws closer, the heat increases.

Scrutiny Actions

- **Clear a mark** to deal light or medium Flame damage to a crew mate, and set one of their resources on fire.
- **Clear a mark** to superheat an element of the airship, anything from a room's contents to the engine housing to the ship's wheel.
- **Clear a burn** to have Coalflower Jin attack the ship directly, dealing massive Flame damage and starting multiple fires.



The Nautico (Watcher From Below)

A spectral submersible that rises from the depths, anchored crew convinced that the only way they can escape the darkness is to trade places with the living.

Cut Imposed: On rolls made within the airship's rooms and corridors.

- **Unmarked**: The crew might feel the most traditional signs of a haunting - an overwhelming cold, a flickering of lights within the ship, and the feeling that they're being watched without a sense of where from. Nightmares of leafy darkness are common, but they fade upon waking.
- **Marked**: The Nautico surfaces, a wrecked submersible picked out in silver and shadow. The airship might leave it behind as it travels, only to fly over it again a few moments later. The unusual occurrences on the ship increase, with wildsailors unsure if what they're experiencing is the result of hallucination or spectral attack.
- **Burned**: The submersible rises above the waves, sailing through the skies with terrifying silence as it zeroes in on the airship. The aim of the Nautico's lost sailors isn't to kill, but to trade places - they'll abduct if they can, sealing captured characters and undercrew within the spore-choked interior of their submersible.

Scrutiny Actions

- **Clear a mark** to deal Frost or Toxin damage to the inhabitants of a room or corridor.
- **Clear a mark** to have a wildsailor's specimens grow and writhe, gaining the Revenant tag.
- **Clear a mark** to impose two marks of mire on a single character as they glimpse the Nautico's scarred hull.
- **Clear a burn** to have the submersible crash into the airship, damaging ratings or internal structure.
- **Clear a burn** to have the Nautico disgorge spectral marauders that move in clouds of spores - these will attack the crew and contaminate their airship, and will attempt to force crew overboard if possible.

The Swell of Stags (Watcher From Below)

Something between beast and spirit and force of nature, a swarm of antlers grasping for the sunlight denied them by their time within the deeps.

Cut Imposed: On rolls made to hunt living creatures or gather growing plants.

- **Unmarked**: An aroma of blood and velvet hangs over the deck, and the crew find themselves possessed of unexpected energy. The thrash below seems more mobile than usual, wavetop branches crashing against each other hard enough to splinter and snap.
- **Marked**: The swell reveals itself, a formless wave of bone-white antlers tumbling across the treetops. Flying mammals in the area become increasingly hostile (no matter their size or usual temperament).
- **Burned**: The swell escapes the wavetops, spiralling into the sky like a cadaverous funnel and in constant pursuit of the ship and crew. Even if beaten back the swell may leave fragments of itself behind, arachnidesque antler clusters stalking a ship's rooms and waiting for their moment to strike.

Scrutiny Actions

- **Clear a mark** to compel a member of the crew to start a bizarre Project track using specimens and salvage.
- **Clear a mark** to have flying mammals attack the crew on deck, dealing light Blunt damage to all affected.
- **Clear a burn** to have the swell lunge up and crash down over the ship, dealing damage to both ratings and crew at the same time.
- **Clear a burn** to have the swell retreat, but to infest the ship with moving predatory antlers (create a track - finding and destroying one fills a box, they'll continue to strike at random until the track is filled).

Witch-Moles (Watcher From Below)

Star-nosed moles the size of bears, their arconautic organs dedicated to weaponizing gravity itself as a tool for both hunting and play.

Cut Imposed: On rolls made to interact with heavy objects and cargo, and to make precise manoeuvres.

- **Unmarked**: A pod of witch-moles come up from the lower depths to revel in the rain for a time. Observant sailors might notice the droplets around them curving in unusual patterns as they fall, and perhaps the occasional juddering from the airship's rudders or steering column.
- **Marked**: The witch-moles see the passing airship as a piece in a game, pulling and pushing at it with lashes of arconautically altered gravity. This might throw sailors from wall to wall, flip the ship upside down, or cause it to fall upwards for brief periods.
- **Burned**: The game becomes a hunt. The witch-moles retreat under the thrash, but they have the ship's scent - at any point in its journey it might find itself yanked savagely down toward the waves, pulled off course by a shift of natural forces, or having to dodge or deal with an upward-falling deluge of branches, stones, and small animals.

Scrutiny Actions

- **Clear a mark** to add or remove a mark from the Journey track as the witch-moles play whimsically.
- **Clear a mark** to lower the impact of the ship's next manoeuvre, or force a sudden change in altitude.
- **Clear a burn** to drag the ship into an unexpected and calamitously damaging landing (after which the witch-moles scatter back to the depths for the remainder of the journey).

Long-Standing or Long Absent?

Not every journey needs to have an entirely new pair of watchers for the crew to deal with. They might end up being scrutinized by the same entities multiple times throughout a campaign (especially if there's some story significance to the encounters or if they're flying over the same territories repeatedly), or have one of the Watchful Eyes inactive simply because there's no watcher nearby to take an interest (perhaps due to choosing a particular route, or following a certain chart).

CHAPTER 02
THE CRUSHING DEPTHS

He still wasn't used to it yet, even after more than a week within the lowport's amberglass dome. To look out and see nothing but leaves was normality, but to see the same above no matter how you craned your neck...

Well, at least it explained the nightmares. Mostly.

The rest of the crew were handling it better, to their credit. Tattersam's eyelessness turned out to be a boon in the dry, recycled air of the port's nautilized interior, and he'd never seen Faro happier than when the 'daytime' heatlamps had hit full intensity. Even Gleemorgan seemed in her element, moulting out of one shell and into something slimmer, lighter, more appropriate for scuttling and climbing through the port's tangled walkways than her usual armoured appearance.

And he would adapt too, given time. He had to with the sub, and the lack of the sun, and the brackish water...

But damn, did he miss the sky.

Core Concepts

This section highlights three new fundamental concepts you should be aware of when adding submersibles to your game. None of them are complex, but they're all important!

Pressure Is a Clock Run Wild

Dipping below the thrash or tangle for a brief sojourn is unlikely to put too much strain on your ship or crew – wildsailing vessels have been doing it for centuries, after all, and that's without the more recent advances in delving design. But the deeper you get, the more the danger grows, not merely from predation or isolation, but from the very weight of the branches and leaves that surround you. The physical and mental pressures of the lower waves are a ticking clock, a countdown to calamity, that divers and delvers must learn to both accept and mitigate as best they can. Practice makes perfect, and it's better to be cautious than carefree until you've adjusted to the new dangers of the underthrash.

The World Creeps In

Even the most carefully constructed submersible is unlikely to be completely immune to the manifold invasive dangers of the lower waves. While a well-trained crew and a properly prepared vessel can turn many threats away without harm, the longer you spend in the crushing depths, the more danger you're in. Dropping your guard while at depth, or relying on your ship to keep you completely safe, are the fastest ways to be overwhelmed.

The Depths are Dark, and Wild, and Thriving

While it may feel like delving into the unknown will be an inherently isolating experience, this is far from the case. Much like the hidden depths of the ancient salt oceans, there's more life and mystery below the topmost waves than one could ever dream of – and you're hardly the first to seek it out. As well as the beasts and leviathans that call the deeps home, there are other wildsailors, in submersibles of their own, or gathered into lowport communities eager for trade and contact in a hostile ecosystem. There are festivals, sanctuaries, piratical raids... Everything you can find on the surface can be found in the depths, but rarely in forms you'll be familiar with. Exploration, even into such a crushing unknown, will most definitely reap rewards.

New Systems, New Rules

Along with additional setting information, this chapter contains a rundown of several important new systems for crews and Fireflies to take into account when they make for the depths. Among other things, you'll find rules for...

- **Pressure**: A new system that comes into play as soon as one drops below the known branches of the canopy, measuring the toll that the lower waves take on both ship and crew. Pressure is handled by the Firefly during a journey, using a combination of expanded twist rules and a unique kind of track.
- **Snaps**: A new type of twist mechanic that ties into the Pressure system, snaps turn twists on their head – introducing complications and optional maluses in exchange for more time below the waves.
- **Pressure Shells**: Not strictly necessary for those that want to delve deep, but highly recommended for those that want to do so and return. These new options go a long way toward transforming an ordinary ship into a functioning submersible, but they don't come cheap.
- **Scrubbers**: The best way to keep the unique threats of the depths out when hemmed in by them on all sides, these are optional, but extremely sensible choices to go for when it comes to outfitting a vessel that's going to spend time at great depths.

The Song-And-Dance had been in bad shape the last time they saw her, little more than a heap of scrap with a barely-functional engine. Scarred by three solid months on the waves, clogged with spores, amberglass cracked... It had been a ship in name only, by the end. More of an idea of a ship, or the memory of one.

But the Marrow dockyards had a reputation for working wonders, and it was wonders that they'd worked.

The blunted razorscale plating had been removed, with gleaming copper in its place. The sawprow remained, but had been augmented with two additional blades on either side of the prow. The deck (so recently protected from the sky by little more than stretched canvas) enclosed in glass and bone - old-world glass, real glass, without the golden tint of the wilds.

Now they just had to steal it back.

The World Below

Delving into the tangle has been common for wavecutting ships since the earliest days of treetop sail - the branches are thicker and progression is more difficult, true, but it's easier to go unseen down there and it's a great way to shake off any canopy-top pursuers you might be dealing with. But to go deeper than that? Well, the dangers you'll be meeting will far outstrip whatever you might be running from. And with the added deleterious effects on the ship and the crew, there's a reason such actions stand as a last resort.

But what if you ready purposefully for such a journey, steel yourselves for it mentally, make ironclad plans? Well, the first thing you're going to need is access to...

Submersibles

For most wildsea ships, the process of becoming a 'submersible' is a worryingly slapdash one. Seals may get tightened, bulkheads reinforced, but unless you're building a ship from the ground-up to deal with the hazards of the undercanopy, you're going to be in a constant fight with the crushing weight of the outside world at all times. To combat this, most wildsea ships adapted for deeper delves rely on a few important modifications - a Pressure Shell and a Scrubber.

Pressure Shells act as an enclosure for those sections of a ship that would usually be open to the waves, most commonly the deck (though some ships may extend this shell around a viewing area or underthrash platform as well). These shells come in many forms, but the function is almost always the same - a physical barrier between the crew out on deck and the thick mass of leaves, branches, and vines that would otherwise threaten to snag or snatch them up at any moment.

Scrubbers help keep the atmosphere of the ship's interior at a pleasant enough level to allow normal operation, filtering out invasive insect species and lung-clogging spores (or doing their best to, anyway). Like shells there are a variety of commonly used scrubbers, but almost all of them work on the same principle - that being able to breathe deep is a useful ability, even if you're only using that air to scream.

Chapter 4 contains a section on how to add Pressure Shells and Scrubbers to an existing ship.

Working with Enclosed Decks

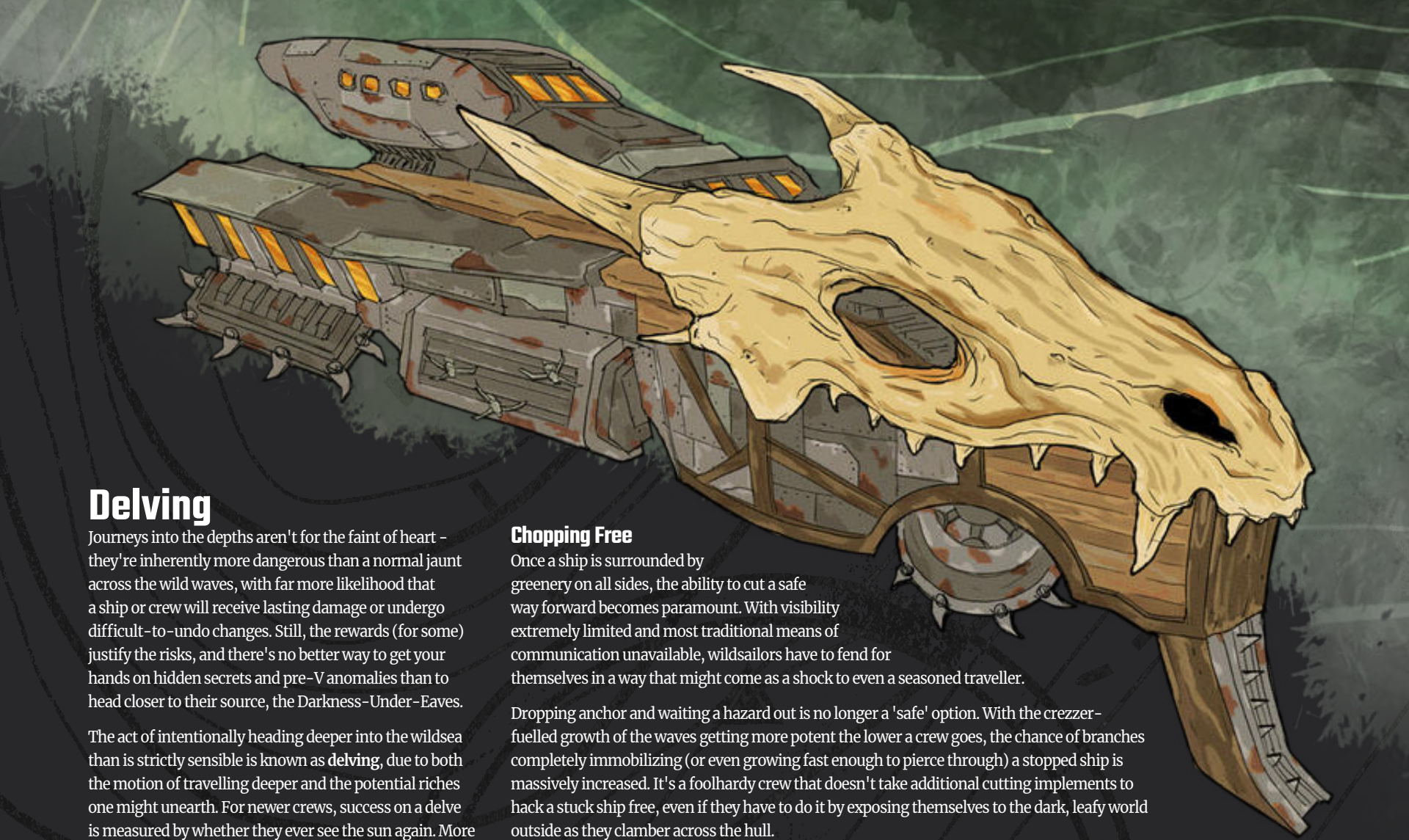
Having a shell in place comes with both benefits and drawbacks to deckside operation. On the one hand, it means that a ship can twist and buck as much as the thicker, hardier branches of the undercanopy force it to without the crew being thrown overboard; but on the other, it means that the act of leaving the safety of the ship and plunging into the waves isn't quite as easy as jumping over the side. *Assume all shells have hatches of some sort, enough to let an enterprising hacker or dredger out into the warm darkness of the branches if that's where they need to go.*

Underthrash Anchors

Anchoring a ship is usually a lot easier when you're down in the thicker areas of the wilds - simply wedge it into a particularly sturdy branch and cut the power to the engine. But, for the more discerning crews, underthrash anchors are an extremely useful tool, thick chains with grappling hooks on the end that are fired off when a ship needs to stay stationary. *Assume a submersible has several underthrash anchors fitted along with the shell, enough to hold it in place even if the branches around it begin to shift.*

Lights in Darkness

Without the sun or moon to guide you, the depths can be an overwhelmingly lightless environment. Carrying some sort of light source with you, even if it's just as a specimen or a piece of salvage, is heavily advised, as is equipping your ship with some sort of internal and deckside lighting system. *Though lights are just as useful to predators hunting you as they are to the crew...*



Delving

Journeys into the depths aren't for the faint of heart - they're inherently more dangerous than a normal jaunt across the wild waves, with far more likelihood that a ship or crew will receive lasting damage or undergo difficult-to-undo changes. Still, the rewards (for some) justify the risks, and there's no better way to get your hands on hidden secrets and pre-V anomalies than to head closer to their source, the Darkness-Under-Eaves.

The act of intentionally heading deeper into the wildsea than is strictly sensible is known as **delving**, due to both the motion of travelling deeper and the potential riches one might unearth. For newer crews, success on a delve is measured by whether they ever see the sun again. More experienced crews, who have their ship outfitted (or even built from the ground up) as a submersible, will likely have more concrete goals they want to achieve.

If delving isn't dangerous enough for you, **diving** is also an option - leaving the ship at anchor (or winching yourself down into the darkness below) and exploring the old-fashioned way, through climbing, wavewalking, and the clever use of safety lines and grappling hooks.

Very few wildsailors go diving just for the fun of it. Those that do should probably not be trusted.

Chopping Free

Once a ship is surrounded by greenery on all sides, the ability to cut a safe way forward becomes paramount. With visibility extremely limited and most traditional means of communication unavailable, wildsailors have to fend for themselves in a way that might come as a shock to even a seasoned traveller.

Dropping anchor and waiting a hazard out is no longer a 'safe' option. With the crezzer-fuelled growth of the waves getting more potent the lower a crew goes, the chance of branches completely immobilizing (or even growing fast enough to pierce through) a stopped ship is massively increased. It's a foolhardy crew that doesn't take additional cutting implements to hack a stuck ship free, even if they have to do it by exposing themselves to the dark, leafy world outside as they clamber across the hull.

Fording

There's also the prevalence, especially in deeper regions, of spaces that a ship can't easily cross. These might be due to a fallen ironroot, a lack of thickly leaved branches, or a larger predator keeping their territory clear enough to move through at speed, but these gaps will either need to be avoided (a hard task for even a seasoned navigator, given the lack of visibility) or be able to be quickly forded. This might involve grappling hooks, mechanical limbs, or even the ability to float a ship across a small gap with repurposed aeronautic equipment. Many a ship has been lost to the depths by travelling too boldly through a lightless region and finding their prow meeting not branch, but empty air.

It's a bad way to go, but at least it's a quick one.

Life In The Depths

The shape life takes in the sink and drown, in both animal and civilized forms, is both jarring and oddly recognizable to the average surface-dwelling sailor. A lot of the old truths hold - avoiding flame, the constant growth, the inherent dangers of the leafy sea - but some usual tropes are altered, or supplanted. This section dives into the differences wildsailors will encounter when they dip below the waves, focusing on the biggest changes.

Predator & Prey

The lower you delve, the more dangerous the waves become. This isn't merely true of the environment, but of the creatures dwelling within it - a combination of increased crezzerin potency and massive pressure to find a survivalist niche has filled the lower levels of the wilds with bizarre and unexpected threats.

Wildsailors at depth are far more likely to encounter tussles over territory, mating displays, and feeding frenzies from an area's natural inhabitants; the mechanics of bestial life most often hidden from the surface by layers of bloom and leaf.

Uneasy Cycles

The lower levels are also typified by vast and sudden shifts in the pattern of predator and prey, as animal and insect migrations bring depth-adapted species from different regions into conflict. A horde of glowing locusts might be easy prey for the frog-tongued felines of one reach, but flourish as dominant predators among the blind plant hunters that make up the food chain of another. Understanding, charting, and predicting such changes can be just as useful as cartography for ships questing through the crushing depths.

Leviathan Commonality

An extra layer of complication to the prey and predation of the deeper beasts is the relative frequency of leviathan encounters. On the thrash and tangle leviathans are the exception to the rule, some so rare as to be rendered almost mythical. Why? Because they spend most of their lives in the darkness beneath, the very layers wildsailors now plumb with increased regularity. Many smaller hazards will flee a leviathan as it moves, just as they would on the surface. More dangerous are creatures that regard even the most titanic beasts as little more than a distraction or, in the worst cases, an ally or source of opportunity.

'Solid' Ground

Civilization in the lower depths tends to cluster, just as on the surface, around areas of more stable ground. The biggest challenges below are finding such places (with the limited visibility of the depths making long-distance vision almost impossible) and then making the first moves toward habitation (as increased submersible and sailor activity under pressure is a fantastic way to draw predators, opportunistic pirates, and curious leviathans).

Mountainsides and Mineshafts

The 'safest' place to build a colony within the sink or drown, a mountain reduced to an island at the surface might have square miles of inhabitable interior if dwellers are willing to brave the dark. Of course, such spaces will already serve as dens, warrens, or haunted gravesites... But such challenges are exactly what a wildsailing crew should be hired to face.

Branch-Building

While relying on the forks of ironroot branches for solid ground and safety might seem absurd at first, it works out far better than most would assume. The structural strength of the average ironroot ensures these places survive rootquakes, and their branching nature makes it less likely they'll bifurcate again due to the influences of crezzerin (which is usually pumped further from the main trunk).

Ever-Spits

These are most often sections of old-world masonry or leviathan bone overgrown to such an extent that they've been incorporated into an ironroot's branch spread. It's not that an ever-spit will *never* fall; they are still spits, after all. Temporary existence is part of their very nature. Rather, ever-spits measure their lifespans in decades and centuries instead of days and years, and are often colonized and built upon in ways that ensure their inhabitants will survive a sudden change of location (even if it's from layer to layer amid a colossal quake).

Living Space

Establishing a safe place to live in the crushing depths takes a lot more planning and a lot more effort than it does on the rustling waves of the surface. Finding a stable place to build is only the first step and, while an important one, is far from the hardest.

The ports of the depths rely on **balance** more than anything else; ecological, mercantile, and structural. These factors being taken into account throughout a port's construction can mean the difference between a thriving underthrash colony and an abandoned husk. For builders, this might come in the form of...

- Checking that a port has enough resources nearby to quickly repair damage and shore up defences.
- Ensuring an adequate supply of space for parasite farming or swarm hunting, or choosing a location that's readily accessible and obvious to trading subs.
- Forging an understanding, or even a symbiotic relationship, with nearby hazards. This might take the shape of defences reliable enough that creatures learn not to test them repeatedly, of the population control of nearby bestial threats, or of time spent training the greater dangers to act as mounts or cautious allies.
- Making bargains with submersible pirate factions for safety, or even for the delivery and trade of certain goods and commodities. Even marauders may take on honest work occasionally if the rewards are solid.
- Developing methods of dealing with the common dangers of the depths in a way that doesn't regularly deplete resources or population.
- Creating accessways and shafts that lead up to the surface, or sometimes even all the way to other underthrash settlements, for the easy exchange of good and services (reducing reliance on trips through the dark unknown whenever an unexpected problem rears its head).
- Camouflaging a port so that it's a less obvious target, to both raiders and predators, bringing it into closer harmony with the surrounding environment.

Lowports

The gleaming points of light and civilized life amidst the thronging darkness, lowports are the outcome of submariners and community-minded explorers overcoming the manifold barriers to depths habitation. Specifically created to act as long-lasting safe havens for submersibles and their crews, a fully developed lowport might be...

- A leviathan's skull with the eye-sockets supported by forking branches, the interior hosting a town of swinging rope bridges and hanging markets.
- An ancient drilling rig or manufactory become an ever-spit, solid and supported enough to be hollowed out and used as a protective shell for the hive-like community of the industrious folks inside.
- A collection of submersibles too old and creaking to make their way back up to the surface, lashed together around an ironroot's trunk as a band of interconnected habitats and modules.
- A repurposed mountainside mine from the days of pre-V industry, passages cut deeper and wider with their rooftops supported by broadwood beams and salvaged struts.
- A crawling mechanical structure that's almost a submersible in its own right, albeit built to an impractical scale, making its way through the lower layers in a constant search for safety and resources.

Lowport Services

The majority of lowports offer the same kinds of services that any normal port would, though their drydock facilities are more likely to cater specifically to submersibles than they are canopy-level vessels or airships. Most will also have a greater emphasis on methods of relaxation and healing, given the increased levels of both mental and physical threat that the pressure of the depths brings. Another important distinction is the existence of leviathan codices, usually found in a lowport's junction or cartoika and free to browse for any sailor. *You'll find out more about leviathan codices on page 50.*

Nautilization

The safest lowports are nautilized, completely cut off from the world of the waves outside through clever construction techniques most often seen in submersible building. Nautilized lowports have their own air supplies or filter systems, usually have some sort of internal renewable food supply (such as a parasite-plant hothouse or beast-breeding farm), and use multiple chambers and decontamination layers for their submersible port entrances.

Though it comes at the cost of a rigidly scheduled life and far greater effort spent on construction, there's no safer place below the waves than a fully nautilized lowport.

Enclaves

The complete opposite of a nautilized port, an enclave is a settlement built with very few (if any) defences against the depths, made for inhabitants to live alongside and among the sink and drown's hazards. Though some accept ships for trade, many enclaves are fiercely independent, suspicious of 'weakling' strangers that need to surround themselves with layers of wood and rubber to survive.

Drill-Cities

An unusual type of settlement that sits somewhere between the ideals of a nautilized lowport and an enclave, a drill-city is constructed by boring through the tough bark on the exterior of an ironroot and then pushing deeper, hollowing out huge spaces within the still-living tree and shaping those caverns into markets, lightless mushroom-farms, and residential areas. Rarely employed by any group that isn't prepared to deal with huge amounts of crezzerin in sap or resin form, drill-cities do at least have the distinction of a whole load of natural armour to them - as long as their pressure doors and port gates are locked, anything less than a leviathan is going to struggle to gain entrance.

"It's not so bad, kid, once you get used to it."

Reyvi had never seen an ektus quite like the old barman in front of him, fibrous skin pale and spines almost translucent, black-petalled blossoms shivering in the breeze from the junction's slow-turning ceiling fans.

"Sure, you have to make some changes, and those come harder for some than others. Me, I took to it like a razorgull to a roach - never looked back."

A drink came sliding toward him in a chipped amber mug. He didn't remember ordering one, but over his first few months under the waves he'd learned not to ignore hospitality.

He took a swig, and almost managed to avoid making a face.

"Mmm... It's good stuff."

The barman shook his head, slowly.

"No, kid. No, it's not."

Exploring the Deeper Layers

While the Darkness-Under-Eaves is still a region that's off limits to all but the most driven diver (and even for them, one that's rarely kind enough to allow for return journeys), the submeric renaissance has opened up the sink and the drown for exploration in entirely new ways. And while the spread of lowports has made some areas of the depths safer, they've also driven submersible crews to explore further uncharted regions in search of new secrets. This section takes a more detailed approach to these two layers of the sea, shining a light on what delving crews might encounter in each. *You'll find additional guidance and details on pages 214 and 215 of the core book.*

Rampant Growth & Deeper Darkness

Even for crews used to the dense foliage of the tangle, the sink is a shock - drivers and navigators are rarely able to see more than a stone's throw in front of the ship without hackers or way-clearing equipment working to open up the path ahead. Leaves and branches crowd the windows, vines tangle and writhe around pressure shells, and the lack of sunlight throws everything into shades of deeper darkness. Crews might encounter...

- A meeting of branches with leaves so thick they clog a ship's bite rather than give way to it.
- Phosphorescent insects fleeing an approaching predator, plunging a vessel into darkness just as danger approaches.
- Cutting constructs moving just ahead of a larger vessel, rattlehands watching sonar screens while hackers jostle for the controls.

Branch-Buried Souls

Delving is a dangerous profession at the best of times, and unless a crew has luck on their side and a whole heap of training, any journey to the depths might be their last. Submersible wrecks are more common than lowports, each one telling a story of the actions that led to their crew's demise. Crews might encounter...

- A sawprow tangled with vampiric vines, the fragments of an amberglass pressure shell still scattered in the foliage around it.
- A well-stocked ship that's completely intact, iron shell covering the deck completely and bite still chewing at the air, the portholes revealing immense fungal growth in the corridors beyond.
- A chunk of wreckage wedged into a fork between branches, with a tooth the size of a cargo crane still embedded firmly in it.

Empty Spaces

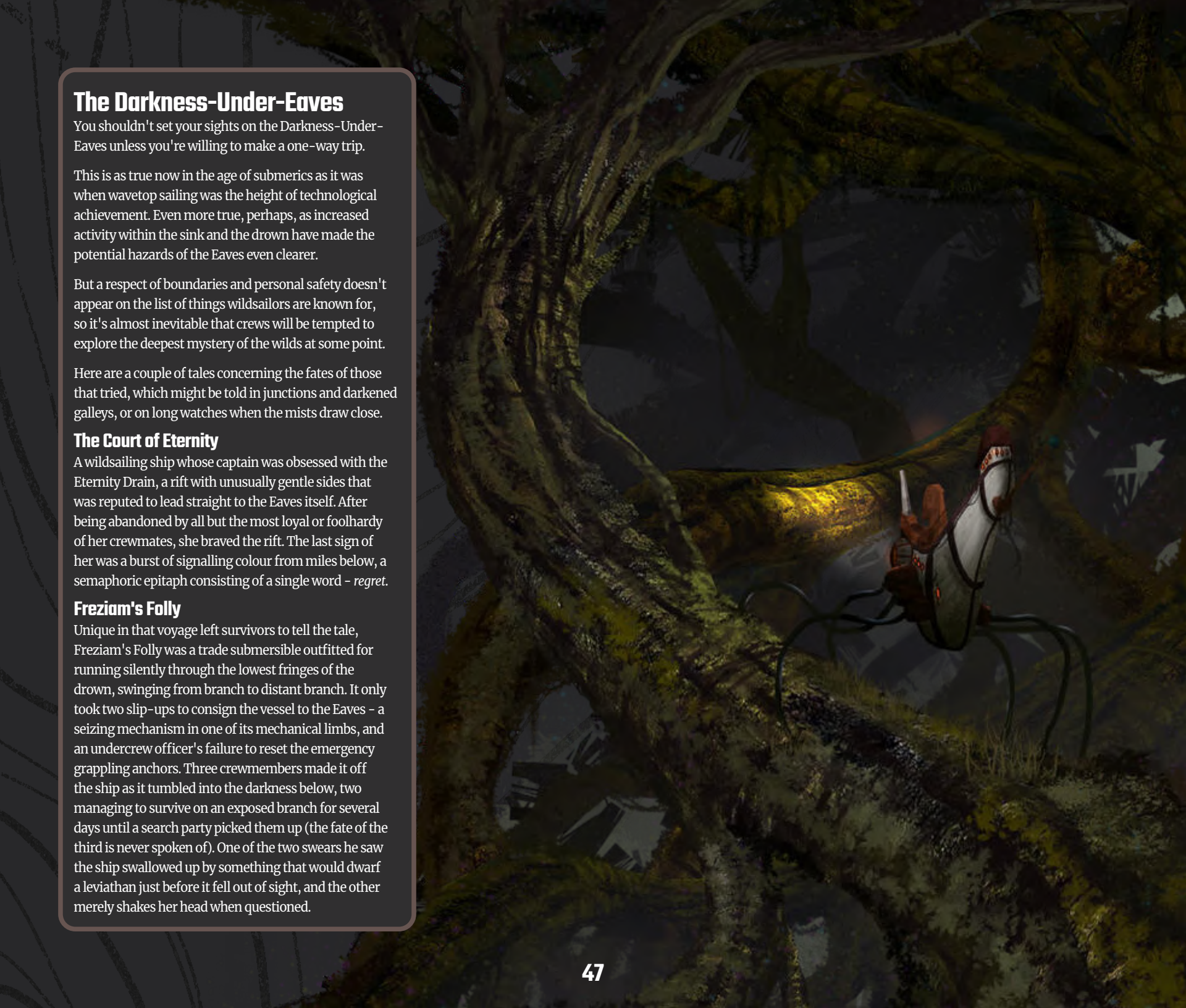
Rare in the sink but all too common in the drown, where the branches become less and less frequent and the ironroot trunks disappear into the mists below. These spaces are what gave the drown its name, the awful knowledge that if you fall far enough, you'll run out of things to clutch on to, and the last long moments of your life will be a fall through total darkness with no hope of rescue. Crews might encounter...

- An unexpected drop just past a thick bank of greenery, sending their ship into freefall before it crashes back into supportive wood once more.
- A rope bridge standing alone between two distant branches, pathetically exposed yet still intact.
- A submersible hanging from the end of a set of chains, emergency anchors that saved the vessel from an otherwise fatal fall into the dark.

The Tables, Turning

Up on the surface, a leviathan is the unquestionable apex of every network of predator and prey - unchallenged by any save for the bravest wildsailing crews. But in the depths, while this dynamic often holds true, it's not always the case. Crews might encounter...

- A leviathan fleeing a pack of spinwolves, scores of them, hundreds maybe, that might be no more than mosquitoes to the great beast but that move with murderous and single-minded intent.
- A small lowport built around a protoleviathan skeleton, the bones extracted from a tangle of predatory blooms.
- An uneasy and most definitely temporary alliance between a crew of delving hunters and a mob of makadrills, made to drive the Spirit of Industry back from their territory (if such a thing is even possible).



The Darkness-Under-Eaves

You shouldn't set your sights on the Darkness-Under-Eaves unless you're willing to make a one-way trip.

This is as true now in the age of submerics as it was when wavetop sailing was the height of technological achievement. Even more true, perhaps, as increased activity within the sink and the drown have made the potential hazards of the Eaves even clearer.

But a respect of boundaries and personal safety doesn't appear on the list of things wildsailors are known for, so it's almost inevitable that crews will be tempted to explore the deepest mystery of the wilds at some point.

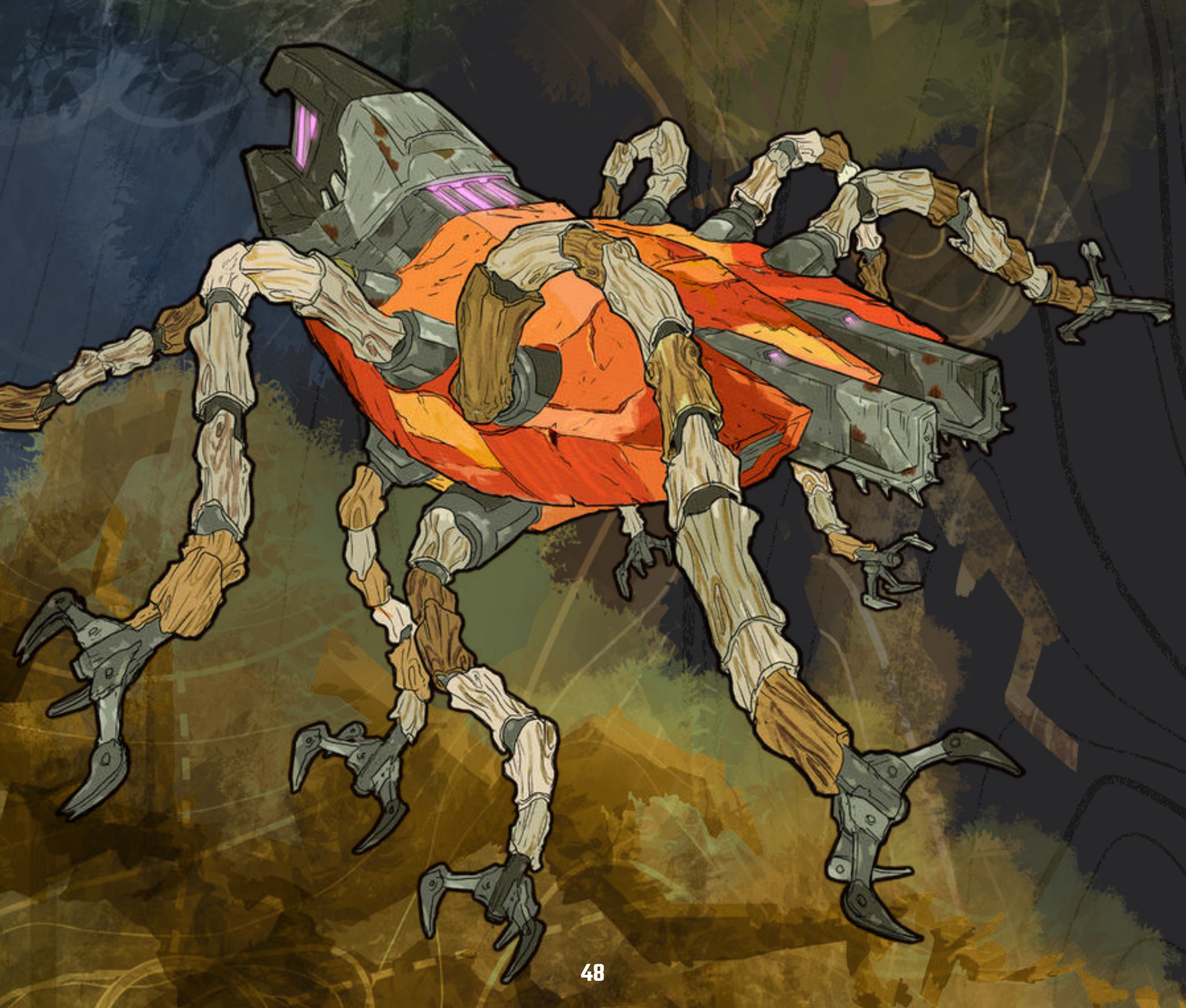
Here are a couple of tales concerning the fates of those that tried, which might be told in junctions and darkened galleys, or on long watches when the mists draw close.

The Court of Eternity

A wildsailing ship whose captain was obsessed with the Eternity Drain, a rift with unusually gentle sides that was reputed to lead straight to the Eaves itself. After being abandoned by all but the most loyal or foolhardy of her crewmates, she braved the rift. The last sign of her was a burst of signalling colour from miles below, a semaphoric epitaph consisting of a single word - *regret*.

Freziam's Folly

Unique in that voyage left survivors to tell the tale, Freziam's Folly was a trade submersible outfitted for running silently through the lowest fringes of the drown, swinging from branch to distant branch. It only took two slip-ups to consign the vessel to the Eaves - a seizing mechanism in one of its mechanical limbs, and an undercrew officer's failure to reset the emergency grappling anchors. Three crewmembers made it off the ship as it tumbled into the darkness below, two managing to survive on an exposed branch for several days until a search party picked them up (the fate of the third is never spoken of). One of the two swears he saw the ship swallowed up by something that would dwarf a leviathan just before it fell out of sight, and the other merely shakes her head when questioned.



The Triumphs of Delving

Though the lower layers of the wilds are a foreboding place for most, their exploration (and the advances of technology that have made it possible) has led to several significant moments in the history of the rustling waves. The next few pages are hardly an exhaustive list, rather an opportunity to zero in on some of the fascinating discoveries that the urge to delve has uncovered.

An Eavesward Snapograph

Nobody can agree on who took it. Nobody can agree on what it shows.

It was a diver, some swear, on his deepest expedition - hanging in the middle of a rift, so low that the only light came from phosphorescent spores swirling in the air around him. Until there, far below, the gleam of something from a world older than the wilds. A snap, and a whirr, and he caught it on film.

Others claim that the shot was taken by a lost ship's snapographic array, and that the faded print was interpreted by junkyard ordinators from the last burst of static sent by the craft's radio. A code in hisses and pops, rendered now in light and shadow. The eye of the creature that would eat the ship.

And others refuse to believe that it's real. It's a sunspot, they say, or a elaborate hoax from some fame-hungry horizoneer. The light in that picture, it could be anything - a ship's half-shuttered lamp, a goliath firefly peeking through the foliage. You can't capture the Darkness, they go on to say, on film. The very nature of it would rebel.

But still, despite the disagreements, the original Eavesward Snapograph sits framed and protected within a monument vault, a coterie of theorists studying it day upon lengthy day.

Ethical Soil Trading

While parasite farming treats the bark and branches of the ironroots as a grow-bed, for true heirloom produce all but the most creative of gardeners needs some sort of soil base for their plants.

Given the height of the canopy and the inaccessibility of the Under-Eaves, soil has always been a highly prized commodity for trading. This led to sources of soil, such as post-rootquake spits and established gardens, being identified as prime targets for theft, sabotage, and piracy by the wildsea's less salubrious sorts. Soil trading ships have to be heavily guarded, and many ridgeback colonies still have row after row of defences made not to withstand the beasts of the waves, but the predations of earth-hungry pirates.

While this behaviour still goes on, submersible exploration (particularly into the drown) has led to a massive reduction. Ships travelling that deep are far more likely to find chunks of ancient earth trapped among the wild darkness than those cutting the easier layers above. Many traders make an excellent living for themselves by fitting their subs with scoops and expanded cargo holds made specifically to hold as much soil as possible, dredging it up a mile beneath the canopy and dragging it all the way back to the surface to be traded away to thankful farmers and excited herbalists.

And with soil comes controlled growth, and with controlled growth medicines, and succulent fruit that can be eaten fresh from the vine. And worms, of course.

Amberglass

Wildsailors have been using amber from the ironroots since the earliest days of Verdancy. The crezzer-tinge is filtered out during the resin's accelerated ambering process, leaving chunks of material that, when carefully chipped or sawn and polished, could serve as a renewable source of glass.

But it was never quite perfect - faults, cracks, and cryptomaterials embedded within it during the setting process tended to leave these chunks as useful for letting in light, but only murkily translucent. Carving amber thinly enough would give you a view screen, but one that might be shattered beyond repair by something as common as a bird strike or a badly-placed branch.

Something needed to be done, and through the concerted efforts of rattlehands, alchemists, and amberclads of various hues and histories, something was.

Amberglass is still amber, and it can still be broken, or murky - but it can also be reformed through the introduction of a chemical compound that occurs extremely rarely in the wild, allowing for broken chunks to be melted down and reshaped with the minimum of hassle. This also allows larger faults to be dealt with and foreign objects to be removed, up to and including entire amberclad dreamers (a far safer method of freeing those resinously captured in the Verdancy's first hours than had been used in the past). And when reformed around salvaged wire mesh or structural bars, amberglass allows an almost perfect (if golden-tinted) transparency at a fraction of the danger, suitable even for entire sections of hull. And for portholes, view screens, and depth gauges, you're unlikely to find anything better out there on the waves.

... Though you're welcome to try.

"There's a lot more here than we expected, if I'm honest."

The codex was a mess, but an undeniably helpful one. Each leviathan detailed had its own ink-stamped impression, an image built more from the impressions of others than the artist's own eyes. These were likely going to be little help to them, given their situation, but the notes accompanying them...

Well, they were what a Writling would refer to as a goldmine.

Habits, cycles of predation, points on a creature's body where a weakness might be found, or made. Descriptions of what specimens had been cut, scraped, or stolen from them in combat, or found in their trails of destruction. Even speculation on what their motives might be, and brief explanations of what zealous cults had formed due to their actions.

"Yes," the old hunter grinned as his fingers traced the outline of a claw, "but it's exactly what we need."

The Leviathan Codices

A spit-dweller might go their entire lives without seeing a leviathan in the flesh, though they'll no doubt hear a thousand tales of them. A wildsailor won't be so lucky, usually having to contend with the effects of leviathan activity every now and then as they travel (and occasionally the attention or hunger of one of the creatures themselves).

But for a submersible crew, leviathans are a fact of everyday delving. Each vessel is a tiny point of life moving among a deep, dark ocean, the very ocean that such creatures treat as their home turf and territory.

It was nothing organised, the creation of the first codex. Just the sketches and notes of a mire-soaked horizoneer, traded away at a lowport's junction for a dram of good whisky. But that junction's collection of such notes grew, and the barkeep saw the value of them; a horde of information about the area's most dangerous and unpredictable threats would be both a benefit to sailors and a draw for visiting customers.

Within a few years, almost every junction in the tangle and below had started building up their own codex, sometimes bound in leather, sometimes pasted up next to bounty boards, sometimes used to decorate entire interior walls. Though no codex is complete, and new pages and entries are added almost every day as previously unseen leviathans appear and old established foes change their habits, the existence of such a wealth of information has saved countless lives and cargoes from ending up in the Eaves.

The Pre-Pre-V

When sailors refer to the pre-verdant world, they're usually talking of the age that was ended by the Verdancy itself - one dimly remembered by the oldest of the ektus, and dreamed of by amberclad imprisoned and preserved in those days of growth. While nobody can seem to agree on exactly what it was like, there's at least a general understanding that it was a far less dangerous time to live in, a time of ground level living and ancient salt seas.

And this holds true, for the most part. But every now and then a particularly powerful rootquake will tear a new section of the Eaves apart, and over the next few months or years artefacts will make their way up through the layers of the sea. Pieces of old temple, the ruins of machinery, ships made for branchless oceans... And things more curious, less easy to understand.

One delver might whisper to their fellows of a claw glimpsed between the branches, miles long and grey with age, of a size that would make even the largest of leviathans seem miniscule. Another might insist that the shapes they scrawl were picked out in hanging light, and that they must be a language or script of some kind despite bearing no resemblance to anything else ever uncovered. And yet another will swear that the unusual necklace they wear was looted from the engine of an impossible vessel, too perfect to have existed in the first place, let alone to have survived the Verdancy.

These fragments of the Pre-Pre-V resist understanding, existing as more a curse for the curious than a puzzle to be solved.

The Weird Gets Weirder

An unexpected byproduct of delving has been an increase in... well, weirdness.

With every artefact dredged up from the crushing depths, every leviathan woken and brought to the surface by a fleeing submersible crew, every isolated lowport culture connected to the rest of the world, the oddities of the upper waves increase in turn.

While this is hardly a triumph for the common wildsea inhabitant, it can be a boon for wildsailors of various stripes. More valuable goods for traders, more enticing creatures for hunters, and more baffling ingredients for chars abound.

The Emergence of the Itzenko

Perhaps the greatest achievement of the age of submeric travel, making contact with an entirely new bloodline to add to the seven most commonly found across the waves. The mantid-like itzenko's fast-evolving culture was assumed inscrutable at first, though luckily for all involved clearer heads prevailed - though their development can admittedly be difficult to keep up with for the casual traveller, they are no more alien than an ardent, tzelicrae, or ektus.

While the itzenko's spread across the waves is an impressive one, they are still more often than not found crewing submersibles than wave-top ships, their bodies adapted for effective depths-based survival. Traditional itzenko place a lot of value on change and personal improvement, mirroring achievements in skill or actions of merit with a controlled physical change brought about by moulting. The process removes their outer shell, leaving it behind to wither as a new one forms in its place. The growth is crezzer-fuelled, as far as anyone can tell, a remarkable adaptation to the depths' most dangerous chemical that turns it into more of a tool than a drawback. That said, the mantid-folk are just as mutable as any other wildsea bloodline, with different enclaves and colonies showing different physical traits and levels of chemical resistance.

Itzenko Names & Language

Formalized language was an itzenko trait picked up after contact with submeric crews, rather than something developed in isolation. Most itzenko treat **Raka Spit**, the language of hunters, as the closes thing they have to a native tongue.

This practice extends to their names as well, at least in part. Itzenko procreation leaves no space for the concept of family or lineage, leading to the average name ending up as a combination of more traditional Raka-style first name and then a descriptive component, usually based on an achievement or a personal goal, in place of any familial descriptor. Haverik of Iron Arms, Jai Open-Wing, and Yannia on Early Sun would all be perfectly acceptable names for a travelling itzenko.

Underthrash Rules

The remaining pages of this chapter cover mechanics related to submersible travel and the crushing depths, building on the narrative elements already introduced. In brief, these pages cover...

- **Crezzer Corruption**: An optional rule for the worsening effects of crezzerin at increasing depth.
- **Hostile Environments**: Focusing on the particular threats that travel through the depths tends to bring a crew face to face with.
- **Journeys In The Darkness**: With advice on moving and fighting at depth, and containing an altered watch roll table for crews travelling the tangle, sink, and drown.
- **Pressure**: A bundle of new rules and conventions to represent the worsening of physical and psychological pressure experienced by ships and crews as they delve deeper. This covers the Pressure Gauge (a special kind of track that's important for monitoring the effects of the depths), and how the Pressure Level increases.
- **Pressure Effects**: A set of random tables that the Firefly can use to inflict weird maladies on a crew under pressure.
- **Snaps**: A special type of twist that's inherently detrimental, but that takes away the sting of pressure temporarily.

Further Relevant Reading...

As well as this chapter's mechanical section, you'll want to have a look over the rules for...

- **Specific Underthrash Threats**: Coming into their own as pressure increases, each threat has its own entry in the Hazards section. You'll find **bad air** on page 139, **drifting spores** on page 155, **insect incursions** on page 152, and **wandering spirits** on page 169.
- **Pressure Shells**: Made for safe operation at depths, found in the ship creation chapter on page 124.
- **Scrubbers**: An optional extra that keeps the interior of a sub clean and breathable, found on page 126.

Crezzer Corruption Optional Rule

The deeper you delve into the wilds, the more dangerous crezzerin becomes. At first it might seem ludicrous - crezzerin is *already* a potent threat, even at the level of the thrash. How could it possibly get worse as you go deeper?

There are two main factors at play here when considering crezzerin at increased depths; **ubiquity** and **potency**.

Ubiquity

Though not much of a problem in the thrash, when you move into the sink and the drown the sheer amount of crezzerin threatens to overwhelm the unprepared. It's not just in the leaves at that level but seeping from bark, bursting from fruits, flowing in rivulets down the trunks or drifting mist-like through the air.

- **Narratively**, this decreases the amount of safe ground to be found at extreme depths, and makes travel outside of the ship a riskier prospect for those without extra protections.
- **Mechanically**, it might increase cut on actions made to traverse the deeps while trying to avoid contamination, cut which might be ignored by choosing to brave the searing substance as a sailor travels knowing that damage (or worse) will be a consequence.

Potency

It's not just that there's more of the wildsea's most dangerous substance below the tangle, it's that the concentration increases in tandem. Potent crezzerin affects body and mind more swiftly, causes more pain and, perhaps most importantly, overwhelms traditional methods of keeping a wildsailor safe.

- **Narratively**, the effects of crezzerin on both crew and hazards are more pronounced - more pain, more mutation, and more unusual mental effects.
- **Mechanically**, this means that in the sink and drown, all characters drop their resistance to crezzerin down by one step. A character normally **immune** to crezzerin would be **resistant**, a character usually **resistant** would have **no resistance** against it, and a character without any inherent **resistance** at all would gain a **weakness**.

Environmental Crezzerin

When thinking of using crezzerin as an environmental hazard, keep the folowing guidelines in mind...

Relevant Ratings: Saws tear through crezzer-rich leaves, increasing immediate danger but perhaps moving the ship to a safer location. Seals and Armour protect a crew while they're inside their ship, but can be twisted out of their usual forms in the process.

Potential Causes: Everything natural at depth has a measure of crezzerin running through it, turning it into a constant, increasing danger. Beasts, plants, mists, water... Sometimes even the air itself.

Potential Effects (Ship): Ratings, rooms, ship components... With the levels of crezzer contamination in the sink and below, the ship itself is in danger of mutation (not to mention Acid and Toxin damage on a massive scale). This might start a track counting toward a serious fault with the ship, or have an almost immediate effect.

Potential Effects (Crew): Crezzer contamination, often thought of as a slow process, is hideously accelerated at depth. This mostly comes in the form of injuries, mutations that change an individual's form or thinking, and massive Toxin or Acid damage in the form of burning tracks rather than marking them. Areas of thick crezzerin are also likely to cause mire through hallucinations and what should be impossible physiological changes.

Crezzer Corruption in Play

Firefly: In the silence after that distant roar, you become aware of something that you hadn't been able to detect before. Inge, your hearing is the best out of everyone's, I think?

Inge: Yeah, I think we've established that. Do I hear it first, or am I the only one that hears whatever this is?

Firefly: Everyone hears it, but you can determine the source; a faint sizzling sound, like fat rolling around a hot pan.

Laura: That doesn't sound like the kind of thing we'd want to be hearing. Inge?

Inge: Yeah, definitely not. Where's it coming from?

Firefly: The hull.

Inge: Definitely *definitely* not! I grab Kyllian and rush to the cabin-side, opening one of the portholes to get a better look. What's happening out there?

Firefly: Well, you took the right person with you! Kyllian, you've had more experience with crezzerin than anyone else on the crew, and what you can see out there is definitely a crezzer effect - the wooden parts of the hull are buckling slightly, blackening slowly.

Kyllian: But the hull-wood is treated, right? Sealed?

Firefly: Against normal crezzerin, yes. But down here the potency has increased, greatly. The longer you stay, and the deeper you go, the worse it's going to get. I'm setting a track...

Hostile Environments

Travelling through the tangle and below is inherently more dangerous than scudding over the rustling wavetops (which is pretty dangerous in the first place). Even with the best preparations, it's almost impossible for a submersible vessel to protect itself from every potential environmental hazard it might encounter in the depths, and that's saying nothing of the creatures that call such a place their home.

Though shipyards and repair bays are ingenious when it comes to coaxing the best out of the salvage they have available, most ships are still essentially a mass of second-hand parts and wavetop oddities. This ramshackle approach to construction works just fine at the canopy-level, but leaves a lot to be desired when the branches close in and the air gets thick - diving down below the thrash comes with a host of problems and impositions that the average ship may not be able to cope with.

This page covers those problems, with a set of narrative and mechanical effects linked to the four most prevalent environmental dangers of the underthrash; **bad air**, **drifting spores**, **insect incusions**, and **wandering spirits**. All of these are things that wildsailors will have dealt with in some way during their time on the surface, but these threats are magnified by the pressure, isolation, and unique ecosystems of the depths.

Bad Air

Wildsea vessels are known for many things, but high-quality craftsmanship is rarely one of them. The concept of a ship's interior being 'airtight' is laughable given the materials engineers have to work with, and the constant structural stress and jostling that travel through a world of leaf and branch entails.

Relevant Ratings: Seals to protect a ship's interior, Saws if a ship has a propulsion system that might be able to move the air around it.

Potential Sources: Rising heat, overwhelming damp, leviathan breath or musk, gasses from Under-Eaves vents or predatory plants, the stench of a creature's lair.

Potential Effects (Ship): Corrosive mists might eat away at Armour or Seals. Heat (or, more rarely, cold) might render some bites and engines less effective than usual, impacting a ship's Speed or Saws ratings.

Potential Effects (Crew): Cut on actions due to lack of oxygen, or the choking caused by nausea. Reduced impact on actions taken to see through a heat haze, or watering eyes. Damage to traits from inhaled toxins, or to gear from corrosive agents. Injuries, in the form of illnesses, taking hold or worsening.

Drifting Spores

Without the wind to spread them, sporeclouds down in the depths grows thicker and thicker until disturbed by a rootquake or passing leviathan, coating surfaces and seeding porous materials with fast-growing fungi (or ushering in far less pleasant effects).

Relevant Ratings: Seals to keep spores on the outside, where they belong, Armour to give spores something to settle on that isn't the crew or any of the more 'delicate' parts of a vessel.

Potential Sources: Fungal leviathans, wrecked mycosanctums, spore vents belching drifts at irregular intervals, living sporeclouds (hunting a ship in much the same way a living storm would), rotten or damaged ironroot trees, decaying carcasses, the haskavo network.

Potential Effects (Ship): Spores clogging the engine or bite might make Forging Ahead impossible, reduce Speed, or interfere with a ship's ability to use the Tilt rating. Growing fungus can eat through Armour and Seals given enough time.

Potential Effects (Crew): Needing to use tasks to remove fungal infections from gear, traits, or companions. Coughing and wheezing as the air fills, or a loss of sight or hearing due to the clouds. Mire from hallucinations.

Insect Incursions

Drawn by life, light, and noise, swarms in the darkness below are a crawling, stinging, skittering hazard that's almost impossible to keep at bay once they've got your scent. Add to that the possibility of developing hive-minds and pseudotzeli hazards that can move with tactical precision... Delving wildsailors would do well to keep a watch on their surroundings at all times.

Relevant Ratings: Seals to prevent a swarm from gaining access, Tilt or Speed to shake off and outrun an incoming mass, Stealth to try to avoid drawing attention.

Potential Sources: Disturbed hives, insect migrations, hunting hive-minds, corpse-feasts.

Potential Effects (Ship): Insect swarms can cause serious structural damage to a ship by gumming up engines, and destroy (or carry off) resources and cargo. Cut on Saws and Speed while moving through a swarm is common.

Potential Effects (Crew): Damage and illnesses caused by bites and stings, mire from being covered in crawling forms, cut on moving through areas choked with insects.

Wandering Spirits

The closer one draws to the Eaves, the stronger the spiritual presences of the wilds becomes. It might come in the form of visions, of hauntings, even of drifting spectres granted a form of dark-bonded physicality.

Relevant Ratings: Speed, to escape a drifting soul. Stealth, to avoid unsettling a graveling grove.

Potential Causes: Proximity to the Under-Eaves, lost sailors, beast souls clinging to reality, wrecks.

Potential Effects (Ship): Spirits rarely affect a ship, preferring to focus on the crew within, but some might meddle with engines or haunt certain rooms.

Potential Effects (Crew): In areas of high spiritual activity, disturbed sleep and prophetic dreams are common, making rest almost impossible and distracting from long-term tasks in the form of cut or extra boxes to fill on tracks. More vengeful spirits might hound an individual, dealing damage or inflicting mire.

Using Hostile Environments

While all of these environmental threats can be used as a hazard or encounter in their own right, they often work best as the backdrop for another event. Fighting a pack of pinwolves may be routine for more experienced wildsailors, for example, but doing so in a cloud of distracting spirits that skew the crew's perceptions will likely add a dash of the unexpected to proceedings.

Below is a quick run-down on how different types of scene might be affected by the crew, or their submersible, moving through a hostile environment dominated by one of these threats.

Scenes

Scenes of exploration and communication might be given a strict timer track due to the surrounding environmental dangers, with NPCs unwilling to chat until the threats have passed. Scenes revolving around combat becomes far more dangerous, or complex, when the crew have to split their attention between two threats acting independently.

Montages

Montage actions taken in spaces without resistance or immunity to these hostile forces might require rolls where none would usually apply, or have reduced impact as the threat interferes with a wildsailor's chosen task. Tasks taken on a ship's deck without the pressure shell engaged will often be most affected.

Journeys

All of the environmental hazards mentioned to the left can slow a ship's progress, but many of them can also play havoc with navigation. Crews may find themselves off course, or even completely lost in the darkness.

You'll find a few additional rules on making journeys through the sink and drown over the page.

Up above, the underthrash platform had been something of a novelty, a curiosity - a glimpse down below the ship, past the leaves of the wavetops. He would sit there and think about what might lie miles below them, what bits of history they sailed over without ever knowing. What secrets the waves would never tell.

But here, down in the sink, the platform felt different.

The pressure shell stretched back to cover it, so it wasn't any less protected than the rest of the ship. It was solid iron and mesh-reinforced amber, and though the occasional claw or throned vine scratched over the wide windows from time to time, it wasn't those intrusions that set him on edge.

It was the secrets he'd thought of. The ruins, the loss. It had all seemed so exciting from the surface.

But down here, they just seemed like a promise.

Journeys In The Darkness

Though the actual mechanics of travel below the waves are the same, the experience is a very different one - particularly when it comes to going on watch. Unless the area you're in has a decent source of light (which might be luminescent fungus, glowing mists, dancing fireflies, or the lights from the ship you're riding), you'll be peering into a shadowed confusion of branches, likely watching for movement among a sea of movement. It's a stressful activity, even for experienced divers, and you might end up marking mire more often if you spend your time peering into the deeps.

Submersible Watch Rolls & Threat

The only mechanical difference in terms of watch rolls comes in the form of the **Firefly's threat roll**, the roll to determine the potential danger of whatever the watch roll reveals. Unless the crew are heading through a region patrolled by lowport defences or under the protection of a particular friendly entity (in which case the Firefly rolls a single d6 as normal), **the basic threat roll for submersibles sits at 2d6**, with the Firefly **cutting** the highest result.

Owning a relevant chart still helps when travelling the depths - **in these circumstances, the Firefly rolls an additional d6 before applying any cut, then takes the highest result left over**.

Watch Roll Results for the Depths

Tension

There's no peace under pressure, but there are quieter moments. You might experience...

- **6** A fragment of something approaching safety, enough for a **montage**. Useful for healing and repairing.
- A **meeting** below the pressure shell, insulated from the wilds pressing in around the ship.
- A chance to gain a whisper in the darkness by telling a **low tale**, of caution or safety or silence.
- The undercrew start up a chorus, a **tree-shanty** designed to keep worries at bay.
- An issue with the **undercrew**, one that might force the crew to step in and smooth things over.
- Sometimes it's just best to hole up in your cabin and take a moment to **calm down**. Usually heals mire.

Order

The deeps may be hostile, but they're hardly devoid of civilization. You might experience...

- **5** A **submersible** crashing through the foliage near enough for you to hail.
- The sighting of a **lowport**, anything from a small enclosed settlement to an underthrash city.
- **4** A **survivor**, a diver separated from their ship or a hapless wildsailor caught up in the branches after a fall.
- A **wreck** or **ruin**, either of another deeps-sailing ship or of something sunk from the surface.
- A **cache** or lifebuoy, a little oasis of potential comfort and resources among the crush.
- A twist of **conspiracy**, of a truth hidden to canopy-top dwellers but revealed in the dark.

Nature

It's all nature down there, but some demands more attention than the rest. You might experience...

- An unexpected change of **Pressure**, which might lift the spirits or cruelly dash them.
- **3** A notable landmark, a **feature** of the crushing depths that helps with pathfinding and mapmaking.
- **2** A **wonder** of the depths, or a friendly light in the darkness. Heals mire.
- **1** A **horror** that squats in the mind, or a wreck or ruin that's been completely overrun. Marks mire.
- A piece of solid ground, sunken from the surface or raised from below - **landfall**. Good for resources.
- The **true wilds** of the deep resent the intrusion of the surface - a plant, creature, or force of nature.

Moving at Depth

Getting around the ship isn't any harder when you're submerged than it is on the surface, as long as you have a functioning Pressure Shell. But once that shell breaks, even crossing the deck will hold a sense of danger for any crewmembers not fully equipped with a pressure suit of some kind - the swarms, the darkness, the sense of being small and prey-like in a world of larger predators... It gets to you after a while, and that while is a pretty short one.

Moving around the *outside* of a vessel that's in the tangle or below, such as to carry out repairs or unclog a vent, is a double-edged sword. As long as you have enough resistance to crezzerin, the profusion of close branches gives additional opportunities to climb and scramble from place to place. But most repairs need light, and light tends to draw attention in a mostly lightless world.

Fighting at Depth

With enough practice, the environment below the waves can be as beneficial for a wildsailor to use as a combat arena as it is for the creatures that naturally dwell there (for the most part, anyway). Especially for combatants that rely on movement and stealth, the combination of darkness, numerous footholds, and multiple places to hide or fall back to when confronted can be a boon. Guerilla tactics and hit-and-run strikes are most effective, but sailors would do well to remember that sometimes the best way to handle sentient dangers below the waves is to retreat belowdecks, bar the doors, and wait for them to pass.

She'd heard the phrase before. 'A spiderweb of cracks'. It had always sounded quite beautiful to her, the few times it had crossed her mind - the idea of amber transforming in a fraction of a second, a portion of time too small to count, from one thing to another. Something smooth and clear and beautiful becoming jagged, a broken cloud of the past.

Beautiful.

In theory.

But as the Nostromika had ripped its way through the last snarls of the tangle and into the utter, bramble-choked darkness of the Sink, those thoughts seemed a cruel joke. The creak of the ship's structure all around her, that was a thought far more present, far more pressing. The throttled cough of the engine, the churning of the saws...

And the porthole beside her turning, in that smallest instant, to a spiderweb of cracks over a forgotten sunset.

And still, they descended.

Pressure

A natural byproduct of exploring down where the branches block the sun, Pressure is both a **physical** and **psychological** problem for wildsailors (and their ships) as they explore the lower layers of the world.

The effects of Pressure differ from crew to crew, from delve to delve, sometimes even from sailor to sailor. Pressure might come in the form of...

- A feeling that something is deeply wrong, an inability to shake the sharp awareness of the depth and danger hemming a ship in on all sides.
- The creaking and groaning of a ship's timbers, as seals pop and portholes crack.
- A change in the wilds, as spores cloud the air and branches begin to twist unnaturally.
- The attention of denizens best left alone, as they catch the scent of a ship crossing into their territory.

The amount of Pressure a ship and crew are under is tracked by the Firefly, with the specifics of track length and how many boxes are marked unknown to the other players.

The Pressure Gauge

The Pressure Gauge is a track-based system for measuring the increase in pressure that a ship and crew are facing in the depths. It consists of a **Pressure Level** (represented by a larger circle with a number inside) on the left, and a **Pressure Track** (represented by a chain of linked circles) on the right.

Pressure Level

The Pressure Level begins at zero, and can climb as high as three. The higher the Pressure Level, the more tangible the effects of travelling at depth become - perhaps on the ship, perhaps on the crew, perhaps on both at the same time. Here's an example...

The crew of the Jailbird are delving deeper into the undercanopy, on the trail of a rare herb that grows only in pitch darkness. The Pressure they're under increases as they travel - it begins at level zero, with the crew adapting as best they can to the sensation of delving deeper. At level one, they realise that something from the outside has made its way into their ship, but they can't seem to track it down. By Pressure Level two, their slinger's mind begins to unravel, and they have to stop to calm and contain her as she struggles to escape the 'contaminated' vessel. At Pressure Level three, they realize their folly - members of their undercrew are disappearing, ship systems are failing, and the slinger's malaise is spreading through the rest of the crew like wildfire.

Pressure Track

The length of a Pressure track is decided partly by the situation, partly by the Firefly, but mostly by the vessel's construction. The track's boxes can be filled (or cleared) by a variety of actions (see the next page for more details on setting and filling tracks). When a track fills, the Pressure Level increases. Here's another example...

The Jailbird's crew are at Pressure Level one, searching for the unknown intruder on their ship. Their rattlehand decides to head out onto the hull to try to establish how it gained entry, and him leaving the ship marks a box on the track. Another box is marked when their slinger finds a member of the undercrew cowering in a corner, babbling about a sinuous shape brushing past him in the corridor. Their failure to track the creature down, and the delay it caused to their journey, marks another box... And they still need to go deeper.

Building Pressure

Pressure begins to ramp up the moment a crew heads **below the embrace of the tangle**, an insidious danger that brings with it the threat of damage, mire, and unexpected darkness. When the pressure level increases through a pressure track being fully marked, clear the entire track. When the Pressure Level increases for any other reason, the marks on the track stay as they are.

The Pressure track is marked when...

- The ship (or crew) engage with a deeps leviathan, or come across a horror of the deeper waves
- The crew drops anchor or rests for the night
- The crew leave their ship (even if voluntarily)
- The ship's Seals or Armour ratings take damage

The Pressure Level increases when...

- The ship (or crew) move down to a lower layer of the wilds (from tangle to sink, from sink to drown, or from drown to Darkness-Under-Eaves)
- The boxes of the Pressure track are fully marked

Decreasing Pressure

Marking the Pressure track is a natural part of exploring the undercanopy, but wildsailors should be careful when the Pressure Level begins to increase. The results can be difficult to deal with, and while marks *can* be erased, it's far harder to reduce your Pressure Level without heading back up to the surface.

A mark on the Pressure track is cleared when...

- The ship (or crew) come across a wonder of the deeper waves, or survives a direct leviathan encounter with their ship unscathed
- A player chooses to replace a twist with a snap (once per scene); *snap rules are found on page 64*
- The crew find safe haven beneath the waves
- A damaged Seals or Armour rating is repaired

The Pressure Level decreases when...

- The ship docks at a lowport (once per journey); docking at a nautilized lowport reduces the Pressure Level **and** clears all marks on the Pressure track
- The ship (or crew) move to a higher layer of the wilds

Setting Pressure Tracks

Setting the track for the ship's Pressure Gauge is a job for the Firefly, and is part art, part science (like so much else in the Wildsea).

The Science

Certain ship upgrades (most usually the Pressure Shell and Scrubber) will add a number of boxes to the Pressure track - the more protected your ship is from the predations of the depths, the more marks you can make before the level increases and the crew start feeling the negative effects of their exploration.

The Art

The art of it is in the Firefly's hands, the decision of how many boxes the Pressure track should start with before being modified by the ship. This depends on the region of the sea the crew are in, how mentally prepared they are to delve deep beneath the wavetops (as Pressure is both a physical and psychological phenomenon) and whether the Firefly thinks the crew should be in for an easy ride or not.

Here's a rough guide to the artier side of Pressure track setting...

- **Start with one box as standard.**
- If the crew are well prepared, add one or two boxes on top of that.
- If you want to give them time to explore down there, give them another box or two (this is particularly appropriate for a crew's first jaunt down into the depths, if you want a more 'gentle' opening to the delving mechanics).

There's also the opportunity to increase or decrease the amount of boxes on the Pressure track during a delve into the depths. Though the track is a hidden one, informing the players that it's not only being marked, but is getting *shorter* as they descend, can really hammer home the seriousness of the crushing deep.

Unlike aspect tracks, Pressure tracks can easily extend beyond eight boxes.

Pressure in Play

Firefly: The amberglass of the lowport is quickly obscured by leaves as you pull away, the hiss of the pressure seals moving back into place the last sound you hear from inside.

Todd: So long, Redcliff. You were a mean little port, but you were good to us.

Laura: ... They definitely weren't, you know.

Todd: Alright, it was a hellhole. I was just trying to stay positive!

Firefly: And that's not the worst attitude to take, because whatever troubles you faced in there are nothing compared to what's waiting for you out here. I'm setting the Pressure Gauge, with the level starting at zero. How long is this track going to be - what does the ship give you?

Kyllian: Plus one from the Thumb-Wax Coating, and plus four from the Upper Jaw we have as our Pressure Shell.

Firefly: And you get a single box as standard too, so you know you've got at least six boxes per level of the Pressure track... For now. It might get shorter, remember, as you move into more hostile areas.

Inge: Which, with Todd at the controls, we're definitely going to do.

Todd: And on that note, it's time to head deeper! That doesn't mark it, right?

Firefly: Not at the moment, no. For now you can treat this just like a regular journey. Well, almost - I *will* start marking it when your more defensive ratings get damaged, or when you run into trouble. Or horrors. Or...

Laura: I think we get the picture.

Todd: And it's not going to stop us! Let's dive!

Pressure Effects

As Pressure mounts, things *will* get worse.

Dramatically.

The depths are off-limits to most sensible wildsailors for a reason. Increasing Pressure comes with a myriad of negative effects, some of them on the mind, some on the body, some on the vessel that carries you down there.

When a crew's Pressure Level increases, the Firefly must make a choice. They can either...

- **Create** an ongoing effect, either mechanical or narrative, for the crew to suffer.
- Roll on the tables to the right to see what Pressure effect the crew will have to deal with.
- Increase the impact of an existing ongoing Pressure effect.
- Combine two or more of the above options into a single event (especially useful when the pressure level is getting high and harsher effects are needed).

Fireflies are encouraged to make use of all of these options at different times, as the narrative calls for them. If the Pressure Level ramps up when the crew are aboard their ship on a journey, for example, rolling on the random tables to the right will likely give you something you can use. If the crew are in a particular location, perhaps mid-scene, when the Pressure Level increases, a narrative approach that's tailor-made or tied into their situation will likely work better. And if the players are already dealing with a Pressure effect, ramping that up and making it more impactful will give a feeling of logical progression, of things getting more and more tense.

Random Pressure Effects

For a random pressure effect, roll 2d6. The first d6 result sets the category the effect covers, the second details the narrative or mechanical fallout that the crew have to deal with until they reduce their Pressure Level. When the crew reduce their Pressure Level while suffering multiple pressure effects, it's up to the Firefly and the conversation to determine which effect is removed.

Unique Pressure Effects

The firefly can also create unique Pressure effects on the fly, either to more accurately suit the particular situation or environment that the crew are passing through or to highlight or further an ongoing element of the narrative. Here's an example of what this might look like, both as the effect is initially encountered and as it develops with worsening pressure.

A crew of dredgers have managed to secure an ancient sarcophagus of unfamiliar design from a branch-held ruin within the drown. They're heading back up to the sink to a lowport they have the rough location of, but the ascent is a hard one. As their Pressure track is marked, several members of the undercrew become nervous around the find, refusing to enter the cargo hold even for essential duties. When the Pressure Level increases, a thump is heard from below, then another. Upon investigating, they find the sarcophagus lying open on the cargo bay floor, the interior empty. Was it empty beforehand? Nobody knows, but from this point on it becomes harder and harder for the ship to ascend - the controls jam and the engines stutter, and the scrubbers that the ship relies on for clean air are choked with honey and viscera. As Pressure increases again, a swarm of crawling bees finds the ship, covering windows and making navigation almost impossible. More bees make their way in through the broken scrubber vents, eating the fireflies from their lanterns and plunging the ship's interior into darkness. And in the cargo hold something forms, a quickly-assembled set of honeycombs and wax with the sarcophagus at its centre, more shrine than hive. All food onboard begins to taste sickly sweet, and the crew can't even rest thanks to the buzzing of bees within the cabin walls.

1 - Structural Problems

1. **A Rattle In The Engine**
   Something's stuck in there, or has been shaken loose. It's not incessant, but that somehow makes it worse.
2. **Fractured Portholes**
   The ship's amberglass has cracked under pressure. The darkness outside seems a little closer now.
3. **Creak and Splinter**
   The ship is complaining, right down to its bones. It can't take much more of this before it snaps.
4. **Deeper Midnight**
   Whatever you use to light the ship's interior flickers weakly, or is snuffed out entirely.
5. **Scrubber Failure**
   Clean air becomes a distant memory as the ship's Scrubber fails and refuses to start up again.
6. **Shell Malfunction**
   The mechanisms that lever the Pressure Shell across the deck are gummed up or malfunctioning. Whether the shell still works or not is up for debate.

2 - The Wild Depths

1. **Iron and Wood**
   The branches around you are hardier than usual, refusing to bend or break without significant effort.
2. **Something in the Air**
   ... that makes your lungs miss the surface, that makes your skin crawl, that makes you heave and splutter.
3. **Too Much Growth**
   Spores, leaves, flowers - something here refuses to stop growing, virulent and impulsively shaped.
4. **Leviathan's Leavings**
   Perhaps a huge hollow, an abandoned burrow, or a half-eaten meal - there was something here, recently.
5. **Brittle and Broken**
   Every branch the ship passes over threatens to break, making progress a stop-start nightmare.
6. **Rot Sets In**
   The waves outside are pallid, sickly, bark sloughing off to reveal mold and insect infestations within the branches. Hope this blight doesn't affect the ship...

3 - Life In Darkness

1. **Swarm Migration**
   A mass of hungry insects, perhaps, or a ravenous horde or tiny critters. Small, but in such numbers...
2. **New Beasts, New Prey**
   A creature of the depths has your scent, and is tracking you to learn more before it strikes.
3. **Marauders!**
   You're not the only ones with your own submersible – a marauder group have caught sight of you or otherwise found your trail, and are eager for plunder.
4. **Back For Round Two**
   A hazard that you previously disposed of survived, or perhaps was given a new form by crezzerin contamination or spiritual possession. Whatever the method of reanimation, it certainly remembers you.
5. **From The Corner of Your Eye**
   Something unspeakable has wormed its way into your ship, hoping for a free ride to a place with warmth and light and sustenance.
6. **Behemoth Signal**
   A leviathan, in the flesh, close by.

4 - Forms Under Pressure

1. **Malfunction**
   A trusted piece of gear fails, catastrophically.
2. **Crezzerburst**
   A radical biological change caused by slow-seeping crezzer corruption. Likely temporary, but disturbing.
3. **Violent Dissolution**
   Whispers buckle and snap within your mind, escaping unbidden or tearing themselves to shreds.
4. **The Hand That Feeds**
   A companion is driven wild by the depths, needing to be trained once again or coaxed back into the fold.
5. **Unnecessary Adaptation**
   An element of your biology is attempting to adapt to the crushing, lightless, branch-choked depths.
6. **If Memory Serves**
   What were your drives? What kept you going, up above? Whatever they were, they've changed now.

5 - Heavy on the Mind

1. **Dark Crawls In**
   With every flicker of the ship's lights, your confidence is slowly eroded. With every glance at a porthole leading to the endless night outside, you wonder if you'll ever see the surface again.
2. **Strange Bedfellows**
   How much do you know about your companions, really? What better time to delve into their personal business than here under the waves, with nowhere to run to escape those awkward conversations.
3. **Thoughts Unbidden**
   Why did you make that choice? Who would you have been, or who would you have been with, if you hadn't? Past decisions are impossible to move past, for a time.
4. **All the Same**
   Surely you've passed this place before – is the undercanopy nothing more than a maze, a lightless labyrinth you should never even have tried to traverse?
5. **Something Out of Place**
   A discovery that leads to more questions than answers, something from the surface far above down here in the depths. Who brought it, and why, and should you be taking it back to them or leaving it to stand as a monument to their effort?
6. **We Weren't the First**
   A sign that other wildsailors came to this place. Those trailblazers are long gone. You probably know where they ended up.

6 - ... And Then There Were None

1. **New Face In The Crowd**
   A headcount reveals one member of the undercrew more than there should be, but they all remember each other... Is the count wrong, or the world?
2. **Slapdash**
   The pressure gets too much for one of the undercrew, who makes a critical mistake at their post.
3. **Gone Quiet**
   Silence haunts the decks like an unwelcome guest, the undercrew reluctant to talk even to each other.
4. **Gone Feral**
   Undercrew packs are going wild, snapping at their fellows and abandoning their posts.
5. **Just... Gone**
   A gang member from the undercrew has disappeared, each of their colleagues swearing they saw them just a moment ago.
6. **Over Every Shoulder**
   An undercrew member swears they saw something outside, something watching them, tracking them.

Mechanical Pressure Options

While the narrative effects of Pressure are up to each individual group to work out for themselves, if the worsening Pressure on ship and crew needs a mechanical representation you have a few hard options here.

Inflict Damage

An easy to use effect, just choose a damage type and amount that suits the narrative of the Pressure effect. *Thorned vines bursting through a porthole might deal 3 marks of Spike damage, for example.*

Inflict an Effect or Mire

A complication that affects the narrative for one or more of the crew, possibly causing mire as well. *Those same thorned vines might instead tangle around two of the crew, forcing them to free themselves before they can move again.*

Inflict Burn

As the Pressure Level increases, burn can effect more serious injuries or lasting problems. *An acid tide washing over the ship's Pressure Shell might burn a box or two on the Seals or Armour track, impossible to repair without extensive refitting and the correct materials.*

Consume/Degrade a Resource or Cargo

Or an entire resource type, if the Pressure Level is getting high. *That same acid tide might instead add the 'corroded' tag to the metal-based resources of any crew caught in it, or melt a couple of their resources or cargo pieces entirely.*

Lose Access to a Skill / Language / Edge

Especially useful for more psychological Pressure events, a crewmember might lose access to one of their skills or edges until the pressure eases off a little. *Distracting bursts of mesmeric photophores from outside the ship might distract a crewmember, making them unable to use the Veils or Tides edge until the ship has moved on, or stopping them from using their Sense or Study skills to aid with action rolls.*

Added Cut / Impact Reduction

Particularly hard-hitting in the moment. *Those same photophoric strobes might instead add cut to any rolls taken to concentrate or act with decisiveness, or might even reduce the impact of any mind-based actions taken to represent the constant distraction.*

Pressure On Pressure On Pressure...

A crew moving through wildly different areas as they delve deeper are likely to come under the influence of multiple different Pressure effects, some of which will lessen or worsen as the journey continues. When the Pressure Level increases and a new effect is added, consider whether it...

- **Affects the ship, the environment, the whole crew, or a single crewmember**
- **Is an entirely new effect or a compounding/worsening of a previous effect**
- **Is something that the crew are aware of immediately or something they slowly become aware of (or will only notice or become aware of at the worst possible moment)**

The higher the Pressure Gauge, the harsher the Pressure effects should be - depending on the narrative there may be multiple different mechanical effects when a new Pressure Level is reached. Here's an example...

The crew of the Kalen's Falcon are delving deeper than the thrash. When their Pressure Gauge hits one the air around the ship turns hostile, acidic - all crewmembers will take medium Acid damage if they leave the safety of the ship's interior or pressure shell over the deck. They manage to max out the Pressure Gauge again before they reach the sink, and this loses them a member of the undercrew to grotesque fungal tendrils that slide through crevices in the ship.

Those same tendrils also steal a valuable piece of cargo - it's not destroyed, but the crew will have to venture outside the ship to get it back. They track that cargo downwards, entering the sink - not only do they come face to face with the pseudopodal myconic terror that's been ravaging their ship, the Pressure Level increase brings with it a resurgence of the acidic air. The Acid damage they take for venturing outside the ship becomes burn, and their companions refuse to accompany them out there in the dark, losing them access to any companion aspects until the Pressure Level decreases.

Unwilling to risk themselves to that extent they flee, leaving their cargo behind and finding their way to the nearest lowport, an amber-domed environment resistant to the area's acidic airs. Docking there reduces their Pressure Level to two, and the acid abates. In addition, they stock up on local protective gear, essentially reducing the effect of the acidic air to nothing by the time they're ready to hunt for that tentacled monstrosity once again.

When the Gauge Hits Three

The Pressure Gauge maxes out at depth level three, but that doesn't mean things are as bad as they can get. Keep marking the track - instead of increasing when the last box is marked, every existing Pressure effect the crew are suffering from worsens. The loss of a single undercrew member might instead become the loss of an entire gang, light or medium damage from an ongoing environmental effect may increase to heavy damage or even burn, and mandatory cut affecting a single type of action may spread to associated activities or become far more severe.

Mitigation or Escape?

The depths of the wildsea are hostile, overwhelmingly so on occasion, but they're not unconquerable (at least temporarily). Instead of escaping Pressure effects bought on by the process of delving deeper, crews should try to seek out clever ways of mitigating or working with them, adapting themselves and their ships to the dangers they encounter. Here's an example, following on from the previous doomed situation as if the crew of the Kalen's Falcon had no nearby lowport to head for.

Things are looking bad - the crew don't have their companion aspects available, and any venture outside the ship is going to deal some serious levels of Acid damage (as burn rather than marks, making the situation even more dire). There's also a fungal horror stalking them, that's already claimed one of their undercrew and a piece of cargo.

But if the crew of the Falcon were sensible sorts, they wouldn't be down in the depths in the first place. Their alchemist begins working on a counter-chemical, something that might neutralize the acid long enough for their corsair to head out and reposition the ship's deck weapons. They might not be able to take their myconic foe down, but if they can get a few solid shots into it the thing might pull back and give them some respite, even if it's only a moment to plan their next desperate move.

There are many ways to deal with Pressure effects, and even if you can't always reduce the amount of Pressure you're under, you can usually do at least something to make it a little less oppressive. A clever crew might...

- **Prepare** as well as possible for a delve, taking resources and cargo items they know will be useful in a pinch based on previous explorations
- **Seek out lowports** and use their services and knowledge of the depths to make life easier, fitting the ship with new upgrades or gaining temporary benefits for the crew
- **Take the fight to the wilds** - instead of cowering within the ship to escape a hunting creature or environmental effect, a crew can tackle it head-on, trading short-term hurt for longer-term security

Pressure Effects in Play

Kyllian: We're going to go deeper. And yes, we know - this is a terrible idea.

Todd: To be fair, that's half of why we're doing it.

Firefly: Okay, your ship's arborofathometer clanks and protests as you cut your way down from the sink into the sparser, lightless world of the drown. Those moths that were harrying the ship for the last few scenes finally give up, defeated by the new depths you've attained. But...

Kyllian: I can see you rolling dice there...

Firefly: That's right, it can't all be good news. I'm upping the Pressure Level - you're at two now, so things are going to start to get dicey. First off, those moths left for a reason - one of your undercrew officers staggers into the room after the first few minutes, raving about something he saw out on deck from under the shell. I'm marking that officer.

Kyllian: So we're not alone down here.

Firefly: Never. But that's not your only problem. Kyllian, his rant brings something to mind, something from your past - something you saw, when you were deeper than you should have been and far less well-prepared. You were apprehensive of being down here anyway... Was this old ghost of a thought the reason?

Kyllian: Most likely yes. I'm happy to spin a tale here - is there going to be some kind of fallout from it?

Firefly: There is indeed - while your mind is preoccupied by this old horror, you'll take a cut on all actions that require concentration...

Leth had always told themselves that there was no such thing as luck, that even those individuals that swore their fortunes were favoured (or cursed) by something unknowable were really just deluding themselves.

The events of the past week hadn't broken them of this view, but they had certainly shaken a few other certainties loose. The engine failing not once but three times, the spot they chose to anchor within the deeps being overrun with massive migrating arachnids, even the cargo they hauled up from the single wreck they'd come across turning out to be nothing but twenty crates of long-spoiled wormapples.

It had hardly been the most successful expedition, and as far as Leth was concerned, they were due a return to somewhere safely nautilized and a soak in a shadow-spring.

On the bright side, things could hardly get any worse.

Snaps

A reliable way to reduce the number of marks on your pressure gauge, a **snap** is a twist turned feral.

Snap Mechanics

Once per scene, when you roll a twist, you can choose to treat it as a snap instead. If you do so, instantly **clear a mark from the Pressure track**.

Only one player can use a snap per scene, and **it has to be declared before the twist it replaces is discussed** (meaning you can't work out what the twist might be through the conversation, and then choose to use a snap instead).

Snaps in Narrative

A snap works just like a twist, in most ways – it's opened up to the rest of the table for conversation, finding something unexpected that happens as a result of your actions.

Unlike a twist, **a snap is always something negative** – maybe even for everyone involved, but always at least for the individual that rolled it, their ship, or their fellow crew. What's more, this snap should come in the form of a depth-related event, something caused by the ship and crew being under pressure.

Snaps don't **need** to have a mechanical element to them (though they certainly can), but they should most definitely change the flow of the narrative and give both Firefly and crew a new challenge, or add a dimension of story to work with or react to.

Example Snaps

The freedom offered by twists can be difficult to adjust to for some players, and snaps are no different in that regard either. To hopefully lessen some of the potential creative burden, we've added a few examples below of how snaps might manifest below.

A snap might come in the form of...

- A sudden change in the environment due to the unknown dangers of the deeps (such as a burst of spores or a splintering of deck-wood).
- A change in perception or perspective, or an intrusive thought that you can't help but let affect you.
- A sudden mutation, or the reveal of an unexpected crezzerin-based effect, in a hazard you're facing.

As some additional guidance, we'll take a common situation for those exploring the depths – catching sight of a terrible creature, possibly a leviathan, that adds a mark to the Pressure track even though it isn't aware of the characters yet. A crew defining a snap when in this kind of situation might decide to...

- Simply have the creature notice the ship and move in to investigate.
- Describe a new facet or element of the creature that becomes obvious with a change of situation, such as a clutch of smaller attendants or young attached to the thing's underbelly.
- Have something happen to the ship, like the blowing of a pressure-valve or an unexpected roar from an unstable engine, that rouses the creature and sets it to investigating the area.
- Introduce a companion or rival to the beast that changes its behaviour from passive to active; even if that doesn't pose an immediate threat, it complicates the situation and increases future danger.
- Have a member of the undercrew stagger into the cabin – that's the creature, they stammer, that ate their friend (or family, or even their entire spit). They'll be understandably emotional and unreliable for the rest of the scene, and maybe beyond.

Snaps in Play

Firefly: You can hear the ship's structure creak and shift around you, the brambles pushing so thickly up against the amberglass that you can barely see anything else out there.

Laura: Okay... But we know we're not alone, right?

Firefly: Oh yeah. You know. I'm marking the Pressure Gauge, not just for the brambles, but for the knowledge that there's something leviathan-sized moving through them nearby.

Kyllian: I reckon we could get a look at that though - I'm not saying I particularly *want* to, just that it would be sensible. I've got that swarmsight brew I made earlier - think I could take a swig, get a glimpse of what's out there?

Firefly: Of course, go for it. You'll need to roll to get a good look, though.

Kyllian: Okay, I'll mark off that temporary track to down some of the concoction and channel my vision through whatever insects are out there, and I'll roll Study to try to get some info on the thing. That's 2d6 for Study, 1d6 for Veils and... Does the brew count as an advantage?

Firefly: Oh, definitely.

Kyllian: 4d6 then... A 5, a 4, and two 1s. That's a twist, but... Given that Pressure mark, I think I'm going to take it as a snap instead.

Firefly: Well I'll clear that mark then. Let's do the snap before the conflict - anyone, any ideas?

Todd: Ooh, how about Kyllian sees the thing that was out there but it's just as trapped as we are by these brambles, and that's drawing some more attention from local predators?

Firefly: So a swarm is on the way? I'm good with that if you are, Kyllian. Now, with that conflict result you see...

CHAPTER 03
CHARACTER OPTIONS

Goodbyes were never easy, but he'd said enough of them over the years to have adapted. You went for the core of what you felt and you spoke it as truthfully as possible, because any goodbye on the lignin tide might be the last.

Greetings, though...

Greetings were so much harder.

The workshop rang with the sound of chisels and the hiss of acid, the ship's rattlehand and alchemist working in tandem to carve off chunk after chunk of amber from the block they worked on. The offcuts would be excellent trading fodder, but that wasn't their purpose (at least, not yet).

He could see the dreamer within. With every hammer-strike, every layer of gold hard-sap they removed, their form became clearer. Soon they'd be free, and they'd wake.

And he would have a greeting to make that would define the rest of their life.

What Will You Be?

This chapter contains options for characters. Quite a lot of them, actually. Most of them come in a form you'll be familiar with, as Bloodlines, Origins, and Posts. Some of them come with a little less fanfare - you'll find them over the page, a set of aspects linked to the options from the core book, and how they might have adapted to a world of wild skies and crushing depths.

Not every one of the options here relates to exploring the heavens or the underthrash. Almost all of them can be used for a game of regular wildsailing ships, where the lowest you'll get (barring unfortunate accidents) is the middle of the tangle, and the highest you'll get is a crow's nest (if you can find one). Our advice is, as always, choose what sounds cool to you.

Complex Aspects

A new addition to Storm & Root, representing traits, gear, or companions that heavily define certain background choices. Complex aspects are single aspects with multiple choices to make when they're taken, usually bundling together several benefits and a drawback. Apart from this additional early choice, complex aspects work exactly the same way regular aspects do.

__Example__: Chichi takes the Ravelliko aspect, a 2-track complex companion that gives a semi-sentient scarf. The aspect requires her to choose two benefits as she does so, to determine what her personal ravelliko does. She chooses __Unpick__, which allows her to use a task to gain some thread-based resources, and __Living Dye__, which add mesmeric patterns to the fabric.

Though these complex aspects are important to the 'standard' presentation of certin background choices in this book, they're by no means mandatory. You can be an effective Diver without a Pressure Suit, and an excellent Itzenko without the ability to moult and remoult.

Character Advancement & Spending Milestones

This section doesn't have any new information, it's intended as both a reminder and a quick clarification on what's already written in the core book. You can gain a minor milestone once per session after doing something you think is important for your character, and the Firefly can award minor milestones for impressive feats. You can gain a major milestone once per narrative arc after achieving something truly memorable, and the Firefly can hand them out at the end of a completed arc as well as a reward for the entire group.

Once you've *earned* milestones, you can use them to advance your character by starting a track that can only be filled by *spending* milestones. **Minor milestones fill one box** (but you can use up to three at once), and **major milestones fill three boxes**. You need to use a task to work on milestone-based tracks, like with any other project. You can use these tracks to...

- **Add a Box to An Aspect's Track (3-box track)**: Aspects can have a total of eight boxes.
- **Develop an Aspect (3-box track):** Rules are found on page 90 of the core book.
- **Gain One Skill Rank (3-box track):** This can be in a skill you know, or one you have no ranks in.
- **Gain a One Language Rank (3-box track):** This can be in a language you know, or one you have no ranks in.
- **Gain a New Aspect (6-box track):** A character can have seven aspects in total. New aspects can be taken from any bloodline, origin, or post, or can be created using the rules on pages 90 and 91 of the core book.
- **Combine Two Aspects (6-box track):** If the tracks of the aspects you're combining exceed 8 boxes, the new aspect's track is still capped at eight. You can decide the new aspect's name and type yourself.

Extra Aspects For Bloodlines, Origins, Posts, and More!

The newfound drive to explore the depths and the skies doesn't just invite new background choices, it spills over into the existing traditional options as well – these pages are devoted to individual aspects themed around aeronautics and submerics, some of them general enough that any character could benefit from them and some themed around existing bloodlines, origins, and posts.

These aspects can be taken while creating a character, just like any other, but they often make more narrative sense when applied to existing characters who have decided to refit their ship and explore one of the new areas available. They might be earned through the usual process of milestones and character growth, or perhaps given out during a training montage as a crew readies themselves for the unknown as best they can. Whatever works best for your group!

AERONAUTIC ASPECTS

Simple aspects to allow existing characters to better engage with certain elements of the skies.

Mayfly Reflex 3-Track Aeronautic Trait

Once per scene, when targeted by an attack or effect while aloft (which covers anything from leaping at a great height to flying), burn to hijack focus and avoid the incoming danger completely.

Rigid Kite 4-Track Aeronautic Gear

A less complex version of the kitesailor's unique apparatus, constructed from painted fabrics and an inflexible frame. Mark to gain the Rush and Glide styles until end of scene.

Cloudwire 2-Track Aeronautic Gear

Alchemically treated filaments that seek out clouds, pulling their user along for the ride. Mark to unspool your cloudwire, gaining the Float, Hover, and Soar styles until end of scene, but these are only usable when you have a sightline to the clouds.

Spiralgull 2-Track Aeronautic Companion

A rare bird with twisting patterns running across its feathers, known for leading aeronauts out of trouble and into safer skies. Treat conflicts as triumphs when performing aerial stunts.

SUBMERIC ASPECTS

Simple aspects to allow existing characters to better engage with certain elements of the depths.

Hazard Burst-Grapples 3-Track Submeric Gear

Once per scene, when targeted by an attack or effect while delving that might cause you to fall, burn to hijack focus and release the burst-grapples, yanking you to a nearby point of interest and out of harm's way.

Undersuit 4-Track Submeric Gear

A less complex version of the diver's pressure suit, constructed from leaf rubber, salvaged metals, and a large drum of clean air. Mark to become immune to the effects of bad air and drifting spores at depth for the duration of a scene.

Brass Arborofathometer 3-Track Submeric Gear

Once per scene while delving, you may check the Firefly's Pressure Gauge (learning the current Pressure Level, length of track, and how many marks it has).

Jag-Spinner 3-Track Submeric Gear

A noisy chainsaw-like tool used for cutting through thick branches at depths. Deals CQ Spike damage, or mark to have it deal CQ Hewing or Serrated damage for the duration of a scene.

Malusan Eel 3-Track Submeric Companion

Toothy and loathsome to all but their owners and the ships they call home. Treat conflicts as triumphs when moving across the outside of a vessel under Pressure.

BLOODLINE ASPECTS

For the ardent, ektus, gau, ironbound, ketra, mothryn, and tzelicrae.

Venchcoat 3-Track Ardent Gear

A long, sleeveless jacket made to catch the wind in a dramatic fashion. Increase impact when making impressive or unexpected entrances, and resist damage that would be caused by falls or landings.

Haughty Grandling 3-Track Ardent Companion

A possessive ancestor hunched spectrally on your shoulders. The interior of any ship you crew resists wandering spirits while you're on board.

Flexneedle 4-Track Ektus Trait

Your spines flex in an endless dance. Mark to ascend or descend a difficult surface without rolling, at impressive speed, without using your limbs to climb.

Amber-Pinned Petal 4-Track Ektus Gear

Your sight is reliable, even under the greatest stresses. Ignore mesmeric and perception-altering effects that arise from Pressure or Scrutiny.

Mycomelding 3-Track Gau Trait

You can use a task to absorb spores from the air around you, gaining a single temporary rank in two different skills of your choice. These ranks last until you next use the Mycomelding aspect.

Drifting Territory 4-Track Gau Trait

Your own spores drift wide, acting as a benevolent barrier to more invasive types. The interior of any ship you crew resists drifting spores while you're on board.

Hollow Tubing 2-Track Ironbound Trait

Part of your form is crafted from hollow tubing filled with pressurized lighter-than-air gas, making you far less heavy than most of your kind. Increase impact on actions taken to leap, and to move deftly or perform aerial stunts while flying.

Delver's Drill 3-Track Ironbound Gear

A huge drill, designed for boring through ironroot bark. You cut when attempting deft movements, but can deal high-impact CQ Serrated damage.

Plasmic Form 4-Track Ketra Trait

Your flesh is malleable and regenerative, even by ketra standards. Mark mire to gain a rare resource, *Living Protoplasmic Flesh*.

Resonant Skull 3-Track Ketra Gear

A cyclopean skull stolen from a deeps-corrupted creature makes up part of your skeleton. Your shouts can now deal CQ and LR Blast damage without a physical projectile.

Mutterdust 4-Track Mothryn Trait

Your wings vibrate softly, the air around you shimmering with natural dust. This cloud doesn't impede vision, but does allow any individuals within it to communicate with each other silently in any language they know.

Pure-Colour Cocoon 1-Track Mothryn Companion

Would this have been a mothryn, if not dipped in pure colour? Burn to reveal the cocoon for a few moments, dealing massive LR Salt damage to everyone that can see it (including you and your crewmates).

Bidingweb 2-Track Tzelicrae Trait

Slim filaments surround you, almost impossible to see. When an event would take you by surprise, mark to hijack focus.

Voltaic Silking-Lines 2-Track Tzelicrae Trait

An array of electrically charged webbing that drifts around you. Deals CQ Volt damage, and you gain the Float and Glide styles, but your flight is only effective in short bursts.

ORIGIN ASPECTS

For the amberclad, anchored, ridgeback, rootless, shankling, and spit-born.

Closer to the Past 4-Track Amberclad Trait

Choose a skill you have zero ranks in. When under the effects of Pressure, this skill has ranks equal to the current Pressure Level (maximum three).

Reavolver 3-Track Anchored Gear

A six-shooter with permanently empty chambers, smelling of darkness and wandering ghosts. Deals LR Salt damage, and any spirit struck by this weapon is dragged into complete corporeality for a short time.

Surface Stone 2-Track Ridgeback Gear

Not something to be worshipped, but most definitely something to be remembered. Burn to reduce the Pressure Level by one.

Adaptive Ratter 2-Track Rootless Companion

A long-whiskered cat with a taste for chitin. The interior of any ship you crew resists insect incursions while you're on board, as does the deck (even without a pressure shell).

Flutter-Lamps 4-Track Shankling Gear

A set of moth-lanterns on a string, carrying both light and cheer to fight the encroaching dark. Sheds a gentle glow, and nearby crew ignore any mire that would be marked due to darkness (living or otherwise).

Pilferer 4-Track Spit-Born Trait

Whenever your crew gains a piece of cargo, gain a resource related to it for yourself (either salvage or specimen, whichever is most appropriate).

POST ASPECTS

For the alchemist, char, corsair, crash, dredger, hacker, horizoneer, hunter, mesmer, navigator, rattlehand, screw, slinger, steep, surgeon, tempest, and wordbearer.

Extraction Techniques 3-Track Alchemist Trait

Consume a crezzer-tainted specimen. In its place you gain two new specimens, the first a sample of *Extracted Crezzerin*, and the second based on the remains of the consumed resource.

Broke-Mirror Mist 3-Track Alchemist Gear

Burn to spread a perception-altering cloud through your current area for the duration of a scene that prevents cut results being counted for Scrutiny. Individuals in this cloud also gain resistance against precise incoming attacks, but cut when targeting their own attacks.

The Only Knife 2-Track Char Gear

Shaped, honed, perfectly balanced. Deals CQ Keen damage, and lets you increase impact when creating a dish using raw meat. Raw meat dishes prepared in this way never sicken you or your crewmembers.

Antlered Solenodon 2-Track Char Companion

Both harm and cure in a small, snuffling package. Deals CQ Toxin damage, and you can use a task to gain a rare resource, either *Potent Venom* or *Antivenom Droplets*.

Metzaka Feathers 3-Track Corsair Companion

A feathered charm made from the remains of a spectral crow. Does little on its own, but when wrapped around the hilt of a weapon dealing CQ damage, it allows that weapon to deal LR damage instead. The affected weapon can also deal damage without being physically held, keeping your hands free for other tasks.

Comet-Forged Sabre 1-Track Corsair Gear

A fragile blade made for precise, debilitating strikes. Deals CQ Keen damage. When attacking, a triumph allows you to reduce a slashed target's immunity or resistance to a single type of damage by one step.

The Joy of Direct Paths 3-Track Crash Trait

Whenever your ship rams or cuts through a particularly difficult obstacle using a ratings roll, you gain a piece of salvage or specimen with the *Broken* tag related to the obstacle overcome.

Torpedo Mallet 2-Track Crash Gear

Yes, this was once an armament for a submersible. No, there really aren't many safety precautions in place. Deals CQ Blunt or Blast damage, or burn to deal Massive CQ Blast damage to multiple nearby targets... and yourself, of course.

Arc Lamp 4-Track Dredger Gear

A bright source of directed light. Mark to overcharge the lamp, allowing it to deal LR Salt damage for the duration of a scene.

Roving Shadow 4-Track Dredger Companion

Something intangible from the depths treats your shadow as a home. Burn to detach your shadow, sending it ahead to explore for you for a brief time. Your shadow has no weight or thickness, but can't stand bright light.

Mockserry 2-Track Hacker Gear

A blade that looks like a normal jagserry, until it unfolds with an insectile shudder. Deals CQ Serrated damage, and allows the wielder to detect the smallest vibrations in the ground and air around them.

Gnashing Sawskull 2-Track Hacker Companion

For the hands-off hacker, this grisly spectral relic of some unnamed undercanopy predator has teeth strong enough to turn wood to splinters. Deals CQ Hewing damage, with increased impact while under Pressure.

Worth Telling Twice 3-Track Horizoneer Trait

When a crewmate or opponent uses a whisper, take a single word from it and start a 3-box Project track, marking the first box. If you already have an existing Project track due to this trait, add the chosen word and mark another box. When all three boxes are marked, gain the three words collected as a new whisper.

Wavecutter's Ravito 1-Track Horizoneer Gear
A beautiful long-necked instrument, the tones of which bring to mind calming memories of the rustling waves. Burn to reduce the Pressure level by one, or to clear a mark or burn from a watchul eye.

Bloodscrawl Markings 1-Track Hunter Trait
These patterns are a hard-won warning to lesser game that it should steer clear. Any ship you crew is immune to insect incursions and wandering spirits while delving.

Necklace of Claws 2-Track Hunter Gear
Treat disasters as conflicts when attacking or defending against a creature that you have bested before.

Amberglass Spectacles 3-Track Mesmer Gear
Treat conflicts as triumphs when investigating mysteries or discerning truths while at least one watchful eye is marked or burned. If both watchful eyes are marked or burned, increase impact on these actions as well.

Guilewasps 4-Track Mesmer Companion
Spectral, flickering, barely there at all. When one of your crewmates uses a whisper, mark to gain a twisted copy of that whisper as a resource (supplied by the Firefly).

Fractured Discipline 3-Track Navigator Trait
Whenever a watchful eye is marked or burned, or the Pressure Level increases, gain a whisper related to one of your existing charts.

Jyorachling Pair 2-Track Navigator Companion
Two feathered spiders that seem to despise each other. Use a task to gain two charts, one related to the skies above your position and one to the depths below.

Emergency Repairs 2-Track Rattlehand Trait
When your ship's lift system, baffler, pressure shell, or scrubber would take structural damage, consume two pieces of salvage to prevent it.

Rewiring Reality 1-Track Rattlehand Trait
Consume a whisper to fundamentally change the function of a single mechanism you can see to directly benefit you (with the aid of the Firefly for specifics).

Distant Repulsion 2-Track Screw Trait
Your arconautic abilities seep into any vessel you call home. Any ship you crew gains the Hover style, in addition to any existing styles offered by its lift systems.

Crisis Bolts 3-Track Screw Gear
Deal Blast damage to any creature that attacks you with their own body in close quarters (such as with tail or bite attacks).

Experimental Accelerator 1-Track Slinger Gear
Deals LR Spike damage. With each shot, decide if you want to increase your impact without cutting or affect multiple nearby targets at once.

Yardtongue Anteater 2-Track Slinger Companion
Trained over long years to whip missed shots out of the air before they disappear into the waves. Treat disasters as conflicts when using LR attacks against a nearby target.

Overwhelming Aromas 1-Track Steep Gear
The fragrance of your brews and concoctions wafts through passageways and corridors like a pleasant dream. Any ship you crew is immune to bad air and drifting spores while delving.

Silver Split-Prong 3-Track Steep Gear
An ordinary-looking fork, by all accounts. Deals CQ Spike damage. You can use a task to swap a tag from any one of your resources to any other resource you own (even if the tag wouldn't usually or logically apply).

We Can't Keep Doing This 3-Track Surgeon Trait
Ignore any cut that would be added for difficulty or precision when attempting to tend to, treat, or heal a member of your own crew.

Jar of Old Fears 2-Track Surgeon Gear
Deals LR Salt damage. In addition, you may use a task to heal a mark of mire from any member of the crew, and gain a whisper based on that mire's nature.

The Gathering Storm 2-Track Tempest Trait
You gain the Float, Rush, Hover, and Soar styles, and treat disasters as conflicts when attacking with Volt damage, during stormy weather. Storms don't count as a negative atmospheric condition for you during flight.

Petrichord 4-Track Tempest Gear
A stringed instrument, somewhere between a sitar and a lyre, that sounds like fresh rain. The bearer's ship is immune to damage and negative effects from storms, including living storms, for as long as the petrichord is being played.

Dead Letters 4-Track Wordbearer Trait
Consume a resource to 'deliver it' to the Under-Eaves by throwing it over the side of a ship. Gain a whisper based on the delivery, with the *Echoing* tag.

Crawling Jar 2-Track Wordbearer Companion
Mark to add a resource to the crawling jar. This resource is impossible to find for any individual other than you, as to them the jar will appear empty. The crawling jar can hold any number of resources. Burn to pull a random resource from the jar that you never put in there (determined by the Firefly).

"And if we just lever the mouth open like... so..."

Potts ignored the shared look of horror among their assistants, gesturing for a little help as they grappled with the slumbering beast's mouth. The undercrew's squeamishness was to be expected - the creature could swallow the pack of them in a single motion if it chose to, after all.

"Come on folks, we don't have all day. And I mean that literally! This lovely thing," and they slapped the side of the protoleviathan's snout to a chorus of frightened gasps, "is a heavy sleeper, but it wakes with the dawn. Which is, what, half an hour away at most?"

That was all the impetus they needed. A few moments later the teeth were exposed, gums furred with a vivid shroomlike substance.

"Now that," Potts murmured as they stepped forward eagerly, readying one of their specimen jars, "is what we're here for..."

Bloodlines on Offer

... Or, more accurately, bloodline. While not the only bloodline within the pages of this book, the **itzenko** have the singular honour of having managed to grow and spread far enough to become a common sight on the waves of the wilds.

Itzenko [Pg 74]

Adaptive mantids that have risen from the depths to learn and flourish, typified by an unusual chitinous mutability and a willingness to experiment.

Origins on Offer

As the boundaries of the wilds expand, new settlements and ways of life become commonplace. A wildsailor's origin doesn't define who they are or how they live, but it certainly influences it.

The origins on offer are **kosmer**, **heartskavo**, **stowaway**, **submerged**, and **windward**.

Kosmer [Pg 76]

Hailing from satellite cities and perpetual airships. Kosmer are masked from birth to avoid the hungry eyes of the heavens.

Heartskavo [Pg 78]

Almost lost, but given a new breath of myconic life. Heartskavo are fungal revenants with unusual senses.

Stowaway [Pg 80]

A youth spent as a shadow in the cargo hold, a scratching below the deck planks. The average stowaway is a stealthy individual with a strong connection to their ship.

Submerged [Pg 82]

Born within the depths, in a nautilized lowport or tenacious underthrash colony. Submerged have an innate understanding of the cryptic depths.

Windward [Pg 84]

Followers of a personal path, some driven to greatness and some consumed. Windwards take risks others would balk at without batting an eye.

Posts on Offer

In a world of limitless horizons and crushing depths, the value one brings to a ship more often comes in unexpected forms and niche specialties.

The posts on offer are **augur**, **cannoneer**, **diver**, **kitesailor**, **marketeer**, **pilot**, **rattlewing**, **raveller**, **smuggler**, **swarmjack**, **thorn**, and **zealot**.

Augur [Pg 86]

Students of astral navigation and stories of uncertain veracity, adept at guiding ships where traditional forms of pathfinding fail.

Cannoneer [Pg 88]

Marked for danger and disaster by the weapons they use, stolen or salvaged from shipwrecks and repurposed as devastating leviathan-killers.

Diver [Pg 90]

Trained and equipped to leave the comparative safety of the ship within the lightless depths, relying on pressure suits and hard-won experience to stay alive.

Kitesailor [Pg 92]

Revelling in the freedom that the skies have to offer, kitesailors spend more time aloft than they do on solid ground.

Marketeer [Pg 94]

Shrewd negotiators with an eye for opportunity, they make enemies and friends in equal amounts, but profit above all else.

Pilot [Pg 96]
Equally at home at the controls of a wavecutter, airship, or submersible, pilots make the impossible seem achievable when they have command of a vessel.

Rattlewing [Pg 98]
Masters of mechanical flight, explorers of the skies, the depths, and the frontiers of technology.

Raveller [Pg 100]
Arconautic manipulators of cloth, wool, and fur, bringing a touch of elegance (or unexpected savagery) to a ship.

Smuggler [Pg 102]
The less salubrious cousin of the marketeer, with honour playing second string to dashing exploits and underhanded deals.

Swarmjack [Pg 104]
Multi-disciplined theorists that learn to control the scuttling masses of the wilds.

Thorn [Pg 106]
The body is a garden, and time a grow bed. Thorns impose their will on the wilds in a way no one should ever dare to.

Zealot [Pg 108]
A follower of... something probably best left undescribed, placing their souls in the nebulously effective hands of divinity for guidance and power.

ITZENKO BLOODLINE

Mantid-like newcomers living lives of iterative improvement, in search of a personal form worthy of monumentization.

The first mantid colony discovered by surface dwellers was on a repurposed wreck, a relic of a bygone age gutted to make room for simple living and sleeping spaces. The inhabitants were hostile, unintelligible, but fiercely protective of their little kingdom. Their location was marked on maps and charts as a place to avoid - there are many of those on the waves, after all - and they were left alone.

And in their isolation, their ambition flourished.

It was maybe ten or twelve months later that the first mantid visitors arrived at a nearby trading port, their pole-barge laden down with detritus and chitin and mute fervour. They traded their stock out and left the way they came, and few remarked on their presence. The next month they were back, their barge with a rattling engine, their chitinous forms smoother, their stock improved. By the third month, their traders were speaking Low Sour through new-formed mandibles as if they'd been born to it. By the fifth, Brasstongue and Highvin and Knock.

Where did you learn, their eager customers asked them. *Here*, they replied, *from you*.

Iterative Moulting

All mantids have a flexible inner shell and a more rigid set of outer chitin, regrowing and refining the latter every time they moult (once every few weeks, on average). This moulting stands as a personal ritual for most mantids, an opportunity to sculpt their new chitin into a form that matches their inner development - perhaps as a remembrance of an event, or as a method of adapting their body to better fit a skill or aesthetic they're trying to master.

Ambition's End

Perhaps it's this constant remaking that drives the mantids on their ambitious paths - for most, personal improvement is an innate part of existence (though what's worth striving for is different for each mantid). And though they seem to have no natural limit on their lifespans, accomplishing perfection is bittersweet - mantids that achieve their goals typically spend as much time as they wish basking in that payoff of perfection and then calcify, by choice, rendering themselves monuments to personal success.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the mantids into your character, consider the following questions...

- What's your ambition, and how does it relate to your shape?
- Is the moulting process something you enjoy, or dread, or are ambivalent towards?
- How have your experiences been immortalized in your chitin-sculpting?

Alternate Presentations

The Iterative Moult complex aspect can be used to mimic a variety of other insect and arthropod life - the itzenko don't really have to be mantid-like at all!

ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

Iterative Moult 1-Track Complex Trait

Your outer chitin is part protection, part self-expression, part project, and part ambition. Use a task to moult, gaining **two benefits** of your choice from the following list that last until you moult with this aspect again...

- **Recurve Claw**: Sometimes the old ways are the best. You deal CQ Keen or Hewing damage.
- **Spined Scissor**: You deal CQ Spike damage, and treat conflicts as triumphs when restraining a target.
- **Fluting**: You are immune to Keen damage.
- **Bulwark Shell**: You resist Blunt and Blast damage.
- **Tetrantid**: You've sculpted yourself additional limbs, allowing you to hold more than is usually possible.
- **Refine**: Add one temporary rank to any two of your existing skills.
- **Reconstruct**: Add one temporary box to any two of your aspects (temporary boxes are lost when burned or marked).

Shaping the Self 3-Track Trait

You treat all chitin-based resources as if they had the *Medicinal* tag. In addition, any time you heal damage on an aspect using a chitin-based resource, add a temporary box to that aspect's track (this temporary box is lost when it would be marked or burned).

Bursting Moult 1-Track Trait

Mark to hijack focus and tear free of your outer shell, leaving a chitinous husk in your wake. Until the end of the scene you're weak to all incoming damage, but increase impact on all movement-based actions.

Modes of Prayer 3-Track Trait

A fighting style that comes naturally to those of mantid descent, all portentous stillness and burst of swift movement. You deal CQ Keen damage, and when you would cut for precision, cut one fewer result than usual.

Ambitious Mimic 2-Track Trait

Consume a whisper to mimic a trait or piece of gear belonging to a crewmate, gaining a copy of it as a temporary trait. You can only have one such temporary trait at a time.

True Dedication 4-Track Trait

It's not a grind, it's a process. When you drop anchor or reach port, mark the track of any one project you're working on (once per journey).

Translucent Wings 2-Track Trait

A rare achievement within an ambitious society that allows you near-perfect flight, albeit for short periods. Mark to gain the Float, Hover, and Soar styles for the duration of a scene.

Sculptor's Claw-Hammer 3-Track Gear

Ritual shaping-tools for working on your own chitin. Mark to gain a specimen from the following list, either *Chitin Fragment*, *Living Shard*, or *Dripping Ichor*.

Intercut Fabrics 2-Track Gear

Designed to be worn above, around, and even below your changing chitinous exoskeleton. You resist the harmful effects of crezzerin, and are immune to drifting spores.

Copper-Chi Simulacra 3-Track Gear

Sculpting metal isn't as easy as sculpting chitin, but sometimes a trial run is needed before you commit to an idea. Salvage can be used to heal your traits and injuries, and for you also counts as a chitin-based resource.

Moult-Husk Marionette 2-Track Companion

Most shed chitin dissolves or scatters after a moult, but this set was tenacious. When you gain this aspect, select a gang choice from the undercrew section. The Moult-Husk Marionette mimics their ability during journeys.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose itzenko as your bloodline, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Grace, Sharps, Tides

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Hack, Hunt, Rattle, Sense, Tend, Vault, Wavewalk

Languages: Knock, Raka Spit, Brasstongue, Highvin

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Fluted Remembrance, Grandfather's Claw

Specimens: Chitinous Shard, Gaspling

Whispers: Something New, Blades and Patience

Charts: Studied Glyph-Map

Drive (Choose 1)

Give aid to growing mantid colonies

Demonstrate reaching the pinnacle of a chosen niche

Mire (Choose 1)

You understand the fears of your fellows - the sea feels truly hostile for the first time

The Under-Eaves feel uncomfortably close

"I'm proud of what I am, but even more proud of what I will one day be."

- Kizo Kara, itzenko hacker

KOSMER ORIGIN

Mask-wearing ritualists raised above the clouds, in the dizzying heights of one of the near-inaccessible satellite cities.

Wildsailors that return from the heights of the world have as many stories of strangeness to share as those that plumb the depths, if not more. Of grand empty vistas fringed with cloud, of winged and unwinged creatures and their incomprehensible flight paths and, if they made it high enough, of the fragile but beautiful satellite cities.

The kosmer (the name an unusual Highvin neologism that seems to have caught on among wildsailors in recent years) are defined by two simple truths; that they grew up at heights that left them exposed to the brute scrutiny of the stars, and that mysticism and secrecy are the perfect antidote to such a situation.

Averting The Constant Gaze

How to escape an unblinking eye? For the kosmer there are many methods, but the most common practice across various skybound settlements is to choose the face they show to the world, wearing a mask whenever they're within sight of the heavens. This cultural pillar is strong enough that even the bloodlines without traditional faces take part, with ektus and ironbound kosmer carving themselves masks as adornment and decoration.

Inscrutable

It's an unfortunate, but long-held belief that the more remote a settlement is, the more inscrutable their practices are to outsiders. This holds little weight for the most part, saying more about the laziness of researchers than it does the cultures they study, but for the kosmer it's actually true - they *are* difficult to understand, even to each other, and it's entirely by design. Each individual is encouraged to develop their own private rituals and practices that should never be explained to anybody else, not even to their own neighbours or crewmates. What better way to keep the skies guessing?

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the kosmer into your character, consider the following questions...

- What's the symbolism behind your mask? Even if you don't share it with others, you should know yourself!
- What led to you moving away from the satellite city you lived in, and down toward the treescape below?
- How do you think of the skies above and around you - as something to be feared, respected, or simply acknowledged?

Alternate Presentations

Divorcing the concept of the kosmer from the sky gives you the perfect opportunity to create an isolationist wanderer, or a dweller of some place so distant that it's never even been speculated about, let alone actually heard of. Alternatively, you could lean into the importance of the mask, using it as a kind of parasitic or soul-bound entity, the 'true self' of a kosmer character.

ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

Eyrie Swing 4-Track Trait

You move with an uncannily light step, no matter how laden down you are. Your presence never seems to add weight to surfaces.

Mask Under Mask 5-Track Trait

Your face, even when unmasked, is immobile - you can hide emotions and feelings with ease, even under the most intense pressure.

Wide-Arms Ritual 1-Track Trait

Use a task and mark mire to allow every member of the crew to consume a specimen if they wish - those that do can either clear a mark of their own mire, take an additional task, or clear a mark of damage on one of their trait or companion aspects.

As Above, So Below 2-Track Trait

When you take this trait, choose either 'Above' or 'Below'. When the watchful eye related to your choice is marked or burned, treat conflicts as triumphs when engaging with the danger it represents in any way.

Obscuring Words 3-Track Trait

Consume a whisper to allow any nearby individuals you choose to communicate freely in Low Sour without being understood by any other individuals until end of scene.

Baffler Ribbons 4-Track Gear

When you make a roll that's cut for Scrutiny, you treat cut results of 3, 2, or 1 as 4.

Lightning Lash 2-Track Gear

Deals LR Blunt or Volt damage, and increases impact on attempts to restrain or tangle a target. If a target affected by the lash tries to escape, hijack focus (once per scene).

Cyclopean Mantle 4-Track Gear

The single eye set into this mantle is traditionally taken from a hunting beast of the wild blue. Mark to see through a usually opaque surface (such as a wall or a cloudbank) with perfect clarity for a short time.

Kosmeri Mask 5-Track Complex Gear

Though some kosmer choose a simple and unstylized second face, many strive for a blend of uniqueness and usefulness. This gear option allows you to choose **up to four benefits** from the list below, each benefit **reducing the aspect's track by one box**. You can choose from...

- **Dominant Nose**: Gain increased impact when gaining information or tracking through scent.
- **Additional Eyes**: You can see in all directions at once, and can burn to hijack focus when ambushed.
- **Uncovered Eye**: A challenge to the heavens. Whenever the watchful eye from above is marked or burned, you are immune to mire.
- **Teeth or Tusks**: You can deal CQ Spike or Hewing damage (choose one when you take this benefit).
- **Sea of Tongues**: You can speak the same words in multiple known languages simultaneously.
- **Lacquered Mane**: Waves of reinforced hair that grant resistance against Keen and Hewing damage.
- **Shining Visage**: The mask is inlaid with gold and precious stones. Mark to gain a resource, *Gold Scrapings* or *Unsocketed Gem*.
- **Starlight Sconce**: A fragment of glowing metal that sits like a crown. Your mask acts as a strong light source that you can only dim by covering it.

Cloak of Stolen Stars 2-Track Gear

You master what hungers for you, removing one of many threats from the world. You are immune to all effects of the Hungry Stars watcher, and gain the Rush and Soar styles in any area starlight touches.

Counterweight Ferret 3-Track Companion

Scampers from place to place on your body to aid uncertain movements. You are immune to vertigo, and treat disasters as conflicts when trying to balance, leap, or prevent falls at great heights.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose kosmer as your origin, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Grace, Instinct, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Flourish, Hunt, Outwit, Sense, Rattle, Tend, Vault
Languages: Signalling, Old Hand

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Simple Mask, Ornate Mask
Specimens: Colourful Ribbonfruit, Tenacious Raindrop
Whispers: Untouched Branches, Hidden Away
Charts: A Bird's-Eye Sketch, A Wind-Scarred Chart

Drive (Choose 1)

Establish a new highport
Permanently remove a danger made clear by one of the watchful eyes

Mire (Choose 1)

You fear the coming night, and crave the dawn
The mask begins to slip - who are you underneath?

"We are watched."
Hale Mau, ardent kosmer

HEARTSKAVO ORIGIN

Though the spores of the lower waves are famed for their virulence, some deep-rooted infestations are not without their benefits.

It's something wildsailors learn to identify early on, that rattle in the chest when they laugh, a scatter of spores after every sneeze. Nothing a good soak in a shadow-spring won't fix.

But those that face the dangers of the rustling waves for a living are always looking for an edge, and for some of them a myconic infestation isn't a parasite to be cleansed, but an ally against the predations of the rest of nature. There's power in mushrooms, after all, and the gau seem to get by just fine...

Right Spore, Right Time

The physical benefits a heartskavo reaps are entirely dependent on the kind of spore they let take root within them, how they cultivate its growth and development, and the biology they were working with pre-parasite. For ardent and ketra the fungus tends to branch throughout the body, strengthening muscles and unfurling in shelf-like protrusions outside the skin. Ektus, ironbound, and gau tend to play host to furling fronds that offer extra sensory apparatus, clicking mantles draping their already impressive frames. And for the tzelicrae, the mothryn and the itzenko, the concept of willingly giving yourself up to myconic infestation is a tough one to come to terms with, but can also yield impressive symbiotic results.

Second Heart, Second Mind

But it's not all beneficial, as one might expect. Heartskavo that let their infestation run wild, as beneficial as it is, often begin to develop strange habits and urges related directly to their position as host. A willingness or urge to seek out the depths or the upper airs, flashes of memory and emotion that don't quite feel like their own, and most often dreams that they seem to share with other myconic hosts, some long dead and some, paradoxically, yet to be.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the heartskavo into your character, consider the following questions...

- Was your infestation by choice, a happy accident, or a curse you endure?
- What form does the fungus take? Are you, perhaps, the host of an aberrant haska node, a haskavo disconnected from the network?
- How much do you feel of your original self remains, and how much have you changed in the post-myconic years? Is that change down to you, or it, or the two of you together?

Alternate Presentations

The aspects for the heartskavo can, with a little tweaking, be used to represent parasites and symbiotes of various types. The presentation here is also one of mutual co-operation and benefit, but there's no reason aside from comfort and tone that this has to be the case.

ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

Networked Metabolism 2-Track Trait

Eating a properly prepared meal clears a mark on any one of your traits and heals a box on any one of your injuries. You are immune to the effects of drifting spores.

Revenant Step 2-Track Trait

Something about the way you move strikes fear into animal and arthropod alike. You cut when attempting most precise movements, but ignore all cut when attempting to avoid damage from beasts and insect-based hazards.

Noctovore 2-Track Trait

Heal a mark of damage on any one of your traits after spending a scene in extreme damp or darkness.

Cordevenant 4-Track Trait

Use a task to breathe new life into any once-living specimen, giving it the *Fungal* tag.

Myconic Crown 3-Track Trait

Mark to speed and control the growth of any non-sapient fungus, spore, or mushroom.

Fungal Filaments 2-Track Trait

You can see perfectly in darkness or dim light, and in utter darkness you increase impact on any actions taken to discern the properties of your surroundings.

From Depth to Depth 2-Track Trait

Clear a point of mire whenever the Pressure Level increases, or turn a burn on one of your tracks into a normal mark.

Unnerving Fronds 3-Track Trait

Treat conflicts as triumphs when attempting to scare or unsettle a target. Any ship you crew resists insect incursions.

Sporeburst 3-Track Trait

Mark to release a cloud of stinging spores, dealing CQ Toxin damage to all nearby foes and coating them with a layer of fast-growing mushrooms.

Slow Surrender 5-Track Trait

Burn to immediately and completely heal an injury by replacing the affected area with a fungal proxy.

Haskavic Dreamer 3-Track Trait

Sleeping allows you to dream fragments of other pertinent heartskavo lives, no matter how distant. Spending a night at rest during a journey rewards you with an insight into your current situation (supplied by the Firefly).

Toxic Personality 2-Track Trait

Just being around you raises one's tolerances. Your entire crew is resistant to Toxin damage, and you are immune.

Breath of Eaves 3-Track Trait

Use a task and mark to banish or redirect a sporewind, or use a task and burn to summon one.

Wheezing Bellows 3-Track Gear

A musical instrument that most struggle to find even vaguely pleasant when played. Acts as a weapon in a pinch, doing CQ Blunt or Toxin damage... noisily.

Orbishroom 2-Track Companion

A plump little follower that rolls drunkenly around your heels. Mark to gain a specimen, either *Virulent Spores* or *Fungal Sheddings*.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose heartskavo as your origin, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Iron, Instinct, Teeth

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Brace, Concoct, Cook, Harvest, Sense, Tend, Wavewalk

Languages: Old Hand, Gaudimm

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Frond-Scarred Plating, Spore-Bottle

Specimens: Unfurled Mycobranch, Underspore Sample

Whispers: The Other Side, Not As Bad As You'd Think

Charts: A Smudged Depth-Chart, Haskavo Node-Map

Drive (Choose 1)

Encourage others to accept a myconic colony

Understand the dreams of a haskavo network

Mire (Choose 1)

An urge to climb and burst and drift away

You feel a ravenous parasitic hunger that is not your own

"These dreams weren't meant to fit in a head like mine. I wonder what they've excised to make room..."

- Lombrechtus Aur, ardent heartskavo

STOWAWAY ORIGIN

Sometimes a life on the waves, even with the associated dangers, is better than whatever you had waiting for you back at port.

Admittedly, it's hardly a glamorous existence. Scurrying around cargo holds to steal fruit from damaged crates, hiding in crawlspaces and engine compartments when the crew search the ship for whatever bizarre creature has high-tailed it through one of the hatches... Spending your younger years teaches you a lot about how to stay alive when alone, despite being surrounded by people.

But there comes a moment in the lives of most stowaways where they come out into the light; perhaps discovered by a member of the undercrew, or maybe more valiantly to defend your allies (if that's the right word for people who had no idea you existed) against a threat to the vessel you call home. It's those moments when the decisions are made, as to whether you're turfed out at the next safe port, or thrown straight to the waves themselves.

Or, given that the one thing almost all wildsailors hold in common is a respect for those that can survive at sea, whether you're offered a bunk of your own.

The Price of Isolation

Ships are dangerous places, even more so when you're crawling around in the sort of spaces that weren't designed to be crawled in, and wildsailing vessels are rarely built with safety standards in mind. It's common for stowaways that have graduated to the level of true crew to wear their injuries with pride. Months - or even years - of dealing with problems alone leads to an absence of the prosthetics, patches, and grafts that normally come in the wake of a serious injury at sea.

Softly, Softly

Stealth, so an old sailor's saying goes, is for the beasts. When you're riding on what in most cases amounts to a chainsaw with a foredeck, the idea of a subtle approach is somewhat distant to the minds of most. But not so the stowaway - secrets keep them alive, and thieving keeps them fed. There are few on the waves better suited to the role of infiltrator (or assassin) than those who've lived in silence by choice.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the stowaway into your character, consider the following questions...

- Did you stay true to one vessel, or hop opportunistically about?
- Were you discovered by the rest of the crew, or did you reveal yourself by choice? Perhaps you haven't even been found yet, and still live a life in hidden spaces...
- What scars, or trophies, have you gained in your life of secrecy? What did you flee?

Alternate Presentations

Much like the dredger, the stowaway's abilities lend themselves well to being interpreted as a classic fantasy rogue, or even a gun for hire who uses the element of surprise to their advantage.

ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

Old Habits Die Hard 4-Track Trait

You can tell what's in a cargo crate before it's even opened. Whenever you drop anchor, gain a resource related to one of the pieces of cargo on your ship.

Engine's Toll 3-Track Trait

You survived an accident that should probably have killed you, and you did it alone. Gain immunity to one damage type of your choice, and you have resistance to all damage and effects that would result from hazards and malfunctions on your own ship.

Struggle Through 3-Track Trait

Whenever you would be affected by crezzerin, bad air, or drifting spores, you may mark mire to ignore the effect.

Underdeck Physique 2-Track Trait

When engaged in a chase of some kind, obstacles that would slow you down give you a burst of speed instead. Treat conflicts as triumphs on actions made to escape or outwit pursuers when you're the quarry.

Softshoe Reflexes 3-Track Trait

You leave barely any trace (and are almost impossible to track) when aboard ships or in dockyards. Once per scene, if you are discovered in these areas, hijack focus.

Whispering Key 2-Track Gear

Consume a whisper to open (or jam) any mundane lock. Consume a chart to discover hidden locations or crawlspaces nearby.

Tar-Stained Cloak 4-Track Gear

When in shadows or areas of limited visibility, mark to shift attention from you to a willing crewmate and be momentarily lost or forgotten to foes. You can see perfectly in darkness.

Piecemeal Outfit 4-Track Gear

You chop and change your clothing with whatever you find lying around. Increase impact when attempting to go unnoticed, blend in, or look like you belong.

Gasping Jar 4-Track Gear

Burn to temporarily silence a single individual in your immediate vicinity (everything from their voice to their footsteps). You can target yourself with this aspect, but cannot target a crewmate unless they're willing.

Stolen Revolver 4-Track Gear

Filched from a member of the undercrew. Deals low-impact LR Blast damage against targets that are aware of you, high-impact LR Blast damage if you're hidden.

Flashfinger Construct 3-Track Companion

A mobile hand pieced together from old roster sheets, engine bolts and secrecy. Treat disasters as conflicts when pickpocketing, stealing, or using sleight of hand.

Accidental Anchor 3-Track Companion

The spirit of a crewmember lost to the waves has tenuously attached itself to you, unseen and unheard by the rest of the world. Mark mire to gain a secret about the ship, or a location the ship has visited before, or burn mire to make your companion tangible for a brief time.

Leashless Monkey 4-Track Companion

Consume a specimen to create a monkey-based distraction in a nearby location. Once per scene, this distraction allows you to hijack focus.

Librico Silverfish 3-Track Companion

Mark to gain information about a nearby room or secret space. Consume a chart to have the silverfish, rather disgustingly, create an entirely new chart based on the information discovered, or fragments of overheard speech.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose stowaway as your origin, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Instinct, Tides, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Brace, Delve, Flourish, Hunt, Outwit, Scavenge, Vault

Languages: Knock, Old Hand, Signalling, Raka Spit, Brasstongue

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Frayed Rigging, Lost Snapograph

Specimens: Engine-Oil Mushrooms, Discarded Rations, Rat-Roach Shells

Whispers: Hidden Underfoot, Backroom Chatter

Charts: Self-Made Scratches, Escape Route Schematics

Drive (Choose 1)

Earn the trust of a doubting crewmate

Seek out a port worth staying in long-term

Mire (Choose 1)

The secret spaces of your vessel call to you once again

Your past threatens to catch up to you

"Good ship, good crew. They keep the ratroaches at a minimum, and never check their galley contents too closely."

- Jaix Reming, gau stowaway

SUBMERGED ORIGIN

Survivors who adapted to the ebb and flow of the sea with the efficiency of the Verdancy itself.

Life on the wildsea is shaped around (and by) the waves, and the submerged may well be the best example of this. Their colonies are built below the thrash, the largest thriving within fallshanks (the bastionic bark of these toppled giants protecting them from the usual dangers of the tangle).

Repeated contact with crezzerin is a matter of course in such colonies, and the submerged have learnt to embrace and even to rely on the changes it brings, further enhancing their connection to the wilds. They are people who take victories in whatever form they must; beneath the rustling waves you have naught but what is carried, and the submerged carry themselves well.

Stewards By (And Of) Nature

The submerged understand early in life that their position within the wooden waves is only found by balancing in the midst of chaoses. Only the limber and discerning are able to tread such a path wrought, fought, and caught within the timber. Understanding the self comes from knowing one's place within the waves. Communal action and mutual aid is the only way to thrive. The wildsea is a web woven of wonders.

With Might Comes May

Some submerged seek to Impose themselves upon the waves, ensuring their dominance and power is recognized. Strength is sought solely so personal goals are accessible. Leviathans do whatever they will. Such submerged accrue capability and power so they can achieve whatever they set themselves to. The powerful bear peace and tumult for others to weather; the mighty can even afford indifference when it pleases them.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the submerged into your character, consider the following questions...

- How do you understand your place within the waves, what facets of the sea recognize you, how do you acknowledge them?
- What do you hope to find while sailing the sea that you couldn't already find exploring within, which of your secrets accrued beneath the thrash do you not share?
- The nurture of nature requires growth. In what ways have the wooden waves altered you, in what ways have you adjusted yourself to the lignin tide, how has the sea, thus, adapted to you?

Alternate Presentations

While the submerged naturally fits a character with their origins lying below the canopy, it can work just as well for an individual drawn inexorably to the mysteries of the depths, or one determined to put themselves in danger for the bounty that the darkened underthrash offers.

ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

Marked by the Sea 5-Track Trait

The serendipitous swell and shift of seeded surf has served you too many times to be coincidental.

Sealegs 2-Track Trait

Your body was made for moving with the tides. Treat conflicts as triumphs when traversing the open waves without a ship.

Howl of the Veil 3-Track Trait

The echo of this terrible call in your mind dulls natural fear responses. Seeing leviathans and other bestial horrors offers whispers instead of mire.

Masktopus Tattoo 2-Track Trait

A spirit of ink. Mark to slip into the spectral realm for a short time, disappearing entirely from the mundane.

Prey Instinct 4-Track Trait

Knowing how mice think lets you find cats. You always know if you're being followed, tracked, or stalked.

Decoy Tactics 3-Track Trait

Becoming bait for your pack requires courage, honour, duty, or some other foolishness. Once per scene you may hijack focus to react to an incoming threat in place of another crewmate. That crewmate increases impact on their next action taken against that threat.

Pheromonal Nose 4-Track Trait

You can smell your surroundings as clearly as others see theirs.

Natural Learner 3-Track Trait

After overcoming a nature result during a journey, gain two temporay ranks in any skill related to the experience. These ranks last until the journey ends.

Adaptive Anatomy 4-Track Gear

The changes you've embraced have furnished your body with a natural weapon. You can deal either CQ Keen, Toxin, Blunt, Acid, Volt, or Spike damage (chosen when you take this aspect).

Leviathan Ambergris 3-Track Gear

You have a small sample of leviathan musk, but the effect is potent - you never smell like prey.

Yelnstra's Fables 3-Track Gear

A loosely bound collection of Yelnstra's stories gathered and shared by your culture. Mark to receive a useful fable (supplied by the Firefly).

"A Whispered Roar" 3-Track Gear

This named bone instrument contains a whisper gone feral. Consume a whisper to exactly mimic the sound (and volume) of a beast.

Trophied Longclaw 2-Track Gear

Taken in victory under the waves. Deals CQ or LR Hewing or Serrated damage.

Rode's Path 4-Track Companion

Unanchored spirits find you, or at least one has, to serve as point of connection until they find their lasting anchor or decide to sail past the veil. You may mark mire to learn a secret they can share from their restless past life.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose submerged as your origin, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Teeth, Tides, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Wavewalk, Vault, Harvest, Hunt, Hack, Sense, Outwit

Languages: Raka Spit, Old Hand, Signalling

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Ironroot Jag, Terrapine Scale

Specimens: Ribbon Taffy Oranges, Harbinger Feather

Whispers: Hot Heavy Air, Fluffy!

Charts: Pinned Entrail Reading, Bridge-Tree Map

Drive (Choose 1)

Spread the joys of living in harmony with the waves
Hear the sea call your name

Mire (Choose 1)

The perils of the deep require constant preparation
Shadows chant your name

"If you stay as you are, you'll never experience the thrill of becoming something more."

- Griiz Bonega, ektus submerged

WINDWARD ORIGIN

A constant traveller across the rustling waves, driven to move from place to place by a restless but positive wandering streak.

For a typical windward, travel is everything. They drift from crew to crew and from cause to cause as they see fit. The stability of routine is a cage to be broken - and while they may have families, friends, and loves, these familiar trappings rarely matter more than the freedom offered by an unmarked path.

Most windward dream of a goal so large it can never truly be fulfilled; to experience everything the waves have to offer. It's a promise they make to themselves and to the open sky. A challenge to the order of things, to spit at destiny and to become more than they were ever meant to be. It's a lonely road for some, one full of friends and companions and laughter for others. For many it's a road cut short - the secrets of the sea are protected, after all, by the common brutality of the unknown wilds.

But however their path is carved, it is *theirs*.

A Way of Life

Those unfamiliar with the windward might pre-judge them as self-interested types. They'd be wrong, in general; when they're on a ship, the average windward is just as invested in their crew as any ridgeback, rootless, or kosmer... But they also know that it won't last forever. Windwards move on when the time comes, and rarely ever look back.

Variant Paths

A windward's more short-term goals are very much their own to choose, and could be anything from bringing down a pirate clan to delivering a particularly important letter. Some steps on the path might be taken in days, others years - what's important is that the motion is constant, that something is always being worked on. Windwards, like the waves themselves, are sometimes calm, but never truly at rest.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the windward into your character, consider the following questions...

- What feat have you achieved in your time on the waves?
- Has following the wandering path led you to develop any memorable friendships, either uncommonly strong or unusually fleeting?
- Does your personal journey have a definitive end? Or will your time simply be up when you've run out of new things to experience?

Alternate Presentations

A windward's drive and determination might be in the form of a religious crusade or holy mission from one of the wildsea's dubiously effective god-like figures. Even without the religious overtones, a windward's path could easily be portrayed as a pilgrimage of some kind, or an extended homecoming.

ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

Indomitable 3-Track Trait

You move with purpose, untouched by indecision in the face of certain doom. When you would be forced to cut two or more results, cut one result fewer than usual.

From The Jaws of Defeat 2-Track Trait

Burn to increase your impact on any action taken in a desperate situation. You can also burn to treat a disaster as a triumph, but only whilst facing a seemingly overwhelming challenge.

Scar of Steps Taken 3-Track Trait

During a journey, you can make a discovery without consuming a chart. Instead, choose and consume a whisper as normal and then combine it with either one of your mires, an injury you've suffered, or a project you've worked on. The discovery will be tied to your choice.

The Weight of Experience 4-Track Trait

Whenever you would clear mire you can choose to heal two marks of damage instead. Mark to ignore an instance of mire generated by your own curiosity or actions.

Ascetic's Waltz 3-Track Trait

Somewhere between a dance, a martial art and an expression of arrogance. Deals CQ Blunt damage and, once per scene, allows you to hijack an incoming attack and choose a new target for it.

You Make Your Own Path 3-Track Trait

Whenever you would receive a chart, you may convert it to a piece of salvage and a whisper instead. Once per scene, treat a conflict as a triumph when rolling without the benefit of a skill.

Spiced Wine 2-Track Gear

For warming the spirit and mind on a long, cold night. When you gain a temporary trait, add one box more than usual. Once per montage, without using a task, you may add one box to any one crewmate's temporary trait.

Wayfarer's Compass 4-Track Gear

Once per journey, you may tie a new discovery to one of your drives. The precise nature of the connection is up to the Firefly.

Whirl-Crafted Rabir 2-Track Gear

The calming drone of the rabir allows you to meditate rather than sleep, maintaining full awareness of your surroundings. In addition, when you set the instrument spinning, choose either bad air, drifting spores, insect incursions, or wandering spirits. Your vessel resists this threat until the rabir ceases to spin.

Quartered Raiment 3-Track Gear

You have resistance to Toxin and Salt damage, and to any damage taken while aiding a crewmate in an action they're attempting.

Oft-Repaired Blade 5-Track Gear

Deals CQ Keen or Spike damage, but you treat triumphs as conflicts when attacking with this weapon.

Nomad's Stilt 3-Track Gear

A long spear-like weapon used to balance on in dangerous areas. Deals CQ Hewing damage, and lets you resist the hazardous effects of crezzerin exposure.

Crumpled Frog 2-Track Companion

A minuscule wax-paper construct made from an ancient chart. Whenever your crew discovers a new location, the frog will spill a single cryptic secret about it (supplied by the Firefly).

Feathered Cobra 2-Track Companion

A gliding snake with a generous plumage, aerodynamic feathers spreading out from its curving hood. Deals LR Toxin damage, and you may consume a specimen to gain the Rush and Flap styles until end of scene.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose windward as your origin, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Iron, Grace, Instinct

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Cook, Delve, Flourish, Outwit, Sense, Study, Wavewalk
Languages: Highvin, Raka Spit, Old Hand

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Scrap Necklace, Old Paper
Specimens: Slaughtermelon Spikes, Chitin Dice
Whispers: Unwavering Process, Against the World
Charts: A Faded Branch-Map

Drive (Choose 1)

Survive an unwinnable challenge
Walk your path, wherever it leads you

Mire (Choose 1)

Indecision takes you, slick and unfamiliar
It's impossible to rest or concentrate; you must move on

"The only challenges worth their salt are the ones you set for yourself."

- Alma Esterfell, ardent windward

AUGUR POST

Secrets told in stars, known to those who are brave enough to read them.

Tides shift. Trees fall. The sky remains. An augur proves their worth as both wayfinder and historian. Using the stars as navigational tools, they often need little more than a clear view of the sky to guide their ship. They counter the hunger of the stars above with a burning curiosity of their own, a willingness to learn and experiment and plumb depths of mystery closed off to most.

And with sights set well past the horizon, it's easy to see hints of what lies just beyond the veil. Stories slip from whisper to ear to heart, and an augur listens. These voices can whisper a way forward as easily as any star, and when you operate in the abstract, there's little difference between an upcoming port and portentous event.

Lighting the Way Through the Weird

Maps and charts are a staple of treetop travel, but an augur relies on methods more esoteric. They look beyond the mundane, and find stories and pathways hidden in plain sight. Be it from dreams, visions, or reading signs, an augur lights the way for their ship and their crew with the confidence of a seasoned storyteller. It's not that they're never wrong, but that their methods are as studied and rigorous as those of any more traditional cartographer or navigator.

Nails Like Stars

Forged from metals contained in fallen stars, an augur's astral nail set is a catalogue of the myths and stories that move them most. Each one inscribed with a tale, these nails draw the things they hear from possibility into reality. Some augurs push their minds even further in search of stories yet to be told, and a rare few have even been successful. Such activities often come at a cost, however.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the augur into your character, consider the following questions...

- How do you look across the veil to divine information, and have you ever glimpsed anything there that you wish you hadn't seen?
- Where do you go to learn new stories, and how do you remember them? Through song, repetition, inscription, faith?
- Have you ever stepped into the spectral realm? If you have, did you do so on purpose?

Alternate Presentations

An augur can easily take the roll of a charismatic would-be prophet, making predictions that might come to pass and calling upon the heavens to guide them to where they need to be. The post might also suit a witch modelled in the more traditional fantasy vein, a wielder of divination and occult force.

ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

A Reading of Passage 3-Track Trait

When you have the chance to read the stars while journeying, you may consume a whisper to predict a future encounter. You gain a 1d6 advantage on any interactions with the subject of the prediction.

Flash of Insight 2-Track Trait

In moments of crisis, you see what happens a fraction of a second before it takes place. Mark mire to ignore the results of a roll. Take a new approach and re-roll.

Skybridge Pirouette 2-Track Trait

Adapted from a well-known shankling tradition, your feet can find brief purchase on empty air. You gain the Float and Hover styles, but only in short bursts.

Collapsible Recliner 4-Track Gear

A portable chair offering extreme comfort and an excellent viewing angle. Also deals CQ Blunt damage!

Light-Catch Lantern 3-Track Gear

A hooded lantern that both emits and consumes light. When lit it acts as you would expect, but when unlit it absorbs the light from a single nearby source.

Somatic Drill 3-Track Gear

An augur's auger. Deals CQ Spike damage, and allows you to consume a whisper to have a prophetic (but cryptic) dream, details of which are supplied by the Firefly.

Mythologue Fireflies 4-Track Companion

Fireflies which trace the paths of constellations. Useful for navigation, and pathfinding in dark places.

Wandering Starling 2-Track Companion

A bird with plumage that gleams like a falling star. When you make a discovery, you uncover two nearby locations which share thematic elements.

Whisperwisp 4-Track Companion

A spectral creature which enjoys sitting on shoulders and whispering stories in people's ears. Mark to learn a distant truth (supplied by the Firefly).

Astral Nail Set 3-Track Complex Gear

Nails forged from fallen stars, waiting to manifest their hidden stories. Deals LR Spike damage. When you choose the Astral Nail Set as an aspect, it gains **two benefits** of your choice from the following list. You can mark the nail set to use one of your chosen benefits, or burn it to use *any* of the benefits listed below...

- **Twin Nails**: Link the fates of two similar creatures. What happens to one happens to the other.
- **Slink-Nail**: Link the senses of a crewmate and a nearby creature. The crewmate can perceive everything the creature does.
- **Solpod Nail**: Pierce a plant with this nail to make it grow at a greatly advanced rate.
- **Somnolent Nail**: A creature pierced with this nail falls into deep slumber.
- **Plummeting Nail**: Use this story to call a comet to the sky, and briefly weaken the veil of the spectral realm.
- **Long-Shadow Nail**: Use this story to temporarily pin something by its shadow. Allows the set to deal LR Salt damage for the duration of a scene once used.

Augur's Eyepiece 3-Track Complex Gear

A ratcheting monocle spilling over with gears and moving parts. Designed to hold several lenses, each one with different properties. When you choose this aspect, it gains two benefits of your choice from the following list...

- **Feathered Lens**: Gain a distant bird's-eye view of your current location.
- **Rainbow Quartz Lens**: Allows the viewer to peer into the spectral realm.
- **Cracked Lens**: Look around corners and through small gaps.
- **Sapphirine Lens**: See the sky above you, regardless of what's in the way.
- **Warped Lens**: See through illusions and deception.
- **Vexing Lens**: Gain a third-person view of yourself.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose augur as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Instinct, Sharps, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Flourish, Hunt, Outwit, Study, Sway, Tend, Rattle

Languages: Lyre-Bite, Highvin

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Gear Oil, Polished Glass Shard

Specimens: Solpod Seed, Glittering Spores

Whispers: Colliding Lights, From Her Slumber

Charts: Pre-Verdant Star Chart, Eclipse Calendar

Drive (Choose 1)

Take on an apprentice of astral readings

Navigate to a freshly-risen spit by the stars alone

Mire (Choose 1)

The stars grow dim, the sky distant

Even you struggle to trust your predictions

"The stars may hunger, but their appetite for our warmth is nothing compared to mine for the secrets they hold."

- Moka Tekerozi, tzelicrae augur

CANNONEER POST

A simple truth of the wilds: when your targets are oversized, make sure your weapons match. Seen so rarely on the wild waves as to be near-apocryphal, the average cannoneer makes it their job to combine the destructive potential of a deck weapon with the portability of... well, the portability of an extremely large and unwieldy thing.

Most cannoneers loot their weapons from the wrecks of unfortunate ships, in some cases even their own - while detaching such a large piece of machinery from deck-mounted housing has a habit of reducing the accuracy or potency, long hours of practice and clever engineering minimise the downsides as much as possible. Which isn't to say there aren't still downsides, as any heavy-weapons wielder will likely be quick to point out, but there are most certainly upsides that (supposedly) outweigh them.

Life on the Edge

Massively weighed down by their implements of choice, all it takes is a badly timed step on a patch of unruly thrash to send a cannoneer over the edge of a moving ship. Because of this inherent danger, many have adopted an attitude rarely seen across the waves - that it doesn't matter how heavy their gear is past a certain point, so they may as well armour up. Younger sailors that come across such an individual are often awed by their proclivity for standing out in the open, feet planted, a leviathan-sized target bearing down on them as they calmly line up their first shot.

What Makes a Cannon?

Cannoneers are defined primarily by the weapons they choose to wield, but despite the name they've earned themselves, it's rare to find one sporting what most wildsailors would think of as a 'true' cannon. While it's true that many of their weapons are looted from the decks of wrecked ships and adapted from there, some prefer to craft their own unique death-dealing implements from scratch. Explosives are commonplace, alchemically perfected so as to deal the maximum amount of damage without the threat of flame, but many stranger examples exist.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the cannoneer into your character, consider the following questions...

- Where did your weapons come from - were they salvaged or self-made (or both)?
- What's the largest creature you've taken down with a well-placed shot?
- How did you make the choice to weigh yourself down, and overcome the fear associated with it in a deep and shifting world?

Alternate Presentations

Though cannoneers are presented here as targeting leviathans and other large creatures with their weaponry, their gear (for the most part) works just as well against enemy ships and structures. Mixing the cannoneer with the crash could give an extremely proficient demolitions expert.

ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

Pure Muscle 4-Track Trait

You don't get to lug this kind of gear around without developing the muscle to go with it. Mire, Pressure, and Scrutiny effects can never cause you to cut when attempting strength or brawn-based actions.

Battering Ram 2-Track Trait

Though not famed for your melee prowess, there's a lot to be said for precise applications of weight. Increase impact on CQ attacks when you have a running start.

How It's Done 3-Track Trait

After dealing massive damage to a target, the next crewmate that attacks that target gains increased impact on their action.

Needle-Point 3-Track Trait

You may fire LR weapons at extreme distances that wouldn't normally be possible without cutting for difficulty. In addition, you never cut for precision or accuracy when targeting larger opponents or structures.

Me First! 4-Track Trait

Mark to hijack focus from a leviathan as it attacks your ship or a member of your crew (once per scene). Burn instead of marking to ignore the 'once per scene' limitation of this aspect for that hijacking.

Leaving a Mark 4-Track Trait

Mark mire to gain a whisper based on damage or an injury you've just dealt, supplied by the Firefly.

Oft-Rattled Braincase 3-Track Trait

When you roll a twist as part of an action that deals massive damage, you may choose to heal a mark of mire or clear a mark on any of your traits in addition to the usual effect.

Full Reef-Iron Plating 3-Track Gear

Whenever you would take massive damage from an attack of some kind aimed against you, you may burn a box on this gear's track to ignore it.

Salvaged Cannon 3-Track Complex Gear

What was once a deck-mounted weapon now sits in your hands, absent a ship yet retaining terrifying potency. Cannons deal high-impact LR Blast damage as standard. When you choose the Salvaged Cannon as an aspect, it gains a **base frame** from the following list...

- **Hullbreaker**: Increase your cannon's impact when targeting ships and structures.
- **Mazengara**: Increase your cannon's impact when targeting leviathans and protoleviathans.
- **Scattering Storm**: Your cannon shots affect multiple nearby targets.

A **sketchy alteration** from the following list...

- **Hazardcrank:** Mark while attacking to increase the cannon's impact against any target.
- **Adaptive Loader:** Consume a resource to temporarily change the cannon's damage type (with the new type tied to the resource consumed) until end of scene.
- **Explosive Exhaust:** The cannon's exhaust ports can be used to increase the impact of leaps and dashes.

And a **serious flaw** from the following list...

- **Dead Weight:** You take a cut on all actions made to jump, climb, or move at speed.
- **Ammunition Jam:** A disaster while firing jams the weapon until end of scene, making LR attacks impossible. Burn to unjam the cannon early.
- **Wild Thunder**: You can't use whispers in any way until end of scene after firing the cannon.
- **Barrel-Parasite**: Consume a piece of salvage at the end of any scene in which the cannon is fired. If you don't have salvage to consume, burn a box.

Loading Assistant 2-Track Companion

A lemur trained to crank handles and ready ammunition. Burn when firing a weapon that deals-high impact or massive damage to immediately fire a second shot using the same roll result.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose cannoneer as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Iron, Instinct, Teeth

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Brace, Break, Concoct, Hunt, Scavenge, Rattle, Wavewalk

Languages: Brasstongue, Old Hand, Signalling

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Twisted Metal, Firing Charges

Specimens: Pulverized Bone

Whispers: A Step Up, Unwise Decisions

Charts: A Route-Etched Casing

Drive (Choose 1)

Protect the crew from leviathan-sized threats

Stay calm in the face of overwhelming danger

Mire (Choose 1)

Backfire threatens, a promise of pain and noise

Your gear is too heavy even for you, dragging you down

"We all fall eventually. My goal is to make sure they go down before I do."

- Quiet-By-Sunlight, gau cannoneer

DIVER POST

Those for whom the call of the true deep is impossible to ignore, a yearning that runs to their very core.

Few wildsailors ever get to feel the real pressure of the depths - not the worries of the thrash, or the beginnings of surrounding weight that come with delving down into the tangle, but the cosseting darkness of the lower levels. Divers face that pressure head-on or, more commonly, through a sensible layer of leaf-rubber and polished amber. There are dangers unknown and leviathans unseen, and the diver readies themselves for all eventualities as best they can.

Lead Where Others Follow

Just as a hacker leads their crew through the thicker tangles and a navigator to islands half-glimpsed, a diver heads the charge down into the tangle and beyond. On a ship they tend to watch from the prow, better suited to sensing the unique dangers they train for. When leaving the relative safety of a submersible's deck they tend to stay connected to it in some way, either by chains or tubing or good old-fashioned rope.

And, in those situations where leaving the deck at depth is necessary, divers find the way not only to descend even farther, but to get the rest of their crew back up to the ship once they're done.

Up Above

Even though a diver's specialty draws them below the wavetops, most wildsailing crews - even those dedicated completely to exploring the depths - spend at least some time up on the canopy. When society beckons, the stories and whispers a diver collects in their time beneath make for fantastic trade goods. When exploring the new and the quake-born, the sights they've seen let them make connections that others miss. And on the long, warm afternoons of the high wild summer, they can always repurpose an oxygen tube or two into a makeshift fan.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the diver into your character, consider the following questions...

- How do you deal with the growing pressure as you descend? Is it a purely physical adaptation, or is there a mental aspect to it?
- Do you maintain your more complex gear yourself, or do you put your trust in the hands of dockside engineers (or maybe a group of deep-delving specialists)?
- What's the deepest you've been into the wildsea? To the tangle for sure, maybe the sink or the drown... Or even deeper?

Alternate Presentations

While the diver aims to explore the depths of the wilds, it can easily be slightly adapted into an explorer of sunken ruins and ancient wrecks instead, an extension of the dredger down into the true darkness. You might also decide to play a character that has risen from the depths, rather than one with the urge to explore them.

ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

Pressure Suit 3-Track Complex Gear

A clanking pressure suit designed to allow its user to explore the depths. When you choose the Pressure Suit as an aspect, it gains **two benefits** of your choice from the following list...

- **Reinforced Lifelink**: A tube snaking back to your ship. You're immune to the effects of bad air, and can act as if you have the Glide style for short distances at depth by swinging from the tubing.
- **Leaf-Rubber Seals**: Laced and caulked. You're immune to the effects of insect incursions, and invisible to threats that track by scent or pheromones.
- **Extraction Bellows**: Wheezing and perpetually almost clogged. You're immune to the effects of drifting spores. After a scene taken under Pressure, gain a gaseous or spore-based specimen resource.
- **Saltwater Piping**: Rarely chosen by anchored or ketra divers. You're immune to the effects of wandering spirits. Your suit also keeps you at a safe temperature no matter the surrounding heat or cold.
- **Amberglass Visor**: Flanked by firefly spotlights. You can see almost perfectly in utter darkness, and can shine bright light in a narrow beam ahead of you that cuts through spores, murk, and mists.
- **Caterpillar Chains**: Sometimes slow surety is best. Reduce cut by one for you and your crewmates on all movement through the sink or drown.
- **Counterframe**: Built to withstand the crush and the surge. You have resistance to the effects of crezzerin, and to Pressure-based damage and effects.

And **one drawback**...

- **Coiled Tubing**: You're weak to both Spike damage and Keen damage.
- **Rusting Joints**: Cut when attempting movement-based actions requiring speed or stealth.
- **Limited Air**: Mark at the end of every scene you spend at depth without direct access to your own ship, a lowport, or a source of clean surface-grade air.

Cathedral Lungs 2-Track Trait

You're immune to the effects of bad air, and your voice can carry far farther than usual. You will always be heard, and can 'see' via echolocation even in complete darkness.

Paths in the Dark 4-Track Trait

When one of your crew uses a chart to help traverse the tangle (or any deeper area) during a journey, add an extra die to each watch roll and take the result you prefer.

Dancing on the Edge 3-Track Trait

When operating under Pressure, treat disasters as conflicts while moving through the waves.

Ragged Dive-Clothes 4-Track Gear

You're resistant to the hazardous effects of crezzerin exposure. Mark to become immune to crezzerin for the duration of a scene.

Deeps-Badger Claws 3-Track Gear

Used by their original owners to carve out places of safety amongst the lower regions of the waves. Deals CQ Keen damage, and you can use a task to lower the effective Pressure Level of your immediate surroundings by one.

Serrospear 2-Track Gear

A rotating blade lubricated with sizzling chemicals, safely removed from the wielder by a lengthy haft. Deals CQ Serrated or Acid damage, and increases impact on cutting through branches and vines.

Winch-Rifle 3-Track Gear

A more powerful and direct form of the usual grappling hook. Deals LR Spike damage, and the tethered projectiles can be used to aid in climbing or swinging after being successfully anchored.

Chakio 2-Track Companion

A weasel-like mammal bred to find handholds and safe routes. When you would cut for manoeuvring under the effects of Pressure, ignore it and increase impact instead.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose diver as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Iron, Teeth, Tides

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Brace, Concoct, Delve, Hack, Sense, Wavewalk, Vault
Languages: Signalling, Highvin

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Length of Chain
Specimens: Viper Skin, Badger Teeth
Whispers: Strangling Branches, Surrounded
Charts: A Carved Millstone, A Closely-Written Logbook

Drive (Choose 1)

Glimpse the Under-Eaves with your own eyes... and live
Give aid to lowports and other colonies at depth

Mire (Choose 1)

Chains rust and seals crumble
The air is too close, too hot, too full of lost voices

"Sweat and swarms, teeth and territories... The world below the waves is even harsher than the world atop them."

- Lestrito Warner, ketra diver

KITESAILOR POST

Masters of the endless blue, kitesailors learn to put their trust in thermals, gusts, and painted fabric as they soar the skyways with unparalleled freedom.

Just as divers rely on their leaf-rubber seals and crezzerproofed suits, kitesailors rely (for the most part, at least) on their metal-and-fabric kites, the often ostentatious decoration a useful distraction from how little material it is that keeps them safely aloft.

But a kitesailor is more than their equipment. It takes a special kind of individual to choose, voluntarily, to travel the expanse of the skies without a firm deck beneath their feet. For some it's an expression of joyous recklessness, for others a way of meeting a challenge that the waves below can no longer provide, and for some, perhaps, merely a way to seek solitude among the clouds from time to time.

A Great Deal of Trust

Though there are many methods of personal locomotion to carry an individual across the rustling waves, none perhaps are more dangerous than the kitesail. Just large enough to allow their users to drift down to solid ground from absurd heights, a kite's true strength is in its flexibility and portability. They're compact enough to be folded or snapped open in an instant, and there's a lot to be said for the ability to leap from a ship's deck and travel skyward rather than down to the Under-Eaves at a moment's notice.

Without a Kite

There are situations where taking to the air would be more of a danger or hindrance than a boon, but although a kitesailor might be hampered by these conditions, they are by no means useless. Many possess an incredible knowledge of, or instinct for, the wild ways of the skies, able to predict or identify the movements of air or impending changes in weather that might affect their ship or the rest of their crew. Some are experts in avian or insect predation and habits, and yet others have senses, honed by the void, that would baffle even the most dedicated of arconauts.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the kitesailor into your character, consider the following questions...

- Was your first flight a success or a failure and, if it was a failure, how did you survive to make a second attempt?
- How do you pattern your kite, and what's the significance behind that patterning?
- When you're aloft it's likely that all eyes will be on you, the ones you're aware of and the ones that you're not. How do you deal with the scrutiny of it all, up in the blue?

Alternate Presentations

There are already non-standard presentations on offer in the kitesailor aspects on the opposite page, including the ability to use balloons and mechanical wings if you so choose, but many of the kitesailor's abilities can easily be given a more organic skew. Consider creating an avian creature and using the information here as the basis of a bloodline choice, perhaps, or as an arconautic experience harnessed and internalised.

ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

Kitesail 2-Track Complex Gear

A folding kite designed to allow its user to explore the skies. You gain the Rush and Glide styles. When you choose the Kitesail as an aspect, it also gains **two benefits** of your choice from the following list...

- **Drake**: Increase impact and ignore cut on aerial stunts performed in thermals and updraughts.
- **Raptor**: Increase impact and ignore cut on aerial stunts performed favourable winds.
- **Chemjet**: Consume a source of fuel to gain the Soar style for a short time.
- **Hinge Array**: Gain the Flap style.
- **Thundering**: Treat storms and electrical disturbances as a positive condition. Your kitesail can deal CQ Volt damage.
- **Stunt Kite**: Treat conflicts as triumphs when performing aerial stunts.
- **Combat Kite**: Your kitesail can deal both Blunt and Keen damage.
- **Cometmoth**: Your flight and gliding are both far faster than usual.
- **Feathered**: You're weak to Flame, but treat conflicts as triumphs when hunting while airborne or diving in for an aggressive action.
- **Sturdy**: Add one box to the kitesail's track.

Born for the Skies 2-Track Trait

If you would cut on a roll made to manoeuvre or fight due to the Scrutiny track, ignore it and increase the impact of your action instead.

Emergency Repairs 2-Track Trait

Hijack and consume a piece of appropriate salvage to remove a mark from one of your gear aspects instantly, no more than once per scene.

Snapdragon's Fervour 2-Track Trait

Add a beneficial tag to any resources you acquire while flying or falling.

The Seventh Sense 4-Track Trait

You are attuned to the winds, and can see updraughts and gusts moments before they occur. Use a task to deepen your connection to the atmosphere, learning about future changes in weather or temperature.

Wingtip Swing 4-Track Trait

A fighting style designed for aerial combat. Deals CQ Keen damage, and lets you treat conflicts as triumphs when rolling to engage an opponent while airborne.

Flight Visor 3-Track Gear

You can see clearly through rain, storms, and clouds, and can see detail at a far greater distance than usual.

Buoyloon 4-Track Gear

A chemical compression chamber and attached gasbag that can send you rocketing skyward. Burn to gain the Float and Hover styles, and immediately ascend at a rapid pace if you wish.

Scatterbombs 3-Track Gear

Deal LR Blast or Frost damage, and can hit multiple nearby targets when used from an elevated position.

Livesail 3-Track Companion

A biological companion that tolerates being used as a kitesail. Consume a specimen to gain the Rush and Soar styles until end of scene.

Gull of Hearts 3-Track Companion

Brave but fragile, a reliable aerial companion. Clear a mark or burn from one of the watchul eyes whenever you sight a wonder or horror while airborne.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose kitesailor as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Grace, Instinct, Sharps

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Flourish, Hunt, Outwit, Rattle, Sense, Study, Vault

Languages: Highvin, Signalling, Old Hand

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Bolt of Fabric, Colourful Dyes

Specimens: Bottled Cloud, Atmosphere Dragonflies

Whispers: True Freedom, Under the Eye

Charts: A View From Above, A Gustway Chart

Drive (Choose 1)

Chart new highports, connecting distant cultures

Find a way to soar without a kitesail or companion

Mire (Choose 1)

The winds skirt you, ever out of reach

Landings are clumsy; take-offs are worse

MARKETEER POST

Merchants whose lives in bazaars and auction houses have taught them to squeeze every bit of value out of port and providence alike.

While the last vestiges of currency adorn Writling crowns or rot in the darkness under eaves, commerce is alive and well on the lignin tide. Such is the domain of marketeers: expert traders, efficient logisticians, and passable diplomats who have made their place at the center of spit-side life as the wildsea's foremost go-betweens.

Yet for those brave vendors seeking the greatest profit on their wares, the cheapest place to acquire them is at the source. They find themselves delving into ancient ruins, and skinning beasts side by side with dredgers, hunters, and other like-minded opportunists, saving the most pragmatic trinkets for themselves and selling the rest.

The Business of Booming

They say a real marketeer can turn a handful of scratch into a freighter full of cargo in a season or two of trading, but most have larger dreams than owning a big ship. They long for luxuries that simply can't be produced while folks are struggling to survive amidst the waves. As such, these ship-based wildsea merchants spend much of their time organizing markets, local supply chains, and trade routes between ports in the hopes that people can get not only what they need; but also all that they want.

A Deal's a Deal

Like wordbearers, marketeers live and die by their word. While a merchant is welcome to drive a hard bargain for their services, reneging on a contract or handshake after a deal has been struck is considered dishonorable and bad for business. Other marketeers have a vested interest in bringing those who give them a poor name to justice.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the marketeer into your character, consider the following questions...

- Do you specialize in a certain commodity? Some marketeers may know all about exotic produce, while others deal strictly in antiquities.
- How did you hone your bartering abilities? Did you have a mentor willing to instruct you in the intricacies of the commercial arts, or do you haggle purely on instinct?
- Did you ever have a deal go wrong? Did it leave you in debt to someone dangerous, or are you the one seeking to collect?

Alternate Presentations

Although most marketeers have earned their way across the waves, some of their more entitled aspects and their taste for the finer things would suit a stereotypically arrogant noble as well. On the other hand, the marketeer could be a vagrant and a fool: able to ingratiate themselves with the rich and powerful, but quickly draining their friends' material wealth.

ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

Aureate Kiss 4-Track Trait

Some say it's a curse, you say the only thing better than a silver tongue is a golden one. Your bites deal CQ Salt damage. You can also use a task to swallow a resource and recover it with the *Golden* tag, but imbibing food and drink always inflicts mire.

Oligarch 3-Track Trait

You're regarded with awe by merchants and artisans of all sorts. You ask for and receive no discounts, and they withhold no wares or information from you - you never cut when attempting to deal or bargain.

Supplying Demand 3-Track Trait

You can create a need where there was none before. Mark to make a mundane object intriguing and desirable for the scene. Burn to turn the object into an obsession.

Odds Broker 2-Track Trait

Fate is a gambler, and you know how to place bets in her game. Once per scene you can call the result of a roll before it's made (either triumph, conflict, or disaster). If you call it correctly, gain a relevant resource.

Loan Wolf 3-Track Trait

You have a fearsome reputation for collecting on debts owed to you. Repayments and rewards always come with interest (such as a resource or favor).

Lingua Fortunae 3-Track Trait

Fluency and cultural understanding can mean the difference between trading for a jagserry and trading for a stag berry. Treat conflicts as triumphs whenever you acquire a resource using a language other than Low Sour.

Record of Accounting 3-Track Gear

Your list of receipts and lines of credit fill multiple volumes, allowing you to collect dividends almost anywhere. Whenever you dock at port, gain either two common local resources, or a single rare local resource.

Tariffigy 4-Track Gear

A spirit of greed anchored to a personal object that protects you—for a price. Consume a resource to gain resistance to any instance of damage. If the resource has a valuable tag (such as *Heirloom*), gain immunity instead.

Protectionism Plan 2-Track Gear

A strict budget scrawled across a ledger in crimson, proving that resourcefulness and austerity can sometimes be painful. Once per scene you may mark one of your aspects, or your crewmates' with their permission, to acquire a resource related to that aspect.

Pidgin Eggs 3-Track Gear

An ample supply of protein gathered from fowl mimics. Use a task to eat one, gaining two temporary ranks in a language of your choice until you use this aspect again.

Hazardous Goods 3-Track Gear

It's the merchant of death that chooses who suffers, and how. You can deal two types of LR damage from the following list: Blunt, Spike, Blast, Toxin, or Salt. Mark this gear in port to acquire a dangerous resource.

Warebear 4-Track Companion

An entrepreneurial raccoon-dog, exiled by its pack for gathering greenery rather than food. Consume any two resources to gain a leaf-based specimen with the *Medicinal*, *Spectral*, *Poisonous*, or *Mesmeric* tag.

Trade Winds 1-Track Companion

A spirited zephyr at your back that delights in deals. Consume a resource to increase impact on movement related actions for the duration of a scene. Increase your ship's speed rating by 1 while it has cargo aboard.

Viridian Viper 2-Track Companion

A wily serpent that's as cunning as you are. Deals CQ Toxin damage. Mark to gain a specimen, *Snake-Oil*.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose marketeer as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Instinct, Sharps, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Delve, Flourish, Harvest, Outwit, Scavenge, Study, Sway

Languages: Brasstongue, Highvin

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Ornate Snuff-Box, Set of Copper Scales

Specimens: Actuarial Sprout, Jewel Beetles

Whispers: Deep Pockets, Exponential Growth

Charts: A Summary of Debts, A Punchcard Appraisal

Drive (Choose 1)

Get a trade route named after you

Strike a deal that settles a long-standing feud

Mire (Choose 1)

Your greed is insatiable - you *need* more

No one's buying what you're selling

"You want how much amber for it? Even if your last promised crate really was 'carried off by makadrills', I've never seen worse copper in my life. I'll give you this mask, and warn every pirate in the area that your junk isn't worth stealing. Final offer. "

Sirra Piscino, ardent marketeer

PILOT POST

It's not all about speed, that dash to new horizons, but speed certainly plays a part.

Journeys across the rustling waves are long enough that, after a while, everyone's expected to take a turn at the helm. It's not that hard, when you get down to it; steer the ship, beeline towards thicker, more reliable patches of the thrash and tangle, and avoid the yawning voids of rifts when they unexpectedly loom below you. There's more to it, if you've got the skill, but keep those three basic guidelines in mind and you're golden ninety percent of the time.

Pilots are the ones that take it further.

Why stay clear of rifts when you can ride their rim, skirting chasms at spitting distance? Why stick to the safer waves when you can cut through the more dangerous for a cleaner, faster route? And why simply steer, when you can play the minute movements of the wheel like a bard strums their trisketar? The branches aren't there to be sailed; they're there to be *bested*.

One With The Ship

It's the construction of a wavecutter that keeps it afloat, but it's the mind behind the helm that makes it move. Well, that and the engines. And the bite. And the fuel.

Technicalities aside, the best pilots treat their ships as an extension of their own body. Some push this into spiritual or arconautic territory, but for most it's an expression of skill and time invested - they wear the ship like a glove, attuned to the smallest changes in condition whether at the helm or asleep in their bunk.

Routes & Planning

Picking out paths is a navigator's job, and clearing them is the domain of the hacker. But a true pilot straddles these disparate disciplines, making split-second decisions in response not to lines on a map, but the wind-tossed topography of the wavetops around them. Charts are all well and good, and jagserries are reliable (if not exactly safe), but the ship itself is the most potent tool in a frequent traveller's arsenal.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the pilot into your character, consider the following questions...

- How many ships have you sailed on, and have you always been the one most often behind the wheel?
- What's your opinion on outriders? A needless addition, or a new challenge to be met?
- Have you ever lost a ship, or even a member of the crew, after a bad decision taken at just the wrong moment? If so, what kind of effect has it had on you?

Alternate Presentations

Pilot aspects focus on the vessels they travel on, but with a little tinkering they can work for a confident specialist in outriders, or even rideable beasts. You could also play up the unusual rituals that some pilots slip into, incorporating arconautic or spectral hues.

ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During Quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

Home Deck Advantage 3-Track Trait

You increase impact on all actions taken to fight and defend against foes that have boarded your ship.

Hold On To Your Hats 4-Track Trait

You may mark this aspect while near or at the helm of a ship to perform a difficult manoeuvre or aerial stunt unerringly, without making a ratings roll. Burning this aspect allows you to hijack focus for this action.

Air of Competency 1-Track Trait

When you take this trait, choose two ratings from the following six: Armour, Seals, Speed, Saws, Stealth, and Tilt. Increase both of these ratings by one while you're aboard your own ship.

The Other Left 4-Track Trait

Mark to allow you, or a crewmate, to treat a disaster on a ratings roll as a conflict instead.

Situational Awareness 2-Track Trait

A mixture of gut feeling and pattern recognition tells you more than most when approaching the unknown. The Firefly makes threat rolls out in the open when determining the level of danger during a journey.

Creakophony 3-Track Trait

You are immediately aware of any Pressure-based invasion of your ship (from spores and spirits to bad air and insects), and your ship also has two additional boxes on any Pressure track as long as you're aboard.

Hullcradle 2-Track Trait

A true nautical soul. You're weak to Salt, but can take the helm and steer the ship from any part of your vessel, even belowdecks. Your ship is also immune to wandering spirits, and invisible to spirit-based watchful eyes.

Familiar Routes 1-Track Trait

Whenever you or an ally would consume a chart, make a 1d6 fortune roll. On a 6, that chart is not consumed and instead gains the *Familiar* tag.

Copper-Knot Scarf 2-Track Gear

Threaded with a filigree of engine wiring. Deals CQ Volt damage, and you're resistant to Volt damage yourself. When under Pressure, you're also resistant to the harmful effects of crezzerin.

Nautic Cowl & Goggles 2-Track Gear

Traditional dress for pilots expecting hostile skies. You can see through mists, clouds, and sporeclouds clearly, and you're resistant to damage and effects caused by poor atmospheric and environmental conditions.

Eye-Scraper Jerky 4-Track Gear

Laced with mild psychoactive chemicals to heighten alertness. Mark to gain a burst of detailed information about something in the distance (supplied by the Firefly), and you never need to rest or sleep on journeys.

Unwrecker's Wrench 3-Track Gear

Deals CQ Blunt damage. Whenever your ship would suffer structural damage, reduce the number of boxes on the damage track by two.

Hushed Parakeet 3-Track Companion

You may mark this companion to remove a single cut result from any roll that would be affected by Scrutiny.

Ratwork Refugees 3-Track Companion

Saved from a broken cluster and trained to help more than they hinder. Consume a specimen to reduce one of your ship's ratings by one and boost another by two. This change lasts until you consume another specimen in this way, or until the end of a jouney.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose pilot as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Iron, Grace, Tides

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Brace, Break, Flourish, Scavenge, Sway, Rattle, Wavewalk

Languages: Brasstongue, Signalling

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Broken Ship's Wheel, Colourful Flags

Specimens: Brandy Like Tar, Rat's Skull, Apple Hardtack

Whispers: Going Boldly, Just Over The Next Rise

Charts: A Hasty Sketch of Branches

Drive (Choose 1)

To protect the ship from marauding piratical sorts

To have a route, once thought impossible to traverse, named after you

Mire (Choose 1)

There are moments where the controls seem unfamiliar

Ship engines misfire and leak in you presence

"Anyone can get from A to B, if they're lucky enough. But it takes real skill to do it consistently."

- Tiko Teriko, tzelicrae pilot

RATTLEWING POST

Hands that grasp at new ideas rarely come away empty.

The wilds has never failed to provide the junk and salvage necessary for a mechanically-minded sort to piece together something new, but the advent of air travel lit a metaphorical fire in the minds of some who had never before looked higher than the wavetops. Those same old materials that would once have set them thinking on punchcard assistants and complicated weapons now seemed ripe for new methods of flight, and an entirely new breed of engineer was born: the rattlewing.

Most rattlewings produce for themselves and their crewmates, but few can resist the allure of designing the *next big thing*. Or, at least, trying to - no matter how much testing is involved, and how many safety protocols adhered to, the reality is that convenient skyward travel may be centuries away.

Your Own Best Test Subject

Though some tried and true designs are already being spread by word of mouth and live demonstration, copying another's ingenuity just doesn't have the same flair as creating something that's entirely your own. The most effective rattlewings aren't afraid to cobble something together deckside and throw themselves over the rail to test it, and the best even manage to make their way back to iron out any kinks their test flights reveal.

Not Just For The Blue

Most assume that rattlewings all have their ambitions aimed firmly cloudward, but a good deal of them design as much for the exploration of the depths as they do the heights. The sink and drown's unreliable terrain invites just as many opportunities for an aeronaut as it does a diver, especially in areas where the branches thin out and trunks loom distant in the darkness.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the rattlewing into your character, consider the following questions...

- How was your first test flight, and did it leave any scars that you wear to this day?
- Are you drawn more to the open skies or the crowded depths, and how much of a bearing does this have on the creations you present to the world?
- Were you a rattlehand in the days before airships and kitesails, motivated to change by modern trends? Or was personal flight your first venture into the art of turning trash into treasure?

Alternate Presentations

Most rattlewings are assumed to be inventive types with an eye for mechanical application, but there's always the opportunity to create a character that ascends through instinct alone - an aeronaut by trial and error, ignoring potential harm and chasing elusive aerial perfection that nobody else seems able to offer you.

ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

Aviotinker 1-Track Trait

Use a task to add a takeoff or flight style of your choice to any aspect, belonging to you or a companion, that already has a style of some kind. This addition lasts until replaced by another using Aviotinker, but a character can only benefit from one of these additions at a time.

On Awkward Wings 3-Track Trait

On completion of a creation, you may consume an additional piece of salvage to add the Rush and Flap styles to it in addition to any existing benefits, and reduce the length of the creation's track by one box.

Emergency Innovation 4-Track Trait

You can craft using only one resource (rather than the usual minimum of two) when under Pressure, or when at least one watchful eye is marked.

More Than Maintenance 3-Track Trait

No ship of yours is safe from continual improvement. Choose a takeoff or flight style from the following list: Rush, Float, Hover, Glide, Flap, or Soar. Any ship you crew that already has lift systems gains this chosen style in addition to any existing styles.

The Purr and the Claw 4-Track Trait

Any ship you crew ignores the usual damage dealt by a lift system's takeoff cost in all but the most terrible atmospheric or environmental conditions.

Enlightening Chaff 3-Track Gear

Mark to make thermals, air currents, and magnetic forces in your area visible for a short time. You and your companions treat disasters as conflicts when using these to aid with flight-related rolls.

Deadening Bolt 2-Track Gear

Mark to render flight, by any means, impossible in your vicinity for a short time. Burn to do the same, but excluding you and your companions from the effect.

Portable Chemicovent 3-Track Gear

You gain Frost resistance, and both you and any nearby allies reduce the negative effects of windchill and extreme cold. You may also mark to create a temporary updraught around and above you.

Skimmers 2-Track Gear

For some it's the thrill of speed that draws them to invention, whether airborne or not. Increase impact on actions taken to sprint, slide, or chase, and you gain the Rush takeoff style (but no additional flight style).

Reef-Iron Pinions 3-Track Gear

Jagged, noisy, and spectacular. You gain the Rush and Flap styles, and can deal CQ Serrated damage, but cut whenever you attempt stealthy or quiet activities.

Ironroot Repulsors 2-Track Gear

Useless for the skies, but perfect for the depths. You gain the Float, Hover, and Glide styles while close to an ironroot's trunk or branches.

Vortex Aerofans 2-Track Gear

A logical next step for the classic rattlehand vortex box. You gain the Float and Hover styles, and can attack with sudden bursts of air dealing LR Blast damage.

Raka-Jets 3-Track Gear

A tool most often used by airborne pirates to launch surprise attacks, these wrist- or ankle-mounted jets allow you to mark them for either a burst of extreme aerial speed or a jet-accelerated CQ strike, dealing increased impact with one of your existing damage types.

Mobile Scrapbox 1-Track Companion

A hovering iron chest that follows you closely, occasionally knocking into your ankles. Use a task to make a 1d6 fortune roll. On a 1, 2, or 3, you gain no benefit. On a 4 or 5, you gain one piece of salvage. On a 6, you gain two pieces of salvage. The resources you gain are provided by the Firefly.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose rattlewing as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Iron, Sharps, Tides

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Brace, Concoct, Delve, Rattle, Scavenge, Study, Vault

Languages: Brasstongue, Signalling, Old Hand

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Broken Mechanical Wing, Pre-V Coupling

Specimens: Vat of Natural Acid, Hollow Bones

Whispers: The Mother of All, Breaking New Ground

Charts: An Experimental Schematic, A Chart of Twisting Pathways

Drive (Choose 1)

Rediscover a pre-V method of flight

Create a contraption that earns you widespread fame

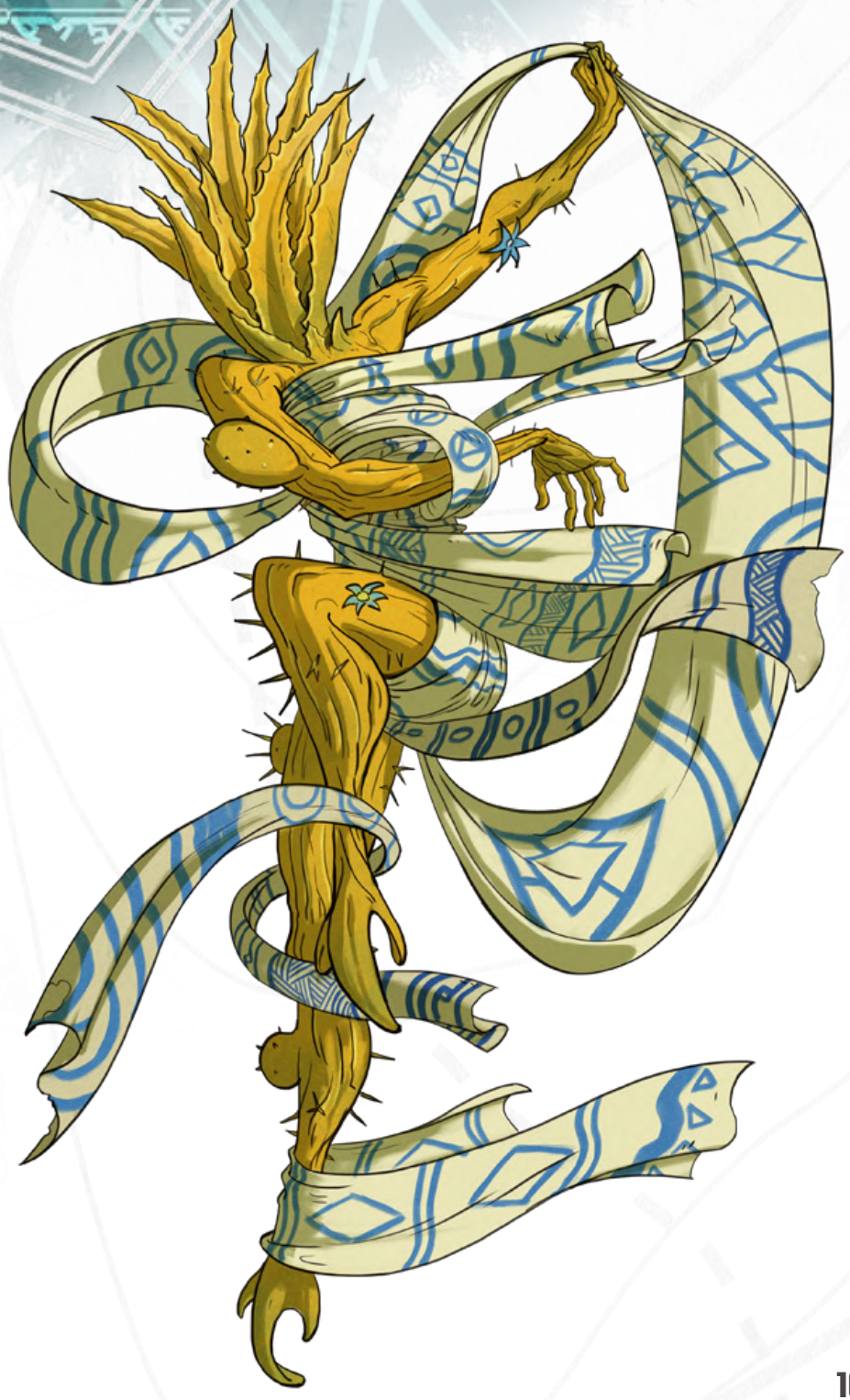
Mire (Choose 1)

Ominous creaks and rattles issue forth from all machinery in your presence

Your spirit seems firmly nailed to the ground

"The blue, the depths - it makes no difference in the end. A horizon is a horizon, and a new one is always worth exploring."

- Leif Angstrawl, ketra rattlewing



RAVELLER POST

Controllers of phantom cloth and enspirited fur, blending elegant materials and soulstuff into a flowing kinetic marvel.

The average raveller is somewhere between weaver, medium, and dancer, snaring the essence of movement from the world of the wilds and folding it into the threads and furs. They're distinguished by their clothing, most often - moving independently of the wind, their scarves twisting and coiling around them or the hems of their jackets prowling around their ankles like hungry wolves.

But a raveller is more than the threads they wear; many hold an impressive understanding of the spirit world, combining this with the practical knowledge of thread and needle needed by a master clothier. Their art is far less niche than it first appears, and always undeniably impressive when demonstrated.

Style & Substance

For most ravellers, the first choice they make as they walk the path is whether to concentrate on woven fabrics or once-living furs. The former tend to be seen as more elegant, silks and canvases whirling around them as they leap and dance and fight, the latter more bestial in their approach as they draw from memories of claw and tooth. But this dichotomy is by no means all-encompassing - a fabric-based raveller might sew their sailcloth ghast with sawteeth and wreckjunk to create a blood-stained dervish, just as a fur-based raveller could surround themselves with pantherskin as they steal softly through the night.

Woven Realities

Spend long enough thinking of the world as a series of materials to be sewn together and you'll catch glimpses, here and there, of what it might be when it's torn apart. Some ravellers eschew their usual focus on the physical and dive headlong into the hidden spaces behind the veil, turning their delicate needles to tasks that should be impossible.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the raveller into your character, consider the following questions...

- Do you use fur, cloth, or nothing at all to make your mark on the world?
- So many colours, so many patterns, a palette of nature to choose from - when you dance and spin, what do your allies see in the blur?
- Where's your limit? Is there a soul that can't be sewn, a pattern you won't follow?

Alternate Presentations

Raveller aspects, especially their complex aspects, work really well even if you remove the element of fur and fabric from them, substituting other materials instead. Alternatively you can leave out the spirituality that comes as standard with this post and instead focus on the movement, having a raveller able to manipulate their fabrics using nothing but elegance and training.

ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

Off the Cuff 4-Track Trait

Whatever clothing you wear ripples with inner life, sometimes even acting on its own accord... Not always in the most helpful ways, though. Treat your clothes as an extra limb, capable of manipulating additional objects.

To Shreds 4-Track Trait

You see the threads that bind reality to whatever lies beyond the veil. Mark mire to slice or tear a usually resilient material as if it were cheap cloth.

The Threads That Bind 2-Track Trait

The ragged edges of your clothing unravel into fluttering tendrils of cloth. Treat conflicts as triumphs when climbing or brachiating, and increase impact when attempting to tangle, trip or ensnare a nearby foe.

Anchoring Thimble 3-Track Gear

You can use a task to tie a spirit to one of your resources, consuming the resource and anchoring the spirit.

Chiraloth 3-Track Gear

Mark to have clothes restitch themselves to mimic a uniform or piece of unique attire from a wildsea group or faction. Burn for a perfect, precise visual recreation.

The Loom 3-Track Gear

A large contraption of needles, pattern-cards, and rolling drums. Treat disasters as conflicts when crafting or repairing anything with a fabric-based resource.

Grappling Needle 3-Track Gear

An oversized needle and thread, used to aid with swinging and climbing. Deals LR Spike damage.

Plush Pal 4-Track Companion

With rough-cut stuffing, buttons for eyes and a fledgling soul, the plush pal is an effective and adorable friend.

Porcuquill 3-Track Companion

A spiny little critter nestled among your clothes. Mark to produce a rare resource, *Perfect Needle*.

Ravelliko 2-Track Complex Companion

A writhing bundle of living fabric that wears you as much as you wear it. When you choose the Ravelliko as an aspect, it gains **two benefits** of your choice from the following list...

- **Words in Thread**: The Ravelliko can rapidly stitch elegant writing across itself to communicate directly (in any language you speak).
- **Crawlscarf**: The Ravelliko holds you just above the ground, moving you around with a silent, silken step.
- **Unpick**: Use a task to gain a resource, *Fine Thread* or *Coarse Fabric*.
- **Spirit of Silk**: Deals Salt damage at CQ or LR.
- **Sewed Edging**: Deals Keen damage at CQ or LR.
- **Living Dye**: The Ravelliko's colours swirl in vibrant, mesmeric, or camouflaging patterns.
- **Catchsail**: Your Ravelliko can catch the winds - mark to gain the Rush and Glide styles until end of scene.

Memorial Fur 2-Track Complex Companion

A stark reminder of death and beauty, a fur taken from a once-great beast that now blankets and protects you. When you choose the Memorial Fur as an aspect, it gains **two benefits** of your choice from the following list...

- **Leftover Eyes**: You have 360 degree vision, and reduce the impact of any effect that makes it more difficult for you to see.
- **Feral Memory**: Mark to gain two temporary ranks in a skill related to the animal your fur was taken from. These ranks last until end of scene.
- **Leathern**: You're resistant to Keen and Frost damage.
- **Jaws & Claws**: Deals CQ Spike or Serrated damage (choose when you gain this aspect).
- **Sinewed**: Treat conflicts as triumphs when leaping.
- **The Beast Without**: When you mark the last box on this aspect's track, instantly hijack focus. An attack made with this focus has increased impact.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose raveller as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Grace, Sharps, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Delve, Flourish, Outwit, Rattle, Study, Sway, Vault

Languages: Highvin, Lyrebite, Signalling

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Rusted Needles, Coil of Thread, Ragged Silk

Specimens: Dyeberries, Patch-Ouli

Whispers: Ravel and Return, Tied Together

Charts: A Tapestry Map, A Knotted Navi-String

Drive (Choose 1)

Clothe a being that has never been clothed

Acquire a perfect leviathan pelt

Mire (Choose 1)

Your threads snap and fray when out of sight

Time is a tangled tapestry, your presence an uneasy blade

"Not everything is connected...
But everything could be."

Hapteriz Nova, mothryn raveller

SMUGGLER POST

Relocators of things that, perhaps, should not really be relocated.

There are few common laws that hold true across the wild waves - respecting and avoiding fire is near-omnipresent, as is a healthy fear of the greatest depths (even among those that plumb the lesser deep by choice). But there are other conventions that hold more or less true, and that theft and smuggling are punished is one of them.

Smugglers tend to see it as their duty to circumvent such problems, usually for healthy scrap- or treasure-based profits. They pair well with dredgers and divers, allowing them to more easily transport their most dangerous finds to places that would likely turn them away or impose heavy tithes on their movement through port.

Low, High, and All In Between

The most valuable commodities for those living atop the rustling waves are objects and oddities that can only be found deep beneath them, or far above. These cargo items are risky to transport, either because of the danger inherent in acquiring and handling them, or in the attention they bring. What kind of person would steal a leviathan egg, swaddle it in blankets and binding-rope, and ferry it from the sink all the way up to an island floating high above the waves? The kind of person that knows how much such a service is worth, that's who.

Infamy, or the Lack of It

Much like pirates, the most successful smugglers fall into one of two camps. They're either bold, brash, and recognisable, trading on their fame for opportunity and risking run-ins with creditors and rag-tag law enforcers, or completely unknown and indistinguishable (but no less effective for it). Many smugglers work opportunistically, tagging along with a crew of otherwise reasonably reputable sorts and making a little profit on the side as they move from port to port, relying on their companions to keep them out of excessive trouble and sharing the additional wealth they bring in amongst all on the ship. Some, of course, are more secretive - maybe their companions don't know where they steal off to in the dead of night, or why they're so protective of that particular box down in the hold...

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the smuggler into your character, consider the following questions...

- Are you famous, storied, or a shadow in the night?
- Do you specialise in any particular kind of cargo, and if so, how do the rest of your crew help with acquiring and safeguarding it?
- Is there anyone out there on the waves that's expecting something from you that you might never be able to bring? If so, what is it, and why?

Alternate Presentations

If you're going for a more classic approach to your weird fantasy, the smuggler (like the dredger) can work effectively in the sphere normally occupied by a rogue or thief. They also make good piratical combatants, and could be raiderly types if one so wished.

ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

Silverleaf Tongue 3-Track Trait

Treat disasters as conflicts when conversing or outwitting pirates, auditors, and other smugglers.

Easy Come, Easy Go 4-Track Trait

Using your resources as makeshift weapons in combat doesn't risk damaging or destroying them (though some actions might involve you having to pick them up again).

Know How to Pack It 3-Track Trait

Damage to your ship never damages the cargo within it. Your cargo space (and cargo space only) is additionally resistant to insect incursions and drifting spores.

Winning Smile 4-Track Trait

Even those that despise you know you sometimes keep your word. Consume a whisper to earn a modicum of trust where it shouldn't be, albeit temporarily.

Wrapped in Rippling Words 4-Track Trait

Sometimes it's better to confuse. Consume a whisper to briefly disguise your face, voice, and clothes, becoming a chameleonesque ripple to eyes and memory.

Balancing Act 3-Track Trait

Salvage never seems to weigh you down. When you take damage to an aspect, you can reduce the number of marks by one by adding a negative tag to one of your resources (if the resource already has a negative tag, destroy it instead).

Fleet-Heel 4-Track Trait

Once per scene, when the final box is marked on a secret or hidden track, hijack focus to act in the last moment possible before the change it brings.

Wickless Lantern 2-Track Gear

The amber eyepiece accompanying this lantern allows you to see by the light it remembers shedding. You can see perfectly in darkness, and increase impact when sneaking or staying hidden in dim areas.

Commanding Tricorn 4-Track Gear

Ignore mire caused by your own crewmates or undercrew, and reduce the impact of Pressure effects that would affect the undercrew.

Disarming Cutlass 3-Track Gear

Deals CQ Keen damage, and increase impact when attempting to disarm a foe.

Axehead Blunderbuss 2-Track Gear

Deals CQ Blunt or Hewing damage to multiple nearby targets at once.

Chemical Flashbangs 4-Track Gear

Deal LR Blast damage, or mark to produce a blinding flash that affects multiple targets.

Multi-Hued Moths 3-Track Companion

Used to send and interpret messages in signalling at extreme range - the moths are trained to send their messages directionally, and such messages are almost invisible to anyone other than the target.

Crafty Lemurs 2-Track Companion

Once per montage, identify the location of a nearby piece of valuable material that can be taken as cargo (details supplied by the Firefly).

Smuggle Bug 3-Track Companion

A large beetle that can store things in its stomach, safe from digestion and prying eyes.

A Fragment of an Old Friend 3-Track Companion

Anchored to something small but valuable on your person, this spirit fades restlessly in and out of existence. Never cut when handling dangerous cargo, and you have resistance to all damage dealt by such items.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose smuggler as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Grace, Tides, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Delve, Flourish, Outwit, Scavenge, Study, Sway, Vault

Languages: Brasstongue, Raka Spit, Signalling, Old Hand, Knock

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: An Unopened Strongbox, A Coil of Rope

Specimens: Chewing Tabak, Genuine Ektus Teeth

Whispers: Up For Air, Darkness Recedes

Charts: A Cross-Hatched Treasure-Map, A Smuggler's Journal, A Broken Compass

Drive (Choose 1)

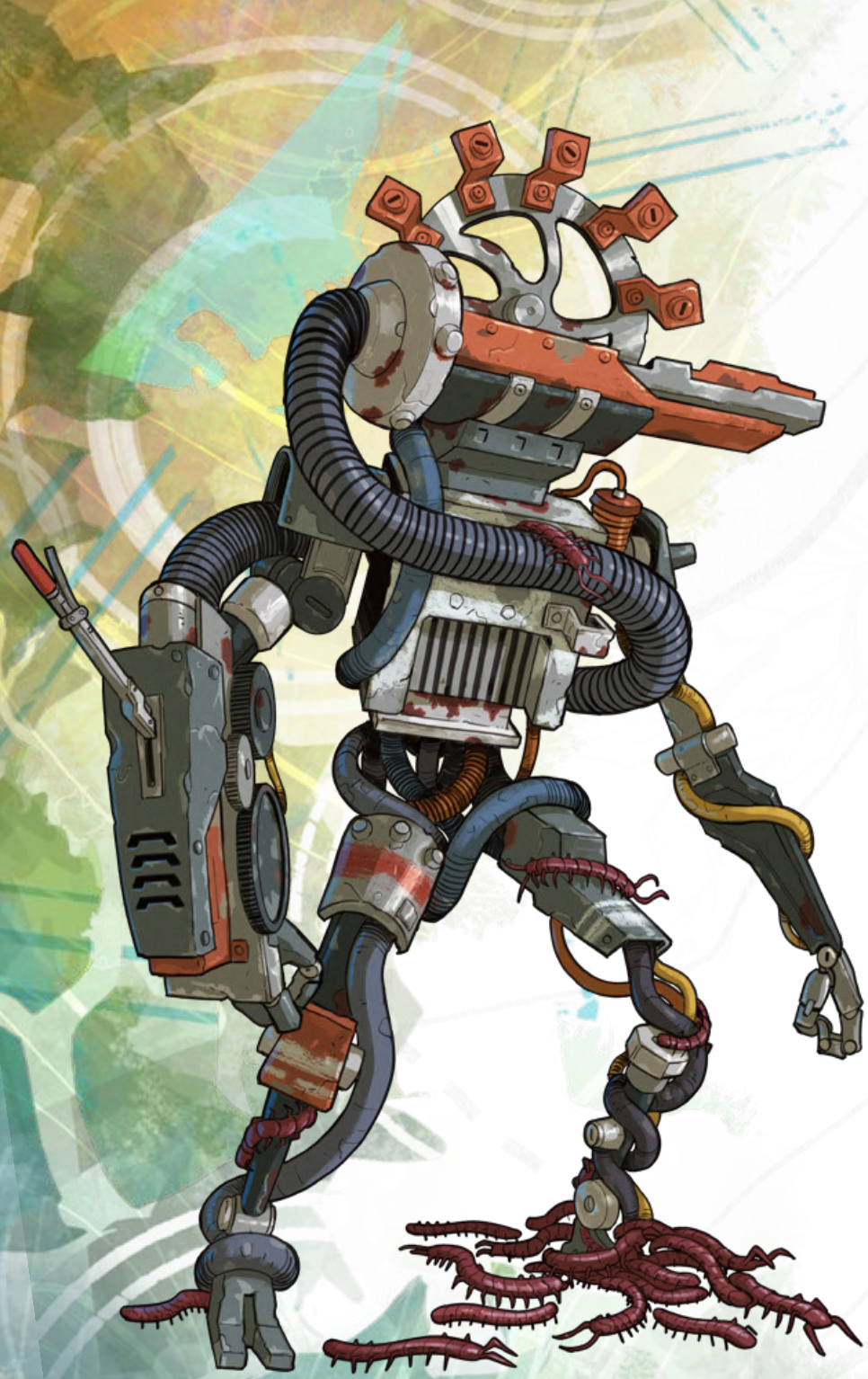
Take something from the depths to the skies... And sell it
Uncover an ancient and valuable thing for an employer

Mire (Choose 1)

Everything glitters - what is value?
Cargo ropes snap, box-wood splits, bearings squeal

"Trust me - it'll be worth the wait."

- Khar Tju, itzenko smuggler



SWARMJACK POST

You've managed, through arconautic, alchemical, or pseudomechanical application, to convince one of the savage swarms of the wild depths to treat your equipment as their home.

The crawling masses of the wildsea may not exactly be smart, but they're certainly more willing to learn and adapt that any chitinous pre-V scuttlers were. It's this Verdancy-fuelled increase in intelligence that makes a swarmjack's work possible, allowing them to tinker and refine their methods until their connection with a particular group of insects is almost instinctual.

But connection and control are two entirely different things; while a swarmjack may appear outwardly to be a bastion of confidence, most of them are keenly aware that their mastery over their scuttling charges is on a perpetual knife-edge. They may be tolerated, protected, perhaps even obeyed... But no mind is larger or more wilful than the hive.

Mixed Disciplines

It's not often that it pays to be a generalist, but it's rare to find a swarmjack that doesn't know the basics of at least three or four different disciplines. Alchemical and pheromonal tinkering might be used to attract a cluster of insects, with technological, arconautic, or even musical know-how used to separate them into those that will adapt to a modicum of symbiosis and those that will sting the hand that feeds.

What Makes a Swarm?

Most jacks perfect their art over long years of study and practice - the insects of the wilds aren't known for their lifespans, and some practitioners might go through several generations of the chitinous creatures over the course of a year at sea. The aim is to create a colony that's used to travel, and that treats the swarmjack as something like a protector, something like a queen, to be followed, relied upon, and defended against the other dangers of the waves. A rare few swarmjacks build their personal colonies out of disparate groups, limbs crawling with ants while centipedes tangle their feet, bees settled in their hair, but the mechanical know-how needed to keep harmony in such an irregular group is beyond the understanding of most.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the swarmjack into your character, consider the following questions...

- What disciplines do you use to attract, replenish, and command your swarm?
- Do you focus on a particular type of crawling ally, or even a specific subtype or mutation of an already uncommon species?
- What were the bumps along the path, the moments where you were dethroned by the masses? There's no point in lying, it's happened to every jack at some point.

Alternate Presentations

While the swarmjack focuses on insects as a default, all it takes is the changing of a few damage types and a reframing of certain aspects to end up with a rat-wreathed piper, a lord of squirrels, or even a singer surrounded by adorable feathered friends.

ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

Honey For Blood 3-Track Trait

... Or, if you have no blood, some other kind of useful liquid. Use a task to gain a rare resource, either *Warm Honey*, *Cicatrix Wax*, or *Artery Grub*.

Spread the Swarm 3-Track Trait

Burn to scatter your charges in all directions, finding any secret crevices and hidden things nearby (and doubtless causing chaos while doing it).

The Hive Remembers 3-Track Trait

Whenever you would use a chart, mark to instead rely on scraps of knowledge from your insect attendants.

Coruscating Shield 3-Track Trait

A glittering, scuttling sacrifice. When you or a nearby ally would take more than one mark of damage, reduce that damage to a single mark on this aspect and ignore any additional effects it would cause (once per scene).

To The Bone 1-Track Trait

Use a task to direct your swarm to consume a fallen foe. When this task is completed, gain one of **all** possible non-edible resources that looting or butchering the foe might have offered (for example, bones and metals would be left behind, but meats and fruits would not).

Royal-Jack Array 4-Track Gear

A curious mechanism worn around the throat. Consume a whisper to translate speech in any language to chemical bursts, understandable by most insects.

Pheromone Bellows 4-Track Gear

Pump hard for maximum effect. Burn to thoroughly confuse a swarm, or drive them into an intense instinctual behaviour (such as fear, hunger, or frenzy).

Tome of Scuttling Pages 4-Track Gear

A repository of arthropod information. When you enter a new port or area of the sea, define a single useful insect common to the area and immediately gain one as a specimen (either living or dead).

Colony Backpack 2-Track Gear

Never quite at rest, but their work is impossible to direct. Whenever an ally gains a specimen or piece of salvage, make a fortune roll using a d6. On a 6, you gain a copy of this resource with the *Waxen* tag.

Signal Spikes 4-Track Gear

Clusters of chemical-drenched burrs that stick to clothes and hair, dealing LR Toxin damage. Once a target has been hit with a signal spike, mark to draw a swarm of stinging insects to them for a brief time, or consume a specimen to discern their exact location.

Herding Bat 2-Track Companion

Trained to manipulate the movements of swarms via whistled commands. The herding bat allows you to naturally attract, shepherd, or repel swarms of non-aggressive insects.

Dedicated Swarm 2-Track Complex Companion

Perhaps centipedes, or bees, or scorpions - the crawling, droning creatures that swarm around you, are up to you to define. When you choose Dedicated Swarm as an aspect, it gains **two benefits** of your choice from the following list...

- **Swarmalanquin**: You are carried on a million tiny legs. Increase impact when climbing or scrambling through tight spaces.
- **Countless Wings**: Mark to gain the Float and Hover styles for the duration of a scene.
- **Used to It**: You're resistant to Toxin damage, and any damage dealt by swarm or insect-based hazards.
- **Releasing the Horde**: Deals Spike, Toxin, or Acid damage at CQ or LR (choose the type and range when you gain this benefit).
- **Jealous Charges**: Both you and your ship are immune to the effects of insect incursions.
- **Undulating Movement**: Ignore cut when attempting to defend against incoming attacks.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose swarmjack as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Instinct, Sharps, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Concoct, Flourish, Hunt, Sense, Study, Sway, Tend

Languages: Knock, Signalling

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Empty Jar, Failed Experiment

Specimens: Queen Extract, Crushed Shells, Worryingly Eager Termites

Whispers: One Among Many, The Scuttling Wave

Charts: Honey-Stained Page, Collated Research Notes, Pheromone Folio

Drive (Choose 1)

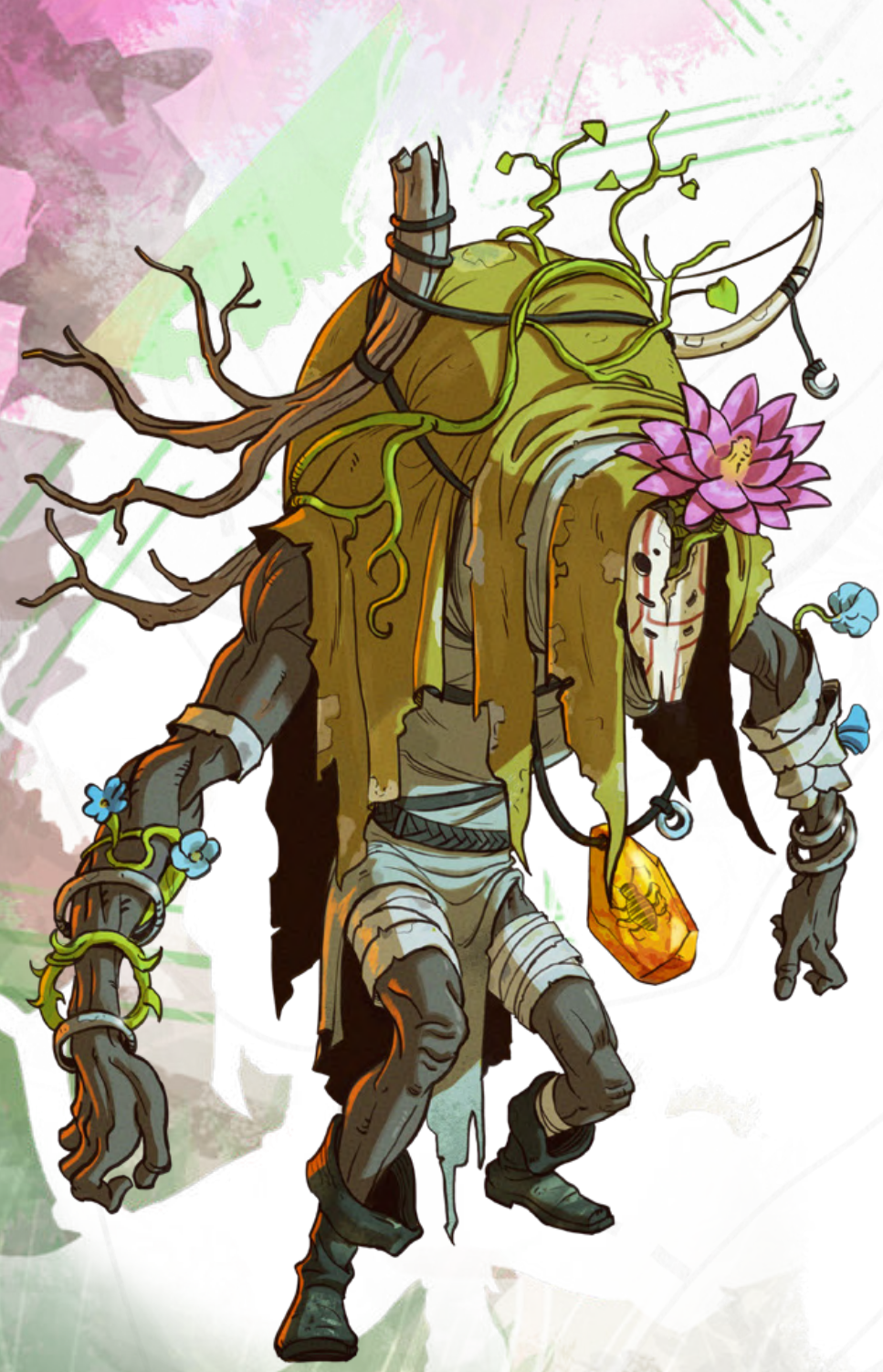
Reach accord with an insect leviathan or protoleviathan
Create the perfect swarm

Mire (Choose 1)

Your swarm perceives you an outsider, a threat
Insects flee in your presence

"Sometimes you have to accept that true agreement is a fleeting dream."

Ondara Tolgo, ketra swarmjack



THORN POST

Unparalleled tenders of the wild, dedicating their time (and sometimes their bodies) to the roots and blooms of the waves in return for a bounty of gifts.

It's common knowledge that the plants of the wildsea are impossible to reliably cultivate (at least without decades of splicing, maintenance, and alchemical treatments). They grow too unpredictably, too violently, to be contained.

But common knowledge often fails in the face of determination, and thorns are nothing if not determined. Travelling the waves in search of rare blooms and unusual produce, the average thorn carries with them a veritable garden of half-grown seedlings and overfilled specimen jars, portable soil-beds and unerring dedication.

The Next Wild Step

... And for some thorns, that's where it ends.

But not for most.

The lure is too strong, the benefits too obvious; a graft here, a slip into symbiosis, a dabbling with chemical processes and arconautic energies. There's a saying among thorns, or at least those sociable enough to repeat it - you either carry the seedbed or you become it.

A Part of the Waves

For thorns that have fully dedicated themselves to the arconautic side of their art, death is rarely the end. The heart may stop (or whatever heart-equivalent a thorn may have within their chest), but the garden continues to grow. Whether this is a true state of undeath is up for debate, but given the many weirdnesses of the rustling waves, it's likely one not worth engaging in.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the thorn into your character, consider the following questions...

- Do you control the wilds you cultivate, or do they control you? How much of yourself are you willing to give for what might only be the illusion of control?
- Do you specialize in a particular kind of plant (or bloom, or fungus), or do you take from whatever is at hand and nurture it to its full potential?
- What set you on the path of the thorn, against all logic and sense?

Alternate Presentations

Decoupling the thorn's abilities from the concepts of symbiosis and grafting enables you to create an effective druid, a controller of plant and bloom. On the other hand, you could create an alternate alchemist with a more scientific bent, a researcher into the true nature of the wildsea who has learnt enough to impose their will on something commonly thought to be beyond taming.

ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

Gnarled Host 4-Track Trait

You're host to a spreading, fibrous infection that hardens your flesh into bark-like plates. You are weak to Flame and either Hewing or Serrated damage, but immune to Blunt and either Keen or Toxin.

Crezzer-Blooded 1-Track Trait

You're immune to the effects of crezzerin. Use a task to create a resource, *Concentrated Crezzerin*.

Nurturing Chant 3-Track Trait

Use a task to grow a seed into a small plant, or to coax an already-grown plant into producing flowers or fruit. If this growth affects a Project track mark one more box than usual.

Bursting Bloom 3-Track Trait

A wildflower winding through your limbs, but never tangling them. Mark to create a nearby point of interest by forcing plants into an unexpected burst of growth.

Grave-Roots 4-Track Trait

Burn to root yourself where you stand for a short period of time. When rooted, you are almost entirely immovable (and cannot move yourself without unrooting either), and nearby crewmates benefit from your resistances and immunities.

Sizzling Sap 3-Track Trait

An arconautic organ somewhere in your body allows you to spit searing sap at a distance, allowing you to deal LR Acid or Toxin damage.

Heirloom Seed-Bottles 2-Track Gear

Brimming with potential life. Use a task to create one of the following resources: *Thorn Grain*, *Nascent Wormapple*, *Beansprouts*, or *Micromelon*.

Inscribed Root 3-Track Gear

Mark to reshape nearby exposed wood into a useful obstacle. Mark mire to reshape nearby exposed wood into a winding path.

Symbiote Seed-Bed 3-Track Gear

Use a task to give an ally a one-box temporary aspect, *Symbiote Seed*, that grants them resistance to a single damage type of your choice. When that aspect is lost, gain a plant specimen related to their bloodline.

Gentle Scythe 2-Track Gear

Almost definitely a misnomer. Deals CQ Keen or Hewing damage, with increased impact against plant-based foes.

Autumnal Drift 3-Track Companion

Leaves dance around you, holding you aloft. Treat conflicts as triumphs when wavewalking. Mark to gain the Float and Glide styles until end of scene.

Trained Hummingbird 3-Track Companion

Swift and sharp-eyed. Mark to identify a rare or unusual plant-based specimen in your vicinity.

Anemone Ghast 3-Track Companion

A bundle of animated, spine-like tendrils made of rough soil and ragged soul. Allows you to hold or manipulate many objects at once, and can be used to deal CQ Salt damage.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose thorn as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Teeth, Tides, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Brace, Concoct, Delve, Hack, Harvest, Hunt, Sense, Wavewalk

Languages: Signalling, Highvin

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Blunted Axehead, Wooden Planks

Specimens: Living Roots, Spore-Colony, Ropevine

Whispers: Old Mind, Parasite Farming

Charts: An Underthrash Scrawl, A Soil-Ship's Log

Drive (Choose 1)

Reach accord with a leviathan plant

Become a part of the waves themselves

Mire (Choose 1)

You are as nectar to questing insects

Your consciousness scatters like petals on the wind

"Yes, nature is hungry, cruel, and capricious. But so am I."

- Alanza Sobringham, ardent thorn

ZEALOT POST

Keepers of the intangible and hoarders of the horrific, pursuing faith in a world that fell and then rose again.

Some three hundred years ago, a tide of greenery demolished the world-that-was. It tore through cities, drank the seas, and hit the reset button on society. And, some say, on the divine as well; whatever gods or godlings may have existed in the pre-verdant times were lost to history, or reduced to stories told and mistold by scattered groups of tenacious survivors.

But nature abhors a vacuum, and the wildsea is nothing if not brimming with nature. In the speculative space of the lost divine, something grows in heart and mind. For some, it's a remembrance, taking those tales of old and elevating them past myth and into power. For others, it's the draw of the new, filling the unknowns of the wild with deific explanation. And for most, that gap is filled by the leviathans, physical manifestations of immense and all-consuming force that are often as ignorant of the humanesque specks around them as the pre-V gods were rumoured to be.

Faith, & How You Find It

Every zealot has something they worship, whether lost god or leviathan or concept, but the paths they take to this devotion are varied. One zealot might come to their faith after a great tribulation and a lot of soul searching, another through witnessing an awesome display of natural or leviathanesque power, recontextualising their place in the world based on the experience.

Truth in the Divine

The question most often asked of the faithful is an obvious one - are their beliefs true? But despite its frequency, it's a pointless line of enquiry. For the more metaphysical zealot, there's ample proof, with the wildsea's tangible souls and the narrative meddling of whispers in easy evidence; there are as few arguments that confidently exclude the divine as there are that include it as fact. And for leviathan cultists, the question's answer is usually just a wave of the hand toward whatever swathe of destruction or smoking ruin is left in their wake.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the zealot into your character, consider the following questions...

- What do you worship, and how did you come to such strong beliefs?
- Does it really matter to you if the source of your potency is truly divine?
- Have you ever communed with something you believe to be a god or godling, to the extent that you've received answers to your prayers or questions?

Alternate Presentations

While a wildsea zealot is implied to have something of the hermit about them, more organised and priestly presentations are completely acceptable. And there's nothing saying that such an individual need *actually* believe in their stated deity...

ASPECTS

Your aspects help make your character unique, giving them ways to break the normal rules of the Wildsea. They also act as fictional permissions, to an extent - choose ones that speak to you, that you think you can weave into your story. During quickstart creation, **choose 2 aspects** from the list below.

Hollow Mantra 3-Track Trait

Nobody's listening, most likely, but words still hold power. Use a task to give one of your whispers the *Echoing* or *Hungry* tag.

Bellow of the Beast 4-Track Trait

When you use a whisper to shout (creating a high-impact change that's out of your control), you are immune to damage or negative effects that result from that change.

Spiral Scars 3-Track Trait

A cause. A purpose. A promise. Once per scene you may ignore an instance of cut that would affect you by marking mire.

Consecrated Ramblings 2-Track Trait

You gain increased impact on rolls made to convince or disorient with words. If you have a fully marked mire, treat conflicts as triumphs when engaged in these actions.

The Hard Road Back 3-Track Trait

Consume a whisper to turn a burn to a mark, or to clear a mark of mire, on any character once per scene.

Hasty Doomsayer 4-Track Trait

Once per scene, you may mark mire to hijack focus. Treat triumphs as conflicts for any action take with this hijacked focus.

Fallen Pillars 3-Track Trait

When you make a discovery, you may combine two whispers rather than a whisper and a chart. Treat disasters as conflicts when rolling to explore or discern the history of locations discovered in this way.

Rampant Tongue 2-Track Gear

You count as having a single rank, a smattering, in all known languages... But only to speak them, not to understand them when you hear or read them.

Hymn-Scribed Dice 4-Track Gear

Whenever you make a fortune roll, or would be directly affected by one, roll an additonal d6 and choose the result you prefer.

Melismaphone 3-Track Gear

A rickety sound-producing device with a scratched wax cylinder spinning within it. Whenever a member of the crew rolls peace while on watch, you and your crewmates can each clear a mark of mire.

Decorated Leviathan's Tooth 2-Track Gear

Once per scene, burn the leviathan's tooth to ignore an instance of incoming damage. For the remainder of the scene, the tooth deals high-impact CQ damage of the type it allowed you to ignore.

Rope-Strung Tablets 4-Track Gear

Promises were made to be broken. Burn to gain a whisper related to either your faith or the current situation.

Tattered Vestments 3-Track Gear

From the following list of damage types, gain one immunity, one resistance and one weakness: Acid, Toxin, Frost, Flame, Volt, or Salt.

Shrineruff Mastiff 2-Track Companion

The shaggy pelt of this hound is shot through with prayer tablets, scraps of hymn-scrawled paper and 'divine' charms. Deals CQ Salt damage, and allows you to mark any of your trait tracks to gain a whisper or chart relevant to your faith.

Protoleviathan Grubling 3-Track Companion

This companion can only be marked by mire. When fully marked, you and your crew are immune to Pressure increases caused by leviathan and protoleviathan signs, effects, or encounters.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose zealot as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Iron, TIdes, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Conconct, Delve, Flourish, Outwit, Sense, Study, Sway
Languages: Raka Spit, Old Hand, Highvin

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Lightning-Struck Idol, String of Beads
Specimens: Carven Stone, Painted Beast Teeth
Whispers: Larger Than Us, Something Watching
Charts: A Ritual Calendar, Map of Intriguing Sites

Drive (Choose 1)

Spread the word of your own personal faith
Commune with a godling and come away unscathed

Mire (Choose 1)

You've drawn attention, and can't seem to shake it
Your prayers and mantras sound hollow, even to you

"We are below their notice... for now."

- Osmon Helivyte, ketra zealot

CHAPTER 04
EXPANDED SHIPBUILDING

The Jailbird had changed a lot over its month at the Howl's Garden refitting station, to the point where the crew could barely recognize it any more.

The basic components were still there. A broadwood hull, reinforced with bones from their first successfully hunted protoleviathan. The mulcher unit that had cut a path through reach after reach up above. The underthrash platform, where they relaxed and watched over the world below.

But there was so much more to it now. That platform was reinforced with an amber shell, allowing sight but blocking off direct access to the outside world. The same kind of shell covered the entire deck, sealable holes cut in the sides to allow tracking for their newly installed shrapnel cannons. And the mulcher, long the centrepiece of the ship, now dwarfed by two massive outboard serroclaws.

Yes... They were ready to delve.

Adapt or Create?

This chapter offers a whole host of new ship-based options. They can be used to take an existing vessel into the skies or down to the depths, or as part of the foundation for an entirely new ship. It's this choice, whether to adapt what they already have or to create something new, that crews will have to make first.

Terms & Conditions

Most airships and submersibles didn't start off that way - they were ordinary wildsailing ships (if there truly is such a thing) designed for travel across the thrash and tangle.

These 'standard' ships are now referred to by some as **wavecutters**, a term meant to encapsulate their core purpose of carrying crews across the rustling waves. Ships that can rise to the wild blue are generally known as airships, and ships that can delve deeper than most as submersibles. There are other names that get thrown around occasionally, and in areas where travel through the skies and lower branches has yet to become an everyday sight you might get some strange looks, but these are the most common terms.

Refitting a Wavecutter

If you're running an existing game or campaign, the crew is likely to have a ship of their own. They'll be attached to it too, if they're a typical group - their ship will have saved them in countless situations, acted as a home base and meeting place, and been a refuge from the most savage moods of the wildsea.

The good news for these groups is that their ship can be refitted into an airship or a submersible through the process of finding a specialist shipyard and paying the requisite amount of stakes for the modifications needed. For an airship they'll need a **lift system** at the very least, and a set of **bafflers** wouldn't go amiss. For a submersible they'll need a **pressure shell** to get started, and few last long in the depths without **scrubbers** to keep them breathing clean air.

The rest of this chapter is divided into two large sections, one for air travel and one for the depths. Each section starts with these essential components, so if you are refitting an existing ship, you only really have to look at the first two pages of the relevant section. The mechanical cost isn't too high - a few stakes (which, in-game, translates to a few pieces of traded cargo) is enough for you to leave the waves behind for a spell.

Building From Scratch

But there are a lot of new options, far beyond the basic requirements, for players to look over as well. If players want to build a new ship, they should be free to use the new options presented here in Storm & Root as well as those already in the core book. Though these options are organized within this chapter by those most appropriate for either airship and submersible, wildsailors have rarely ever taken the 'appropriate' or 'recommended' path through life when presented with dangerous and bizarre opportunities. Want a wavecutting ship with a hull of reinforced amber, or a set of flying squirrels as an undercrew choice? We say go for it.

The Best of Both Worlds

But what if you want a ship that can tackle the harshest depths of the wilds and then rush to the surface, escaping branch and leaf to soar through the lofty skies?

Well, we've already said it - *go for it*.

Having a ship that can sail the rustling waves, delve into the depths, and keep the clouds company means you'll be adding a lot of extra systems to the Ship sheet, which will be both costly and mechanically complex. But don't let that stop you if that's what you want from the wilds; versatility is a wildsailor's greatest strength.

"Teeth and ships don't mix. Especially in the air."

Velliam let out an exasperated sigh, stabbing his finger down at the schematics spread out across the junction's filthy table. It was hardly the most glamorous place to discuss a new theory, but the portside shipwrights had made it extremely clear that if they caught him nosing around the place again he'd be removed with some force.

"How many wavecutters have you seen with leviathan parts? It's almost a requirement for those hunting types. Why should an airship be any different?"

The rest of the crew shared a look, so he pushed on before they had a chance to interrupt.

"All I'm saying is, hollow out the teeth, chemical gas exchanger in the root of each..."

"But why teeth?" Franz, of course. Far too sensible for the blue.

"For the *style* of it, my friend. Why else?"

Creating an Airship

Whether you're refitting an existing ship or creating an entirely new vessel, the first half of this chapter holds the options best suited for those wishing to take to the skies. Just as with any other ship, stakes are required to purchase the options presented here (unless you can salvage them from wrecks while out on the waves, which is unlikely but not impossible). If a crew is having a ship added to or created during a game, **cargo items can be traded to a shipyard to act as stakes**.

Mandatory Choices

A **lift system** is required to get a ship into the air. Much like a wavecutter's engines, this system is assumed to be maintained and fuelled throughout the usual course of travel. Groups wanting a more survivalesque experience can track lift system fuels in the same way they can ship fuel, using the optional rules on page 172 of the core book.

Though not technically required, a set of **bafflers** is *extremely* useful for any airship when the time comes to deal with growing Scrutiny.

Lift Systems [Required]

The most important choice you need to make when taking to the skies is to decide the way you... well, *get* there. You need something to give your ship lift, the ability to scorn the wavetops and pull yourself aloft. ***It's mandatory to take at least one of these options*** *to unlock the rest of the rising choices in this chapter. If you have stakes to spare, multiple lift systems can added to a single vessel.*

All options presented here have a **takeoff cost**: they mark a particular rating when the character At the Helm attempts to transition their ship from wavetops to skies. **If this mark is the last on a rating track, the takeoff fails and the ship suffers an immediate crash landing, and taking off with a ship that has multiple takeoff costs requires you to mark all ratings indicated.** If a ship has multiple lift systems, it pays the combined cost indicated by of all of them when taking off. You can find more about takeoffs (and landings) from page 19 onwards.

All lift systems also have **takeoff** and **flight styles**, which lets you know how the ship needs to be travelling to leave the waves, and how it moves whilst airborne. Most of the rules concerning airship movement during scenes rely on the theatre of the mind, but **the flight style has a big impact on the choices one can make during an aerial journey**. You'll find a full rundown of these mechanics on pages 20 and 21.

Patchwork Gasbag 2 Stakes

It's almost criminal that you're being charged for this. Ascent with a gasbag of this quality is ponderously slow, and puts massive stress on a ship's internal structures.

- **Takeoff Cost: Tilt & Armour**
- **Styles: Float, Hover**

Channeling Sail 2 Stakes

Known for providing a burst of lift on takeoff and little more besides that, the bones of the kite-like sail's frame needs frequent repairs.

- **Takeoff Cost: Speed & Armour**
- **Styles: Rush, Glide**

Hullbreaker Wings 3 Stakes

Don't let the disarming honesty of their name fool you; there are far better choices than these creaking mechanical deathtraps.

- **Takeoff Cost: Speed & Seals**
- **Styles: Rush, Flap**

Levito Bolt Exchange 3 Stakes

While it may seem little more than a confusion of hissing pistons and thumping hammers, the external section - a series of bolts attached to the hull - allow a ship to surf magnetic fields normally too weak to detect.

- **Takeoff Cost: Stealth & Saws**
- **Styles: Float, Hover, Glide**

Shard Chambers 3 Stakes

Pieces of a sailing stone are placed at strategic points within a vessel's structure. They abhor the skies, but excel at scudding through the depths and across the yawning spaces offered by rifts.

- **Takeoff Cost: Speed**
- **Styles: Float, Hover, Glide**
- **Only functions when the ship is within or below the level of the thrash**

Bulbous Gasbag 3 Stakes

An envelope of canvas and a unique chemical engine to fill it with a lighter-than-air mixture, the amount of which can be controlled from the cabin to effectively raise or lower the ship.

- **Takeoff Cost: Armour**
- **Styles: Float, Hover**

Jet-Throat Pitcher 3 Stakes

A delicate pitcher plant with an unexpectedly robust system of root-like exhaust vents. The pitcher's bulb produces flotational gas, and the roots can be angled to give a ship a modicum of directional thrust.

- **Takeoff Cost: Seals**
- **Styles: Float, Glide**

Brace of Kites 3 Stakes

Swifter, but far more dangerous than other low-tech methods. The brace of kites is a complex series of sails, ropes, and canvas that can be deployed for a sudden surge of lift.

- **Takeoff Cost: Saws**
- **Styles: Rush, Glide**

Ambered Cylinder 3 Stakes

Usually found running the length of the deck, a gyroscope soaked with cloudward dreams.

- **Takeoff Cost: Tilt**
- **Styles: Rush, Hover**

Leather Pinions 4 Stakes

Folded against the hull when not in use, a ship needs a good turn of speed to take to the air as they snap open.

- **Takeoff Cost: Tilt**
- **Styles: Rush, Flap**

Wooden Screw 4 Stakes

Often mistaken by wavewalking types for some kind of sky-drill, engineers assure dubious aeronauts that this does, in fact, work.

- **Takeoff Cost: Saws**
- **Styles: Float, Flap**

Heaven-Hewn Carving 4 Stakes

The details of the carving are incidental - the true power lies in the origin of the stone, mined from a floating island or stolen from a crumbling aerial temple.

- **Takeoff Cost: Speed**
- **Styles: Float, Hover, Glide**

Helioweaver 4 Stakes

An arconautic marvel that briefly braids and crystallizes sunlight, riding the resulting shimmer like a rail.

- **Takeoff Cost: Saws**
- **Styles: Rush, Soar**
- **Only functions when the ship is in direct sunlight**

Canvas Wings 5 Stakes

These use lighter materials and more advanced engineering techniques than other wing attachments. Beating them for lift still takes an incredible amount of power, especially for heavier ships.

- **Takeoff Cost: Speed**
- **Styles: Rush, Glide, Flap**

Cumulus Cabling 5 Stakes

Operating on the same alchemical principles as cloudwire, firing slim filaments high into the air that pull the ship along for the ride as they seek out water vapour.

- **Takeoff Cost: Tilt**
- **Styles: Float, Hover, Soar**
- **Only functions when the ship has a direct sightline to the clouds**

Magneticactus 6 Stakes

Technically it's only the spines that are used, drilled into the outer sections of a ship where they can resonate with magnetic fields. Attaching them to the outer hull correctly is a challenge in and of itself.

- **Takeoff Cost: Speed**
- **Styles: Float, Hover, Soar**

How Much!?

Lift systems are *costly*. That's perhaps to be expected, as you're gaining the ability to leave the waves behind and enter an entirely new realm, something sailors have been dreaming about since the earliest days of the Verdancy. But, unless you're working with a lot of stakes, converting an existing wavecutter is a long and expensive process.

If your table wants access to the wild blue as soon as possible, you have a few options...

Start With More Stakes

Normally crews begin with six stakes between thm, plus another three for each wildsailor. Feel free to increase this starting amount to kit out an airship, starting with five or even six stakes per sailor instead.

Purchase Stakes With Cargo

It's been said before, but it bears repeating - cargo can be traded in port to give a crew more stakes to spend, at a rate of one piece of cargo to one stake. Spend these new stakes on portside shipwrights, hiring them to add new pieces to an existing ship (or even create an entirely new vessel).

Scavenge From Other Ships

The easiest way to get a lift system once play begins is to take it from a wreck, or a conquered vessel. Ripping it out is the easy part, but it'll take a project (or the attentions of an aforementioned shipwright) to install it in your own vessel.

A More Natural Process

There are benefits to taking the waves as you find them, relying less on ingenuity and more on existing natural methods of flight.

*The options presented here **don't damage ratings upon takeoff**. They do, however, each have a serious drawback to them. Think twice before choosing one of these as your ship's mode of flight.*

Dandelion Cluster 3 Stakes

Large, fluffy seed clusters that catch the wind, their roots coaxed into latching around the strongest sections of a ship. While not reliable in terms of timing, these massive dandelion clusters lift a ship with worrying ease.

- **Takeoff Cost: None**
- **Flight Style: Float, Hover**
- You can only take to the air in favourable wind conditions, or with the aid of thermals.

Floatnut Husk 3 Stakes

Though the ironroots these hail from have never actually been found, their efficacy as a natural route to air travel is beyond question.

- **Takeoff Cost: None**
- **Styles: Float, Glide**
- Floatnut husks only allow takeoff from the waves, and sit inert when within the confines of a highport.

Chittering Cloak 4 Stakes

Your hull is a hotbed of insectile symbiosis, thousands of chitinous bodies and translucent wings sprouting from wood and iron.

- **Takeoff Cost: None**
- **Styles: Float, Flap**
- **Reduce cut by one on aerial stunts performed while within mist, fog, or sporeclouds**

Threaded Hullsect 6 Stakes

A parasitic protoleviathan that grows as *part* of a ship rather than being tied to it in some way, resulting in a pair of massive but functional insect wings.

- **Takeoff Cost: None**
- **Styles: Float, Hover, Soar**
- Hullsects absolutely refuse to fly in wet weather.

Whirling Rotors 6 Stakes

When angled precisely, these allow for complex aerial manoeuvres in even the toughest conditions. You won't be able to hear yourself think, though - many crews on rotor-driven ships learn Old Hand out of necessity.

- **Takeoff Cost: Stealth**
- **Styles: Rush, Hover, Flap**
- **Reduce cut by one on aerial stunts performed in dangerous crosswinds or unpredictable gales**

Hollowtooth Array 6 Stakes

Ringing the ship's deck like they would a leviathan's lower jaw, the gas-filled nature of these fangs does little to quiet the discomforted murmurs of the undercrew.

- **Takeoff Cost: Saws**
- **Styles: Float, Rush, Hover, Glide**
- **Reduce cut by one on aerial stunts performed while harried or pursued by an aerial threat**

Ironshard Sail 7 Stakes

A shard of old-world iron, usually split into two side-mounted runners. Channeled voltaic current causes them to react to distant metals to lift the ship.

- **Takeoff Cost: Tilt**
- **Styles: Float, Hover, Soar**
- **Reduce cut by one on aerial stunts performed in strong or known magnetic fields**

Storm's Stolen Heart 7 Stakes

There's a non-zero chance you'll be doggedly pursued until your crew is fried and your ship rendered into nothing but a charred memory. But, until then, this is a hell of a find.

- **Takeoff Cost: Seals**
- **Styles: Float, Hover, Soar**
- **Reduce cut by one on aerial stunts performed in storms, living or otherwise**

Catalyst Jets 7 Stakes

The mechanics behind these are simple, but the chemicals and hull reinforcements required are anything but. Known for venting scalding exhaust in their wake.

- **Takeoff Cost: Seals**
- **Styles: Rush, Soar**
- **Can deal massive CQ Flame or Acid damage, but without the chance of fire spreading**

Skyward Harness 7 Stakes

Chains or ropes deeply anchored within the ship's structure, a skyward harness comes complete with a well-trained protoleviathan of the wild blue.

- **Takeoff Cost: Armour**
- **Styles: Float, Rush, Hover, Flap**
- **The harnessed creature can deal massive CQ damage of any one chosen type, except Flame.**

The Novelty of Flight

Perhaps more than any other form of travel on the wilds, flight is a realm of experimentation. From alchemy to arconautics, engineering to artistry, sky-focused shipwrights will incorporate anything into a lift system if they think it'll help get a ship into the wild blue.

In recognition of this, the following rules allow you to create a lift system that's entirely unique to your ship. If created in-game, it will likely require a good amount of cargo and a long project track to pull it off, but there's always the option of using these rules during a session zero, as part of ship creation. That should also give a crew the ability to sculpt, from the ground up, their own preferred aerial experience.

To work out the stake cost of a newly created lift system from scratch...

- Start with a cost of one stake
- Increase cost by one stake for the Rush or Float style
- Increase cost by one stake for the Glide or Hover style
- Increase cost by two stakes for the Flap style
- Increase cost by three stakes for the Soar style
- Increase cost by one stake for a stunt cut reduction
- Reduce cost by one stake for an additional takeoff cost
- Reduce cost by one stake for an environmental need

Auxiliary Lift Systems

Choosing multiple lift systems can grant you access to a whole host of takeoff and flight styles, but the costs associated with getting into the air tend to grow. This is where auxiliary lift systems come in; they won't send a ship to the wild blue on their own, but they will offer new options for a crew when combined with an existing lift system – and they'll do it without increasing takeoff costs. *Auxiliary lift systems don't work without a proper lift system to augment, even if your choices give you both a takeoff and flight style.*

Antiballast 3 Stakes

Multiple canvas balloons placed strategically within the ship, pipes running between them. The gas they fill with doesn't stay lighter-than-air for long... but it's enough to get some distance from the wavetops.

Additional Style: Float

Brute Turbines 3 Stakes

Massive outboard engines that threaten to shake a ship apart. Thirsty for fuel, and give constant thrust.

Additional Style: Rush

Copper Feathers 3 Stakes

Whether attached to an existing set of wings or simply welded to the hull, these carefully sculpted feathers allow ships to skim through the clouds for league after league.

Additional Style: Glide

Ghost Spikes 3 Stakes

A set of spirit anchors sunk into the outer hull, each one tied to the soul of a lost aeronaut. The ghosts are fragile, but they thrill at the open skies.

Additional Style: Hover

Undulate Fringe 4 Stakes

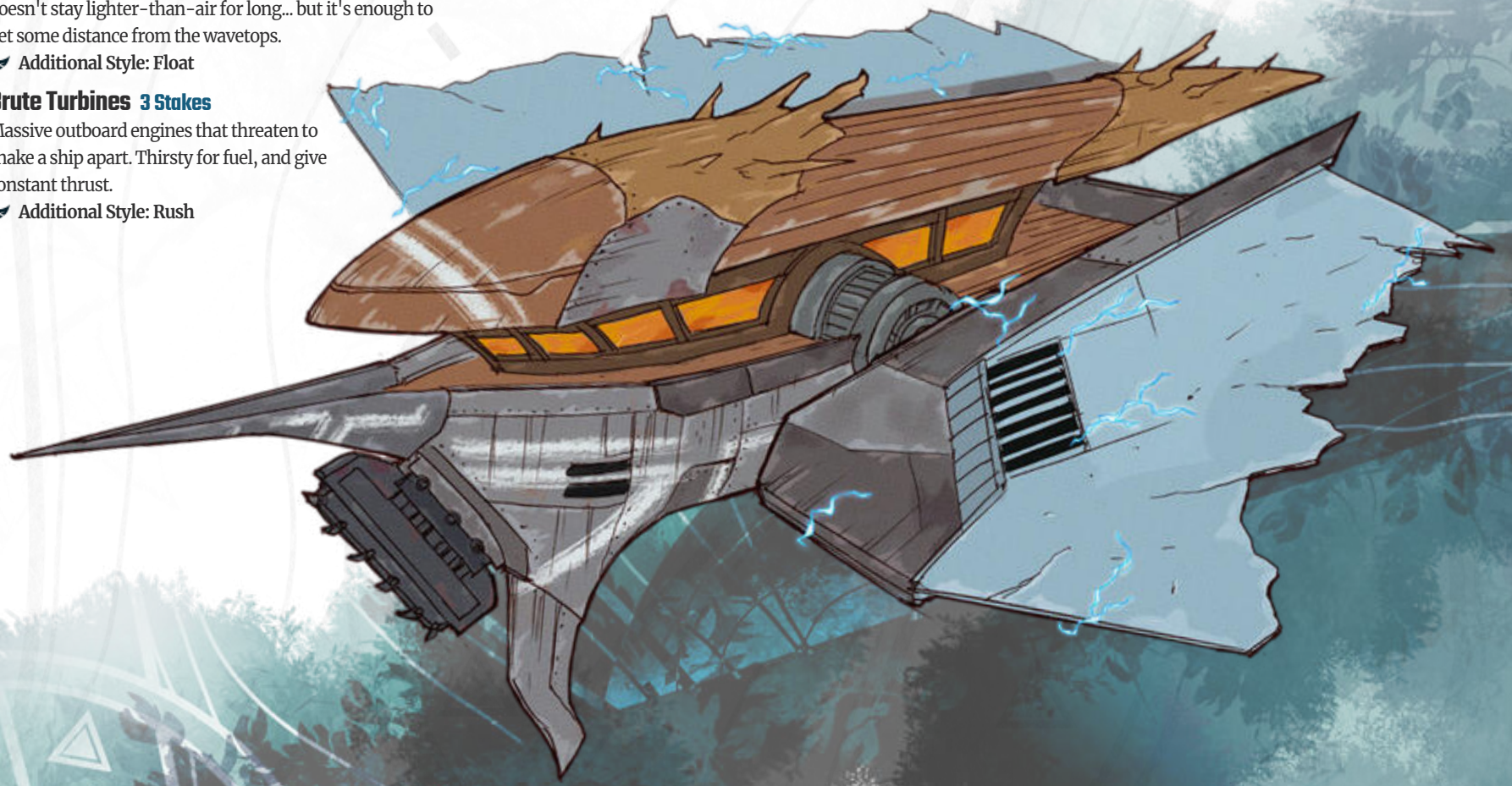
It's best not to ask what creature this was harvested from, or why it continues to move.

Additional Style: Flap

Whisper-Spin Gyro 5 Stakes

A pinwheel of barely-visible whispers, each a suggestion of flight or freedom. They offer a smoother flight, but linguistic radiation risks infecting the crew if the apparatus is damaged.

Additional Style: Soar



There was no way to count down as precisely as she wanted to, but Simi knew that the moment was coming. She felt it in her bones, pushed as they were to the deck by the speed of their climb. In her fingers, straining to stay curled around the safety-ropes around her. In the raindrops spattering her like little hammers, like iron tears.

Lightning tore the sky to her left, uncomfortably close.

Kir Ke had it worse, no doubt - the violent lurch away from the treetops had split their silken skin, scattered the spiders that were them to every corner of the decks. Simi couldn't even imagine how it must have felt.

That count down though, to the peak of the storm and beyond? Even without measurements, she could imagine that.

Three, another spear of lightning singing. Two, an utter darkness as they bite into the cloud. One, a moment of maddening fear...

And zero - an endless, sudden blue.

Bafflers [Heavily Suggested]

Air travel tends to attract the attention of the world, usually in a less-than-positive way. Being a single speck in the wild blue attracts the interest of marauders, living storms, leviathans, and a whole mess of other weirdnesses that can cause trouble for a ship. ***It's not mandatory to take one of these options, but it will make air travel a whole lot safer.***

*All bafflers can be used opportunistically, allowing a crew to **clear marks from the Watchful Eyes**, as described on page 33. You can do this at any point during a journey, even during take-off or landing.*

*Many bafflers also have an additional effect, described as their **Optimal Use**. Meet the conditions for Optimal Use and you might be able to **clear a burn from one of the Watchful Eyes**, completely unmarking the affected Eye.*

*Some bafflers may also have an **Alternate Use**. These more inventive uses do little to distract the Watchful Eyes, but they can help a crew in other ways.*

***Bafflers can only be used once before they have to be reset through the use of a task.** This is usually done in port, but periods of peace on longer journeys might also afford this option. This restriction applies no matter how they're used (opportunistically, optimally, or alternately).*

Colourful Flags 1 Stake

More likely to draw attention than dispel it, some aeronauts nevertheless swear by the things.

- **Alternate Use**: A good signaller can use every scrap of fabric around to their advantage. Instead of clearing an Eye, a single message in Signalling can be sent at extreme ranges that wouldn't normally be possible.

Overside Cache 1 Stake

A collection of mostly useless junk in a rather fancy cargo crate, specifically designed to catch the eye of looters and marauders after being pushed over the edge of your ship.

- **Optimal Use**: Push over the side to clear a burn from any marauder-based Eye.

Firefly Cloud 2 Stakes

Kept in pitch-blackened jars with their tops wired together, a single pull on the relevant lever fills the air around the ship with a cloud of fireflies. They do come back eventually, if they're well trained (and if they survive their explosive exodus).

- **Optimal Use**: Fire to clear a burn from any insectivore predator-based Eye.
- **Alternate Use**: The fireflies swarm a foe, distracting and reducing their vision until end of scene.

Starlight Dance 2 Stakes

Crews that have been taught the starlight dance know the secret ways of distracting the hungry light above, using shape and rhythm to cancel out gnawing need.

- **Optimal Use**: Perform the dance at night with some kind of additional light source to clear a burn from the Hungry Stars.
- **Alternate Use**: A vigorous dance isn't just good for the body, it's good for the mind! Instead of clearing an Eye, all crewmates that dance can clear one box of mire.

Chemicowork Rockets 2 Stakes

Both baffler and makeshift weapon, these carefully packed rockets burst with colourful chemical spray.

- **Optimal Use**: Fire at night to clear a burn from any predator-based Eye.
- **Alternate Use**: The rockets can act as a potent weapon - instead of clearing an Eye, they can be fired at foes for a single burst of Massive LR Acid damage.

Copper-Fox Flags 2 Stakes

Finely made mimics on the end of insulated poles, the wax-sealed fabric and metallic edging of these fake spring-foxes draws the ire of a living storm's lightning away from the more exposed areas of a ship.

- **Optimal Use**: Extend them at just the right moment to frustrate a lightning-strike, clearing a burn from any weather-based Eye.
- **Alternate Use**: They work well to keep a ship safe from lightning generated by non-living storms too, and might even charge ceramic batteries.

Patchwork Crew 2 Stakes

Unnerving though their presence may be, these whisper-animated sacks of dried leaves and wave-level offcuts can be pushed over the side of a ship to bait hungry pursuers with a nose for the crew.

- **Optimal Use**: Throw overboard to clear a burn from any Eye tracking the crew rather than the ship.
- **Alternate Use**: They rarely get much done, but you might as well put those whispers to work. Instead of clearing an Eye, clear a mark on any two of your ship's ratings.

Asteroid Anchor 2 Stakes

A chunk of fallen star with unusual properties of spirit attraction. The main mass is almost too heavy to move, but fragments cut from it retain some of its most useful properties for a time.

- **Optimal Use**: Launch a fragment from the deck to clear a burn on any spirit-based Eye.
- **Alternate Use**: The asteroid metal produces a low boom when rung, which wakes nearby intangibles into true corporeality for a short time.

False Clouds 2 Stakes

Usually produced alchemically, a false cloud wreathes the ship in atmospheric vapours to make it far harder to visually track. Real clouds can tell the difference, though.

- **Optimal Use**: Deploy to clear a burn from any Eye tracking the ship from below the clouds.
- **Alternate Use**: Changing the chemical mixtures used can have unusual, and harmful, results. Instead of clearing an Eye, the false clouds can create a patch of bad air on deck that lasts for the duration of a scene.

Scatterbird Cages 2 Stakes

For those with higher ambitions than insect training, these rows of cages can be opened to fill the air with extremely angry avians. They'll (mostly) return to their perches after working their fury out on anything nearby.

- **Optimal Use**: Release to clear a burn from any Eye tracking the ship from above the clouds.
- **Alternate Use**: A fury of claws and beaks cover the deck, dealing Massive CQ Spike damage to anyone nearby (including your own crew, if you're out there).

Lift Systems & Maintenance

A lift system is essential to claw your way into the sky, but it's recorded on a ship sheet just like any other fitting. Consequently it follows the same rules as a ship's other fittings, meaning that it can be damaged or destroyed in unfortunate situations.

Broken Lift Systems

When a lift system is damaged an airship might have a higher takeoff cost, be unable to turn or to climb any higher, or perhaps even be forced to start a slow descent. More serious damage might send a ship plummeting back toward the waves like a stone, but experienced crews *should* be able to survive a crash landing of this type... If they're lucky.

Bafflers & Maintenance

While not essential, bafflers are so commonly used by aeronaut crews that it's rare to find an airship without them. Destroying a baffler renders it inoperable until repaired, but...

Broken Bafflers

When a baffler is broken, it may instantly activate before being rendered useless (even if this activation won't clear a Watchful Eye). It might even have its alternate use activate, which might be a blessing or curse depending on the type of bafflers used.

The Starlight Dance baffler can ignore these rules, relying on the crew's own effort rather than anything physical.

Rising Designs

Once you've chosen your lift system you can take further modifications to your ship's design (or, if you're building a new ship from the ground up, you can pick from these choices alongside the standard design choices). The choices listed here are beyond the ken of most canopy-level engineers, so the crew should search for drydocks in the branches of tallshanks, floating cities, and on isolated mountainsides. *These choices are split into the usual design categories of hull, bite, and engine. Their specific category is noted next to their stake cost.*

Willowpeel 1 Stake Hull

Light and flexible, but extremely fragile, even by the standards of the weakest hulls.

- **Speed +1**
- **Armour -1**
- Increase impact when performing aerial manoeuvres

Feather-Scale 2 Stake Hull

Interlocking feathers tightly thatched together, capable of flexing with and adapting to the wind but still sturdy and resistant to outer damage.

- **Tilt +1**
- Increase impact when performing aerial manoeuvres

Nimbus Tin 2 Stake Hull

Though less impressive in terms of defence than iron or steel, nimbus tin is light enough not to interfere too much with aerial movement... Plus the odd mottling colour is a good match for the wild skies.

- **Seals +1**
- **Stealth +1**

Aeroviathan Bones 2 Stake Hull

Hollow bones taken from huge aerial creatures, resistant to damage, but naturally light.

- **Armour +2**
- **Tilt +1**
- **Stealth -1**

Roto-Chopper 2 Stake Bite

Some say the aeronaut rotor was inspired by the sawblades of the wild's earliest days. The roto-chopper shows that inspiration sometimes comes full circle.

- **Saws +1**
- **Armour +1**
- **Deals massive CQ Hewing damage**

Kaboara 2 Stake Bite

Hideously complex, but undeniably effective at clearing the way, the kaboara takes the form of a series of angled pots, tubes, and funnels used to direct doses of explosive alchemical mixture.

- **Armour +1**
- **Saws +2**
- **Stealth -1**
- **Deals massive CQ Blast damage**

Scramblepads 2 Stake Bite

Modelled after an ironjaw ray's flippers, these paddle-shaped pinions work as oars on the treetop sea and directional fins when a ship is airborne.

- **Tilt +2**
- **Deals massive CQ Blunt damage**

Winter's Tongue 2 Stake Bite

A prow attachment that flash-freezes greenery before slicing through it, leaving a wake of ice crystals as a ship moves.

- **Armour +1**
- **Seals +1**
- **Deals massive CQ Frost damage**

Sunscoop 2 Stake Bite (Sail)

A sail-like array that ripples and surges in sunlight.

- **Speed +2**
- **Only effective in direct sunlight**

Vapour Intakes 2 Stake Engine

Funnel-like collectors leading to an internal compression engine. Operates in near-silence.

- **Stealth +1**
- **Speed +1**
- Fuelled with cloudstuff and water vapour, but easily clogged by sporeclouds

Flexing Canvas 2 Stake Engine

A sheet of old airship canvas mingled with restless whispers, tied to springs and pulleys to take advantage of its constant but erratic movement.

- **Speed +1**
- **Seals +1**
- Fuelled with the dropped syllables of the crew's mumbled secrets

Storm-Scrap 3 Stake Engine

Sealed inside of a triple-locked chamber, ringed with rubber seals and safety cages. If a fragment of storm, even one this small and mindless, ever escaped, it would wreak havoc on the vessel that imprisoned it.

- **Seals +1**
- **Tilt +2**
- Fuelled with electro-conductive salvage

Stone Eye 3 Stake Engine

Is this arconautic, or spiritual? A vessel for whispers, or for something far more ancient? Is this the work of some maddened sculptor, or an artefact from before the verdant world, or perhaps a leftover from an age before even then? And, most critically, *did this thing just blink?*

- **Armour +1**
- **Saws +1**
- **Tilt +1**
- Fuelled with uncomfortable attention

Rising Fittings

As with the rising design options, the fittings listed on the following pages are the kind of thing most sea-level engineers would struggle to create or install. *These choices are split into the existing fittings categories of additions, bounteous additions, rooms, and armaments. Their specific category is noted next to their stake cost.*

Aerial Anchor 1 Stake Addition

A deployable chemical balloon that holds lighter-than-air gas, and a weighted pendulum-style chain below. Ships with aerial anchors may Drift while at height, effectively allowing them to drop anchor without landing even if it can't usually Float or Hover.

Buoyancy Tethers 1 Stake Addition

Grappling-array style hooks that are designed to latch onto floating debris. They don't let a ship float as effortlessly as an aerial anchor, but they do ensure that even an unattended airship doesn't drift from where it's left at all.

Ballast Tanks 1 Stake Addition

Filled with wood chips, spoiled liquids, and rusted salvage. These tanks can be opened remotely and their contents dumped, lightening the ship for a burst of height while already aloft.

Stormplough 1 Stake Addition

Angled blades mounted on the prow of an airship, hiding simple insulation and wiring connected to the interior.

- Reduce the impact of storms when you're moving through the clouds that make them up. In addition, your ship is resistant to lightning strikes.

Piped Air 1 Stake Addition

A pipe system that carries air from the interior of a ship to nozzles on the deckside, allowing those working outside to breathe easy even when high in the atmosphere.

Signal Mirrors 1 Stake Addition

A method of long-distance communication using an array of spinning mirrors attached to a refurbished ordinator. Can be controlled from the pilot's station or the mirror array itself.

Spatterglass 1 Stake Addition

Pre-V glass coated with a thin layer of hydrophobic grease that interferes very little with transparency. Keeps views from the ship clear no matter the weather.

Spring-Set Decking 1 Stake Addition

Though it takes a while to move as confidently on deck planks that have a little give as it does on solid wood, the absorbent properties reduce the chance of crew injuries when aerial manoeuvres turn harsh.

Angler Fins 1 Stake Addition

Controlled from a ship's pilot section, these wood or metal fins are used to gain a greater level of control over movements while airborne.

- Reduce cut on tricky aerobatic manoeuvres (such as barrel rolls and sharp turns) no matter the atmospheric conditions.

Fluting Bones 1 Stake Addition

Adapted from the aerodynamic structures displayed by countless wildsea sky-beasts.

- Ignore the negative effects of strong or unpredictable winds while flying or gliding (positive effects still benefit you as normal).

Focusing Amber 2 Stake Addition

A screen of delicate amber placed in front of the pilot's controls, with various bubbles and magnifying lenses built into it. Focusing amber allows any pilot at the controls to benefit from *Hawksight*, the ability to see further than most and in much greater detail.

Re-Scrutiniser 2 Stake Addition

The sky watches, but this ship watches in return. An arrangement of amber lenses and arconautically charged wiring leads to a central screen, displaying a simple but accurate radar-like display.

Magnacoupled Kitesail 2 Stake Addition

A kitesail that has no obvious tether to the ship, allowing for complete freedom of movement at extreme range on windy days. When the kitesailor decides they've had enough, or needs a quick return to the ship, the release of a spring on the kitesail's central spar activates an electromagnet, yanking it violently but effectively back toward the deck it launched from.

Gas-Grub Nest 1 Stake Bounteous Addition

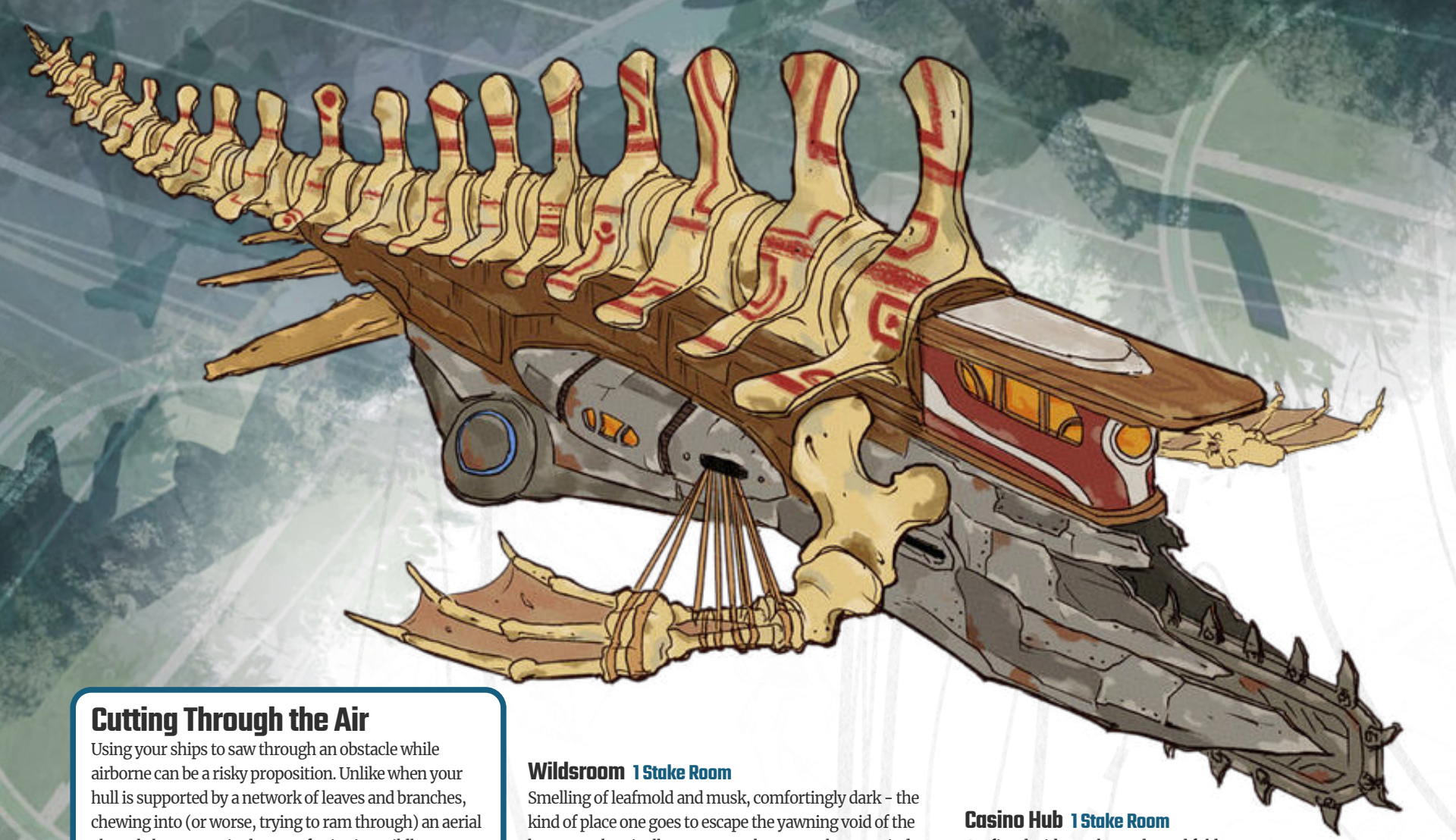
Portly and squeaking, these grubs produce a lighter-than-air gas as a natural byproduct of their digestion. Once per journey (if you have an appropriate container for it), gain 'Canister of Lifting Gas' as a piece of salvage.

Cumulus Hen Hutch 1 Stake Bounteous Addition

Cumulus hens are uneasy at canopy-level, beginning their egg-laying process only when above the clouds. Once per journey (if you've ascended high enough), gain 'Fresh Cumulus Eggs' as a specimen.

Ferrogranate Tree 2 Stake Bounteous Addition

One of the most popular on-deck arborist choices, the fruits produced by a ferrogranate tree are almost entirely inedible, but their plentiful seeds are naturally magnetically charged. Once per journey, gain 'Handful of Ferrogranate Seeds' or 'Ferrogranate Iron-Rind' as a specimen.



Cutting Through the Air

Using your ships to saw through an obstacle while airborne can be a risky proposition. Unlike when your hull is supported by a network of leaves and branches, chewing into (or worse, trying to ram through) an aerial obstacle leaves you in danger of spinning wildly out of control.

To somewhat reduce the inherent danger of such an action, a group of ironbound hacker-engineers came up with a countermeasure that proved so useful it's been adapted by airship crews from all corners of the waves...

Pyramidal Stabilizer 1 Stake Room

Installed as near to the centre of a ship as possible, this bulky but useful device detects and corrects unexpected spins and losses of balance.

- Reduce cut imposed when trying to saw through or ram an aerial obstacle.

Wildsroom 1 Stake Room

Smelling of leafmold and musk, comfortingly dark - the kind of place one goes to escape the yawning void of the heavens when it all gets too much, or merely to remind themselves of the comforts of an old home.

Tinted Lounge 1 Stake Room

Tinted amberglass windows allow occupants to see out, but an expensive mirrored finish prevents anybody on the outside from seeing in. Perfect for clandestine meetings, and for avoiding prying eyes.

Library 1 Stake Room

An overly grand name for what's most often a small cache of books, scrolls, and inscribed tablets, libraries are found far more commonly on airships than on thrash-level vessels thanks to the long periods of (relative) peace their crews are likely to experience.

Casino Hub 1 Stake Room

Outfitted with stools, cards, and fold-away tables, enabling crew to play a range of chance-based games from far-off reaches.

Iris Under-Bay 1 Stake Room

An airlock-type room usually found at the base of a ship, complete with a sliding door arrangement for easy ingress and egress.

Boiler Room 1 Stake Room

Rare on canopy-level ships, but more common on those that take to the air. A ship's boiler room typically uses alchemical reactions to heat water, which is then piped around the walls of the vessel to keep it warm in the cold of the heavens.

Pepper-Barrel Gatling 2 Stakes Armament

Made for laying down a hail of suppressive fire on larger threats, or shredding smaller targets.

- **Deals high-impact LR Spike or Serrated damage to all targets in a small area**

Tzarebuchet 2 Stakes Armament

Designed to launch clouds of sharp-edged scree in lazy but dangerous arcs.

- **Deals high-impact LR Keen or Hewing damage to all targets in a small area**

Cobra Cluster 2 Stakes Armament

The scattering of high-velocity explosives from a cobra cluster may lack the punch to injure leviathans, but can put paid to just about anything else.

- **Deals high-impact LR Blast or Acid damage to all targets in a small area**

Catastrophapult 2 Stakes Armament

A forked deck-weapon that fires axehead-shaped projectiles using springs and stored tension.

- **Deals massive LR Hewing damage**

Bolas Cannon 2 Stakes Armament

The weighted cables fired from a bolas cannon aren't meant to tangle, as one might expect, but to slice.

- **Deals massive LR Keen damage**

Mounted Magnet-Rail 3 Stakes Armament

A powerful voltaic charge accelerates explosive projectiles to near-impossible speeds.

- **Deals massive LR Blast damage**
- **Reduce cut when attacking scaled targets**

Quartzwater Cannon 3 Stakes Armament

Each shot a kiss from the deepest winter.

- **Deals massive LR Frost damage**
- **Reduce cut when attacking feathered targets**

Whirlwind Bolt-Launcher 3 Stakes Armament

The harpoon-like bolts fired from this launcher spin as they travel, drilling through even the thickest leviathan hides with undelicate effectiveness.

- **Deals massive LR Spike damage**
- **Reduce cut when attacking tough-skinned targets**

Deck-Based Aeronaut Equipment

While a good grappling hook and a head for heights can keep the average wildsailor safe enough, most prefer the added security that comes from specialised equipment. *Remember to add these rules to the notes section of your ship sheet if you choose any of the options below.*

Safety Tethers 1 Stake

Running from a ring sunk into the deck to a wildsailor's belt or harness, these turn a dangerous tumble into an embarrassing mid-air hang.

- Working with a tether attached is safer, but also clumsier - cut on actions taken with multiple other tethered crewmates around is common.

Wingsuit Wardrobe 2 Stakes

In no way do these suits guarantee flight or gliding, but they add both as potential outcomes to a list that otherwise comprises of 'falling to your death'.

- Crew that have time to suit up before leaving the ship at heights gain a temporary 3-track benefit, **Wingsuit** (this can keep a character aloft in favourable winds or break an otherwise lethal fall).

Compact Parachute Stock 2 Stakes

A less flexible but more reliable version of the wingsuit, compact parachutes allow a crewmember to safely drift down towards the waves after a jump or fall from a great height. What happens to them once they land is probably better not to speculate on.

- Crew that have time to don a compact parachute before leaving the ship at heights gain a temporary 3-track benefit, **Parachute** (this can turn an otherwise lethal fall into a controlled descent). The parachute must be re-packed with a task before being used again after such an event.

Wildbreath Tank Stock 2 Stakes

These pressurized tanks are filled with canopy-level air, allowing for easy breathing even when a ship is high enough that the atmosphere begins to thin.

- Crew that have time to shoulder a wildbreath tank before leaving the ship at heights gain a temporary 3-track benefit, **Clean Air.**

Deck Equipment in Play

Firefly: There's a scream from the starboard side, the kind that brings up every aeronaut's greatest fear... One that starts loud, and gets quieter with dangerous speed.

Todd: Oh damn! Morningvale's gone over the edge, hasn't he?

Firefly: He has indeed. Whether he was pushed or jumped is something you'll have time to work out later - for now, you've got a split second to react if you want to save him.

Kyllian: A split second is all I need, I've still got the effects of that concoction from earlier as a benefit. I leap over the edge after him.

Firefly: Bold move! But he's an ironbound, are you sure you'll be able to grab him and bring him back, even with that temporary trait in play?

Kyllian: ... I... probably should have thought about that before I jumped.

Laura: Friends don't let friends fall alone, Kyllian. Can I grab a wingsuit from the wardrobe and head down after them? With both of us helping, I think we'll be able to slow his fall and at least land safely.

Firefly: You can indeed, but even donning it as fast as you can is going to take some time. I'll shift focus to Kyllian and see how he does before we get back to you, if that makes sense?

Laura: Definitely - I lunge for the wardrobe and start getting the wings on as fast as I can. Could I roll to speed up the process, if I take a cut?

Freya: Before you do that, I'm going to take some initiative myself. I'll push the ship into a dive, try to close the gap a little so you'll be closer by the time you're ready.

Firefly: Excellent idea. I'm starting an open track, Short Way Down, and marking the first box...

For Heru, it was the calm days that really got to him.

A storm you could fight. You could set up the lightning rods and head inside to wait it out, could rise above the clouds and escape it, could even stand on deck and scream into the rain to goad the bloody thing. You could DO something.

But the calm days, where a ship feels adrift even when it's on course, where even the rush of wind gets tuned out and you're left with nothing but silence... They were hard to deal with. Those days when the rigging doesn't tangle, when none of the alarms sound, when the engine ticks over and you're left to pace the deck without even the reassuring jostling of branch on hull to keep you shifting your balance from moment to moment. Those big, nothing-filled days.

Without the ferrets, he reflected, he'd probably have lost it years ago.

Rising Undercrew

The final option available when creating an airship is to pick from a set of new undercrew choices. Some of these choices may also benefit canopy-level ships, but most are geared toward aerial travel. *These choices are split into the usual undercrew options of officers, gangs, and packs. Their specific category is noted next to their stake cost.*

Promoted Generalist [3-Track] 1 Stake Officer

When you have the time and the inclination, it's almost impossible to resist dabbling from time to time.

- **1 rank in any three skills or languages.**

Watchful Balloonists [3-Track] 1 Stake Gang

Trained spotters with their own personal lift devices, experienced at detecting and warning of approaching aerial dangers.

- When at anchor (or otherwise still) the watchful balloonists rise above the deck, giving early warning if hazards approach.

Sky-Seers [3-Track] 2 Stake Gang

For some, the sky is just too wide... But they've lived the aeronaut life, and their tales help keep danger at bay.

- You may mark this gang's track to avoid having an instance of cut count for Scrutiny.

Nimbus Sages [3-Track] 2 Stake Gang

Often on the studious side, a gang of nimbus sages track and record atmospheric phenomena.

- Automatically acquire a weather-based chart after a storm (or other unusual weather-based event).

Vapour Brewers [3-Track] 2 Stake Gang

Amateur steeps that focus on concoctions using pure, uncrezzered cloud-stuff.

- Automatically acquire a resource, Pure Water, after moving through a bank of high-atmosphere clouds.

Owl-Arms [3-Track] 2 Stake Gang

Dedicated owl trainers that use their charges to hunt other denizens of the skies.

- Mark the owl-arms track to gain a resource, Freshly Caught Prey.

Atmosferrets [3-Track] 1 Stake Pack

Lithe little beasts with shaggy coats, rarely used for anything other than companionship or distraction at extreme heights.

Sundown Roosters [3-Track] 1 Stake Pack

These birds crow at the setting of the sun rather than the rising, and care very little about wind chill or external temperatures no matter how low they drop.

Donatza [3-Track] 1 Stake Pack

Droning dragonfly-like insects, each about the length of an ardent arm. Their usually restless activity slows in the presence of larger aerial predators.

Hawks-Eye Moth [3-Track] 2 Stake Pack

A moth the size of a large dog. The moth gets its name from the patterning of its wings, which stare outward to confuse and intimidate potential predators... including the ever-hungry sky.

- Reduce cut by one when trying to resist the effects of scrutiny while near a ship's hawks-eye moth.

Psuedomatic Claw [3-Track] 2 Stake Pack

Though it might appear to be a simple piece of equipment at first, this crane-style claw device is an ensouled machine, similar to an ironbound. The pseudomatic claw acts as a floating cargo crane, using spiritual energy to drift from place to place while transporting cargo. In off hours, most have the attitude of a playful pet, and love games of tug-o-war with the crew.

Chattergulls [3-Track] 2 Stake Pack

Avian messengers with remarkable sound-mimicking abilities, used to transmit messages between airships.

Tetralpaca [6-Track] 3 Stake Pack

A small herd of hardy animals taken from the northernmost reaches of the known sea, notable for their four eyes, walnut-flavoured milk, and soft coats.

- Use a task or mark the tetralpaca track to gain a resource, either Fresh Milk or Snow-Coloured Wool.

Creating a Submersible

Whether you're refitting an existing ship or creating an entirely new vessel, this latter half of the chapter holds the options best suited for those wishing to delve deep beneath the canopy. The options presented here can be salvaged from wrecks (if you're lucky), but are more reliably added by shipyard engineers through the spending of stakes. If a crew is having a ship added to or created during a game, **cargo items can be traded to a shipyard to act as stakes**.

Mandatory Choices

Only the pressure shell is required to create a submersible. That said, **scrubbers** are highly recommended - you can skip them if you just want to get down to the depths as quickly as possible while still interacting with the new Pressure mechanics, but your trips will likely be shorter and more brutal.

Pressure Shells [Required]

One of the greatest dangers most crews will come up against when they slip below the waves by choice is the sheer denseness of the foliage. With the wilds not just below them, but suddenly all around and above them as well, simply traversing a ship's deck becomes a gauntlet of slicing leaves, insect bites, slapping branches, and predatory attention.

Pressure shells act as a canopy, usually retractable, that can be moved into a position that gives the crew some protection from the wilds, even out on deck. *Pressure shells increase a ship's **Depth Tolerance**, adding to the amount of marks needed for Pressure Level to increase whilst below the waves, and may add to a ship's ratings. Importantly, pressure shells **don't** afford the deck area any protection from under-canopy perils that a ship's interior might resist (such as bad air and insect swarms) **unless they explicitly state that they do**. You'll find more rules concerning pressure on page 58.*

Nothing But Hope Zero Stakes

Your ship travels the depths without reinforcement, the crew relying on silent prayers to keep pressure at bay.

- Depth Tolerance: +0

Sliding Panels 1 Stake

While useless as a pressure shell, they make a handy set of movable shields in times of need.

- Armour +1
- Depth Tolerance: +0

Tar-Canvas Layering 1 Stake

Stiffened fabric painted with layer upon layer of protective sealant, covering the deck like a rigid tent.

- Depth Tolerance: +2

Rusted Segmento 2 Stakes

Plates of interlocking iron that can be pulled into place to cover the deck, low quality in terms of materials, but good at shouldering incoming damage aside.

- Armour +2
- Speed -1
- Depth Tolerance: +2

Carven Bands 2 Stakes

Made to slide up from the edges of the ship and interlock above the deck, the broadwood making up the main body of each band is both flexible and resilient.

- Tilt +1
- Depth Tolerance: +2

Wickthatch 2 Stakes

A mat of wildsea grasses and vines woven between reinforced poles, more for blending in than keeping the crew safe on deck.

- Stealth +1
- Depth Tolerance: +2

Hood-Willow 2 Stakes

A tree growing from the deck itself, some quirk of plant biology leaves the hood-willow extremely protective of the space beneath its branches.

- Depth Tolerance: +4

Mag-Stone Plough 2 Stakes

Shards of mountain-stone, heavy with iron ore - they lift into the air at the flip of a switch, forming a floating partial shield at the front end of the deck.

- Armour +1
- Depth Tolerance: +2

Weeping Fossil Figurehead 2 Stakes

A creature turned to something like stone by the passing ages, or by the unpredictable energies of the wilds. Greenery shies away when such a specimen draws close.

- Seals +1
- Depth Tolerance: +2

Pamu 3 Stakes

Parasite leaves that grow directly from a ship's upper hull, and that naturally curl around the exposed deck when their vessel dips below the canopy.

- Stealth +1
- Depth Tolerance: +2
- Deck area benefits from ship's interior resistances

Chitin Segmento 3 Stakes

Nowhere near as effective as its iron counterpart at resisting damage, the chitin segmento is still popular among submariners thanks to the innate ability of its semi-living plating to push back against the depths.

- Depth Tolerance: +4
- Deck area benefits from ship's interior resistances

Threshing-Cage 3 Stakes

An ever-moving arrangement of poles, chains, and blades, the entire rattling assemblage plugged straight into by the ship's engine.

- Speed +1
- Saws +1
- Depth Tolerance: +2

Upper Jaw 3 Stakes

The half-skull of an enormous creature hangs above the deck, ready to be pulled down by the crew to act as a macabre covering against the encroaching depths.

- Saws +1
- Depth Tolerance: +4

Ambershell 3 Stakes

A retractable amberglass canopy that encloses the deck when engaged. The shell's translucent nature allows good all-round vision for curious types but, more importantly, the unbroken finish allows wildsailors on deck to benefit from their ship's internal scrubbers.

- Seals +1
- Depth Tolerance: +2
- Deck area benefits from ship's interior resistances

Amoebic Bubble 3 Stakes

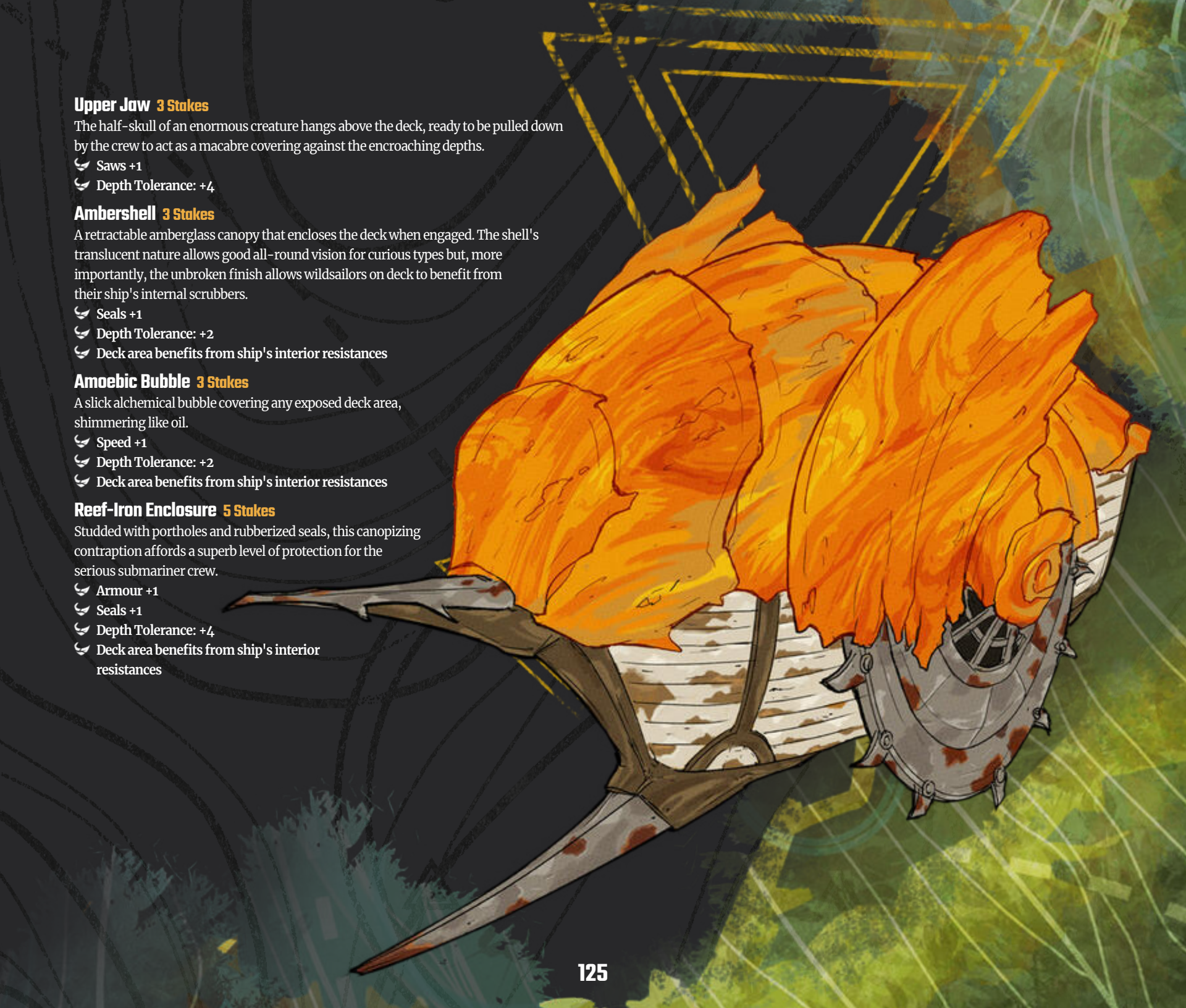
A slick alchemical bubble covering any exposed deck area, shimmering like oil.

- Speed +1
- Depth Tolerance: +2
- Deck area benefits from ship's interior resistances

Reef-Iron Enclosure 5 Stakes

Studded with portholes and rubberized seals, this canopizing contraption affords a superb level of protection for the serious submariner crew.

- Armour +1
- Seals +1
- Depth Tolerance: +4
- Deck area benefits from ship's interior resistances



The first transition passed with barely a shudder. He might have missed it entirely if he hadn't been waiting for it, thorned feet scarring the wood of the corridor as he paced.

Being on deck was a step too far for him now, even up here, but he knew how it would look for his crewmates. The scattering of leaf and branch and sunlight that made up the thrash receding above them, the deeper greens and stranger airs of the tangle hemming them in on all sides. They'd still see the sky, in patches, like through a broken window, for a time.

But that time was short.

They'd be too deep for light, soon.

Too deep for sense, for logic, for laughter.

Too deep entirely.

Scrubbers [Heavily Suggested]

"Essential? Pah!" This phrase has been recorded more than once as the epitaph of inexperienced deeps-delvers. Scrubbers keep the interior of a vessel safe, usually by making sure that there's a decent amount of clean, breathable air circulating the ship's interior. More esoteric scrubbers do little for the air, but instead keep the ship's rooms and corridors free from some of the most common perils of the undercanopy.

While a failure in the scrubber system rarely directly leads to death - there's air down there to breathe, after all - it often leads to a whole host of unpleasant effects, such as the ship filling with spores, or pheromones, or stinging insects, or living darkness. Plus, there's very little that staves off the crawling fear of the deeps than being able to take a breath without choking. ***It's not mandatory to take one of these options, but it will make delving a whole lot safer.***

Scrubbers increase a ship's ***Depth Tolerance****, adding to the amount of marks needed for Pressure Level to increase whilst below the waves, and often protect the ship from a variety of common under-canopy perils. You'll find details on the specific perils on page 54, and an explanation of Pressure and Depth Tolerance beginning on page 58.*

Scrubbers are always active once installed (unless they get broken or a crew chooses to disengage them in some way), offering their bonuses and resistances automatically. ***Choosing two scrubbers that offer a specific resistance allows you to upgrade that resistance to an immunity.***

Scraps of Cloth Zero Stakes

Really? That's what you're going with?

- **Depth Tolerance: +0**

Multi-Layered Fabrics 1 Stake

A huge step up from just jamming rags into corners.

- **Depth Tolerance: +1**
- **Ship interior resists drifting spores**

Thumb-Wax Coating 1 Stake

Rubbed around doorways and portholes, and then applied liberally to any unusually draughty spots.

- **Depth Tolerance: +1**
- **Ship interior resist wandering spirits**

Coughing Pitcher 1 Stake

Technically doesn't stop the bugs coming in, just ensures they don't live long enough for an infestation to begin.

- **Depth Tolerance: +1**
- **Ship interior resists insect incursions**

Parasite Vines 1 Stake

Winding throughout the ship, the leaves of these vines tend to absorb unusual elements as they grow.

- **Depth Tolerance: +1**
- **Ship interior resists bad air**

Myconic Struts 1 Stake

Does nothing to protect the ship from other spores (or any other dangers specific to the depths), but a fungal reinforcement to the ship's frame helps it withstand the physical aspects of increasing pressure.

- **Depth Tolerance: +2**

Unspun Wool 2 Stakes

Taken from surly mountain rams, and smells just as you would expect. Keeps noise low, though, and if you can get past the stench it's actually quite comfortable.

- **Stealth +1**
- **Depth Tolerance: +1**
- **Ship interior resists bad air**

Seven-Tooth Cogs 2 Stakes

Why seven teeth per cog? No rattlehand has ever quite been able to explain it in a way that makes sense, but somehow the convention sticks. Something about the way these cogs mesh and turn is antithetical to spectral entities, and even anchored and ironbound wildsailors tend to feel queasy around them.

- **Tilt +1**
- **Depth Tolerance: +1**
- **Ship interior resists wandering spirits**

Charcoal Rattlevents 2 Stakes
A system of air vents and mechanical filters, powered by the engine. Finally, a use for charcoal!
- **Depth Tolerance: +2**
- **Ship interior resists bad air and drifting spores**

Nailed Whispers 2 Stakes
You can see them, sometimes, like dust in a sunbeam.
- **Depth Tolerance: +2**
- **Ship interior resists insect incursions and wandering spirits**

Catalyst Pump 2 Stakes
Increases Pressure within the ship very slightly to match the Pressure on the exterior. Unpleasant, long-term, but an effective means of increasing structural integrity without reinforcing the ship's frame.
- **Depth Tolerance: +4**

Silvergrit Exchange 2 Stakes
If clean air is out of the question, at least you can fill it with something that keeps it so that you're the only ones breathing it. Silvergrit is a tiny particulate substance made from dried sundew stalks, pumped through corridors and out of vents to distract invading insects.
- **Depth Tolerance: +2**
- **Ship interior is immune to insect incursions**

Plasm Bulkheads 2 Stakes
Thin organic membranes stretched over every vent and doorway that open and close on instinct as crew and companions pass through them.
- **Depth Tolerance: +2**
- **Ship interior is immune to bad air**

Salt Signs 2 Stakes
Invisible except under direct moonlight, impossibly complex sigils cover every inch of the ship's structure, forbidding entry to any spectral entity that the ship doesn't recognise as crew.
- **Depth Tolerance: +2**
- **Ship interior is immune to wandering spirits**

Gargoyle Toads 2 Stakes
Clay baked and shaped with arconautic puissance, the unseen tongues of these immobile open-mouthed decorations snake through the air to gather and neutralize drifting spores.
- **Depth Tolerance: +2**
- **Ship interior is immune to drifting spores**

Protoleviathan Skeleton 3 Stakes
The pyramids of predator and prey beneath the waves are malleable and ever-changing, but leviathans and protoleviathans almost inevitably sit upon their capstones.
- **Depth Tolerance: +2**
- **Ship interior resists bad air, drifting spores, insect incursions, and wandering spirits**

Leaf-Rubber Octopump 3 Stakes
It's not alive. It's just a machine, after all. But the way those tubes writhe, and those bellows wheeze like lungs... Well, suffice it to say that if it *were* alive, it would most probably be very unhappy.
- **Depth Tolerance: +6**

Full Nautilization 7 Stakes
This is more than a scrubber - this is a complete refit of every system, every inch of frame, every plank of wood and piece of stolen scrap to make the ship's interior a fortress against the dangers of the depths. *Currently, the concept of full vessel nautilization exists only in theory - it's certainly possible, but nobody has yet proven able to crack a practical implementation.*
- **Depth Tolerance: +6**
- **Ship interior is immune to bad air, drifting spores, insect incursions, and wandering spirits**

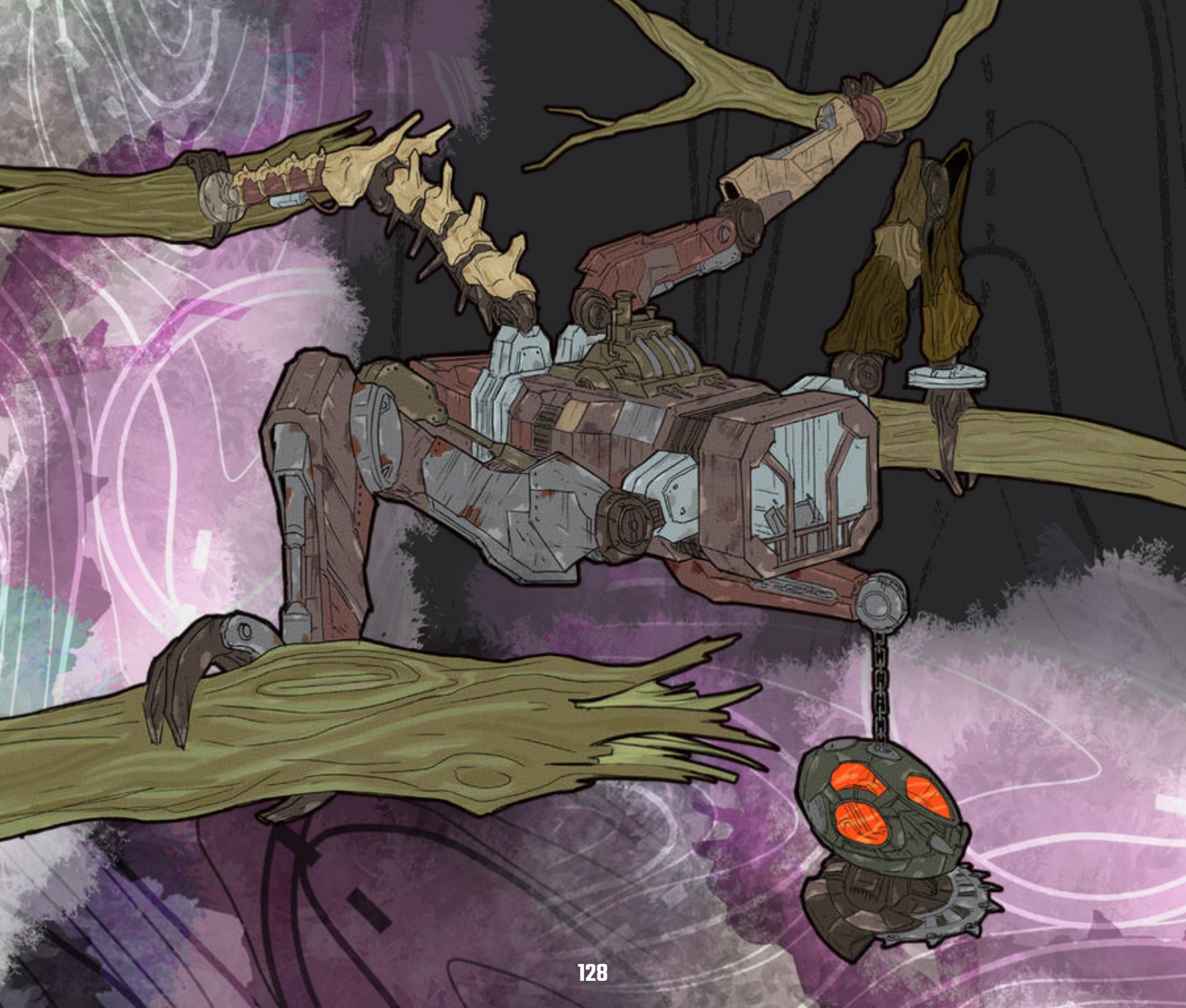
Scrubbers, Shells & Maintenance
While scrubbers and pressure shells are important bits of kit for submariners, they go down on the ship sheet just like any other fitting. This makes bookkeeping easy, but also means they're subject to the same rules as other ship components - damage that the ship takes might result in them breaking, rendering them useless until repaired.

Broken Scrubbers
As you might expect, a broken scrubber loses any ability it might have to clean the air circulating the ship's interior or protect it from invasive threats. A broken scrubber might also reduce the ship's Depth Tolerance, if the damage is severe enough.

In some cases a scrubber might malfunction in a more dangerous way, spewing noxious chemicals that make it impossible to stay belowdecks for long, or attracting hazards rather than repelling them.

Broken Pressure Shells
A pressure shell's function is to keep the deck safe from the horrors of the depths, so when one breaks, the most obvious danger is that what it was keeping outside might start to work its way in.

There's also the chance that a shell might get stuck either open, closed, or half-closed - protecting certain points of interest on the deck, but not others. It may even work, but at a far slower rate than usual - there are no hard-and-fast rules for the opening and closing of a pressure shell over the deck, but crews might have to contend with one that they have to pull into place manually until the mechanisms that usually move it are fixed.



Special Submersible Frames

The six frames presented in the core book work absolutely fine as the basis for building a submersible, or for adding submersible elements on top of. But the rattlehands and shipwrights of the wilds are nothing if not resourceful, and the prospect of exploring the depths tends to bring out the experimental side of those sorts. *The one-frame-per-ship rule still applies here, but a crew might be able to retrofit their ship in an appropriate port.*

Reinforced 1 Stake Frame

A simple frame, augmented with a multitude of cycling locks, pressure exchangers, and built-in ordinators.

- **Depth Tolerance: +2**

Sidewinder 2 Stake Frame

Segmentation taken to the extreme, these frames are modelled after a particularly tenacious breed of wildsea caterpillar. Sidewinder frames offer little benefit while travelling, but do allow a ship to wrap itself around an ironroot's branch as an anchoring method.

- **Depth Tolerance: +2**
- **When dropping anchor the ship can curl around branches or monuments, anchoring itself so thoroughly that even a rootquake can't dislodge it**

Spinch 2 Stake Frame

The colloquial name for one of the earliest deep-delving designs, the 'Submersible Pneumatic Inching Frame' allows a ship to split into several connected sections which can extend forward on semi-flexible rails to bridge gaps between larger branches.

- **Depth Tolerance: +2**
- **The ship's extending frame allows it to bridge gaps several times longer than the length of the ship**

Spread 2 Stake Frame

A spread frame distributes the ship's decks and rooms over a wider, flatter area than usual. Ships built with a spread frame are more like barges, able to rest safely on thin or brittle areas of branch and leaf.

- **Depth Tolerance: +2**
- **The ship never has to cut for movement made to traverse thin or brittle branches**

Delving Designs

Once you've fitted a pressure shell (at the very least) you can work on other aspects of your ship's design (or, if you're building a new ship from the ground up, you can pick from these choices alongside the standard design choices). The choices listed here involve materials that are uncommon at canopy level, and a crew will find much more luck obtaining these ship upgrades at a lowport of some kind. *These choices are split into the usual design categories of hull, bite, and engine. Their specific category is noted next to their stake cost.*

Rootwood 2 Stake Hull

Hull planks cut from the base of the ironroots, drenched in three hundred years of verdant history and incalculable aeons of lost time.

- **Armour +1**
- Once per journey, your ship ignores incoming damage from a leviathan-sized source.

Muffling Wool 2 Stake Hull

Shorn from shaggy drown-dwelling goats, left soft on the ship's interior and lacquered on the outer hull.

- **Seals +1**
- The crew treat conflicts as triumphs when trying to hide, keep quiet, or go unnoticed within the ship.

Bark-Scale 3 Stake Hull

Chemically treated for flexibility, but still liable to catch and drag as a ship moves, bark-scale's true benefit is in the natural camouflage it offers at depth.

- **Seals +1**
- **Stealth +2**
- **Speed -1**
- Increase impact on stealth rating rolls taken when at anchor within the depths.

Hewn Amber 3 Stake Hull

Cut and shaped from massive chunks of hardened ironroot resin, this hull material is prized for its golden glow, but is an absolute *bastard* to repair without the aid of a lowport drydock.

- **Armour +1**
- **Seals +1**
- **Depth Tolerance: +2**

Driftsail 1 Stake Bite (Sail)

A near-invisible sail woven from the ghosts of old canvas. Ripples and billows in the presence of spirits.

- **Speed +1**
- **Only effective in areas of dense spiritual presence**

Geckopads 2 Stake Bite

Mechanical legs with gecko-like pads at their tips, designed to firmly grip branches while holding your ship aloft (or below).

- **Tilt +1**
- **The ship never has to cut for movement made to traverse thin or brittle branches**
- **Deals massive CQ Blunt damage**

Outboard Serroclaws 2 Stake Bite

Outboard engines housing chainsaw attachments, made to resemble a mantid's claws.

- **Saws +1**
- **Tilt +1**
- **Deals massive CQ Serrated damage**

Talongrove Tendrils 3 Stake Bite

Traditionally carved from sinuous talongrove trees, known to grow, flex, and grasp for decades after harvest.

- **Stealth +1**
- **Tilt +2**
- **Deals massive CQ Spike damage**

Mycovent Exchange 1 Stake Engine

A funnel system that extracts and redirects energy from spore-thick air.

- **Stealth +1**
- **Fuelled by travelling through sporeclouds**

Ur-Composter 1 Stake Engine

A grumbling series of compression bins and leaf-rubber hoses. Attracts insects, but never for very long.

- **Seals +1**
- **Fuelled with woodrot, offcuts, and spiderwebs**

Motive Moment 2 Stake Engine

A fossilized whisper of motion-based words, trapped and spinning drunkenly like a broken phonograph record.

- **Speed +1**
- **Tilt +1**
- **Fuelled by sounds cut unnaturally short**

Deck-Based Delving Equipment

As hostile as the depths are to ships, they are magnitudes more dangerous for the unprotected wildsailor. *Remember to add these rules to the notes section of your ship sheet if you choose any of the options below.*

Chemical Spray 2 Stakes

Better doused in noxious alchemical solutions of unknown and unsettling origin than crezzerin. Probably.

- Crew that have time to douse themselves before leaving the ship at depth gain a temporary 2-track benefit, **Soaked**, which gives crezzerin resistance.

Tether-Lines 3 Stakes

Coils of reinforced leaf-rubber and twine, designed to unspool slowly and retract at speed.

- Crew that have time to attach a tether-line before leaving the ship at depth gain a temporary 3-track benefit, **Tether-Line.** The tether-line track can be marked to briefly 'glide' by swinging on the line, or to be yanked unceremoniously toward the ship's deck.

Makeshift Suits 3 Stakes

Uncomfortable to wear for long periods, these suits provide a modicum of protection against depth-related hazards the crew might encounter outside of the ship.

- Crew that have time to suit up before leaving the ship at depth gain a temporary 4-track benefit, **Makeshift Suit** (though this may have negative effects on their ability to move freely).
- The number of boxes on this track is reduced by one whenever the Pressure Level increases. Unmarked boxes are removed first.

Emergency Tool Rack 3 Stakes

Jagserries and sabres are all very well, but the challenges of the underthrash are varied and rarely expected.

- When preparing for a delve, each member of the crew can take a temporary 3-track benefit, **Depth Tool**. The tool deals either CQ Serrated, Hewing, Acid, or Volt damage, chosen when it is gained.

Delving Fittings

It's extremely rare that a ship is built to delve down to the root-choked depths far below, but certain dockyards are equipped to make the major modifications needed to give a ship a chance in the deeper darkness. *These choices are split into the existing fittings categories of additions, bounteous additions, rooms, and armaments. Their specific category is noted next to their stake cost.*

Underthrash Anchors Free

An upgrade to usual wildsea anchor systems so ubiquitous as to be treated as standard.

Deep-Delving 2 Stake Motif

No crew travels the depths with regularity without a good reason, or so one would hope. Ships fitted with a deep-delving motif will likely have...

- **Superstitious markings** over their hull, charms to ward off leviathans (of dubious effectiveness)
- **Honeypot vents** to draw insects away from doorways and portholes
- An array of **wilds-clearing tools**, allowing crew fighting on or below decks easy access to Hewing or Serrated damage

Periscope Mirrors 1 Stake Addition

Arranged throughout the ship, a set of mirroring channels to give the pilot a more complete view of their surroundings even when submerged.

Bounding Ropes 1 Stake Addition

Used for pulling the ship across areas with wide gaps between their branches, slowly and laboriously. Capable of carrying great weights, but need to be secured to trunks and distant branches by hand.

Extra Portholes 1 Stake Addition

A blessing and a curse, these allow crew to stay safe inside their ship while getting a good view of the depths that surround them, but curious predators are sometimes drawn to the light they shed.

Trunk Drills 1 Stake Addition

The ship can attach itself to the trunk of an ironroot while at anchor, able to easily weather unexpected quakes or impacts.

Snap-Fire Grapples 1 Stake Addition

Though useless for forward movement, snap-fire grapples are excellent when it comes to slamming on the brakes or stopping an otherwise uncontrolled fall. Need to be rewound and reset with a task after use before they can be used again.

Kineticant Colony 1 Stake Addition

Though temperamental, this colony of shovel-headed ants can be coaxed into carrying the ship for a short time in almost complete silence.

- You can cut a path without using bite or engine once per journey. Increase your stealth rating by two marks for the duration of this movement.

Echo Machine 2 Stake Addition

A sonar-like device used for finding reefs, sunken ruins, and hidden ships. Effective use while travelling requires a member of the crew to operate and monitor it, but they gain *murksight* for the duration (the ability to see clearly through sporeclouds and gaseous obstructions).

Lockdown Protocol 2 Stake Addition

Sets of printed instructions in multiple languages displayed around the ship, written (or dictated, more likely) by experienced delvers.

- At the beginning of any journey, you may choose either bad air, drifting spores, wandering spirits, or insect incursions. The interior of your ship is completely immune to the chosen hazard for the duration of your journey.

Caging-Bell Station 2 Stake Room
A reinforced cage of scrap on the end of a set of winch ropes, built into the interior of the ship using a rudimentary pressure-door system. The caging-bell can be raised and lowered with internal controls.

Scything-Bell Station 3 Stake Room
A more advanced version of the caging bell, this 'room' acts almost as a tethered outrider when detached from the main vessel. The scything-bell can be raised and lowered with internal controls, and comes equipped with a serrated sawblade capable of cutting through obstructions and effecting lateral movement.

Pseudosun Closet 2 Stake Addition
Cramped but relaxing, this small space is drenched with a warm orange light from multiple arc-powered bulbs and firefly lanterns that simulates the distant sun's rays.

Grave Figurehead 1 Stake Bounteous Addition
The figurehead's carvings are carefully designed to have a mesmeric effect on the nearly-lost. Automatically acquire a spirit-based resource when you move through an area of dense phantasmal presence or encounter wandering spirits.

Drownberry Bush 1 Stake Bounteous Addition
Though they refuse to produce anything edible under most conditions, when they do it's worth the wait. Once per journey (if you've descended to the drown), gain 'Medicinal Drownberries' as a specimen.

Mydas Duskdew 1 Stake Bounteous Addition
Though the arconautic processes behind the plant's transformative properties border on the inscrutable, they're hard to ignore. Once per journey, gain an insect specimen with the *Golden* tag.

Mangrove Cutting 2 Stake Bounteous Addition
Grisly remains harvested from a particular underthrash tree, avoided by undercrew whenever they can help it.
- Whenever the Pressure Level increases, make a d6 fortune roll. On a 4, 5, or 6, gain a whisper.

Scorpion Strike 2 Stake Armament
A spring-wound weapon that creaks alarmingly with every judder of the ship, packing enough of a punch that 'firing' it tends to shake a vessel down to the frame.
- **Deals massive CQ Hewing damage**
- **You may mark one of your ratings to hijack focus and attack with this armament (once per scene)**

Fractal Pseudojaw 2 Stake Armament
Taken from an inherently arconautic beast of considerable size, the teeth of the fractal pseudojaw dig into more than flesh and wood when they bite down.
- **Deals massive CQ Spike damage**
- **You may mark one of your ratings on a successful attack to reduce a bitten target's immunity or resistance to a single type of damage by one step**

Spitting Pitchergraft 3 Stake Armament
A predatory plant of the depths coaxed into taking root among your ship's planks and plating.
- **Deals massive LR Acid or Toxin damage**

Hakebasu's Spear 3 Stake Armament
A glowing conductive wire attached to a tiny grasping hook, shots with the spear seem to do little damage until the built-in ceramic batteries are fully activated.
- **Deals massive LR Volt damage**
- **Reduce cut if fired in pitch darkness**

Copper Eaveskettle 3 Stake Armament
Containing a constantly boiling mixture of herbs, spices, and searing alchemical liquids, the oversized kettle can be tilted to release pressurized jets of scalding steam.
- **Deals massive LR Flame damage**
- **The steam of the copper eaveskettle never sets things aflame, despite the intense temperatures**

Hunter's Anchor 3 Stake Armament
Each massive bolt launched from this crossbow is attached to a chain wound around the ship's frame.
- **Deals massive LR Spike damage**
- **You may mark one of your ratings to tether a target hit by the hunter's anchor to your ship, forcing it to break free before it can flee (or pull you with it as it moves, if it's strong enough)**

Torpedoes
A new addition to the usual arsenal of deckside weaponry, torpedoes are powerful self-propelled threats released from a launcher built into a vessel's hull. Costly, but perfect for firing at ships you lack a clear line of sight to among the choking branches of the depths. *You must purchase **at least one launcher** option and **at least one charge** option to use these weapons. When a torpedo is fired, the combination of launcher and charge determines the damage type and any additional effects. Every shot can combine any two purchased launcher and charge options.*

Heart-Seeker 2 Stake Launcher
Loaded with living shells that hunger for glory far beyond their means. Reduce cut on attacks against leviathans and protoleviathans by one.

Cruel Greetings 2 Stake Launcher
There's very rarely a second chance to say hello. Reduce cut on attacks against ships and structures by one.

Magnetic Spiral 2 Stake Launcher
Used to accelerate torpedoes to such ridiculous speeds that they shatter on impact. Charges fired from the spiral deal their damage to all targets in a small area.

+ Solid Core 1 Stake Charge
There's much to be said for a chunk of salvaged iron, but you'll have to speak fast. Deals massive LR Blunt damage.

+ Whalebane 1 Stake Charge
Named by an amberclad woken from dreams of ancient salt. Deals massive LR Spike damage.

+ Cog Collection 1 Stake Charge
Though not particularly sharp, the speed at which they travel lends an unexpected edge. Deals massive LR Serrated damage.

+ Long Night Herbs 1 Stake Charge
Harvested and woven together with extreme care, these volatile herbs implode with a savage cold when disturbed. Deals massive LR Frost damage.

+ Broken Battery 1 Stake Charge
Why repair trashed ceramic batteries when you can recycle them? Deals massive LR Volt damage.

"It's dark out there."

Nicole's eyes were glued to the amber-tinted screen in front of her, but she spared her new companion a nod to show that she'd heard him. Fletchley was a good sort, but he'd never dipped below the waves before, and it showed.

"Can't really see anything," he continued. His eyes (or whatever light-sensitive patches passed as eyes for a ketra) were as riveted to the porthole beside him as hers were to the echo machine's display.

"That's the way of things, Fletch."

He didn't seem comforted by her answer, though she could hardly blame him. Everyone dealt with the pressure in their own way - hers was to focus, his apparently to talk. Incompatible, unfortunately.

"... Are you not scared?"

She paused for a moment, shot him a look.

"Of course. But fear keeps you sharp. Remember that. Embrace it."

Delving Undercrew

The final option available when creating a submersible is to pick from a set of new undercrew choices. Some of these choices may also benefit canopy-level ships, but most are geared toward traveling the depths. *These choices are split into the usual set of officers, gangs, and packs. Their specific category is noted next to their stake cost.*

Promoted Specialist [4-Track] 2 Stake Officer

Nothing beats experience, down in the dark. Sometimes it's all you have to rely on.

- 3 ranks in any one skill.

Grand Complicado [X-Track] 2 Stake Officer

Practice and repeat. Unpick a mystery. Demonstrate value. Become indisposable.

- Any one complex aspect.
- A grand complicado's track is equal to the track of the complex aspect they have access to, with two more boxes than usual.

Protobound [3-Track] 1 Stake Gang

Ships that plumb the depths have a higher than average chance of turning wild themselves, or of spawning ironbound from their wrecks. The protobound are theorized to be the beginnings of that process, young minds in hull-scrap form.

- Attacking invasive spirits target protobound before any other member of the crew.

Skewerjoys [3-Track] 1 Stake Gang

Named after their weapon of choice, skewerjoys ignore larger threats and focus on making life a living hell for unexpecting arthropods.

- Automatically acquire a resource, Skewered Insect, after moving through an area of particularly dense insect activity.

Lightless Scribes [3-Track] 2 Stake Gang

Few can chart the depths effectively, hampered by the confusion of branches and cloying dark. Lightless scribes are a notable exception.

- Whenever the Pressure Level increases, make a d6 fortune roll. On a 4, 5, or 6, gain a chart.

Rowdy Motley [4-Track] 2 Stake Gang

Though technically hired on for their ability to check seals and keep firefly lanterns lit, this jocular group have a pleasant habit of easing the tension when they can.

- Automatically reduce the number of marks on the Pressure track by one when you drop anchor.

Delve-Seers [3-Track] 2 Stake Gang

Some experience or injury that they refuse to talk about keeps this gang from ever leaving the ship at depth again, but they're a useful eye on gauges and dials.

- You may burn this gang's track to reduce the number of marks on your Pressure Gauge by 1d6.

Doomed Trio [3-Track] 2 Stake Gang

Born under uneasy stars, not that they'd ever have known it living so far from the skies.

- Whenever one of the crew would be hit by a negative Pressure effect, you may burn a box on the doomed trio's track to have them suffer it instead.

The Undercrew at Risk

Officers, gangs, and packs are in a far riskier situation below the waves than they are up on the surface. The threat of Pressure, harsh environment, and the increase in questing predatory creatures almost guarantee that they'll be taking more damage than they usually would.

This might be an accurate representation of danger, but it may not suit the tone of your game (especially if you treat the undercrew as fully fledged NPCs, that take part in the narrative of the game in a more-than-mechanical way). If this is the case, the following optional rule is for you...

Last Gasp Alternate Rule

When the last box of an undercrew's track is marked, they don't risk death. Instead, any subsequent damage or marks burn boxes on their track. When an officer, gang, or pack's track is fully burned, they risk permanent death as usual. Before that point, they'll be able to recover from injuries and clear both burn and marks through rest in port and the ministrations of a helpful and caring crew.

Kinsquid [3-Track] 1 Stake Pack

Affectionate tentacular beasties that always seem to be around when you need them.

Glowbug Gastronomers [3-Track] 1 Stake Pack

Quickly come to learn the tastes of their trainers (mostly through trial and error, unfortunately).

- **Once per journey, the glowbug gastronomers will settle on an edible specimen with a positive tag near the ship (supplied by the firefly)**

Ragamoff Squirrels [3-Track] 1 Stake Pack

Flying squirrels adept at retrieving small resources in the immediate vicinity of the ship, allowing the crew to stay safely sealed inside.

Salt-Rimed Wasps [3-Track] 2 Stake Pack

They care little for the vessel they ride on, but will protect their own nest with gusto and savagery.

- **Mark to increase impact on an action dealing with wandering spirits or insect incursions while on your ship**

Lung-Petal Crawlers [3-Track] 2 Stake Pack

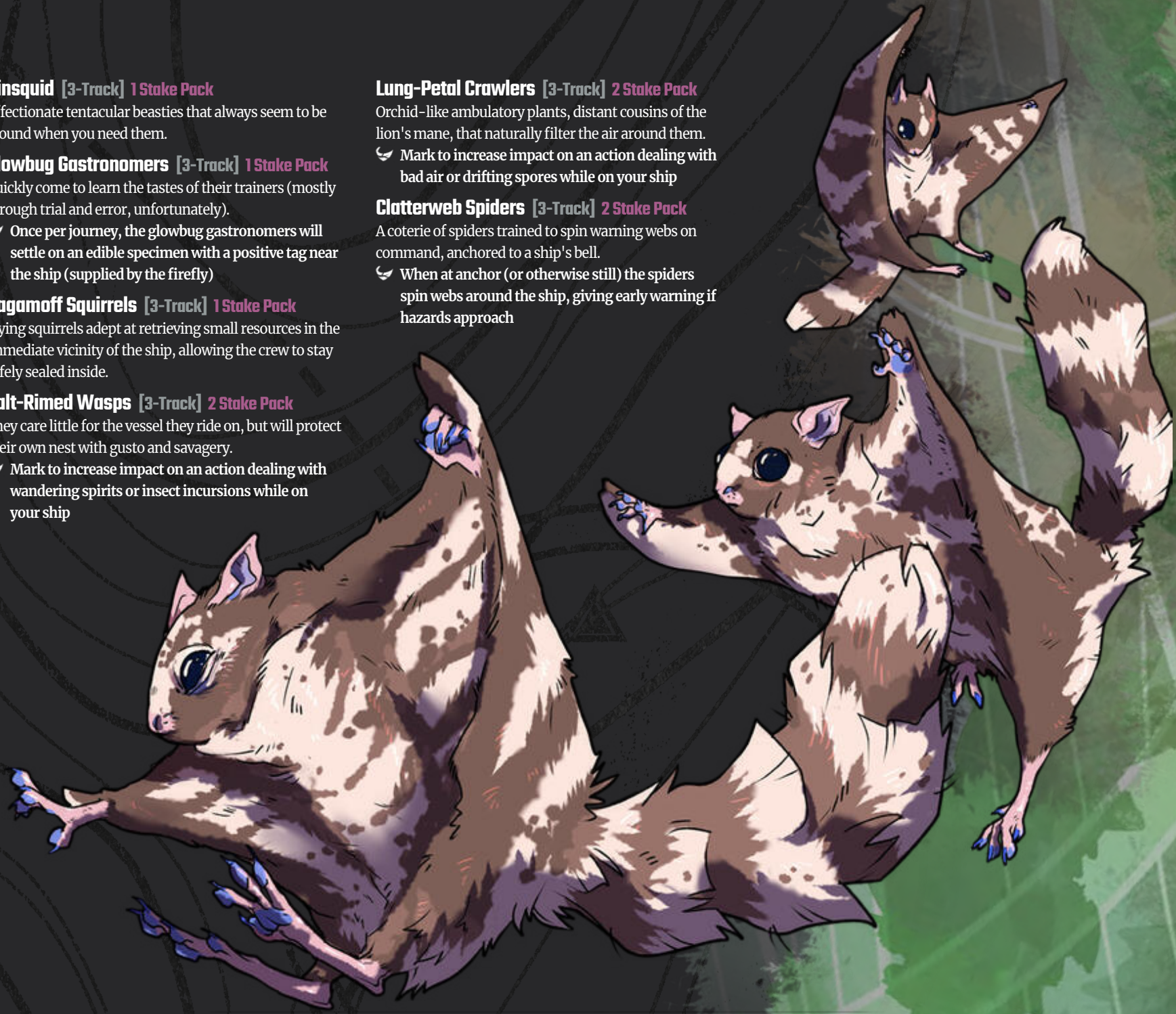
Orchid-like ambulatory plants, distant cousins of the lion's mane, that naturally filter the air around them.

- **Mark to increase impact on an action dealing with bad air or drifting spores while on your ship**

Clatterweb Spiders [3-Track] 2 Stake Pack

A coterie of spiders trained to spin warning webs on command, anchored to a ship's bell.

- **When at anchor (or otherwise still) the spiders spin webs around the ship, giving early warning if hazards approach**



CHAPTER 05
HAZARDS

New Mouths, New Teeth.

You couldn't deny that it stood out, scrawled in what was almost definitely blood above the junction's bounty board. If 'board' was still the right word - it was more of a counter system now, three separate workers (a heavyset gau and two slim-shelled itzenko) seated behind a thick, opalescent layer of mesh-reinforced amberglass.

The security wasn't born of some pipe dream either, given the stacks of charts and salvage on shelf after shelf behind them. Every hunter that dropped by gave something, a tooth or a claw or a still-dripping pelt, and got a fresh map in return. Most barely bothered to read them before heading back out into the spore-laden air, with only a few pausing to peruse before grimly nodding and taking that same path.

None of them turned a map down, or asked for a switch, or even argued for some kind of pay.

Chaos had come to the rift-mouth, and each was eager to drink their fill.

A Hundred Hazards More

... Or thereabouts. One of the oldest maxims of the rustling waves concerns hunters, and their prey - for every beast felled, a hunter sights a hundred more out of reach.

But with the ability to sail both skies and depths, that reach has extended considerably. Unfortunately (or fortunately, if you're a particular kind of hunter), the variety of dangers that the waves have to offer has increased in kind.

This section deals with additional hazards for the world of the Wildsea, with many suited to the new environments on offer. You'll find creatures that fly, others that burrow, and yet others that move in near-inscrutable ways, but the wisdom of the core book holds true here - everything within these pages is intended as a challenge rather than a roadblock, something to be fought, understood, evaded, or overcome in whatever way works for a crew or campaign.

Example Encounters

With that in mind, we've added a little more guidance for Fireflies when it comes to using the hazards presented here as part of their world.

Example encounters give one or more potential ways a particular danger might be presented, building on the idea of hazard-based hooks from the core book. This usually encompasses the situation or terrain in which they appear, and a brief description of some of the tactics they might use to challenge the crew (especially if there's more than one creature to focus on during an encounter).

Premade Tracks

These examples come complete with premade **strategy tracks**, suggested track lengths, and break points that a Firefly can mark as the crew tackle a hazard. The most important thing here is to remember that strategy tracks, even for the wildest beast, **don't have to be filled by pure damage** - outsmarting a creature or mitigating some of the worst effects of an environmental happening can fill a strategy track just as well as hitting something with a stick, and may even be more effective in some cases. Potentially violent encounters might involve fighting, but they are not always necessarily *fights* - they're challenges, first and foremost, a chance for the Firefly to flex their creative muscles and for the other players to have their characters shine.

Levels of Difficulty

Each of these example encounters comes with an additional bit of information that describes their expected difficulty; either **easy**, **medium**, or **difficult**. This relates to the complexity of the encounter, the length of the tracks involved, and how many big changes or breaks there are, but it's far from an exact science. What might be difficult for one crew, another with different options or tactics could sail straight through without breaking a sweat. As a Firefly, nobody knows your table and your crew better than you do - these are examples only, meant to act as inspiration or a quick fix rather than be relied upon completely. When put together, all of this information appears in a box like the one below.

Difficult Encounter - Six-Pin Shuffle ○-○-○-○-○-+-○-○-○-○-○-○-○

A crezzer-mutated pinwolf, almost the size of the ship itself, crawls out of a nearby ruin to confront the crew as they get ready to delve into its interior. The six-limbed wolf will aggressively attack the ship (dealing medium to heavy damage with most attacks) until beaten back or forced to retreat - the break point. After the track break, the pinwolf will attempt to return to the depths of the structure, where it will lie in wait for the crew if they still decide to explore the ruin and launch surprise attacks by breaking through walls or puncturing holes in the floor from its den in the lower regions, a treasure room of sorts (though one befouled by the carcasses of the pinwolf's previous prey).

Forces of Nature

The canopy is a cruel place for the unprepared wildsailor... the depths and the heights even more so.

Forces of High Nature in Play

Airships are usually pretty sturdy - they have to be, to survive the hazards of the skies - but nature still takes a toll. Driving winds push journeys off course, storms might force a ship to take cover on the wavetops or to rise above it, and the scrutiny of the heavens is a constant, mire-related threat.

Forces of Low Nature in Play

The closer one gets to the Darkness-Under-Eaves, the stronger the influence of crezzerin becomes. The wildsea, in essence, becomes even more wild - branches twist and sway without the influence of wind, leaves curl and spit, blossoms track passing submersibles with bland malice. The forces of low nature are tied to darkness, pressure, heat, and wood, just as one would expect.

Ghost Storms

Confusing occurrences consisting of invisible downpours and unseen lightning, ghost storms have little effect on the more physical members of a crew, but can pose a serious danger to ironclad and anchored individuals. *Some ships are also far more susceptible to the effects of ghost storms than others, especially those that run on spirit-based engines or use spectral bites.*

Barkscatter

Occurring rarely (but affecting potentially any tree, no matter its place in the canopy), barkscatter is an unexpected explosion of ironroot bark caused by some sort of pressure buildup, linked perhaps to the aerosolization of crezzerin. The fragments of bark fly like shrapnel, but they're far from the only hazard of such events. *Barkscatter explosions spread a heavy dose of crezzerin into the air, which dissipates quickly but drives rapid mutation until it does so.*

Wreathing Spirits

While the true spiritual nature or these almost-creatures is arguable, their phantasmal power is not. Wreathing spirits are seemingly non-sentient amalgamations of spectral energy tied to a particular place, such as a grove of parasite trees or a sprawling beehive. Intruders into the place, or those that seek to steal or otherwise remove something from within it, are picked up and bodily thrown from it by the spirit's tendrils. *The older and larger the place, the stronger the wreathing spirit is - there are even rumours of pre-V wreathing spirits that seem to be anchored to ancient salt-sea submersibles and tankers, or to the remnants of centuries-old shrines.*

Aurex

Voltaic auroras that light up the night sky. The electricity travelling through them is usually too high to be a threat, but they drain power from everything below them as they build in luminescence. *More than one airship has dropped out of the sky during a night-flying journey after their engine being sapped by a spreading aurex.*

Baffling Fog

Rolling across the rustling waves and obscuring everything that isn't right in front of a watcher's face, baffling fog can be the perfect cover for predators with uncanny hunting methods. *On the bright side, the obscuring nature of the fog tends to clear marks and burns from wave-level Watchful Eyes.*

The Skin-Wind

Hardly fatal, but extremely irritating. The skin-wind doesn't affect inorganic bloodlines (leaving the ironbound completely free from effects), but creates an intense itch in the outer layers of all other individuals (including companion creatures). A mild breeze might be nothing more than a distraction, making daily tasks more difficult, but a stronger gale can be completely incapacitating for crews that don't cover exposed flesh with extreme speed. *Certain saps and alchemical concoctions can reduce the intensity of the itch, for a time.*

Slow Motes

Thought in the earliest days of the post-Verdancy to be a kind of sporecloud, slow motes are actually the skin fragments and drifting fibres shed by those affected by chronovoric moss. *Appearing as little more than a disturbance in the air, an individual passing through a cloud of slow motes finds their movements sluggish and the world outside far brighter and sharper than it should be.*

Pseudosaw Swells

Something between plant-affecting ailment and arconautic tide, an invisible surge of puissance that rolls through the upper branches of the wilds, reshaping leaf, bark, and even the hides of creatures into serrated sawteeth. *Pseudosaw-affected materials tend to return to their natural shapes within hours of the swell passing, but some areas remain changed for days, or even weeks. The sawteeth are mobile too, beginning to chew or vibrate whenever they come into contact with inorganic matter.*

Unfire

A heatless flame that sometimes spreads across ships and branches at sea during the autumn and winter months. Though unfire doesn't burn most organic materials, or even feel warm to the touch, it buckles and splits chitin as if it were an extremely potent acid. *Tzelicrae, mothryn, and itzenko wildsailors should avoid unfire at all costs, taking the early warning signs of insects fleeing an area with great seriousness.*

Flowing Amber

Sometimes referred to as liquid gold, this substance might be mistaken for viscous honey (though doing so isn't the kind of mistake one makes twice). The origins of flowing amber are understood, but the cause remains a mystery - cryptozoic amber chunks suspended among the canopy for years can, at unexpected speed, melt back into warm resin and drain toward the Eaves. *This event has the side-effect of releasing whatever the amber held within it, dreamers woken to a confusing new world.*

Vortex Rifts

[Huge] With Rifts As Their Shadow

All wildsailors are familiar with dangers posed by rifts, areas of the canopy that fall away into mawlike spaces leading, most often, right into the cold embrace of the Under-Eaves far below. But as dangerous as these gaping chasms are for a wildsailor, they're nothing compared to the horrors of a vortex for an aeronaut - all the threat of a rift with none of the visibility. *Use a vortex to terrify the crew and undercrew, throwing them against a mindless and almost completely invisible force that exists only to drag them higher and higher into the atmosphere.*

Presence

Sight: An area of the wild blue that looks like any other, though the most observant might spy that no birds or insects fly there.

Feeling: A quiet tension that puts hunters in mind of leonine threats poised to strike.

Resources

Specimens: Vortex Air (if you can capture it somehow)

Whispers: Unwilling Ascent, From Such Great Heights

Aspects

Hand of the Heavens: Sailing into a vortex is like having your ship picked up by an invisible hand and lifted skywards at breakneck speed. Controls cease to function, lift systems are useless, and if the vessel begins to yaw or turn, it's entirely possible that sailors or members of the undercrew will lose contact with the deck, but continue accelerating along with the ship. In a vortex, to put it as simply as possible, you fall upwards until you suffocate on rarefied air or freeze to death in the upper atmosphere.

Escape: The only thing that should be on any crew's mind. It's not impossible, but it will leave lasting damage. The best way to escape a vortex is to create a horizontal push to hopefully carry the ship out of the affected area. This might come in the form of overloading the engine or detonating a volatile lift system - whatever method the crew find, it will almost inevitably heavily damage their ship and leave them miles too high... and falling as fast as they were rising.

Shroomtides

[Variable] A Deeper Mimic of the Blossoms Above

The tides are hardly unique to the surface of the wilds, though the form they take below the waves is decidedly more fungal in nature. A shroomtide is an explosion of myconic growth, as some cryptic impulse pushes settled spores into a burst of damp, intoxicating activity. *Use a shroomtide to violently move the crew from place to place at speed while they explore the depths.*

Presence

Sight: Animals and insects fleeing. Spores taking root. A myconic wave that catches a ship or submersible, carrying it along on its crest.

Sound: A wet creaking that grows louder and louder as the tide approaches.

Smell: A fungal sweetness, unusual petrichor.

Taste: Enterprising chars sometimes set up jars on the outside of a submersible's hull, hoping to catch the spores a shroomtide stirs at the peak of their unusual activity. Those that manage it report tastes ranging from 'unexpectedly fruity' to 'absolutely awful'.

Resources

Specimens: Withering Shroom, Vivacious Spore

Whispers: Tides Unseen, The Air Turns Harsh, Carried To Places Unknown

Aspects

The Uncomfortable Tide: Shroomtides can fill multiple boxes on a Journey track, just as a bloomtide can, but the rapidly sprouting fungus is far harsher on a ship's hull than soft blossoms. Riding a shroomtide without taking damage to ratings requires a roll with a difficult cut from whoever is at the helm of a ship when it hits.

Choking Hazard: Shroomtides are likely to fill a ship with drifting spores for the duration of their activity, dealing Toxin damage or inflicting breathing-related injuries to the unlucky crew within.

Quirks

Downward Spiral: Most shroomtides push horizontally, but every now and then a crew might be unlucky enough to encounter one that acts more like a whirlpool than a wave, sucking their ship downwards at terrifying speeds and unexpectedly increasing the pressure level with a huge jolt.

Overgrowth: Ships that fail to ride the tide may be infested with the spores it brings, growing a dense coat of mushrooms along their hull, decks, and outer surfaces. These mushrooms might impose cut on movement-related actions until cleared, or bring with them unexpected infections and sicknesses.

Fuel Spoilage: Spores getting into liquid fuel may well spoil an entire batch, leaving a ship without a working engine after a tide has passed or carried them.

Easy Encounter - Surf's Up! ○-○-○

Shroomtides aren't what one might call 'gentle', even at the best of times, but the intensity of the approaching swell is definitely on the lower end of the scale. So low that a group of springfoxes seem to be riding the crest of the tide themselves, leaping from broken branch to tumbling trunk in an elegant dance. The tide will carry the ship safely as long as good rolls are made, and managing to successfully steer the vessel until the tide naturally peters out at the end of the track will also give the crew the chance to clear mire and gain some fox-related resources as a bonus.

Difficult Encounter - Trapped In The Swell ○-○-○-○+○-○-○-○-○-○

A shroomtide catches the ship, but it isn't alone. Another submersible crashes into the starboard side, and the two vessels roll end over end as the wave pushes them forward through the darkness. The first part of this track represents the effort needed to free the ships from each other and regain the ability to steer safely, but the break point heralds the crew of the other ship realising that they can take advantage of the situation - cutlasses are drawn and helpful outsiders turn sour. *This may start a secondary Strategy track for the threat posed by the other crew, or the time left within the shroomtide.*

It took Jeska days to realize what it was about their newest steep that made her uncomfortable. It wasn't his manner - he was perhaps the cheeriest gau she'd ever met - and it certainly wasn't the brews he produced, which were as varied as they were delicious.

But once she'd seen it, it was impossible to ignore. She waited one afternoon until he was out on deck, tending to his cubby of mushrooms, before speaking up.

"You don't have a shadow." Such simple words, but holding a truth far stranger and larger than they should have been able to.

"Oh, aye, I do."

The gau didn't turn from his work, the deck beneath him as lit by the afternoon sun as the mushrooms he was hunched over.

"Got a lovely shadow, actually."

She waited. There was obviously more to come.

"It's just... We're taking a little time apart right now."

Obscurances

[Variable] Chitinous Blizzards of Utter Blackness

Though it may appear as little more than a lonely cloud of purest darkness to most, those with sight beyond the usual realms of vision know the truth of an obscurance; it's an airborne swarm, calignous beetles gathered in spectral congress.

Obscurances are the source of 'unlit downpours', heavy curtains of black mist comprised of shed shell and motes of drifting shadow. *Use an obscurance if you want the crew to face an environmental hazard that isn't just a threat on its own, but that can also hide much greater threats within.*

Presence

Sight:	Rolling black fog, Beetles trailing pitch motes, shadows dancing.
Sound:	Leaves pressed down by spectral weight, movement against the breeze.
Smell:	Whorls of cool air from deep below, the colour black, a pre-sneeze tickle.
Taste:	The hot darkness of your own mouth, mingled with a sense of the air within a newly opened coffin.

Resources

Specimens:	Calignous Beetles, An Obscurance's Heart
Salvage:	Bleached Wreckage
Whispers:	Umbral Umbrage, Roiling Darkness Stilled

Aspects

Penumbral Curtain: Unlit downpours cover whole boughs in impenetrable shadow. Even the brightest lights fail to penetrate the gloom, and these downpours can be far larger than the obscurance that spawns them if the winds are right (or wrong).

Quirks

Hunters In Darkness: Beasts (you hope) live and hunt behind the umbral curtain of a downpour, hunting without sight and dealing CQ Salt damage to those they manage to catch.

Inviting: A Wildsailor's shadow might be enticed by an obscurance, arconautically separated from them in such a way as to cause burn or an unusual lasting injury.

Searocco

[Variable] More Than Hot Air

Luckily for the denizens of the rustling waves, the volcanic activity of the world they live upon is mostly dormant (save for a few unique reaches, but you'll learn more about those later). But dormant is far from non-existent, and every now and then, a rootquake will cause one of the ironroots to shift, dig deeper, and pierce a channel of magma or superheated air deep below the Eaves. *Use a searocco if you want the crew to face an unexpected threat that has different effects depending on where they happen to be journeying.*

Presence

Sight:	A shimmer in the air. A blackening of leaves.
Smell:	Like a pre-V oven baking fresh wood.

Resources

Specimens:	Heat-Curled Leaves, Fresh-Roasted Insect
Whispers:	From Eaves to Skies, Hell's Breath

Aspects

The Air Turned Hostile: A searocco is more than just a patch of bad air that's difficult to breathe, it's a powerful zephyr-like exhalation heading upwards, hot enough to sear skin and flash-boil liquids. Being in the vicinity of a searocco deals CQ Flame damage, even absent literal fire, and breathing in the superheated air will almost certainly cause a long-term injury to the throat or lungs.

Quirks

Updraught: If a searocco hits an airship, especially one using wings or a gasbag, it can push it far higher than it was ever meant to fly or spin it wildly off course.

Close to the Source: Travelling the underthrash and encountering a searocco turns the surrounding environment into just as much of a danger as the air itself, with branches splitting and bursting and structures with rubberized components warping and falling apart.

More Wonders, More Horrors

For every wonder of the rustling waves, the skies and depths have their echo. And every horror is mirrored tenfold in the wild blue, and a thousandfold in the darkness of the crushing depths. *Wonders and Horrors may not all be forces of nature but, just as in the core book, they are included here for the sake of completeness and ease of reference.*

Using Wonders & Horrors

Wonders clear mire, but might also be useful in clearing marks on a Pressure track or Watchful Eye in the right situations. Horrors are the inverse, usually marking mire, but sometimes being able to worsen the effects of Pressure or draw the attention of hazards from the open skies. It's also important to remember that both wonders and horrors, while usually able to affect an entire crew, may not always have the expected effect on a particular individual (depending on either the way they play their character, the experiences they've had on the rustling waves, or the aspects they've chosen).

The rest of this section is given over to example wonders and horrors, though we highly recommend creating your own that suit the innate fears and desires of your crew, or that play to their mires and drives.

Sunburst Wonder

A massive ejection of glowing matter from the sun, spreading through the sky like oil across water. Brief but beautiful, these events raise the ambient temperature for a few days and lull leviathans into a doze; they're a sign that the waves are a mite safer than usual, for a little while at least.

Cloudfarms Wonder

It's almost impossible to cultivate most wildsea plants on vapour and winds alone, but some individuals seem to have managed it. A cloudfarm isn't only a source of hope, or relief, but a place for the gathering of fresh resources far from the churn of the waves below.

Crying Night Comet Wonder

Tears from the stars themselves, enough to mist their gaze and unfocus their staring blankness. Such comets do not grant wishes - no comet can - but wildsailors wish on them anyway, gathering at the rails and voicing hidden desires.

Pressure-Spat Survivor Wonder

Some rootquakes happen at just the right time to change a life, or to save one from ending. A pressure-spat survivor is the lone inhabitant of a submersible raised to the surface by the shifting seas, escaping what they thought was an inevitable doom.

Amygdala Wisps Horror

Fireflies that seem to read the minds or histories of those they swarm around, coalescing into glittering, living renditions of the most shameful or brutal moments of their pasts.

Dieback Horror

Though the trigger is unknown, the effects are well-documented - everything plant-based within miles of a dieback's point of origin simply crumbles, leaving leafless branches that break under the slightest weight. The plants will grow back eventually but, unusually for the crezzer-fuelled growth of the wildsea, this process might take weeks, or even months.

Siren's Echo Horror

Sometimes a snatch of the underthrash song will get caught on a whisper or trapped within a rising zephyr, making its way up to the unnatural emptiness of the skies. And aeronauts, unlike delvers, will most likely be caught completely unawares by their sudden maddening need for the darkness below.

A Choked Shout Horror

An unfinished whisper released into the world with a dying breath, thrashing like an animal in a trap. It's pinned to reality, the boundary of potential and execution, in a state almost impossible to rectify.

Bad Air

One of the four core dangers of the depths, the options below describe some of the possible mechanical effects of bad air on both ship and crew, and the form the hazard might take to inflict them. *These effects are perfect for acting as a mild challenge during a journey through the depths on their own, or for acting as the backdrop for a more complex encounter with another hazard.*

Aspect Damage

Hallucinatory gasses that drive a companion to attack its owner, or unexpectedly airless voids that crack the lungs.

Lasting Injuries

Areas where the air lacks sufficient oxygen, or where some unknown aerosolized chemical withers flesh or damages the senses.

Resource Corruption

Chemical imbalances might sour edibles and liquids, and areas of unusually accelerated time turn charts to dust. Whispers might have their words changed, or be torn away entirely, by savage underthrash winds.

Mire Infliction

Air ringing with whispers, or that conjures half-remembered insults and failures.

Ratings Damage

Corrosive gasses that eat away at a ship's seals or hull. Voltaic energies dancing through the air that play havoc with an engine.

Additional Cut

Low-oxygen environments will take a mental toll on the crew, increasing clumsiness and bringing about hard-to-shake fatigue.

Lowered Impact

Perhaps caused by air seeming thick and treacle-like, requiring more force for every step and swing.

Temporary Weakness

Chemicals in the air acting as an empowering catalyst for incoming Toxin or Acid damage.

Beasts

As if there weren't enough dangers on the rustling waves themselves, the skies and the depths each come with their own flourishing roster of ways to get eaten.

Beasts of the Wild Skies in Play

The pickings can be slim in the upper air, so an airship loaded down with perishable cargo (and tasty, tasty wildsailors) presents an inviting target to flying predators. And the scrutiny of the heavens, though nowhere near as mutative as the crezzerin of the waves below, can have unexpected effects on local wildlife.

Beasts of the Lower Depths in Play

It's not only the crushing depths that a delver has to worry about, but the creatures hardy enough to call such a place their home. Crezzerin runs riot in the darkness, pushing the cycle of predator and prey into an evolutionary arms race that baffles even the most devoted wildsea researcher.

Wild Tetralpaca

With their four curious eyes peeking out from under a full-body covering or snowy hair, tetralpaca are one of the most adorable and valuable high-altitude wool-givers. *Though usually quite docile, tetralpaca that haven't been socialised around ridgeback communities can be tough for an inexperienced wrangler to handle, their powerful limbs and toxic spit posing a credible threat to the unprepared.*

Nightjar Flocks

Smaller cousins of the mighty nightbarrel, nightjars are the most common bird of the highest reaches of the sea. Swift and intelligent, they flock their prey (usually larger insects or other birds) and drive them out of the air, crushing them with the weight of their combined mass. *A score of nightjars is a mild annoyance. A thousand of the feathered creatures is enough to smash through an airship's hull with repeated impacts.*

Artefact Mogs

It's not only dredgers and rattlehands that are drawn to the lost technologies of the old world. Artefact mogs are a distant cousin of the common slink, stockier felines with a volt-carrying ruff of fur. *Mogs are found in small groups, usually sleeping and raising kittens in the ruins of old machinery. Though a single artefact mog is more of a pest than a danger, the electrical potential of a group of them is enough to short a ship's mechanisms and cause severe damage to an incautious salvager.*

Brain-Rattler

Snakes feared not for their size or their bite, but for their sound - the rattling warning of one of these creatures seems to be able to shake the whispers out of an individual's mind, allowing them to escape into the aether - or speak themselves into reality (with unexpected and occasionally devastating results). *Brain-rattler meat is sour and unpalatable, but the rattles themselves are prized by mesmers and musicians alike.*

Lantern Tails

A plated undercarriage hidden beneath a mass of shaggy fur, lantern tails are six-legged creatures bearing some resemblance to badgers. The resemblance ends with their tails, tipped with glands and membranous flesh that glows with a faint yellow light. *When threatened, lantern tails flash the organs in their tail to warn off intruders. These flashes are bright enough to stun or blind for a short time. If still pursued, the lantern tail can increase the intensity of the light and keep it on for longer periods, making it nearly impossible to look at without some form of eye protection.*

Razorgulls

Omnivorous pests that hang around docksides and market stalls. Merchants and loaders with bandage-wrapped hands are a common sight in such areas, victims of unexpectedly sharp feathers. *Razorgulls are more of an annoyance than a true threat, and can be distracted by throwing a specimen or two for them to feast on. Of course, this does risk drawing more...*

Wild Lemurs

The wilds are a place of various and conflicting faiths, but some conventions hold true across the wider waves. The fear and reverence of flame is one, the wisdom of carrying a blade and a rope another. But one that's talked about less, though just as implicitly understood, is that lemurs - some of the few beasts that do no harm themselves - should be left to their own devices. *If one does interact with a lemur, they'll find it easy to befriend and quick to train. They respond well to treats and petting, and really just want to be little wildsailors in their own right.*

Beavers

Fiendish terrors with teeth that never stop growing, beavers are whispered about in the dead of night around the tables of lowport drinking-dens (though at that depth, one could say that night was eternal). Apparently a remnant from the vicious world of the pre-Verdancy, beavers seem curiously resistant to crezzerin mutation, no matter their level of exposure. *Though simple in nature and lacking the ability to mount attacks that the average wildsailor would worry about, the potential destruction a group of beavers can cause in their habitats among the sink and the drown gives most pause for thought.*

Mimic Hares

Hunted for their fur in some parts of the waves, seen as a sign of good luck in others. *A mimic hare blends almost seamlessly into the surrounding environment, only being visible as it moves. Though occasionally found near the surface, they most often use their natural abilities to lie in wait for the insects of the sink and lower tangle.*

Couerangara

Hunting cats of the extreme depths, rarely ever seen outside of the drown. Couerangara, unusually for beasts adapted to the lightless environment of the crushing depths, hunt by sight - but they don't do it alone. These cats have a symbiotic relationship with a particular species of drown-dwelling firefly that give light in a spectrum only they can see. These fireflies seek out and settle on potential targets, allowing the wily felines to track them even in utter darkness.

Chameleocuda

(Large) Scaled, Piscine, Shimmering

Icthyonic predators that slink through the upper branches, chameleocuda are sly, measured, and capable of holding a serious grudge. Adept at changing colour to blend in with their surroundings, even on the move, their ability to mimic patterns borders on the supernatural. *Use a chameleocuda if you want your crew to face a slow, careful enemy they can barely see.*

Drives

Seek Out Spirits: Though capable of eating meat and insects, a chameleocuda's preferred food source is the spirit of a still-living individual.

Presence

Sight: A brief blur among the leaves.
Sound: A growing hiss.
Smell: Crezzerin and salted meat.
Taste: A morass of salt and gristle and sweetness.

Resources

Specimens: Jutting Tooth, Chromatic Chameleo Scale, Swivelling Eye, Piscinesque Meat
Whispers: Active Camouflage, Ocean to Ocean

Aspects

Canopy Slink: Chameleocuda move in near silence, with impressive grace. When hunting, their camouflage flickers into activity, making them little more than a ripple in the air. Cut on any attempts to hear, see, or target them while this camouflage is active until a chameleocuda is suitably bloodied or otherwise visually marked. *A chameleocuda's camouflage doesn't extend to its teeth, or to the inside of its mouth - a wildsailor might get a chance to take an accurate shot without cut in the moment before it attacks.*

Saltmaw: Chameleocuda bites deal CQ Spike damage, but they can also exhale a slowing miasma of Salt and Toxins to inflict medium damage at LR.

Piscine Tail: Long and strong, their fishlike tails help with balance and weight regulation. Chameleocuda can grip and climb most surfaces with ease as long as their tails are intact, and deliver devastating slaps dealing CQ Blunt damage that might knock targets off balance.

Quirks

Rainbow Zoetrope: Some past injury has turned the chameleocuda's camouflage into a flickering mass of contradictory colours - it's impossible to miss, but looking at it causes intense headaches and nausea.

Tame: The chameleocuda has a rider that poses just as much of a threat as the beast itself, likely armed with weapons capable of dealing LR Blast or Spike damage.

It was one of those moments, Bernthal thought to himself, that would probably be a lot more amusing in hindsight. The kind of moment that you'd turn into a story to tell a gaggle of grandchildren as they crowd your legs, or that you'd amp up every time you spilled it to fellow drinkers over a flagon of honeyed wine. Or that you'd...

A resounding thud and a growl, quickly followed by a scream (the kind that cuts off rather too abruptly), put an end to his reverie. It was hardly the first time he'd heard it over the last few minutes, but still he checked the cabin door again.

Firmly locked, and he intended it to stay that way.

To tell those kinds of stories, you have to survive the events that inspire them first, after all.

Squirrelbears

[Large] Swooping Hybrid Hunters

For denizens of the wildsea that grew up at wave-level, squirrelbears are the kind of ridiculous myth that they tell their children to get them to sleep at night. An absurdist hybrid that wildsailors come back with tales of when they've been at sea too long, clutching patches of fur taken as trophies (that really could have been from anything).

For those that grow up on tallshanks, or coursing the skyways, it's a different story. A far more real one, for a start.

Squirrelbears travel in small groups, gliding easily on thermals despite their hulking frames and bristling fur. They manage to keep aloft through a combination of hollow, avian-style bones, wide skin-flaps for catching updraughts, and large, flexible tails for aerial adjustments. When they spot suitable prey, they fold in those wing-like flaps and drop, impacting decking like an ursine meteor. *Use squirrelbears if you want the crew to face... well, a bear. That can fly.*

Drives

Make Off With Supplies: Squirrelbears have learnt that airships might carry large volumens of fruits and vegetables, specimens that would otherwise be difficult to access from their lofty perches. They'll tear through a crew just to get to the storeroom (and, if hungry enough, a wildsailor's meat provides a more than adequate meal).

Presence

Sight:	A swiftly spreading shadow. A blur of red-brown fur that blots out the sun.
Sound:	Heavy thumping on deck-boards. The screams of surprised undercrew.
Smell:	Curiously odourless.
Taste:	Squirrelbear meat has a hint of the porcine, but is rarely eaten due to the difficulty inherent in bringing down a squirrelbear.

Resources

Specimens:	Squirrelbear Pelt, Curving Claws, Fan-Like Tail, Hollow Bones
Whispers:	Death From Above, Rooting Through The Larder, Merely Myth
Cargo:	Broken Crate of Fruity Treats, An Assortment of Nuts

Aspects

A Sort of Clumsy Glide: Squirrelbears tend to climb the bark of tallshanks and wait for prey to move beneath them, at which time they launch themselves from the branches and dive. Small groups of squirrelbears can ride thermals for a time, but it's an inherently dangerous activity that's only really used when deeper hunger sets in, or migration is necessary.

Great Speed, Greater Impact: Squirrelbears are expert when it comes to leveraging their speed for attacks, dealing heavy Blunt damage. This damage is CQ in nature, but a diving squirrelbear can move fast enough that range is essentially immaterial.

Quirks

Honey-Mired: Honey, more than most liquids, absorbs and holds crezzerin. Squirrelbears that are drawn to the sweet scent of the stuff can become addicted, seeking out more and more despite the ravages of change that the substance inevitably wreaks.

Cheek Pouches: Rare unless winter is approaching, a good hit on a squirrelbear might empty its cheek pouches of half-eaten food and stored nuts. The resulting mess is not particularly appealing, but definitely nutritious.

Nightbarrels

(Huge) Feather-Horned and Mirror-Pinioned

Nightjars are little more than an avian pest unless they're present in extreme numbers, but even a ready crew with access to deck weapons and training would be wise to turn tail at the sight of a nightbarrel. Though rarely aggressive unless provoked, the feathers of these enormous birds have the rare and dangerous property of repelling projectiles, no matter their power. *Use a nightbarrel if you want the crew to face an enemy that shrugs off their strongest attacks without a thought or, if they're unlucky, turns them back on the ship itself.*

Drives

Protect the Nest: Nightbarrel nests are exclusively found in the forks of tallshank branches. Their soft-shelled eggs are as fragile as an adult's feathers are strong, taking years of nurturing and incubation to hatch.

Presence

Sight:	A bird the size of a house, feathers glorious in the darkness. Ragged holes punched through nearby surfaces.
Sound:	Low vibrating warbles, oddly haunting.
Taste:	Smooth, creamy flesh (if you can get to it).

Resources

Salvage:	Spent Ammunition, Crumpled Harpoon
Specimens:	Dull Mirror Feathers, Nightbarrel Flesh
Whispers:	Right Back At You, Returned Tenfold
Cargo:	Nightbarrel Beak

Aspects

A Thousand Dull Mirrors: Nightbarrels aren't just immune to a wildsailor's LR attacks, they deal the damage they would have taken to the surrounding environment (or to a random target among the crew).

Diving Rake: Using a combination of sharp talons and beak, nightbarrels deal medium CQ Keen or Hewing damage to their foes as they fly by at speed.

Quirks

Attendant Flock: Some nightbarrels act as tsar to a flock of nightjars, using the smaller birds to misdirect and confuse predators that draw too close to their nests.

Luminary Sharks

(Large) Soaring Starlit Hunters

Appearing only on nights where the moon is absent and stars rule the sky, these efficient predators are almost impossible to identify until they attack. Rumours hold that these creatures were once the apex of a salt sea food chain, if you believe such fanciful notions. For wildsailors that encounter them, it's easy to see why such opinions persist. *Use a luminary shark if you want the crew to face a powerful foe as they travel the wild blue, but one that has severe limitations in where and how it hunts.*

Drives

Feed: Whatever luminary sharks do for every other night of a month where the moon is visible, or during the day, is unknown... But when they're present, they're hunting.

Presence

Sight:	A suggestion of teeth and fins in silvery starlight. Blood dripping from above.
Sound:	None, though it somehow feels like their presence should be accompanied by ominous notes.
Taste:	Luminary shark meat fades into insubstantiality when out of starlight, and disappears entirely with the rising of the sun or moon, sizzling into nothingness. If a char *is* able to render and cook a luminary shark, the meat tastes of ozone and secrets.

Resources

Specimens:	Starstuff Meat, Shining Tooth
Whispers:	Apex of a Broken Chain, Under No Moon

Aspects

Efficient Predation: Luminary sharks don't waste time when their window to the wilds opens - they're unbound by gravity, covered in rough hide that deals CQ Serrated damage to anyone that comes into contact with it, and equipped with a dangerous CQ Spike bite. Add to that the fact that their bodies are glass-like, mere sketches in the night sky, and you have a beast that strikes fear into even the most seasoned of aeronauts.

Starstuff: Nobody seems to understand the method through which luminary sharks phase in and out of existence, but their rules are clear - light from the sun or moon banishes them, and light from the stars gives them form. Though one would expect this ephemeral existence to define them physically, a fully manifested luminary shark has enough presence and weight to tear through iron and drag victims from the decks of airships with ease. In addition to this, their translucent skin (points and angles glimmering with liquid starlight) is resistant to all damage types except Salt... Which they're entirely immune to.

Quirks

Astral White: Glimpsed once by an aeronaut that now chooses to live exclusively in the drown, the Astral White is a leviathan luminary with teeth the size of outriders. There may be conditions to the creature's appearance that aren't yet understood, but there's no telling when it might appear again.

Inescapable Fear: The appearance of more than one luminary shark marks mire for characters, even those that would normally be immune to beast-based effects.

Easy Encounter - Bearing Witness

The ship passes close to another vessel engaged in a pitched battle with a single luminary - the beast is already wounded, but they've taken losses themselves. Can the crew lend enough aid to hold the creature off until the sun rises? In this situation, the Strategy track might act as a timer from the first glow of dawn to the sun breaking through the leaves.

Difficult Encounter - Bloodied Stars

There are no track breaks here, no unexpected changes of behaviour - a pair of luminary sharks phase into existence as the sun drops below the horizon, and the crew have little recourse other than fighting for their lives or finding a way to escape. The natural resistances of luminary sharks will make this a tougher than normal battle even for experienced sailors, so bringing deck weapons and environmental hazards to bear can help speed things along.

Pteranha

(Variable) The Teeth of the Wild Blue

Of all of the aerial predators of the wildsea's skies, the pteranha are perhaps the most ubiquitous. Coming in a huge range of shapes and sizes, each subspecies of these flying lizards dominates a particular area of the aerial food chain. *Use pteranha if you want the crew to face a saurian threat reminiscent of pulp exploration sagas.*

Drives

Soar & Snap: Pteranha are uncomplicated creatures; they feed, they mate, they raise their young, and they fiercely protect their territories.

Presence

Sight: Flying lizards with impressive wingspans. Shadows passing over an airship's deck. A clutch of leathery eggs on a cliffside.

Sound: Communicative coughs, crest-whistles, and raptor-like screams.

Smell: Variable, but most often sharply acidic.

Taste: It might be difficult for some to believe, but pteranha meat really *does* taste like chicken.

Resources

Specimens: Toothen Protobeak, Curving Talons, Leathery Wing, Pteranha Feathers, Cracked Eggshell, Pteranha Crest

Whispers: Adapted to the Heavens, Dive & Soar

Aspects

Protobeak & Talons: Whatever other adaptations a particular pteranha might have, their teeth-lined craws and wickedly sharp claws are their primary form of attack. These can deal CQ Spike, Keen, or Serrated damage, and excel at pulling sailors off balance.

Wide-Winged: Pteranha wings resemble those of bats more than birds, elongated finger bones running through them to aid in powerful flight. Almost all pteranha can both fly and glide for hours at a time if necessary. Larger pteranha can pick targets up bodily and carry them while flying, but this does slow them considerably and reduce the time they can stay aloft.

Whistling Cough: Even pteranha who might appear to be flying solo can scream for aid, their crests creating a carrying call to others of their species.

Quirks

Pack Attackers: Smaller pteranha tend to flock together, attacking lone targets with hundreds of tiny bites and slashes like a swarm of insects. Being caught up in a pteranha swarm adds cut to actions taken to move or see clearly due to the sheer number of tiny bodies involved.

Impressive Specimens: Larger pteranha are far more likely to attack targets without any immediate back-up available. Attacks from these weightier creatures, some of which can grow to be the size of small ships, are more likely to inflict medium-to-heavy damage.

Niche Hunters: The extent of pteranha variation is truly impressive, each subspecies preferring different methods of roosting and unique food sources. Give a niche hunter two resistances and an immunity, related to the region they're found in and their common diet.

Lords of the Air: Territorial disputes among saurians are common, and larger specimens might see a ship as an invasive threat in their airspace. Some pteranha ignore a crew at first, instead attempting to damage or destroy a vessel's lift systems with targeted strikes.

Echoing Call: The precise sonic properties of a pteranha's head crest varies from species to species, but some rarer breeds can use them to perform powerful LR Blast damage attacks, or even to scream wordless whispers into the world (these have no specific effects other than causing sky-related chaos, as the creatures using them have no or little capacity for language).

Hybridizers: Some pteranha species, especially those that roost among the thrash, have crezzer-fuelled hybridization in their family histories. A pteranha might have an aspect from any of the other wildsea hazards representing this crossover, leading to flying lizards with prey-catching tongues, the ability to spit toxic liquids, cloaks of moss or mushrooms, or fast-moving pin limbs.

Tangle-Divers: At least one sub-species of pteranha feeds by making dives into the waves below to spear unsuspecting insects or mammals before fighting its way upward and into the open air once more. Such creatures are likely to launch surprise attacks on wave-level craft.

Easy Encounter - Mating Display ○-○-○

Colourful saurians whirl around the ship, barreling across the deck heedless of any crew that might be in their way. They're not there to attack, but to show off - causing enough of a ruckus or taking a few shots will have them scattering to the higher skies.

Medium Encounter - Leather-Winged Warning ○-○-○-○+○-○-○

A horde of tiny pteranha set upon a member of the undercrew, transferring their attention to anyone that steps in to offer aid. The first half of the track represents the swarm's eager feeding frenzy, but when the break point is reached, they scatter moments before a much larger specimen swoops in for the attack, drawn by the noise and the potential of distracted prey. The larger pteranha will retreat after a little damage is dealt, or if scared off... but it won't forget.

Difficult Encounter - Territorial Dispute ○-○-○+○-○-○-○-○ ○-○-○-○-○-○

The crew find themselves in an area speckled with clutches of leather-shelled eggs, each warm to the touch. The first part of this track is a timer - the longer they stay in this pteranha nesting zone, the more likely it is the parents will return to defend their offspring-to-be. If the crew spend long enough there to reach the break point (or if they disturb or attempt to steal some of the eggs), two large pteranha will appear in quick succession. Each are niche hunters, with the same immunities but different resistances, and one will target the crew while the other focuses on attacking the ship.

Higpogs

[Small] Metallic, Multi-Hued Hedgehogs

Almost exclusively nocturnal, higpogs make the dangerous journey from their homes in the tangle and sink up to the topmost reaches of the thrash to feed on electricity during thunderstorms. Once fed, the creatures bask for a while before returning to the deeper layers, their metallic quills creating an iridescent sea of sparks. When new sailors speak of hearing storms below the ship on peaceful days, seasoned veterans know there must be a prickle of higpogs sleeping below. *Use higpogs if you want to give the crew a good omen of the future, tempered slightly by the dangers they might bring in the present.*

Drives

To Feast and Protect: Higpogs prefer natural sources of electricity, avoiding stored voltage unless overwhelmingly hungry. They've even been known to clamber onto ships during storms, lining the rails before leaping surprising distances to snatch lightning from the air; many crews have stories of how such behaviour has averted potential disaster during a thunderstorm.

Presence

Sight:	Quills of living bismuth. A shower of colourful sparks. A tiny shape silhouetted by a lightning strike.
Sound:	Snuffles and static.
Smell:	Clean, crisp air. Hints of burning tin after a feeding session.
Taste:	Chewy meat and tooth-breaking spines.

Resources

Specimens:	Charged Quills, Bismuth Flakes, Shockingly Overcooked Meat
Whispers:	Living Lightning, A Storm Unseen

Aspects

Electric Quills: Able to deal light CQ Volt damage, which increases to heavy CQ Volt damage if the higpog has recently eaten.

Prickly Swarm: Higpogs never travel alone if they can help it, preferring safety in numbers. And while a single one of the small beasts might not present much more threat than a nasty shock, a whole prickle of them can fry even the toughest beasts.

Lightning Leap: Despite their diminutive size and tiny legs, higpog muscles are uniquely designed to take latent electrical charges and transfer them into pure energy. A single higpog can easily leap the length of several ships when it has a stable spot to launch from.

Quirks

Ray-Bait: Ironjaw rays are one of only a few predators that can deal with higpogs self defence mechanisms. The two species clash often, sometimes catching sailors in wild voltaic crossfire.

Quill-Darts: One notable subspecies of higpogs has learned to go on the offensive, firing electrically charged quills when it feels threatened. These creatures can deal LR Volt damage in addition to CQ.

Stormfisher's Friend

Higpogs have no fear of ships or sailors, sometimes even travelling with them as impromptu undercrew.

Rail-Perching Higpogs [3-Track] 2 Stake Pack

While on the deck of their own ship, any sailor can mark the Rail-Perching Higpogs track to have them absorb a harmful instance of lightning or Volt damage.

Redfeather Strigia

(Huge) Why Soar When You Can Smash?

The first, and last, thing that many unfortunate delvers of the depths see is a mass of cream and crimson, an owl approaching at the speed of a steam train. These beasts nest and lay their eggs in the drown, but smash their way up to the sink to hunt - favouring submersible crews above all other morsels. *Use a redfeather if you want the crew to face something massive, ferocious, and determined.*

Drives

Empty the Can: Unlike the majority of wilds-dwelling creatures, strigia don't back down once they've smelled wildsailor blood, no matter how much damage they take. They are perfectly capable of breaking through deck-planks and hull metal in search of a meal.

Presence

Sight:	Half-eaten carcasses strewn around a ruptured vessel. Masses of broken bones making a macabre nest. A dark shape speeding toward an unwary ship.
Sound:	Thunderous hooting, breaking branches, and ear-piercing shrieks.
Taste:	Strigia flesh tastes like carrion, no matter how fresh it is.

Resources

Specimens:	Clawed Wingtip, Huge Talon, Crimson Feathers, Strigia Skull, Owl-Spit
Whispers:	Blood on the Wing, Cries at Night

Aspects

Swift But Clumsy Flight: Redfeathers can fly, but poorly, and only for short distances. They usually end up crashing into their targets at the end of a gliding leap (dealing heavy CQ Blunt damage).

Day Blindness: Redfeathers are exclusively nocturnal hunters, being mostly blind in daylight, but their chosen hunting domain - the sink - ensures a near-constant shroud of darkness that suits them perfectly. Leading a strigia into an area of bright light will likely disorient it... and enrage it.

Sonic Shriek: A blast of high-pitched sound, loud enough to send anyone close reeling, often let forth before a rushing attack. Deals CQ Blast damage to multiple nearby targets that can hear.

Beak, Talon and Claw: All uncannily sharp, able to tear through armour like it was nothing with unerring CQ Keen or Spike damage.

Quirks

Grasping: A crezzerin mutation, grasping redfeathers have atrophied, useless wing-membranes but grossly enlarged claws on their wingtips. They climb rather than fly, and prefer to seize and crush their prey.

Chemical Spew: Some redfeathers don't just stop at a vessel's crew, they consume the engines as well. These particular individuals can vomit forth spumes of chemical fuel, dealing LR Frost, Acid, Blast, or even Flame damage (at the cost of some temporary discomfort and disorientation for the owl itself).

Medium Encounter - Empty Nest

The movement of a rootquake has shaken a redfeather nest free of its usual resting place within the drown, pushing it up to the surface near a well-travelled shipping route. The adult redfeathers are nowhere to be seen, but newly hatched strigia - already the size of outriders - have started launching nighttime attacks on passing ships. The track isn't for beating the birds back, but rather destabilizing the nest they operate from.

Difficult Encounter - Terror From Below

The boxes leading up to the first break are marked as the crew negotiate the underthrash, each one an opportunity for them to notice the pair of redfeathers that have set their sights on their vessel. Once the break is reached (whether the crew know that they're being hunted or not), the birds will attack in tandem, one heading straight for the pilot's cabin or crew quarters, another (with the chemical spew quirk) for the engine. The pre-break track isn't a long one, but when filled, it represents triumph over only *one* bird; the other will seem to retreat, only to return for revenge moments later.

Bone-Clad Nest (Location)

Constructed Around: Lost wrecks, fallen spits, and rootquake-risen ruins
Average Clutch Size: 6-8 striglings

These gruesome nests are constructed around large objects that have become trapped in the drown, and act as both a safe haven and an egg-laying site for redfeathers throughout the year. Though they vary in size (depending on the amount of monstrous owls that dwell within them), few are smaller than a traditional portside homestead, and some swell to cover spaces that might rival a drydock or warehouse.

Skeletal Mortar (Horror)

Strigia use the existing structures these nests are built around as incubators, packing the insides with feathers to act as a warming, protective layer for their eggs. The exteriors of these central areas are then covered in bones, often those of lost sailors and other animals that dared challenge a redfeather for territory rights, held in place with owl spit. *Layer after layer of bones are added as strigia are born, mature, and then hatch striglings of their own, the remains woven together to form traditional nest-like shapes.*

Parasite Fruit (Feature)

The abundance of bone in a strigia's nest acts as perfect fertile ground for certain kinds of leeching trees, which grow and fruit in the darkness of the drown. While these fruit are inedible for strigia themselves, they sometimes draw animals and scavengers close, increasing the chances the birds will be able to feed their young without risking a trip away from the nest. *The fruit, nicknamed 'claw pears' by the few brave wildsailors that harvest them, have a chalky outer rind and a soft, spongy interior. Their taste isn't anything special, but they are extremely nutritious.*

The Carmine Way (Ship)

An infamous submersible made to resemble a redfeather, accurate enough that it can pass through nests (briefly) without being attacked by the birds that live there. *The crew and captain of The Carmine Way are unknown, but are assumed to be particularly strange individuals given their chosen focus and lifestyle.*

Insects

The crawling masses, the chittering wave; insects on the wildsea have always been a threat, but the expansion of exploration into both the skies and the depths have uncovered newer, more bizarre, varieties.

Insects of the Wild Skies in Play

Thrash-level sailors might assume that the skies are ruled by avian and lizard presences, with insects reduced to more of a food source than anything else. They would be dramatically wrong, as the crezzer-boosted arms race of the upper air led to several notable chitinous types establishing dominant positions on the food chain.

Insects of the Lower Depths in Play

Underthrash insects tend to swarm, to the extent that entire generations of rattlehands have dedicated themselves to better protecting ships against them. But larger, more independent insects pose just as much of a threat, targeting sailors brave enough to leave their sumersibles and step into territory that is emphatically *not theirs.*

Chitinous Jellyfish

Known to more playful wildsailors as skellyfish, these drifting creatures rise from the depths to fill the skies after particularly violent rootquakes. *Most varieties of skellyfish aren't much of a threat unless they gangled around an airship's engines, but some can deliver deadly stings with the drooping tendrils.*

Smokeweed Cicadas

Though seen by parasite farmers and ship-gardeners as a menace, the average wildsailor treats a horde of smokeweed cicadas as a potential boon. If caught at the right stage of their lifecycle, at the right time of year, the husks they leave behind after molting are an excellent source of concentrated smokeweed - a plant difficult to harvest traditionally, but excellent for packing the bowls of acid-stem pipes for a bit of unhealthy relaxation. *The cicadas do present a threat, but not to wildsailors or undercrew: they'll devour any plant-based specimens they can find if their traditional diet is absent.*

Orb-Crafters

Huge beetles that spend their long lives crafting and rolling balls of detritus from place to place across the treetops. Different orb-crafters seem to favour different materials, and the orbs themselves can grow to truly titanic sizes before they almost inevitably become too heavy for the tangle to hold and crash down toward the Under-Eaves. *At least one rift has been created by a protoleviathan orb-crafter's accidental destruction, and more than one settlement flattened or incorporated.*

Mosquitos

Another of the pre-V species that found themselves perfectly ready for the spread of the verdant world, mosquitos are a pest for sleeping sailors throughout the spring and summer months no matter the depth or altitude they travel at. *Though the mosquito bites present little threat, the diseases they transmit while feeding can be deadly.*

Chatterpillars

Small and unassuming for most of their lives, it's only when they pupate and transform that their value is made clear. A butterfly that spent its early life as a chatterpillar seems to generate whispers almost at random as it flies. *These butterflies, unfortunately, rarely last long - the chaos they bring falls upon them more often than not, and some eager entomologists will go to great lengths to capture and study them before they go the way of all things.*

Bonfire Bugs

Luckily the truth in their name comes from the heat they generate rather than from any actual flame. *Bonfire bugs are particularly prized by chars and steeps for their ability to act as mobile campfires without risk of spreading flame.*

Toothworms

Harmless to most bloodlines, but a potential hazard for both gau and ektus individuals. These tiny creatures aren't much to look at, resembling earthworms with a ring of tooth-like horns at both ends of their bodies, but their burrowing prowess is notable. *Toothworms usually attack the roots of parasite plants, but if they can latch onto a vegetative or fungal crewmate, they'll happily burrow into them and begin to feed.*

Cryptoroaches

Thought to be the product of an alliance between swarmjacks and rattlehands, the average cryptoroach is about the size of an ardent thumb with multiple squarish, transparent wings (though much larger specimens have been raised for specialist projects). *These wings aren't used for flight, but rather as natural punchcards, allowing for the storage of large quantities of mechanical instruction in a single insect.*

Drill Pickers

A species of hercules beetle evolved to cut passages through amber, feeding on the cryptosomatic sleepers held within. *Drill picker nests are a hotbed of stolen dreams.*

Torpikons

Surely the result of extreme crezzer-fuelled mutation, a torpikon's front limbs end in vicious stingers while their curving tail sports a powerful claw. *Though obviously a scorpion offshoot the two species seem to loathe each other, fighting often over prey and territory.*

Miniature Locusts

Barely visible to the naked eye, an individual locust would take months to consume a plant (if such a feat were even possible, given the rapid regrowth of wildsea foliage). Unfortunately for the rest of the world they travel in swarms that number in the millions, stripping an ironroot of leaves and bark within minutes. *Miniature locusts are most often found within the drown, and some theorize it's their feeding patterns that lead to a good number of shankfalls.*

Ratflies

Specialized insectile mimics, a ratfly looks exactly like an average rat until it takes to the air, furred carapace splitting apart to reveal an unexpectedly chitinous interior. Diligently bred by certain dockworkers thanks to their natural diet, the very creatures they resemble. *While a horde of buzzing not-quite-rats infesting a port might on the face of it seem worse than an actual rodent infestation, the creatures have no taste for processed food. They're still pests, but they do less damage to the bottom line for traders.*

Revenant Butterflies

[Medium] Bizarre Insect Puppeteers

Some quirk of biology has left these brilliantly coloured butterflies unable to feed on anything purely physical – instead they thrive on teamwork, some shared and redoubling resonance of potential. To facilitate their feeding, these butterflies cluster in small networks, sinking themselves into the bodies of lost wildsailors and working together to bring them back to a semblance of life. *Use revenant butterflies if you want the crew to face the forms of wildsailors lost, back in body without mind or intentional malice.*

Drives

Recapture What Was Lost: Revenant butterflies seem to tap into the habits and skills their hosts displayed during life, though it takes some time for them to exhibit them (which is understandable, given the difficulty in puppeteering a corpse with any accuracy).

Presence

Sight: Colourful wings beating in perfect synchronization. A mouldering corpse, jerked and pulled into flight. Clutching hands. A silent mouth.

Sound: The flapping of wings. A sigh from old lungs, divorced from respiration.

Smell: Mould, rot, sweetness, and revenancy – the cocktail of true death denied.

Resources

Specimens: Revenant Wing, Corpse Bile, Fluttering Antennae

Salvage: Rusted Weapons, Torn Clothing, Frayed Rope, Scratched Depth-Gauge

Whispers: Back from the Below, Colour and Flight, A Life Beyond Life

Aspects

Up to the Surface: The corpses brought to the surface by revenant butterflies are sometimes laden with loot or supplies, but more often decaying visages of their past selves. Encountering revenants will usually mark mire, encountering a revenant from a previous crew will definitely mark mire.

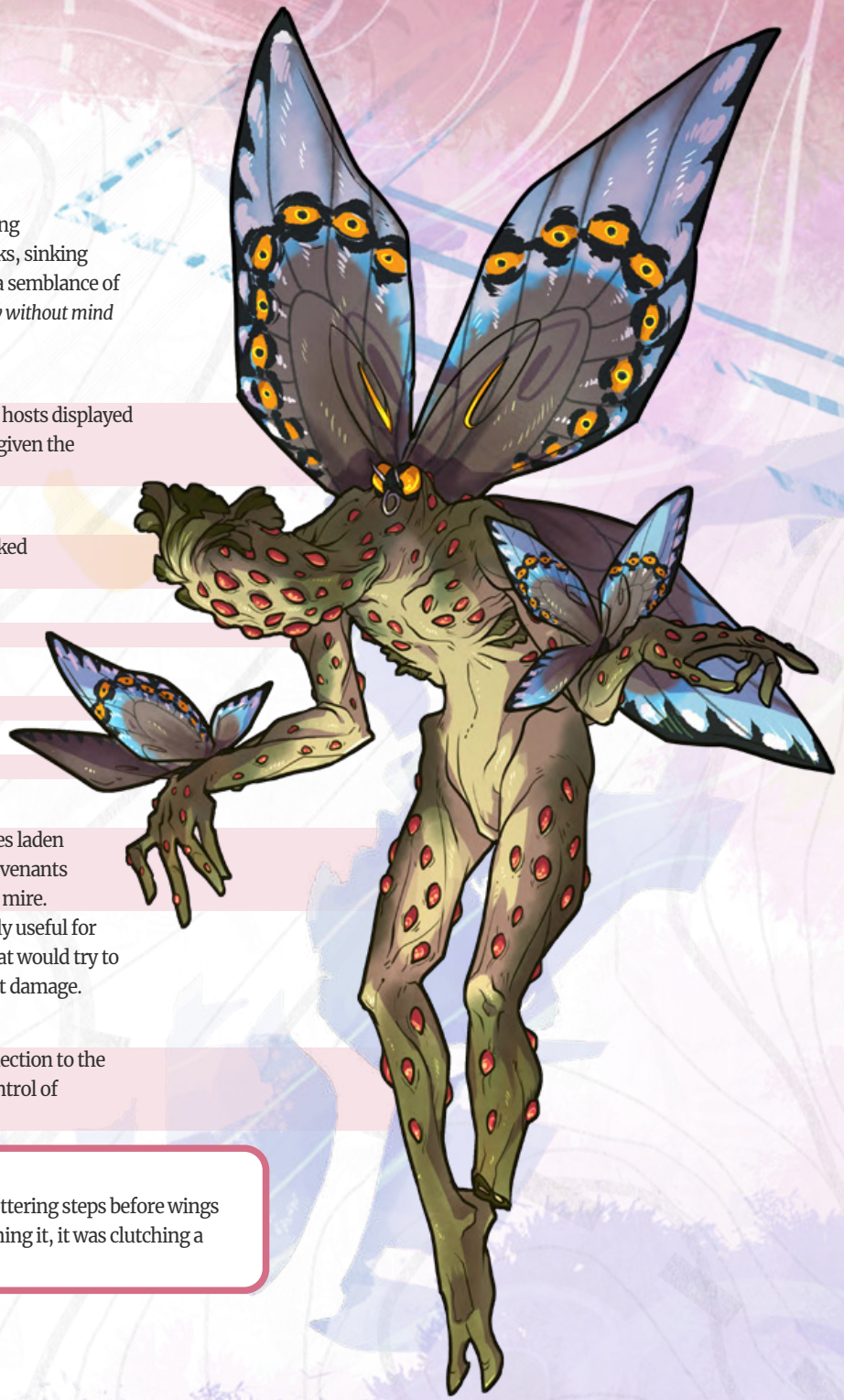
Protective Engagement: Revenant Butterflies, and the corpses they bring, can be extremely useful for alchemical and arconautic research. The butterflies learn quickly to avoid or fight those that would try to cage, capture, or separate them from their hosts, usually through the application of CQ Salt damage.

Quirks

The Soul Remains: In some cases the spirit of a revenant's puppeteered body keeps a connection to the corpse, able to influence the butterflies as they move and slowly regain more and more control of their old form. Most have grudges held close to their stilled hearts, old scores to settle.

Easy Encounter - Nobody Expected That

A corpse staggers upright midway through being looted by one of the crew, taking a few tottering steps before wings burst from beneath its skin and it takes to the skies. Unfortunately for the wildsailor searching it, it was clutching a valuable item they were carrying as it took off. It must be tracked down!



"It's... a dead end?"

The pilot had only heard that same kind of rising tone in her hacker's voice on one or two occasions, and they'd been scudding the waves together for more years than she cared to count. She eased off the throttle a little, letting their little outrider come to a scuttling stop.

"Define 'dead end' for me, Wick."

The ektus scratched under one of his blooms, answering slowly.

"As in, I don't think we can get through here. Or around here, either." He gestured to the lamp-lit greenery hemming them in on all sides, and then to the thicket of branches and leaves right in front of them. "There's no give to it. Look at the shine - they're stuck together, some sort of resin, almost like see-through pulpcrete. And if it's the same stuff as earlier, this old blade isn't going to make a scratch in the damn stuff."

"Then we head back, and we do it fast. I know a trap when I see one."

Labyrinth Scarabs

[Large/Huge] Hulking Bipedal Snare Setters

For most insects of the wildsea, sailors represent little more than an unexpected hazard or an opportunistic meal. Labyrinth scarabs, however, have adapted to the presence of submersibles and lowports just as well as wildsailors have to the depths, or perhaps to an even greater extent; they've evolved into what some term 'submerovores', their diet consisting primarily of explorers fresh from the surface. *Use a labyrinth scarab if you want the crew to face a confusing gauntlet in the darkness of the sink or drown, or a truly unexpected encounter within the tangle.*

Drives

Trap & Devour: Labyrinth scarabs have an arconautic organ within their shells, a secondary stomach focused on processing amber into a transparent resin that sets again within moments of being exposed to air. They use this material to construct complex burrows that appear to be natural pathways through the leaves of the underthrash, leading submariners inside with the promise of an easy route before they get lost within a maze that their saws have little impact on. Once prey is in this state, with both hope and supplies running low, the scarab can enter its den and feed at its leisure.

Presence

Sight:	A suspiciously easy-to-navigate route through the branches. Dry leaves glistening, encased in hardened resin. A lion-sized insect stampeding toward the crew, all thick shell and battering limbs.
Sound:	The constant buzz of the lower waves seeming quieter. Distant coughing, hacking sounds. The clink of metal on preserved leaf.
Taste:	Like cryptic dreams and souring beef.

Resources

Specimens:	Labyrinth Resin, Scarab Carapace, Crushing Limb, Compound Eyes, Shovel Antennae
Whispers:	Maze of Branch and Leaf, No Way Home

Aspects

Choice Prey: Large labyrinth scarabs pick on individual wildsailors, especially divers and hackers that try to brute force their way out of the insect's den. Huge scarabs are confident enough to tackle entire crews, and even smaller ships, alone.

Built to Break: Labyrinth scarabs are immune to Blunt and Blast damage, and resist Keen, Serrated, Hewing, and Acid damage. They can deal medium Blunt damage to multiple targets with a charge, and varying levels of CQ Blunt or Hewing damage with their carapace-covered limbs. Finally, these scarabs can vomit out gouts of amber-derived resin, dealing LR Toxin damage and hardening into heavy, movement-restricting clumps.

Multi-Purpose Antennae: One of a labyrinth scarab's only weaknesses is their reliance on their antennae. While their compound eyes detect large objects and swift movement, their feelers serve the dual purpose of detecting prey by scent and making fine adjustments to extruded resin. While actively enlarging their dens, their senses are severely hindered.

Quirks

Resin Shell: Some scarabs coat themselves with the product of their second stomach, rendering them immune to Serrated and Hewing damage until it can be chipped off or otherwise removed.

Difficult Encounter - The Tomb Among The Branches

Meant for crews exploring the sink or drown, but who are still relatively new to the depths. The first section of the Strategy track should be filled in secret, alongside usual progress marks, without the crew realizing their unexpectedly easy path is leading them deeper into the scarab's labyrinth. The break point reveals the first dead end, but upon retracing their way, other avenues have also been closed off with pulped resin and broken branches. The second break represents the scarab revealing itself and rushing forward to attack once the crew have attempted to escape or explore. When the final track is fully marked, the scarab breaks one of the walls in frustration and the last six boxes empty again.

Itzonata

[Medium Swarm] Bomb-Burst Hunters

Though unrelated to the itzenko in terms of lineage, itzonata share their ability to moult, unexpectedly and explosively. These wolf-sized dragonflies use this skill to great effect as they hunt, whipping through the skies at speed as they track their prey, then divebombing them as they moult, peppering targets with sharp-edged chitin shards that bleed them as they're lifted into the air and spirited away. *Use an itzonata if you want the crew to face a small group of hunters with unsurpassed aerial flexibility.*

Drives

Shock & Snatch: Itzonata tactics are simple and direct - deal as much damage as possible and drag their targets into the air as they weaken. They hunt for food, rather than sport, and can go weeks at a time without eating so much as a morsel.

Presence

Sight: A green and gold streak across the skies. A trail of blood where a member of the undercrew stood only moments before.

Sound: Rattling wings and organic explosions.

Resources

Specimens: Chitin Shards, Itzonata Wing, Curled Limb

Whispers: Freedom Denied

Aspects

Precise Flight: Itzonata can accelerate and decelerate in the blink of an eye, and turn on a dime while airborne.

Primary Shards: The dragonfly jaws of an itzonata aren't an effective weapon against anything with a modicum of protection, but their bursting shells deal medium to high Spike or Keen damage at either LR or CQ.

Hooks & Encounters

Two Down: Itzonata strike during a watch on the crew's airship, blasting the deck with splinters and pulling two of the undercrew away... In different directions entirely.

Colour on the Horizon: The skies in the distance darken, then burst into multifaceted light as the clouds above shift - a massive swarm of insects are heading your way, and you have mere minutes to escape their path.

Ventipedes

(Variable) Hydra-Style Invaders

The scourge of the well-ventilated, these creatures crawl into the air ducts of nautilized ports and the scrubber routes of submersibles, settling in the darkness before they begin to grow. Within weeks the creatures will have lengthened, bifurcated, taking up enough space that whatever filtration systems are active begin to labour and wheeze. *Use a ventipede to set a trap in a space thought safe, or to damage a crew's ability to operate at depth.*

Drives

Settle, Grow, & Strike: Ventipedes don't hunt - they wait in shadowed areas, growing in strength until they're discovered, and use that opportunity to strike.

Presence

Sight: Something dripping from a poorly fixed vent. A glimpse of movement in darkness.

Sound: A clank in the air ducts. A tapping from behind the walls.

Smell: Something sharp and hard to place, only now and then - acrid, smoke-like.

Taste: Few that have eaten ventipede meat have lived to describe the taste.

Resources

Specimens: Hydra Mandibles, Splitting Segment, Toxin Sac, Ventipede Egg Cluster

Whispers: Within In the Walls, Negative Flow

Aspects

Hydra Strike: When part of a ventipede is attacked or discovered, the entire creature will begin to defend itself. Brachiated sections may push out of air ducts and tubing, or break through walls; these attacks tend to take their targets by surprise, though their range is limited due to the ventipede's physical shape trapping most of it inside its home. CQ Spike and Blunt damage are common.

Ventilator Toxins: A danger present even before the creature is discovered, the presence of a ventipede in a ship or colony's scrubber system slowly poisons the air passing through it. The list on the right demonstrates various effects that ventilator toxins might have on an unwary crew or populace.

Quirks

Chitinous Plating: The ventipede is unusually sturdy, gaining resistance to Blunt, Keen, and Serrated damage.

True Hydra: A crezzer-fuelled mutation that takes place at a nightmarish pace. Whenever a ventipede is wounded, another segmented body section (and jawed head) bursts forth, closing the wound and becoming a new source of danger. This will likely cause mire as it happens, as well as clearing a mark from the ventipede's Strategy track. This may be avoided by cauterizing or otherwise affecting wounds in the moments after they're made, perhaps with Acid, Frost, Salt, or Flame damage.

Ventilator Toxin Variants

Ventipede toxins have been observed to affect those breathing tainted air in a variety of different ways. **Mild** effects come in the first few days of infestation, **severe** effects once the creature has grown to fill the majority of the ventilation system it infests. *The list below is not exhaustive by any means, and the different toxin effects are organised by the shell colour and patterning of the ventipedes that cause them.*

Tiger Stripe

Mild: An aching in the teeth and bones, manifesting as phantom pain for individuals that lack either.

Severe: The slow growth of additional, irregularly sized teeth, using any bone within the body as an anchor point. Sufferers without a skeleton find their skins twisting and calcifying into toothlike shapes.

Bright Blue Base, Spotted Pattern

Mild: Shared dreams among those sleeping in close proximity to each other.

Severe: An unwanted telepathy, communicating thoughts and desires in random bursts.

Leaf-Like Camouflage

Mild: A sense of nervousness that's hard to shake.

Severe: Sensitivity to loud noises and sudden appearances, sending sufferers into paroxysms of near-immobilizing fear and making rest or relaxation of any kind almost impossible.

Insect Incursions

One of the four core dangers of the depths, the options below describe some of the possible mechanical effects of insect incursions on both ship and crew, and the form the hazard might take to inflict them. *These effects are perfect for acting as a mild challenge during a journey through the depths on their own, or for acting as the backdrop for a more complex encounter with another hazard.*

Aspect Damage

A swarm of biting, stinging insects, likely the most common presentation of an insect incursion.

Lasting Injuries

A horde of mosquitoes or ticks that pass illnesses to the individuals they bite, or leeches that must be carefully removed once they've latched on to avoid causing further or more serious damage.

Resource Corruption

Edible resources may be infested with grubs or maggots, gaining negative tags or being eaten away to nothing.

Mire Infliction

Burrowing creatures forcing their way inside a sailor is likely to engender some real fear, as might terrors and hallucinations caused by infectious bites. Additionally, the simple circumstance of being covered by swarming insects will cause most wildsailors considerable stress.

Ratings Damage

Larger insects might force their way into delicate parts of an engine to damage Saws or Speed, and a swarm gathering around a ship might make laying low or making precise movements almost impossible.

Additional Cut

Attacking a swarm is never easy, with so many small bodies ignoring damage to their fellows. When such a swarm begins crawling over an individual, it tends to break their concentration and push them towards panic.

Lowered Impact & Temporary Weakness

Allergic reactions to the stings or bites of certain insects will likely leave an individual slower and more prone to damage from other sources.

Jyorachnid Families

(Variable) Too Many Legs, Too Many Feathers

Technically multiple subspecies of arachnid that all descended from a common tarantula-like ancestor, each family shares a single behaviour with its relatives; a penchant for feather-theft. Born dull and naked, as soon as a jyorachnid can scavenge alone it sets about harvesting fallen feathers from the surrounding branches, each of which is attached to its malleable exoskeleton with specialist webs. As they grow in size their behaviours evolve, later encompassing daring raids to pluck feathers from roosting avian targets, and finally a bold predation on smaller flying species.

Despite the piecemeal nature of these thefts, each feather is arranged and attached them with the same care that a tzelicrae scholar would spin a web-poem, often creating patterns that closely mimic the most common avian prey of their local hunting grounds. In some cases, the disguise is enough to fool other animals, and even wildsailors, into thinking the hunched form before them belongs to a creature of beak and wing rather than fang and venom. *Use a jyorachnid family if you want the crew to face a single-minded mass of feather-filching scuttlers.*

Drives

Consume & Collect: Though jyorachnids will attack wildsailors if they're hungry enough or backed into a corner, their main targets are almost exclusively of the feathered variety. Though if a wildsailor is wearing some kind of feathered garment, that may prove impossible for the spiders to resist...

Presence

Sight:	A flash of colour among the leaves. Web-spattered feathers. Birds fleeing an area with haste. Empty nests.
Sound:	Staccato clicking.
Taste:	Meatier than one would expect from a spider, with a faint twist of citrus.

Resources

Specimens:	Spider Feathers, Spinneret
Whispers:	Wildsea Hybrid
Charts:	A Venom-Etched Eggshell

Aspects

Aerial Movement: Despite their feathers, jyorachnids are wingless - they can't fly. What they *can* do is climb to a vantage point, leap off, spread their limbs, and glide down onto their target with very little fanfare.

Dripping Mandibles: Sharp fangs above mincer-like mouthparts. An attack from a jyorachnid usually deals CQ Spike damage, but most can manage a hit or two of CQ Toxin damage before their venom sacs run dry.

Natural Irritant: The web-based chemicals that jyorachnids use to attach stolen feathers to themselves have the side-effect of coating those same feathers in a natural irritant, deterring even larger predators. CQ attackers are likely to be left with feather fragments in their skin, causing painful itching until treated.

Avian Shell: A jyorachnid's feather layer gives it natural resistance to Blunt, Toxin, Frost, and Blast damage, but removing patches of feathers nullifies these resistances.

Quirks

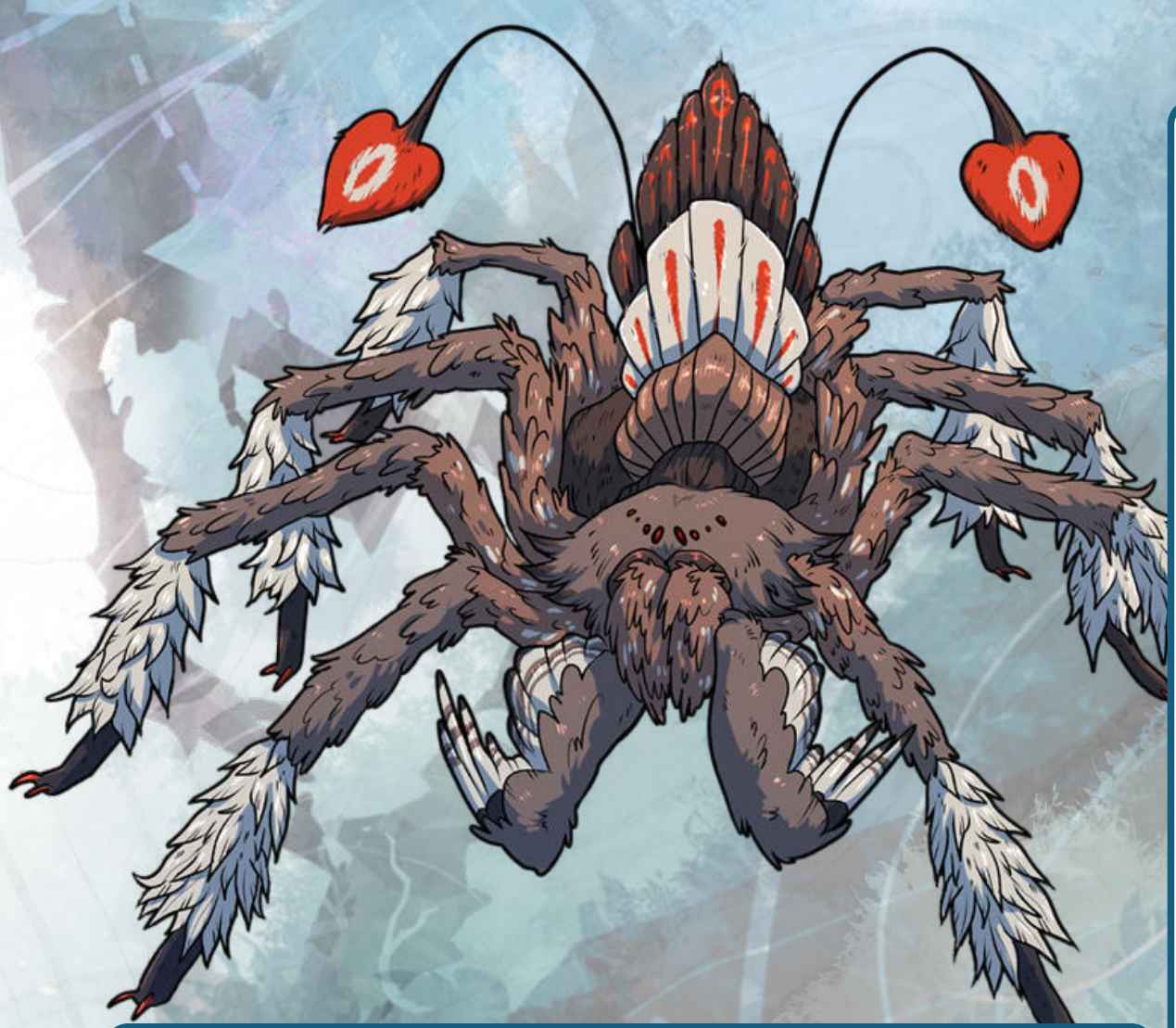
Mancatcher Web: While few jyorachnids spin traditional webs, those that do use a silk so strong and sticky that it requires cutting implements or acid to free something entangled within. Such spiders often pull their own stolen feathers out with these webs, either by accident or as a form of territory marking.

Prodigious Leapers: All jyorachnids have an impressive jump, but some can clear an entire spit in a single bound if they choose to. They can make these leaps while carrying caught prey, but the distances (while still impressive) are greatly reduced thanks to the additional weight.

Family Affairs: Though often encountered alone or in pairs, damaged jyorachnids can release a chemical burst that calls other family members to their aid.

Prototarantula: A truly massive specimen - the natural jyorachnid resistances become immunities, and it gains resistance to all other damage types except Flame.

Truefeather Rumours: Laughed off as the ravings of the drunk and mire-scarred, there are still persistent rumours that some newly hatched jyorachnids actually emerge from their eggs with tufts of feathers on show. Perhaps their avian predation is merely an attempt to recover something lost during their earlier lineage?



Easy Encounter - Colourful Pursuit

A single jyorachnid has mistaken some vibrant element of the ship as a prized feather, and is pursuing the crew across the waves. The creature is doggedly focused on its goal for the first half of the track, but after the track break it may turn its attention to the last member of the crew to damage or frustrate it, attempting to drag them over the edge of their vessel or – if they're particularly unlucky – grab the sailor in their mandibles and make a prodigious leap away from the ship, taking their captive with them.

Medium Encounter - Familial Territory

With a jolt, the ship becomes caught in a half-hidden mancatcher web spun by what must be an impressively sized jyorachnid, or a family working in disturbing concert. The Strategy track isn't for fending the creatures off, but for freeing the ship and leaving before enough of them arrive to become an overwhelming threat – every few marks on the track, larger and more dangerous spiders will appear to investigate their catch.

The Lovaria (Location)

Wrecked: Sometime within the first hundred years of post-verdant sail
Existence of Treasure Rooms: Rumoured, ambiguous

There are questions surrounding the wreck of the Lovaria, the kind that draw scholars to the subject in droves. How was a ship measuring over a mile long ever supposed to be supported by the thrash or tangle? What could power the huge paddle-steamer wheels placed in rows along its hull? Why does no community seem to have a record of building such a monstrosity of a vessel, and is such secrecy a product of shame or tragedy?

Unfortunately for the knowledge-hungry, these questions are likely to remain unanswered. The wreck of the Lovaria sits at the intersection of sink and drown, far deeper than sensible sailors ever plumb.

And even if an enterprising crew were to reach it, the depth will hardly be their biggest concern.

Spiderhome (Horror)

Every cabin, corridor, and cargo bay of the Lovaria is thick with jyorachnid webs, with the entire structure acting as an extended set of trapped burrows. *Local jyorachnids leave the entrances unguarded and focus on herding prey into the ship's interior, relying on the webbing inside to ensure that anything that enters has little chance of leaving again.*

Dubious Treasures (Feature)

Far more legend than proven fact, rumours still abound that the Lovaria was laden down with riches before leaving its home port for that final, fateful voyage. *Details of those riches are sparse - could anything it carries be worth the danger of delving down to the wreck site and combating the arachnid menace that treat it as home?*

Feathers For The Fallen (Festival)

An old rootless celebration, a sombre affair in which colourful feathers are soaked in tears and thrown overboard. *Could this be the genesis of an entire species, a homage being paid to an ancient threat, or merely an unfortunate coincidence of forms?*

Plants

While any plant on the wildsea can be both a blessing and a boon in the right hands or situation, the vast majority of those that earn a name do so through the potential hazard they represent.

Plants of the Wild Skies in Play

While the skies may not seem like the first place one should go looking for vegetation, the crezzer-inspired growth of the wilds reaches far above the familiar waves.

Plants of the Lower Depths in Play

With so much competition for water, food, and light beneath the thrash, and the usual evolutionary race so chemically accelerated, the plants of the lower depths are almost impossible to categorize (though that doesn't stop people trying). A bloom or fruit found on one delve might have changed into something almost unrecognizable by the next, or been ousted from the area by an invasive species, or outright devoured.

Ornito Drifts

Clouds of seeds helicoptering their way through the skies, the sharp edges of an ornito's 'rotors' make them beautiful from afar, deadly up close. *Ornito drifts deal CQ Keen damage over large areas, and are difficult to avoid in windy environments.*

Tempest's Beard

Drawing from the natural moisture and unusual physicality of living storms, these hanging curtains of lichen carry trapped spores and unusual insect colonies. *Some of these beard-like growths act as conductors for the electrical potential that the storms carry with them, crackling with barely contained lightning.*

The Greater Crowned Saguaro

While particularly difficult to harvest, the saguaro's natural growing patterns resemble nothing so much as a sawblade, strong enough to be fitted to a smaller ship as a method of cutting through the wild waves in lieu of the more mechanical options commonly relied upon. *There are drawbacks, however, mostly that the sawtooth-like spines need time and care to regrow after blunting.*

Casketweed

Often found growing around long-abandoned corpses caught in the canopy, many wildsailors have cut their way through thick drifts of casketweed in search of the grisly prize within. *Though casketweed is a simple plant with no anomalous properties, dense patches of it do a fantastic job of hiding the presence of beasts and insects that might feed on the sea's bounty of abandoned corpses.*

Mimic Haze

Though it appears by all accounts to be a cloud like any other, the mimic haze is actually a partially gaseous fungal colony threaded with hair-thin filament tendrils. Unable to direct its own movement, it relies on the winds to carry it, the sweet scent of the spores attracting airborne insects only for the tendrils to draw them deeper into the mass for slow digestion. *Mimic hazes aren't much of a threat to even the most rickety airships, but they do attract swarms and play havoc with the senses of those with delicate noses or pheromonal receptors.*

Shankling Spears

Hardly the most complicated of threats, but simplicity rarely equals safety. Shankling spears grow from the lower boughs of well-watered tallshanks, dropping unexpectedly to the waves when ready to split and seed. *The spears are a particular hazard to ships moored where tallshanks meet the treeline - more than one crew has returned to their vessel to find one of these massive seeds sticking out through a new hole in the decking, or a previously pristine cabin roof.*

Wintergreens

Parasite vegetables are hardly a rarity, but those that form their own microclimates are something worth paying attention to... And usually something worth harvesting, if you don't mind a taste of winter's chill. *The air in the immediate vicinity of a wintergreen is cold, but nothing compared to the drop in temperature when one is sliced. Well-prepared chefs wear thick gloves when handling them, and even then frostbite occasionally sets in.*

Crashberries

With every rootquake, more ruins from the Eaves are brought crashing upwards, but most never reach the surface. These lightless memorials to a world long-lost are prime fodder for dredgers and divers, but equally attractive as a source of nutrients for the crashberries. The plant's vines grow into dense networks within the ancient stone, berries fruiting, waiting for the right stimulus. *Unfortunately for wildsailors, this stimulus tends to be sound and movement, and drawing too close to a crashberry cluster leads to it bursting open violently, showering the hapless target with chips of sharp-edged stone and annoyingly delicious juice.*

Graveling Grove

Thickets of thorns and vines that grow over corpses suspended in the sink or drown, these groves seem to draw restless spirits toward them, acting more as a prison than an anchor. *The spirits drawn by a graveling grove are often unstable and in spectral pain, wanting nothing more than freedom.*

Tumblecage

Thorned and mobile, tumblecages don't seek out prey in the traditional sense, but do still seem to be effective vegetative predators (even if only by accident). *A fist-sized tumblecage may impale a score of bugs as it bounces from branch to branch. A ship-sized tumblecage, with thorns the length of sabres, is far more of a threat.*

Vanta-Bloom

Many divers are used to navigating by the glow of fireflies, or the sickly light of underthrash bioluminescence. The vanta-bloom is a naturally occurring enemy of such explorers, drinking in the light from its surroundings to feed petals so dark they can barely be seen. *As a hazard, vanta-blooms are no real threat if identified early... But plunging a ship into a parasite stand of them risks threshing exposed surfaces with a mixture of almost invisible stems, leaves, and petals.*

Walking Roots

[Huge] Long-Stepping, Crezzer-Seeping

Uncomplicated in their motives but unfortunately destructive in their relentlessness, walking roots are exactly what they sound like - root systems that stride slowly through the treetops, disconnected from their ironroot trunks through some Eaves-based trauma. *Use walking roots if you want the crew to tackle a mindless foe, more of a mobile environmental hazard than a predator to be fought.*

Drives

Constant Movement: For whatever reason, walking roots seem content to move from place to place at random until they wither and crumble. They don't feed, or react to any external stimuli - they simply walk.

Presence

Sight: Assemblages of wood and clinging soil, striding slowly across the waves. Drops of concentrated crezzerin sizzling on a ship's deck, or the rooftops of an unfortunate settlement.

Smell: Forgotten earth.

Resources

Specimens: Drying Root, Clump of Soil

Whispers: Restless History

Aspects

Wood & Soil: Walking roots are weak to Salt, Hewing, Serrated, and Flame damage, but their potential to take such damage and keep moving is prodigious. Toppling one of the walking roots through damage alone can take hours, perhaps even days.

Trail of Destruction: An unfortunate side-effect of their aimless wanderings, walking roots deal massive CQ Blunt and Toxin damage to anything that can't move out of their way in time.

Quirks

Flowering Roots: Every now and then, the seeds of the upper waves settle and grow within a walking root, creating a mobile hybrid ironroot of sorts.

Kosmillaria

[Swarm] Spined Cactoid Drifters

A lone kosmillaria might be an unpleasantly spiky surprise, a rootless cactus tumbleweed floating on the breeze, but it's hardly something to worry about... Unless you're an established aeronaut, in which case you'll be sprinting belowdecks for safety, knowing what's coming. *Use a swarm of kosmillaria if you want the crew to face a hunting plant hazard that takes over the skies like a storm.*

Drives

Swarm and Impale: Kosmillaria have a limited group instinct, sending singular plants ahead as scouts to identify potential targets. When a target is found, usually a larger creature (or, unfortunately for aeronauts, a ship), the rest of the swarm will head in that direction, slamming into their targets spike-first at great speeds.

Presence

Sight: A tiny drifting ball of cactus, sometimes spotted with pink flowers. Birds and flying lizards fleeing in one direction. A hail of fibre and spikes.

Sound: Repeated impacts.

Taste: The cactus-flesh is meaty in texture, but the spines (probably) need to be removed first.

Resources

Specimens: Cactus Flesh, Vampiric Spines

Whispers: Blood on the Wind

Aspects

Heavy Impact: The floating swarm's first attack is an obvious one, slamming into their target like fibrous hail. This might deal CQ Spike or Blunt damage to individuals caught in it, or the ships they crew.

Withering: The secondary effect of a kosmillaria swarm is a more subtle one - spines that break off as part of the attack slowly leech the essence for whatever surface they're stuck into, whether that's blood from a vein or moisture from worked wood. This deals slow CQ Salt damage, or a lasting injury, to the affected target, and allows a new kosmillaria cactus to grow outward from the broken end of the spine.

Drifting Spores

One of the four core dangers of the depths, the options below describe some of the possible mechanical effects of drifting spores on both ship and crew, and the form the hazard might take to inflict them. *These effects are perfect for acting as a mild challenge during a journey through the depths on their own, or for acting as the backdrop for a more complex encounter with another hazard.*

Aspect Damage

Some spores are toxic enough to deal damage on contact, or carry enough weird energy to discharge when their drift is interrupted.

Lasting Injuries

Spores that take root and grow in exposed flesh or metal, leeching from traits, gear, or companions in order to continue to spread.

Resource Corruption

Fungal specimens are likely to spring into a period of uncontrollable growth when caught within an environment choked with new spores, or to wither and die as foreign bodies settle upon them.

Mire Infliction

Remember that the gau aren't the only mushroomish types that can cause hallucinations!

Ratings Damage

Seals are most likely to be affected by a drifting cloud but, if it's thick enough, it might reduce a ship's Speed as well.

Additional Cut

Air thick with particulate can leave vision partially or almost entirely obscured.

Lowered Impact

A blanket of fast-growing mushrooms can act as a kind of myconic armour for creatures attacking within a sporecloud, if they can get over the discomfort.

Temporary Weakness

As a counterpoint to the type of drifting spores that might lower impact, those same clouds enshrouding an individual will likely leave them dangerously flammable.

Chronovoric Moss

[Variable] It Appreciates Your Time

The strangest dangers often come in the most unassuming of forms. Moss is everywhere on the wildsea, so ubiquitous that it rarely even gets mentioned; it's a fact of life that you'll find it on jetties, on wrecks, clinging to the eaves of buildings, and growing over even the most independent of ironroots.

But chronovoric moss is rare, and wildsailors that have come into contact with it thank whatever spirits, godlings, or leviathans they might put stock in that that's the case.

Each patch of chronovoric moss has the unique arconautic ability of detaching anyone that comes into contact with it from time, in small but unforgiving ways. Iron might rust or turn as red-hot as the day it was smelted, old wounds reopen as fresh ones heal... And in the most severe cases, entire years of a sailor's life can be carved from them in an instant, their personal clock wound back and forth so rampantly that the metaphorical gears burst.

It may not be a hostile entity, but it's spoken of in the same breath as leviathans and pirate queens when crews discuss their narrowest escapes. *Use a patch of chronovoric moss if you want to wreck the concept of predictable, linear time.*

Drives

Feed On Moments: Oddly enough, the intense distortions sailors undergo while exposed to the moss are a byproduct of it feeding on the smallest moments, the kind one would never miss. It's the process of *getting* to those moments that does the damage.

Presence

Sight: Chronovoric moss can present in a number of ways, from an oddly hazy growth to a riot of fractal movement. The most lethal patches seem just like any other moss.

Taste: Split seconds, the meat of time spitted, cooked, and consumed.

Resources

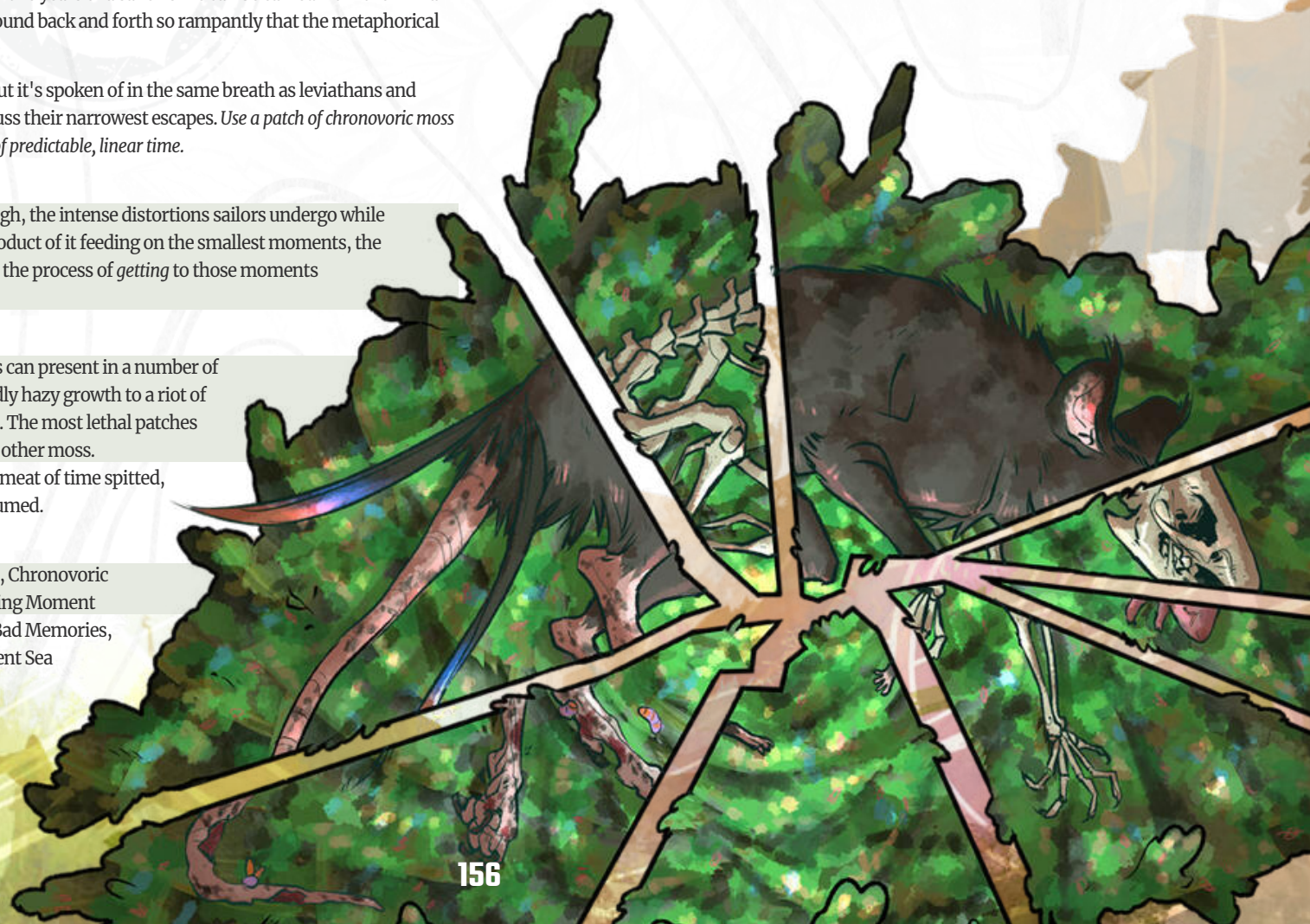
Specimens: Oddly Aged Bones, Chronovoric Moss Sample, Living Moment

Whispers: Change Is Afoot, Bad Memories, Adrift On A Different Sea

Aspects

Broken Arrow: When a character comes into contact with a patch of chronovoric moss, the Firefly rolls a d6. The result of this roll determines the narrative effect its feeding process will have, though the actual mechanical effects are up to the Firefly (though likely include damage, the loss (or gain) of resources, and unusual recursive injuries. These effects are temporary... By default, anyway.

1: An aspect is twisted by time - burn every box and change what it does until healed.
2: Old injuries reappear, or future maladies rush into the present.
3: The character's resources are altered, some improved, some destroyed.
4: The mind is ill-equipped - unmark marked mires, mark clear ones.
5: Traits and companions are healed, or gear suddenly good as new.
6: Biology bucks and shifts - the character gains a new trait from their background.



Turn Back the Clock

We rarely state hard limits in the Wildsea books, knowing full well that they're the first thing most table will throw out as they craft their own version of the world. With that said, though...

Chronovoric moss does not allow time travel.

... Unless it does.

The Terror of Time

Time travel is a tricky business - head back into the past and kill the wrong butterfly, you might never have existed. And the wildsea has a whole lot of butterflies on offer for an errant traveller to paradoxically crush.

But the trickiest thing about time travel is that it tends to steal weight from events, erase the importance of decisions. It almost inevitably messes with the structure of stories, and it's stories that you're here for.

Displacement

All of that said, time travel can be intoxicatingly cool if it's done the right way. And if you are going to incorporate it into a game (there's a chronovoric moss sample as a specimen, so for an alchemist, char, or steep the thought will likely cross their mind), set some sensible limits. Don't flash back to the pre-Verdancy - it'll spoil a lot of the mystery, and it's also worth considering that characters will likely end up two miles above an ironroot-less world. For a more 'Wildsea' feel to your time travel, use it in short bursts so that even a few seconds count. A moment watching through the eyes of your younger self, a sudden glitch-like displacement around a blade's swing, a cryptic glimpse of the future that will haunt a character for years to come? That kind of thing is generally more in keeping with the world.

But every wildsea is different, after all. Make sure your entire table is on the same page, and have fun.

Any Last Regrets?

Our final word of advice on the subject? If it's a jaunt into the future you want, trap yourself in amber and dream your way there like everyone else.

Tusking-Caps

[Large] Porcine & Porcini

Heavily featured in moralistic gau tales, these pileate monstrosities of fungal muscle and rippling gills have only one desire - to seek out and consume other shroomlike matter.

Tusking-caps are built big, and they're built strong - with a shape that resembles the most dangerous of pre-V boars, they're perfectly equipped to gouge their way into hollows and branches in search of their food. They'll do the same to any sailors that get in their way too, given half a chance. *Use a tusking-cap if you want to pose more of a threat to any gau characters in the crew, or to give a truffle-hunting char a true arch nemesis.*

Drives

Root Out Truffles: Entirely without sight, tusking caps hunt truffles and other mushroom matter entirely by scent. For richer-smelling gau, the roar of a tusking-cap might as well be a death-knell.

Presence

Sight:	A charging mushroom, body dominated by an armoured cap and two huge tusks. Ironroot trunks gouged open.
Smell:	Expensive, somehow, the kind of aroma that puts one in mind of fine dining.
Taste:	It's an old adage, but tusking caps literally *are* what they eat. An intoxicatingly earthy medley with each bite.

Resources

Specimens:	Shroomcap Flesh, Sensory Gills, Half-Digested Truffles, Mighty Tusk
Whispers:	Get the Point, Fairytale Charger

Aspects

Curving Namesake: Each tusking-cap has a pair of tusks made of hardened stalk-matter, sharpened to rough points against rough bark. These natural weapons deal medium to heavy CQ Hewing damage, but most tusking-caps charge as they make their attacks, throwing targets into the air or knocking them down to deal additional CQ Blunt damage with their stubby limbs.

Armourcap: More than a foot thick in some places, the fungal flesh protecting a tusking-cap's sensitive gills is resistant to all damage save for Frost, Flame, and Spike. The plant's undercarriage, the gills themselves, have no such resistances.

Brush-Crasher: Tusking-caps charge, tumble, and smash indiscriminately, heedless of the world around them unless it has the right scent. They'll rarely even *notice* wildsailors unless they have mushroom-based resources on their person (or have recently eaten a meal with some kind of fungal component) unless a crew is actively trying to get in their way.

Quirks

Straight Out Of A Nightmare: Though these organisms are used as threats in a score of gau sporeling-stories, there's not a hint of the mythical about them. The stories are there to impress upon gau that their safest option is staying as far away as possible. Gau wildsailors fully mark one of their mires upon seeing a tusking-cap.

Guide & Guardian: If a crew can avoid becoming enough of a nuisance that a tusking-cap turns its attentions to them, following the beast as it scavenges is a surefire way to discover high-grade mushroom specimens.

Young Tusks: Unusually, tusking-cap young are carried around within the gills of their parent, maturing within spore sacs for years before being released.

Medium Encounter - Truffle Hollow

The crew are alerted to a nearby tusking-cap by the sounds of splintering wood, and find it gouging its way into a slim crevice found among the bark of an ironroot. There are truffles in there, gleaming wetly in the darkness, but if the tusking-cap gets to them first, they'll be gone in moments. The beast will ignore attempts to harm or divert it until the track's break, after which it'll turn furiously on them. The second track is a timer, marked by environmental damage - if it fills before the crew have felled or driven off the tusking-cap, the ironroot bark will split wide enough for the truffles to serve as the shroomlike boar's meal.

Yasetta had been a wildsailor since before she could walk. Born to a rootless family, fleeing the community as soon as she could go it alone, she'd spent decades at sea on so many ships that she could barely remember their names.

She'd had friends, from time to time, but they never lasted. Everybody else seemed to be looking for something she had already tasted - found family, a sense of belonging, the security that came with a bunk of your own and a captain that knew your name.

But that wasn't what the wilds had ever meant to her.

So when she felt the tendrils snap tight around her legs, smelled acid and pollen, realised that her axe was out of reach, that her crewmates would likely never find out what had happened to her...

Well, there were less appropriate ways her journey might have ended.

Sliverbell (Leviathan/Location)

Flight Speed: Anywhere from a stone's throw per day to a pinwolf's flat-out sprinting speed
The Taste of the Air: Reminiscent of an old blood-fed fern rotting in a clay pot

Some roving scholars argue that Sliverbell is more of a floating island than it is a leviathan, all great calcified petals and dusty cathedral-sized pollen repositories. Others disagree, pointing out that it seems to shepherd and direct smaller drifting manes (as other leviathan-sized creatures sometimes do their own children). But, no matter their opinions, all lock their doors or head belowdecks when it passes in front of the moon.

Mile-High Mane (Horror)

From a distance, Sliverbell could be mistaken for a particularly large drifting mane, with petals closed to protect its pseudoteeth. It's only when it draws close that the true scale of the plant becomes clear. *Though Sliverbell does have tendrils, they're too unwieldy to grab anything smaller than a battleship with any reliability.*

Opportunistic Descent (Feature)

In a manner similar to the manes that call it home, Sliverbell drifts through the skies of the wildsea until it senses an opportunity to feast, whereupon it descends at speed and lodges itself in the treetops. *Once settled, the petals of the great plant open, disgorging hundreds of smaller drifting manes ready to hunt.*

Slow to Rise (Feature)

Sliverbell's raids are mercifully short, the drifting manes it releases heading back to their 'carrier' en masse in response to some unknown signal. It's only when the last of the manes have returned and the great plant closes its petals once more that it can begin building up the chemical gases needed to rise again - a process that can take many hours. *This is the safest time to explore Sliverbell's interior passages and chambers, when the manes within are resting to digest their prey. Crews wishing to do this will need a supply of breathable air.*

Drifting Mane

[Large Plant] Of Lashings and Hunger

A distant cousin of the lion's mane, drifting manes have evolved a stomach-like sac behind their petalled mouths full of highly acidic gases, used to both dissolve caught prey and keep themselves aloft as they hunt. These sacs are self-perpetuating, using the juices created during decomposition as fuel for gas creation.

This interplay has led drifting manes to specialize in ambush hunting, floating high above their prey and then rapidly expelling gas to drop down onto them, drawing them toward its mouth with tendrils and then lounging, sated, as it digests and refills. *Use drifting manes if you want the crew to face a plant with the instincts of a larger predatory bird, diving in for sudden attacks that can incapacitate individual crew members.*

Drives

Wrap & Grab: Though a mane's pseudoteeth are impressive, they lack the agility to lunge and bite. Instead they use tendrils to grasp and lift smaller prey, pulling them toward the mouth or (if small enough or already incapacitated) directly into the stomach sac.
Digest at Leisure: Once one of the manes manages to swallow prey it'll stay where it is, anchoring itself with its tendrils. If there's still a substantial amount of danger a mane will drop itself down into the canopy, finding a deeper place to hole up.

Presence

Sight:	A distant drifting shape, high above. A rapidly growing shadow. Slim yellow tendrils wrapped around branches. Flaring petals.
Sound:	Silence save for the flutter of petals on the wind.
Smell:	Sharp acid and rotten flesh.

Resources

Specimens: Mane Pseudotooth, Tendril Cutting, Sac-Bile, Pollen Bell
Whispers: Acid Adrift, Distant Cousin

Aspects

Hold Very Still: The glowing lamp-like bells on a drifting mane double as sensory organs used to locate prey. These bells are far better at tracking movements than colour or shape, so if a mane's prey stands still or moves extremely slowly, they're liable to be distracted by other elements of the surrounding environment.

Flotation Sac: Allows for drifting flight, though it's hard for a mane to move against the wind. Can be emptied in a blistering eructation to deal heavy CQ Acid damage, or LR if it takes advantage of a prevailing wind.

Lashes: A drifting mane's tendrils are used like lashes, weakening prey before being used to wrap and pull. They deal light to medium CQ Keen damage.

Quirks

Bristling Bells: Used to dispense pollen in great gouts, choking affected targets temporarily and creating clouds of bad air that are difficult to see through for most.

Juggernaut Mane: A drifting mane with its petals fused closed becomes unable to float or ingest food, but remains predatory and hungry. Such manes move wildly, their tendrils thrashing unpredictably and their otherwise-useless petals being used as bludgeons (dealing heavy CQ Blunt damage).

Hooks & Encounters

Special Delivery: A disoriented mane is tangled around the ship's lift system by unkind winds.

Searchlights: The crew stumble deep into mane territory, finding themselves in the middle of a sensory network of light and pheromone.

Constructs

The surge of advances in technology and alchemy, the core of both air travel and safer depths exploration, have dragged construct development practices along in their wake.

High Constructs in Play

Usually defined by the methods by which they stay aloft, the constructs of the wild blue are as varied in propulsion as the ships that sail among them.

Low Constructs in Play

Though huge steps have been made in keeping crews safe beneath the known waves of the thrash and tangle, delving will likely always be one of the most dangerous activities for a wildsailor. Many constructs found below the waves are designed to mitigate this, an array of autonomous units relying on punchcard intelligence.

Remote Subs

Piloted by ingenius rattlehands from the comfort of their ship or portside homestead, sent out to collect samples or pick over depth-eaten wreckage. *Remote subs can be controlled in a variety of ways, but the most common are signal-carrying cables that unspool over leagues, focused radio broadcasts, and arconautically-linked sensors.*

Crawl-Brains

Constructed by depths-dwelling navigators and engineers working in tandem for the purpose of charting the unknown. *Crawl-brains scribe maps as they travel, filling their internal compartments with ream after ream of steam-pressed paper. Breaking one open is hardly polite, but it would offer a wealth of knowledge in the form of locally made charts.*

Aviato

Pseudobirds made more for the art of it than any particularly useful function. They wouldn't fool a real bird, but they're usually close enough in design to be indistinguishable at a distance. *An aviato's feathers might be made of glass, amber, leaf-rubber, or even iron. Very few of them can manage anything more than clumsy flight.*

Pendulum Emplacements

Found hanging from highports in regions known for piracy and smuggling, and fitted with armaments that would put a deck weapon to shame. *Most pendulum emplacements have limited signalling capability, and one or two built-in weapons capable of dealing massive damage.*

Stilting Harvester

Parasite farming is even more important in the depths than it is up above, where a reliable source of low-crezzer food can make the difference between sticking out a winter or nobody being there to greet the next spring. *Harvesters are autonomous, usually, but are often guided from a nearby reinforced guard post.*

Screamer Balloons

Though dwellers at wave level like to image the out-of-reach heavens as full of advanced sorts with wonderfully complex technology, it's far from a universal truth. *Screamer balloons act as high-altitude proximity alarms, floating near isolationist settlements. When ships come close enough to disturb the mechanisms hanging from the balloons a set of vents open, producing a howling alarm when the wind passes through them.*

Unbodied Wings

Swooping forever through the firmament, unencumbered by rider or pilot. *Unbodied wings are rare and unexplained, though aeronauts have a bevy of theories about what their origins might be. They attempt to evade capture (or at least seem to) when pursued, and once caught reveal themselves to be nothing more than canvas and wood.*

Clay Clouds

It's debatable as to whether these really count as a construct, but they seem to have been shaped by both hands and intelligence, so most just shrug and accept it. Sculpted to resemble a stylized cloud, as one might see in a woodcut or child's drawing, the ceramic outer shells are often cracked and chipped with age. *A clay cloud acts very much like a high-altitude sailing stone, just ploughing a straight line through the sky until it impacts with something. Unlike sailing stones, clay clouds occasionally 'burst', raining mud on the waves far below before slowly piecing themselves back together.*

Amberglass Automatons

Brimming with trapped dreams, these automatons are golemesque collections of chemically treated amber reinforced with mesh. Rumour holds that they tear themselves free from the portholes and cabin windows of sunken submersibles, eager to return to the ironwoods their resin was harvested from. *Amberglass automatons can communicate via signalling, but holding a conversation with one is far from easy; they speak in riddles, dream-drunk and cryptic to a fault.*

Heavy Hands

Squat constructs with detachable crawling hands, whirring and jerking as their internal clockwork unwinds and rewinds itself. Their many hands crawl the environment around them as a form of 'sight', but are more renowned for a singular curious ability. *Any target that a hand attaches itself to loses the ability to glide or fly for as long as they're held. The skies simply refuse to take them.*

Alchemical Memories

Artificial alchemical shapeshifters that take the form of individuals from a wildsailor's past. These replicas are convincing for the most part, but touching them reveals the liquid truth of their construction. *The longer an alchemical memory spends inhabiting a particular individual's form, the more of their character and personality it can accurately portray.*

Xalti

Elemental 'creatures' constructed of tangible light, the product of a ridgeback experiment-ritual. Whether the xalti were treated as a success or a failure is unknown, but they rarely head out onto the waves, dwelling usually in mountainside caves and ruined altitude mines. *Some zealous types worship xalti as godlings due to their appearance, but they're nothing of the sort.*

Spinwolves

(Medium) Sawteeth & Torque

Though far from the largest or most dangerous predators of the rustling waves, pinwolves have earned a name for themselves the world over thanks to their combination of ferocity and adaptability. And when pushing the boundaries of punch-card mechanistics, why not start with a proven design?

Spinwolves are a rattlehand's dream, autonomous machines designed to hunt, self-repair when damaged, and even to assemble additional units if the situation is right. *Use a spinwolf if you want the crew to face a new, inorganic twist on a classic wildsea threat, one that makes up for an inability to match some of the basic pinwolf attributes with clever engineering workarounds.*

Drives

To Hunt: Spinwolves use their unusual locomotion to build up speed as they travel, uncurling into ferocious, limb-first lunges that allow them to essentially staple themselves to unfortunate larger prey before tearing into it with grinding mouthparts and saw-edged tongues.

To Produce: Whoever made the original spinwolf did so with expansion in mind. When one of these machines comes across a wreck, or a cache of mechanical parts, it will attempt to create another rudimentary spinwolf from the available materials. It'll even add a hide as camouflage, if there's one around to use.

Presence

Sight:	A flash of tattered fur and metallic spines. Sinuous shapes. Jaws dripping with oil.
Sound:	Hisses, yelps, and howls, distorted by experimental speaker systems.

Resources

Salvage:	Spinwolf Limbs, Piston Pins, Sawblade Tongue, Punch-Card Brain, Chemical Stomach, Piecemeal Plating, Stolen Hide
Whispers:	Pirouette Climber, Machine Intelligence
Charts:	Spinwolf Instruction Card

Aspects

Cutting Corners: As well-designed as spinwolves are, it's impossible for them to match the manoeuvrability of their namesakes at speed. The machines use their pin-like limbs for climbing, fighting, and slower movements, much as a pinwolf does, but swift travel is achieved by curling up and rolling in a style similar to that of a pillbug or pangolin. Additional spines and stabilization systems ensure that this movement, though untraditional, is an effective way of traversing the thrash.

Grinding Jaws: Spinwolf mouths are designed to disassemble machines as easily as they tear through meat, dealing medium CQ Serrated damage as standard. This can be augmented with light CQ Volt or Acid damage, using internal battery-prongs and pressurized jets of caustic exhaust.

Piston Pins: Spinwolf limbs are sharp and pin-like, dealing CQ Spike damage and allowing them to climb just about any surface.

Quirks

Camouflage Hide: Spinwolves drape themselves in the hides of organic creatures as a kind of camouflage, using actual pinwolf hides when they can get them.

Jumper Cables: A rare adaptation to the sparser branches of the drown, these long, whip-like cables are able to be fired across long distances to act as winches or grapples.

Wolf Generation: Newly constructed spinwolves are bare-bones in design, able to bulk themselves out by processing useful wreckage.

Billowguts

[Huge] Canvas Frayed and Freed

Hot air balloons were one of the earliest forms of wildsea flight, and one of the most quickly abandoned. While the basics of the technology are still used for smaller balloons and as an addition to larger skyfaring vessels, trusting yourself to an undefended basket beneath a bright, predator-attracting gasbag is a recipe for a sudden and shocking death. But what happened to those projects abandoned, left to moulder in the corners of warehouses and the junkpiles of airyards?

The same thing that happens to any other abandoned ship, in the end - they learn to hunger. *Use a billowgut if you want an aerial predator that cares nothing for stealth or speed, moving with the surety of a storm and the purpose of a mawship.*

Drives

To Envelop: The aerial cousins of caging bells are far less complicated in their motives, driven by hunger to seek out sailors of any kind and suck them into their billowing, chemical-filled interiors.

Presence

Sight:	An oddly misshapen gasbag, leaking steam and dripping with unknown fluids.
Sound:	None, save the rippling and snapping of canvas in the wind.

Resources

Salvage:	Living Canvas, Chemical Slew
Specimens:	Decomposing Meat, Empty Shells
Whispers:	Left to Moulder, Living Vortex

Aspects

Gut & Lung: A billowgut's hollow interior is all stomach, filled with digestive chemicals adapted from old fuel sources that deal CQ Acid or Toxin damage. More dangerous is the construct's method of attack, either swooping down to envelop prey or sucking them into a powerful temporary vortex, ripping them into the air to be snatched up moments later.

Living Canvas: Billowguts are weak to Keen, Spike, Hewing, Serrated, and Flame damage, but they resist Blunt, Acid, and Toxin.

Uncaged Bell

[Variable] A Break In The Chain

Many submersible crews avoid risking their entire ship by delving too deeply, but that doesn't mean their curiosity is limited. The caging bell was invented to satisfy that dangerous urge for exploration, lowered from a ship on the end of a heavy chain or unspooling coil of reinforced tubing, allowing its inhabitants to survey the lightless depths for as long as they need to before being winched back up to safety.

But winches jam, chains snap, and tubing gets scythed or eaten away by passing swarms. Not every bell makes it back to the ship it was dropped from.

And, just like any other vessel lost at sea or that spends too long away from port, these lost cages turn wild with time. *Use an uncaged bell if you want the crew to a smaller version of a mawship, less of a threat to their vessel, but a huge threat to them as individuals if it gets past their pressure shell.*

Drives

Seek New Observers: Caging bells were created as observation platforms, and even when they've gained what passes for mechanical sentience, they stay true to their intended purpose. But what's an observation platform without an observer to inhabit it? Uncaged bells attempt to abduct rather than kill their chosen targets, but they're completely willing to devastate anyone else that gets in their way once they've made their decision.

Presence

Sight:	A caging bell split and reformed into something like a spider or scorpion, restraining bars open like a broken ribcage or a gaping mouth. Broken amberglass smeared with blood and sap.
Touch:	Warm metal and splintering wood.
Sound:	Clicking and whirring, like a snapograph's shutter trying to snarl.

Resources

Salvage:	Amberglass Shards, Uncaged Limb, Broken Observation Tools
Specimens:	Observer's Remains, Skeletal Fragments
Whispers:	Tiny Hungers, Who Watches?
Charts:	Observation Notes, Torn Brasstongue Instruction Manual

Aspects

Roving Room: The structure of an uncaged bell may have been twisted by its journey to maw-sentience and the pressure of the depths, but it's still sturdy. It is immune to Toxin, Frost, and Flame damage, and resists Spike, Keen, and Serrated attacks. It is, however, weak to Volt and Hewing.

Limbs or Teeth?: Uncaged bells will attempt to crack their way through a ship's pressure shell to get to the crew inside, maybe even forcing their way into rooms and corridors if they're small enough. They attack with twisted spars and cage parts that have been repurposed into something that might be a tooth, might be a finger, might be a leg... But that definitely deals high-impact Spike or Blunt damage at CQ.

Empty Chamber: An uncaged bell will choose a single member of the crew to focus on, attempting to restrain and abduct them. It will attack any other crewmate that gets in the way, and will hijack focus with a devastating high-damage attack once per scene as an answer to anyone trying to free an abducted target.

Quirks

Against All Odds: The uncaged bell's original inhabitant lives, barely, and might even be able to be rescued.

The Hekamek Triumphant

[Large] The Perfect Marriage of Technology, Ambition, & Theft

While the most enterprising types of the modern age turn their eyes heavenward or cast their gaze to the depths, a small cadre of amberclad engineers have had their sights fixed firmly on the horizon since the earliest days of sail. These individuals, known as the Hekamek Collective, scorned the imprecise technology of engines and timber; they'd been preserved in the very blood of trees, after all, and what could be more suited to the waves than a vessel made from that same mysterious substance? The collective worked for decades, refining and redesigning until, after two full centuries of iteration, their dreams came to fruition.

... Only to be promptly stolen by their most junior technician.

The hekamek triumphant is the result of their labour, a wearable exoskeleton made from thousands of carefully shaped shards of interlocking amber, controlled from within through thought alone. It's a display piece and a proof of arcomechanical genius, a successful experiment and a monument to misplaced trust.

The collective have already started work on a replacement, though sourcing and working the materials is expected to take at least another fifty winters. In the meantime they use their considerable resources to hire wildsailing crews to track the thief down, but ironically have become victims of their own success - the fully realised hekamek is as hard to catch as it was to create. *Use the hekamek triumphant if you want to add an air of the thiefish heroic to your games, with a friendly NPC that's almost too good to be true or a threat for the crew that's only tangling with them in the name of popularity.*

Drives

To Show Off: It may seem shallow, but it's honest - the hekamek's thief wants little more from life than the ability to show off the glory of 'her' creation. This brings with it a certain level of fame and responsibility, and she shoulders it well, but at the end of the day, all she really wants is to be seen. She doesn't hide it, either.

To Pay Off Her Waking-Debt: ... One day, anyway.

Presence

Sight: A mess of shards and tentacles picked out in fragmented amber. A shining figure striking something approaching a heroic pose.

Sound: Reverberating slogans of scientific triumph. The occasional call for applause.

Resources

Salvage: Amber Tentacle Fragment, Discarded Shards, Complex Arcomechanism, Shred of Pale Cloth

Whispers: The Cost of Progress, Can't Run Forever

Aspects

For the Challenge: The pilot of the hekamek triumphant prefers formally announced contests that draw the crowds, and aims to triumph and abscond (and maybe humiliate) rather than kill or maim. She's not above well-paid bounty work though.

Tightly Packed Technology: A fully operational hekamek is just as dangerous as the Collective once promised. It has resistance to all damage types, and deals heavy (or massive) CQ Salt, Blunt, Spike, or Serrated damage. It also has the equivalent of soaring flight when close to or within the wavetops, granted by sinuous tentacles made out of interlocking shards.

Last Resort: The hekamek's only real drawback is its lack of sustainable ranged options. The suit can deal low or medium LR Spike damage by launching shards of itself (which it can reabsorb later), but each of these attacks removes its resistance against a single damage type.

Jeska Morudova

Jeska Morudova's theft of the hekamek triumphant was an alarmingly simple affair, the manufactory it was made in impressively guarded from outer threats but entirely unprepared for internal sabotage.

If the Collective had vetted their engineers a little better, they might have seen it coming - though a brilliant pre-V mind, Jeska was woken from her amber slumber by a group of unscrupulous piratical traders. Her release from their 'care' was subject to a material debt that would be almost impossible to pay, and it was while scraping by on Collective salvage gifts that her plan to steal the hekamek (should it ever be completed) came together.

She now exists as an independent bounty hunter on the move, able to support a lavish lifestyle and to keep ahead of both those she stole from and those she owes to.

Debts and guilt may each be hard to outrun, but she's giving it a damn good go.

Hekamektek

If the crew can bargain for or loot arcotechnology from the hekamek triumphant, a good rattlehand might be able to reverse engineer it using a project to gain a portion of the original benefits. *Turning hekamek resources into lasting aspects will take a good amount of amberglass and some difficult, high-cut rolls based around engineering, arconautics, and miniaturized design.*

Hekamek Tentacles 2-Track Gear

Seem to act on a will that's almost entirely their own. Mark to activate the tentacles for the duration of a scene, allowing the manipulation of multiple objects at once, granting CQ Spike damage, and conferring the Float, Hover, and Flap styles within the vicinity of the thrash and tangle.

Amberglass Orbitals 3-Track Gear

A taste of the amberclad's uncertain, refractive existence. You can split incoming damage between multiple Aspect tracks as you like. Massive damage only marks a single box for you if you take it on the Amberglass Orbital track.

Marauders

When a new vista opens up for exploration, it's the bold that strike out first... and the greedy that follow in their wake, snapping at their heels.

High Marauders in Play

Most often wave-level piratical types that have managed to outfit their ship with a lift system, the prospect of aerial piracy seeming far easier. It's hard to flee in the wild blue, after all, and cargo holds are the best source of goods for miles around.

Low Marauders in Play

The most grizzled and battle-hardened marauders often slink below the waves toward the end of their careers, the choking darkness making it easier to hide and allowing for terrifying submersible raids while simultaneously making them almost impossible to hunt down or track. The tricky parts are boarding, with the space between vessels so innately hostile, and retrieving any goods, cargo, or salvage acquired without attracting too much attention or spending too long exposed.

Breakers

Straightforward to a fault, breaker crews outfit their submersibles with massive ramming prows and slam them straight into the sides of trading ships from underneath, like massive piratical lampreys. *Breakers might target other submersibles, but more often use the depths as a place to hide and sort through loot.*

Hawks On The Wing

Shankling-based pirates found throughout the wild blue, known for three distinct features. *The first is their emphasis on territory - they mark areas that they 'own' clearly, patrolling their patch with single-minded diligence. The second is their ships, sleek and feathered and kept aloft by beating mechanical wings, which take a lot of power to run, but also allow them a huge amount of aerial mobility. The third is their attitude towards anyone that infringes on their set territory, as the Hawks are entirely willing to throw an entire crew overboard before salvaging what they can from the empty ship and then leaving it to drift.*

The Tortoises

Named for their method of attack, inspired by an ancient myth. These aeronautical pirates make their homes on mountaintops, carving large chunks of stone free and chaining them beneath their airships. When they hunt they pull these boulders with them, releasing them from great altitudes and letting gravity turn them into a deadly weapon against ships passing below. *Tortoise vessels are likely to flee from other airships rather than fight, only engaging when they have the literal high ground.*

Obraido's Band

A collection of exiled tempests that eschew ships and prefer to ride living storms for their raids. *The band have short lifespans, their mounts almost impossible to control.*

Depth-Seers

Monastic snipers living rough within the sink and drown, engaging in piracy not for any greater goal, but as the 'ultimate challenge'. *Depth-seers operate in almost complete darkness, firing their long-barrelled rifles from self-made hides among the thicker branches of the ironroots. They certainly don't choose and track the ships they target through sight alone, but they're so rarely confronted in person that the senses they rely on are unknown.*

The Word-Eaters

Lone whisper-thieves that can be found anywhere on the waves, disguising themselves as undercrew or passengers in order to get close to wildsailors laden with living words. *Word-eaters are feared not for their obsession, but for their methods of whisper extraction; victims are rarely left alive, or whole. Some suspect a link to the Quiet Empire, but no concrete evidence has ever been found.*

The Claw & Clay

A manic band of acid-pipe-smoking mercenaries famed for their love of decorative pottery, their ability to see in the utter darkness of the lower depths, and their habit of riding barely trained giant badgers into battle. And yes, they're exactly as odd as you might think. *There's some truth to the persistent rumour that the Claw & Clay started life as a joke among delvers in a lowport junction, but those humble origins are now well behind them.*

The Seven-League Vultures

Masters of passive piracy, the vultures exclusively attack settlements that have been recently ravaged by leviathans. Swooping down from the upper air allows them the opportunity to launch effective surprise attacks on these already chaotic places, and the majority of their raids meet little resistance. *There are rumours that the vultures aren't as callous as they appear - they may steal valuable resources, but they leave building supplies alone, and sometimes 'accidentally' leave crates of food and medical supplies in the wake of their raids.*

Stonefacers

Marauders are rarely lauded for their creativity, more often feared for their directness. And few are more direct, or less creative, than the stonefacers. *All stonefacers plug or replace their eyes, teeth, and any other useful features with chipped stone, supposedly to resist the wild temptations of delve-sirens. Even with the absence of traditional senses they are effective berserkers, slamming their ships straight into settlements and swinging staves and hammers with indiscriminate fervour.*

Kaverna's Seekers

Leviathan worshippers in search of their absent deity, interested not in physical possessions but in information. *Nobody outside of the Kaverna's ranks has any idea what leviathan they're even in search of, and their questions and answers on the subject are equally cryptic. Whether an answer will satisfy one of the Kaverna is very much up to chance - some believe that even they don't know what they're looking for, their entire cult so based around an air of mystery that their eventual goals are hidden even to their highest-order members. In the end, who knows if they're even saying it correctly?*

Maskello's Marching Company

Possessed of a single ship and an entire library of tales, the marching company descend upon spits and other vessels and force their inhabitants to take part in elaborate recreations of historical wildsea events. *A good performance might earn the unwilling actors a standing ovation, and maybe even the chance to keep breathing.*

The Quiet Empire

[Gang] Secretive Undercanopy Whispersmiths

The Quiet Empire does not exist.

That's the official take on things anyway, if you ask around in lowports or take issue with the tales of traders. There's no grand conspiracy, no network of informants, no vast and spreading influence among the piecemeal political powers of the sink and drown.

Probing further is inadvisable, though few will take the risk of explaining why. They won't tell you of the windowless, tar-blackened submersibles that navigate by scent, or the whisper-bloated assassins that (won't) target members of a curious crew that wander off alone in a reputedly safe settlement and never return. They certainly won't mention Kavonis, the flagship of the Empire's rarely-seen fleet, a vessel built around and into the reanimated corpse of an eel-like leviathan from the lowest reaches of the drown.

Why would they? The Quiet Empire is nothing but a malignant rumour, after all. *Use the Quiet Empire if you want the crew to face a secretive corruptive influence that nobody sensible will admit even exists.*

Drives

Control: ... And nothing more complicated than that. The Empire started as a loose spy network, and they still hew to those base purposes despite becoming something much, much greater.

Presence

Sight:	A note being passed. A sly look exchanged. Blood on the dockside.
Sound:	Stony silence, or stammered refusals. A whisper unleashed, warping the world.

Resources

Salvage:	A Deceptive Leaving, Broken Whisper-Jar
Specimens:	Word-Blood
Whispers:	The Scent of Secrets, Word After Word, Behind Glass, Purpose Unknown, A Silent Parliament, Never Even There
Charts:	A Set of Coded Instructions

Aspects

Words of War: Agents of the Quiet Empire don't need weapons to defend themselves or achieve their goals, even when those goals are drenched in blood - they're whispersmiths first and foremost, collectors and deployers of potent living words. When an agent attacks they eschew direct damage, instead warping the world into one where their target never existed. *Because players tend not to like their characters simply disappearing, have the whispers these agents deploy give complex past-affecting injuries or burn entire aspects temporarily out of existence, or add and mark new mires.*

Any Face, Every Face: When not aboard their own ship, a member of the empire is almost indistinguishable from any other lowport denizen. They have no uniform, no call-sign - at least, nothing exterior. The only common factor between them is a single whisper they all share, *The Scent of Secrets*, which must never be spoken aloud.

Quirks

Glutting: The most dangerous assassins of the Empire choose to forget their own families and pasts to make room for more whispers, a process known as 'glutting'. Such individuals might be caught out by being unable to remember key details of their younger years, but discovering them leads to a maelstrom of spoken carnage that typically leaves none alive to report their existence.

Empire Submersibles

Nearly impossible to discover and even harder to track, the submersibles of the Quiet Empire are one of the few things about them that have any distinctive qualities. Each is windowless without fail, entirely enclosed, with entrance and egress achieved through triple-locked hatches. Though designs differ greatly in terms of the fuel required and the engines they run on, tentaculari, geckopads, and talongrove tendrils are the most common bites - stealth and mobility, along with the ability to descend to the crushing leafy depths, are their greatest assets.

Quiet Fittings

The noted lack of traditional armaments and methods of combat extends even to the Empire's submersibles. If by some miracle the crew manage to find and best one in a fight, they might be able to loot the following fittings...

Memory of Flame 2 Stakes Armament

A spool wound with the whispers of those that have witnessed the conflagration first-hand. When released, targets split and buckle as if burned without any of the associated risks of spreading fire or searing pain.

Deals massive LR Flame damage

Whispering Wayplace 2 Stakes Addition

A sensory deprivation room filled to waist-height with sense-deadening alchemical slurry and equipped with a piloting console, designed to let whispers guide one's hands. *The Whispering Wayplace is almost useless unless one has a whisper related to travel or discovery.*

Kavonis

The pride of a fleet none will admit exists, and proof of an organization far more powerful than any want to admit.

Kavonis was a creature once, a leviathan of the same name that was fossilized mid-fight by a particularly powerful Empire whispersmith. Through the unnerving majesty of living words it now lives again (after a fashion), doomed to serve as ribs and hull of a submersible that would dwarf some spits in size.

The only drawback to the massive craft is that, unlike other Quiet Empire ships, it's incapable of reaching the surface. Something in the words that bind it back to life rebels against sunlight, consigning it to the tangle, sink, and drown for as long as it manages to sail.

Aviary Drakes

[Gang] Reigniters of Pre-V Myth

'Dragon' is a word rarely used on the rustling waves, and 'drake' perhaps even less so. With the amount of real and present dangers wildsailors come face to face with, not to mention the wave-shattering presence of leviathans, the monsters of pre-V myth are either mostly forgotten or quietly ignored.

But for some, such tales strike a chord. And for the Aviary Drakes, they were the seeds of an entirely new way of life. *Use the Aviary Drakes if you want the crew to face a group of proud and showy buccaneers who eschew wavecutters, airships, and submersibles alike to focus on personal flight methods inspired by what they're **reasonably sure** are the drakes of old.*

Drives

To Become 'Draconic': Ah, drakes - the kings of the pre-verdant skies (if you believe a load of old rumours, anyway). Did they breathe fire? Drink molten gold? Wheel through the heavens on feathered wings? Live in enormous wooden palaces attached to the trunks of trees? If you believe the Aviary Drakes, the answer to all of the above is a firm and resounding ***yes***.

Presence

Sight:	Red and gold feathers against the slate-blue sky. Droplets of molten gold. Smouldering wood and sailors running in abject fear.
Smell:	Sweat and woodsmoke.

Resources

Salvage:	Mechanical Drake Wing, Taloned Boot
Specimens:	Alchemical Flame-Gut, Heartwood
Whispers:	That's Not How That Works, Misinterpreted

Aspects

On The Wing: Each Aviary Drake creates a wingsuit for themselves as part of their initiation, mechanically complex and alarmingly fragile. Aviary Drakes are weak to all types of damage... Except Flame, which they resist.

Breathing Fire: While the taloned boots and gloves of these buccaneers deal CQ Keen damage, the true threat is their alchemically augmented stomachs and throats; drakes have overcome the usual (and sensible) fear of flame that pervades the wilds, and can breathe gouts of liquid fire that deal medium to heavy LR Flame damage. *This is exactly as dangerous as it sounds - including the Aviary Drakes as a threat has the capacity to cause chaos in an area in the way that even leviathans rarely manage.*

Treeside Motte (Location)

Located: Atop the knots of partially charred tallshank trunks
Construction Style: A mixture of styles taken from across the waves, but always and exclusively in wood

There's definitely been some miscommunication somewhere down the line, but nobody can fault the Drakes for their eagerness. The palatial structures they use as home bases (added to throughout the years, and occasionally rebuilt when parts of them burn down) have an air of the birdhouse to them, but are no less impressive for it.

Treasure Vaults (Feature)

Overflowing with stolen valuables of all kinds, but truly constructed to hold what the Drakes desperately try to convince themselves is the truest source of nourishment - gold. *The members of the Aviary Drakes do actually drink molten gold from time to time, though only as part of initiation rituals and certain post-piratical celebrations. Without the aid of their overworked alchemists, the practice would almost certainly kill them.*

The Flame-Gut Workshops (Feature)

Alchemically augmented organs stolen and adapted from numerous wildsea beasts, every Drake has a flame-gut replacing their own stomach (or adding an entirely original stomach for those bloodlines that have no need of one). *Drake flames are fuelled by heartwood mined from the tallshanks they live upon, catalyzed with processed crezzerin.*

The Givers In Green

[Gang] Patient, Opportunistic Gardeners

When most wildsailors think of marauders, they envision loud and violent robbers with an aversion to hygiene. The last thing they expect is a welcome banquet set on fine tables by kindly hosts. The Givers in Green take no interest in pre-verdant salvage or leviathan trophies. They seek instead to nurture new or otherwise potent forms of fruit and flower by sowing their seeds in the hardy and unique bodies of the sea's many bloodlines. This is most often accomplished through ingestion—during a Feast of Good Harvest—but can sometimes take the form of a bracelet tied a tad too tightly, or a fine powder blown in the face during a Blessing of Fair Winds. *Use the Givers in Green when you want an innocuous meeting to blossom into something terrible over time.*

Drives

Play Host to Good Hosts: The Givers genuinely value their guests—as much as one values expensive potting soil—and will travel great distances for a chance to harvest from a rarer medium such as an amberclad or an aloe-presenting ektus.

Reap What You Sow: A seedling which withers or escapes with the wildsailor it's growing in is a growth cycle wasted. The Givers in Green will doggedly pursue the fruit of their labor, and refuse to plant anew until they're certain harvesting has become a lost cause.

Presence

Sight:	An elegantly furnished ship covered in ivy, vibrant with fruits and blooms.
Sound:	Tree shanties and the rustle of sickle-cut stalks.
Smell:	Citrus, lavender, honey, and engine-seared meat.

Resources

Salvage:	Burlap Seed Sack
Specimens:	Blood Lily, Bone Wood, Pomheartgranate
Whispers:	Give and Take, Personal Growth
Charts:	Cherry-Picked Route, A Plotted Plant

Aspects

Careful Cultivation: Until a Giver's chosen host is ripe for harvest, they will go out of their way to ensure the crewmember's safety and encourage ideal growing conditions. A wildsailor might notice that a Giver always leads them into direct sunlight while enjoying their hospitality, for example.

Tide Dyed Vestements: "Green" doesn't begin to truly describe these mesmeric cloaks, which mimic the many rolling shades of the thrash and the soothing sway of its branches. Crew members are likely to suffer cut when trying to attack the Givers in Green directly or perceive them among the waves.

In Sharp Supply: Whether it's a sickle, scythe, or shear-sword; they all are designed for clean cuts dealing CQ Keen damage.

Quirks

Goliath Strain: The Givers in Green are trying to foster a particularly large plant, possibly even a leviathan like the Orchid Scar. To do so, they need to sow a lot of people and keep them in the same place.

It was the kind of night that stirred thoughts of campfires in the huddled crew, despite most of them never having seen one before. They held each other close with the half-deflated gasbag as a windbreak, and waited for the dawn to break.

"I heard they live 'round these parts. If you can call it living, that is." Those had definitely been words, but nobody would admit to being the one that let them free.

The wind howled like a mother. The eastern sky sat resolutely dark.

There was a chuckle from somewhere close by, and a shift in the gasbag's heaped fabric that had nothing to do with nature. A hiss, and a clank, or was that something imagined?

At dawn they'd fix the tears and rise again, brave and skyward, high above the rustling waves. But for now, in the high darkness of a shattered mountainside, they waited.

And thought about survivors.

Ancient Survivors

[Medium] Marauders Entombed, Tangled Up in Wild Fear and Ceaseless Precaution

There are words on the waves that are rarely used - the names of certain deeps-dwelling leviathans, descriptors for the smell of a pinwolf's bile, the precepts of the manticore-bloom's religion. All rare words, but perhaps none so rare on the lignin tide than one of deceptive simplicity: human.

There are rumours, obviously, that some humans survived the Verdancy unchanged, but the omnipresence (and strident denials) of the ardent and ketra combined keep them whispered and querulous. Because if they had survived, where would they be? How would they fare, unadapted to a world of spores and beasts and crezzer-tinged sicknesses?

Poorly... Unless they were removed from the waves entirely.

The ancient survivors operate much like a band of piratical marauders, swooping down from the skies in iron-hulled airships to engage with and overwhelm their foes before making off with whatever they can. For an unwary crew, the first sign of their arrival will be the heavy thudding of boots on deck, the click and whirr of tightly wound crosscannons. Facing off with the survivors is a daunting proposition, their pressure suits - worn at all times thanks to their human biology's complete inability to cope with the wild environment of the waves - offering superior protection against the usual scrap-and-bravado weaponry of the seas. *Use ancient survivors if you want the crew to come face to face (or rather, face to visor) with the visage of humanity's lost past.*

Presence - Suited

Sight:	Armoured figures, not an inch of skin exposed. Glass masks and curling hoses. Tanks of high-altitude air.
Sound:	Muffled shouts in a language almost Chthonic. Stamping feet. The ratcheting click of tension weapons.
Touch:	Hands gloved in cold metal, surfaces slick from chemical cleaning agents.

Presence - Unsuited

Sight:	Skin untouched by sun, eye blinking in the light, slick gelatinous preservatives sloughing free.
Sound:	Wails of fear, most likely.
Smell:	Strong, chemical, in some undefinable way essentially pre-verdant.

Resources

Salvage:	Crosscannon Bolts, Pressure-Suit Plating, Rubberized Hoses, True Glass Visor, Pre-V Iron
Whispers:	A Dying Ember, Faces Forgotten, High and Dry

Aspects

Crosscannons: Tension weapons loaded with multiple steel bolts, crosscannons fire their projectiles in devastatingly wide arcs, though luckily not with much range. Deal CQ Spike damage to multiple targets at once.

Entombed: An ancient survivor's pressure suit is designed to keep everything at sea level out, no matter the level of discomfort. They're bulky and awkward to move around in, but decrease the impact of all incoming damage types with the exception of Salt.

Quirks

Naked Humanity: Denied their suit, an ancient survivor is particularly weak to Toxin and Flame damage, and instantly (some would say monstrously) affected by any crezzer-type contamination they come into contact with.

Pressure Wash: An ancient survivor airship hovers over the area, spurting out gouts of 'cleansing' liquids that burn skin and dim vision (dealing Toxin or Acid damage to anyone caught in the deluge). The survivors themselves are completely unaffected.

Hooks & Encounters

Drifting Airship: At the highest reaches of where the crew's own airship can fly, there's a craft of unfamiliar design - all gleaming metal and well-worked wood, with a propulsion system that not even the most experienced aeronauts can recognise. There are hints of movement inside, but no outward signalling - what could have gone wrong with the craft, or the isolationist individuals inhabiting it?

Falling Star: Fires rage at the impact site of a ship's meteoric descent, with suited figures trying desperately to put the flames out before they spread. They seem unused to the waves, unsure of their footing, and some fall clumsily eavesward even as you watch - they could definitely use some help.

First Contact: The port thrums with rumours - aeronauts with suits like divers have landed, bringing exotic goods and an armful of unanswered questions. They're willing to barter, but they seem to want something in particular...

Medium Encounter - Language Barrier

A single suited figure found alone on a sinking spit, but is rescue even possible? The first two boxes of the track act as a timer - can the crew make themselves understood with no shared language to speak of, before the miscommunications drive the figure to hostile or defensive action? Post-break, the boxes might be to aid the figure in escaping the spit or fighting them off, as they employ their pistol and suit in a doomed attempt to attack their would-be saviours.

Hard Encounter - Protocol

A small squad of ancient survivors hit the deck of your airship boots-first. Pre-break they fight normally, but when their break point is reached, one of them attaches a timed explosive device to your outer hull as they're pulled back to their own vessel. The countdown begins.

Wandering Spirits

One of the four core dangers of the depths, the options below describe some of the possible mechanical effects of wandering spirits on both ship and crew, and the form the hazard might take to inflict them. *These effects are perfect for acting as a mild challenge during a journey through the depths on their own, or for acting as the backdrop for a more complex encounter with another hazard.*

Aspect Damage

Spirits consigned to the purgatory of the depths are rarely full of joy, and are likely to set upon the living with spectral weaponry and auras of grave-like cold.

Lasting Injuries

A haunting that leaves a sailor vulnerable to cruel words and unexpected visions, or damage directly to the exposed soul of an ironbound.

Resource Corruption

Death brings death, so any living resource might desiccate or spoil, but mischief is a far greater danger (and one much harder to predict) - charts might be altered by phantasmal hands, and whispers plucked from unguarded minds only to be forced into others.

Mire Infliction

Perhaps the scrape and scrabble of spectral claws on the outer hull, or the face at the porthole that echoes childhood nightmares...

Ratings Damage

While some spirits are barely tangible, little more than mist, others are corporeal enough to tear parts from a ship they see as a threat to their unlife.

Additional Cut

Playful tugs from hidden hands when precise work is needed, or a tangling of sleeves when a weapon is swung.

Lowered Impact

It's difficult to be truly effective when an invisible presence is working against you.

Temporary Weakness

Likely linked to whatever damage caused the death of a particular spirit, an echo of mortal injury.

Illnesses

More of a danger in the depths than the skies, most illnesses are more of a lasting annoyance than a true threat... Though assuming a benign nature has been the end of more than one promising wildsailor.

High Illnesses in Play

Star-sickness is the most famous illness unique to the wild blue, and at least a portion of that fame comes from the lack of competition. The skies are one of the safest places on the wildsea when it comes to infections and parasites, with the vast open spaces reducing the opportunities aeronauts have of coming into contact with dangerous materials.

Low Illnesses in Play

The concentration of crezzerin in the depths sears skin and brings mutation, but it's far from the only vector of infection or change - insect-borne parasites, patches of bad air, inhaled spores, and the touch of wandering spirits can all leave lasting effects that manifest, or are at least treated like, illnesses.

Rinworm

A rare side-effect of crezzerin contamination that only affects wildsailors with some kind of internal skeleton. Rinworm manifests as bouts of intense pain and unexpected muscle spasms, as one or more smaller bones detach themselves from their neighbours and go questing through the body at will. *The surest cure for rinworm is to remove the offending bone surgically, usually requiring a replacement to be inserted in its original location.*

Ribbon Scars

An arconautic injury most often suffered by careless ravellers, causing flesh and hair to adhere strongly to cloth and other clothing. Rough movements tend to tear the stuck clothes, leaving 'ribbons' of material stuck to the skin that are extremely difficult to completely remove. *Untreated ribbon scars are only a mild annoyance most of the time, but they do tend to catch the attention of Watchful Eyes (which might increase cut on any action under the effects of Scrutiny).*

The Rasp

Contracted after prolonged episodes of breathing bad or tainted air, it does nothing more than turn every breath into a loud, laboured rasp. *While it definitely won't kill you, it renders effective stealth more difficult and makes it more likely that predators that hunt by sound will seek you out.*

Lambskin

An affliction that softens the skin, whether it's flesh, vegetable, fungal, or chitinous (ironbound are thankfully immune, and ketra suffering from lambskin rarely even notice). *Lambskin does no damage on its own, but decreases a sailor's immunities and resistances by one step each. It doesn't however, affect existing weaknesses or create any new ones.*

Labyrinth Lobo

Most often developing in dredgers and divers operating at great depth, the sickness begins as a preoccupation with the path not taken, and grows into a complete inability to choose when presented with multiple unknown directions. *The short-term treatment for labyrinth lobo is easy - closing your eyes (or otherwise deadening any visual senses) allows for the making of choices without seeing what else might have been on offer. Longer-term treatments and true cures often have an element of confronting uncomfortable decisions.*

Scurvy

For a wildsailor or diver to develop scurvy is almost unheard of, as the one thing that the waves offer in abundance (besides danger) is fresh produce. But for aeronauts, fresh food can be much harder to find on long journeys where landing would be difficult, and one of the oldest sailing curses rears its ugly head. *Scurvy manifests as a depressing lethargy in the early stages but, if left to develop, can lower the impact on almost any action a sufferer takes and impose cut on rolls made to heal other injuries.*

Mane of Quills

A simple outcome for a mysterious disease, a patient's beard and hair twists and hardens into porcupine-like quills. *Though nobody has worked out the source or true cure of the condition, some more martially inclined sufferers treat it as a benefit by using their quills as a weapon or defence.*

Chirurgic Embrace

Healing Isn't Always Healthy

Carried by mosquitos or contracted by using tainted medical supplies, the embrace feels very much like a boon... Until the screaming begins. *Use chirurgic embrace to heal a member of the crew, and then subject then to far more 'recovery' than they were expecting.*

Presence

Sight:	A scar quickly fading. A fluttering of dried leaves. A slow flexing of old bone. Blood from leather.
Smell:	Antiseptic and fresh blood.
Sound:	Ominous silence, then terrified yells.

Resources

Specimens:	Any existing resources may gain the Revenant of Screaming tag
Whispers:	Taking Things Too Far, Beyond Skin Deep

Aspects

Welcome Healing: The chirurgic embrace should start life as a secret track, with the sufferer clearing a mark of damage from a trait or healing a mark from an injury whenever it's marked (usually after sleep or a good meal). When the sufferer's traits and injuries are fully healed, however, the track should be revealed - from that point on, every mark made on it corrupts one of their specimens with the Revenant or Screaming tag (as they 'heal' back to a form of grisly half-life) or burns a box on some of their gear (as furs writhe and old bone gains marrow and flesh).

The Horror: The process of animal parts and old bones unexpectedly growing flesh or spurting blood is, as you might imagine, worthy of mire for most observers.

Quirks

That Dragon: Some strains of the chirurgic embrace are even more aggressive, burning boxes on entirely healed traits as they force the body to mutate in the same way an overdose of crezzerin might.

Healthy Separation: Depending on the tone of your game, companions may be entirely unaffected by the embrace (even if their owner is suffering).

Tagra's Clutch

The Grip of the Storm that Wasn't

An arconautic infection that manifests itself as a slow change to both ship and crew, caused and worsened by increasing proximity to the living storm, Tagra's Clutching Hand. The storm itself affects the world just like any other would, even in the absence of cloud or rain, but it's the sickness that surrounds it that slowly makes sufferers aware of the thing's true nature. *Use Tagra's clutch to bring ship and crew closer and closer to the substorm, the absent rain, the silent howl.*

Presence

Sight: The word Tagra, scrawled in notebooks and on the margins of maps and in the dust of a window, in script nobody can quite identify, but that everyone can somehow read. Raindrops spotting surfaces, blotting paper, but never seen in the air.

Smell: Rain on the wind from a cloudless sky.

Sound: Tagra, a word on the breeze. Tagra, in the ticking of a pocket watch. Tagra, in crackle of unseen lightning.

Resources

Specimens: Not Quite Water, Tagrapedes

Whispers: There Should Be Thunder, Words on a Page

Aspects

Everything is Tagra: What in god's name is a Tagra? Nobody seems to know, but the word crops up more and more the closer the crew come to the storm. In reality, the living storm known as Tagra's Clutching Hand manifests as the thrashing of leaves and branches, the feeling of rain on skin, all coming from a cloudless sky on a sunny day.

Pulled Into The Malestrom: Once the infection has advanced far enough, either ship, crew, or both are pulled into a pseudoreality, a version of the world where an endless storm has eaten the world. Driving rain and screaming wind impose cut on actions made to fight or manoeuvre out on the deck, lightning and the following peals of thunder deal a combination of high impact Volt, Blast, and Blunt damage, and until the crew can figure out a way to shake the infection (through clever alchemy, through challenging the suddenly visible storm, or through other inventive means) mire will slowly increase.

Quirks

The Wolves of Tagra: Driven by the winds in the aftermath of thunder, the 'wolves' are a collection of scrap and debris from nearby ports that have been destroyed by the storm. They range across the storm-beaten waves, attacking anything they find that might be broken down to add to their own mass. The wolves deal CQ Keen and Blunt damage in combat, but their scrapyard forms come apart easily enough from even the slightest damage (though will reform when the thunder comes round again).

Star-Sickness

Can't Win Either Way, It Seems

A condition most often suffered by the kosmer satellite-dwellers, but that can affect any aeronaut that spends enough time aloft at night. Star-sickness, paradoxically, seems to manifest the most heavily in those that *avoid* the gaze of the stars, and rather cruelly affects their crewmates more than it does their own body. *Use star-sickness to drive home the danger of Scrutiny to incautious and over-cautious aeronauts alike.*

Presence

Sight: Polyps that glow as the sun sets.

Smell: Burning tin, a smell so unfamiliar most won't be able to place it.

Feeling: A sense of emptiness and hunger radiating from a friend.

Resources

Specimens: Night-Sky Polyp, Starbuncle

Whispers: Unwavering Attention, Eyes In Uncertain Places

Aspects

Heaven's Gaze: The polyps that develop on a sufferer's skin, known colloquially as 'starbuncles', don't just glow - they *observe*. Any crew taking actions within sight of these starbuncles at height increase the amount of cut by one when they would be affected by Scrutiny.

Soft Glow: A benefit in the right situation, the polyps cast a soft starlight as soon as the sun begins to set that lasts until dawn.

Aura of Hunger: While one infected with star-sickness typically has an entirely normal appetite, other crewmates feel compelled to consume more than usual in their presence.

Quirks

Burnout: A rare but devastating side effect that causes a polyp to burst unexpectedly, dealing CQ Flame damage to both the sufferer and anyone caught in the blast radius.

Medium Encounter - Albatross

A flying creature, which may very well be an actual albatross, has decided to roost somewhere hard-to-reach on the crew's airship. It's afflicted with star-sickness, and though it proves mostly harmless during the day, it dramatically increases the danger of working or fighting out on deck during the night hours. The boxes leading up to the first break are marked every time it affects a roll by adding cut under the effects of Scrutiny, but once the break is reached it enters a state of burnout, driven mad with pain and spreading small fires around the vessel as the crew inevitably attempt to chase it off or capture it.

The Siren's Call

Spread By Tragic Remnants, Long-Abandoned

Even for those that prepare as well as they can, that take every sensible precaution for a delve beneath the tangle, the reality of pressure is impossible to truly anticipate. For some crews it's a sense of unease that worsens the deeper they travel, for others a creak in the ship's structure that becomes a scream of twisting metal or groan of splintering wood, for yet others an oppressive silence, or a familiar face where it couldn't possibly be, or the scrabbling of malformed claws at the window...

And for some, the unluckiest few, it's a yawning call that's impossible to ignore - a sense of *belonging*.

It lodges in the ear and the throat and the brain. It twists bones, sizzles sap, and ushers crezzerin into the secret spaces of the heart.

Sometimes a diver will stopper their ears, or knock themselves senseless and rely on their companions to drag them back or lash them down. Such individuals return to the surface and rarely ever step foot on the deck of a ship again, let alone a submersible. They've heard the whispers in the dark - not even a call to the Under-Eaves, but something more vital, more insidious; the siren-sound of the choking, pressure-cooked shadows beneath. They're infected, but it's dormant, and they know how to avoid a resurgence.

But more often they'll be claimed by the waves, either fighting through their bemused and horrified companions or, in the worst cases, urged on or joined by them. The siren's call takes hold quickly and they give in to the pressure, becoming a part of the ecosystem they were only ever meant to dip into... a delve-siren. *Use the siren's call if you want the crew to battle their own survival instincts and their fellow sailors in a doomed rush for the depths... Or use a fully infected delve-siren as a cautionary tale of what happens when pressure gets too great, either in the form of a lone, twisted individual, or an entire depths-warped crew.*

Presence - The Call

Sound:	A murmur through the branches that rises to an insistent, beckoning roar. A symphony of inviting madness that makes far too much sense.
Feeling:	That you're heading home for the first time.

Presence - Delve-Sirens

Sight:	Forms once-familiar that now shamble, or slither, or brachiate. Pressure suits split open to the cruelty of the depths. Sheared tubing that writhes like tendrils. Shards of amberglass, once visors, now teeth. A looming vessel in the darkness, disgorging figures from burst hatches.
Sound:	Cries, sobs, howls, song... Each delve-siren spreads the call in their own way, but none are ever silent.

Resources

Salvage:	Cracked Suit Plating, Shattered Visor, Flaking Tubing
Specimens:	Mutable Flesh, Overgrown Flowers, Warped Bone, Twitching Ocular Bud
Whispers:	Call From The Depths, Darkly Irresistible
Charts:	A Transcribed Set of Dying Words

Aspects

Rapid Progression: Though the call itself grows slowly over time, coming into contact with a delve-siren allows it to be heard clearly and immediately, without the insulator of distance or misunderstanding. A sailor that hears the call directly from another siren has only moments to react before their urge for the depths becomes overwhelming. Deafening themselves might be effective, and tying themselves down or otherwise restraining themselves can help them ride the initial impulse out. Resisting the call becomes easier with time, and sailors that have faced delve-sirens on several occasions might even be entirely unaffected by it.

Undying Elite: Killing a fully infected delve-siren is possible... but rarely without forethought, huge amounts of luck, and the direct and repeated application of massive damage. It's not that they have any particular resistances, more that they mutate and heal almost instantly when dealt any damage of normal, or even high, impact. Strategy tracks made for a delve-siren encounter should be filled through a concerted effort to trap, flee, or entirely crush and dismember them...

Or, for the sake of being sure...

Burn them. A delve-siren's only traditional weakness is to Flame.

Decompression: The only point of hope in many siren encounters is that they never willingly leave the sink or drown. Ascending to the tangle causes them to undergo hideous decompression, and by the time they would reach the thrash, their corpse would be almost unrecognizable as ever being one of the wildsea's bloodlines.

The Body Is a Weapon: Every part of a sufferer of the call mutates into something that might give them an advantage in the depths - extra limbs, mouths, and claws are common, and the clothes and gear they were carrying when they gave into the call will have changed along with them. Delve-sirens can deal medium to heavy Blunt, Keen, Spike, Serrated, Hewing, Toxin, or Acid damage as a matter of course, at CQ or LR.

Back From The Brink

Many give themselves over to the call, and it's only the rarest few whose crews recover them from the darkness of the underthrash before they've had time to turn into a delve-siren. Even then they're marked forever, changed into something not quite of themselves - avatars of what might have been, in the endless night of the deeps.

Siren's Touch 3-Track Complex Trait

You've come back from the brink, but are forever changed by the depths. When you choose Siren's Touch as an aspect, it gains **two benefits** of your choice from the following list...

- **New Maw**: You sport a new mouth with gnashing teeth, in a place where a mouth would never usually be. You can deal CQ Spike damage, and are immune to the effects of ingested crezzerin.
- **Flesh Petals**: Not the most wholesome form of defence, but an effective one. You gain resistance to all types of damage dealt by hazards native to the sink and drown.
- **One With The Suit**: The diving suit you wore has melded with the rest of your body. You are immune to Blast damage, and resist the effects of bad air.
- **Overgrowth**: Your body has split, bulked out, and lengthened in unusual ways. Ignore cut on actions taken to move through the underthrash, and treat all CQ damage types you can deal as if they were CQ or LR.

And **one drawback**...

- **Sun-Shy**: You're weak to all types of damage when in direct sunlight.
- **Bulked Up**: Cut when attempting movement-based actions requiring stealth or precision.
- **Drawn to the Dark**: Whenever you or a member of your crew gets the Nature result from a watch roll, the Firefly makes two threat rolls and takes the worse outcome as the result.

Leviathans

Many cartographers add leviathan activity to their maps, as even when the beasts have moved on, it can be useful for others to know where they've been. This is harder in the skies, as mapping the heavens is a troubling prospect at the best of times... And impossible in the depths, as the density of leviathan and protoleviathan activity would make such documents too confusing (and potentially too terrifying) to use.

Leviathans of the Heights in Play

Aerial leviathans aren't common in the wild blue, owing to the enormous amount of energy it takes to get any creature above a certain weight into the air. Far more of a danger are goliaths of the wavetops that can operate among the clouds for short bursts, or creatures and spirits that have evolved or lucked into some sort of adaptation that grants them movement untethered from gravity. Protoleviathans, on the other hand, are far more common - still large enough to pose a serious threat to a ship, but not enough that they tire themselves out merely by trying to exist.

Leviathans of the Depths in Play

The underthrash acts as a natural habitat for the majority of leviathans, with interlocking branches large enough to support them in both movement and rest, an element of isolation from the hunters of the waves far above, and countless nearby food sources. The unfortunate outcome of this is that when a submersible delves deeper, it is by default entering territory that has already been claimed by threats far larger than most could reasonably handle.

Luckily, the leviathans of the depths aren't on constant watch for intruders, especially not those wrapped in anything as blandly flavoured as a submersible's hull and pressure shell. It's the benefit of the deeps; everything down there may be a potential threat to a sailor, but many of them are threats to each other as well. The pyramids of predator, prey, and opportunist are ever-shifting in the crushing depths, and while leviathans are often near the top of them, even those lofty positions are subject to change.

The Mangrove

[Leviathan Ironroot] Clutching At Lost Lives

Thankfully immobile, but no less dangerous for it. One might mistake the Mangrove for an ironroot like any other at wave level, branches laden with wrinkled white fruit hanging among wan green leaves, perhaps holding a particularly tempting-looking wreck. Delving beneath the canopy reveals the truth of the Mangrove - bark studded with bodies, their corpses first feeding the trunk, then integrated directly into it. It feasts on wavewalkers and fruit pickers, and some of the still-moving remains wear the tatters of clothing a century out of date.

The relatively safe crown of the Mangrove spreads for miles, sometimes overgrown by other, less predatory trees, other times completely exposed. While the leviathan itself is almost impossible to *defeat* in any traditional sense, these upper branches can be sawn through to reduce its area of influence. *Use the Mangrove if you want crews to face a massive but non-traditional leviathan, one that only poses a danger to those that choose to draw close enough to engage with it.*

Drives

Supplemental Nourishment: It's theorized that the Mangrove's roots don't draw enough from the churned earth of the Eaves, driving the tree to turn to more predatory tactics over the years.

Presence

Sight:	Olive-coloured leaves that rustle against the breeze, pale withered fruit, grasping hands and ratcheting mouths.
Sound:	A low moan from below the wavetops.
Smell:	Putrefaction, above all else.

Resources

Salvage:	Twisted Axe, Blunted Saw
Specimens:	Broken Mangrove Branch, Hungry Bark, Mangrove Fruit
Whispers:	Inefficient Roots, A Hunger for Sailors, Shank and Shank
Charts:	Page of Transcribed Murmurs
Cargo:	Sarcophagus Timber, Mangrove 'Survivor'

Aspects

Leviathan Crown: The Mangrove is a true leviathan (treating incoming massive damage as normal damage), but it's also an ironroot - it can't be 'beaten back' or forced to flee, it's rooted to the darkness of the Under-Eaves. In addition, the Mangrove is completely immune to Toxin and Salt damage, but the upper portions and the corpses it collects may be weak to Hewing, Serrated, and Flame damage.

Grasping Limbs: The Mangrove attacks with the corpses of those it has integrated, dealing different damage and effects depending on the biology of the unfortunates caught within it. *Instead of the usual Quirks section, the Bodies section below gives multiple options for attack.*

Bodies

Ardent: Scrabbling and keening, ardent bodies lash out with the weapons they were clutching when they died. Their vocalizations cause mire, and their attacks usually deal CQ Keen, Blunt, or Serrated damage.

Ektus: Incorporated ektus become an integral part of the Mangrove's sensory network, iris blossoms acting as keen visual input and spines softening into antennae.

Gau: When caught by the Mangrove, a gau's fungal nature runs rampant, causing it to stretch and skew in disgusting ways. These corpulent masses release a steady stream of mind-altering spores.

Ironbound: Though their bodies are trapped, maddened ironbound souls lash out to deal CQ or LR Salt damage.

Itzenko: Morbid bombs of chitin, incorporated itzenko rest peacefully until a threat to the Mangrove draws near. The ensuing biological explosion deals heavy Keen or Spike damage, with fragments lodging in victims to leave lasting injuries.

Ketra: The gelatinous mass that makes up a ketra's body reaches out far further than would normally be possible, allowing for LR Blunt and Acid attacks.

Mothryn: Unlike all other widespread bloodlines, the mothryn are safe from absorption by the Mangrove. Not from attack, though.

Tzelicrae: Mangrove bark doesn't keep spiders well, but if it traps enough of them, it can incorporate an entire hive mind. These still-mobile swarms scuttle around wildly, distracting foes and biting for CQ Toxin damage.

It started with figures drifting through the mists.

... Or perhaps it started so much earlier than that.

Perhaps it was when the mists rolled in, the cloying damp that seemed to bring the stench of the sink, overpowering the dawn's light and strangling cries of fear and reassurance alike.

Perhaps it was the distant horn, cutting through that same mist, the only sound ringing clear. A warning, a signal, something darker... The undercrew had debated it over bombardier-steamed rice that went sour between bowl and mouth.

Perhaps it was the life of the waves, or the lack of it. The springfoxes that had danced like dolphins in the ship's wake falling behind, replaced by masses of dog-sized woodlice scuttling over each other in a confusion of shell.

But however it started, the figures were there now - drifting, silent, and closer every day.

The Raahe

[Leviathan Mawship] An absence of hunger, a proliferation of loneliness

Mawships are known for their appetites as much as their brutality, their hunger for a crew to replace the sailors they've lost. It's a fundamental facet of them, one of the few elements of their existence that is truly understood.

But, as is the way of the wilds, there are exceptions to every rule.

The Raahe was a triumph - a battleship designed to spend years out upon the rustling waves, so heavy and large that the base of the hull cut deep through the tangle, almost kissing the sink. It had a crew of hundreds, ardent and ektus and ketra and more; they'd been a rootless fleet-family, once, but ambition and desire had pulled them closer and closer together until a single ship seemed so much more sensible than a collection of smaller vessels.

And it worked, for a time. It worked well. The Raahe was large enough to fend off leviathans, stacked with enough stored food to survive the winters without making port, and imposing enought that even the most ambitious pirate factions turned tail and fled when it entered their territory. It had taken years to build, and many more years of trading and material-gathering to fund but, in its finished state, it was truly a marvel.

There are conflicting theories about what precisely led to the ship's downfall, some of them more credible than others. Divers speculate that the Raahe's experimentation with dipping deeper and deeper into the waves as it travelled let something take root in the ship, or the crew - a siren's call, perhaps. Mesmers speak of the mists that the ship brings with it, and where those mists might have originated, and the waking dreams it might bring. Other rootless fleet-families insist that it's the natural outcome of forgetting the value of self-determinism, of distance-and-closeness combined. Rattlehands click their tongues, if they have them, and speak of the folly of building at titanic proportions and not regulating for the emergence of intelligence.

Whichever theory is correct, the outcome is not in question. At some point, fifty or so years ago, the highest smokestacks of the Raahe sank below the thrash, and it took years for the ship to emerge again. And once it did...

Well, there are worse things than being lost at sea.

Use the Raahe if you want the crew to face a leviathan that has no interest in hurting them (more than it has to, anyway), but will instead attempt to abduct and integrate them into itself. One driven not to destroy, but to collect.

Drives

Add to the Family: It's not a hunger for replacement crew that drives the Raahe, but for additions to the crew it already cares for (though the standard of that care is very much in question). It seeks new life, hot blood, fresh souls, and the sailors it already keeps are as eager for them as the ship itself.

Presence

Sight:	A hulk looming through the mists, crashing inexorably through branches and trunks and small settlements as it seeks out your ship. The crew, dressed for diving, floating limp through the air around the ship, connected by ancient air-hoses. Crawling woodlice filling the wavetops, brought up from the sink.
Smell:	A cold, seeping damp. Rotten food stores. The sour note of dried crezzerin.
Sound:	The Raahe's foghorn, blaring a call (or a warning, if you want to be charitable). Silence from the hanging crew, though speakers of Old Hand may be able to distinguish the occasional pleading word.
Touch:	Slick mist leaving every surface slippery and turning each breath into a gulp of the depths. An unnatural cold, no matter the season.

Resources

Specimens: Rotten Meal, Woodlouse Shell, Bottle of Chill Mists
Salvage: Corroded Suit Parts, Raahe Steel
Whispers: The Family Unit, The Last Dive, Isolation's Chill, Shape in the Mists
Charts: A Raahe Journey Log, Mist-Delving Map
Cargo: Raahe Plating, Crate of Spoiled Supplies

Aspects

Fine-Forged Steel: The fleet-family sailors that pieced the Raahe together took advantage of the most modern construction techniques they could, travelling many reaches in search of the perfect materials and processes. Though it was once merely a ship, the Raahe now counts as a true leviathan: it treats incoming massive damage as normal damage. The outer hull is also completely immune to Keen, Blunt, Toxin, Frost, and Flame damage, regardless of impact.

The Mists: Though the ship itself can deal Massive Blunt damage as it makes progress through the waves, it doesn't usually actually attempt to attack the vessels it follows - unlike most mawships, it lets the crew still living within it handle such things. But the vessel does bring a freezing mist wherever it sails, spilling from a huge gash in the steel of the ship's starboard side. Exposure to these mists marks mire and deals increasing amounts of Frost damage to anyone not prepared for the cold, and drawing close to the body of the ship is likely to deal crezzerin-based Toxin damage as well.

The Horn & The Sink: Whether it intends to or not, the Raahe's foghorn tends to repel the creatures of the upper waves and beckon forth denizens of the sink, especially insects. These can sometimes be more of a problem for an escaping ship than the Raahe itself, as these swarms can sting and bite (causing CQ Toxin and Spike damage that's difficult to avoid) and tend to overrun ships, lodging themselves in exhaust ports and engine innards to the point where Saws and Speed ratings will be reduced until such blockages are cleared.

Quirks

Cage Turned Claw: If something does spur the Raahe to defend itself, such as a threat from another leviathan or severe structural damage, cage-like diving bells on the end of ropes and chains will spill from the same hole in the hull that the mists emerge from, flailing like tentacles. The snapping motions of these cages can deal high-impact CQ Keen or Serrated damage, and an unlucky wildsailor might be caught within one and pulled back toward the interior of the ship.

Giving Up: The Raahe pursues ships for days, but will almost always give up if that ship reaches a port. The reasoning here is unknown, especially given that it will sail straight through the middle of a spit when in pursuit of a fleeing target.

The Gentlefolk

[Medium Leviathan Attendants] Less than ghosts, more than a crew

Those that see the gentlefolk rarely forget it; they're haunted by images of figures drifting silently through the air, still wearing Raahe-branded pressure suits, of fingers flexing in the mists. They're not dead, the gentlefolk - there's no carrion stench, no hint of seeping soul. But they're not quite alive either, at least not in the way that they once were. *Use the gentlefolk if you want the crew to face a more personal threat when in the vicinity of the Raahe, once-proud fleet-families turned attendants to a lonely monstrosity.*

Drives

An Ending: To the cold. To the quiet. To everything.
Catch & Release: The gentlefolk will grapple with their targets, pulling them into the air and back towards the ship they're connected to.

Presence

Sight: Limp figures drawing closer. Hands opening and closing. Rubber umbilicals flexing unnaturally.
Sound: Nothing, until their oxygen tubes are cut.
Smell: Unsettling and impossible to place, but it brings the sink to mind.

Resources

Salvage: Raahe Diving Suit, Hose-Rubber
Whispers: A Ghost Would Be Better, Found Family

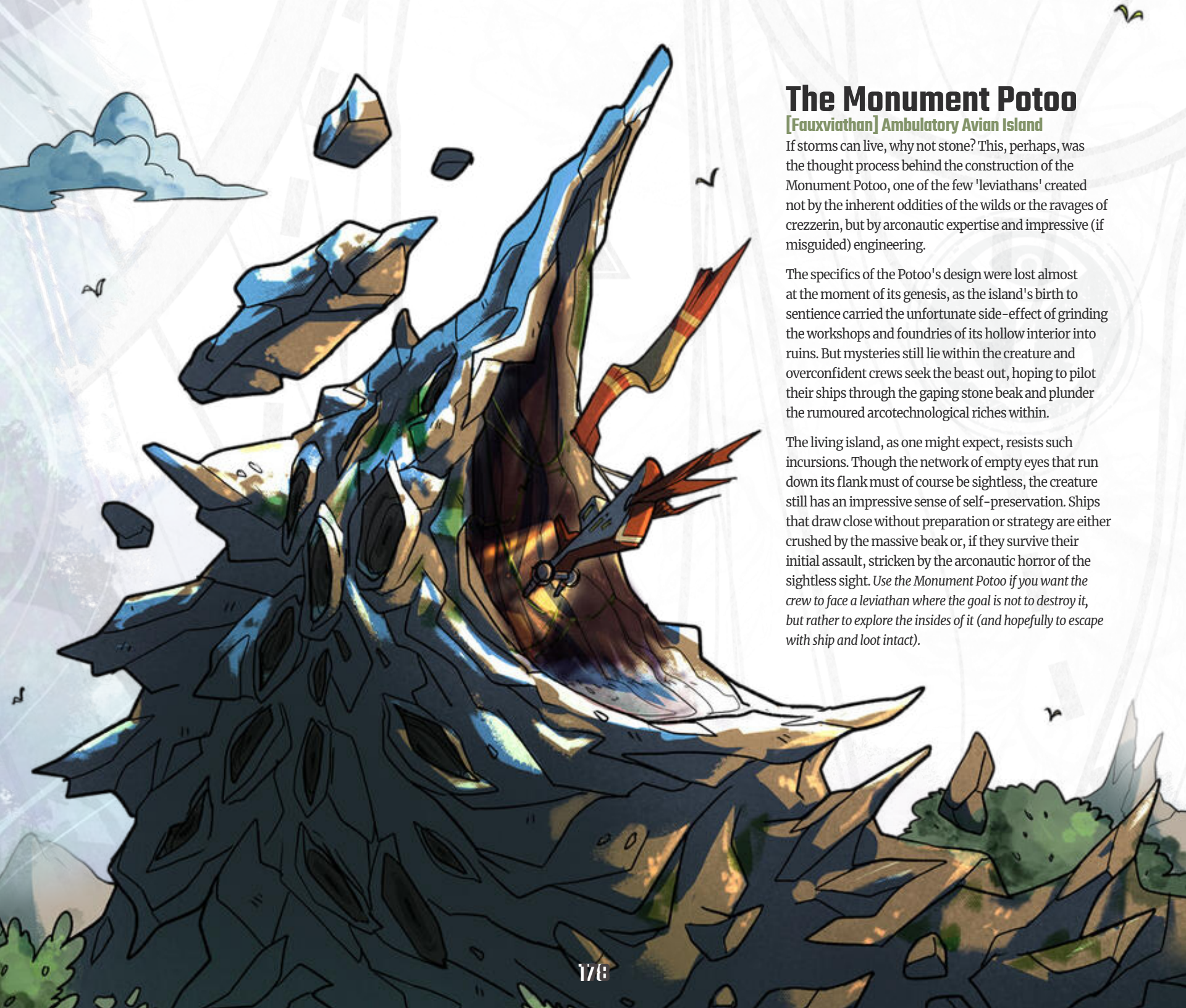
Aspects

Grasping Hands, Quiet Breath: The gentlefolk don't carry weapons, preferring to grab their targets and lift them into the air. But that doesn't leave them defenceless - if they're overwhelmed or restrained, they can open their pressure suit visors, releasing jets of freezing mist that deal CQ (or, for larger gentlefolk, LR) Frost damage. There are faces behind those visors, but they're pale and emotionless.

Umbilical Tubes: The only time you'll hear a sound from one of the gentlefolk is when one of the thick rubber tubes connecting them to the Raahe's distant deck is cut or broken. The resulting screams will almost definitely mark mire, but the gentlefolk affected will also drop like a stone, thrashing for a few seconds before going still.

Quirks

Last Gasp: One of the gentlefolk, their connection to the Raahe severed, regains (in the moments before their death) a fraction of their mind back, able to answer a few questions or pronounce a set of last words through chattering teeth.



The Monument Potoo

[Fauxviathan] Ambulatory Avian Island

If storms can live, why not stone? This, perhaps, was the thought process behind the construction of the Monument Potoo, one of the few 'leviathans' created not by the inherent oddities of the wilds or the ravages of crezzerin, but by arconautic expertise and impressive (if misguided) engineering.

The specifics of the Potoo's design were lost almost at the moment of its genesis, as the island's birth to sentience carried the unfortunate side-effect of grinding the workshops and foundries of its hollow interior into ruins. But mysteries still lie within the creature and overconfident crews seek the beast out, hoping to pilot their ships through the gaping stone beak and plunder the rumoured arcotechnological riches within.

The living island, as one might expect, resists such incursions. Though the network of empty eyes that run down its flank must of course be sightless, the creature still has an impressive sense of self-preservation. Ships that draw close without preparation or strategy are either crushed by the massive beak or, if they survive their initial assault, stricken by the arconautic horror of the sightless sight. *Use the Monument Potoo if you want the crew to face a leviathan where the goal is not to destroy it, but rather to explore the insides of it (and hopefully to escape with ship and loot intact).*

Drives

Hoard Old Secrets: Though the thought processes of the Monument Potoo are as inscrutable as one might expect from a beast of sentient stone, the practical outcome of its behaviour is clear. The Potoo's interior contains secrets, and it wishes to keep them that way. It keeps to itself where possible, dwelling beneath the canopy most of the time and moving from one sparsely inhabited locale to another.

Presence

Sight:	A rocky island shot through with oddly regular cave entrances. A moving mass of stone resembling a wide-mouthed bird. Bursts of steam or mist from empty eye-holes. A stone beak ten times the size of an average ship.
Sound:	The grinding of stone on stone. Hisses of escaping vapour. A small voice, perhaps, from deep within the interior...?
Taste:	Shards of the Potoo's hide taste... well, like stone. What would you expect?

Resources

Salvage:	Stone Chips, Shattered Engine, Ancient Piping, Wreck Fragments
Specimens:	Explorer's Bone, Shard of Stone-Soul
Whispers:	No Stone Unturned, Left to Devices, Silicate Soul, Not the Wisest Move
Cargo:	Chunk of Living Stone, Intact Engine, Ruined Genesis Technology

Aspects

Living Island: As a true leviathan (even if made artificially), the Monument Potoo reduces the impact of damage dealt against it, treating incoming massive damage as normal damage. In addition, the creature's stone hide is extremely resilient, **completely ignoring** any damage except for Blunt and Blast. Attacking the interior of the creature, or breaking off a section of the exterior stone, removes this additional restriction on effective damage types.

It Was An Island, Once: And perhaps it still is. While moving, the Potoo's avian shape can be clearly distinguished, but when at rest most would mistake the leviathan for a stone spit of some kind (though curiously free of vegetation and habitation).

Defensive Measures: The Monument Potoo is not a complex fighter - it grabs and smashes ships with its beak if they come close enough, dealing Massive CQ Blunt damage. It's actually more likely to flee approaching vessels than to stay and fight though, only turning on the most dogged pursuers.

Internal Workings: The engineers and stonemasons that worked on the Potoo's creation built their homes and workshops in caves within what would eventually become the creature. Though these caves now act as the Potoo's expansive stomach and the leviathan's movement has torn many of these structures to pieces, there are still many valuable arconautic and technological artefacts to be found throughout their ruins. Crews should be aware that the interior of the Monument Potoo is pitch black, except for those spots illuminated by light filtering in through the creature's empty eye sockets.

Sightless Sight

[Unique Arconautic Illness] Punishing Curiosity

You'll find them in the darker corners of junction-houses, or holed up in shadow-springs - wildsailors whose bodies are marked by eye-like indentations, some an inch deep, some that cut a path from one side of them to the other. These individuals have been cursed, though the term is imprecise, to suffer from the Monument Potoo's own uncanny defence mechanism. *Use the sightless sight as a hangover for players that get a bit too distracted while delving into the interior of the Monument Potoo, or those that obsess over finding it.*

Presence

Sight:	Yes. Far too much of it.

Resources

Whispers:	You Were Probably Warned

Aspects

Empty Eyes: The holes on a sufferer of the sightless sight act as eyes that can never be closed, making it almost impossible for those afflicted to sleep, focus on individual objects, or withstand bright lights without becoming overwhelmed. Most sufferers keep to dark places if possible, or try to bandage or otherwise cover these new 'eyes', but the effect is limited.

The Curse of Curiosity: Though this illness usually only manifests in those that have come into contact with the Potoo, occasionally those that delve too deeply into its mysteries (even from afar) or handle objects plundered from within it will catch a case of sightless sight.

Quirks

Curing Stone: There are rumours of a cure, involving living stone taken from the Potoo's floating crest and then shaped into cork-like stoppers. They are only rumours, though.

"It's still coming, sir!"

The captain cursed, scattering the stack of charts at his side with a sweep of his cactoid arm. The watcher that had called out cringed at the motion, but stayed firm at his post - they'd been awake and on the move for two days now, and the beast didn't seem like it was any closer to tiring now than when they'd started.

But their ship? That was a different story. They'd tried so much to escape - taken to the air only to have their gasbags torn to shreds by a flurry of talons, coaxed as much speed out of their engines as they could until the entire lower deck had to be evacuated thanks to dangerous chemical exhaust. Even delved down below the tangle, as unprepared as they were, before realizing it did nothing more than let the beast gain ground.

It was a race to port, and they were still a day away. It promised to be a long one. Or, in the worst case, a very short one indeed.

That Feral Roa

[Protoleviathan] Terror of the Lower Skies

Some leviathan-type entities earn their fame through sheer size, or through the oddities their presence brings. Not so That Feral Roa - barely large enough even to classify as a protoleviathan, the beast has nevertheless become the central figure in a huge host of stories, songs, and poems that concern themselves with the dangers of air travel. Why? Because the creature hunts ships not for food, but for sport - it is a creature possessed of genuine cruelty, with maddened, rolling eyes only seeming to gain focus and purpose when it has prey in its sights.

That Feral Roa is most often found bounding from branch to branch across the canopy of the wildsea, but more than one crew have lost their lives by thinking that it's limited by its size; though flight is difficult for it, the prospect of not bringing down a potential target spurs it into a wild spiral of flapping and screeching, allowing it to briefly but explosively corkscrew up into the lower skies to snatch ships as they make for the safety of the clouds. *Use That Feral Roa if you want the crew to face a leviathan small enough that they might be able to fend it off without preparation, but that will hunt them doggedly across the waves until finally dealt with.*

Drives

Single-Minded Fury: What has driven That Feral Roa into such a furious state? It's too crazed to sleep, to rest, running on a pure hatred of anything that dares enter its territory. And its territory, as far as anyone can tell, is any and everywhere it can see.

Presence

Sight: A bird the size of a battleship bearing down on a smaller vessel. Eyes full of desire for nothing more than destruction. Gouges in settlement walls and smashed jetties at worryingly empty ports.

Smell: Blood, musk, sweat, fury.

Resources

Specimens: Roa Feather, Discarded Remains

Whispers: Driven to Madness, Mire and Feathers

Aspects

Winged Protoleviathan: Lacking the size and defences of a true leviathan, protoleviathans reduce the impact of all damage they would take, but are still able to be harmed or beaten back with conventional weaponry and clever tactics. Taking one down is still a near-impossible task, however. That Feral Roa can also fly, though only low to the treetops - it's more likely to use a feather-scattering leap than a controlled glide to clear any kind of obstacle or gap.

Furious Talons, Screeching Beak: That Feral Roa is a straightforward attacker, using talons to slash and beak to spear and snap. It deals Massive CQ Keen or Hewing damage with most attacks, but wildsailors that allow it to draw too close are likely to be temporarily deafened by a screech powerful enough to deal LR Blast damage.

Single-Minded Pursuit: Once That Feral Roa has a ship in its sights, it takes a monumental effort to distract or dissuade it from the chase. If it catches its prey, it will tear it apart until nothing but shards and splinters remain, consuming anything living and thoroughly wrecking anything non-organic that remains.

Fire From the Sky: The exception to this comes in the form of storms and open flames, both of which will drive the beast back (at least for a time). It's theorized that this is one of the reasons the creature neglects to fly close to any clouds even when airborne, perhaps fearing the prospect of lightning or hidden fire. Whatever the reason, these innate fears are some of the few advantages a crew will be able to gain over the creature, and each already comes with its own risks.

Quirks

Canned Food: Every now and then That Feral Roa will attempt to attack a settlement rather than a ship, tearing the roofs off of dwellings to pluck out the screaming morsels inside. In such situations, the combined attempts of the populace will normally be enough to beat it back, but they'd have to deal some sort of grievous injury to the beast to keep it away for very long.

And Finally, Sleep: The Roa sleeps - it's a restless sleep, barely any quieter or calmer than it is when it's awake, but it's sleep nonetheless. As for what triggers this incredibly rare phenomenon, who can say?

You wake to the noise of gulls in the air, waves lapping at a stony shore, the sun dappling the form of your husband sleeping next to you. Your blankets are sewn with clouds, and the driftwood hanging above the fireplace casts a familiar shadow.

No.

This is wrong.

There's bacon in the pantry, and soon it'll be a morning of hot fat and fresh butter and soaking pans. The bread from the next village is a little too expensive for your liking, but you can't beat the smell of it warm from the oven, or the taste.

No.

You thrash wildly, gasping for air.

This is...

Relaxing, in a way. You won't have to head down to the docks until midday. Plenty of time to enjoy the warmth of bed and partner, both trusted, both reliable.

Neither yours.

You're drowning, twice over.

ISOMA

[Leviathan] Dreaming of a Long-Lost Sea

A pale-shelled isopod the size of a city, crawling endlessly and aimlessly through the pitch-black spaces between the thickest-branched portions of the ironroots. But unlike most leviathans, the most disruptive element of Isoma's travel isn't the creature itself (as large as it is), but the dream that it radiates. An old dream, a captured dream, a complex dream that could never belong to it - the dream of a sailor of ancient pre-branch seas, of the pre-Verdancy, of an ocean where wavelets and ripples catch the sun and birds fight for scraps of fish thrown by children on the sand.

It's a pleasant dream, at first - but as with most dreams, there are things lurking beneath the surface that threaten those that linger. Memories of what it's like to slip under the waves, or of anchor-rope coiled around an unwary limb, or of calling for a lover that can't hear you as they cross the horizon for the final time. And, stronger than anything else, water - water beneath, above, all around, and a delicious freedom and crushing pressure rolled into one.

Isoma carries this dream, replays it in a thousand variations. And those that draw close to it play their parts, if caught unawares, or fight to stay in reality if they're driven enough to try. *Use Isoma if you want the crew to experience something usually absent from the wilds - vast saltwater oceans, the ability to swim and, perhaps most importantly, a glimpse of the pre-verdant world - or, at least, one version of it, from one tiny seaside fishing village that may or may not have ever existed.*

Drives

Wait For the World to Come Round Again: Some believe in cycles, that one day the wilds will be washed away and salt and water and true tides will return. Perhaps Isoma believes this also. Perhaps it believes nothing. Perhaps it has forgotten how, or never cared to in the first place.

Presence

Dream: Salt. Water. Friendship. Loss. Love. Depth.

Resources

Specimens: Shell Fragments, Oceanic Amber
Whispers: The Old Salt Sea, Drowning in Memory
Cargo: Ambered Dream-Chunk

Aspects

Pale Shell: As a true leviathan, Isoma treats incoming massive damage as normal damage. In addition, it is completely immune to Flame and Blunt damage, regardless of impact, unless you're within or have somehow removed its shell.

Dragging the Past: Isoma doesn't care enough about most vessels to attack - or enough about anything in the wilds around it, for that matter. The real danger of the creature, aside from prodigious size (as it can deal massive CQ Blunt damage to ships and settlements merely by crawling over or through them), is the half-mile aura of tangible dream it drags around with it. Objects and individuals caught within this aura behave as though they were underwater, with the effect becoming more pronounced the closer to Isoma you get. *Note that there is no water - it's purely a shared dream. But a dream strong enough that, when within a couple of stone-throws of the creature, you'd be more effective swimming through the air than you would walking.*

A Dream of Drowning: Falling too deeply into the dream can convince your body that you're entirely submerged - or are you truly submerged, but the water itself is elsewhere? Whatever the truth, the fact of the matter is that the experience is both painful and inherently miring - medium-to-heavy Salt damage is appropriate, as are lasting injuries, and mire is almost inescapable from such an experience.

Quirks

A Fleeting Chance: Sometimes Isoma pauses, rests, and keeps the dream to itself. In these periods, usually only an hour or two and impossible to predict, an assault on the creature might be possible.

Pearlskull

[Protoleviathan] A Ketra Community Curse

Given the gelatinuous, driftwood-boned nature of the average ketra, it's easy to forget that they owe their existence to the same ancient human stock as the ardent. It's only thanks to the depths they developed in that their mammalian aspects receded, replaced with other, more suitable, adaptations. And for most ketra this old world human lineage is barely a footnote in their ancestral memory, a curiosity to ponder while idling hours away at a watch-post or dockside junction between voyages.

But for the pearlskulls, it was an aberration.

The ketra community of Pearlskull might well be the lowest surviving settlement ever recorded, an oceanic pre-V research station of some long-forgotten purpose. It was snatched up by the Verdancy, carried upward by the growth of the nascent waves and deposited, precariously, among the lowest branches of the drown. Those that survived found themselves changing within months thanks to the crezzer-infused air still swilling through the environment, every breath a slide toward a glorious boneless existence. And unlike the majority of would-be ketra who took such changes in their stride as best they could, the Pearlskull researchers set about trying to accelerate the process as best they could - the world was changed, and they were determined to change with it.

The results of their efforts are evident whenever the Pearlskull protoleviathan heaves its dripping bulk up to hunt among the sink. A singular organism, something that might generously still be called ketra-like, but on a massive scale. All biomass from the research station combined, a protoplasmic horror of living liquid and luminescent patterning.

And, if rumours and idle gossip are to be believed...

It remember what it was like to be human.

Use Pearlskull if you want a living monument to folly, an intelligent threat driven mad by its circumstances, with intentions extant but unknown.

Drives

Cryptic and Uncommunicated: The Pearlskull hunts, but it also collects. It traps submersibles into the fabric of its own form, complete with crew, but not as a food source or an act of mindless aggression. In fact, it's careful not to damage ships that it manages to capture. There's something happening down there in its home, but it lacks the ability and inclination to let anybody else know what that might be.

Presence

Sight:	A glow from deep beneath the waves. Slime dripping from branches. A huge, humanoid form rearing out of the darkness.
Sound:	Distorted wailing that might almost be recognisable chthonic. The smashing and bending of branches.
Smell:	None at all, a curious absence.

Resources

Salvage:	Twisted Timbers, Pre-V Gewgaw
Specimens:	Ketratic Plasm, Glowing Liquid
Whispers:	Cursed By Ambition, A Retreat From Bones

Aspects

Ironroot Skeleton: As a true leviathan, Pearlskull treats incoming massive damage as normal damage. Like most ketra-derived organisms, it also needs a skeleton of some sort to aid with movement - due to the size of the creature, it splinters and incorporates ironroot branches (and occasionally trunks) into itself like an internal scaffold. The Pearlskull is weak to Flame and Spike damage, but that's about it.

Lights in the Skull: The glowing patches of the Pearlskull shift and run along its body as it moves, never in one place for very long. They illuminate its environment, but they can do much more than that if the creature feels threatened - by concentrating the glowing sections of itself into an appendage, the protoleviathan begins radiating a distortion effect that sears skin as surely as crezzerin does. This deals LR Flame damage over a large area, but wilts and withers affected objects and individuals rather than setting them aflame.

Once Like Us: The pearlskull is a living warning of the danger inherent in desire - whenever it causes a target to mark mire, that target burns a box of mire instead.

Pearlskull Actual (Location)

Words Painted Above the Loading Bay By Some Unlucky Escapee: TOMB. WOMB.
Habitat Pods: Three remaining.

Though the small complex of Pearlskull Actual lost most of its original rooms during the Verdancy, the remaining areas are a shrine of old world technology and pre-V historical data. Accessing that information is made almost impossible thanks to the Pearlskull itself, which languishes within the entire complex when not hunting or trapping (its plasmic body filling almost every available space).

The Bay of Bones (Feature)

A burst-open cargo storage area, from the looks of things. The bay of bones is functionally named, the only room large enough within Pearlskull Actual to house the ironroot skeleton it slips around when it needs to explore the waves. *The Bay of Bones is the only way to get into the research station without cutting through some very high-grade pressure seals.*

The Experiment (Horror)

The Pearlskull doesn't simply abduct ships and crews for the fun of it. There's an experiment taking place in the innermost sanctum of its home, one that's been running fruitlessly for years. But... Maybe they're close to a breakthrough. *No, we're not going to tell you what it is they're trying to achieve. But whatever it is, it's not pleasant.*

The Howl Eternal, a Beast of Strangled Words

[Leviathan] A Thousandfold Whisper of Bestial Rage

A crew might hear it in the distance at first, carried on the changing breeze as they crest a wave or sit out on a night's watch. An animal cry that's impossible to identify, that reminds the listener of a beast driven mad by loneliness or pain or rage. Hearing it, even from a distance, is enough to send chills down the spine of all but the most experienced leviathaneers.

And hunting it?

Most crews buckle before even catching sight of the beast, turning their ships back in the face of a wall of noise that only ever seems to grow in intensity and complexity. When crews are close enough for lungs to shudder and ears to bleed, they'll be able to understand the truth of the sound, that it's not a single bestial mouth but an impossible number, and that the howl is a twisted threnody of words they might even, from time to time, be able to understand. What kind of beast could produce such a cacophonous, constant cry?

No beast at all, those that draw the closest discover, but the whispers of a beast made real. Masses of grizzled hair the colour and consistency of moonlight, teeth bared and semisubstantial, flesh like an exposed soul - the Howl Eternal is a whirlwind of tangled whispers, words of rage given form. *Use The Howl Eternal if you want the crew to face something massive and rage-filled that will destroy everything around it indiscriminately, creating an ever-changing field of engagement that is better tackled by ships that can dive beneath the waves or take to the air at a moment's notice.*

Drives

Spread The Noise: The Howl Eternal has no discernable goals of its own other than to stagger and scream and rage at the world. Entire settlements clear out at the first sign of its approach, returning days later to broken windows and an eerie, too-loud silence.

Who Spoke First?: Though there's a secret within the Howl Eternal's breast, the closest anyone has ever gotten to it is by being swallowed... And those unfortunate few rarely return to spill their findings. If anyone ever does, they might tell tales of a humanesque shape, made microscopic by the scale of the beast, curled fetally within the whisper-flesh of its chest.

Presence

Sight:	An exodus of ships, their sailors and passengers wearing waxen ear-stoppers (if they have ears to wear them in). A distant glow, like moonlight. Swathes cut through the thrash, of islands demolished and ironroots snapped at their crowns. Wild tangles of silvery hair that shed words as they move.
Sound:	An ear-splitting cacophony that's loud enough to shatter stone.
Taste:	Like words you want to shout, but never could.

Resources

Specimens: Whisper Flesh, Moonlight Fur
Whispers: Howl, Howl, Howl, Howl, Howl...
Cargo: Word-Scribed Tooth, Broken Island-Stone

Aspects

A Skin of Words: Like most leviathans, the Howl Eternal reduces the impact of damage dealt against it, treating incoming massive damage as normal damage. Unlike most leviathans, the Howl has an additional defence - its skin, flesh, and hair are comprised of living whispers, ever-shifting and only partially mundane. To deal lasting damage to the beast, crews will have to hit it with whispers of their own in conjunction with their attacks, or any wounds they do manage to deal will flow closed within moments.

The Noise: Hearing the Howl's constant cry from a distance marks mire, but the closer crews come to the beast, the more they'll feel the physical effects. Traits, gear, and companions will be affected by increasing intensities of LR Blast damage the longer they stay near the creature, and if they're close enough their ship's ratings will begin to degrade as well.

Quirks

Just Too Much: Drawing close enough to the beast to launch any kind of offence makes it impossible for the crew to hear anything other than the creature itself. Ear protection is needed to resist taking Burn rather than marks from the intensity of the noise.

The Eye of the Storm: Managing to get inside the Howl Eternal brings a blessed sense of peace, the noise still audible but muffled by the creature's whispering skin.

CHAPTER 06
REACHES

Menok's Bluff was a quaint little town, but that kind of thing isn't enough to attract visitors, or trade. Built onto a spit of time-worn stone shot through with vines and branches, it had stood for fifty years and might, rootquakes allowing, stand for fifty more.

But it was the food that brought the crowds.

Chemical-roasted hogmeat. Banana rice, as yellow as the midday sun. Spears of fresh asparagus and soft, melted butter. Every settlement on the waves was striving for individuality, for a reason to garner protection from the right types, to protect them against the attention of the wrong. And the inhabitants of Monek's Bluff had found their path early on. If you can't fight, and you can't export, and you can't expand...

Feast.

... and a Little Bit Extra

The core Wildsea book has a variety of reaches for you to use if you crave a partially predefined play area, and this book expands on that concept. Not only do we have several additional reaches, each complete with their own factions, ports, and other oddities, but we also have several new categories of pre-made content on offer for the Firefly in a hurry - **prototerritories**, **freeports,** and **rogue factions**.

Prototerritories

A prototerritory is an area of the wildsea that's as visually and ecologically distinct as a reach, but that doesn't extend anywhere near as far as a reach. That means you can drop a prototerritory into any of the other reaches, or into one of the wider, less prefabricated areas of the rustling waves with minimal effort.

Prototerritories can also work really well for adding variety during a long journey. Perhaps the crew's path takes them over the fringes of a prototerritory, allowing them to experience a sliver of the new environment or hazards that it offers. They might mark this place down as a place to visit later, drop anchor, or perhaps even steer into this new weirdness to make the most of the unexpected change in scenery.

If the prototerritories in this chapter don't fit your game though, consider creating on the fly with your group during play by following these steps during a journey...

- Ask how the shape or colour of the waves is changing
- Ask which insects and animals that were common now seem absent, and which have risen to fill their place
- Ask how the sounds are different, of the sea itself and of the ship as it travels
- Ask the crew to define the first landmark they see, each member giving a different detail

Freeports

Much like a prototerritory, a freeport has no reach to call its own. Most of them can be slotted easily into any of the other reaches, though some might take a little tweaking.

Freeports are designed to be self-contained areas rich with story seeds and mysteries, perfect to dip into for a session or so (or to serve as a temporary 'home base' while exploring an area) but without the necessity of bringing an entire extra reach into the equation. They can also act as an excellent pre-made location for the crew to discover after finishing a large arc, giving the Firefly time to collect themselves and decide what kind of opportunities and story threads from the previous adventure they can work on tying into the game as it continues.

Rogue Factions

A faction without a place to call home, either roving across the waves or so widespread that they're only tangentially connected to the reach that spawned them. Rogue factions aren't inherently good or evil, helpful or obstructive; each has their own wants and principles that crews may have to work around or contend with.

Each rogue faction entry also comes with pre-made NPCs and story hooks, hopefully letting a Firefly introduce their presence via a bit of gossip or a chance meeting at a junction house, and allowing the rest of the players to decide whether to engage or not.

With each finger a stone,
With each stone, a promise,
A sacrifice remembered,
As long as the skies roll o'erhead,

With each daybreak a prayer,
With each meal, a memory,
For these lofty heights remind us,
Of what a life lived below could have been,

And for each of the pieces,
Of this grand home now spinning,
We offer thanks to you, Parnak,
And all you have been.

- Transcription of a hymn to Parnak's continual grace and protection, originally in Lyrebite.

Parnak's Rest (Prototerritory)

Temple Shards: Three hundred and forty, at last count
Penalty for Missing Mandatory Offerings: Three days of contemplation from the lowest floating shard

While religion, in its more organised forms, is comparatively rare across the rustling waves, 'rare' is not the same as 'absent'. Parnak's Rest was, in the pre-V times, a temple, and a temple it remains - though the objects and rituals of worship have changed somewhat over the years.

And on the subject of change, the temple's structure and location are caught in an ever-shifting dance. While the chunk of ground upon which the main temple once stood remains firmly intact, the stone (and everything else for a half-mile radius) seems to have been lifted skyward at some point after the ravages of the Verdancy, splitting into multiple shards, but maintaining some sort of aerial cohesion in the process.

Parnak, In The Flesh (Wonder)

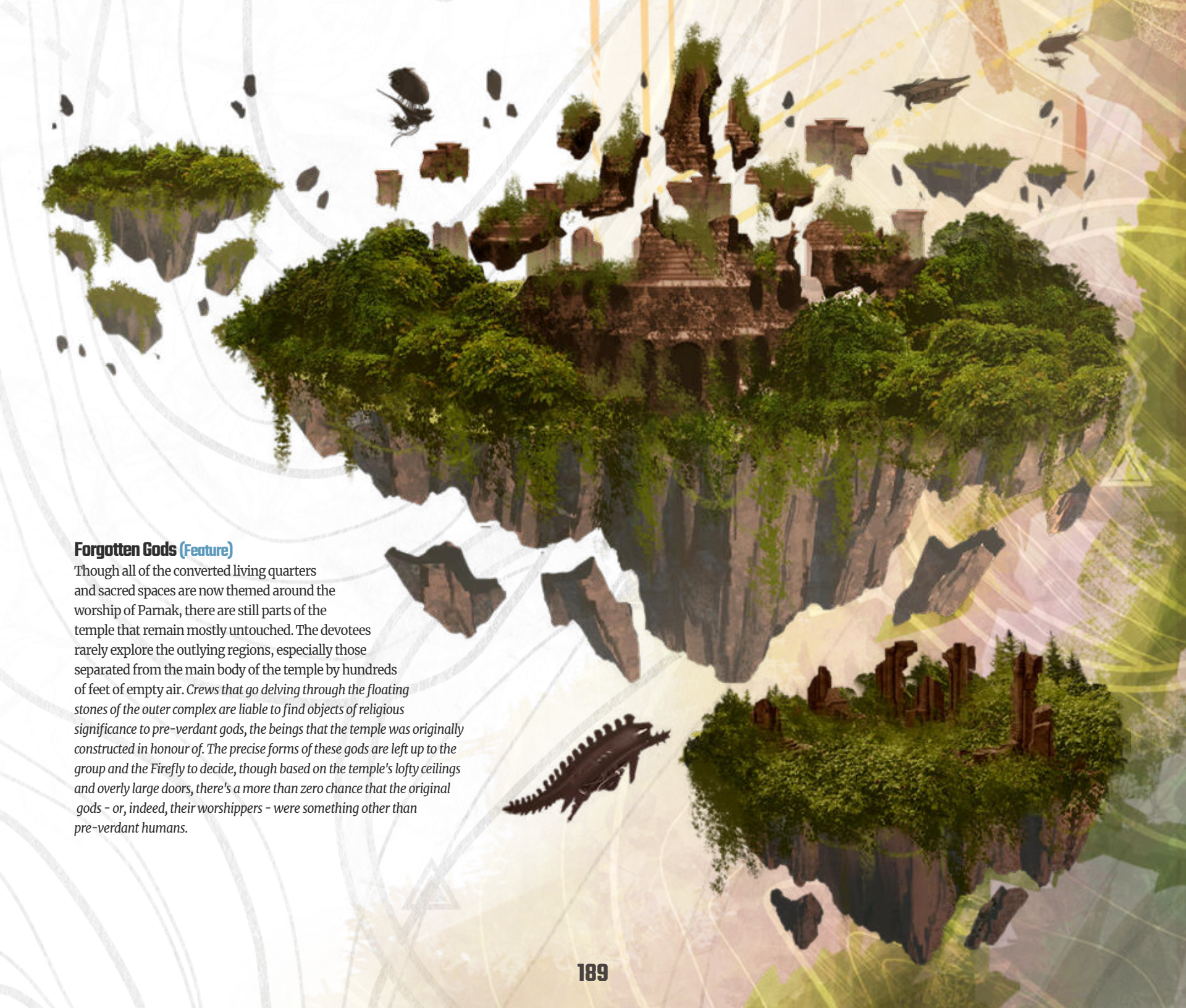
Splayed over an ancient altar at the heart of the temple complex, the corpse of Parnak - ten-armed and bristling with gears and wires - is an imposing sight, even in death. The devotees that call this temple home tell stories of his sacrifice, how he led their ancestors to this holy place at the time of the great calamity that forested the world, how each of his fingers lifted a different section of the outer temple's stone into the skies, and how he eventually gave all that he had, down to the last shreds of his own soul, to keep it aloft long after his time would pass. *Though these stories are definitely not based in reality, as inquisitive wildsailors will no doubt discover, the majority of the temple's inhabitants believe them wholeheartedly. They have no idea what Parnak truly is and, if they learned the cost of their devotions and what's being traded for the continued safety of their home, they would likely be appalled.*

Parnak, In Truth (Horror)

The body in the main sanctum is dead, after a fashion, but then so are many individuals across the wildsea that lead comparatively normal lives. In 'life', Parnak was an ironbound, an arconaut of considerable skill, researching the temple's ancient history (back when it was a wavetop spit thrown up by a rootquake, long before it attained the floating majesty of the present day). It was, as in many cases, an overambitious experiment that reduced Parnak to his current state, ironbound body left empty and arconautically-infused soul spread throughout every inch of the temple's stone. He's been trying, for years, to coalesce - to reverse the explosive outcome of his experiment and piece the temple back together, but the offerings of the priests and attendants that surround him interfere with his attempts every time. *Ironbound bodies are easy enough to control with a spark of life within them, but being displaced throughout the temple has stretched him thin. Though Parnak is still 'alive', in the sense that he can think and, to a limited extent, feel, he now thinks with a geological slowness, and what communications he can muster take place over that same aching timescale.*

The Devotees (Feature / Hazard)

A stolid and serious bunch, most likely due to the awareness that their home floats through the skies of the wildsea through a mechanism that they can only attribute to divine intervention (and concerning Parnak's true state, they're not actually too far off in that assumption). Their practices are simple, mostly consisting of a mandatory gifting of offerings, to be piled on the floor around the altar. *It's this growing pile that frustrates the disembodied Parnak, continually shifting the weight of the temple's heart and throwing off his already-slow calculations. Most of the offerings are simple salvage, purchased from passing airship traders or fished from storms, but every now and then, an object of significance is found and donated. If they would only abandon this practice...*



Forgotten Gods (Feature)

Though all of the converted living quarters and sacred spaces are now themed around the worship of Parnak, there are still parts of the temple that remain mostly untouched. The devotees rarely explore the outlying regions, especially those separated from the main body of the temple by hundreds of feet of empty air. *Crews that go delving through the floating stones of the outer complex are liable to find objects of religious significance to pre-verdant gods, the beings that the temple was originally constructed in honour of. The precise forms of these gods are left up to the group and the Firefly to decide, though based on the temple's lofty ceilings and overly large doors, there's a more than zero chance that the original gods - or, indeed, their worshippers - were something other than pre-verdant humans.*

Bough-Breakers (Rogue Faction)

Home Turf: Wherever they wander
Motivation: To help those in need

Though theoretically a very small pirate gang, the Bough-Breakers are really what every wildsailor dreams of being - a wandering crew that help where they can, bouncing from adventure to adventure with little regard for the past and great optimism for the future. Though they genuinely have the best intentions, things rarely go their way, and they're as likely to cause additional chaos with their arrival as they are to solve problems.

Unique Timing (Feature)

Bough-Breakers tend to appear at the most inopportune moments for those around them - in the middle of a fight, or a tense negotiation, or a dramatic societal shift. Is it luck, perhaps, or something arconautic that drives their uncanny timing? *When introducing the Bough-Breakers, roll a d6. On a 6 they crash into a scene offering help as best they can. On a 5 or a 4, they mistakenly aid the other side, making life that much harder through misunderstanding. And on a 3, a 2, or a 1, they sail right on past, yelling apologies and encouragement while dragging whatever was chasing* ***them*** *into the scene as a hazard.*

Principles

Never subtle, always unexpected, a cacophony of loud music and strange lights heralds a group that:

- Tries to help struggling wildsailors, when they have the time.
- Seems to always overstay their welcome.
- Strives to spread their name with (mostly) positive connotations.

Quick NPCs

- **Tzitzi-Yaku (tzelicrae)**: Overly cheerful and eager to help with any problem. They wear brightly colored clothes and a laughing mask.
- **Beruka 'Rook' (ardent)**: With her bees buzzing around her, Rook can build or fix whatever she needs.
- **Jisan Aoga (gau)**: Hungry sailors who try Jisan's cooking for the first time are often surprised by the amount of hallucinogens contained within.
- **Gomez Moonglow (ektus)**: Terrifying their enemies with incredible dance moves all while setting themselves on fire.

Story Hooks

- An unexpected burst of chaos at a nearby spit - somehow, the Bough-Breakers have unleashed a vegetative horror whilst attempting to help in some minor dispute.
- A raucous celebration at a junction reveals a gau with a large stockpot being bounced from shoulder to shoulder among the crowd, perplexed, but apparently happy.
- A grove of parasite sawnana trees has been infested with hard-shelled crabs. The owners called for the Bough-Breakers to aid them several days ago, knowing that they were near, but they haven't shown up yet...

Conzanteum (Freeport)

Available for Barter: Everything you could dream of, in extremely limited quantities
Opens Yearly: For seven days of high summer, when the leaves are slick with sweat and fireflies fill the thrash

Every market trader and minor artisan dreams of receiving an invite to Conzanteum, and those that tell you otherwise are lying through their teeth (or fronds, or chitinous mouthparts). Though the port itself is active throughout the year, the Festival of Trades is the settlement's biggest pull - seven days of unbridled salescraft and opulent extravagance.

The Lavender Letters (Feature)

Sent to chosen traders across the world in the months after a festival via a dedicated corps of well-worn wordbearers, these letters are both invite and entry pass to the Festival of Trades. There's no way of knowing whether any particular establishment will receive one, though if it hasn't arrived by winter's first sting, it's a safe bet that you've been unlucky this time around. *The selection process that Conzanteum's festival organizers follow is inscrutable at best, an arcane and bureaucratic labyrinth of regulations and favours at worst. Many decry the system, swearing that their own lavender letter must have been lost at sea during an effort at delivery, but as far as anyone can tell, no Conzanteium-employed wordbearer has ever failed in their delivery to this day.*

The Festival of Trades (Wonder)

Outside of the festival week, Conzanteum is an architecturally impressive but reasonably empty port. The main hub is built into the side of a half-shattered mountaintop, with spars and gantries leading out over a rift tamed by the constant attention of volunteer hackers and thorns. It's on these stretching platforms that invited traders are allowed to set up their stalls, turning the usually bare brass into a storm of colour and noise for the duration of the festival. *The ships of those invited to Conzanteum's yearly festival, and those coming to buy, are only allowed to dock at the point where the mountain meets the wilds, ringing the entire edifice with an amount of vessels that no port could reasonably hold.*

Free Samples (Feature)

Almost as much of a pull as the actual merchandise available for trade are the free samples that the temporary stallholders offer up to entice return visits (and to engender the favour of Conzanteum's upper echelons, some say). *The list below is far from an exhaustive one, but most free samples consist of a small resource that hints at something larger and more valuable waiting in the wings. Wildsailors might be offered...*

- A Punnet of Unseeded Viridian Strawberries
- The Rind-Chitin of a Squirmapple
- Flowering Vegetables Tied With Bows
- Roots That Weep
- A Singing Cactus Flower
- Ornamental Golem-Bird Legs
- A Slinking Spring With An Oily Hue
- A Compass With Five Unlabelled Points
- A Sheaf of Gaudimm Equations, Unsolved
- Middle-Tier Spikewine
- A Rogue Doomsayer's Proclamations
- Transparent Leaves
- A Vial of Light-Eating Chemicals
- A Sketch of a Leviathan Hatchling
- Weapons Carved From Living Bark
- A Frog

May Henceflower (Leader)

Though not the leader of the port itself, May is still reputedly the most powerful individual in the festival's impenetrable hierarchy. As the organiser of Conzanteum's stall spacing, they're in charge of who sets up where, and how far from the central hub they are out on a spar or gantry. There have been accusations of favouritism over the years, but rarely from anyone that attends the festival as a contributor rather than a customer. *May doesn't look like much at first glance, carrying their fungal frame with a quiet composure, and never seen without a clipboard and string of coloured chalks. It's in their planning and strategising that they shine, arranging sellers in such a way that early suggestions lead to purchases later down a strut, or that thoughts have time to percolate in a customer before filtering into fleeting but obsessive needs.*

The Colosseum (Location)

Material: Brass that shines despite its obvious age.
Disaster: Impending.

Conzanteum's great for a bit of trading, maybe even some showstoppers to wow the adoring public with their pockets full of scratch, but for those in the know, the true appeal of the Festival of Trades is whatever gets exhibited at the Brass Colosseum.

Rift-Eaten (Horror)

Far from immediately evident, the Colosseum is actually half a mile lower than the rest of Conzanteum. It sits awkwardly between rift and mountain, only the uppermost floors visible in the murk and spores that typify the sink. *Those floors host their own show during the Festival of Trades, catering to a far more select and discerning customer base.*

The Old World Brought to Life (Wonder)

The traders invited to the Colosseum aren't sent letters, like those up above - they simply know when it's their time to exhibit, a feeling in their bones or souls. The attendees feel it too, a draw to something ancient and powerful and overwhelmingly costly. They're both there, these groups, for the distribution of a single commodity - the artefacts of the pre-verdant world. *If it's from the time before the Verdancy, there's a good chance you'll find it at the brass Colosseum. Whether you can afford it is another matter entirely, unfortunately for most.*

The Break of 272 (Feature)

This secondary festival is held deeper below the waves for more than just a shroud of mystery, as pre-verdant materials and machines can be full of unruly power. Nowhere is this better demonstrated than around the ragged hole burnt through the topmost floor of the Colosseum's western edge, exposing the shadowed rooms below. *There was a stall there, one year, with a customer that insisted on a demonstration of the engine they were haggling over. The resulting explosion heralded the introduction of several safety features to the show, almost all of which are routinely ignored.*

Molewood, The Tree of Trees (Titanoshank Prototerritory)

Crown Height: Eight and a half miles above thrash level
Preparations Needed to Ascend: More than a crew could possibly manage

Crezzerin leads to unpredictable and accelerated growth, but over the vast majority of the sea, that growth seems to top out at about two miles above the level of the long-lost ground. There are tallshanks, of course, and there are swells and crests that bring the canopy higher, but for the most part the thrash is of an acceptable, understandable height.

Molewood breaks all of these rules.

Some insist on referring to it as a tallshank, and they're not entirely wrong. It's true, after all, that the entirety of the vast vegetative chaos of the place is supported by a single trunk, half a mile wide, that erupts from the surrounding waves like an ancient monument. Some relate to it in the same way they do other parasite plants, and they're not entirely wrong either, as the branches of that single great central tree act as an anchor for more ironroots, grown at impossible angles, their roots digging into the Middle-Mole's bark.

And some worship it as a god, or a future - the truest expression of the wilds.

They might not be entirely wrong either.

The Middle-Mole (Wonder)

An ironroot built to a scale that puts even the largest of tallshanks to shame. The Middle-Mole supports an entire ecosystem upon its branches, a thicket of forest that would take weeks to navigate held miles above the rustling waves. There are species that call the branches of Middle-Mole their home that have never seen the 'lower' waves, settlements atop the crown that think of the spread of treetops far beneath them in the same way that the denizens of those treetops think of the Under-Eaves. The Middle-Mole has an enormity that almost defies thought, and most certainly defies the logic of even crezzer-infused vegetative architecture. *Ships wishing to ascend from the branches of the rustling waves to the chaos of the Middle-Mole's personal forest most often rely on airships to bridge the divide, but there are some branches that hang just low enough that a rootquake might bring them into contact with the thrash, even if only for a few days.*

The Root-Anchored Forest (Feature)

Ironroots grow from the middle-mole's branches as readily as they do from the churned earth of the world-that's-lost, creating a forest above the forest that's just as dense, just as sailable, and just as full of life. From a great distance, Molewood looks very much like the average tallshank - a thick trunk, a spread of green above. But as ships draw closer and crews begin to realise the true size of the thing, that's when the realisation sets in... That the wilds hold more than one could ever see in a lifetime. *For some wildsailors, their first glimpse of Molewood can be a humbling experience, sometimes even a hope-shattering one. Others see it as a challenge, and hordes of eager explorers head out to the base of the Middle-Mole every spring to try to ascend and explore as much of the chaos as they can before autumn comes.*

The Deeper Wood (Horror)

Staying to the 'thrash' of Molewood as you travel gives a dizzying view of the skies around you, and the waves below, but heading deeper into the 'tangle' of it comes with its own dangers. The vast size of the tree of trees means that crews exploring the interior areas suffer from the effects of Pressure, just as crews delving deep beneath the waves below would. *Moving through the interior of Molewood invites the Firefly to create a Pressure Track, and crews are subject to Pressure effects as that track is marked. More information of this can be found in the box to the right.*

King's Clasp (Highport)

Built onto Molewood's crown, a pseudothrash ten miles from the ground, King's Clasp was laboriously constructed over a period of years by dedicated airship crews at the behest of a horde of explorers and forward-thinking delvers. Low structures on stilt legs anchored to the wood's upper branches support smoke-houses, junctions, docking yards and landing pads, and the local chop-stations specialise in the curious beasts that call Molewood their home. *Specimens and salvage from the lower waves are highly prized in King's Clasp, especially by those of the first generation born within the port, who have likely never set foot on the deck of a thrash-level ship in their lives.*

Beasts of a Different Kind (Feature)

The mammals, birds, and insects of Molewood are subject to the same accelerated, crezzer-fuelled evolution as those of the wider waves, but the closed-off environment has led to a unique range of strangenesses. *Though mostly absent from the waves below, monkeys thrive in the lower branches of Molewood. Wolves outnumber foxes, and eagles soar majestically where falcons and hawks would normally rule. Locals tell of the million species of beetle unique to Molewood's branches, and while that might be a slight exaggeration, it's probably not too far off.*

The Puppet Ornail (Horror)

A brother, a sister? An ancestor, perhaps, to that famed leviathan of the lower waves? The Puppet Ornail is a titanic squirrel reduced to skin, fur, and bone. When it 'died' is unknown, but sailors who have had the misfortune of drawing close to it can attest to the fact that it's just as lively in death as it must have been in life - more, perhaps, given the force that animates it. *The Puppet Ornail is a leviathan-sized 'tzelicrae' of normal-sized squirrels working in tandem, moving the corpse of their king like a battleship-sized marionette. It lacks the grace of its wave-dwelling kin, but can do just as much damage... And if damaged enough the skin splits open to reveal a veritable tide of chittering, hungry beasts spilling out from within.*

The Molewood Effect

The Pressure exerted by travelling through the interior of Molewood is a little different from that found in the sink or the drown - there's no fear of weaker spots or leviathans (save the singular example of the Puppet Ornail), the air is clean (though thinner than you'll likely be used to), and the Darkness-Under-Eaves is further away than ever.

With that in mind, a few of the existing Pressure effects found on page 60 need a little bit of adaptation. Here's a list of alternate effects that crews delving into Molewood might have to deal with...

12 **Return to Form**
Something in the air acts as a liquefying agent, reducing amber windows to dripping sap.

15 **Choking Hazard**
The ship's Scrubbers are struggling, not with the dirtiness or spore-choked nature of the air they were designed to cope with, but with how thin the surrounding atmosphere is.

25 **Root Riddles**
A burst of growth from one of the Molewood root systems catches the ship, tangling through doorways and vents and seeking out liquids of any kind.

36 **A Squirrel Conspiracy**
You're watched too closely, by silent squirrels. What messages might they carry back to their corpse-king?

45 **Call of the Heights**
The Molewood's crezzer-rich atmosphere takes its toll, beginning to warp and change your form to be more effective in terms of swift brachiation or high-altitude living.

55 **Something Far Too High**
A discovery that leads to more questions than answers, something from the thrash found high in the branches of the anchored forest you're exploring. Is there a wreck nearby, or did this object end up here through more uncanny means?

65 **Down to Earth**
A gang member from the undercrew throws themselves over the edge of the rail, caught by the madness of heights and the desire to return to the known dangers of the waves far below.

Golden Kalaan (Leviathan Freeport)

Common Offerings: Vials of insect venom, wasp families, beast spurs, stolen hives
Tongue Length: Six stone-throws

There are rumours of entire societies built onto the backs of insect leviathans, their simple needs and urges rendering them ripe for symbiotic civilization building. The cultists of Golden Kalaan might once have been aiming for a similar situation, but the drown-dwelling leviathan toad they settled within obviously had other ideas.

Giri of the Gasp (Lowport)

A port built directly into the mouth of the Kalaan leviathan, ramshackle buildings balanced on the creature's slowly pulsing tongue. There is almost no reason to visit Giri of the Gasp, save for the clout of saying that you survived the encounter - the toad saliva they sell is caustic and unpalatable, the air within the lolling mouth has a constant acrid stench, and the locals are a curious mix of unwelcoming and desperate. *Almost every inhabitant of Giri of the Gasp is a leviathan cultist, and rarely by choice. The toad must be fed, and to avoid that action destroying their entire port, that means hundreds of trips a day into the beast's stomach to deposit food. Such a life, constantly on the edge of meaningless destruction, does strange things to a society.*

Safety Concerns (Horror)

In addition to the expected hazards of landing your ship inside a leviathan's gaping mouth, visitors to Kalaan must also take their own biology into account. Ektus wildsailors tend to irritate the tongue with their spines, increasing the frequency and power of the isotonic pulses shaking the city. The effects of a ketra's gelatinous body, an ardent's sweat, and a mothryn's shed dust are all unpredictable, some seeming to sate the beast for a time and others causing it to shift uncomfortably (an action which threatens to throw the entire town off balance, toppling multiple buildings). *As for tzelicrae visitors, very few have ever been recorded. Given the Golden Kalaan's appetite for crawling food, there are very good reasons for this.*

The Cult of the Tongue (Feature)

The primary question from most visitors to the sickening, throat-adjacent port of Giri is... Why? Why, of all the places across the endless waves, would anyone choose to live here, in constant danger of being swallowed by a leviathan, having to give their lives over to tending to its hunger day and night? *Most citizens won't answer - they're deep enough in servitude to the beast that another way of life is almost impossible to imagine. But the oldest of them, or those that live on the fringes of their little society, sometimes whisper that they are placed there in penance. Penance for what, even these spillers of secrets won't admit.*

It was, perhaps, the best festival they'd ever been too.

Rejakata was something of an enthusiast. They'd held a borrowed ajna aloft at the parting of the ways ceremony, in a spit built around the corpse of a living storm. They'd run through the snow-slick streets of Iramb, whooping with joy as horned constructs swiped ineffectively at the air behind them, belching incense. They'd even imbibed (with their usual wanton spirit) the boiled remains of a gau mystic, swimming inside a hundred years of gathered fungal dreams.

But this simple feast, in honour of Ornail's secret nature, somehow seemed to top them all.

Maybe it was the sense of community, of folk in animal skins sharing jokes and glad tidings in Raka Spit. Maybe the food itself, mushrooms and nuts roasted over the shells of scurrying bonfire bugs. And maybe, just maybe, it was because they knew how it would end.

Leviathan Cultists (Rogue Faction)

Home Turf: Wherever leviathans roam, an area that encompasses nearly the entirety of the waves.
Motivation: To bathe in the glory of beings greater than themselves

Why would one worship a leviathan, not just with a sense of deck-appropriate zealousy, but with an all-consuming passion? It's a difficult question to answer; the common folk don't care to hazard those kind of guesses, and leviathan cultists are rarely known for their philosophical musings (save those that follow the never-caught vulpine, who rarely cease babbling about such topics).

Whatever their reasons might be, leviathan cultists are found in every corner of the wildsea. Most live in enclaves or temple communities dedicated to their chosen scion, but some take the rootless approach and stay mobile (especially those wishing to travel in the wake of their behemoth godling). A rare few groups eschew both temple and ship, aiming to live wild among the treetops like the beasts that they worship, but such communities rarely last long before the spores, crezzerin, or food chain consigns them to a horizoneer's footnote.

The Predator's Pantheon (Feature)

Though presented as a single faction on this page due to the core belief present in all leviathan cultist groups, worshippers of one leviathan rarely have contact with those of another. *The particular creature, or force, that a group dedicates itself to determines how they look, how they act, and their attitude toward outsiders. The list below encompasses a few of the more famous cults that have sprung up across the rustling waves...*

- **Ornail's Entourage**: Despite the ferocity of Old Ornail itself, the religion he's accidentally fostered takes a decidedly non-violent approach to life. In their eyes, the leviathan squirrel is misunderstood, an ultimately peaceful and benevolent creature driven to malice by the actions of hunters and researchers that refuse to leave it in peace. They might not even be wrong.
- **The Deep Dreamers**: Followers of ISOMA, though they may not really be aware of it. Deep dreamers spend their lives in a hallucinatory reverie of seaside days, feeding imaginary gulls as they somehow ignore the critical lack of salt water and sand.
- **The Scattered**: One of the more insular cults, each member ritually burns themselves within the acidic pits of the Orchid Scar. Surviving this ritual bestows the highest honour - the chance to rest, heal, and then do it all again.
- **Roa's Fallen Feathers**: Each member lives in a constant state of rage, in honour of their patron.

Varied Principles

Each leviathan cult holds principles of its own, rules that only they live (or die) by.

Quick NPCs

- **Lucia Sosilva (ardent)**: A member of Ornail's Entourage, she's devoted her life to tending to a pack of bear-sized squirrels after witnessing the death of their matriarch. She wears its hide as a reminder, and fiercely opposes the hunting of non-predators.
- **Kai Borenthal (ketra)**: Raised in the hot darkness of a sink-level manufactory, Kai escaped the only place he'd ever called home after learning the true horror of the industrial spirit he'd been raised to revere.
- **Wide-Winged Chemonet (itzenko)**: A zealot in the truest sense, Chemonet swears that his patron (a godlike mantis that only he has ever seen) will soon descend upon the wilds, sparing only him.

Story Hooks

- A travelling cultist festival threatens to draw the beast they worship, and nearby spits are at risk.
- Ornail's Entourage makes an unusual call for aid, pleading with more experienced hunters and trackers to locate a group of young devotees seemingly hell-bent on communing directly with the leviathan.
- An empty temple, one wall smashed apart from the outside. A grisly lesson or a warped success?

The Rampant Devout

[Variable Gang] If You Can't Eat Them...

Of all the factions of the rustling waves, the leviathan cultists are perhaps most likely to appear as an outright aggressor toward a wildsailing crew. Such clashes might occur due to the crew's pursuit of their chosen leviathan, their failure to observe certain cryptic tenets within the cult's practices, or sometimes merely thanks to stumbling onto the wrong kind of festival at an unfortunately sacrificial moment. *Use the rampant devout as a hazard if you want the crew to face a threat that blends intelligent tactics with a more feral approach.*

Drives

Worship, and Pay Tribute: Few leviathans notice the cults that form in their honour, and even fewer care even if they are aware. The dreams and plans of creatures that stand so small in their shadows are nothing compared to the forces of hunt and hunger. Leviathan cultists seem to be aware of this, at least in part, as many of their activities revolve around amassing 'tributes' (usually of an edible nature) that are large enough to draw the attention of their idols.

Presence

Sight:	A band of ketra painted to resemble cogs and saws, moving in straight lines across the canopy. A ship, half-ruined, made grisly with trophies taken from hunters. A pile of tied creatures, squirming and keening, surrounded by driftwood decorations.
Sound:	Thin calls made to echo titanic roars. Chanting in Chthonic, or Raka Spit. The beat of hands on wood, and the screams of living tribute.
Smell:	Entirely based on the way a group lives.

Resources

Salvage:	Twisted Metal Decoration, Binding Ropes
Specimens:	Hunter's Trophy, Leviathan Drool
Whispers:	Take Heed and Cower, Not By Size Alone
Charts:	Map of Leviathan Territories
Cargo:	Crate-Sized Egg, Wreath of Prey-Bones

Aspects

Graven Images: The precise appearance, homesteads, and techniques used by a wild leviathan cultist gang differs from group to group, related to the particular leviathan they worship.

The Skills They Bring: Nobody starts out a leviathan cultist (unless they're extremely unlucky, anyway). Individual cultists will likely have skills, and maybe even tools, that they've kept as a reminder of their past lives. Gangs should have unique forms of movement, resistances, and be able to deal several types of damage.

Quirks

Once Noticed: A cultist group has achieved the near-impossible - they live in harmony with the leviathan they worship, feeding and tending to it in exchange for the protection it offers, and the promise (perhaps unspoken, perhaps implied, perhaps merely hoped) that it will only feast upon its worshippers in the most dire of situations.

Tinflower Step (Prototerritory)

Parasite Plants Present: Nothing but tinflowers, sewn through the tangle.
The Problem With Wiskins: Kept secret out of respect.

Wildsailors know they're drawing close to the boundary of Tinflower Step when the noise of the waves begins to change. They've likely known the rustle of leaf on leaf, of branch on branch, their entire lives - the sudden jangle of metal replacing it never fails to turn heads (though if they're riding high in the thrash, there's likely nothing to see).

The Step is a parasite farm growing one particular plant - the tinflower. Though these tangle-grown specimens are dainty and weak-looking during their early stages of growth, the plants undergo a miraculous transformation as they bloom. Hand-sized petals unfurl, standing bright and blue among the waves for no more than a day or two before shedding their soft outer covering and revealing a core of metal beneath.

The tenders of the parasite farm don't let such a transformation pass without profit. When a patch undergoes this 'second blooming', they're out there the same day on flat-bottomed barges and stilt-poles to harvest as many of the blossoming flowers as they can.

They have a cannery to feed, after all.

Petals, Teeth, and Sunlight (Feature)

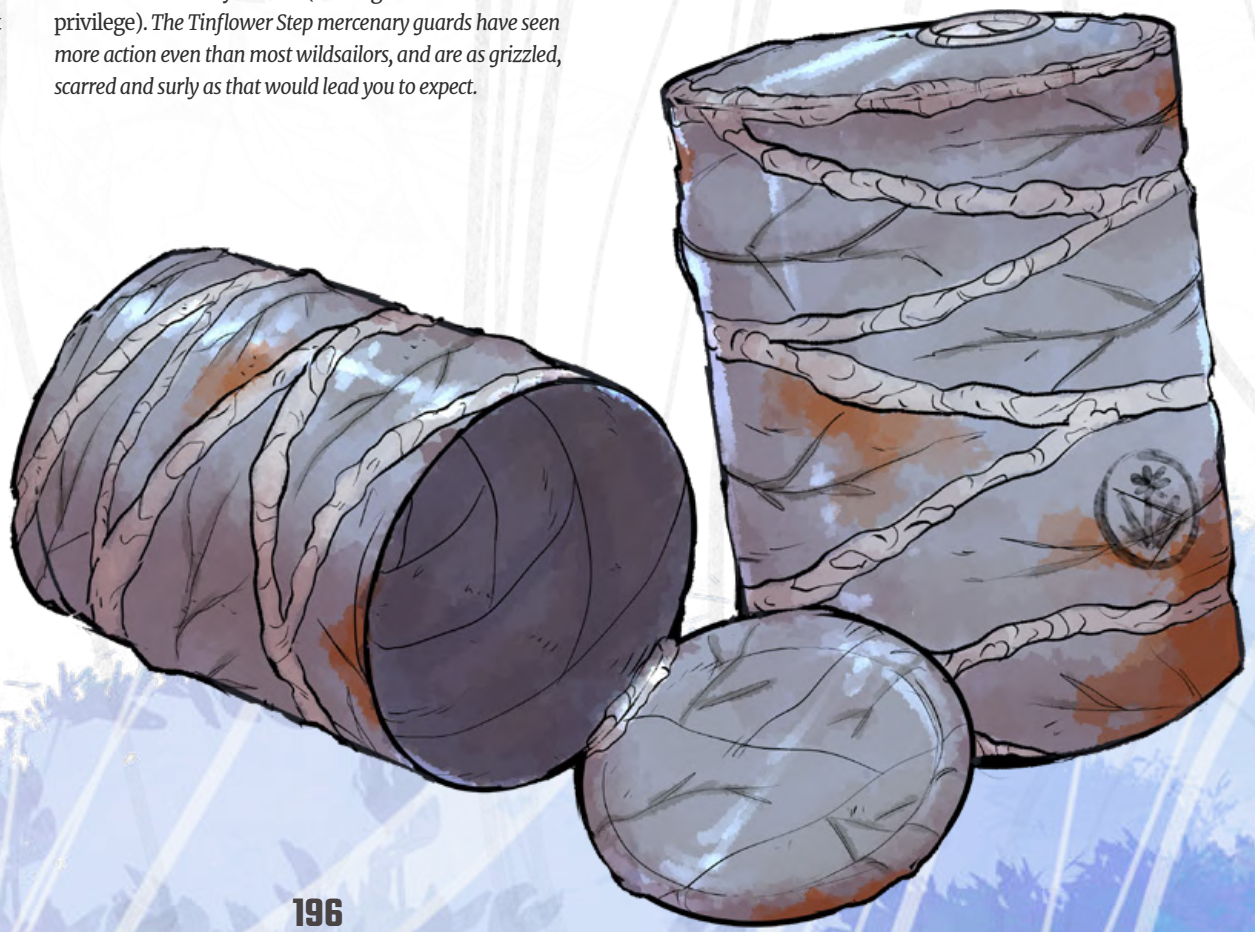
The rush to gather tinfower petals is due to their time-sensitive growing patterns. What most visitors don't know is the delicate balance of the harvest - the blooms only shed their outer covering when exposed to sunlight, so when monitors realize that a patch of flowers have bloomed, their first job is to cut away the thrash that covers them, then hold back the wildsea's natural growth until the petals can be harvested. *More than one opportunistic salvaging crew has tried to steal clumps of these metallic petals for themselves, often using arcomagnetic cargo cranes for the purpose... before coming to the depressing realization that the petals are stoically non-magnetic.*

The Cannery (Ship/Factory)

There are no spits within Tinflower Step, no islands within the bounds of the parasite farm. The Cannery is a collection of four large wildsailing ships that have been linked together with towers, bridges, and chains, sacrificing their ability to move for a solid footing on the ever-shifting waves. Built into the space between the ships is the mechanism of the cannery, a marvel of post-verdant engineering that processes tinflower petals into serviceable, resealable containers. It's a costly process - the noise of constant hammering attracts enough predators that the ships need constant guards, and the entire assemblage runs on enough chemical engines to power a fleet. But the results are unique enough to merit the cost, and crews will come from distant reaches to collect their bounty of cans (trading fuel and food for the privilege). *The Tinflower Step mercenary guards have seen more action even than most wildsailors, and are as grizzled, scarred and surly as that would lead you to expect.*

Wiskins (Leader)

A mothryn engineer, and the original designer of the Cannery mechanisms. He doesn't work on the machine himself much any more, leaving that to younger engineers that are eager for a challenge, and instead holes himself up in one of the observation towers on the southern-most ship to observe his grand design and the glittering grove that surrounds it. *Wiskins is a tragic figure, unfortunately - a recent repupation left him bereft of the experience that led to the Cannery's creation, and if the edifice broke, he would have no idea how to fix it, let alone to design and build a replacement. Very few Cannery employees know this fact for sure, but it is a persistent rumour.*



Stagger's Gull (Freeport)

Most Popular Companion: Dawn Chorus Owls
Population: Thirty full-time engineers, several hundred part-time bird traders

Balanced on three long legs that keep it high above the canopy, what was once a salt-sea drilling rig has been converted into a moving market for the avian enthusiast. Stagger's Gull, despite the brutalist steel of its original architecture, is a cheerful, colourful place, one of the few shankling homesteads that isn't some sort of tallshank.

While technically a moving port, the old rig's size leads most to treat it as a kind of mobile market city. Airships are catered to with various docking platforms and highport tethers, but canopy-level ships can also berth themselves inside the hollowed tripod legs that move the rig from place to place. Crews that leave their ships in such places do so at their own risk, often returning to find their stores and possessions in a chaotic mess due to the movement of these limbs.

Mekzeti Moll (Leader)

The chief engineer of Stagger's Gull, Moll is a performer through and through. After losing her legs in a machining accident many years ago, she crafted a replacement set themed around the striding stork - this leaves her towering over most of the other ardent around her, often more on the eye level of ektus or ironbound than her fellows. *Moll's rule over the Gull is a laissez-faire convention, and she takes little interest in the day-to-day running of the markets themselves. The rig itself, though, that she can be serious about, and she has the respect of even the surliest engineer that works there to keep it walking.*

The Snapping Saturday (Festival)

There's a rift often passed over on the Gull's most common route, a rift that the locals call 'Saturday'. It's not that wide, and it's not that long, and it wouldn't take too much effort to go around it. But for the engineers of Stagger's Gull, that would not only be backing down from a challenge, it would be missing an *opportunity. The tottering leap that platform makes is accompanied by a great shout and the release of flocks of birds. To test the waters, so to speak (or at least that's how it's justified to the locals).*

The Three-Feather Market (Feature)

Visiting crews of all stripes are welcome to shop at the Gull's famous bird market, but there are formalized processes to follow. The most famous of these is the buyer's fee, an additional cost on top of whatever salvage or specimens are exchanged in the form of three feathers from different, distinct birds. Some say that it's the stories of how these feathers were obtained, rather than the feathers themselves, that the traders are actually interested in. *For some traders this is true, but for others, these feathers are an important part of their bird-training activities. With so many different species in such close proximity, the feathers can be used to make chimeric 'false mothers' for younger birds to imprint on, designed to promote harmony in what would otherwise be quite a raucous population of products.*

Totterdays (Horror)

Stagger's Gull wasn't named on a whim - every slow step that the rig takes has to be meticulously planned by a cadre of engineers and cartographers, ensuring that the city puts its weight on a part of the canopy that can support it. It's rare that these well-trained professionals fail in their taks, but accidents do happen. These mis-steps, referred to as totterdays by the seemingly unworried traders, have the entire rig sway and judder as it tries to keep itself upright. *The Gull has never fallen, as far as anyone can remember, but the threat of it does tend to keep visitors on edge.*

"We've seen that tree before."

It took a few repetitions for the rest of the crew to take notice of their diminutive navigator. They were too focused on dealing with the chop and change of the wavetops in the wind. And anyway, he was a recent hire, an itzenko thief trying to stay on the narrow path. New to the job, maybe wouldnt even stick around. Most of them didn't even know his name yet.

"That tree with the scarf trapped between the branches. We saw that an hour ago."

There were looks shared. A few of the undercrew laughed, maybe to try to break the tension.

"Same scarf. Same tree. And we were travelling in the same direction too."

The boat rocked as the waves shifted again, fruit popping, branches creaking.

"We've seen that tree before. And all this movement... But I don't feel no breeze."

The Sword-Spiral (Living Rift Prototerritory)

The Horizon: Growing more distant by the day
Speed: Variable, anywhere from a stone's throw in an hour to a reach-span in a night

Few who go looking for the Sword-Spiral find it - the territory moves across the waves, from reach to reach, as much of an idea as it is a physical place. And those that do find it rarely realize that they have until it's too late, until they notice that they're cutting the same path over and over again while the horizon pulls farther away with each passing hour.

Far more common is for crews on a normal voyage to stumble upon the prototerritory as it moves. With little in the way of obvious evidence that they're in danger (as this particular rift lacks the wrecked ships and yawning chasms that normally clue even an inexperienced wildsailor into the threat they're facing), some vessels spend days or even weeks within the Sword-Spiral, slowly running out of supplies or fuel and wondering why they haven't reached their destination yet.

Waves On Repeat (Feature)

There are several elements of the Sword-Spiral that make it uniquely dangerous, the first of which is the nature of the ironroots it contains. Or, perhaps, contains is the wrong word... Affects, maybe? Whatever the correct terminology may be, the great trees within the moving boundary of the spiral seem to be uprooted, shorn from the Eaves, and moved with nothing less than malice. It doesn't happen within view of a ship trapped in the leafy vortex, but always just over the horizon; ironroots shift, spin, rise, and fall, all the while pushing the ship and unwitting crew ever-closer to the centre of the rift. *While the rift is intelligent enough to 'trap' ships in this way, the deception isn't perfect. Crews might notice elements of the scenery they see more than once, the lack of wind, the constant feeling of being in a low-level rootquake, or a sense of 'pull' or 'push' without a bloomtide.*

Losing the Horizon (Feature)

The longer a ship spends within the rift, the closer it is pulled toward the centre. Unlike most rifts, there's no grand drop to the Eaves, no dizzying edge to look over - such base methods of ship-predation are below the Sword-Spiral. Instead, there's a shifting down, a slow ratcheting of depth. The skies seem further away, and distant landmarks drop out of sight. *Crews at this stage of the Sword-Rift's hunting method begin to feel the effects of Pressure, but they may not know why. The Firefly should make and mark the Pressure track in secret, applying the effects of growing Pressure as if they were just parts of a normal journey.*

The Belly of the Rift (Horror)

It's only when ships are drawn to the most central point that everything changes. The tumble of waves seems to calm, offering a few cruel moments of relaxation before the branches holding the ship on the 'thrash' (which at this point is likely closer to the level of the sink) give way, dropping the vessel and crew into a dark interior of torn roots and gnarled branches and hundreds upon hundreds of wrecks. *Escaping the belly of the rift is possible, but doing it with a ship intact is a fool's errand. Crews will have to salvage, refit, and strategize if they have a hope of escape.*

Captain Jodara & The Tugboat Etienne (Wonder/Horror)

Though the rift tends to tackle one ship at a time, there's a persistent thorn in its metaphorical side. Jodara and his tugboat, the Etienne, have sailed the waves of the Sword-Spiral for something approaching twenty years, aiding many ships in escaping its clutches before they can be taken by the belly. *Some captains offer to help Jodara as he helped them, especially as they reach the edges of the prototerritory. Jodara rarely accepts but, even if he does, he finds himself drawn back to the windless slopes of the spiral every time. His place is there, it seems, and his reasons for staying are entirely his own.*

The Reds (Rogue Faction)

Home Turf: Wherever they wander
Motivation: To revel in the glory of a death well-avoided

There's surely no shortage of thrill-seekers on the rustling waves; depending on how you look at it, the average wildsailor leads a life overflowing with narrow escapes and terrible happenings. But the Reds take death-or-glory behaviour to the next level, striking out from their home ships with nothing more than a lurid red cloak, an outrider, a promise, and the knowledge that if they make it back, they get to do it all over again.

Promise & Style (Feature)

There's a time and a place for teamwork, and as far as the Reds are concerned, that's shipside. Their vessels are glorious, scrubbed and polished until not a trace of the waves remains aboard. That's where camaraderie ends, though - every Red makes a promise when they strike out solo, that they'll reach a certain place, best a certain beast, return with a particular trophy. *The most fascinating aspect of this lifestyle is that they actually **do** return, more often than not - statistically improbable given their habits.*

Principles

Three rules to live, or die, by:

- Stand tall, stand out, and stand alone.
- Laud a promise kept, and honour a promise broken by death.
- Each promise kept with style earns a mark of black, to be worn with pride.

Quick NPCs

- **Marveno Vis Veno (ektus)**: An ancient Red, and the captain of their largest vessel. His cloak is almost entirely black, patches of honour and promises kept covering all but the barest shreds of its original red.
- **Lilet Always-Left (itzenko)**: A new recruit for the Reds, eschewing the traditional fabric cloak for purposefully-grown flexible chitin the colour of blood.
- **Bay (ketra)**: Losing three limbs in a protoleviathan encounter hasn't slowed Bay down - their prosthetics are carved from the beast's own bones, after all.

Story Hooks

- A pirate group once active in the area turns sullen and landbound, marauders whispering in junctions of lone red-cloaked figures that keep stealing their damn ships out from under them.
- The crew come across one of the Reds in a pitched battle with a leviathan. Though the creature is injured, it obviously has the upper hand - do they know enough not to intervene in the fight, or will they risk ruining the promise?
- A prominent Red organizes a tournament, a chance for entrants to demonstrate their most impressive skills. Participants are judged not on how well they perform, or even whether they survive, but on the style and panache they display.

Wrench (Freeport)

Average Number of Wrecks Recovered Per Month: 3
Local Delicacy: Engine-Roasted Salmon

The port of Wrench isn't much to look at from the outside. Built onto and between the lashed-together hulls of several decrepit hulks, their smokestacks still belching to fight off the chills of the near permanent winter, on the surface it might seem like any other trading post.

But it's under that surface, in the warmer darkness of the sink, that Wrench defines itself.

For as the Verdancy chewed through the ancient seas, as much was gained as was ultimately lost. The waters drained, absorbed into the nascent ironroots or sucked down into cracks opened up in the skin of the seabed by their questing roots. Cephalopods and many-finned things were beached, rendered cataclysmically extinct. And a new ocean grew, one of branch and leaf, to cover those wounds in the old world. But...

The Fissure (Horror)

Deep below Wrench, deeper even than the Eaves themselves, there's a crack in what was once the seabed. It's too far down that it could ever really be explored, even with the recent advances in submersible technology, but the stink of old salt and fresh fish wafting up toward the new wavetops makes it impossible to ignore. *The citizens of Wrench have built their society directly above this weird, ground-level rift for a reason - there's no ingredient on the wilds as exotic as Pre-V fish.*

The Double Effs (Faction)

The most revered souls of Wrench, the double effs take their duties seriously. Every evening they head down from the thrash-level port, to nautilized platforms constructed among the branches of the sink. It's from there they unspool and cast off, releasing miles-long filament fishing lines baited with whatever meats they can find. Most catch on branches, snag on roots, or are pulled up slick with salt-sea water but empty of anything edible. *But every now and then, they pull up a piscine prize that makes it all worth it.*

Ziggurat Airyards (Freeport)

Company Motto: "Add enough engines, and anything can fly"
Fatal Crashes in Recent Weeks: Officially? Zero.

More of a 'paid port' than a traditional freeport thanks to their constant hunger for scrap, salvage, and fuel, the airyards are *the* place to be if balloons and propellors don't get your personal motor fired up.

Owned by Ziggurat Arc & Air, or the ZAA, the crowded manufactories of the airyards are something of a maze to the uninitiated. Engineers seem to run back and forth at random with armfuls of parts, would-be pilots clamber over their machines like unruly makadrills, and speculator and gambler alike gather on a series of rickety overhead platforms to watch every take-off, landing, and disastrous impact.

The Main Yard (Feature)

The goal of the ZAA is to perfect engine-powered flight, and the main yard is where their experiments are put together. Workshops and material storage bays are roofed, set off to one side, but every half-made craft in the main yard stands out under the clouds. It's unusual, but there's logic to it - if something is supposed to survive the wild blue up close, it had better be able to weather a few storms before it gets there. *Aircraft that show signs of failure due to weather are taken apart without ceremony or circumstance, their parts donated to other budding projects.*

Rat Frances (Pilot)

A short ardent woman with an impressive number of scars and replacement parts. Rat is Ziggurat's most successful test pilot - it's not that her craft stay up for any longer than those piloted by others, but that she always survives when they come back down that's earned her a modicum of local fame. *The Ziggurat airyards don't release official statistics on pilots lost, likely so they don't spook incoming talent.*

The Proven Brigade (Wonder)

A nickname given to test craft that survive more than three flights, the machines that make up the Proven Brigade are proudly displayed around the outer limits of the main yard. Though not typically flown after they've joined the brigade, these craft are still of immense importance; engineers, alchemists, and rattlehands study them in order to find out exactly which combinations of parts may have led to such success. *Calls to disassemble or cannibalize craft from the Proven Brigade are met with horror from the airyards' management.*

Tzolhm (Merchant)

A cross between investor and bookie, this enormous tzelicrae rarely leaves the gantries hanging above the airyards. It's from there that he operates his primary business, the taking and placing of bets on upcoming flights. People pay in with salvage and fuel, and are paid out with aerial charts and local specimens. It's not the best eschange in terms of value, but more than half of the attendees barely notice it - they're there for the spectacle more than they are the potential for profit. *Tzolhm is too. Though he keeps it quet, almost everything he takes is donated directly to the engineers working on new models of aircraft. He keeps this quiet, though, and would prefer if anybody that finds out would do the same.*

The Runway (Feature)

Running alongside the seaward edge of the main yard is the runway, a long strip of lacquered wood marked with distances and warnings in multiple languages. The ships made at Ziggurat aren't the usual wildsailing types that most sailors are starting to become familiar with. These new designs rely on building up some serious speed before they launch, and maintaining it throughout a flight. The run-up is necessary. *The only time the runway shuts is when there's an explosion or crash that damages the surface. Aside from that, there are lights twinkling and craft idling it at all times of the day and night.*

Ziggurat Test Craft

While the Proven Brigade are indeed a wonder, it's the engines that power them that will be of most interest to the aerially-inclined wildsailor. The rest of this box contains a sample of Ziggurat-branded engines, all of which have been successful at driving small, powerful craft through the wild blue.

These engines are proprietary - getting ahold of them won't be easy. The most effective method is, as you might have guessed, theft, but there are likely more legitimate ways for a crew to get their hands on one.

The Revenant 5 Stakes

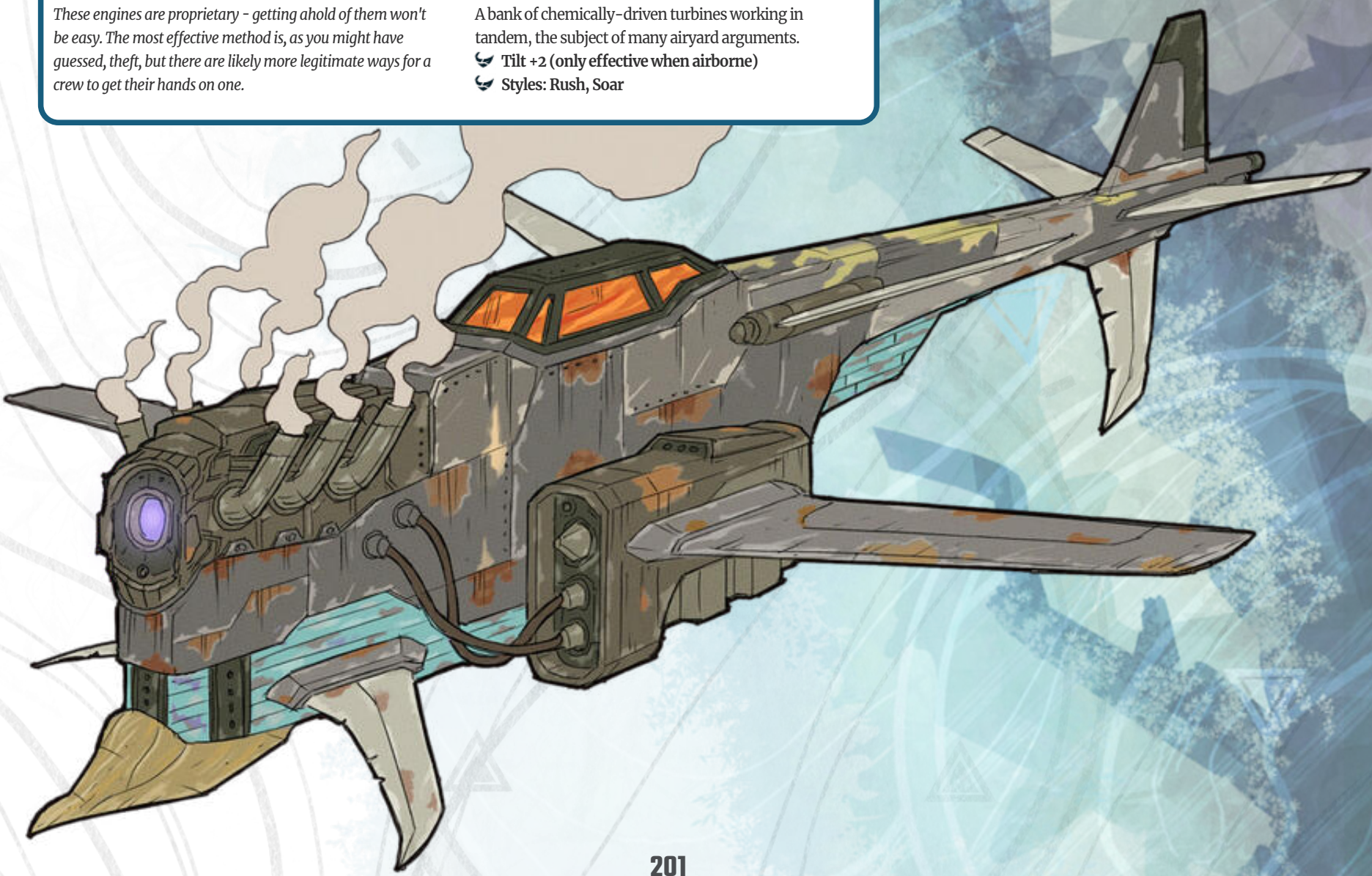
The first successful Ziggurat design, put together long before most had the wild blue in their sights. Composed of two massive thrusters and a set of fixed wings.

- **Speed +2 (only effective when airborne)**
- **Styles: Rush, Soar**

Six-Ring Promise 5 Stakes

A bank of chemically-driven turbines working in tandem, the subject of many airyard arguments.

- **Tilt +2 (only effective when airborne)**
- **Styles: Rush, Soar**



NADIR

"There's something on the horizon, I think." Clatheridge wasn't used to such a lack of certainty from their watchpost, and turned to raise a questioning eyebrow.

The ironbound posted there shrugged, an undercrewsman that she couldn't quite place the name of. The dawn light glinted off of their polished chassis.

"It's a cloud, I think. Or mist, but the colours are all... weird. Or a storm, hung too low." He shrugged again. "Tell you the truth, I've no idea what it is. Never seen anything like it."

Moments like this were what separated the wildsailors from the shorebound, in Clatheridge's experienced opinion. She ordered a change of course and kicked the engine up a notch, the ship's ceramic batteries whining and spitting as they fed it power.

It was minutes later before the watchpost sounded again.

"You might not believe this, miss..."

Main Elements

This page highlights the most important elements of Nadir, a reach of blossom and hive-minds and ancient cities reclaimed. The rest of this section delves into more detail.

Low-Blossoms

The waves of Nadir are a roiling mass of branch and blossom, eschewing the usual vibrant greens of the wildsea. Leaves are a rarity, and bloomtides are a common occurrence; the low-blossom waves are soft and easy to cut, but no less dangerous for it. Crews might encounter...

- Pale pink and bone-white blossoms sprouting from thick branches, filling the air in a ship's wake.
- The sounds of creaking wood softened by the carpet of blooms.
- Vanilla cut with smoke, the distinctive smell of blossom pulped by saw-teeth.

Sprawlshanks

The tallshanks of Nadir barely ever reach more than a couple of hundred feet above the canopy, but spread their upper branches over far wider areas (sometimes up to several square miles). Renamed 'sprawlshanks' by the locals, their sizeable branches are home to some of the largest colonies of the reach. Crews might encounter...

- Wide-reaching crowns bristling with tenuously tethered architecture.
- The scent of peeled apples and split pomegranates on the breeze.
- Thunderous signal-drumming from within a hollow trunk.

Favourable Winds

Calmer skies, infrequent storms, and long warm seasons mean that travel by air is nowhere near as difficult within the boundaries of Nadir as it is elsewhere on the rustling waves. Some settlements have left the canopy entirely, using gas-filled balloons to hover safely (well, reasonably safely) above the waves. Crews might encounter...

- Kite-sailors diving and gliding in the distant sky.
- Bland but filling bird meat livened up with the liberal application of herbs.
- Lighter-than-air chemical mixtures that singe the nostrils, used to keep floating ports aloft.

A Dredger's Paradise

The canopy of Nadir sits lower than that of other reaches. Which, coupled with the softer nature of the waves, makes dredging the lower levels significantly easier. There's a local craze for the unearthing of ancient structures, and most locals have one or two inscrutable gewgaws to hand from a lost age. Crews might encounter...

- Enthusiastic dredging crews, ships clustered around sawn-branch chasms.
- The clank and hiss of pneumatic cranes.
- Old dust and lingering memories in the corridors of a newly risen relic.

Manifold Minds

Something about Nadir seems to inspire swarms to sentience. Perhaps the local crezzerin, or the proximity to the Under-Eaves... nobody is quite sure. But throughout the reach, tzelicrae rub their many shoulders with hive-minds of butterflies, centipedes, and scorpions, often with cultures and histories of their own. Crews might encounter...

- Crawling chaos beneath the blossoms of the thrash.
- Bitter ichor from smashed swarms.
- Salty, crunchy, vinegar-and-sun-dried insect shells, and soothing waxmead made from hive walls.

Local Rumours

- Magriba Mo, a mothryn cartographer, has been spiraling slowly into despair trying to map Nadir's many bloomtides.
- There's a secret vow taken by local monks which, if broken, would utterly spoil spring forever.
- Marauders avoid Zeal's Grove because they remember something that others seem to have forgotten.
- Certain crezzerin-heavy blossoms have mutative properties, astonishing even by wildsea standards.
- Key figures in several of Nadir's ports have been replaced with near-perfect facsimiles, agents of the Manifold Mind. They may have a larger plan, but if any of them are ever discovered or captured, they burst into their component insect parts and scatter to the waves.
- The city of Gale is drifting lower and lower with each passing year, despite the efforts of local engineers.
- The Churn is where a particularly vicious breed of mawships are born, wrecks within it unable to rest peacefully.
- There's a new design of kite-sail doing the rounds, one that seems to harness the wild energy of bloomtides even from the air.
- Airship crews moving across the Churn report a sense of being watched by something immense, not from the skies above but from below the blossom waves.

The Churn (Territory)

Warning Signs: Ripples back and forth across the bloom-coloured waves
Crews Consumed: Uncountable

An endless and omnidirectional chaos of overlapping bloomtides, famed for its ability to destroy ships and swallow crews. A true navigator's nightmare.

Hostile Terrain (Feature)

The Churn is essentially a titanic, unpredictable whirlpool. *Though it doesn't pull ships under, it does batter against them savagely - even successful travel can damage ratings.*

The Unfortunate Zenith (Airship)

Literally chained to one of the sturdiest ironroot trunks of the area, the Unfortunate Zenith hangs at the dead centre of the territory (as near as anyone can make out). A cluster of signal towers and spotlights, its harried crew do their best to make travel through the Churn less deadly. *The crew are perpetually at breaking point - meeting them causes mire. They do have access to some pretty impressive charts, however. Limerick, their chief signal operator, took a recent unauthorized leave of absence.*

The Rose-Rift (Horror)

The wild swells and sudden vortices of the Rose-Rift are driven by newborn hammertide foxes. These pups play and race in the territory's tangle, unaware of the havoc they wreak on the thrash above. *Full-grown foxes will come to protect their young if threatened. Cut any attempts by ships to cross the Rose-Rift without somehow calming the foxes beneath.*

Zeal's Grove (Territory)

Sacred Flag Colours: Crimson and carnelian
Scripts Found on Flags: Chthonic, Knock, Raka Spit

The thrash of Zeal's Grove is dotted with poles and archways, each flying coloured fabrics scribed with words of hope and warnings of impending gaps within the canopy. Unusually for the wildsea, some property of the trees within Zeal's Grove has led to narrow channels between the crowns of each of the ironroots. While these channels aren't as dangerous as rifts, they're still an obstacle for thrash- or tangle-riding ships. The locals, however, have taken this unusual property of the waves as a challenge, and they have most definitely risen to it.

Pale Ozuo (Wonder)

A stunted sprawlshank, its branches heavy with head-sized apples. The blossoms growing on Pale Ozuo's branches are in constant motion, the entire sprawlshank rippling with a seemingly endless bloomtide. *Beasts and insects in the surrounding waves are curiously placid, easily tamed.*

Overcoming Shyness (Feature)

Larger settlements, which rely on regular trade to support their populations and cottage industries, usually overcome the difficulties of fording the spaces between each ironroot's crown with carefully maintained bridges. *Smaller settlements have solved the problem with a far more dangerous but undeniably more exciting take, taking to the waves in nano-sized ships drawn by tethered butterflies that can yank them across the gaps, or relying on surfboard-like seeds that catch the wind with canvas sails or rely on bloomtides to give them the speed they need to leap from crown to crown.*

Bellico's Coffee-Barge (Ship)

Serves and trades in apple-core coffee, made by Bellico herself with seeds taken from Ouzo's apples. The barge is colourfully painted, and furnished with a kind of luxurious shabbiness - the perfect place to relax with a steaming cup of coffee. *Bellico is a gau, and a friendly one at that, but with good business sense. Her product is unique, and she'll price-gouge you with a smile if she can.*

Bloom-Surfing

Though Zeal's Grove isn't the only territory of the wildsea where denizens take to the waves on surf-seeds and parasails, it's the territory where such actions are closest to essential for travel. The following options allow a crew to spend stakes to add useful bloom-surfing equipment to their ship, for use within Zeal's Grove and beyond. *Remember to add these rules to the notes section of your ship sheet if you choose any of the options below.*

Surf-Seed Rack 1 Stake

A collection of flat-topped seeds, each large enough to lie or stand on. Wildsailors can leap out onto the waves with one of these to ride a bloomtide, as long as they can balance on the crest of it as it carries them along.

- A player might use Wavewalk or Vault to balance on a surf-seed as it carries them along, a roll that will be harder to make the more violent the bloomtide is that they choose to ride

Butterfly Swarm 1 Stake

A horde of large butterflies attached by slim threads to a tether or handle, designed to be held while riding a surf-seed to allow travel without a bloomtide.

Parasail 1 Stake

Designed to pull a surf-seed along using nothing but the wild winds.

- Requires favourable winds for travel

"That should do it, Cap'n!" Rekif gave the nearest hook a hearty slap, causing the chain leading up into the darkness above to jingle.

"Shouldn't they be tighter than that? The last thing I want is for the ship to slip out up there."

"Nah, don't worry - done this hundreds of times with the old crew, and never once had a ship fall yet." He gave her a reassuring smile before turning to the young gau working the signal-flares. "Right, light them up!"

Two fat fireflies were coaxed into action, their bellies glowing blue as they spiralled lazily around the Hart's Patience. Answering lights flickered on above, stronger chemical search beams zeroing in on their ship's deck.

A clank of machinery from high above. The sound of chains pulling taut, a moment of tension, and then a jolt as the ship left the wave.

"See," he chuckled as they rose, "Nothing to worry about."

Maneka Stand (Territory)

Insect Life: Crawling - Scintillating - Overwhelming
Hive-Mind Gestation Period: 7 months or 7 years

The wavescape here is riddled with tunnels, warrens, and hives, channels cut to buried spits where nascent insect intelligences ponder their own impending sentience. Many blooms and branches are eaten away, food and fuel for the swarms.

The Honeyed Seat (Junction, Sort-of)

A cracked-open hive with honeycomb walls, the insects driven out and an implacable ketra bartender holding court here. The prices are steep, but when it's the only place to buy a drink in the entire territory they're allowed to be. *Dagda is a good host, always ready with a salt-loaded shotgun and spinning rabirs for when the swarms come calling. Wary around tzelicrae and mothryn, but will warm up once they order a drink.*

Grub Chambers (Feature)

Scattered throughout Maneka, often raided by the unscrupulous for live grub specimens for later sale. *Grub Chambers hosting a fledgling sentience are usually heavily guarded by Manifold swarms, who will also try to hide developing hive-minds among cargo to gain them passage to the wider waves.*

Tolta (Port/Hazard)

Named for the ancient highvin word for venom, Tolta was expected to be the territory's very first dredged city, a complex of stone temples pulled up from where they were lodged in the drown. It was a horrendous failure, the seventh building raised releasing hundreds of overgrown scorpions that scythed their way through the dredging crews and still inhabit the port to this day. *Tolta isn't typically visited, for obvious reasons, but there are whispers that things have changed there over the years. Those scorpions, released from their prison of permanent darkness down in the drown, have evolved both physically and socially. Could they be a hive-mind themselves, now?*

Ousten's Gate (Port)

Ousten: Absent or Forgotten, Long-Dead (Perhaps?)
Named Manufactories: Hop and Hamber, Sal Works, The Okesu Shipyard, Poorweather's

Found at the westernmost edge of the reach, where the outland ironroots give way and Nadir's blooms begin. Ousten's Gate is one of the few large ports designed to service all three kinds of wildsea ships, with berths and repair facilities for everything from wavecutters to submersibles to airships.

Verticality (Feature)

The port is a marvel of construction that bridges the difference in canopy height from one reach to the next. Despite a decent population it lacks streets, in the traditional sense, and is instead constructed as a series of platforms that are partially moored to the exposed ironroot trunks that tower alongside Nadir's lower wavescape. *Which reach Ousten's Gate is built to provide access to is entirely up the Firefly and the players, depending on your own particular version of the wildsea, but the particulars of the port might change depending on what it neighbours. If Ousten's Gate links Nadir to the Icterine it might be run by ektus traders, for example.*

Ousten's Fall (Shadow-Spring)

A cyclic waterfall fed by grand, wheezing pumps, and creaking reclaimed turbines. Most of the waterfall is open to the air, but the bottom of the port contains a 'basin' of sorts to collect and funnel the water back to the pumps. *The shadow-spring is built around this basin, allowing visitors to bask in the cooling mists of the falls.*

Who Was Ousten? (Feature)

Despite the port's naming conventions, nobody living or working there seems quite sure of who, or what, Ousten was. Record-keeping in the post-verdant years isn't exactly a precise or reliable source of information, but ancestral tales and word of mouth usually carry *some* nuggets of truth from person to person. *In fact, it's almost as if this 'Ousten' individual was stripped from this place in all but name - but why?*

Gale (Airship Port)

Current Leader: Zerika Tolgast, ardent airshipwright
Number of Stalagtowers: 43 and growing

Though technically an airship, the immense size and typically stationary nature of Gale mean that most think of it as more of a port (though wildsailors will occasionally make their way toward its last known location and find that it's somewhere else entirely).

Gale is a city inverted, stalagtowers spearing down toward the waves from the main airship body above. Visitors often complain of nausea and extreme vertigo. Locals barely even notice.

Strut One (Dock)

Gale's dock is for airships and kite-sails only, with no access for wavebound ships of any kind. *Safely reaching Strut One can be a challenge in itself, especially if the crew leave their ship unattended down below.*

The Canvas-House (Market)

Spread across the interior of several hanging towers. The best place to go for custom-made aeronautic equipment, with stalls stocking everything from kite-sails to parachutes to fixed-wing gliders. *Prices are steep - only the finest resources will do (or cargo). Clientele are NOT allowed to try before they buy.*

All Wings Fold (Chop-Station)

Deals in bird meat and cured feathers, taking the usual 1/4 cut of any avian beasts they render down for customers. *The proprietor, an ektus named Hove, is on the lookout for feathers of a particular bird.*

Season's Climb (Port)

Favoured Tattoo Style: Ragged, geometric beasts
Number of Monks: About 100, with a 100+ more on missions and pilgrimages

A multi-tiered monastery built into the overhang of a splintered peak. The monks within spend most of their time writing poetry, engaging in good-natured bouts of martial skill, and practicing the secret arts of intricate petal-ink tattooing.

Each of the four tiers of the monastery is built to encourage a different mode of living, from the brief luxuries of summer to the bare asceticism of winter.

Autumn on the Winds (Junction)

The most experienced artists of Season's Climb gather here to discuss ink and skin and style. The junction house isn't the place to get tattooed, but it might be the best place to find a tattoo artist. *Swap a specimen for a tattoo in the form of a 2-track benefit.*

The Changing Seasons (Festival)

Four times a year the monks move their possessions and living quarters to a different tier of the monastery via dangerous mountain paths. *Cut for difficulty when walking the paths. Cut again if helping the monks carry their belongings. A great way to earn their respect.*

Bright (Ship)

A large ship with a hull of mountain-stone, used by the monks for artistic pilgrimage. Painted bright to stand out on the waves. *Will trade with friendly crews, gifts of ink, and patterned stone.*

The Manifold Mind (Faction)

Home Turf: Maneka Stand
Motivation: To grow in complexity and influence

A hive-mind of hive-minds, more of a spreading concept than a true faction. The Manifold Mind is difficult for single-minded individuals to understand, and terrifying for a tzelicrae to even consider.

The First (Leader)

An impossibly vast hive-minded individual made up of various insects and arachnid specimens, pressed together so tightly that they're almost a single organism. *Not actually the first, but its naming implies the mind has a flair for the grandiose.*

Facets (Feature)

Each newly emerged swarm consciousness is a facet of the larger whole, with an identity of their own, but also a part to play in the thoughts (if that's even the right term) of the Manifold Mind itself. Many developed facets take on humanesque form, mimicking other bloodlines to fit in as a tzelicrae would. *Some who believe themselves tzelicrae are in fact unknowing facets.*

Principles

As far as anyone can tell based on the fragments of truth spilled by various facets over the years, these are the ultimate drives of the Manifold Mind.

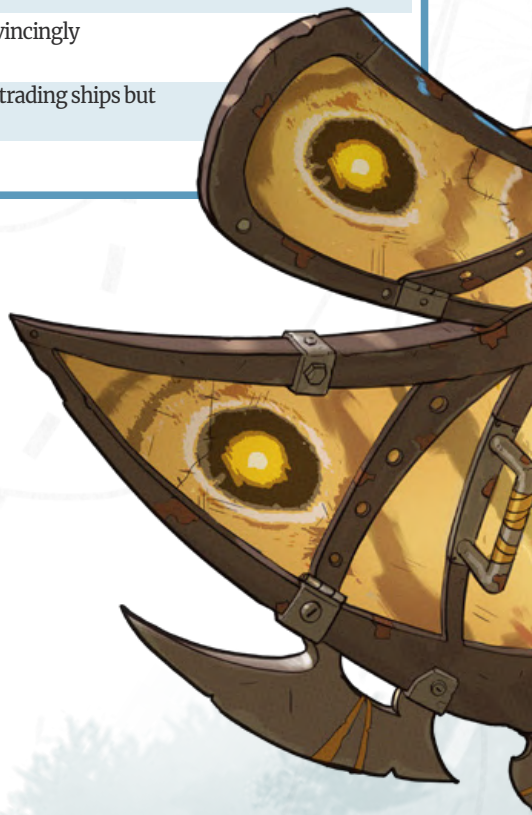
- Learn more about the waves, and the people living among them.
- Seize power when possible, as it may never be offered.
- Grow. Spread. Develop. Become more.

Quick NPCs

- **Pa (facet)**: One of the oldest and most developed facets of the Manifold Mind, a collection of bees in a ragged trench-coat. Resents being a part of something larger, enjoys playing the trisketar.
- **Chikot (facet)**: A collection of dragonflies in a vaguely humanesque cloud, used as a courier due to their speed.
- **Nameless (facet)**: Living on the very fringes of Nadir, desperate to leave but afraid to lose the last of their identity.

Story Hooks

- A barrel of meat seems to have been emptied out at some point and replaced with curiously organized mantises.
- A drunken, terrified ardent is convinced that bees are trying to steal his face for themselves.
- The crew witness the birth to sentience of a new swarm.
- A minor official in Gale is discovered to be a mass of butterflies in a convincingly ektus disguise.
- An organized swarm of termites has been chewing through the hulls of trading ships but leaving crews alive.
- A sighting of the First.



Self-Smuggling (Feature)

Desperate to spread, facets will often try to board anchored ships and hide in their shadowed corners to be transported to distant islands. *Use a track to chart the crew discovering signs of a Manifold Mind on board, starting with small things like missing food and objects being moved around.*

Dissolution (Horror)

Luckily for the wider waves, agents of the Manifold Mind tend to lose cohesion and return to a mindless swarming state once they leave the bloom-spread of Nadir. Watching this happen can be heart-wrenching; a swift loss of memory, then purpose, then language, then self. *Watching it happen causes mire, and the process is irreversible.*

Ba Gorain (Living Junction)

A crawling hive that serves a variety of insect jellies and treated pheromone snifters. It's hardly the most often visited place on the waves, but it does have a certain kind of charm for the discerning wildsailor - especially the kind with mandibles of their own. *Ba Gorain is named for an old Highvin sign, twenty feet long, that serves as a countertop within the glistening, sloping walls of the hive.*

The Kitingales (Faction)

Home Turf: Gale (but which was named first...?)
Motivation: To master the air and scorn the waves

Warm, predictable winds and relatively few large airborne predators have seen the rapid development of personalized aerial travel in the years since the Verdancy (particularly using gliders and kite-sails). The Kitingales hold that they were the first to leave the safety of their islands in those dark, early days, not by sea but by air (they are almost certainly lying).

Somewhere between a club of extreme sports enthusiasts and a pirate gang, Kitingales have a reputation for fierce independence, daredevil stunts, and general aloofness. Many keep birds, winged insects, and flying lizards as companions (likely to have something around to show off to).

Kitingale gangs do on occasion raid wavetop settlements, but it's as much for sport as it is for theft (though it is definitely for both).

Plummet (Festival)

A yearly festival exploring the boundaries of potential flight, both in terms of style and method. Parachutes are permitted but seen as the mark of a weak heart, and avoidable deaths are common. *The blooms actually make falling long distances far more survivable in Nadir, but even for survivors intense crezzerin exposure is common.*

Willing to Share (Feature)

Despite their reputation, the Kitingales are actually extremely willing to share technologies and innovations with wavebound folk. *Trusted visitors to their settlements should have access to new ship upgrades and temporary gear at a reduced price.*

Stalleyman's Peak (Junction)

Boasting "the tallest ale in the world", Stalleyman's Peak sits at the very top of a slim mountain-shard, and is only accessible from the air. *Drinks are free for the duration of your first day - if you've made it there, as the owners proclaim, you've already put the work in.*

Principles

Scribed emphatically in Low Sour onto the very top of Gale's gas-balloon housing, visible only from the air.

- LAND WHEN YOU MUST
- FLY AS YOU WILL
- BE FREE

Quick NPCs

- **West River (gau)**: An experienced flight instructor and kite-sail buccaneer.
- **Lao (ironbound)**: A frustrated aeronaut desiring speed, but only able to use ponderous gas-balloons due to the weight of their own body.
- **Abeksha Aromad (ardent)**: An eminently hateable show-off when it comes to aerial manoeuvres.
- **Monado Sigmurestra (ketra)**: A kite-sailor famous for their dedication to the art, having forged their entire skeleton from old bird bones and aeronautic gas canisters.

Story Hooks

- A scatter of shots from above, a flash of swooping colour, and one of your passengers is gone.
- A Plummet survivor, denied her self-crafted wings, schemes her return.
- A gang of kite-sailing youth are harassing a local parasite-farm.
- An aerial race is planned for the next full moon, a night-time thrill ride with an exceptionally grand prize - it's open to all.
- An alchemist thinks they've found a way to turn the blossoms of the Nadiri waves into upscaled butterfly wings.
- The floating port of Gale is drifting lopsidedly. What is going on?
- The Festival of Empty Skies, held in certain highports across Nadir, is particularly violently celebrated. In the aftermath it seems that a ship full of experimental kite-sail designs has gone missing, and the aeronautic engineer behind them is offering a handsome reward for their safe return.

FIREFLY RESOURCES

Watch Results (Peace)

6: You pass through an area of beatific calm, marked out by coloured flags tied to high poles.
5: The sight of a distant sprawlshank, and the sounds of celebration.
4: A member of the undercrew gathers blooms as you travel, decking the ship with bouquets.
3: Flying squirrels soar through the air around you.
2: You pass an old settlement on a half-sunk spit, long-abandoned and strung with signs of thanks for the time the occupants had there.
1: A nearby bloomtide that scents the air.

Watch Results (Order)

6: An encounter with Bright, the stone-hulled ship of Season's Climb. They offer free tattoos and home-brewed mead, jokes, and stories of the wilder places.
5: A lighthouse, chemically powered, and figures standing wait at the lamp-rails.
4: A spit, some kind of pre-verdant store, and the corpse of a masked ektus dredger within it.
3: A small vessel wrapped in some kind of cocoon, suspended in a dip within the branches of the tangle.
2: A flight of kite-sailors above, shouting insults at your wavebound progress.
1: A pre-verdant city partially dredged to the surface, the entire worksite eerily empty.

Watch Results (Nature)

6: A newly born insect hive-mind still feeling out its surroundings, eager and willing to learn.
5: A new sprawlshank in its infancy, barely grown above the surrounding waves of the canopy you sail. Beasts and birds watch you warily as you approach, ready to defend their infant home.
4: A crashing bloomtide of unexpected power, pushing the ship a huge distance before subsuming.
3: A threshing wind of razor-sharp petals.
2: A day of intense, unexpected sunlight that shrivels blooms and drenches the crew in listless sweat.
1: A territory fight between two hammertide foxes.

Trade Goods and Cargo

- **Petal-Ink (export)**: Vibrant, shifting inks made from the choicest local blooms, highly prized by tattoo artists and mural-makers.
- **Pure Fruit (export)**: Grown plump and succulent over Nadir's lengthy spring. Pears, pomegranates, and apples are common, flowering dhaji less so.
- **Pre-Verdant Oddities (export)**: Thanks to the rabid efforts of root-runners and experienced delvers. Old curios and obscure machinework pieces are often traded away for more mundane but useful items.
- **Leafy Seedlings (import)**: You always want what you can't have - seeds of non-blossoming wildsea plants fetch a high price at Nadir markets.
- **Exotic Insects (import)**: Particularly sought-after by the Manifold Mind, which hopes to raise them to sentience or add them to itself.
- **Strong Fabrics (import)**: Used in the construction of sails and gliders, aeronauts import these materials to get an edge over one another in competition flight.

Passengers

- A facet of the Manifold Mind trying to smuggle itself out of the reach while wearing a less-than-impressive overcoat.
- A kite-sailor with a broken glider, sullenly asking for passage to the nearest sprawlshank.
- An ektus researcher with jars full of insects, carefully separated by black velvet.
- An amateur climber hoping to hire themselves out to city-dredgers.
- A tusker with a flock of bats as their pet, jovial and good-natured when they talk to the crew, but can be heard crying in their cabin at night.
- A tzelicrae who claims to be drawn somehow to the region - was he once a simple facet that managed to leave? Could such a thing be possible?

Endemic Hazards

- Falcons, little-changed from their pre-verdant ancestors, glutting themselves on the huge amount of insect life in the region.
- Stilt-legged spiders, spinning webs to catch ships.
- Gaseous jellyfish floating at thrash-level after feasting on the remains of fallen airships.
- Wild facets of the Manifold Mind, acting on instinct and impossible to reason with.
- Hawkwolves, leaping and flying from branch to branch as they chase shoals of bats at sunset.
- Spears-From-Beneath, a leviathan bird infested with a rogue termite facet.

Hammertide Foxes

[Medium] Swift Destructive Beast Pack

The foxes themselves aren't a problem - they can be territorial, yes, and they'll protect their cubs fiercely when they feel they have to, but they don't hunt or seek out wildsailing vessels or intentionally threaten crews. The real danger of the hammertide fox is an arconautic quirk of their nature - some pulse, aura, or chemical agent that causes violent bloomtides in their wake, churning the sea into a frenzy of petal and pulp wherever they travel. *Use hammertide foxes if you want the crew to contend with a force of nature drawn by an innocent creature, and the moral problems that might entail.*

Drives

Bait the Tide: Whether they're aware of their own peculiar power or not, the foxes are always on the move, escaping the tides they drag in their wake.

Presence

Sight: A blossom-like mane and flash of pale fur.

Sound: The creak of unexpected potential, then frantic burst of petals.

Smell: A sudden spring breeze.

Resources

Specimens: Fur Like Petals, Hammertide Tail

Whispers: Drawing the Tide

Aspects

Riptide: Hammertide foxes can't help but pull bloomtides in their wake. Normal bloomtides are easy enough to ride, but these unexpected swells can deal massive Blast damage.

Stunning Speed: It's not just that the foxes are fast, it's that they move at speeds almost impossible for the average eye to track when they need to.

Quirks

Cublings: Fox dens are usually protected by a whirlpool-like swirl of repeating burst and bloom, dragged into a pattern by the movement of the parents. The cubs themselves can also cause intense disturbances in the thrash when they play, but not enough to deal massive damage - medium or strong blast damage is sufficient.

Autumn Colouration: A clade of hammertide foxes that drag defoliation rather than hyper-fecundity, leaving brittle leaves and crackling branches in their wake.

RAO ZE

Well, this won't do.

It had become something of a personal mantra of late, rattling around Jeheba's head as she thumbed through work reports and iron manifests, her thorned fingers delicate on the pages.

It wasn't that their goal was flawed. She believed, almost inherently, in the task that the Ministry had set themselves. In a world as wild as this, the pursuit of order (as flawed as it might sound) was a noble goal.

Or at least, she liked to think it was.

But goals were only useful when you could find a path to their completion, and with the ever-expanding territories of the Empty Splinter starting to push uncomfortably close to the Glasshouse's outer work sites, that path was growing more and more tangled by the day.

Sooner or later, something was going to break.

And that just... wouldn't do.

Main Elements

This page highlights the most important elements of Rao Ze, a reach of carnivorous plants, wild whispers, and the spreading influence of order imposed. The rest of this section delves into more detail.

Iron & Glass

There are fewer settlements in Rao Ze than there are in other reaches, but the ones that do exist are mightily impressive. The Glasshouse Ministry, the most widespread and active faction working these particular waves, exert their influence and control through architecture and agriculture more than anything else. Crews might encounter...

- Massive but delicate structures enclosing large portions of the waves, bubbles of amber and quartz and skin and, in some rare instances, huge sheets of oft-repaired pre-V glass.
- Wavetops following more orderly patterns than they should, aggressively pruned or tied back with wire and rope.
- Trading ships chugging slowly from port to port, their holds brimming with rivets, heirloom fruits and vegetables, and ceramic batteries.

The Hungry Sea

Outside of Ministry settlements, the waves of Rao Ze are some of the wildest a sailor might find. This isn't only thanks to the huge varieties of predatory (and sometimes ambulatory) plants, or even the unusually active whispers that crawl and leap and sputter through the air, but the inexorable and almost impossible-to-describe *pull* of something deep below. Crews might encounter...

- An unexpected hunger within themselves to explore the sink and the drown, and maybe even deeper.
- Ships being pulled under in great gouts of torn leaves and broken branches.
- Proliferations of ravenous plants, predatory birds, and flying lizards, adapted for life above and below the canopy.

Salt-Heavy Winds Tell Stories

It's not a heavy flow, but it is a constant one - the squalls and breezes of Rao Ze are tinged with old salt, which builds up in corners and seems to drive some of the locale's unusual sense of hunger. This salt makes the area hostile towards souls and spectres, but something else has risen to fill their usual space - something wild, and free, and narrative. Crews might encounter...

- Rusted metal, barely holding together, battered by years of the harshest elements.
- A lack of spirits, and as a consequence a lack of local anchored and ironbound sailors, their exposed souls scoured constantly by the breeze.
- A smell difficult to place, something that tugs at memory and makes one think of the sound of gulls.

Whispers Gone Wild

In place of the usual spiritual component of the wilds, whispers have risen to ascendancy. There are more, and wilder, words found threaded through the leaves and branches of Rao Ze than anywhere else, fragments of old stories and lost slogans and shattered ambitions. Rest in Rao Ze is hard won, as the properties of the waves (or the wider world) might shift at any moment. Crews might encounter...

- Bottle after bottle of captured whispers arrayed behind the bar of a Ministry junction, traded for along with the more usual meat and ales.
- Vivid daydreams shared by multiple members of a crew, the product of a whisper tearing itself apart above the ship and scattering to the winds.
- Scads of self-organized matter with silvery words at their core, only glimpsed out of the corner of one's eye.

"You'll never find another like it, guaranteed!"

Kolbe and Katskya stared at the weed-choked wreck hanging before them, and could only agree.

"Look at that hull -" the seller rapped his knuckles against it with a dull thud, "- pure ceramic, straight from the kilns of the APR. Don't often see that this far east, do you?"

"Well, no," Kolbe used her gentlest voice, "because the thrash ain't so thick here with the salt drifts. Pretty sure that ceramic's gonna tear right through the brittle bits and head straight down to the Eaves."

The merchant didn't skip a beat.

"Making it the most efficient design for a full submersible, am I right?"

It was Katskya's turn to join. "I mean, yes, in a way. Though I think we're rather after something that's going to be able to make its way up again."

Hollow Dawn (Territory)

Overwhelming Aura: Of rattling, vegetative predation
Named For: The first successful soil-trading ship

The wildest, most utterly rampant area of Rao Ze, a veritable haven for mancatcher lilies, octodews, zeqin scythers, and predatory plants of all shapes and sizes. Very few settle here long-term despite the old earth spits available, unless they're particularly brave or incredibly, wonderfully foolish.

The Sweet Scent of Predation (Feature)

The airs of Hollow Dawn are thick with pollen, spores, seedlings, and pheromones, the mingling extrusia of thousands of predatory plants. *The entire area is technically one huge patch of bad air, and sporescarves or breathing equipment are almost essential.*

Old Earth Risen (Wonder)

Rootquakes in this area have a habit of throwing up island-sized chunks of fertile earth. Soil-traders and researchers rush to these waves to haul them out before they're broken apart, or pulled back down by the hungry seas. *This old earth is highly prized, but rarely traded outside of the reach due to the Ministry's own local needs.*

Mancatcher Lilies (Hazard)

Beautiful with their flowers unfurled, full of screaming sailors once they snap unexpectedly closed. *The petals of a mancatcher lily are impossible to pry apart, but can be cut through with considerable effort.*

Scraw's Promise (Ship)

The largest soil-trading ship of the area, crewed by a combination of ex-Glasshouse ektus and heavily adapted itzenko. While the ship itself tends to draw attention initially (three or four times larger than most the average wildsailor would have seen, travelling on segmented limbs that double as cranes), the crew are the real marvel. *The ship was originally an ektus creation, but they opened their berths to itzenko misfits and paid them the highest honour possible - grafting limbs and sharing fibre. Sometimes it's hard to know whether a particular crewmate is more of one bloodline than the other.*

Salt's Run (Territory)

Wreckage: Pre-V battleships, drilling rigs, port parts
The Winds: Laden with memory

Once the deepest part of a salt-rich sea in the days before the Verdancy, the rustling waves of the area are thick with reefs of old ship iron and desiccating drifts. Despite the lingering memory of its pre-V nature, Salt's Run is unusually arid for Rao Ze, the waves holding more of a brownish hue than the usual olive green of the surrounding regions.

Desiccating Drifts (Feature)

Accruing around the leaves and branches of the upper waves, particularly after periods of driving winds, these large deposits of salt regularly attract chameleocudas (some theorizing that the uniformly bland colouration of salt gives their chromatophoric skin a sense of rest and relaxation). *Salt drifts kill nearby leaves and flowers, and make the branches of the tangle dangerously brittle.*

Cobson & Son (Junction)

A spit made from some ancient rig, specializing in the sale of pure desalinated water to thirsty travellers. The rig towers like a tallshank, most of its structure made up of a patchwork of pipes and tanks. *Cobson is long dead, and his son wants rid of the business despite the comfortable life it affords him.*

The Running of the Salt (Festival)

The thrice-yearly festival that gives the entire territory its name, competitors arrive from far-off reaches to take part in a hideously dangerous footrace across the salt drifts. *There is only one prize given to the winner after each festival, despite the huge amount of trade and business it brings to the area. None of the contestants, or organizers, ever seem to come out and say what that prize actually is.*

The Sea of Tongues (Territory)

Oldest Whisper: Stolen Salt
Most Common Dream: Of a mountaintop covered in gorse, the sound of thunder in the distance

Everything speaks within the Sea of Tongues.

... This is, of course, a lie. The wilds are no more talkative within the territory than they are anywhere else around Rao Ze. But it's an *understandable* lie, given the effects of the whisper-suffused winds that ruffle the wavetops and slink in through open portholes. Settlements in the Sea of Tongues are as fortified against words as they are the wilds.

Rampant Words (Feature)

With every shift of the canopy, more and more whispers spin themselves into being. Most of them are simple things, only the suggestion of a word or two sketched out in the air (for those with the eyes to see them) or brushing past the ear (an unusual sensation, but not an entirely unpleasant one at first). But some are deeper, more complex, spouting ancient histories and lost knowledge to the empty skies. *Whispers birthed within the Sea of Tongues rarely last long outside of its boundaries, seemingly made both by and for the unusual properties of their immediate surroundings.*

Whispermills (Feature)

Much like the windmills of certain distant ports, whispermills are large structures dedicated to drawing power from the endless movement of nature. Constructed with large billowing ribbons of canvas or sail hanging from their heights, it's these fabrics that catch and funnel whispers down into the mechanisms working within. *Whispers are threshed and shredded within the walls of a whispermill, turning turbines to fill ceramic batteries while being drained of their vitality. The exhaust ports of these mills dump dead words out into the sink, which then drift limply to the Darkness-Under-Eaves far below.*

Tongues & Teeth (Hazard)

There's a barely-seen ecosystem at work within the Sea of Tongues, one laid on top of the more usual cycle of predator and prey that typifies the wilds. Larger, older whispers envelop simpler ones, adding fragmentary meanings to their own greater whole. The largest and strongest whispers are almost physical, seen as words from various verdant scripts sketched on the winds in uncomfortable colours. *These are the kinds of whispers that would sooner burst a skull than be trapped within one, but those with special training might be able to snag and keep one for a short time. Doing so is likely to have unpredictable effects on the whisper's host, and on the ship and crew they belong to.*

Local Rumours

- Saboteurs are beginning to organize into a full-fledged movement against the Glasshouse's expansion.
- The Empty Splinter are building a god for themselves below the waves, a clutter of scythes and shed chitin and wild, empiric words.
- It's not the midnight storms that are alive, it's the old salt within them.
- All water in the area is tainted with something far worse and more insidious than crezzerin.
- Parasite heirlooms are spreading and flourishing, a new kind of slow-motion Verdancy.
- Chameleocudas will eat meat and salt quite happily, but their prey of choice is far more spiritual - if they were ever to escape the soul-fraying bounds of Rao Ze, there's no telling how much damage they might do.
- The itzenko are not a product of the Verdancy, but a resurgence of something far older.
- Babbling scythers aren't as incoherent as they may first appear.

The Sunsnare (Port)

Local Paper: Yellowing, damp, endlessly recycled
Panels Shattered This Year: 7, all fully replaced

A blister of glass and scrap-iron nestled among the waves, the Sunsnare was the first (and most successful) experiment of the Glasshouse Ministry. An untraditional settlement in many ways, the city is an interconnected series of towers and platforms beneath an irregular bubble, a centre of defiant order standing stark against the wilds beyond.

The Dome (Wonder)

Technically 'dome' is the wrong word to use for the unusual glass-and-amber shield enclosing the city, but it's the one the inhabitants have stuck with. *Years of repair with scavenged materials may have distorted its shape, and in some cases its transparency, but the dome is still solid enough to maintain a controlled environment within.*

Three-Lock Landing (Feature)

Though the Sunsnare has multiple docks and berths throughout the city, passage in and out of the dome is strictly controlled. *All ships must enter and leave through specified airlock-type corridors, their cargo thoroughly inspected and their hull and decks sprayed with stinging alchemical solutions.*

The Weekly Wash (Festival)

All residents that have the capacity to climb are expected to scale the exterior of the dome once per week, working in shifts to scrub the glass clean of mosses, whisper-stuff, and crusting salt. *Though songs are sung and food distributed after a shift, calling this a festival is a bit of a stretch.*

Erringbath (Shadow-Spring)

A complex of well-lit, white-painted corridors in opposition to the usual comforting shadows of most springs, the washing-water within Erringbath is more of a chemical stew than a relaxing soak. *Doesn't do much for mire, but great at fighting infections and illnesses.*

Orbital Cruisers (Fleet)

Multi-limbed gunships sporting advanced alchemical weaponry, a small fleet patrols the fringes of the Sunsnare at all times. *They're mainly there for defensive purposes, and rarely ever stray too far. They're also, oddly for the wilds, surprisingly uniform in construction - the Sunsnare rattlehands found an effective design and managed to mass-produce it with all of the hoarded resources at their disposal.*

Parasite Atmosphere (Feature)

With the dome acting as a hothouse, one might expect the greenery captured within it to be even wilder than the waves beyond. But, as visitors quickly discover, the Ministry's attentions and methods are second to none where horticulture is involved. *The residents of the Sunsnare have elected to forgo the usual methods of parasite farming for food, instead adapting the very branches of the ironroots into something far more orderly, more stable, than they were ever meant to be. Of all of the smells within the dome, of fruit, of spores, of unknown chemicals and hot sweat, there's not a whiff of crezzerin to be found.*

Long Word (Port)

Common Predatory Plants in Evidence: Octodew, toadgrass, drifting manes, petalsquid
Central Sculpture: "Rising Wings Together"

One of the only settlements within the boundaries of Hollow Dawn, and the home turf of the Empty Splinter. Long Word may be an impressive landmark, but it isn't the kind of place that receives many visitors.

Predatory Streets (Horror)

The homes of Long Word are built straight onto the rustling waves, without so much as wooden planks or cargo netting to act as roads or bridges between them. For all but the most experienced wavewalkers, navigating the town is a potentially deadly prospect. *Some use the rooftops to get around, but this comes with its own problems - drifting manes float sedately through the city, ignorant to the hollow presence of the locals but more than willing to snap up passing visitors.*

Splinter City (Feature)

The whisper-driven itzenko offshoots that call Long Word home live in the area for a very good reason. The predatory plants common to Hollow Dawn, though voracious by nature, pay them very little mind; it seems a meal composed only of frustrated words and discarded shells doesn't arouse their hunger in the same way that blood and living fibre manage to. *Every now and then one of the splinters are swallowed by mistake, but given their pseudoliving nature this is more of an inconvenience than an existential threat.*

The Gatling Archipelago (Port)

Historic Moment: The firing of the Justice Lost
Chameleocuda Treats: Salted bones, iron filings, tears

A chain of faux-islands made from rusting pre-V shipwrecks, the Gatling Archipelago is a beautifully lawless place that still manages to operate as an effective, profit-making sprawl of a junkyard.

Fedurric Lomen (Leader)

An ardent built to a more traditionally ektus scale, a pirate-king engineer with a flair for the dramatic. Loves good drink and good company, but more than either loves forward-thinking experimentation with voltaic and magnetic energies. *Has a huge, bushy beard interwoven with metal rings, which must be painstakingly removed before each of his experiments.*

Ships for the Shipless (Feature)

As engine parts and ship-hulks are their most valuable crafting materials and living spaces, few local to the archipelago travel on traditional vessels. Instead they train and saddle chameleocudas, suiting up in protective gear and riding them into the tangle as they delve. *The training process is NOT an easy one, and effective trainers are highly respected.*

The Drunken Stack (Junction)

Now this is a junction in the truest sense of the word - always packed with sailors, salvagers, and hunters, doing a bustling trade in information and exotic foods, and host to the occasional barside stabbing. Food and drink are cheap here, but information is expensive. *Crews are likely to run into past friends or foes in a place like this.*

Crableg (Smokehouse)

A place that sells tobacco and other burnables, and rents out pipes for the curious to use. *They even occasionally wash the ones that get returned.*

What's the opposite of a flower?

She couldn't find a word for it. Something equally complex and beautiful, but defined by its hollows rather than its petals, by the spaces between the different pieces.

Inaajia, seen from above, made her think of that wordless word.

The undercrew were at the rail, mothryn and ektus and ardent sailors all craning their necks for a better view, hanging over the sides to get a look at the spiralling rings of wood and iron built around the edges of the rift.

And she was there with them, though she tried (poorly) not to seem as invested. Horizoneers were meant to be worldly types, after all. And she was.

But in all the places she'd travelled through, of all the ports they'd docked at, she'd never seen one quite like Inaajia.

Inaajia (Lowport)

Suggested Resources: Blindfolds, tether-ropes, and calming herbs (rift-side living isn't for everyone)
The Inaajia Seasonal Moult: Accompanied by a grinding of gears and splintering of wood, as well as a cheer from the populace and cries of consternation from unprepared visitors

There's a story some sailors tell, of the very first itzenko colony ever discovered. A few even claim to have been on the ship that found them, though such stories almost always end up being spurious in nature.

But there's a kernel of truth to every tale on the rustling waves, and perhaps nowhere else do such kernels sprout than within Rao Ze. It may be hard for visitors to believe, given the beautiful nautilized sprawl of the place, but Inaajia is that same mean little colony discovered such a short while ago - or, at least, what that place has become.

Moulting Bizarrechitecture (Feature)

Inaajia is the kind of port that would feature in tourist brochures as a sight not to be missed, if such works were regularly circulated across the wilds. A living city built around the frames of lost vessels, covering the walls of a rift for at least half a mile below the surface, the architecture existing as both confusing work of art and mechanical marvel. *The cityport of Inaajia changes with the seasons, built to moult and adapt in the image of the itzenko that developed there. The page on the right details the changes Inaajia goes through with each season, and the rest of this page is given over to some of the more important places throughout the city that persist no matter its form.*

Taier (Chop Station)

An open-air establishment run by calm, monastic mantid types. Each attendant butcher is wiped clean of all distinguishing marks, identified instead by their self-crafted cleavers and the smooth shapes of their chitinous shells. *Nobody has ever heard the itzenko running Taier speak, or ask for payment, yet somehow information is conveyed and resources are bartered.*

The Vermillion Vents (Feature)

A network of crawlways and rat runs spreading throughout the port, their walls taken over with an odd-coloured growth of something like chitin, something like coral. *The air of the Vermillion Vents is crisp and invasive, smelling of machine oil and promise. The vents themselves are as mutable as the city, shifting their angles and purposes to suit each seasonal moult.*

Look-Down-Well (Cartoika)

A collection of maps, or more technically *map*, singular. The lowest level of Inaajia is one huge circle of dredged stone, acting both as a foundation for the rift-wall civilization built above it and as a repository of visual information for delvers. The stonework is daubed with a complex depiction of Rao Ze's tangle, sink, and drown, details changed or added to by itzenko explorers and visiting submersible crews. *This is unquestionably the most accurate map a crew will find of the local depths, though it's oddly difficult to remember any details once you're away from the mural.*

Metrica (Junction...?)

A silent room with a long, low roof, honouring mantids who have reached the end of their path and calcified with satisfaction. It's not the liveliest of places, but it's not a sombre one either - it's best if you treat it as a museum, the locals say, displaying the potential of great treasures. *Drinks are served so visitors use this as a junction, but all but the most open minded outsider finds the aura of the place slightly off-putting.*

Phi Constantino (Leader)

The eldest of the itzenko, as far as anyone can tell. Phi is refreshingly approachable, and takes pride in speaking every active language of the rustling waves. Their outer carapace is even adapted to hinge open and closed in sections, giving them the ability to speak in patterns usually reserved only for signalling-flags and shutterboxes. *Phi will readily share that the reason for their advanced age is related to their goal; to perfect not only their own form, but that of the entire city they're in charge of.*

The Spring Moult

The habitable sections of Inaajia lever themselves up to the very rim of the rift at the beginning of spring, meeting the melting snow and explosion of budding growth with open shutters and a resurgence of trade. The port sheds its nautilized coverings, becoming more of a haven for airships and normal wavecutters than submersibles. Most of the buildings go through a flowering process of their own too, with rooftops opening to the skies as they let the close air of the winter months free.

Crews might come across...

- The first traders of the year receiving a hearty welcome, complete with thrown garlands of riftside flowers. This is partly ceremonial and partly mercantile, a celebration invented by Phi Constantino to help spread the word that their bloodline's home turf is as welcoming to trade and outsiders as anywhere else.
- Vines and creepers snaking through the city streets, casually hacked back by passing itzenko locals as they go about their day. It's one of the drawbacks of living on the rim of such a large rift, the constant incursion of nature, but despite the occasional hazard (and marauding predatory plant), it does bring a wonderful splash of colour after a leafless winter.

The Summer Moult

A time for construction and ship-building, using the materials gathered throughout the months of spring trade. Streets unfold, capping and covering the rift's mouth with wood and chitin to make one huge shipyard. Almost every citizen of Inaajia, both the itzenko natives and the settlers of other bloodlines, are given a slew of tasks to complete. Some of them may seem inscrutable at first, but the shipmakers are a clever lot - by the end of the season, an entirely new fleet has been assembled through honest labour, workers rewarded with trinkets from distant reaches and traded foods.

Crews might come across...

- Itzenko moulting and re-moulting to adapt to specific jobs, most often log carrying and tree cutting.
- Temporary tents for designers and shipwrights, supplied with reams of freshly pressed paper and pots of ink. These tents are usually built upon raised areas of the rift-capping platform, allowing temporary overseers a good field of view over the various components being created around them.

The Autumn Moult

The slowest, but somehow most dramatic change for visitors, when the leaves begin to changes and the wind bites colder than normal. The city recedes; districts crawl slowly down the trunks and branches that border the rift, streets disconnecting from their neighbours. The summer ship-building platform dismantles itself, becoming a set of elevator shafts and staircases that connect the different sections of the split city.

The parts that remain near the rim continue to act as docks for airships and wavecutters, spires and jetties bustling with wildsailors as they head out to gather the last supplies needed to help the city last through the coming winter.

Crews might come across...

- Leaving ceremonies for long-time residents that wish to winter elsewhere, especially those non-itzenko that hail from distant ports. The houses belonging to these residents are sealed up with a mixture of sap and wormapple pith, kept in gummed stasis throughout the winter so they can be easily slipped back into by those returning in the spring.
- The newly made fleet leaving port, ten or twenty ships a day, full of old sailors and young guns off for their first voyage. As these ships return, laden down with supplies to be transported to warehouses down at sink-level, they're dismantled with terrifying efficiency by a small cadre of specially trained rattlehands. The reclaimed materials are stored and catalogued, reassigned to the upcoming nautilization process of the winter.

The Winter Moult

A shuttering of the doors and closing of the walkways. With the first snowfall comes nautilization, the process of turning the entire city into two massive rings - one for comfortable habitability, one for lowport activities and the submersible exploration of the still-warm sink.

Crews might come across...

- The last of the rim-level territories making their way down to the sink, rejoining the districts that moved earlier in the year. It's a concertina of architecture closing up, gaps and spaces filled with the wood from reclaimed ships.
- Submersibles heading out into the lower wilds, using claws and grapples to deal with the brittle branches. Exploration during the winter has a minefield of hazards to contend with, but the biggest threats of Rao Ze - the predatory plants - have died back enough to make it one of the safest times to enter unmapped areas. This exodus also helps locals contend with the unusual pull that some feel across the reach, a pull to the deeps that none can quite explain.

The Empty Splinter (Faction)

Home Turf: Long Word
Motivation: To persist against all odds.

Itzenko biology tells a story, of constant re-shaping and self-improvement. It's one of the core facets of mantid life in most colonies, with areas set aside for the calcified perfections of honoured itzenko dead that have reached the end of their path. This moulting and re-moulting, while sometimes uncomfortable, is part of the betterment of the self (or so most seem to agree).

But nobody asks the shed shells what they thought. About the story they could have told, and how it might have ended.

Perhaps they should have.

Whispers & Chitin (Feature)

When an itzenko moults, the hard outer shell they shed is usually lost to the waves. Most often it dissolves, or is eaten by the carrion-crawling masses below. In some rare cases an itzenko holds on to the pieces that were once a part of them, as an ardent might keep a tooth knocked out in a bar fight as a memento, or an ektus press a particularly beautiful fallen bloom between the folds of a chart. In rarer cases still, the moult-husk is preserved in its entirety, turned to an arconautic marionette to serve as a companion, or as crew for a ship.
Some chitin remembers, though. It remembers how it felt to live, to move, the story it was a part of - and where do whispers grow, if not from unfinished stories? That's the origin of the Empty Splinter, a faction of abandoned chitin and unfinished stories both striving to be less hollow.

Words That Scythe (Wonder/Horror)

Each member of the Empty Splinter is a manifestation of a particular whisper, grown from the frustrated ambitions of the itzenko it was shed from. These whispers are wilder than most, entirely unstable - the longer they stay within their chitinous shell, the more they want their story to end. *It's an impossible goal, unfortunately - without the ability to moult and improve, the stories these whispers tell are frustrated, endless, whipping back and forth through unattainable possibilities. They affect the world around them like a virus, fragments of meaning leaking out from between mantid plating, twisting chance and narrative in unexpected ways (and not always in their own favour).*

Striving For Something More (Feature)

Splinters sometimes organize themselves into small bands, resembling marauder groups, but they have no true faction-based goals. Or, more accurately, their goal is to aid each other in bringing the stories that make them to a close. There's a sense of desperation that hangs around members of the Empty Splinter, born more of frustration than sadness or loss. *Many assume that these ex-itzenko want nothing more than to be 'real', to graduate their arconautic half-life and become more permanent. Nothing could be further from the truth; it's the very permanence of their existence that thwarts them. These stories want nothing more than to end.*

Whisper-Flesh (Feature)

Though not particularly warlike or murderous, splinters tend to find themselves drawn into conflicts wherever they go (something about stymied narrative energy, whisper-theorists posit). And while their skills in combat are related mostly to the itzenko that shed them, their defences are far superior to most. *Empty Splinters are resistant to Keen damage due to the mantid chitin they're comprised of, but no damage seems to stick unless an attacker is using whispers of their own as they fight. Wounds in their imagined flesh flow closed, and broken bone-like runes reknit as fast as the waves around them grow.*

Principles

From what those that have come into contact with the Empty Splinter understand, they operate on principles that roughly resemble:

- Expansion is imperative, in case there's something out there that might bring a narrative closer to conclusion.
- Avoid captivity, silence, stillness.
- Finish the story.

Quick NPCs

- **Isaka Walks Northward (splinter)**: A trader with an acid-scarred head-shell hiding flowing silver script. Speaks Low Sour and Saprekk to a decent standard, but respects those that engage her with Raka Spit. Isaka trades goods from lower in the tangle for information on the Conflagration.
- **The Quiet of Ko Kora (splinter)**: Working as a bounty hunter of sorts, Ko Kora bucks the Empty Splinter trend of rashness and frustration and seems entirely at peace with what he is.
- **Ala Vidomassa (ardent)**: An elderly ardent scholar living on a small ship moored above a large itzenko colony. They study mantid history and society, and correspond through bottled messages with itzenko researchers in the lower waves on the nature of whispers and stories.

Story Hooks

- A newly discovered spit seems barren of habitation until the crew discover a small colony built into its undersides, filled with members of the Empty Splinter.
- The crew's ship is caught on a blockade of itzenko design, but there doesn't seem to be anyone around to greet or fight them.
- A lone splinter lands on deck, obviously pleading for help despite the lack of a shared language.
- A quasi-living ship with calcified whispers for a frame and hard-edged words as saws crosses the waves, the splinters within living out some piratical ambition... And living it well.

As far as Hodr was concerned, his wavebound fellows spent entirely too much time obsessing over words.

There are whispers on the breeze, they rumble excitedly, grasping nets and spears as if words could be so easily caught. They're there for the excitement, the capture of stories, and it wasn't that he blamed them for it - of course, such a life was one he might have lived for himself if things had turned out differently.

But he had all the stories he needed under the dome. The narrative of sprouting seeds and blunted thorns, litanies of ordered growth in the face of nature's chaos.

Those were the tales that sent him to work with a sense of purpose, and to sleep with the satisfaction of a job well done.

The Glasshouse Ministry (Faction)

Home Turf: The Sunsnare
Motivation: Taming the waves with iron and glass.

To enclose and partition the entirety of the rustling waves is an absurd and impossible goal, but as far as the Ministry are concerned, it's also a worthy one. What started as a group of bright-minded engineers and alchemists has become a thriving community with glass-domed settlements spread throughout the entirety of Rao Ze.

Ektus Adaptation (Feature)

More than half of the Ministry workers are ektus, and not without reason - the focus on controlled, stable environments has allowed them to adapt and flourish. *Glasshouse ektus tend to be tall and limber, their bloomscatter more vibrant and their thorns shorter.*

Embracing the Weird (Feature)

Alchemists and experimental researchers are given free reign in terms of their methods, as long as their projects fall within certain parameters. *The only hard limit is a rejection of crezzerin, despite its usefulness.*

Parasite Heirlooms (Wonder)

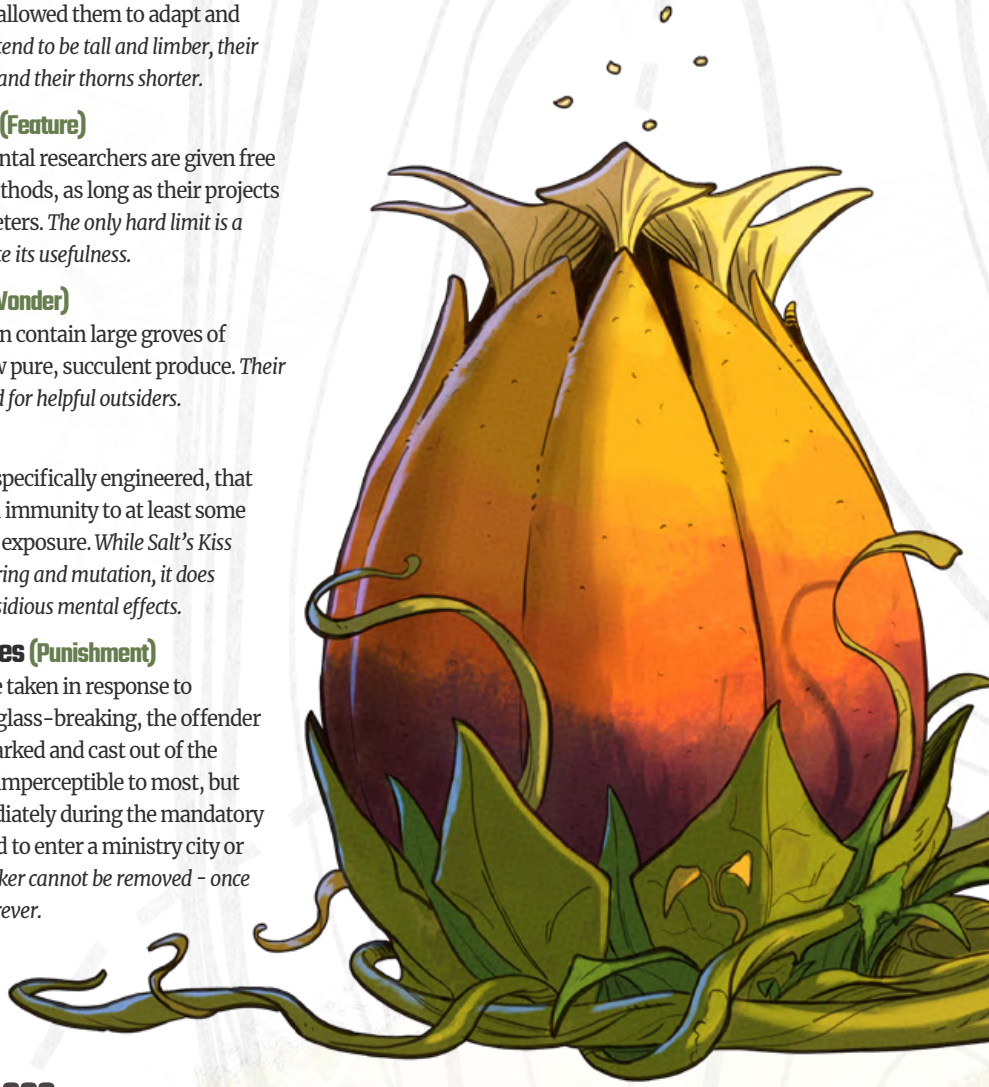
Ministry settlements often contain large groves of heirloom plants that grow pure, succulent produce. *Their seeds are a common reward for helpful outsiders.*

Salt's Kiss (Wonder)

A benevolent contagion, specifically engineered, that gives its carriers a natural immunity to at least some of the effects of crezzerin exposure. *While Salt's Kiss decreases the chance of searing and mutation, it does nothing to halt the more insidious mental effects.*

The Closing of the Gates (Punishment)

A rare but severe measure taken in response to sabotage and purposeful glass-breaking, the offender is indelibly chemically marked and cast out of the community. The mark is imperceptible to most, but becomes apparent immediately during the mandatory decontamination required to enter a ministry city or outpost. *The chemical marker cannot be removed - once it's there, you're marked forever.*



Principles

A logical and orderly set of achievable goals and maxims, just as they should be.

- The waves are bountiful, but unpredictable - use caution when encountering novelty.
- Poor hygiene taints experimental results - stay bathed and chemically scrubbed when possible.
- Learn from the past, but look to the future - it's brighter than you think, and you help make it so.

Quick NPCs

- **Zirius (ardent)**: An engineering overseer for a small Ministry outpost, worried about the whisper-related effects of a nearby Splinter camp.
- **Gahand Oko (ektus)**: A cruiser captain, almost entirely covered in blooms and missing an arm.
- **Paarl (ektus)**: Elegant and cheerful, his demeanour hides a streak of wanton destruction and a chaotic pull towards subterfuge.

Story Hooks

- One of the crew is mistaken for a saboteur and marked by the Closing of the Gate.
- A shipment of amberglass has been delayed, one that was necessary for a nearby glasshouse's environmental control.
- The crew are sought out due to rumours of their experience with a particular monstrous plan.
- A Ministry settlement goes into lockdown with the crew trapped inside.
- An heirloom crop is spoiled by an unknown, but fast-spreading, disease.
- A particularly powerful rootquake has shattered the dome of a settlement, and the panicking locals need evacuation.
- An itzenko is rumoured to have moulted their way out of the mark left by the Closing of the Gates.

FIREFLY RESOURCES

Watch Results (Peace)

6: A distant flash of greeting in Signalling, with no malice or ill intent.
5: One of the undercrew reveals they've been saving a particularly uncommon and delicious fruit to share with the entire ship.
4: A salt formation in the near distance.
3: One of the crew develops a hacking cough, but assures you that they're fine.
2: The distant hiss of a chameleocuda chasing its prey - not you, thankfully.
1: A storm on the horizon. It's too distant to affect you right now, but it's on your course.

Watch Results (Order)

6: An irregular dome over a small research station, unfamiliar plants pressed up against the glass.
5: A discarded crate of alchemical supplies.
4: A spit made from an old converted battleship, with sounds of laughter and the clatter of dice echoing out from within.
3: A party of mantid hunters unsatisfied with their usual prey, openly considering you as a target.
2: A Ministry outpost with its glass cracked open, overgrown with predatory plants.
1: Saboteur pirates settling a personal score.

Watch Results (Nature)

6: A stretch of alchemically altered parasite plants from a nearby Ministry settlement, somehow still pure despite their exposure to the wild waves.
5: The remains of an unfortunate mantid explorer caught in a large predatory plant, their possessions tantalizingly just out of reach.
4: A threshing wind of salt crystals that blast the ship's exterior.
3: A savage living thunderstorm that lasts for days.
2: The deck lights up with the scintillating patterns of a nearby lion's mane.
1: An octodew's tendril snaps closed around the ship.

Trade Goods & Cargo

- **Alchemical Resources (export)**: Newly developed compounds and tinctures have a habit of making their way out of Rao Ze, either through legitimate trade or smuggling.
- **Salt (export)**: Mined from drifts or collected by sifting the wind, other reaches tend to import it for the purposes of meat curing and dealing with the unruly thrash.
- **Heirloom Seeds & Bulbs (export)**: A side effect of the purification processes used by the Ministry's grove-tenders and alchemical researchers, various plant species (many edible) have had their crezzerin'd taint removed.
- **Glass (import)**: The Ministry's expansion relies on regular shipments of salvaged glass from all across the sea, and they'll pay a premium for the stuff no matter the quality.
- **Oils (import)**: High-quality machine oils made from out-of-reach materials are always in demand by engineers and rattlehands.
- **Masons, Crafters, Engineers & Researchers (import)**: Not really a cargo commodity, but definitely desired like one, the research on better environmental protection is ongoing.

Passengers

- A novice chameleocuda-jockey that lost their mount, rather embarrassingly for them.
- A ketra explorer from a far-distant reach, fascinated by the quiet industry of the Ministries and their push for progress.
- An itzenko courier with a broken wing, passing messages from one colony to another.
- A collection of hunter-researchers trying to bring in a pair of lion's manes alive for study.
- A grieving youth with their crystallized family in tow, victims of Salt's Bite.
- An unassuming ektus that lights up in worrying patterns when sprayed by Ministry chemicals as you enter one of their ports - the gates are closed to them, and likely to you too.

Endemic Hazards

- **Chameleocuda**, the only common apex predator of the region (unless you count the hungry plants and patient leviathans...).
- **Octodews**, ambush-hunter plants that can digest an entire ship.
- **Living Storms** that doggedly pursue ships they feel have slighted them.
- **Salt's Bite**, a mutated form of the Salt's Kiss contagion that slowly transforms sufferers into crystalline statues.
- **Lion's Manes**, efficient plant-based hunters moving in pairs.
- **The Jagged Orchid**, an elegant but destructive mantis rising silently from the waves.

Zeqin Scythers

[Medium Plant] Splay-clawed acrobats

One could mistake a zeqin scyther for an itzenko, at a distance - they share the same curving claws, the same combination of what seems to be pale inner flesh and hardened outer shell. But this is nothing more than mimicry, the drive of the wilds to create efficient methods of predation wherever possible. Unfortunately for visitors to Rao Ze, the deception is rarely discovered until it's too late.

Zeqin scythers are bipedal plants, their claws and carapaces made of multiple layers of sharp-edged leaves. The ivory interior these leaves contain is actually a corrosive jelly-like substance, used both as a digestive sac and a method of propulsion: scythers approach prey slowly until they're within striking distance, then ignite the rear portions of this chemical gel to rocket forward and slam claw-first into their targets. *Use zeqin scythers if you want the crew to face a foe that they might recognise, falsely, as a friend... at least at first.*

Drives

Envelop: Scythers use their claws to bleed and incapacitate potential prey, then pull back their carapace leaves and attempt to entirely absorb their victims. Once a food source has been absorbed in this way the plants will close their leaves tightly, trapping the individual within a shroud of corrosive jelly before retreating to a safe place for the long process of digestion.

Presence

Sight: Is that an itzenko, staggering forward with clawed arms waving?

Sound: A gentle bubbling, that becomes more pronounced when the carapace leaves are splayed open.

Smell: A similar acidic tang to that of a lion's mane.

Resources

Specimens: Carapace Leaf, Scything Limb, Dollop of Chemical Gel

Whispers: Friend or Foe, Foliate Mummification

Aspects

Cut Down: The claws of even the youngest scyther are dangerous, able to deal medium CQ Keen damage to targets that draw close enough. Once a zeqin scyther has matured it gains enough control over its chemical interior to use it as both digestive agent and propulsive force - coming into contact with the jelly deals CQ Acid damage, and when used as a fuel the exhaust fumes deal medium CQ Flame damage (though there's no risk of spreading fire).

Rocket Fuel: A scyther's rapid acceleration works well for both attack and retreat. When using it to charge toward a foe, it increases the impact of the plant's claw-based attack by a step (usually from medium damage to heavy damage). When used for a quick escape the force is enough to lift the plants into the air, giving them temporary flight at great speeds.

Living Tomb: If a scyther manages to completely envelop a sailor, it will deal constant CQ Acid damage to the trapped individual. Getting free is possible, but attempts to do so treat conflicts as disasters. This negative effect can be avoided if there's an outside influence working to give aid in tandem with the struggles of the unfortunate sailor inside.

Quirks

Red-Leaf: A divergent form of the usual scyther, where the chemical interior drenches the surrounding carapace leaves with a heady toxic stew (dealing CQ Toxin damage to those that attack the plant with their own body at close quarters).

Babbler: A whisper has taken root among the scyther's leaves, allowing it access to rudimentary speech.

Zeqinreef (Leviathan/Location)

Movement: A deceptively smooth wave-level glide
Powered By: Zeqin scythers anchored to the reef's underside, pulling the reef along with motive claws or pushing it with chemical jets

Scythers can't last long alone on the open waves, the salt-rich air withering their leafy claws and drying out their digestive petals. Luckily for them, the crezzer-fuelled forces of evolution work fast on the wilds.

A zeqinreef is a living location, a knot of earth, rusting metal, and mingled plant matter roughly the size of a pre-V battleship. They can't move on their own, but they don't need to - these reefs stay constantly mobile thanks to hundreds of scythers that latch onto their bellies, dragging them away from dangerous storms and Ministry vessels.

Symbiosis (Feature)

Zeqinreefs and the scythers they play home to would be lost without each other. The scythers use the reef as a kind of recharging base, a safe place to digest caught prey and shelter from the weather. The reefs allow scythers to direct their movement, and would be immobile and defenceless without them. *Seedling scythers develop in the protected interior of a zeqinreef, supping on trickling nutrient-rich sap and fertile soil until they're ready to hunt living prey.*

Launching Batteries (Feature)

While most zeqinreefs offer little more than mobile protection for their smaller charges, some grow mechanisms akin to a submersible's torpedo tubes. Zeqin scythers are herded into these before being fired with great force away from the central mass, used as both a defence mechanism and a way of seeking out new prey. *These launches aren't without danger and, even as used to rapid acceleration as they are, not all scythers survive their flight or landing.*

ZENTINEL'S RISE

They worked in the flashes provided by lightning as it cut across the clear sky, the air around them full of the scent of smoke and hot sap and tin.

"Almost there people, keep it up!"

Less than half of them heard it over a crash of thunder, but those that did redoubled their efforts. The trees they were hacking through seemed almost as resilient as the metal chains they grew from, and every now and then, a spray of sparks from a glancing axe blow or saw pull made them wince in reflexive fear.

Everything was wrong here. They'd known it from the first sight of a rift that never seemed to end, of a mountain hanging in pieces, of their own sawprow dragging them higher and higher up a vine-choked chain too large to keep in mind, let alone in view.

But the ship was nearly free again. Maybe they'd turn tail and run while they had a chance.

Main Elements

This page highlights the most important elements of Zentinel's Rise, a reach of frequent lightning, dizzyingly large rifts, and shackled mountain shards that scorn their own immensity. The rest of this section delves into more detail.

More Rift than Wavetop

Though there are canopy-level routes through Zentinel's Rise, they are few and far between - the mountains of the pre-V days are stolen, swallowed, split apart, become rifts leagues across or constellations of floating ore high above. Rifts rule the waves here, ready to gorge on ships that cling to the 'safety' of the thrash. Crews might encounter...

- Gaping spaces between the ironroots, so large you'd need a telescope to track their circumference.
- Portions of the thrash barely wider than an ironroot's crown, with dizzying drops on either side.
- Rust-coloured bark that rings like metal when struck, and slim hard-edged leaves that absolutely refuse to burn.

Chained Ferrotopography

The ground-growing waves may be sparse, but Zentinel's Rise is by no means empty of land to explore or sea to sail. Some interaction between the more-literal-than-usual ironroots and the ore within the ancient mountains has lifted shards of them aloft, but the wildsea's growth is not so easily stymied. Crews might encounter...

- An archipelago of islands magnetically suspended above a bottomless rift.
- Lemurs swinging from branch to branch, using their momentum to hurl themselves towards distant shards.
- Glimpses beneath the world's skin from high above, of the ironroot's roots beneath where the Eaves should lie.

Ancient Chains

Dragged up from beneath the mountains in the first days of the Verdancy, each cathedral-sized link scribed with old chthonic runes. These chains, and the floating islands they tether, are furred with enough greenery that they're almost easier to sail than the waves below. Crews might encounter...

- Roots and vines winding around sigil-scarred iron.
- Airships soaring overhead as more traditional wildsailing crews cut their way up link after link.
- Portside defenders with armour crafted from chain-metal, still scarred by crezzer-touched roots.

Dry Lightning

The skies of Zentinel's Rise are often clear of clouds (when they can be seen through the floating shards above), but that doesn't mean they're clear of lightning. Even in the absence of storms, forks of blue-gold light crackle in the upper air. The saving grace, the locals point out, is that the Zentinel's leaves are resistant enough to voltaic energy that they've never ended up with a burgeoning conflagration on their hands. Crews might encounter...

- Lightning rods attached to the treetops, to catch and channel lightning into ceramic batteries.
- Tree bark glowing with a dull heat after a lightning strike, a sign of good craytinder.
- An unlucky airship crashing down out of the sky after taking an unexpected hit, spilling sailors and cargo behind it.

The Shallow End

Outlander crews that make it up to the floating mountain shards of Zentinel's Rise are faced with an unusual set of conditions - the Verdancy has taken hold there, so there's a sea to sail, but it's only a couple of hundred feet deep in most places. And, more to the point, no Under-Eaves to fear either (unless they steer themselves off of the islands and down into the waiting rifts below). Crews might encounter...

- A leviathan curled up among island-grown ironroots, too large to hide.
- Gnarled branches doubling back on themselves, their reflexive growth confused.
- Mines and quarries cut into the mountain stone, ringed with walls *just* strong enough to keep the wilds at bay.

Gantry (Territory)

Named Rifts: Forsooth, Agreal's Throat, Guato, Sevrina
Flag Colours: Red For Impassable, Yellow For Caution, Purple For Something Hopeless and Long-Lost And Woefully Misguided

The largest mapped canopy-level territory of Zentinel's Rise, consisting of overlapping ironroot treetops weaving a complex path between massive rifts. Gantry is rarely sailed by locals unless they have a very good reason, or have been exiled from the floating islands above.

Bader's Shovel (Ship)

Though Bader herself is long dead, her gau descendants keep the Shovel running for a singular purpose - to distribute processed fuel for free in repayment of a half-forgotten debt. *Crews that run into Bader's Shovel will find them open, welcoming and charitable, a bright spot of sociability in an otherwise dour and dangerous territory.*

The Rifts That Talk (Horror)

Enough to drive even the hardiest of wildsailors to their last nerve, several of the rifts that dominate Gantry's wavescape are unusually... chatty. *The rifts aren't the ones speaking, luckily, as trying to wrap your head around that kind of truth would be a hazardous endeavour. In fact it's a species of local parrot, the gantry azure, that have become exceedingly good at remembering and mimicking the utterances of passing crews. Every now and then a wildsailor might hear their own words thrown back at them as they pass close to a rift-side nest.*

Gantry's Exiles (Hazard)

Exile from the shackled islands above Gantry is usually reserved for those that try to break the immense chains connecting them. Such attempts are futile, or at least have been up until now, but local authorities take them extremely seriously. *Exiles are treated harshly but fairly, banished from the islands above, but provided for before being ejected. They're typically given purple-painted ships strewn with bells, a warning in sound and colour for anyone that sights them to stay clear, and local rattlehands are absolutely forbidden from adding any aeronautic components to such vessels.*

That Old Serpent (Territory)

Links in the Chain: Twenty Seven, Unbroken
Local Festivals of Note: The Etching Feast, Mizzelmass, The Month of Snow and Scales, Awlday

The smallest territory within Zentinel's Rise, yet somehow the one that seems to inspire the most awe in those that venture out across it.

Perhaps it's the location, with the entire territory running the length of the massive shackles that link the Ottencarv island to the waves far below. Perhaps it's the height, as peering down from the deepest of the chain-rooted branches reveals the entire territory, and the island it connects to, sit above the largest rift of the region. Or perhaps it's the dull yellow of bone that spears out through the treetops at irregular intervals, the chain that supports the territory host not only to ambitious verdant growth, but threaded through with the skeleton of some subterranean viper of a size that would put most of the wildsea's leviathans to shame.

Yeah... It's most likely that last one.

Sailing The Chain (Feature)

The verdant growth that furs the chain is thick enough to sail and wide-reaching enough that even unfamiliar crews rarely venture too close to the edge, but moving from link to link as you ascend can be difficult. Local guides often station themselves on platforms built into the thrash around where the chain meets the wilds proper, renting out their navigational services for a modest to extortionate cut of whatever cargo a ship is carrying. *Some of these guides are more reputable than others, and there are no local laws against them asking for more payment mid-journey.*

Viper's Bones (Feature)

There are few snakes on the wildsea to begin with, but if you take pure mass into account, there may be more 'snake' within this territory than any other. The viper's bones are impressively large and solid, but most local settlements steer clear of them (despite the perfect conditions for building). *Rumours tell that a few of the bones have been hollowed out in secret, and are used as staging areas for breakers dedicated to the Manakesta Principle.*

Awl (Horror)

Scores of miles across, the great rift Awl is reputedly as deep as it is wide. This is almost certainly false, but what even a casual observer will realise (if they can bear to countenance the thought) is that by peering down into it, you're seeing past the sink and drown, past the Under-Eaves, and into a hole wrenched into the skin of the pre-Verdant world below. *Lights glint at the bottom of the rift from time to time, deep enough that they're barely visible, but containing the kind of information that some spend their lives collecting.*

Ottencarv Island (Landmass/Port)

The island that That Old Serpent connects to, floating above Awl. Known throughout the region for its industrial excesses, almost the entirety of the island has been cleared of encroaching wild growth and converted to mines and ore-processing facilities, with citizens living in the shadows of their smokestacks. *With the surrounding ironroots resistant to voltaic bursts and the rift below to dump industrial waste into, Ottencarv factories are known for their reliance on electrical power above all else. Spent batteries are carted out by the dozen each evening, and the sounds of crackling and hammering ring through the streets at all hours.*

Craybridle West (Territory)

Common Fuel Types: Compressed Chemical Fluid, Ancient Oil, Craytinder
Stilt-Leg Sightings: Infrequent, But Increasing

A huge floating mesa that casts a near-constant shadow on the waves below, its lowest point only a stone's throw above the wavetops of the thrash. The mesa is as covered by the wildsea as the waves below, though the ironroots that have settled there are only roughly a quarter of the size of those found below (which still gives them a titanic, imposing height, and allows them to support the weight of ships, but leaves the local Under-Eaves a far less dark and mysterious place).

Settlements within Craybridle West tend to be built more vertically than horizontally, taking advantage of the *relative* ease with which the solid ground of the mesa can be accessed as a firm building foundation. It's not uncommon to find villages built on stilted platforms, partially anchored to the surrounding trees, but their legs resting on the unshackled mountain-stone far below.

Something Growing (Hazard)

Though the mesa is large by the standards of solid ground (and extremely large for a floating object), it's still small compared to the wider waves. Despite this, Craybridle West seems to have attracted its own leviathan, a long-limbed bird of prodigious proportions that stalks through the treescape to hunt its prey. *Dubbed the Western Stilt-Leg, locals point out that despite its size it very rarely attacks vessels or settlements, focusing on the mesa's beasts as a food source instead.*

Craytinder Harvesting (Feature)

The smaller ironroots growing across the mesa are as resistant to lightning as the rest of Zentinel's trees, and industrious local types periodically strip large areas of their bark as a fuel and export material. This fuel, known as craytinder, isn't for burning, but rather for compression - the chemicals it exudes are a perfect fit for most liquid-fuelled engines, and act as an excellent insulator for ceramic batteries. *Good-quality craytinder has a distinct purple hue to it, as does the liquid expelled upon compression. It's this dye that's used to mark the region's exiles and flags in purple, which can lead to unfortunate mistakes for long-time craytinder harvesters.*

Local Rumours

- The alchemical defoliant used by Daivera's border guards hasn't always reacted unexpectedly when it comes into contact with ketra, though none of the ones in charge will admit to this being a recent phenomenon.
- The links of the great chains are hollow, and the roots that dig into them expose these secret spaces.
- A band of pirates roam the Gantry, ships festooned with banners stained purple.
- Second Sister may be the longest crane now, but First Sister was far more impressive... Until she was stolen by the Manakesta.
- A tzelicrae named Quotley Feng lives on every one of the Constellation's islands, but none seem to know about the existence of any of the others.
- The Manakesta succeeded in breaking a chain once, and the island it shackled simply drifted away, rather than falling. Sensible folk do their best to avoid thinking about that now.
- A submeric mawship stalks the underboughs of Craybridle West, searching for something.

The Daivera Constellation (Highport Network)

Average Number of Collisions Per Year: 4
Greenery: Pale, Clean, and Aggressively Pruned

A loose collection of floating islands that orbit each other erratically, constantly in motion. The islands that make up the Daivera Constellation are said to have fountained explosively into the air at the first touch of the Verdancy's fast-expanding growth, leaving them almost entirely free of crezzerin contamination due to their height and isolation. The locals take this as a point of pride, and decontaminate visitors before they're allowed to land.

Unkissed By Crezzerin (Wonder)

Though it's difficult to reach, the Constellation is known across the reach and beyond as a place of refuge for those that want time away from the constant growth of the waves. *Mire recovers faster for crews stopping over in Daivera, though the barter required for local goods and services is correspondingly high (as the locals know exactly how valuable such a feature is to outsiders). The highest islands are almost satellite cities in their own right, so removed are they from the wilds below.*

Daivera Defoliant (Feature)

A thick jelly-like substance made by local alchemists, kept in vats around Daivera's highports. Visitors arriving by airship are required to bathe themselves in the substance before they're allowed entry onto any of the island interiors. *Visiting ketra have particular problems with this substance, the defoliant jelly tending to bond to their skins and stain them vivid, coruscating colours.*

Isai-On-Iron-Wings (Port)

Winch-Miles Clocked on Second Sister: 7338, give or take a couple
Most Popular Exhibit at the Longdrop Institute: A Beast's Finger, Still Flexing Years After Removal

A low heaven for dredgers built around the ruins of an ancient pre-verdant crane assembly, now jutting precariously out over an unnamed (or too-many-named, depending on who you ask) rift. The port itself is small, but constantly thrumming with energy, wood and metal walkways groaning under the weight of caging-bells and new submersible components. With so many of Zentinel's inhabitants looking up at the islands above for inspiration and profit, the workers and explorers of Isai-On-Iron-Wings take a peculiar pride in looking firmly eavesward instead.

Brother's Watch (Workshop)

Built around the base of Second Sister, the longest and strongest of the port's assembled cranes. The engineers within are scarred like leviathaneers, and hold a visitor's gaze for too long to be comfortable - they've confronted and overcome whatever fears they once held. *The Brother's Watch engineers (and don't you dare call them rattlehands) excel in submeric ship adjustments for reasonable prices.*

Caging-Bell Rental (Feature)

For those that want a taste of the depths from a position of relative safety, caging bells can be rented along the dockfronts. The drop is long, and the winch-back slow, but they're well constructed and the cables never snap. '*Never' is a very strong word in this case, but it's great for advertising purposes.*

The Longdrop Institute (Wonder/Horror)

An exhibition hall run by dredgers too old or injured to head back out into the rift, filled with curios from the depths and the memorialised keepsakes of overconfident crews long dead. *The Institute might heal or inflict mire depending on what the crew stumbles upon there, but will always give whispers related to the depths in some way.*

Solen Gorge (Port)

The Southern Tooth: 24 Lightning Converters Running
The Northern Tooth: 8 Lightning Converters Running

Solen Gorge huddles between the twin fangs of That Old Serpent, a mean little port town known for its lack of conveniences and its trade in ceramic batteries.

Gorgeguards (Hazard)

While they style themselves as a group of protectors and lawbringers, the gorgeguards are actually more like a private mercenary group hired by the various battery-fortune families living within Solen. *The majority of locals look on the gorgeguards with disdain, but stay quiet for fear of reprisal.*

The Three Families (Feature)

Descendants of the Gorge's original settler crew, the three families (one ardent, one mothryn, and one gau in terms of hereditary bloodline) control the import of ceramics and the export of batteries. *The gau family are currently at the peak of this mercantile triumvirate, but that looks set to change in the near future.*

Voltaic Dominance (Feature)

There may be nowhere else on the wildsea that relies as much on captured electricity as Solen Gorge. The port has its own system of streetlights, electric lifts in larger buildings, and volt-engine heating throughout the winter months. *There are even rudimentary attempts at neon signage outside some forward-thinking establishments.*

The Serpent Wires (Feature)

A series of metal cables running up from the tip of Solen Gorge's two grand teeth, staked to the bones of That Old Serpent. These wires attract and channel the region's dry lightning down to conversion engines located within the port's teeth, charging batteries for the families to trade. *Local youths are known to wrap their hands and feet in leaf-rubber and climb the serpent wires, treating it as a test of bravery or rite of passage into young adulthood. Following the wires leads these adventurous sorts out into the wilds that cover the chain, and not everyone that makes it out that far returns to claim their glory.*

There were nights when Yasmin wished she'd never seen that flash from the dockside. She could have attributed it to the region's dry lightning, or to an oddity below best left uninvestigated. If she had, she'd probably be the captain of her own ship right now, or at least a navigator for someone eager to leave this rift-cursed place. Not sitting, waiting, with quill and ink.

But she'd been a curious sort from an early age, and there's none so idly curious as the dockside teetotaller on a night of drunks. She'd seen that light and leant over the edge to see more. And she'd understood the words it blinked.

She took a draw from her fungal ale, then another... And another. Her hands wouldn't shake as long as they were wrapped around the mug. There were some things that were better left untranscribed.

The sequence below blinked on, a scatter of truths like seeds.

The Manakesta Principle (Rogue Faction)

Home Turf: Awl, and the islands floating above it
Motivation: To reunite the exposed Eaves and the islands above, to fill rift with root, and to honour the wishes of the lost and lonely lights that most refuse to acknowledge

A loose collection of individuals from all walks of life who have had their eyes opened to some of the uncomfortable truths of the rifts that run through Zentinel's Rise, particularly those of Awl. Settlements on the Rise's various islands have all outlawed membership of the Principle, and practice of any of their chosen activities comes with the penalty of exile, but membership (as unofficial as it is) never seems to stop growing.

The movement takes its name from 'manakest', an entirely light-based style of signalling used long before the Verdancy by smuggling ships that crossed the salt seas by night. One of the first things many who join the movement do is train themselves to communicate in manakest, usually through the use of shuttered moth-lanterns, to more accurately interpret the words of the Pleading Sequence.

The Pleading Sequence (Leader/Horror)

The guiding light of the Manakesta, in the most literal possible sense. The Pleading Sequence is an intermittent communication from the deepest unknown depths of the Awl rift, a distant communication in an archaic dialect of Signalling. It's proof that there's life down there, or so the Manakesta believe, but more than that it's proof that there shouldn't be - communications from the bottom of the rift, when they're coherent enough to be understood and translated, beg for an ending to the lonely darkness of the world's hidden core. *The furtive scholars of the Manakesta keep watch from the rift's edge, or from secret sentinel stations that hang within the undercanopy of the islands above. They record whatever communications they catch from the Pleading Sequence, but the versions they print and distribute to members are heavily redacted. There are secrets they learn, or so the rumour goes, that would mire a mind beyond repair.*

Unfettering Day (It Will Be A Festival, One Day)

Celebrated behind closed doors or in locked cargo bays, in anticipation of the day the great chains connecting the islands will be broken and they'll descend to their rightful place among the roots. *There are no rules or traditions for an Unfettering Day festival save for a symbolic breaking of chains, but enough of such meetings end with a mad dash from local authorities that celebrants dress light and scout out their routes home in advance.*

Break to Use to Break (Feature)

Though the Pleading Sequence gives no clues as to how the islands should be brought down, those loyal to the Principle have settled on their own methods. Acting as citizens and sailors and shopkeeps by day, under the cover of Zentinel's nights, they creep out to the sites where chain meets land and saw, dig, or hammer their way through until dawn or attention finds them. *It's a mark of pride for a follower of the Principle to have a weapon forged from the material of the chains themselves, and the unofficial motto of 'break to use to break' has become something of a passcode in certain circles.*

The Road From Below (Chop Station)

A known front for the Manakesta, but one so highly frequented and heavily guarded that even the locals that find the movement abhorrent can do little about its existence. The butchers of the Road From Below take less of a meat-tithe than usual on offers daubed with purple, a sign that the prey was brought down by one of their exiled fellows. *Nae Si, the establishment's head butcher, actually has no ties to the Manakesta himself - he's simply fatalistic enough to accept that, as an ironbound, the islands will likely fall thanks to some reason or another before his own natural end.*

Principles

Whispered behind hands in crowds or celebrated loud in safer spaces, the principles of the Principle are simple and direct.

- Break the chains however you can
- Help your exiled fellows, for they fell in their attempts so that you might succeed in yours
- Extinguish the lights below, in mercy

Quick NPCs

- **Peacoat (Ironbound)**: Swathed in folds of leather and canvas, Peacoat aims to re-engineer his own form to the point he'll be able to float down into Awl to meet the signaller of the sequence in person. Even his cohorts in the Principle tell him this is a terrible idea.
- **Phara Kiptelsha (Gau)**: A gau raised in a distant, tzelicrae-dominated reach who is valued by the movement as a hacker and wilds-climber. Often found setting up new sentinel stations beneath Zentinel's islands and chains.
- **Oscar Offlenvitz (Ardent)**: An officer of the law, or what passes for the law within the Rise. His view of the Principle is a dim one, but lately he's found himself unable to sleep, haunted by a fragment of translated sequence he stumbled across during an investigation.

Story Hooks

- A group of midnight chain-breakers are arrested, but claim innocence.
- A confiscated hammer is found to be the anchor for an unusually violent spirit.
- The sequence goes dark for many days, then bursts into life with a flood of new information - something has changed in the depths.
- A local crew are secretly refitting their ship into a submersible, in order to attack the chains from within the wild growth around them. They need help to do so, but are cautious in who they'll talk to.
- An Unfettering Day festival is celebrated openly on the streets of one of the floating ports - are the Manakesta Principle emboldened by something?

FIREFLY RESOURCES

Watch Results (Peace)

6: Nearby squirrels are stripping an ironroot of bark, leaving ample amounts of craytinder to collect.
5: The sight of the chains leads a member of the undercrew to compose a rousing verse.
4: A member of the undercrew draws beautiful patterns on the deck with scrapings of rust.
3: An unusually violent high-altitude lightning burst drives insects and creatures beneath the thrash, leaving the waves oddly calm and lit in flickering gold.
2: The ship passes through a cloud of magnetic ore floating just above the waves.
1: A Manakesta exile wreck offers a prime opportunity for salvage.

Watch Results (Order)

6: Flags lead to a nearby port about to have a festival of charred meats and delicious sauces.
5: A merchant airship drops swiftly from the sky, announcing bargains on an electronic loudhailer.
4: The crew come across a new island rising slowly from a rift, already thick with ambitious settlers.
3: A ruined submersible sits nearby, torn open by something from deep below.
2: One of the tethered islands shifts unexpectedly thanks to an explosion in one of its ports - magnetic forces in the area go wild as a result.
1: A Manakesta wrecking barge bursts through the thrash nearby, the crew's hammers at the ready.

Watch Results (Nature)

6: Unusual magnetic forces hold several shards of stone in the air above the thrash, ripe for exploration.
5: A member of the undercrew spots riftside plants growing around the wreck of an old caging-bell.
4: Scavenging insects moving over a broken link of one of Zentinel's great chains.
3: A rift, whispering in a voice one of the crew knows.
2: A leviathan's call from somewhere too close.
1: A lightning strike starts a small fire among the treetops, against all odds.

Trade Goods and Cargo

- **Ceramic Batteries (export)**: Charged easily thanks to the regularity of dry lightning, and considered to be of a notably higher quality and level of safety than the average electricity-storage medium.
- **Craytinder (export)**: An excellent fuel for chemical compression engines, native to the reach - stubbornly refuses to grow anywhere outside of its bounds, which is extremely unusual for wildsea vegetation.
- **Magnetic Ore (export)**: Often traded in large quantities due to the almost limitless supply, often sought out by visiting airship technicians.
- **Copper (import)**: An essential component of the most efficient ceramic batteries, the three families of Solen Gorge will barter high-quality materials for even a handful of copper chunks.
- **Alchemical Supplies (import)**: Though Zentinel's Rise isn't overburdened by a surfeit of alchemists, the relatively limited wavescape means that elements common to other reaches can be hard to find locally.
- **Leaf Rubber (import)**: Useful for sealing metal joins and crafting flexible diving suit components, imported thanks to the local leaves giving particularly poor quality rubber themselves.

Passengers

- A young gau from one of the three families who's trying to smuggle himself and his partner out of Solen Gorge without his sporekin finding out.
- An airship captain, seeking the wreck of her lightning-struck ship.
- An itzenko explorer, eager to plumb the depths of the region's rifts.
- An enormous tzelicrae, on the way to becoming a huskpa, looking for passage to a place where it can rest and continue to grow.
- A pair of mothryn who claim to be twins, but share little similarity to each other.
- An ironbound that swears they were born in the depths of Awl, trying to find a crew that can deliver him safely back to the rift's secret spaces.

Endemic Hazards

- Breaker exiles, members of the Manakesta that still hold to the Principle even though the chains are out of reach.
- Armoured grubs that grow beneath craytinder bark, exposed by harvesters as they work.
- Mawship submersibles that circle the rifts, as if caught in the pull of a drain.
- Manticrows, more organized and less inherently mutated than their out-of-reach cousins, their feathers stained purple by craybark.
- Crawling plants with long tongue-like stems that stalk their prey around the edges of rifts.
- A stilt-legged leviathan that resembles a secretary bird, living amongst the trunks that cover one of the largest floating islands.

Light, Power, & Sound

With the frequent dry lightning and the electroconductive properties of local bark, Zentinel's Rise is the place to be if you want to sail the cutting edge of voltaic technologies with some built-in opportunities and safety precautions.

This focus on electricity and the mastery of voltaics has also pushed development in related areas, each of which are detailed below.

Ceramics

Though primarily used as battery-housings in more industrial areas, the ceramics industry also supplies earthenware pots, jugs, and even furniture to inhabitants of the Rise. It's not uncommon for a ship's galley to be outfitted with a clay oven and a heating element, allowing for the slow but relatively safe roasting of vegetables and meats, or a set of sturdy mugs and bowls that can survive the jostle of the waves.

Leaf-Rubber

Long used as a sealant by amateur alchemists and shipwrights, the insulative properties of the stuff give it far more worth within the boundaries of Zentinel's Rise than elsewhere. Though local leaves don't work well for the stuff, imported rubber is often re-treated and improved upon by local alchemical specialists.

Ordinators

Seen by most as a relic of the pre-V world or the playthings of extravagant merchants, ordinators are complex counting machines a step above the usual cobbled-together punchcard machinery of the wilds. And, in truth, most locals still see them that way - but for those in the know there's a whole world of miniaturized technology on the horizon, electronic pulses passing brasstongue instructions through switch after complex switch.

The Electric Path 3-Track Trait

You are resistant to Volt damage (though your resources are most decidedly not). Mark to become immune to Volt damage until end of scene.

Crystallized Lightning 2-Track Gear

Wrapped in leaf-rubber when not is use, this jewel can be shaken to create a shower of sparks or given a light tap to produce a single weak jolt, suitable for lighting a pipe or kindling. Burn a box to deal massive CQ Volt damage to both you and a nearby target.

Battery Charger 4-Track Gear

A tiny set of hand-cranks and wires attached to copper clips. Use a task to add the Charged, Overcharged, or Unstable tag to any volt-holding resource.

Electric Trailblazer 2 Stake Addition

Stored lightning is released slowly as the ship travels, in just enough volume to set branches crackling and snaps of power arcing between leaves in your wake.

- **Ignore cut on ratings rolls imposed by the ship being harried or pursued**

Navigational Ordinator 3 Stake Room

Though the machine is large enough to require its own room on the ship, technicians swear that within fifty years it'll be the size of a compass.

- **Ignore any negative effects of Pressure or Scrutiny when rolling to manoeuvre the ship**

Voltaic Bath 3 Stake Room

An experimental therapy room devised by surgeons and rattlehands working in tandem.

- **A single wildsailor can heal a box of any one of their injury tracks when the ship drops anchor (once per character per journey)**

The Electric World

While arc-powered technology exists in all corners of the wildsea, it remains niche. It might be due to the difficulty of storing lightning once it's been harnessed, or the inherent danger of fires in the presence of large amounts of electricity. It might even simply be due to the limits of available material, where bespoke engines and mechanisms can have the necessary salvage collected over time, but a factory process would be woefully lacking in supplies.

But the wildsea is a place of possibilities, and if your table want to plunge the waves into an electropunk future we're certainly not going to stop you. To increase the amount of electrical potential on show across the waves (even outside the limits of Zentinel's Rise), consider...

Increasing the Availability of Batteries

Ceramic batteries are a useful way to store power, but they don't have to be the only resource available. Electricity might also be stored in...

- **Voltaic cocoons**: Spun and shed by metamorphosing insects, these split cocoons can be sewn shut and then pierced with copper scrap when needed. They won't power large engines, but the sizzling juices they contain will happily drive smaller machines.
- **Battery buds**: Tightly-closed flower buds found growing in places struck regularly by lightning. A battery bud contains a stored charge, but only releases it once doused in fresh water.

Including More Electrically-Powered Ships

And not necessarily just in the wild blue; the core book has Voltaic Runners on page 171, and Ceramic Batteries on page 173. The combination of these gives a vessel purely powered by voltaic energy that moves in a crackling glide above the wavetops.

Make It Clear That Most Electricity Is Safe

Or, as safe as anything gets on the rustling waves. While lightning strikes may start fires (that are luckily quickly put out by sheets of rain), more carefully harnessed electricity will rarely, if ever, start an unexpected blaze.

FJANDANGO

Created by Ric Heise

"I love this place."

Karabet was leaning against the trawler's front rail, idly dropping piece after piece of pocket-scratch down into the mulcher below. He looked, as much as an ektus could, oddly content.

"Really, captain?" Raxa looked out at the waves. "Because all I can see is... trash?"

Karabet's blooms caught in the wind, shedding a couple of petals.

"Trash indeed, my friend. Glorious, glorious trash. Makes a man want to burst into song."

Raxa had heard too many of Karabet's improvised trisketar tunes to fall for that bait. Instead she turned her attention back to the waves, each swell bringing something new and broken into view. An old ship hull, a chunk of veined amber, a raccoon's skull etched with some sort of acid.

What kind of songs, Raxa wondered, would have been sung about those?

Main Elements

This page highlights the most important elements of Fjandango, a reach of tropical heat, traveling trash, and dense jungle depths. The rest of this section delves into more detail.

Junglous

The lignin tide that swells in Fjandango is a swaying morass of rope-like boughs, which act as trunks in some places and roots in others. The sea here is formed mostly of dipterocarp trees, but the crezzerin'd capriciousness of nature has ensured other brands of branch also flourish - mahogany, utie, and kapok are all present. Crews might encounter...

- A crew, or what was once a crew, tangled up and dangling in the lignin knitting.
- The overpowering and vibrant scent of life, a smell of stitching that spurs.
- Dazzling displays from predators and prey; bright colours are there for a reason in the junkgle.

Junk-Strewn

Those who came before the Verdancy had the luxury of waste. The things they cast aside were as swept up in the growth as the salt from the seas, and these riches have filled Fjandango with pockets of yore. Even now, across the vast expanse of the wilds, any waste which can wander will eventually scratch upon the bark of Fjandango. Crews might encounter...

- Traders, or traitors, utterly obsessed with what came before, and willing to do what they must to bargain.
- Collections which have begun to collect themselves. Plates forming into mail, literally begging to be worn.
- The wonders and majesty of pre-verdant technology used in ways wasted, wrong, and effective.

Charged With Change

In Fjandango, personal growth is more accessible... Though it's more likely one encounters personal *growths*. Evolution happens over generations outside the junkgle, but within the acid rainforest, individuals shift and change much more dynamically. Crews might encounter...

- A smiling apostle of the Eidolons serving, happily and with glee, as an agent of cataclysmic entropy.
- A fleshbound, one who embraces crezzerin and fuses intentionally with their ship.
- A canopic crezzeRain washing life into the gaps that persist within nature.

Wetlands

Whether on fallen leaves that have collected centuries of dew, or in the woven nests of antlogators, water wanders throughout Fjandango. Most of it is not potable. Well, you *could* drink it, but it would be much safer for everyone to steer as clear as possible of that usually life-giving substance. Crews might encounter...

- The daily appreciation of a community as they collect during an opening ceremony.
- Ambient amphibious anxieties.
- The splash and spray of water at play (literally).

Being Beneath Boughs

The branches of Fjandango are home to life, wherever it can find purchase. Given the webs of woven wood that the junkgle boughs naturally fall into, it's easier than usual to create an illusion of safety and permanence within the sea itself. The waves are something of a maze, something of a pattern, and something of a poem to a world long-lost. Crews might encounter...

- The entrance of a xylem phloer, the curious ship filling the air with chips of bark as it breaches skyside from within a newly-travelled branch.
- Fallshank communities protecting or defending their homes from vessels which roam.
- Midday constellations forming as the sun reaches through the branches, inspiring tales and promising adventure.

The Upheaval (Territory)

Number of Litterivulets Feeding the Effluvian: 91
Active Magnafyres: "I am not allowed to tell you that there are 3."

The Upheaval is the off ramp for the waste of the world, both old and new. Sauntering rubbish washes up on barked banks waiting to become part of an embankment, or embarkment... Whichever the rattlehands foolishly think will ward against that which has been cast off. Bloomtides of rubble, rubbish or, rarely, rewards, can be a curse or a boon; the Upheaval is a definite display that one's trash can easily be treasured.

Trash Statues (Competition)

Seasonally, heavers will bring the rubbish they've hunted together construct statues that reflect deeds done within the past season. The winner has the honour of constructing a final piece, a new statue using the best bits from each of the other failed entries. *Visiting crews may be shocked to discover a competitor is constructing a diorama of one of their recent deeds.*

The Lost, Found (Cult)

The Church of Trash is built without doors; it is open to all. Any who feel directionless can receive purpose and guidance from Jeanette Hydraxis, the Pope of Trash. *Light pours through the cult's gathered glass, and their stained carpets engulfing whatever falls - Jeanette parses percipience from glistening splotchy spales.*

The Worked Shop (Roving Workship)

Captained by a technoarconautic genius, an individual dedicated to salvaging pre-verdant machinery and using it in all the wrong ways. Their creations always work, but rarely as originally intended (some of them functioning against all mechanical logic), and the vessel they captain lacks any sin of an engine. *Payment is expected for services rendered, even if you didn't ask for any.*

The Darkness-Above-Eaves (Territory)

Brightest Natural Light: Fungaluminescent docking areas
Deepest Solar Penetration: To the door of Gahruk's shack (but NEVER within)

The branches above are strong enough to prevent the questing fingers of light, but not of eager wildsailors. Suspended in chain, rope, and vine, communities spring forth from the shadows, thriving on the constant chaos of the surrounding sea. Collectively surviving or falling, those who live here are as adaptable as they are stubborn.

Penumbral Permanence (Feature)

The sun cannot set where it cannot touch. Many within the Darkness-Above-Eaves grow and adjust to the lack of luminosity in curious ways, to the extent that it becomes difficult for them to be out among the brightnesses of the wider world. *Anything stronger than a dim glow is abhorred by the deeper denizens, as are crews who rely on such.*

Chorus of Nature (Wonder)

The buzz and play of life enjoys a melodic thrum. Many will come to find themselves singing along as part of the chorus, or realize that they're singing a solo with the rest of the wooden waves playing their accompaniment. *This can be either deeply troubling or deeply rewarding; mire is often cleared and earned through the sudden awareness of song.*

Shadows Shifting (Horror)

It can be difficult to see movement within the Darkness. Unless, of course, it is the Darkness itself that moves. Some shadows refuse to rest where they're cast, flickering and scratching for freedom. It's not uncommon for sailors to discover that their shadows have run off to play, empowered by the untethered shades that crowd them. *These freed forms may need to be convinced to return to their hosts.*

Salina Swale (Territory)

Varieties of Salt Currently Sold by "The Goose": Eighteen
The Roil: Continuously bubbling

Waves of wood merge into salted swamplands in this territory, bending and twisting to reflect the flow of water within and without. Branches seem weakened by the hypersalinated flow, but woe comes to any sailor who thinks to test such theories. Many vessels have been moored by salt-rot, or stupidity.

Oasisalt Licks (Landmark)

Peaceful gathering places for wild creatures and wildsailors alike. Aggression is inexplicably inconceivable while within these areas. *Local rootless fleet-families regularly use them as seasonal lodging-places, and are often found teaching useful waveside skills to their young within a lick's comforting influence.*

Banishing Splashes (Ritual)

Salt-saturated water holds much more than fresh, both physically and spiritually. Water from the marshes is often sanctified, but hardly purified - sailors desiring to perceive 'beyond the veil' are known to drink deeply from the splashes. *Clever ones know that to perceive spectrally is to be perceived in return...*

The Salt of Your Brow (Custom)

To sweat in toil for others within the Swale is deeply valued, and often repaid in kind by love or labour. *Visiting sailors will find residents more willing to engage in acts of mutual aid rather than relying on the usual wild economy of goods-based barter.*

The Splitwood Lark had sailed branches of a hundred colours, battled through living storms and voracious sandstorms, shouldered leviathans aside. It had seen more of the waves than any of its crew could claim to, individually or taken as a group. It was a ship with stories, and not the kind you forgot.

And as it followed the xylem phloer through the sap-rich darkness, Quinna mentally added another to the list. How many wave-cutters could claim to have travelled *inside* an ironroot's branches, rather than across them?

Brewed In Chorus (Fleet)

Brews You'll Love: At least one
Ingredient They Don't Realize They Need Yet: A fresh dance

A collection of fomentor-repelling fermenters who now sail to forage, hunt, barter, and create together throughout the Salina Swales. Their ships are designed to purify and utilize the natural waters of the reach, hulls eschewing metal to avoid salt-rot. The biggest can even lever themselves free of the wavetops, anchoring themselves just above the thrash so that smaller vessels can clean off whatever conglomerate materials can't be harvested from their hulls. The crews are as friendly as possible, until forced not to be.

Bottling Day (Event)

Whenever a new brew is immortalized through bottling, several specimens are sent out to the wider waves. Sailors on far-off shores might spy a flow of glinting glass moving against the leafy tides, evidence that a handful of bottles have been sent out to a special recipient somewhere over the horizon. *The Brewed Chorus can immediately tell if one of these bottles has been uncorked (or, worse still, drunk) by someone other than the intended party. Unkindness is paid back in kind.*

Melodious Draught (Warship)

The arm of might which churns the brew pot. It has a legendary knack for showing in moments of peril, the sailors aboard always willing to step in and attempt to deflect disaster. The ship appears in places stories will be told of their deeds - the crew (and vessel) seem to be fueled by such tales. *Whenever Caohrel is asked how they travel such impossible distances, he smiles to himself and replies, "Word of mouth is the strongest advertisement".*

Harmonious Draught (Junction-Ship)

A ship designed entirely for gathering. The Harmonious Draught is the perfect place to get away from a life upon the waves without having to head to solid ground. Music, drama, and other forms of entertainment are constant upon the Draught's inlaid stage. *Journeys and performances are often timed so that ambient sounds naturally enhance the experience of those lucky enough to observe. Crews will sometimes be approached by apprentice brewsters, doubtless trying to sell their first case and earn the right to sail.*

Distilled Bardistry (Wondrous Beverages)

Beverages carbonated in song. The most storied libation brewed by the fleet, a secret of Caohrel's innovation shared sparsely, despite the creation it leads to being shared openly and eagerly. Bubbling and fizzing with the sweetness of words that tickle (or torture) the spirit. *Drinkers will find that whenever the bottle is opened, the art shared is pertinent to their situation. Almost as though the drink had been waiting for that exact moment, when you think about it.*

Caohrel (Leader)

This broad mustachioed ardent leads by his motto, "It is better to have it and not need it, than to need it and not have it". Having cast off a life of rugged individualism, he formed a community distilled in labour. Caohrel is ready to pour a drink and share a smile as song pours forth for all who come to his ships in peace. *People can't agree if all his gardening tools are also weapons, or if all his weapons are also gardening tools. The deft application of his crafts is inarguable, however.*

The Filled Land (Port)

Current Tallest Heap: Avetine
Steadiest Hand(s): Bartolk, tzelicrae garbaqueduct-gondolier

It's said that all litterivulets lead to The Filled Land - when waste wanders, it is inevitably found here. The variety and abundance of trash on display can be nauseating, especially to those as parsimonious as wildsailors (though some of that nausea may well be from the smell, a nasal cocktail of the deliciously discarded). The local 'resources' have made certain garbage magnates unearnedly wealthful, a fact becoming more obvious and more pertinent to those that live on the fringes.

Inherited Defences (Feature)

The accumulation of refuse-based wealth is only possible because of the automatic defense systems picked from centuries-old salvage and bolted to the walls. Only that they work is known, not how. *Often the only warning as one of these weapon readies to aggressively defend is the ominous glow of accumulating energy.*

Insidious Pirate Plot (Feature)

The magnates of The Filled Land are dismissive of the emissaries at their consulate gates, raiders seeking to arrange a heist, assault, coup, or act of sacrilegious bloodletting. Charming corsairs cunningly and cruelly choose fringe citizenry as a kind of quarry, urging them to action if necessary. *Pirates pay well just to be heard out; they know they can take back what's given if needs be.*

Garbaqueducts (Feature)

The flow of trash is contained, mostly, to the stone channels which race and zag through the community. The predictable pattern makes them more boon than nuisance to those experienced in the ways of their ways. *The contents of the garbaqueducts belong to the magnates. Your hands are not theirs.*

The Bound Maw (Port)

Number of Eaves-Bound: 24
Number of Eavesbound: Most, Save 24 or so

A network of vines and lives suspended over a rough-throated ravine. A skull hammocked in between toothsome crags on either side of the ravenous dark below, threatening to bite without needing to lunge.

The ravine, lacking guile, swallows all who dare plunge.

Luminous Lake (Feature)

Gathered in the weave of leaves, a lake has grown. The water is filled with things all life needs, including light, but tales of their healing properties tend to leave out critical information. *The waters must receive life to give life.*

Constantellations (Wonder)

The sun does not reach here, but as the stars flow above, so their echoes flow below. One must travel deep into the Maw to observe Constantellations, a trip as fraught with danger as it is rewarding. *The stars beneath are bore from stories, and those that study them never bore for stories.*

Howls From the Void (Terror)

Wind rips through the cracked darkness below, chilling to the core all who hear and feel the roar. The rage of the darkness at your persistence is palpable, but those that brave the gale may detect a paradoxical loneliness within the rending air. *It is worse when the wind is heavy, hot, and humid.*

Local Rumours

- Every now and then, a deep draught from the Banishing Splashes will send one deeper into visionary truth than they expect - they'll learn a secret of the pre-V world that they're unequipped to process, whispered to them by a ghost that should never have held on for so long.
- Jeanette Hydraxis is nothing more than an inherited pseudonym, as much a title of office as the word 'Pope'.
- Spend too long staring at the trash of The Filled Land and you'll find yourself remembering games you never knew, poems you never read.
- The garbage magnates of The Filled Land pay more attention to the goings-on of their stinking empire than it may appear.
- Fermenters that frequent Salina Swale may not use metal for their ships, but their brewing-materials are constructed from the finest scrap available.
- Xylem phloers avoid the trash-strewn waves of Fjandango by travelling within branches, using natural sap-channels to traverse an ironroot before bursting out through the bark when they approach their desired destinations.
- The songs and stories communicated through distilled bardistry rarely take place within the confines of the junkgle, speaking instead of unknown lands and fresh new faces.
- Rumour has it that the CrezzerIncarnate was once a ketra, but such reductive origin stories hold little appeal to the devoted.

Root Runners (Faction)

Home Turf: Rhizomes' Rest
Motivation: To deliver aid, mail, and rescue to all within their reach

Root Runners are 'the Helpers on the Waves', constructing new vessels and repairing ailing ships from the treasure once called trash. They're a flower amid the garbage of the junkgle, assisting all who do not intentionally increase danger upon the lignin tide.

Solo sailors race from junction to junction, carrying what they can before resupplying at the Trunk, their roving command hub. The Trunk is but one of several mobile ports, each built out of the remains of a single fallen tallshank, and the leavings of the calamity which befell it. More than anything else, they seek to divert disaster when they can - to give the kind of aid they wish they'd received themselves.

Rhizomes (Agents)

These are Root Runners who have completed their apprenticeship and constructed a vessel for themselves. Rhizomes' ships start out barely large enough to carry a single rider and a bundle of supplies, but grow as Rhizomes invest of themselves into them. Many eventually come together and combine their ships to form a single larger vessel. *After official approval, younger Root Runners are called to apprentice upon vessels that have grown enough in size, capability, and reputation.*

Gifts From Distant Lands (Feature)

The Root Runners do not confine themselves solely to Fjandango. Though their branchports rarely leave the Reach, smaller vessels, Rhizomes especially, sail as far as the routes will take them. Many ships are eager to demonstrate the wonders they've acquired far from home, whether unique resources and goods or interesting customs and valuable skills. *It takes a trade of something truly unique or valuable to entice them to relinquish prizes earned so far from home.*

Principles

A mantra internalized and known by even the youngest of runners.

- You deserve to live in safety, the seas are home to all.
- We are sustained by aid, community, and invention.
- We are adepts agent of assistance, acting in altruism.

Quick NPCs

- **Klau (gau)**: A retired pirate with a beloved sporehund, who tries his best to steal only from those that have what they shouldn't.
- **Dorma Laspra (mothryn)**: A dazzlingly decorated mothryn mentor to the younger Root Runners, teaching by tale and deed. Both forms of lesson are accentuated by scales which fall in perfect flow to illustrate as she needs.
- **Larsu (ironbound)**: A char who insists she exists to feed the whole neighborhood. People come from distant reaches to taste the love and care she puts into her cuisine.

Story Hooks

- A Rhizome bearing a letter for one of the crew seeks to hitch a ride to their next delivery.
- A group of small vessels kiting a leviathan away from a ridge port.
- Rumour reaches the crew of a Root Runner who has an unusual remnant of the world that once was, highly desired.
- A festival is interrupted by Root Runners warning of imminent danger.
- Signalling spores blown by the breeze warn crews to re-route to avoid recent rifts.
- A recent ironbound journeying with the body of their former Rhizome, aiming to inter it within the Trunk.

The CrezzeRidden (Faction)

Home Turf: Barrel's Bottom
Motivation: Embrace and embody the flow of crezzerin

The searing, hallucinatory, corrupting influence of crezzerin is what binds this agglomerate together - not in suffering, as most wildsailors would expect, but in mutual understanding.

For the CrezzeRidden, transfiguration is an ecstatic dance. Every new form a celebration, every twisting thought caught a cause for revelry. Not many can withstand such a potent call to chaos, but those that manage to are welcomed with open arms and open hearts.

But as welcoming as they are, there are still initiations to endure. True fellowship requires enthusiastic immersion in flux, a personal purgation of one's past, and ultimately an act of utter capitulation to the universal constant of chaos. It's not just about entropy, or malady - it's change, flow, and improvement.

Salvation in Solvation (Ritual)

The CrezzeRidden's ceaseless remaking of their own bodies speaks to a creed of radical acceptance, an adaptation of alchemical theories that provide the framework of endless personal growth. One must seek a dissolution of the self, they say, in order to truly discover what they are. *All members partake in the ritualistic exposure to, and consumption of, crezzerin. Full immersions within steaming sanctuary pools are communally attended events. They never mourn those who don't reemerge - those sunken sorts embody change.*

CrezzerIncarnate (Leader)

The CrezzeRidden follow one who perfectly embodies the substance they hold sacred, a being of pure mutability. They commune directly with crezzerin, and claim to have the unique ability to translate the will of the mutative substance into both actions and words. *As a symbolic (and worrylingly literal) manifestation of crezzerin, the CrezzerIncarnate acts as a guide for others seeking a particular brand of personal growth. They play catalyst, anointing those they deem in need, or those that might provide for one of theirs. Many words spill from the place where their heart once sat, in many voices.*

The Call of Chaos (Feature)

Such a heavy reliance on crezzerin exposure leaves devotees open to wild hallucinations, quite apart from any of their more physical changes. There are voices ready to creep into their heads, that urge impossibility and entreat miscomfort. Guarding the mind against these invasive untruths is an endless battle, but the far more dangerous activity is studying them, realizing that there are threads of logic among the absurdity and paradox. *The distillation of understanding feels so incredibly rewarding that, eventually, a devotee's thoughts bend and shift without pattern, allowing them to accommodate impossibilities that would break the minds of the uninitiated. To attempt comprehension without proper guidance is to welcome mire, and worse.*

Principles

To accept, entirely, that reality is but accidents causing accidents requires accepting that which refuses refutation.

- There is no misorder, just disorder. Be free.
- Manifest the change you wish to be. Be pliable.
- Revere the inarguable will of eventual dissolution. Be acquiescent.

Quick NPCs

- **Beilgahr (gau)**: An alchemist working on the sporification (thus, aerosolization) of crezzerin. They are more than eager to demonstrate what they call progress, but will refuse to explain anything to one who has not conversed with chaos via crezzerin. Such minds are not mad enough to understand.
- **Yehvak (ektus)**: A formerly hollowing ektus who has managed to stave off decay through alchemical experimentation. Continual (some insist continuous) internal exposure to crezzerin wards off regression, and he insists that his methods would work for all if they took the time to study and emulate his crezzerinsides.
- **Marunk (Used to be an ardent)**: Marunk, ingrained as an arch over the entrance to Barrel's Bottom, has embraced oblivion with zealous conviction. They will argue with any who will listen, postulating that 'they' (never specifying either speaker or listeners) don't exist. This may not be correct, yet they are not wrong.

Story Hooks

- As a nearby ritual begins, a crezzeRain brews into being.
- A diverse herd of local creatures, mutated at their watering hole, have become an invasive species.
- An anointed acolyte seeking passage to port for carefully concealed purpose.
- A chorus echoing in splashes and spray, calling in convocation to the crew.
- After arriving in port, the crew notices signs of a dangerous contaminant in the water supply, but locals insist that it's nothing unnatural.
- A fleshbound vessel and their crew sail in search of boughs suitable to host transformation and hermitage.

FIREFLY RESOURCES

Watch Results (Peace)

6: A wreck shrine assembling at approach and dissembling at departures.
5: A stray and accidental boon escaped from drowned depths
4: Rhizomes showing off on their single saws, complete with sick jumps and all.
3: A trio of tardigrade tamers splashing through the surf and sap upon their durable pals.
2: A spa-ship anchored in the distance offering relaxation and respite.
1: An alignment of glinting illuminates an overlooked, unscavenged wreck.

Watch Results (Order)

6: A wavewandering procession of Church of Trash collectors sings as they bless tithes of rubbish.
5: The neglected walls of a garbaqueduct impose themselves onto the route.
4: Lancers from The Filled Lands mounted upon grasshoppers and the wind seek to root out brigands.
3: A pre-verdant innovation activating its final time, alerting the sea to the existence of brand new scrap.
2: Root Runners directing traffic away from a recent rift, failing to suppress the spread of rumor and tale.
1: A forge-ship sails waves of water while wielding honest fire in creation of novel craftswork and art.

Watch Results (Nature)

6: Antologators have flooded the way ahead, defending it as part of their queen's territory.
5: The daily afternoon rainstorm has taken a liking to the crew and decides to follow them.
4: A salamax adapts to the changes crezzerin has made to their body moments prior.
3: A proto-leviathan emerges to prevent collision with a hidden submerged community they call home.
2: Clouds filled with crezzeRain threaten to unleash themselves upon the wooden waves.
1: The ambient humidity thickens incredibly, the soaked air resists movement but carries sound.

Trade Goods and Cargo

- **Salt For All Sorts (export)**: Whether more mundane varieties or wondrously alchemical, all life needs salt eventually. Denizens of Salina Swale farm and formulate to meet every need.
- **Upcycled Formerly Advanced Technology (export)**: Almost none of the components function as originally intended, but what matters to all involved is that they function now.
- **Processed Crezzerin (export)**: Purified, distilled, and condensed in kitchens, altars, laboratories or precipitation, crezzerin in such form is considered "safer" to handle than more unpredictable liquids.
- **Creatures Clean of Crezzerin (import)**: When delving the depths of crezzerin it is vital also to have a controlled frame of reference. Others display them as trophies and examples of their power to protect.
- **Water-Tight Lights (import)**: Moisture pervades all aspects of life within Fjandango. Divers and delvers alike need illumination safeguarded from rains, floods, waves, and those who attempt to brave them.
- **Seafarers (import)**: Any who hold in them vestiges of ancient salt seas eventually find themselves called to the banks and barks of Fjandango, finding familiarity within the constantly novel.

Passengers

- A long forgotten collection that has begun to collect, and collectivize within, themselves.
- A brewer from The Melodic Draught delivering their mentor's final brew to Caohrel.
- A sailor sans shadow seeking specific trinkets to trade for its ransom.
- One who shirked from the burns of crezzeritual, forced to find a new home.
- A stout ektus crash clad in overalls questing amongst the junk for "The Most Beautiful Break".
- A Root Runner whose itinerary aligns with the crew is happy to trade labour and learning for a ride.

Endemic Hazards

- Amalganimals, singular beings polymerized from smaller creatures have varying levels of control over the chaos which is their form.
- Agile elk-sized beetles who chase their prey into nearby waters, watching them drown underneath a delicate stance.
- Clumsy pheromonal "fliers" known as batboars, whose nauseating musk disorients all nearby as they crash from above.

The Curiosities of Fjandango

The junkgle has no fewer residents than any other averagely-sized Reach, but its waves remain something of a mystery even to the most dedicated of explorers. Whether it's due to the local methods of travel, or the high concentration of surface-level crezzerin (and the constant changes it brings), wavecutting ships rarely make it to port without a sighting of something they can barely explain.

The rest of this page is given over to a brief overview of some of the curiosities of the junk-strewn waves, and how a Firefly might leverage those into potential hooks or plot points.

A Treatise on Trash

Every Fjandangan knows that the trash clogging their thrash and tangle is as much a treasure as a nuisance, but none have embraced it quite as much as the garbage magnates. These colourful individuals think nothing of sorting through a thousand bits of junk for a single worthwhile find, especially when they're not the ones that have to get their hands dirty.

Consider characterizing a particular local garbage magnate based on the kinds of loot that they favour. A magnate might prefer pre-V clockwork, expend a year's worth of resources on dredging up the smallest shard of mountain-stone, or even have a consuming, writling-like love of all that glitters.

Eidolon Rumours

Right-thinking locals tend to ignore the ramblings of the CrezzeRidden, telling themselves that even if there is truth to be found in their words, it's not the kind of truth worth knowing. But there are some oft-repeated ideas that have stuck around, and the most worrying of these is reference to Eidolons - beings that exist outside of what's accepted as reality, larger than leviathans, more potent than godlings.

Consider whether you want the crezzerin-influenced hallucinations of Fjandango to point to an actual threat. If these Eidolons do exist, they're making a push to enter the world of the wilds through the minds of devotees, and if they have the kind of power and influence that rumour suggests then they just might be able to do it.

Mutable Forms

It's not just the local amalganimals that present a puzzle for sailors. Everything that scuttles or leaps through the crezzer-rich waves of the junkgle is on a ceaseless path of change, not from generation to generation, but from week to week. One might find a stag beetle with a translucent shell, or the jaws of a wolf, or even one the size of an actual stag - and with a set of antlers impressive enough to match its name.

Consider using more quirks than usual when presenting Fjandango's hazards, and possibly even setting additional break points that, when reached, cause an additional quirk to unexpectedly manifest.

Xylem Phloers

Every wavecutter is designed to cross the wilds by way of wood and traction. Some rest their hulls on branches, others slice or saw through them, and some even float just above them using spirits, repulsors, or uncanny arconautic puissance.

But the junkgle is a hostile region to sail, with trash and treasure alike scarring hulls and blunting sawblades. Rather than contend with the refuse of the waves, local shipwrights explored other methods of movement that might avoid the area's most common perils. And, after much experimentation, they settled on a solution - the xylem phloer.

These ships are outfitted not only to travel the wavetops, but to burrow directly into the larger branches of the ironroots that make up the sea. Grinding through internal wood over long distances would be almost impossible, but careful study revealed that the sap- and nutrient-channels running within an ironroot's branches, while hostile, were essentially naturally-grown pathways. Entries and exits are still rough, but passage through the surging darkness is a remarkably smooth ride.

Xylem Wheel-Saw 2 Stake Bite

An angled grinding wheel designed not only to tear through an ironroot's bark, but to grip slippery internal wood with maximum traction.

- **Saws +2**
- **Speed -1**
- **Deals massive CQ Serrated damage**
- **Allows for travel *within* larger ironroot branches, but accessing and exiting such areas mark either the ship's Armour or Seals ratings.**

Bark Buffers 2 Stake Addition

Used in conjunction with xylem wheel-saws for more comfortable transitions.

- **Armour +1**
- **When entering or exiting an ironroot's internal structure, make an Armour ratings roll. On a triumph, the usual mark of damage isn't applied.**

DUZAKH'S VENT

Created by Keen Hahn

"Y'know, the navigators 'round here have a parable." Izzy turned to his crewmates with a toothy smile. "The most obvious targets are the ones y'don't want to hit."

As if reinforcing his words, the saws beneath the ship shrieked as the branches on which they found purchase suddenly dropped away. Izzy's smile grew as his friends scrambled for handholds, the deck canting downward as it found the new angle of the sea.

"The Vent pulls ye in, it does." A fin-like hand of mottled green shielded Izzy's eyes as he gazed with hunger at the horizon. "Days like this, you'll see smoke like iron bars tryin' t'jail the very sky. Soon we'll be hittin' the specks of ash, and the smell... a thousand bonfires."

At that word Kaska gulped, their throat distending with anxiety.

"Oh don't worry," Izzy clapped Kaska's shoulder, "that's not even the best part."

"After that comes the drop."

Main Elements

This page highlights the most important elements of Duzakh's Vent, a reach of petrified magma-channeling forests, arborealized deep sea denizens, and stoic, spiritual survivalists with unique connections to earth in its rawest form. The rest of this section delves into more detail.

Trees of Stone and Fire

The edges of Duzakh's Vent resemble other parts of the wildsea, save for an oily tint to the leaves. But deeper in lie the Volcrez, stony giants belching lava from petrified limbs resplendent with jeweled leaves. Crews might encounter...

- Koatu nomads surfing an elaborately carved lithicraft, riding a lava flow spilling from the end of a cave-like bough.
- An omnipresent melodic clinking, like crystal glasses knocking together, while sailing through Volcrez thrash.
- An acrid tinge of white-hot rock in the air, mingled with the scents of cooking meat or disquieting old-ocean salt.

Dark Depths Risen

Duzakh's Vent has its own rich and unusual ecosystem. Denizens of the once-deep sea have adapted to swim, and brachiate, from the briny abyss of the Under-Eaves, rising through waves of wood and stone. Crews might encounter...

- The red-lipped head of a massive trunkworm rising over a dead Volcrez, filtering ashy nutrients from the air.
- What looks like a butterfly of plated gold dancing above the waves, a thin filament leading down into the dark the only warning of danger.
- Bioluminescent glows revealing glimpses of sinuous marine bulk, skittering legs, or mucous-slicked mantles.

High & Low Society (Literally)

The peoples inhabiting Duzakh's Vent have organized vertically, some choosing the heat and hardness of the upper Volcrez branches while others brave the briny, steaming darkness of the lower waves. The foolhardy dive even deeper, braving the base of the drown and even the fringes of the Eaves themselves for pre-V salvage. Crews might encounter...

- The chanting, stomping, and stonedrumming of the Koatu Earthborn Rites, a petrou at the center, glowing globules of magma orbiting their meditating form.
- The sharp and predatory smile of a carcharbora trader across an alehouse table in Bathysphere, the station's constant sway swilling the crimson contents of their mugs, reflecting the dim glow of caged lanternsnails.
- The hiss and pop of meat skewers hung from a hovering lithicraft, their scent a rich backbone under the citrus tang of rubyfruit cracking under a char's masonry hammer.

Wonders From Waters Past

The pre-V relics sunken amid the waves, flames, and steam of Duzakh's Vent are of a different sort than in other parts of the wildsea. Forgotten aquatic creations rise on lava flows, or in the embrace of branches. Crews might encounter...

- A half-melted automaton of propellers and obscure sampling arms, viewing lenses weeping out of shape with heat.
- A grizzled dredger leaning close to murmur, "The Hab-Rings and the CIC, they're still down there somewhere".
- A submersible's nose rising like a grey blade, massive chains lifting it to allow your ship's entry.

Unity Forged in Fire

The preponderance of stone and metal available in the Vent creates not only lasting settlements, but lasting *relationships*. Natives here recognize the harshness of their circumstances and band together in support of one another. Settlements are friendly and welcoming... until you try to exploit them. Crews might encounter...

- Lithicraft circled for a Highbranch Hang, music and delicious scents lacing the air, tattooed arms waving you in.
- A blast of heat from tiny magma channels carved in the side of a shanty, the word OPEN blaring into perpetual dusk.
- A black-sailed vessel sinking, screams and an iron tang on the wind, as crimson-toothed carcharbora hunters work.

The thud of stonedrums rang as Paik remembered.

Roots winding to the deepest chasms, tearing fissures wide.

Eruptions boiling against the weight of water.

Trees learning to touch fire and not burn as stony boughs replaced salty depths and animals learned to climb, swimming forsaken.

The Crystalline Birth.

Paik opened her eyes, magma globules orbiting around her, the ground beneath her floating form glowing with heat.

Time to send the Call.

Sublittoral Shelf (Territory)

Attempted invasions: At least 300 at last count
Severity of the slope: Somehow increasing and...stretching?

A tilted plane of sooty dark green, this territory surrounds the trench that forms the center of Duzakh's Vent and terminates at the Dropoff, a sheer cliff plunging down to the Volcrez Deeps. The trees here are only resistant to the touch of fire, rather than immune like their petrified cousins below. Stewards from Hadalgate monitor the inner fringe of the Sublittoral Shelf with care, lest a Volcrez eruption spread upward uncontrolled. Though its surface seems bland, this territory's higher elevation and exposure to the skies has ensured both that it teems with life and that it acts as a haven for invaders from outside the reach. Crews sail here with a different kind of caution than is needed in the Deeps below.

The Accelerant Cult (Threat)

Whipping across the waves on blazing fast rocket skiffs, the Accelerant Cult are a pyromaniacal order from outside Duzakh's Vent hell-bent on unleashing the power of the Volcrez on the wider waves. To them, the magma trees herald the end of the Verdancy and the beginning of the next 'age' of the wilds, the Conflagrancy. The open fires they keep ever-burning on their ships are seen as anathema by almost everyone. *The Accelerants' temple is rumoured to lie close to the Vent's western border, and is the seat of their mysterious and heavily branded leader, Luminous Breath.*

The Guardian Games (Festival)

A rite of passage for all aspiring members of Hadalgate's garrison, you win the games through simply surviving (although some methods of survival are more highly regarded than others). The captain of the guard sets out onto the Shelf with a cadre of aspirants aboard the Sloperaft, a huge square staging platform pulled by spike-limbed crezzopods. *The frequency of the games has been increasing of late, and its schedule is one of the few things the Captain speaks of anymore.*

The Stretch (Feature)

Unlike the firmness of the Volcrez Deeps, the Shelf is a place of unpredictable motion. The angle of the slant seems to shift at will, and chasms can lurch into existence at any moment. It's almost as if the trees are follicles on the back of something unimaginably vast, a hidden beast that continually stirs. *Ships traveling here must post two crewmembers to watch duty if possible, rolling two dice between them with the Firefly choosing which result gets used.*

Lithicraft Origins

It all begins with a dying Volcrez. The Koatu seek out the cold, hollow tubes that no longer run with lava and set to work with diamond-bladed masonry saws, carving the shape of a ship from the petrified wood. Months later, a lithicraft emerges, carved with designs that both tell a story of the Koatu's history and create channels for the crystalline circuitry grown to power the vehicle. *Fireproof by nature, lithicraft are as tough as they are beautiful.*

Volcrez Plating 4 Stake Hull

Lithicraft are too valuable to be traded away to even the most intrepid wildsailors, but the opportunistic may be able to harvest and incorporate chunks of their material from wrecked vessels (or through shady deals).

- **Armour +3**
- **Speed -1**
- Your ship is completely immune to damage from flame-based hazards and extreme heat. *The crew within it, however, are not.*

The Volcrez Deeps (Territory)

Last brought up on the flows: An unholy fusion of ironclad and garganautilus
Burn victims: Unending

Along the Vent's deepest and most volcanic slopes, the Volcrez grow. Evolved from a complex dance of lava and salt water, these massive trees tempered themselves over time, growing thick petrified layers of stony protection. Towering trunks contain hollow chambers through which magma flows, finding outlets at the end of each of the Volcrez's main boughs. Some chambers are even large enough to navigate a ship through if you've got the right kind of craft. Additional channels in the petrified bark carry supercooled resin, slowing the liquid rock so the trees can leach nutrients from it.

In the canopy, tinkling crystal branches and twigs ending in fractal, reflective leaves that sparkle in the sunlight of the thrash, bedecked by gemstone during each harvest season. But beware: when the spent resin from within the Volcrez oozes through the pores of these appendages to harden into the shine you see, it is more virulently unpredictable than anything else a sailor is likely to encounter on the wider waves. This volcrezzerin sears, maddens, and mutates more severely than its common chemical cousin, and can overcome all but the strongest protective measures. Luckily, the threat doesn't last - areas that have already hardened are leagues safer to interact with than standard crezzerin.

Corlcrez (Threat)

Navigating the Volcrez themselves is hard enough, but more terrifying are the imposters lurking in their midst. Though displaying similar volcanic tubing to the trees surrounding them, the corlcrez are host to razor-toothed polyps that lurk in false bough holes and extra vents. *Careful crews can notice what seems to be a dying Volcrez, several channels gone cold, and those with knowledge of the local waves may infer the truth of its grim nature.*

Paik's Pod (Leader, Fleet, Wonder)

Presaged by a cetacean keening on the wind and the sound of rumbling oar-chants, Paik's Pod is the largest collection of Koatu nomads in the Volcrez Deeps. Their lithicraft are ancient and elaborate, said to be the same ancestral vessels the Koatu first used to travel to the Deeps. But most impressive of all is Paik herself, Prow of the Koatu, with her distinctive petal-trim jacket, extensive cartographical tattoos, and her mount - a near-leviathan-sized oleorca resplendent in black and white blooms. *Various types of supplies can be found scattered throughout Paik's Pod, and sailors' hearts swell seeing Paik and her oleorca crest the waves. Sailors from the wider waves may clear a mark of mire when they first encounter the Pod due to its status as a wonder, and local denizens can clear an additional mark.*

Larval Clouds (Feature)

The young of many species native to the darkness beneath the Volcrez begin life in a very different environment - the air. Less discriminating than their parents, hordes of diverse larvae flock together at night in bioluminescent swarms, dandelion-like fronds letting them float the thermals above the flows. *Mostly the larval clouds content themselves with snatching birds and other small prey, but don't sail too close or get enraptured by their glowing beauty - if disturbed, they've been known to strip ships bare of life in seconds.*

Numberspire (Shadow Spring , Relic)

Anchored at the center of the Volcrez Deeps (some say directly above the Hab), Numberspire perches atop three giant Volcrez grown into one fused structure. The ancient metal tower is named for both the tall, blocky numerals sprayed on its side and the bursts of confusing radio chatter it emits. *A crew might be able to tap into the baffling frequencies of Numberspire to gain unusual whispers, if they can find a way to succeed where generations of Koatu and Freedivers have failed.*

Local Rumours

- Guards undertaking the service of manning the Hadalgate perimeter have taken to calling the barrier they watch the 'Eternal Project', much to the chagrin of the workers tirelessly adding to it.
- Sagwa Roh has spent weeks among the lower bridges searching for the members of Crew 19, the Tangle Tamers. They've been lost for long enough that most have given up hope, but Sagwa refuses to end her investigation until at least a trace of them can be discovered.
- Some less common lithicraft designs are grown entirely from crystal, and can focus enough light and heat to house the most devastating of Koatu weapons - the crystaleaf emitter.
- Weighty Ghost knows far more about the hidden recesses of the Tubing than they let on.
- Constant burnoffs and magma tendrils inject additional minerals into the deadfire litter around, stirring the detritus constantly.
- The Freedivers are convinced that the mythical CIC, the one-time command center of the Hab, is sunken deep within the depths of Bilgetrench... as well as the lair of Unfathomed.
- The crew of the Grand Fallen Beldam may be inextricably tied to their mawship, but they retain a little of their own will. The ship's been known to turn away from targets containing the relatives or descendants of those poor lost sailors.
- Koatu petrous can feel the call of the distant earth in their very bones (if they have them, that is).
- Find the right stalls on Spoils Row, and use the right key phrases, and you'll find an illicit trade in animals that eat light rather than produce it.
- The vivid visions Scrawl inflicts on carcharbora can be addictive, and many a Scrawlhead has been found wandering alleyways in a haze, mouth full of ink.

Scaldstone Bridges (Territory)

Bridge crew gripe: "Ugh, new boots again?"
Seen in the Steam: What looks like an ardent woman, features inexplicably sad, herding what look like sheep... over a known chasm

Scaldstone Bridges sits deep beneath the Volcrez canopy, the glow of lanternsnails and lava raging against the dying light and the ever-present steam. Here the Volcrez boughs grow together between the trunks, creating natural passageways that residents maintain and augment. Paths exist within the wider magma tunnels as well (for those daring enough to travel them). Below the bridges the limbs quickly fall away into blackness, steam, brine, and monsters.

Bridge Crews (Feature)

Keeping the mapped pathways across the stony arches clear and safe is a full-time job, one the bridge crews grudgingly take on. A rotating coalition of Koatu nomads and Hadalgate and Bathysphere residents routinely hack foliage, re-affix light sources, mitigate lava flows, and inspect railings. *The bridge crews' leader, Sagwa Roh, is a towering ektus who wields a jagserry longer than most are tall, and is loathe to give up on any member of her crew despite the dangers of their work.*

The Grand Fallen Beldam (Horror)

The Beldam was the largest craft ever built in Duzakh's Vent, made of repurposed steel taken from a pre-V relic called the 'carrier' and a lamprey-like mulcher mouth designed to carve through even the hardened bark of the Volcrez. It's said that the hunger of her saws began her slide toward maw-sentience, a yearning that induced her manic need to stalk the bridges. *It's not just the size and the saws you need to worry about - unlike the majority of mawships, the Beldam still holds her original crew.*

The Steam (Feature)

Thick banks of briny white cloud rise through Scaldstone Bridges constantly due to the endless war between fire and water in the dark below. Locals are unsure if it has hallucinogenic properties due to particles suspended within it, or if it's just a powerful conduit for spirits, but people see... things... in the steam. Strange things, some of which seem to prey upon their most cruel imaginings and darkest memories. *Crew are at higher risk of unexpectedly marking mire when in proximity to the steam, as it somehow manifests their deepest traumas and fears.*

Mawry's (Junction)

The titular Mawry presides over this simply named alehouse at a confluence of three grand bridges, offering a serrated smile to all who enter. The portly carcharbora share many stories, their gruff, soft voice weaving tales from their bridge crew days. *If you know how to ask, there are charts here that can help an inquisitive crew locate secret boltholes and junctions spread throughout the Scaldstone Bridges.*

Hadalgate (Port)

Perimeter progress: Delayed again; galeoconda nest this time
Lift cable condition: More frayed than comfortable

Hadalgate is by far the largest settlement in Duzakh's Vent. The Vertical City, as locals call it, hangs on the border of the Sublittoral Shelf, a stacked network of stairs, walkways, docks, and buildings anchored on the face of the Dropoff itself. Its gargantuan and ancient lift system provides easy access to deeper areas of the reach for both ships and solo wildsailors. It is a permanently liminal space - a place of guardians, merchants, and explorers coming and going in an unceasing buzz of activity.

The Greyblade Door (Docks)

The Greyblade, a retired submersible relic of a far older, salt-wreathed ocean, guards the main entry point into Hadalgate. Repurposed as a watch station and gateway, the Greyblade hangs on thick chains that can raise it into a vertical position to allow passage to the bustling horseshoe of docks behind it. *A spark of nuclear fire still burns deep in Greyblade's guts, waiting to be unleashed.*

The Abyssal Lifts (Wonder)

Capable of hoisting and maneuvering even the largest vessels, Hadalgate's abyssal lifts are a forgotten combination of drydock and elevator technology. Chains wider than an ironbound's shoulders raise and secure ships in a central cradle while cables the size of old-world tree trunks lower the cage around it, providing access to multiple ferry stops along the Dropoff's cliff face. *The lava wheels powering the lifts groan more frequently each year, and every so often the distinct ping of a cable fiber letting loose will damage a descending crew's calm.*

Mantle Hall (Shadow Spring, Garrison, Seat of Government)

Set in a cathedral-like cavern carved into the face of the Dropoff, this impressive structure is the meeting place of the Mantle, the chosen political representatives of the reach (as well as acting as the headquarters of the Hadalgate Guard). Its passages and amphitheatres ring with spirited debate and booted heels in equal measure. *Listen at the right doorways here and you'll collect valuable whispers - or perhaps find the fiery gaze of an Earthborn pinning you in place.*

The Perimeter (Feature, Workshop)

Most of the metal relics raised in Duzakh's Vent end up as part of Hadalgate's ever-growing Perimeter. An amalgam of hulls, bulkheads, propellers, and long-dead deep sea automata, it uses the old world's husks to protect the new and is constantly under construction. For this reason, several moving workshops are always close to its unfinished edges. The famed tzelicrae rattlehand and Koatu emissary Kranzurka oversees the project, and has done for some considerable time. *Koatu crystaleaf emitters and the elite Thermal Drifters nanoglider squad tirelessly watch over the Perimeter, warding against Accelerant incursions.*

Bathysphere (Port)

Obsession du jour: Something called a "hydrophone"
Sounds from the Tubing: Agonized wails, forcibly and stolidly ignored

A swaying spherical settlement suspended at the stygian borders of the drown, Bathysphere is the Last Stop, the Final Port, the Fool's Diving Platform, or so the Freedivers, carcharbora, and treasure hunters populating it have variously referred to the place. Elders maintain a replacement lift cable from Hadalgate was sacrificed to hang the echoing, miles-wide circular husk of an ancient sea station from the thickest of the bridges at the center of the Volcrez Deeps.

Spoils Row (Market)

At Bathysphere's center amid a ring of burnt-out terminal stations now used as stalls, the Freedivers gather to trade the latest wares collected from their endless forays into the dark. It's a place awash with shining contraptions, glowing creatures, and music that echoes off the curved metal walls. *Companions that shed light, such as gluffins, lamp-rays, and flashswimmers, are a particular specialty here.*

The Thousand Points Raid (Festival)

At least once a year, the population of Freedivers in Bathysphere reaches a critical mass, and by unspoken agreement it's decided that another try for the Hab is in order. Rigged with lights of all kinds, insulated with whatever heat protection can be had, and masked to avoid fumes, a mighty contingent descends in ships, on longlines, or via other more non-conventional means such as arconautics. *If you watch from above, you'll start seeing their lights wink out, one by one.*

The Tubing (Horror)

It's speculated that the Tubing was once a complex network of air channels, ballast chambers, and gas exchanges that kept Bathysphere's original inhabitants alive under miles of ocean. Now, to say it's compromised would be generous. Empty and howling, this derelict maze is a place only spirits and unknown lurking hunters call home. *Don't talk about the sounds you hear - and never approach an open duct.*

Last Kindness (Dock, Junction)

The starfish-like array of struts, catwalks, and anchor lines at Bathysphere's bottom serves as the settlement's main dock, the last friendly port of call you'll see, hence its name. At the nexus of the docks stands the Last Kindness Bar, a haunt of visiting explorers. *A gantry crane glides on tracks that pass directly above the bar, part of the body of Last Kindness's harbormaster and head bartender Weighty Ghost, a blended being of ketra and ironbound who hangs perpetually over the spread of the docks. Rumours abound that its tendrils stretch throughout Bathysphere, perhaps even through the Tubing.*

The Array (Wonder)

Maintained by Weighty Ghost, the Array is a signal room bristling with every kind of sensing gear imaginable. Rife with forgotten Pre-V technologies, it is capable of sounding the depths around the Hab and is often used to prognosticate the ideal timing of a Thousand Points Raid. A side effect of the many receivers in the Array is that it occasionally captures Numberspire's mysterious transmissions. Weighty Ghost in particular is dedicated to deciphering these.

The Koatu (Faction)

Home Turf: The Volcrez Deeps
Motivation: Protect the reach, and its wonders

Living within a constantly dispersing and converging community of ornate stone-hewn ships, the Koatu nomads are the oldest residents of Duzakh's Vent - dating back even to the volcanic islands that originally rose from the pre-V waters. Their ranks brim over with ecologists, engineers, artificers, and hunters, all dedicated to the protection and preservation of the Vent's unique ecosystem. None know the caverns and creatures of the reach better than the Koatu.

Arconautic Tattoos (Feature)

One thing sailors notice quickly when among the Koatu is the abundance of cartographical tattoos decorating every nomad's body. This art carries an arconautic potency, imbuing its bearer with a variety of protections or abilities based on the designs used and the locations represented. Some are even wrought of living metal rather than ink - a method the Koatu's high-ranking rattlehands favor. *Tattoos can't be bartered for, and an outsider receiving one is an incredible and rare honor.*

Highbranch Hang (Festival)

They can happen just about anywhere, for any reason, but all Hangs share a pervasive sense of harmony and community. Lithicraft circle a Volcrez flow, basking in the magmaglow, chars hanging skewered meats near the heat to cook them. Stonedrums ring out under chants of welcome and gratitude. *Sailors encountering such a celebration will be invited to join - not doing so is considered a major insult, or even an act of open hostility.*

Earthborn Rites (Feature)

When dire circumstances arise, the Koatu converge on the largest nearby ridge or Volcrez formation to conduct the Earthborn Rites. At the center of a ring of stonedrummers, a lone petrou sits in a trance-like state. They gather the vibrations thrumming through the rock, concentrating them on a single point with such intensity that the stone around them glows with heat, sometimes even liquifying. When enough force is built up, the Call goes out - a low bass note almost below hearing that courses through all earthen surfaces for leagues. *Responding to the Call will be the Earthborn, the seven souls of the oldest lithicraft, now cliff-like ironbound of immense size who serve as the spiritual leaders of the Koatu.*

Principles

The Koatu have few written laws, but their dedication to the reach and all life within it drive several deep-rooted tenets that virtually all the fleets live by.

- All action should serve balance - death should never be sought for its own sake.
- A good question is always worthy of respect, as it opens the path to new discoveries.
- Deeds are remembered on skin and in stone, for good or for ill.

Quick NPCs

- **Laca Amth (gau)**: A geobotanist of note on the hunt for new Volcrez formations, recognizable thanks to her purple hood and gem-flake tattoos.
- **Iraia (ardent)**: An enormous and seemingly taciturn guardian assigned to Kranzurka's workshop on the Perimeter. Really a gentle soul, quick to laugh and rich with philosophical insight.
- **Brinksong 'Brink' Sasegan (ektus)**: A retired Thermal Drifter obsessed with the emanations of Numberspire. Their antique glider is rigged with their latest sonic measurement creations.

Story Hooks

- The Call rings out, but for some reason the Earthborn seem not to answer.
- A Hang begins, coalescing around the crew and sweeping them up in a wave of good feeling... But one of the undercrew is desperate to leave.
- A Koatu tattooist chooses one of the crew for a gift, asking about the place they were born.
- A young stonedrummer has an ingenious idea of how they might redesign their instrument...

PETROU POST

You are the conduit of the earth itself with mastery over stone in all its forms.

Attuned to the songs of soil, clay, rock, and even magma, petrous turn the land itself into an ally through arconautic power. To them, the shifting and stirring of the planet's crust beneath the waves is an ever-changing story - a narrative of where life's journey is leading.

Petrous are in high demand as wayfinders and protectors of ships. Their ability to calm the planet's fiery violence and predict changes during journeys has saved many a grateful crew.

Establishing an enduring legacy is somewhat of an obsession for petrous. Despite the changes the Verdancy has wrought they, more than others, know that the same solid mass holds this new world up. They use this understanding to leave permanence in their wake - whether that means spits reinforced in concrete, ship hulls patched with ceramic or stone, or even the occasional earthen limb.

Edge (Choose 1)

Iron, Instinct, Tides

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Delve, Break, Rattle, Sense, Brace, Vault
Languages: Signalling, Raka Spit, Brasstongue

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Polished Obsidian, Jar of Rock Dust
Specimens: Petrified Bark, Lavaloach Scale
Whispers: Stirring Fires Below
Charts: Web of Mineral Veins

Drive (Choose 1)

Find stable ground for a settlement
Harness the force of an eruption

Mire (Choose 1)

The earth's songs are an overwhelming cacophony, dulling your senses
Your blood rages with the spirit of magma, threatening to burn all you touch

Aspects

Forced Rising 1-Track Trait

Burn to focus all your energy into bringing the earth to the surface of the sea and raise a small spit, ridge, pillar, or spike of earth or stone instantly.

State Shift 4-Track Trait

You can change the composition of land you're in contact with. Mark to shift soil to clay, clay to stone, stone to magma, or vice versa. Burn to change any of the previous substances to any other.

Roads Beneath 3-Track Trait

You move through earth as a bird in air or fish in water. Treat conflicts as triumphs on all movement-related skills when on solid ground or stone. Mark to instantly travel from one patch of ground or stone to any other within visual range.

Geosong 3-Track Trait

The arconautic power flowing through you has attuned your senses to the slightest shifts in the skin of the planet. When on solid ground or stone, treat conflicts as triumphs when searching for irregularities or discerning impending actions.

Silica Storm 3-Track Trait

Once per scene, create a brief sandstorm around yourself and nearby crewmates that deals Serrated damage to anything trying to pass through it. You also resist the effects of *spores* and *bad air* while the storm is active.

Calling Stone 3-Track Gear

A smooth rock with symbols carved in it that fits in the palm of your hand. You're always attuned to the vibrations of this particular stone, which allows you to sense what's going on in its location, even if it's far away. You can call the stone to you at will.

Akihapo 2-Track Companion

A small flightless bird covered in crystal feathers thinly veined with magma. Produces both light and heat, and has a sharp beak designed to crack hard Volcrez fruit.

Freedivers (Faction)

Home Turf: Bathysphere
Motivation: Raise the Hab

Freedivers embody the wild abandon of the thrill seeker and the single-mindedness of the treasure hunter in one raucous package. A loose and ragtag coalition of explorers, hunters, delvers, and more than a few pirates, they shine light into the darkest, deepest places, defiant in the face of danger as they heave relics from the brine. It's not wholly greed that drives them, though - the Freedivers believe that someday the Hab will rise into the light, a stronghold big enough to complete the Perimeter and protect the Volcrez. The riches to be had from the bargain are just a side benefit.

Longlines (Feature)

The preferred Freediver method of descent into Hab territory is rapid. After all, moving targets are harder to hit. For this reason, many make use of the countless longlines hanging from Bathysphere's underbelly like the tentacles of a great mechanical jellyfish. *Koatu tech is kitbashed into motorized ascender attachments that can rocket users up and down the longlines, and sometimes these contraptions are even mounted to ships for group exploration, or to carry up larger discoveries.*

Maroon (Punishment & Horror)

Freedivers use the word Maroon as both a verb and a name. Those committing acts considered heinous in Freediver society, the chiefest offense being stealing, get sent down a very specific longline coated in flaky, deep red paint. At its bottom is a massive pile of deadfire litter that is the known haunt of Maroon, an outsized woeboargon named for the rusty color its frequent kills have permanently spread across its chosen home. *If those consigned to Maroon survive three days and return to tug the longline, they will be pulled back up and their crimes forgiven. It's only happened three times.*

Ballast (Feature)

A shantytown built along the lower interior of Bathysphere, Ballast is one of the few places where the Tubing has been almost fully opened up. They say this started when someone heard rushing water, and a few weeks of typical Freediver curiosity later, what was uncovered was a series of saltwater recirculators and culverts. *Now exposed, the water runs through a series of canals and retention pools under and around stilt houses where carcharbora residents often gather for the rare and wondrous opportunity of a swim.*

Principles

Though they appear rough-and-tumble at the best of times, the Freedivers do have a code. After all, remember, at their core each one truly believes their questing will help one day save the reach. The Diver's Truths are as follows:

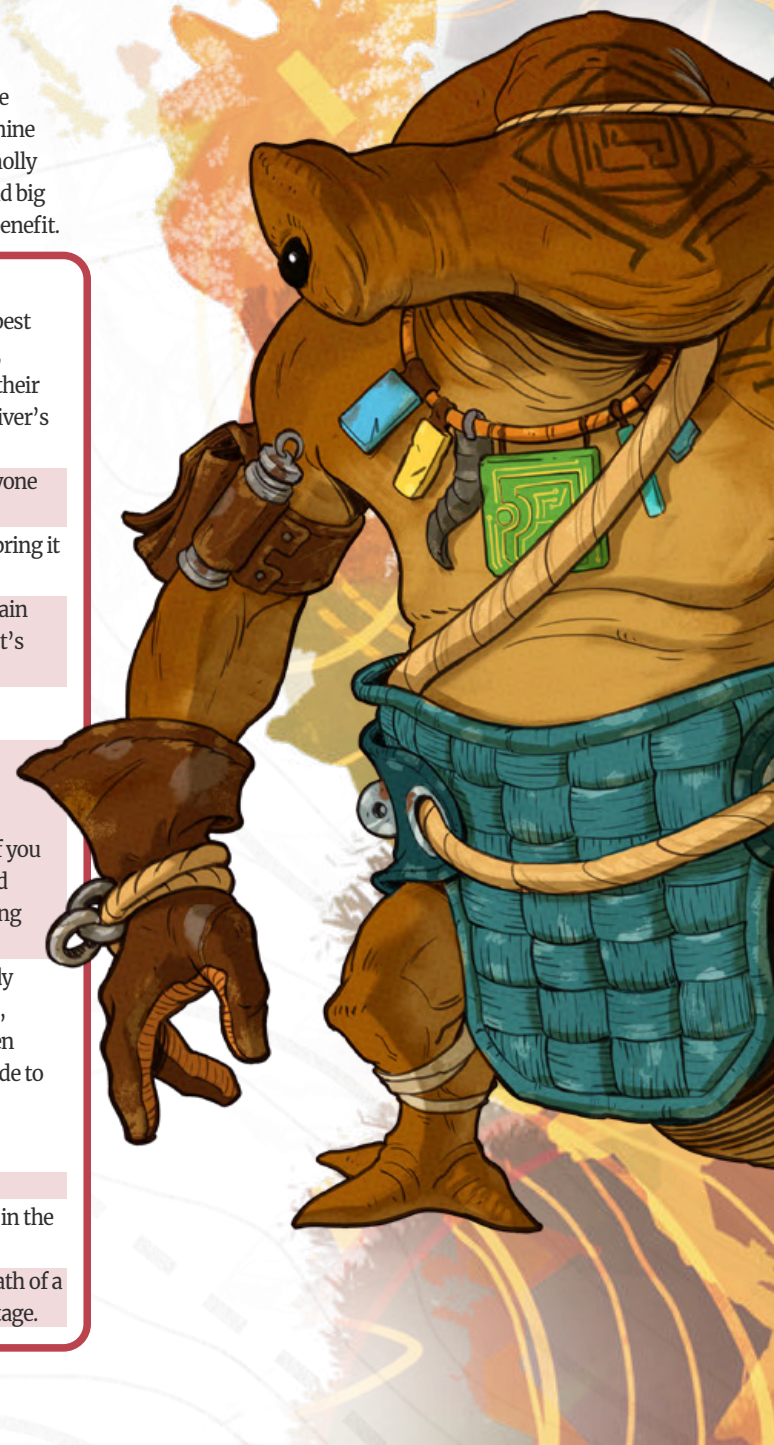
- Enemies are many in the Dark Below, so anyone descending at your side is a friend.
- If you map it, you own it. If others help you bring it up, you share it.
- The Hab means everything; your personal gain is a side benefit. If it clouds your judgment, it's judgment you'll face.

Quick NPCs

- **Finnbarr o Thonnta (carcharbora)**: Ancient and scarred with a venomous one-eyed stare, he can often be found riding a stool in the Last Kindness bar. Full of information, if you can get past the prickly exterior. Locals avoid him, casting sidelong glances and murmuring things like "Sinking Finn" as they pass.
- **Rig (ironbound)**: Blessed with a flexible body of animate ropes and pliable wooden beams, ze is the caretaker of the longlines, often seen scrambling about on Bathysphere's underside to check the many tethers attached.

Story Hooks

- A salvage-thief is consigned to Maroon.
- A bright light blinks from the depths below, in the supposed direction of the Hab.
- A longline snaps mid-use, leading to the death of a prominent Freediver... It appears to be sabotage.



CARCHARBORA BLOODLINE

A passionate and briny people evolved from oceanic apex predators.

Once the carcharbora swam endless expanses of saltwater - now, the Verdancy has forced their adaptation into equally graceful traversers of bough and branch. They are a people at war with themselves, the driving instinctual ferocity of a born predator and the childlike wonder at the world that their new intelligence imbues struggling for balance. Whatever ethos they end up following though, as the saying goes, "a carcharbora commits," and they will pursue their goals and ideals with all the relentlessness of an unstoppable hunter.

Carcharbora come in a variety of sizes and colors, their marine tones of blue, grey, and silver long since exchanged for the greens, yellows, browns, and even sometimes reds of the forests they now call home. What they still retain, however, is a certain streamlined economy of shape, tough hides, deep black pools for eyes, and of course an iconic, highly sensitive wedge of a snout usually lined with vicious teeth.

Edge (Choose 1)

Instinct, Teeth, Tides

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Sense, Wavewalk, Outwit, Hunt, Sway, Hack
Languages: Raka Spit, Knock, Old Hand

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Ancient Rebreather, Propeller Blade
Specimens: Tanglerfish Lure, Shed Teeth
Whispers: Blood On The Waves
Charts: Lateral Line Drawing

Drive (Choose 1)

Fight prejudice in all its forms
Annihilate your greatest threat or enemy

Mire (Choose 1)

Your taste for blood demands reckless action
You feel you can't breathe, remembering water instead of air

Aspects

Abyssal Age 5-Track Trait

Carcharbora never stop growing, and you are a particularly venerable example of the bloodline. Massive and imposing, you are a force to be reckoned with.

Verdenticle Hide 2-Track Trait

Your skin is covered in tough, overlapping tooth-like structures that protect you from harm. You're resistant to Serrated, Keen, and Acid damage, and can mark to treat conflicts as triumphs when traversing the waves.

Lateral Line 3-Track Trait

A series of liquid-filled canals beneath your skin allow you to sense even the most minute vibrations. Darkness has no effect on your ability to perceive your surroundings. Mark to hone in on a specific vibration and learn both its location and what it's likely to be.

Predator's Jaws 3-Track Trait

Your interlocking teeth are a terrifying weapon. When you bite a target, you deal CQ Keen or Serrated damage.

Floater's Organ 2-Track Trait

The parts of your body once used for buoyancy in water have adapted to life among leaves and air. You may always land safely when falling from any distance, and have access to short bursts of the Float and Hover styles.

Scent-Marked 3-Track Trait

When you've been close to a target during a scene or have obtained an object that holds their scent, treat conflicts as triumphs when trying to locate that target again.

Scrawltooth Kit 2-Track Gear

You have mastered Scrawl, the ancient art of scrimshawing teeth to transfer knowledge. Use a task to inscribe a tooth with one memory from another, embedding it in your mouth to receive the information.

Stemora 3-Track Companion

A small and wriggly sucker-faced companion that lives on your body and slithers over you with its leafy fins, keeping you clear of parasites. Mark to remove the effects of toxins, poisons, infections, or infestations.

FIREFLY RESOURCES

Watch Results (Peace)

6: A rubyfruit bloom, dappling the waves with multifaceted crimson sparkles.
5: A pod of oleorca circle the ship, black and white blossomed coats sparkling in the sun.
4: Thermal drafts from beneath buoy the ship.
3: Thrumming vibrations from a Koatu earthbeacon guide the ship precisely along a known trade route.
2: A flock of gluffins emerge from the darkness, their playful wheeling lighting your path.
1: Black plains of obsidian hardened from a recent Volcrez eruption glitter on all sides; a good omen.

Watch Results (Order)

6: Stonedrums echo, voices ring out, and lava glows on the horizon. The ship approaches a Highbranch Hang, Koatu gesturing with excitement.
5: A small settlement nestled in a dead Volcrez tube.
4: A carcharbora hunting party rises from Bathysphere in a submersible, hot on the trail of a galeoconda.
3: High above, a fleet of Thermal Drifters flies over, the scopes on their nanogliders sighting the ship.
2: A lithicraft full of Koatu warriors armed to the teeth confronts the crew, demanding information on recent pirate activity in the area.
1: The acrid stench of fuel on the air and a growing roar gives a slight warning before an Accelerant rocket skiff blazes into view, packed with cultists.

Watch Results (Nature)

6: A herd of magmatee float amid a nearby lava flow.
5: With a snapping of tentacles and a grinding roll, a garganautilus ascends a nearby Volcrez trunk.
4: An entrancing butterfly of golden metal dances alongside the ship. Only the glint of a thin filament attached to it indicates what lurks below.
3: The ship rocks with seismic activity as nearby Volcrez belch black clouds, an eruption imminent.
2: The leaves shine with extra gloss - the crew has stumbled into a fresh patch of volcrezzerin.
1: A chasm appears without warning, threatening to plunge the ship into darkness.

Trade Goods & Cargo

- **Obsidian (export)**: Either raw or shaped into a variety of weapons and tools, obsidian is plentiful in Duzakh's Vent and is a major source of commerce.
- **Koatu Tech (export)**: The most innovative protective, sensing, and communication technologies are freely traded - weapons are a different story.
- **Marine Salvage (export)**: Discoveries that the Freedivers deem unneeded for their quest to raise the Hab are quickly exchanged for supplies or other necessities.
- **Mercenaries (import)**: Duzakh's Vent's population can't sustain Hadalgate's demands for Perimeter guards, so outside help is often sought.
- **Coolants (import)**: Hard to synthesize locally for obvious reasons, the Koatu prize substances that can control the raging heat present in the reach.
- **Books (import)**: Both Koatu and Freedivers are thirsty for knowledge, but both the paper to make new books and artifact books are rare in the reach - which means they'll reward crews handsomely for bringing such things in, especially if they're of Pre-V provenance.

Passengers

- A young aspiring guardian bound for Hadalgate, brimming with optimism and hoping to compete in the Games to win a spot on the Perimeter.
- A grizzled Freediver with an important message to deliver to Bathysphere, paranoid that the crew will try to steal the knowledge.
- A stranger clad in black fireproof leathers and smelling of smoke, claiming to be researching the chemical reactions between Volcrez and magma, but waxing disturbingly poetic when discussing fire of any kind.
- Three Koatu separated from their home fleet and looking to reunite with it.
- A rattlehand bristling with speakers, receivers, and antennae looking to get within range of Numberspire.
- Several new settlers from outside the reach who have the Mantle's permission to begin building a new port at a suitable location in the Volcrez Deeps.

Endemic Hazards

- **Galeoconda**, shark-like creatures whose forms have become elongated and serpentine. When forced into tight quarters, several can merge into a galeohydra.
- **Tanglerfish**, found lying in wait below the waves and captivating prey with glittering metallic lures. These predators strike in an instant and engulf victims in expanding jaws rowed with needles.
- **Ogripedes**, the crawling terror of the deep. Their bioluminescent teeth deliver cascading light shows that entrance targets before they strike.
- **Saltsplitters**, gargantuan predatory crustaceans with claws capable of crushing hulls and impaling mouthparts.
- **Oleorca**, highly intelligent mammals whose flowered hides and wide fin fronds propel them across the waves. Usually playful and curious, but wildsailors would do well to remember that they are still ultimately predators.
- **Tube Bobbers**, found hiding in Volcrez tubes, will shoot out when they sense a nearby target and drag them down into the magma chambers, allowing them to cook their meal as it struggles.

The Hab (Wonder? Legend? Myth? Hard to Say...)

Protector: The leviathan known only as Unfathomed
Seekers: Freedivers, invaders, and fools

It lies at the bottom of the deepest trench, a place so dark even the glow of magma suffocates mere feet from its welling points. Its broken rings tell a tale of past follies, of delving too deep and releasing terrors. This is the legendary Hab, a former station of the Pre-V deeps now ruptured, melted, and run aground, though some parts still sit in the soothing embrace of the briny waters that were once its home. Now its only caretakers are malevolent spirits, decay, and abominations. The Hab is the only part of the Darkness-Under-Eaves beneath the Vent about which anything is known and, if it's any indication, the rest is far, far worse.

Deadfire Litter (Feature)

The stygian plain upon which the Hab resides is the collecting point for all the detritus of Duzakh's Vent, a rich combination of ancient marine snow, leaf litter, and dead wood drifts that reach up to an ektus waist. Needless to say it's a paradise for detritivores of all kinds, such as the reach's ubiquitous crezzopods and mulch slugs... as well as the many things that feed on them, and on each other. *Crews may see a lavaloach longer than a standard ship scud by, magma chambers in its sides glowing as it fuels them with rot. Then a sudden aurora of multispectral flashes as a large mouth yawns wide, wicked teeth oscillating through a hypnotic wave of colored light; an ogripede taking another disoriented meal.*

The Shattered Rings (Relics)

They lie like a series of ripples flash-frozen and dropped, concentric circles once a home amid the inhospitable. These rings are the main body of the Hab itself, radiating outward on either side of the Bilgetrench. Within are wonders of the past and terrors of the present. Unfathomed's shadow looms heavy here, and even the most stolidly irreligious wildsailors give little prayers that it won't fall over them. The Freedivers have their own project in progress here, an expanding blueprint of the Shattered Rings to which hard-won details are continuously added. These new discoveries garner handsome rewards, but it's rare an excursion concludes without disaster of some kind. *Crews must decide for themselves if such promises are worth venturing forth for where every inch is fear, and every moment death.*

Woeboargon (Horror)

Hiding in the drifts of deadfire litter, woeboargons use hypersensitive bristles waving in the air above their buried bodies to sense nearby prey. When triggered they lunge forward in a flash of cavernous mouths, gripping needle teeth, spearing tusks, and large, sensitive noses. *Dodging the bite doesn't mean safety - woeboargons move swiftly on their wickedly clawed limbs, like a vicious carpet of camouflage frills following escapees by scent.*

Bilgetrench (Feature)

Still filled with thick, hypersalinated water, the Bilgetrench is the deepest known point in Duzakh's Vent. Beneath its surface, the war of fire and water still rages, with spots of boiling liquid appearing and disappearing unpredictably depending on where the latest batch of magma creeps through the cracks in its bottom. *The shadows of forms still truly marine flit in glimpses near the surface before diving deep into the black once more.*

Baleglow Hardshades (Threat)

It starts with a greenish sparking in the distance and the sound of metal grinding against stone at high speed. As it grows closer, a humanoid shape comes into view, plodding with heavy steps, a shining, bulbous diving helmet topping its form. The conical power drill grasped in both this revenant's thick gloves is never silent, seeking whatever echoes of oil or ore it was sent to find, and its bearer does not brook interruption lightly. *To stare into the green light emanating from behind the glass portholes of a Baleglow Hardshade's helmet is to experience a clawing dread deeper than anything the observer has known before, as glimpses of irradiated bone and crisped remnants of flesh burn their way into their very soul.*

THE
MYCONICA

There were secrets to the Myconica, she was sure of that much. She could even see how they hadn't been rooted out yet, given that in some of the territories they'd travelled through, you couldn't see your hand in front of your own damn face thanks to the spores.

What she wasn't so sure about, despite their navigator's urgings and their captain's determination, was why any of those secrets could possibly be worth uncovering.

Their ship was an island of calm, a little blister of the inorganic amongst a sea of life. Every surface they travelled over moved as though it was breathing, a motion that was at once less pronounced than the rustle of the waves she'd known her entire life, but infinitely more disturbing.

One of the undercrew had asked her the other day if it felt like home to her. She was a gau, after all.

She'd asked him how he would feel sailing through a sea of flesh, and hadn't seen him on deck since then.

Main Elements

This page highlights the most important elements of the Myconica, a reach... if it could truly be called that... consisting of a singular, all-consuming fungal network, rumoured to hold mysteries regarding the origins of the gau. The rest of this section delves into more detail.

Dimm

The given name for the sprawling fungal mass that makes up the majority of the local wavetops, 'Dimm' has spread through every ironroot in the reach. Whether the organism is uncaring, benevolent, or simply without mind is a question locals rarely ask - they choose to believe whichever appeals to them most, whichever truth makes their existence in such a realm more tolerable. Crews might encounter...

- The bone-white remnants of an old ironroot, studded with fungal shelves.
- A cityport built under a mushroom-cap, which would be whimsical if it weren't for the choking sporeclouds filling the air and the constant snap and growl of sporehunds from shadowed street corners.
- Rolling 'waves' that move without breeze or passing ships, fronds and filaments gleaming wetly.

Saws For The Branchless

While ships designed for the typical leaf and branch waves of the wildsea certainly can sail the quivering fungal mass of the Myconica, doing so comes with a host of problems. Ships that rely on saws, a staple of the wider waves, are particularly affected - the sawteeth tear through sporeclumps and irritant masses, filling the air with infectious clouds. Crews might encounter...

- A sawprow or longjaw lodged in the growth, engine silent, deck scarred with pustulent growths that might once have been the crew.
- Gau mycosanctums rolling happily from place to place.
- Local ships made to rely on centipedal limbs, tentacular attachments, and angled caterpillar tracks.

The Very Air a Smokestack

There are no storms in the skies above the Myconica, but it is nevertheless empty of airships. Rising spores coalesce into drifting clouds that clog engines and turn amberglass opaque. Entire species of saprophytic creatures are said to live within these clouds, drawing the attention of both sky-fishers and larger carnivores from the realms below. Crews might encounter...

- Sky-fishers armed with nets and threshing-boxes on long poles, dredging the lower clouds.
- A sudden surge from below, the waves bursting open as a burrowing ray spears whale-like toward the sky, swallowing an entire cloud in a single gulp.
- A tempest from a distant reach sitting dejected, their inner lightning at a low ebb.

The Mycelial Aurora

So with the Myconica such an unusual place, even by the standards of the wider waves, why is it so heavily travelled? One of the main reasons is the incredible bounty of mushroom-based resources waiting to be collected by alchemists, steeps, and chars. Another is the opportunity presented by the lowest sections of Dimm, spitting distance from the Under-Eaves. But for those in search of wonder there's the mycelial aurora, a skybound network of living filaments that begin to glow as the sun sets, ensuring every night within the Myconica is a unique spectacle. Crews might encounter...

- Submersible crews back from an impossibly deep delve, eyes wide and minds full of secrets.
- The pulsing glow of silver-green light taking hold of the sky as the sun sets.
- Eager snapographers, their image-capturing boxes set up on precarious mushroom caps, sandwiches and flasks of hot tea at their sides, waiting to catch the perfect shot of Dimm's midnight veil.

Dimm's Embrace (Territory)

Motion: Constant, from both the sea and the skies
A Sense In The Air: Of something uncomfortably viscous

The largest territory of the Myconica by far, Dimm's embrace is somehow both the most barren and the most full of life. The 'waves' of the area are a single spreading fungal mass, a collection of fibrous plains, belching organic chimneys, and glistening eye-like nodes. Curled fronds tug reflexively at railings and crane lines, and ships that stop moving for the night in even the least crezzer-dense areas are likely to find themselves completely absorbed by the time they're able to haul anchor again.

The Single Breath (Hazard)

Though other portions of the reach have their dangers, the very air of the Embrace is perhaps its biggest threat. Sporescarves are a requirement for any sailor with lungs, lest they wish to find themselves the host of one of a hundred virulent masses or ravaged by hallucinations. Tanks of clean air and rebreathers are even better. *And there are dangers for those that don't need to breathe too, from the constant vision-occluding murk to the dirty air making the movements of even a well-prepared crew achingly sluggish.*

A Grave of Anchors (Hazard)

Locals warn of the dangers of letting a ship idle when travelling Dimm's Embrace, and these warnings are anything but toothless. A few minutes without motion do little harm, though a crew might stumble when their ship wrenches itself free of the growing fungal mire around them to continue their journey. A few hours and things take a drastic turn for the worse - those curling fronds that might once have seemed playful will have worked their way in through every doorway, every crack, and each moment spent trying to free the ship is another moment for more and more of the growth to accumulate. *Do not tarry in Dimm's Embrace, for it clasps like a child and is too jealous or mindless or possessive to let go. Ships that aren't specifically adapted to crossing Dimm's Embrace must make a successful ratings roll to set off after dropping anchor, with a level of cut or reduced impact based on the time they spent at rest.*

Shanks Like Broken Bones (Feature)

If a crew absolutely has to rest, their safest bet is to find one of the territory's tallshanks... Or what's left of them. The grand mass of Dimm has stripped them of leaves, eaten through bark, leeched them of colour, and these ghostly relics of the Verdancy's power are now little more than tombstones to the waves-that-were. But the one thing they are is solid, the ironroot core of those left standing still stable despite the sucking almost-waves that surround them. *Hitching the ship to a pale shank (or, even better, hoisting it up to hang from one of the broken branches) may be a morbid way to earn respite, but it's an effective one.*

Oido's Stone (Wonder/Junction)

Usually a sailing stone would hardly be a wonder of the waves, but here in the Embrace it can feel heaven-sent. Oido's Stone is a fragment of mountain that cuts effortlessly through the mycelial growth as it travels, festooned with searchlights and cranes. Though Oido himself has very little influence over the stone's direction, he and his attendants have a reputation for helping trapped ships whenever they find them, yanking them up and out of the muck and offering good warm ales to panicked crews. *The actual drinks offered by the junction perched atop the sailing stone are of absolutely terrible quality, but nobody really seems to mind.*

The Walk (Feature)

A ritual carried out by members of the few communities that manage to hang on somehow within the territory. When an individual chooses (or is chosen) to undertake the Walk, they're wrapped in anti-fungal bandages and doused in vinegar before being sent out, on foot, to find another settlement to make contact with. *This is an extremely bad idea, and only a handful of walkers have ever made it to their destination in the last hundred or so years. Most surely die, swallowed by Dimm. Some find their way to one of the region's ghost tallshanks, living alone on the ruined trunk until they're taken by thirst or predation. A lucky few are picked up by passing ships, and almost invariably sign on as undercrew or book passage on the promise of work rather than choosing to return home.*

Escaping The Embrace

The need for constant motion when crossing Dimm's Embrace puts many crews off, with a lot of visitors to the Myconica staying within the (relatively) safe boundaries of the outer territories. Local alchemists and rattehands make a good trade in supplying crews that wish to venture deeper with adjustments to their ship, specifically designed to combat some of the more dangerous aspects of the region - and existing alterations made both for taking to the air and for delving deep beneath the rustling waves can help a ship out in these situations too.

Vinegar Wash 1 Stake Addition

Simple but effective, the ship's deck is lined with barrels of vinegar that can be emptied over the railings after a night at anchor. The liquid is a natural fungal repellant, causing the fronds and growths built up over the night to dry out and retreat.

- **Once per journey, you can move again after dropping anchor without cutting or losing impact**
- **Refilling vinegar barrels at port will likely cost the crew some salvage (if a port even has the facility to help them at all)**

Caterpillar Treads 3 Stake Bite

Attached to multiple sections of the outer hull, these treads bite into the material of Dimm's Embrace to give a ship much more traction when trying to pull free of anchor-time growth. Though less effective in leafy areas, they still have their uses outside of the reach too.

- **Saws +1**
- **Allows you to move again after dropping anchor without cutting or losing impact**

Existing Benefits Various

Depending on how a ship is already constructed, travel through the Embrace can be significantly less arduous. Gasbags and lift systems might not be that useful for local air travel due to navigational issues, but can help pull a ship upwards briefly when it needs to shake off growth. Submersible pressure shells and air filtration units are also effective at keeping the worst of the air's toxicity at bay.

Blue Banxa (Fringe Territory)

Spider-Hunting Season: Winter
Local Words For Blue: Only one, shared across every language no matter the tongue or tonality

One of the few areas of the Myconica where Dimm has been outgrown by local flora, the ironroots of Banxa are host to an entirely different type of fungus. These trees are strong, healthy, and normal in every respect save for their leaves; instead of the usual wildsea green, the branches play host to thousands of mushrooms resembling open clamshells, black and charred-looking on the exterior, and pale blue within.

The Snapping Blues (Feature)

Though the mushrooms of Blue Banxa are a far cry from the leaves of the wider waves, they support ships and settlements in the same way. Their sizes also vary wildly, with some branches furred with hundreds and others lolling under the weight of one or two titanic specimens. *The open-mouth shape of snapping blues might be unnerving, but the mushrooms themselves are safe to travel upon (though hold little to no nutritious content if harvested for food).*

Fault-Spiders (Hazard)

Wherever unique ecosystems exist, predators will rise to turn them into effective hunting grounds. The top of Blue Banxa's food chain is the fault-spider, a huge arachnid with an abdomen resembling one of the snapping blues. if a ship draws too close, or even sails across the spider as it lies in wait, the 'mouth' in the arachnid's abdomen slams closed, leaving the spider's main body to curve round and pick off stranded wildsailors one by one. *Fault-spiders tend to avoid ships that have chainsaws as part of their design, since trapping such a vessel tends to deal more damage than a fresh source of food is worth.*

Monday Morning (Shadow Spring)

The owners of Monday Morning claim that the sapphire-tinted fluid running through their pools (obtained by harvesting and draining the region's mushrooms) has peculiar and mystical regenerative properties. *It does not, aside from the usual benefit of a good bath and some time to relax.*

Clacker-Jack (Fringe Territory)

Distance From the Central Node: Variable, depending on the node's erratic movement
Amount of Power Stored Per-Cap: 600-800 Mycovolts

The haska network crosses every reach, or so they say, an exchange of information through mucoid strands. Some even claim to have seen the Central Node as it moves through the sink, brachiating on pulsing tendrils. But every network needs a power source, and it's the buzzing potential of Clacker-Jack that fuels those strands for uncountable miles.

So That's Where The Storms Go (Feature)

The mushrooms of Clacker-Jack are far more traditional than most of the Myconica's growth, rolling waves of thick pale stalks and colourful caps. The skies are more traditional too - clouds darken and coruscate above the largest of these mushrooms, standing almost to the height of tallshanks, and lightning strikes their caps again and again. *These lightning strikes are the source of the haska network's power, or so the locals say. No matter how much truth there is to the statement, it's obvious that the mushrooms themselves are excellent natural storage for voltaic energy - drawing close to one of the stalks is likely to set your teeth on edge and turn your hair (if you have any) into a puffball.*

Undercap Towns (Port)

There's no port larger than a small town across the Clacker-Jack territory, for fear that any larger structures might draw errant lightning away from its intended destination. Instead, many of the caps have small port-towns built in their shadow, safe from the ire of sky and supplied with limitless local power. *The inhabitants of these towns have adapted to the high-powered environment over the years, and barely register that their homes are clustered around giant living batteries.*

Local Rumours

- Though not publicized or even publicly acknowledged, those few that survive the Walk across Dimm's Embrace live like royalty for the rest of their days.
- Dimm is slowly becoming more aware as the years pass, some region deep within it self-organizing into a form of true sapience.
- The burrowing rays were not a result of crezzerin mutation, but the fruits of a local alchemist's labour as he worked in compact with a group of beast-traders from a distant reach.
- Once a year, on a certain date, each of the snapping blues closes and then opens abruptly.
- The Myconica's aurora is a skyward map, a log of locations touched by the grand spreading fungus as it continues to expand beyond the borders of the reach.
- In some places, Dimm's lowest portions come into contact with the Under-Eaves itself.
- The Myconica is the homeland of the gau, and the very first mycosanctums were forged from mushroom pieces carved from a then-young fungus that would grow to become Dimm.
- The Wild Dancers are far more savvy than they might first appear, and many of the uncanny jaunts their members leave upon have serious and singular purposes that might topple existing power structures or change the futures of far-distant lands.
- Foxfire, and the mycelial aurora it hangs from, are growing in direct opposition to Dimm. At some point, years from now, one or the other of them will 'win' this glacial struggle of growth and claim both sea and sky for itself.
- The first member of Tiltwin's band hailed from the Myconica, taking one of a thousand local fungi outside the reach and allowing it to flourish and spread with so much less direct competition.

The Kilderkin Majestic (Ship)

Number of Fungal Ballrooms: 26, 25 of which have their own band
Checked at the Door: Sporescarves and oxygen tanks, exchanged for the Kilderkin's own current fashions

The ship breathes music. Ballrooms heave with dancers in bedraggled finery. The murky air strobes with phosphorescence, rings with shouts and laughter, is rife with the powerful scents of decay and sweat and expensive fragrance. Is there anywhere more welcoming, anywhere that would judge less and accept more? If there is, none of the dancers have found it.

The party on the Kilderkin Majestic started a century ago, and shows no sign of slowing yet. The ship itself is a ruin, a shell of its former self in terms of seafaring worthiness - it steams drunkenly across the fungal flats, sometimes losing a sheet of iron or a spar of wood as it crests a particularly difficult rise or ploughs through a sprouting growth, but such disasters barely even slow it down.

It might have been a cargo carrier once, judging by the vast inner spaces (now converted to ballrooms, banquet halls, and fighting pits). It might have sailed an ancient sea (for the twitching tentacular masses that drag it ever-forward are definitely of the Myconica, and no other bite that would be suitable for any sort of treetop waves can be seen). And it might, if you believe the breathy whispers of a spore-drunk dancer, or the scrawled note pressed into your hand by a passing shape in a low-lit corridor, have a purpose other than pleasure (though none will admit it openly until you make your way to the highest echelons of Kilderkin society, where the dance becomes one of delicious subterfuge and urgent political machination).

One thing's for sure though - grab your best shoes, breathe deep, and you're going to have a damn good time.

The Scarfsquerade (Feature)

Personal breathing devices are banned within the Majestic, politely removed or roughly confiscated at the doors. In their place visitors gain two things - a ticket for their return upon leaving the ship, and a Kilderkin scarf-and-mask combo, tailored after whatever fashion currently sweeps the ship. *Kilderkin scarves are to a sporescarf what a sunny day is to a storm, a complete antithesis that makes a mockery of the concept of clean air. They don't so much block bad air and drifting spores as they do invite them, but somehow in such great varieties that no single symbiotic infestation can take root - wearers feel a sense of fungal euphoria, which continues to grow as long as the scarf is worn, and is extremely difficult to give up.*

The Eructive Stack (Wonder/Horror)

A huge smokestack that dominates the centre of the Kilderkin's decks, continuously venting impossible amounts of warm, wet spores up from the waves the ship ploughs through. Though it leans at a slightly off-kilter angle, the stack is sturdy enough that shacks and tents have been strung up around the outside to act as places of brief respite for those on board too tired to dance. *The base of the stack, deep within the ship, is rigged with netting to catch delirious dancers who leap from the rim far above, surfing the sporeclouds as they fall to what would otherwise be certain death.*

Changing Fashions (Feature)

It's not just the style of garments and types of music that evolve throughout the year as the dance continues, but the types of entertainment offered to visitors. In some seasons the dances are fast, ended only by the pure physical exhaustion of the dancers, and ironbound chefs serve imported meats drenched in energizing spices. In others the ballrooms are spattered with blood, dancers handed knives and chains to whirl with, and the mezzanines fill with those unafraid of spectacle and eager to bet. *In some seasons the owners of the vessel, the High Majesties, deign to join the dance themselves - they twirl with as much unstable elegance as the rest of the visiting dancers, whispers tugging at their clothes.*

The First (Mycosanctum)

Construction Materials: Dead ships, rotting wood, Dimm's own flesh
The Truth Behind The Name: Questionable

Though there's a lot of argument over the subject, the inhabitants of The First hold that their name is accurate - that the rolling mass of wrecks and fungus they call home is the very first gau mycosanctum, the originator of the entire bloodline.

A Mobile Port (Feature)

Like most mycosanctums, The First is as much a free-roaming entity (or a ship in its own right) as it is a port. It crosses the vast expanses of Dimm's Embrace with ease, stopping and starting as it chooses. *It's the fact that the port is constructed from the very same fungus it crosses that keeps it free of intrusive growth, though it does still face other, more local, problems.*

The Wheeze (Hazard)

The air within the mycosanctum is far cleaner and safer than that of the waves outside, but it's also far more damp. In most lung-having humanesque individuals this leads to the development of nothing worse than a hacking cough, which will clear after a few days free of the mycosanctum's innards, but for ironbound (normally happily immune to various airborne problems) there are additional dangers to consider. *Something in the dampness of the air starts to slow ironbound down, whether they're made of wood, metal, or stranger substances. Perhaps it's a warming of the exposed soul, rather than any physical interaction with their materials, but anchored visitors seem to breeze by just fine.*

The Young Council (Leader)

Control over The First is traditionally handled by the youngest generation of gau grown within it, on the basis that their youth and innocence gives them a sense of clarity that the aged lack. *Though there are some obvious problems with this philosophy, the Young Council are given tutelage and advice by elder members. When they do make decisions, they tend to be surprisingly mature and even-handed in their judgements.*

Port Nycol (Port)

The Price of Speech Within the Markets: Two crates of cargo and a taste of the jag-lash
Local Sporehunds: Deathly quiet and overly-tentacled

There's something about the ghost-shank of Nycol that sets nerves jangling, that makes a sailor grit their teeth. Perhaps it's the journey needed to reach the main town, a series of rickety elevators leading down from a rift in the fungal thrash and down into the ragged-edged depths (a journey that necessitates most crews leaving their ships hundreds of feet above them as they descend). It might be the silent markets of the middle shelves, run by ketra and tzelicrae traders where all deals are made in writing, and not a word is ever uttered. Or maybe it's the shank itself, and the constant smell of slowly rotting wood, giving the feeling that the entire multi-tiered port might slip or break at any moment.

Whatever it is, crews usually spend as little time in Nycol as possible, but inevitably leave with whatever they were seeking.

... Unless that was comfort, in which case they leave empty-handed.

Shelf Upon Shelf (Feature)

Nycol is a sprawling settlement built over many layers of bracket-fungus anchored to a single stunted tallshank, each shelf supporting its own tiny town or marketplace. Some are more welcoming than others, and the lower you get, the more lively they become (as shouts and laughter do well to hold the dark at bay), but there's a sense that any bonhomie comes at a cost. *There are few places across the Myconica where gau make up the majority of the population, but they're almost entirely absent from Nycol.*

The Silent Markets (Feature)

If you can get used to the oddity of trading and haggling entirely in writing, the Silent Markets are actually a fantastic place to offload some cargo and find resources and oddities from across the waves. Each layer of the market has a specialty, but the one thing that none of them offers publicly is whispers. *That's not to say you can't find them - you just need to know where to look, and which palms to grease.*

Scrimshaw Streets (Feature)

The highways and byways of Nycol are carved directly into the fungal shelves it stands upon, and though the markets rest on the surface the homes are tunneled out from within. *The most successful merchants earn a place within the trunk of the shank itself, and can be distinguished from their kin by the strong smell of leafmould and dying wood.*

Hyacinth (Shadow Spring)

Nobody seems to know what a hyacinth is, but the spring holds a unique reputation for being one of the least relaxing places in the port. Carved into the interior of the lowest shelf and misted with memories of sap, wildsailors can expect to sit precariously with their feet swinging over the rift below, with no hint of guide ropes or safety nets in sight. *Locals don't go to Hyacinth to relax - they go there to deal in private rooms, where words can flow freely and forbidden subjects can be aired.*

How far could you really trust a chart? Especially one as crumpled and spore-stained as this, pulled from the ruins of an aberrant tallshank cartoika (the structure itself abandoned, turned over by gods-know-what and left to rot).

And one that implied so much with so few penstrokes, that seemed to promise more than logic would dictate was possible.

Yet there was some truth to it so far, from what they could tell. A dense wave of fungus curling over like a claw to the north. A ghost-shank standing pale to the south-east. A fault line through Dimm's flesh, picked out in unsettling detail on paper, right where the little map said it would be.

And underneath it all, a spread of green - a second ink, maybe moss-derived, dripped onto the page and smeared by some cartographer's finger into a portentous circle.

There was something beneath them, it promised. Something new.

The Foxfire Ocean (Hidden Territory)

Colours by Night: The tarnished silver of an old key and the green of lost leaves, of watchful eyes, of burning futures
Colours by Day: The soft gold of spilled whiskey and the purple of a broken heart, of a geode split, of a spreading bruise
Mycelial Connections: Less than the thickness of an ektus arm

Many assume that, with the vast spread of Dimm replacing the usual leaves and branches of the thrash and tangle, that the grand fungal specimen reaches all the way down to the Eaves. And in some cases they're right - there are many, many spots you could pick on the surface where, if you drilled down for long enough, you'd pass through layer after layer of increasingly dense fungus until breaking through a final membrane and falling, helpless, to the choking darkness of the ground long lost.

But if you picked well, or had the kind of charts that many on the surface would swear didn't exist...

You'd find the cavernous wonder of the Foxfire Ocean.

A Sea Beneath the Sea (Feature)

The Foxfire Ocean is a collection of chambers, some that can be crossed in a day, others taking weeks, that spread haphazardly beneath Dimm's bulk. They're as varied as the waves above are singular - one might be filled with gigantic toadstools, another with drooping salamander mane, yet another with stinkhorns and maitake and morels. The air throughout the caverns isn't free of spores by any means, but it's clearer and cooler than the air above. It smells of darkness and soil. It sighs with peace. *It's almost impossible to access the Foxfire Ocean without a submersible, and the pressure exerted by cutting down through Dimm's crushing mass is incredible... But upon reaching the expanse beneath, if crews are successful, Pressure tracks should be erased and Pressure effects lightened or lifted. But Scrutiny, on the other hand...*

The Deadwood Moon (Wonder/Horror)

It hangs in the centre of the underfungal expanse, miles across and burning with phosporescent light. The moon is artificial, fed by offerings of wood from far and wide, delivered by airships that have never seen the sky. How it hangs there, untethered, is a mystery few dare question, lest reality remember its base physical laws and send the entire construction crashing down to the ocean's floor. *Though constructed, as the name implies, from dead wood (consumed by the glowing fungus that lights the ocean by day and night), the moon can be unsettlingly watchful where visitors are concerned. Scrutiny rules may apply here, though what the moon might attempt if a crew catches its attention is something for you to find out for yourself.*

A War So Slow (Feature)

The moon is a paradox in more ways than one. Some point out that its fungal colours mimic (or are perhaps the source of) the mycelial aurora that lights up the skies above, and that where the lunar light is strongest the exposed inner surfaces of Dimm seem crumbling and calcified. *If either entity could be said to have sentience, you might think them locked in a combat taking place on a geological scale. Perhaps, one day, one of them will triumph.*

Deadwood Farmers (Feature)

Inhabitants of the ocean that spend their lives adding to the cavern's light source, each of their ships a hybrid of airship and submersible. Some delve deeper, stealing bark from the exposed trunks in the lightless depths of the drown. Others range farther afield, heading to reaches still full of wood and leaf to drag their crezzer-fuelled bounty back to the Myconica. *Many of these farmers develop senses and abilities that surprise even the arconauts of the Foxfire Ocean, claiming that their blessings come direct from the moon above to aid them in their mission. Like so much in the Myconica, their claims of the source of their gifts may be regarded with scepticism, but the efficacy of them is not.*

Gilliham's Gladeside (Port)

Gladeside Watchtowers: Rigged with ballistae and chain cannons to slow speeding ships as they approach
Gilliham's Motto: "Growth is a natural want, and flowering the perfect end"

Dominating an entire cavern of the Foxfire Ocean (and with holdings spread across twenty nearby chambers), Gladeside is by far the largest and most influential port of the region. Though it contains a bustling town with thriving nightlife, and many opportunities for visiting crews to take in the local sights (such as the Zoetrope carnival, the weekly tastings, the monument to never-Dimm and the Moon's Shadow theatre), it's best known for the farmlands that surround it and the bounty they offer.

Parasite Glades (Feature)

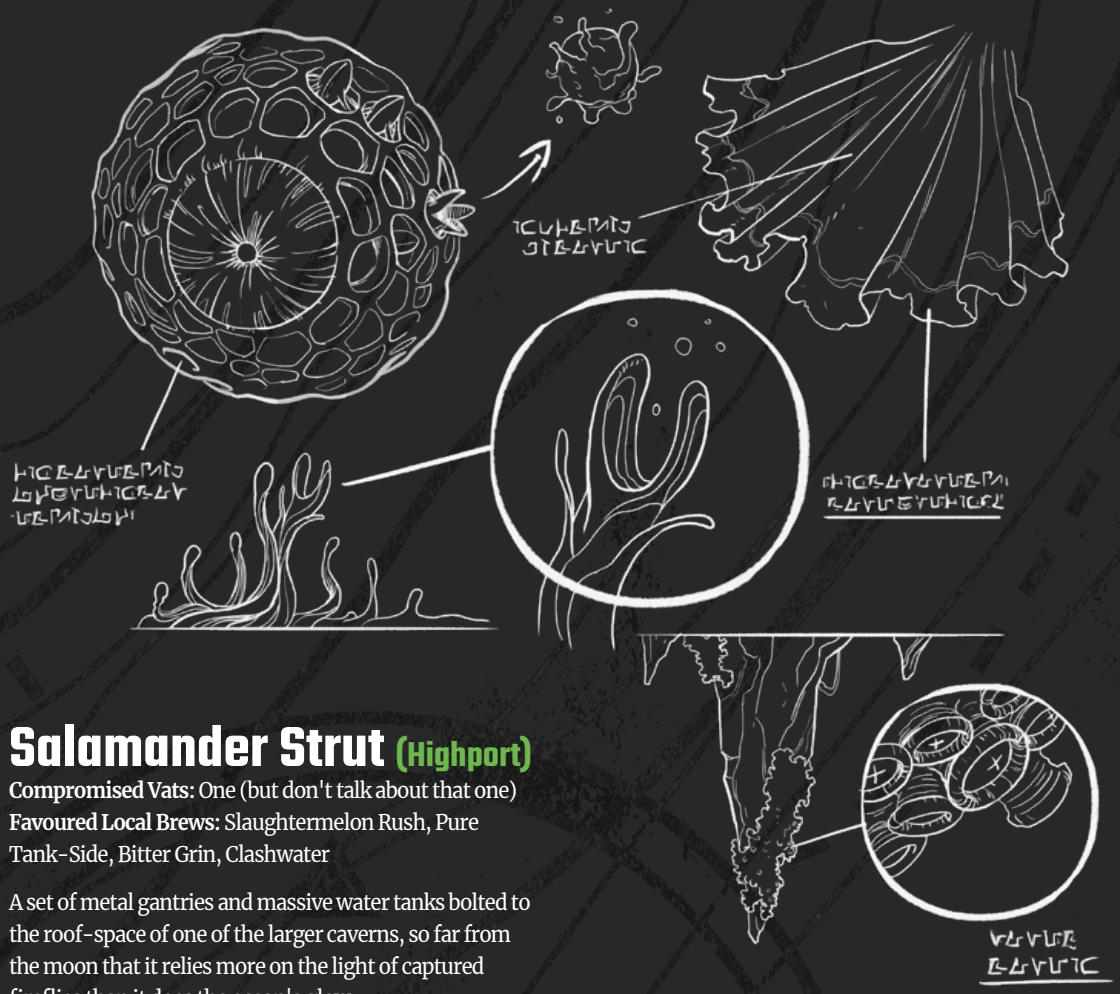
Growing thrash-level plants by the light of an artificial moon, in a space entirely devoid of soil, is not an easy task. But the parasite farmers of the glades are an ambitious lot, and have risen to the challenge with both relish and zeal. *Ships cross many caverns to come and trade for fruit, herbs, and vegetables from the parasite glades, the stolen tastes of waves far away and high above.*

The Impound Cage (Hazard)

It's a simple rule, people - don't plough ships straight through the parasite farms! It's written on signs, blared from port-edge speakers, signalled frantically by guards as they spot approaching ships... But every now and then a reckless crew blunder straight into the grow-zones, and there has to be some kind of punishment meted out. *The Impound Cage is a giant stinkhorn fungus, its natural netting acting as an excellent set of fungal bars to prevent ships towed inside from getting out again before their crews have paid penance. This usually comes in the form of forced labour in the groves and mandatory awareness summits.*

Growmaster Gilliham (Leader)

A stout and cheerful ektus with bone-white blooms, his friendly demeanour hiding a will of absolute iron. *Gilliham was a gardener for many years on the waves above, and it's his designs to which the glades are laid out.*



Salamander Strut (Highport)

Compromised Vats: One (but don't talk about that one)
Favoured Local Brews: Slaughtermelon Rush, Pure Tank-Side, Bitter Grin, Clashwater

A set of metal gantries and massive water tanks bolted to the roof-space of one of the larger caverns, so far from the moon that it relies more on the light of captured fireflies than it does the ocean's glow.

Few people live on the strut, but those that do are dedicated - the entire assemblage is one of the few sources of filtered water for the under-reach, collecting tainted liquid and forcing it through a series of chemical vats and heating processes before shuttling it down to the mushroom waves below.

Salamander's Beard (Feature)

A breed of stalactite-esque fronds that hang alongside the strut, each dripping with water leeched from Dimm's innards. *Drinking straight from the source is a less than sensible idea.*

Mild Forth Place (Junction)

The only junction of Salamander Strut, which also doubles as living quarters for all of the alchemists and engineers that work there. There aren't many facilities for wildsailors, though several airship mooring posts spike down from the basement level, but the place is known for the quality and variety of the drinks they offer. *Technically the junction's bar only offers water, but they flavour and bottle the stuff in ways that a lot of wildsailors would never have seen before. All drinks served in Mild Forth Place have the Medicinal tag.*

The Wild Dancers (Faction)

Home Turf: The Kilderkin Majestic
Motivation: To forget the world

The dance attracts people from all walks of life, but wildsailors are the ones that stay for the longest. For most of them it's the lack of connection to the wider waves that pulls them in, the chance to be truly apart from the constant work of travel and discovery that defines so much of their lives. To find a place where they can just let loose, a place where the dangers are understood and accounted for, and where food and wine flow freely... Well, they can't be blamed for mistaking it for a kind of heaven.

Few Wild Dancers leave. Those that do tend to find their way back before too long.

Juice Povoy (Leader)

Not an *actual* leader in any way, but a famous figure nonetheless. Widely regarded as the wildest of the dancers, trying to keep time with Juice is an exercise in madness. *The ironbound hasn't taken a break from the festivities in more than a year, and hasn't missed a step for several months.*

Wine By The Lungful (Feature)

Brewed using a distillation and fermenting process that seems arcane to the uninitiated, bottles of the spore-laden wine handed out to the dancers are as much inhaled as they are imbibed. *Some drink through their scarfquerade masks, with many of the adornments fitted with holes for mouth and nose for this specific purpose.*

The Old Engine Room (Chop Station)

Whatever powers the tendrils that move the Kilderkin, it has nothing to do with the engine room. The space now acts as a butchery and preparation area for the constant banquets that help the dancers keep dancing. *The thick walls and well-maintained ventilation systems mean that partygoers that make their way down to the chop station sometimes regain a little bit of their sense of time and perspective.*

Principles

Not written - merely true.

- Let the music carry you
- Breathe deep and be free
- Never let the night end

Quick NPCs

- **Chime Towerfoot (ketra)**: An ancient dancer with bones of self-grown fungus. Chime prefers the open air of the upper decks to the cramped spaces below.
- **Alya (itzenko)**: Every moulting gives them more joints to work with, more shapes to contort into.
- **Hraoked Geil (gau)**: Grim and quiet, Geil stalks the halls and passages of the Kilderkin in search of her missing crew. The wild dance holds no sway for her, and the dancers themselves seem to whirl and twist and shy away instinctively.

Story Hooks

- A change of fashions brings the want of foreign furs from dangerous beasts.
- The Kilderkin draws close to Blue Banxa, with the music in each of the ballrooms changing to something more militaristic and proud.
- Visiting wildsailors bring kitesails with them, inspiring a fad of aerial dance amid the fumes of the eructive stack.
- A new illness ravages the dancers, something that their scarves can't filter out. Or, perhaps, that their scarves invite...?
- The music stops. The dance is over. Something has gone wrong.
- Dancers begin hurling themselves over the rails, ranting about the 'gold and the green' below.

... And The High Majesties (Faction)

Home Turf: The Kilderkin Majestic's Conning Tower
Motivation: To nurture the dance, and to seed certain revellers for use in a far more revolutionary waltz

Are these the first dancers of the Kilderkin, or perhaps the original crew? Do they feel the same myconic beat as the rest of the ship, or are they deafened to it by proximity, or does it drive them to a greater extent than their own hearts? Do they still sway and turn, up there in the ship's conning tower?

These are the questions that visitors ask when they tire of the dance, if they're ever able to leave.

They are the wrong questions.

The Right Questions (Feature)

Visitors to the Kilderkin that can resist the pull of the dance might start to see patterns emerging, if they look hard enough. There's order to the chaos, a kind of shepherding in the way the air moves and the beats swell from place to place. The ship's interior starts to seem less like a party and more like a laboratory experiment, and the looming shape of the Conning Tower at the rear of the vessel (matched only in height by the eructive stack) seems all too close, and all too watchful. *Asking questions or passing comments on such matters is a quick way of getting yourself thrown off the ship or, if your questions are unusually incisive, escorted up to a private audience with the High Majesties themselves.*

Mycomesmic Agents (Feature)

Why is it so hard for the dancers to break away from the ship that the Majesties control? It's not simply that a place of such joy is so different from the rest of the Myconica, or that the unbridled indulgence it offers is hard to leave behind, but because dancers are urged to remain until the right kind of spore has taken root inside their mind – one of subversive revolutionary tendencies. *This spore can be removed, if identified before being remotely activated, though the process is likely a difficult one.*

A Note on Tone

Including the High Majesties as presented here can drastically change the tone of Kilderkin, from a place of worrying, but ultimately quite fun excess to the twisted seed of a dark and unstable future. Use at your own risk!

Principles

Though the Kilderkin's dancers are driven purely by the intoxication of the spore-fuelled dance, the Majesties that control the ship have motives of far greater import, and more terrible clarity.

- *Subvert* – bring visitors into the fold of the dance.
- *Infiltrate* – through spore and sweat and joy, catch them in the Kilderkin's web of mycomesmic agents.
- *Destabilize* – when the time is right, wake the agents to sow chaos and topple distant powers.

Quick NPCs

- **Garland (ardent)**: A dancer and feaster, their scarfasquerade mask that of a crying child. Will bang on endlessly about how much fun they're having while the tears flow.
- **Dask Fornell (mothryn)**: An unwitting agent, Dask managed to tear herself away from the Majestic, but hasn't felt quite herself since.
- **Six Oh Three (ironbound)**: Once a char, now a chef to the Majesties themselves. Hears more than they should of the secrets behind the dance.

Story Hooks

- The Conning Tower is rocked by an explosion, teetering but not toppling. What has done this?
- Whispers from the few that tear themselves away from the dance, of grand plans and spreading decay and blood in distant streets.
- One of the High Majesties leaves the ship for the first time in many years.
- Agents begin to awaken, brains full of distant commands in something approaching gaudimm.

FIREFLY RESOURCES

Watch Results (Peace)

6: A gout of golden spores thrown into the air.
5: A passing ship that signals yours with a standard greeting and an offer of trade.
4: A pulse of silver in the daytime sky, as some shuddering from below pumps power through the mycelial aurora.
3: Sporehunds, tamed by generations of passing wildsailors, playing idly in the broken trail you leave.
2: A ghost-shank, normally so pale and uninviting, scrawled with massive messages of hope that lift the spirits of the undercrew.
1: A solo explorer on an outrider racing by, to the cheers of everyone on deck.

Watch Results (Order)

6: A glimpse of the Kilderkin Majestic, spilling light and laughter and music out into the night.
5: Stakes driven hard into the growth, marking the path to a distant port.
4: A submersible adapted for the Myconica's waves, crew out on the curving hull with barrels of vinegar.
3: The corpse of a fault-spider with a bizarre series of tubes and wires leading away from its mouthparts.
2: Sky-fishers hauling their catch back home.
1: The ruin of a sail-powered ship almost entirely consumed by the fungal waves.

Watch Results (Nature)

6: A pack of rays breaking the surface, sunning themselves for a few moments before delving down into their usual lightless world.
5: An area of low growth revealing multiple branchless ironroots, pale in the sunlight.
4: A rift in the waves, the depths it reveals glowing green.
3: An attack on the ship by a confused burrowing ray.
2: An increase in the already dense sporeclouds, dropping visibility even lower.
1: A rootquake far below that tears new faults through the body of Dimm, turning the sea around you into a network of wounds.

Trade Goods and Cargo

- **Dimm's Flesh (export)**: While slightly grisly in nature, fungal samples taken straight from the spreading waves of the Myconica can be extremely valuable as research materials in other reaches.
- **Sporehund Pups (export)**: While common on the flats, sporehunds are surprisingly difficult to breed reliably once you get past the borders of the reach. That doesn't stop people trying, though.
- **Phosphor Spores (export)**: A reliable source of light in a world where flame represents an absurd danger, the Myconica's natural bounty of glowing spores are bottled and exported in impressive amounts.
- **Clean Air (import)**: While tanks of the stuff are valuable, filtration mechanisms (such as those used for the new-fangled submersibles everyone seems to be talking about) are worth many times their weight in rare salvage.
- **Parasite Cuttings (import)**: Needed for the groves of the Foxfire Ocean, to ensure a fresh and constant flow of new fruits and vegetables in the caverns below the shroom-choked tangle.
- **Vinegar (import)**: While some is directed toward the Kilderkin Majestic's kitchens, most is used as an aid for ships attempting to explore Dimm's Embrace.

Passengers

- A duo of sky-fishers hunting out a new place to set up for the summer.
- A gau eager to explore what she thinks might well be her homeland, though she'll likely become more and more disillusioned as she travels.
- Deadwood farmers from the Foxfire Ocean, who lost their airship to a burrowing ray strike and need some other way of getting their cargo back to the moon below the waves.
- An alchemical researcher on a personal quest to research anti-fungal agents.
- An ironbound with a silver soul, searching for the source of one of their component pieces.
- Auroran sightseers with snapography boxes and a huge variety of shutters and lenses, intending to capture a time-lapse of the brilliant night sky above the Myconica.

Endemic Hazards

- The very air itself is a deadly concoction of spores and warmth, the perfect condition for the growth and spread of infection.
- Burrowing rays in search of spread sentience.
- Anti-sanctum marauders, gau exiled from The First for their beliefs about the reach in which they dwell and the true nature of Dimm.
- Feral sporehunds, racing across the fungal flats in packs to engage with and consume any non-myconic life they can find.
- Hunting glut-clouds, huge spreads of particulate life woken by the aurora's light.
- The Broken Hand, also known as the Left Hand of the Deeps, an apocryphal protoleviathan that nobody can quite agree on the form of.

Burrowing Rays

[Huge] Sightless Spears From The Fungal Waves

Ironjaw rays are a reasonably common sight in most reaches, especially those prone to storms (living or otherwise). The unusual atmospheric conditions of the Myconica, plus the mutative effects of crezzerin, have led to the appearance of a distinctive local variant known as the burrowing ray.

Though equally large and graceful, burrowing rays live very different lives from their ironjaw cousins. Most of their time is spent digging through the shroomesque innards of Dimm, relying on their size and their isolation from predators both above and below to keep them safe. But as their hunger grows they draw closer and closer to the surface, tendril-like growths around their jaws tuned finely to the detection of certain edible spores in the roiling clouds above. When they detect a mass large enough to satiate them for a time they tilt, accelerate, and burst from the surface, throwing themselves skywards and swallowing as much of their particulate foodstuff as they can.

Burrowing rays aren't aggressive by nature, but they can sometimes be confused by the existence of true sapience in dissolute forms - more than one tzelicrae vessel has been lost due to being mistaken for the ray's usual sustenance, smashed apart by the creature's explosive rise. *Use a burrowing ray if you want the crew to face a threat from beneath, a creature that bears them no ill will, but may still attack due to the presence of a tzelicrae crewmember or certain types of carried cargo.*

Drives

Feed On The Small Life: Burrowing rays prefer extremely small morsels consumed in large quantities, their metabolisms arconautically adapted for efficiency.

Presence

Sight: A moving mass beneath the skin of the Myconica's waves. A fountain of matter, and a grand arching shape rising inside it.

Sound: Low but powerful calls as they leap for food. Rumbles from beneath a ship's bow.

Taste: Unpleasantly rubbery meat with a distinctive mushroom-like tang to it.

Resources

Specimens: Ray Hide, Sapience-Seeking Tendril, Arconautic Ray-Stomach

Whispers: From Waves to Clouds, Burrowing Mass

Aspects

Blunt Force: If forced to attack, burrowing rays use their size to their advantage to deal large amounts of CQ Blunt damage. If a vessel (or, even more unluckily, an individual) is caught in the radius of one of their eruptive feeding leaps, massive Blunt or Blast damage is common.

Sapience Sense: Burrowing rays have no organs sensitive to light, but their stubby tendrils can sense large amounts of 'thought' spread throughout tiny beings. This allows them to home in on the clouds of airborne matter that act as their primary food source, but also sometimes draws them toward tzelicrae (and other unusually-structured wildsailors).

Designed for Burrowing: Rays burrow as fast as most ships can sail. Their hide gives them a natural immunity to both Toxin and Acid damage, and a resistance to Blunt.

Quirks

Storm Throwback: Every now and then, a burrowing ray is born with the same storm-attracting horns and spines of its distant sky-sailing kin. These override the usual lack of thunder and lightning in the Myconica, sometimes goading a living storm into crossing the intangible barrier between reaches.

Ray-Scale: For burrowing rays that travel particularly deep within Dimm, their rubbery skins may harden into sharper scales to aid with digging through dense areas. These rays can deal CQ Serrated and Keen damage when they attack, and tear the rolling mushroom waves to shreds if they choose to travel along the surface.

The Danger of Breath

There are hundreds of unique illnesses and infections carried within the spore-choked airs of the Myconica. While locals have adapted to resist most (if not all) of them, visitors that don't take care of when and how they breathe might find themselves afflicted with...

Skelechurn

A twisting of internal structures that only affects those with some kind of endoskeleton. In an ardent it manifests slowly, developing over weeks of increased aching and stiffness in the joints. *Ketra have it far worse, even if their skeletons aren't made of bone - something about their biology sends skelechurn into overdrive, to the extent that you might actually be able to see their internal structures reforming and rotating through their translucent skins.*

Auroran Manacles

A particularly nasty infection that's hard to spot until it enters its final stage, unless the sufferer spends a lot of time outside at night. What starts as an urge to stay under the open sky and isolate from others becomes a mania, the true cause (and final outcome) of which is difficult to reverse without excessive trauma. *The night sky reveals the truth, that the sufferer is attached by a slim strand to the aurora above. Attempting to break this strand sends them into a frenzy, eyes and mouth burning with sickly green light and muscles rippling with sky-borrowed strength.*

River's Bend

A simple but dangerous infection, River's Bend develops new organs within its host that pump out a continual stream of spore-attracting pheromones. *Sufferers may be extremely confused as to why sporeclouds seem to follow them around, even past the borders of the Myconica.*

Crezzerdimm

Thankfully extremely rare, the progress of a crezzerdimm infestation is slow, but dramatic. An infected individual transforms, over the course of years, into a moving mass of fungus, the same orange-purple as Dimm itself. *Some living with crezzerdimm are mistaken for gau, but never by an **actual** gau.*

CHAPTER 07
ADVICE & RESOURCES

"Is it just me," Grace started, and the jeers began in earnest. She waited them out - she couldn't really blame them, as the undercrew had spent many a night at sea trying to argue whatever spurious conjecture she chose to throw their way.

"Is it just me," she repeated, and a burly young ardent shouted 'Probably!' in response, setting everyone else in the room laughing. Even she cracked a smile at that one. They were a good bunch, the crew of the Rachnid.

"Come on, come on! Is it just me... Or have things been different since we left Storm's Corpse?"

The laughter died along with the playful mood.

"They have, haven't they? Like the world just, sort of, changed? While we weren't looking?"

A few met her eye. Most couldn't. There were some things you just didn't talk about.

For Players & Fireflies Alike

The core Wildsea book had a chapter on advice for the Firefly, helping them run a game on the rustling waves. The advice in that chapter still holds, but is added to here; for **Storm & Root**, we've...

- Clarified a few problem points from the base game
- Added extra optional mechanics and variant rules that might work for your table
- Codified a few conventions that people seem to have taken to over the years

Not Just For Fireflies

The other thing we've done with this chapter is open it up, thematically speaking, to the average player. The information here isn't something you should avoid if you're not running the game. Whether you're eagerly devouring the book or simply searching for answers, this chapter is for you. So let's jump right in!

Earning Milestones

Though not a resource in the traditional sense, milestones are taken directly from the elements of a scene or story in the same way resources are. The core book gives a few suggestions on when one might earn a minor or major milestone, but we'll expand on those here for the purposes of clarity.

Earning Minor Milestones

By Choice: Once per session, after doing something particularly impressive, record a minor milestone on your character sheet. You might do this...

- After advancing or satisfying one of your drives
- By playing up to an active mire and still succeeding in a situation
- Helping (or really potently screwing over) an NPC
- Getting a triumph with a twist on only two dice
- Surviving an encounter with a beast of the wilds
- Crafting something that sees immediate and game-changing use
- Saying just the right thing at just the right time, enough that the other players at the table will use it as a running joke or quote it at you for weeks to come

If the session comes to a close and you haven't recorded a minor milestone in this way, think back over what you've accomplished and choose the juiciest event or most outrageous moment, and add a milestone based on that.

From the Firefly: The Firefly doesn't usually give out minor milestones piecemeal (though they technically can), more as a reward for good group harmonics and impressive shared achievements. This might be after a plan really comes together, when the crew pull off a dramatic set of linked actions to achieve something that seemed almost impossible, or just as a consquence of a really good bit of character-to-character roleplay.

Earning Major Milestones

Though these are given out once per arc rather than once per session, the conditions for earning them are pretty much the same. But for these major milestones it helps to think *bigger*, focusing on the stuff that really had a lasting effect on a character, story, or the world as a whole.

The kinds of people that played Risk & Sail loved to brag about how the game, though chaotic and seemingly entirely random from an outsider's perspective, actually rewarded skillful, methodical play.

As far as Teu was concerned, that was absolute foxwash. And the amount of scrap and oddments he had to lug home from the junction every night seemed to back that up.

He'd faced off against an ardent writling once, all bluster and paper crowns, and every card Teu pulled made for a perfect play.

He'd sat across from a ketra too, a pirate captain (or so the portside rumourmongers would have had him believe), who played with a sabre in her hand. It almost cost him his fingers, but it was a win.

He'd even faced an ektus that took ten minutes pondering each move, and Teu stopped looking at his cards towards the end of that one. Didn't matter. He knew he'd win.

Just lucky, he supposed.

Fortune Rolls

Edges, skills, and advantages make up the majority of rolls as the crew explore an area or tackle one of the threats of the wild, but some situations are entirely divorced from a character's attributes (or a ship's ratings). In these situations, there's nothing wrong with bringing pure luck into play.

Fortune rolls come in a few different forms, but the most basic is exactly what you might expect - the roll of a single die to represent the vagaries of chance. The columns below cover the variety of fortune rolls a player or Firefly might take (standard, hierarchical, and iterated), and the situations in which they're appropriate.

Standard

As already mentioned, the most basic fortune roll uses a single die with the usual Wild Words results spread.

- **Roll 1d6 and check the result. A 6 is a triumph, a 5 or 4 is a conflict, and a 3, 2, or 1 is a disaster.**

A keen-eyed observer might notice that while this is a fifty-fifty split between failure and success, it's not equal in terms of negative consequences. This is by design - problems and challenges are the root of most stories, and the outcomes are weighted to promote that.

Example: *A fumbled mid-chase pass sends a rare leviathan egg hurtling toward the floor. The shell is tough, but the spit's wooden walkways may be tougher - the Firefly rolls a d6 and gets a conflict, ruling that the egg's shell remains mostly intact after the impact, but that it's dangerously cracked and needs to be handled with extreme care in the future.*

Hierarchical

Every now and then, the way an event affects each individual within the crew is entirely up to chance. In these situations you can use a modified fortune roll, rewarding or punishing individuals based on a hierarchy of results.

- **Every player with a character in the event rolls 1d6 and checks the result. Depending on whether the event is positive or negative in nature, the players with the highest or lowest results are affected.**

Example: *Lightning hits the mast of a copper-hulled sailing vessel during a journey. The Firefly asks every player to roll a d6, intending to mete out increasing levels of damage to those with lower rolls, and to replace that damage with burn for the unfortunate owner of the lowest result.*

Iterated

Like hierarchical rolls, iterated fortune rolls ignore the usual results spread of the Wildsea. Unlike hierarchical rolls, every result of an iterated fortune roll has a specific effect associated with it (though some results can have the same effect as others).

- **Roll 1d6 and check the result. Each result gives a specific effect.**

This is mostly used when rolling on a pre-made table of some kind - Watch Rolls are, technically, a kind of iterated fortune roll to determine whether a crew finds Peace, Order, or Nature on any given leg of their journey.

Example: *A diver's visor cracks, and the unexpected shock and resulting scream push the entire crew to the next level of Pressure. The Firefly rolls on the pre-made Pressure effects tables to see what malady befalls them.*

Relying On Luck

The examples on the previous page should clue you in to when fortune rolls might be effective, but there is a good catch-all rule to apply here too: **use a fortune roll when the outcome of an event, action, or situation has nothing to do with skill or a character's aspects.** Fortune rolls shouldn't feel like they're there just for the sake of *complete* randomness, but rather to represent things outside of the crew's control.

It's Not Luck, It's Skill

Quick thinking by a character might even turn what *would* have been a fortune roll into a regular action roll. Using the example of the falling egg from the previous page, a character might leap desperately towards the fragile thing in a last-ditch attempt to save it - they'll take a cut, but will still be rolling multiple dice thanks to their edges, skills, and advantages.

Coin Flip

If you want to avoid the weighting toward trouble that the standard fortune roll offers, a coin flip-style roll might be the way to go. Either 1-3 is bad and 4-6 is good, or even results mean one thing and odd another (depending on which feels more natural for the table).

***Example**: The fallen egg will break or hold - there's no in-between with a coin flip.*

Secret Fortunes

Any kind of fortune roll might be made by the Firefly in secret, especially if the effects of the roll aren't immediately apparent.

***Example**: A restorative soup is handed out to the crew, but its effects vary in potency. The Firefly rolls secretly for each character, determining which will heal a single mark and which will benefit with healing spread over multiple scenes.*

Fortune Rolls in Play

Firefly: The tzelicrae opposite you pulls a card from his deck, slipping it face down onto the table in front of him, and tilts his head expectantly.

Todd: What, he didn't even look at it?

Laura: Todd, he's a bunch of spiders. He's probably got as many eyes in his fingers as he does behind his glasses.

Todd: Fair point.

Inge: I look him up and down, sizing him up. If he's not going to look - or at least, is going to make a show of 'not looking' - I'm going to do the same. I draw my card and, without looking, place it down to match his.

Firefly: Just going by the luck of the draw, then? Sounds like a fortune roll to me.

Inge: Yep, I'm good with that. 1d6?

Todd: That's right, classic fortune roll.

Kyllian: Wait wait wait... Are we against cheating here? I mean, there's a lot on the line.

Inge: Hey, if I lose and you have to take him on next, you can cheat all you like. Me, I'm going the old-fashioned way here.

Kyllian: You remember we're betting the whole ship on this game, right?

Inge: Yep, but don't worry - I feel lucky. I'm going to roll it, and that's a... Ah.

Firefly: The tzelicrae leans forward expectantly, and flips his card. An Ace of Kidneys.

Inge: Yeah, well, I rolled a... Uh, a two. So that's a disaster, right?

Firefly: ... You flip your own card. A Three of Wolves.

Kyllian: So what you're saying is, I'm going to have to get *really good* at wavewalking by the time we leave port tomorrow. Brilliant.

Ports & Healing

The waves are an unforgiving place for the average wildsailor, and it's not only mire that mounts up over the duration of a tough voyage. While having a surgeon on the crew and taking regular montages while sailing can mitigate some of the aspect damage and lasting injuries characters face, there comes a point where resources run low - you're fighting a losing battle, with more and more aspects hovering around the partially or fully marked condition, and you're weaker because of it.

It might seem like a death spiral at first, something inescapable. But there's a single combination of resources you may be overlooking, resources that might not appear on the sheet but that exist nonetheless...

Solid ground, and ample time.

Healing Over Time

If a crew needs to heal up without the cost of resource usage or a slew of Tend-based rolls, a week- or month-long stop-off at a friendly port might be the perfect antidote. This allows a character to heal naturally from the damage they've taken, and while it doesn't do much to help with burn, taking this extended amount of time to rest and recuperate should clear marks on aspects and fully heal injuries. *It's important to note here that 'healing' also covers repairing mechanical companions and gear-based aspects too. They might not heal naturally, but with that amount of time and a little attention they can be bashed into good working condition.*

Where To Rest (or, Discoveries Are Your Friend)

Even if there are no known ports nearby, combining a chart and a whisper as you travel should allow for the discovery of one in short order. It might not be perfect, but as long as it's not actively dangerous it should be enough of a reprieve from the waves for a crew to hunker down and get healthy.

***Example**: The crew of the Manora Manora have been through the metaphorical wars; a run-in with makadrills, a jostling chase through the sink after a fleeing protoleviathan with a bounty on its head, an encounter with tzelicrae skin-thieves which they barely escaped... It's been a tough few weeks on the waves, and every member of the crew could do with a good meal, a long rest, and a titanic amount of healing.*

Rather than dropping anchor in the wilds and working their surgeon and rattlehand to the bone, they use a discovery to collaboratively create Mourn's Hollow, a dirty little tangle-level settlement attached to a knot in an ironroot's trunk. It's not perfect, and they get a few glares from the locals, but there's weak beer and clean beds on offer. By the start of the next month, they're ready to hit the waves once more.

The Dangers of Rest

So if healing is this free, this easy, why not do it all the time?

Because the world doesn't stop and rest when the crew does.

When players decide to have their characters dig in and let natural healing take its course, it's the responsibility of the Firefly to decide what else happens out at sea while they're incapacitated, and how that might affect the hooks and arcs they're actively following. The trail of a craft pursued will be long-cold, a faction's plans they were trying to stop will be greatly advanced, and even the seasons or weather might have dramatically changed by the time a crew are ready to haul anchor and set sail.

The world of the Wildsea is a living one, after all - make that clear with the passage of time.

Other Ways To Heal

Of course, you can't always take the time out to head to a port and hunker down whenever you need a good burst of healing - the world isn't going to wait for your aches and pains to fade, after all. If time is of the essence but your natural healing or ship's surgeon need a bit of a boost, consider the following options...

Whisper-Based Healing

There's nothing stopping you from whispering a bit of goodness into the world. *A Welcoming Fleet* might be used to herald the appearance of another ship with a medic of their own (or access to a useful healing resource for trade), and more esoterically worded whispers might be able to be twisted into evoking calm situations or unexpected medical breakthroughs. Remember, whispers are open-ended by nature - the Firefly and the rest of the table should work together to see what might be possible.

***Example**: The crew of the Cracked Garnet are feeling pretty run down after weeks at sea and some run-ins with spinwolf constructs. Their surgeon is doing his best, but they need a little boost. One of the crew uses the whisper, A Prison of Skin, to have the bananas naturally growing in the area pull free of their peels. Most are entirely normal (or normal enough for the wildsea), but some are infested with bitter banana-mites that end up acting as a potent healing resource.*

Feasts, Alchemy, and Long Hours of Study

The Tend skill is used to heal more than anything else, but Cook, Concoct, and even Study shouldn't be discounted. You might use...

- **Cook** to make hearty, health-restoring feasts that can be eaten by the entire crew.
- **Concoct** to throw together some restorative tonics - sure, they're likely to have side effects, but those just add some spice to the narrative.
- **Study** to leaf through medical textbooks in a ship's library, or even to evaluate a particular injury. This might not clear or heal marks on its own, but a Firefly could rule that it increases impact when a surgeon actually gets round to rolling.

Delayed Hijacks

You have a plan - a perfect plan, in fact - but it's going to take some split-second timing to pull it off.

By the word of the core rules, there's little you can do unless you have an aspect that lets you **hijack focus**. You might be able to make a deal with the Firefly for the ability to act in a pinch by cutting a few results, but there's nothing official to say that it can (or even should) be done.

Well, that changes today.

The Set-Up

Sometimes you know that something's likely to happen, and you want to be able to act the moment that it does. When you have focus in a frantic or dangerous scene, you can choose to **set-up** a hijack. To do this...

- Use your action to move or ready yourself, getting into the perfect position to react.
- Choose the situation that you want to trigger the hijack - if that happens before you next have focus, **you immediately hijack focus** for a special kind of reaction known as a **pay-off**. *The usual focus hijacking rules apply here, so it's better to hijack focus from an element of the scene than another member of your crew.*

The Pay-Off

The pay-off is a reaction to an event, but you can treat it more like an action - you decide exactly how you're interacting with the element that triggered it.

Example: *Keis knows that the tusking-cap is a charger, and that his gau crewmate is the likely target. He has focus, but he has a plan all worked out - he climbs into the branches above the beast, intending to leap onto it as passes underneath. When the shroomlike monstrosity charges, as expected, he does just that! He lands on the beast's back and rolls to yank it off course, succeeding in smashing the two of them into an ironroot's trunk. The beast misses his crewmate by a hair's breadth, and he gets the satisfaction of seeing a great plan pay off perfectly.*

Why Delay?

You have focus, after all - why split an action into two parts when you could just accomplish whatever you're doing in one?

This is something to keep in mind - in the previous example, Keis might well have been able to get onto the boar's back with a single action, and *may* even have been able to run it directly into the trunk of a tree (though there'd probably be some cut involved).

But situations aren't always as simple as that. You might want to set up a delayed hijack when...

- The current situation makes what you want to achieve difficult, but a small and likely imminent change would make it much easier (and possibly let you avoid cut, or a dangerous situation).
- You're waiting for the perfect moment, like an opening in a creature's defences.
- You need more time to think, but you've grasped the edge of something that might turn out to be impressive if you can pull it off. An action is all about giving your character a moment in the spotlight, after all - perhaps that moment came just a mite too early this time?

Hijack Averted

Even the best laid plans aren't always going to pan out. The most important rule of delaying a hijack - **stating what you THINK is going to happen is not the same as stating what WILL happen**. Your intention is a flag to the Firefly that you want a certain event to transpire. But in the wilds, as in life, the future is unpredictable.

If focus rolls back around to you before your pay-off triggers, take whatever action fits the situation. You tried, and maybe next time it'll go better. *If the Firefly is using a Focus Tracker to make sure players at the table have a roughly equal amount of time in the spotlight, they should mark down your averted hijack as a reaction rather than an action.*

Delayed Hijacks in Play

Inge: I see it! I scream over the storm to the rest of the crew, pointing wildly, then switching to Old Hand when I realize they're not going to be able to hear me.

Todd: See what? I can't see a blasted thing in all this rain!

Inge: There's a crack in the jar, underneath - that's a weak point, I'm sure of it.

Todd: Oh, fantastic... Now we just need to... Wait, that actually is fantastic! Kyllian, do you still have ceremonial dynamite?

Kyllian: Never leaves my side.

Todd: Well it might today. If I climb up the mast and swing over that thing's head, it might reach up and try to snap me out of the air. And then...

Kyllian: I can delay a hijack, right? To throw the dynamite in through the crack, blast this porcelain menace apart from the inside?

Todd: That's about the size of it. Great spot, Inge!

Kyllian: Well, I think focus is on me now anyway. I'm going to do just what I planned, get the dynamite ready and lit and wait for the perfect moment to throw. Will that allow me to ignore the thing's resistances, if I get it in there?

Firefly: It most certainly will, but that's going to depend on how well Todd pulls off his part of the plan. Todd?

Todd: Yep, I'll take focus if it's open - let's see if we can get this thing to move the right way...

Effective Resource Use

The three most common uses we've seen for resources over the years are exactly what you might expect; as ingredients for crafting, as things to trade in port, and as a source of advantage for actions. But there's so much more you can use them for! On the rest of this page we'll give a brief overview of how we think resources can be most effectively used in your time upon the rustling waves.

As Bait

While trading one resource for another in port is easy enough, what you might not have considered is that the use of a single resource can lead to getting a whole lot more of them in a very short time. While travelling, or out in the wilds, consider using a particularly juicy resource as bait - they might draw a creature (or even a particular type of person) into an area you've already scoped out, leading to an encounter where you have the upper hand. Once you've succeeded in the ensuing encounter you can butcher, plunder, or extort even more resources from the baited hazard (as long as things went your way).

As Story Hooks

Sometimes a resource is just... *cool*. The kind of thing you want to know more about, or get more of. If you've collected a resource that really sparks the imagination, the Firefly and table can work together to craft a story hook out of it; a way for it to affect the narrative.

As Gifts & Objects of Favour

Forging relationships with NPCs is most often a slow process, with their trust earned by completing Firefly-set tracks leading to their opinion of you changing (this is particularly true if the NPC belongs to a faction that doesn't like the crew very much, or if they start out as actively hostile). Resources, and specifically the *right kinds* of resources given as gifts, can really speed these tracks along.

Uneven Trades

Even if you are primarily using resources as trade items in port, don't feel like you have to accept a one-for-one deal. Resources with valuable tags that you have no use for should be exchanged for multiple untagged resources that can help a crew out, and some ports will be far more in need of a certain type of resource. In these cases, even a poor quality specimen might be heaped with praise and exchanged for things worth far more than it usually could be.

Example: *Kord doesn't have much to his name, but his pockets are stuffed with seeds harvested from an heirloom garden the crew passed through several sessions ago. When he reaches Iteko's Walk, a small industrial port, he attempts to trade a handful of the things for some maintenance of his weapons. The smiths are wide-eyed - a whole handful for a few hours of work? Kord finds out that the port is trying to start a hothouse, and the heirloom-tagged seeds he's carrying have fa more worth here than they would elsewhere.*

Taking Creations Further

While the rules for creations (whether in the form of temporary benefits from food and concoctions, or crafted aspects made with the Rattle skill) are on page 63 of the core book, it's probably worth pointing out that you can really let your imagination run wild with them. To demonstrate this, we've devoted one of the columns below to showing a variety of things that might be made from a couple of resource combinations. The other column gives an overview of some commonly crafted objects, and a few examples of the resources you might use to craft them.

Flexible Resource Use

So, you've got an Old Bone, some Pinwolf Spit, a Broken Clock, and a Coil of Wire. What are you going to make from that?

Well, the possibilities are (not quite, but close to) endless. Especially if you're willing to cut one of your results here or there for non-standard ingredient usage!

- **Fishing Rod** (Crafted from Old Bone + Coil of Wire)
- **Mechanical Perimeter Alarm System** (Crafted from Broken Clock + Coil of Wire)
- **Glue Trap** (Crafted from Pinwolf Spit + Broken Clock)
- **Grappling Hook** (Crafted from Old Bone + Coil of Wire)
- **Sundew-Style Spiderweb** (Crafted from Pinwolf Spit + Coil of Wire)
- **Brass Knuckle** (Crafted from Broken Clock + Coil of Wire)
- **Sun Visor** (Crafted from Old Bone + Pinwolf Spit)
- **Medical Splint** (Crafted from Old Bone + Coil of Wire)
- **Bone-Splinter Morningstar** (Crafted from Old Bone + Coil of Wire)
- **Springwork Pistol** (Crafted from Old Bone + Broken Clock)

And that's only combining two resources at a time - using three or four resources is encouraged!

Commonly Crafted Objects

There are a couple of things that turn out to be mightily useful in a pinch when a crew is out on the waves, and if you don't have them to hand you should probably have a go at crafting them yourself. If you don't have access to one of these by default, it might be wise to make...

A Grappling Hook

To put this together you'll want something like rope (which might be vines, woven hair, spiderwebs, trisketar strings, coils of wire, animals guts, or leafrubber tubing) and some kind of grabbing claw or hook (which could be bent metal, a snapping beak, old bones, beast claws, sturdy branches, insect limbs, engine parts, a weathervane, a throwing disc, or a huge tooth).

A Makeshift Weapon

Just about anything can work as a makeshift weapon, from a bit of old bone to a stout piece of wood. But to get the most out of these simple weapons, combining such basic materials with something unusual (such as spider's venom, a snatch of living words, the glistening stomach of a maddened beast, or a thorned vine) can add an unusual damage type that works for a specific situation. *The same principle can apply to temporary protective gear, by combining something sturdy with the natural antithesis of the particular damage type you wish be protected against.*

Unusual Ingredients Optional Rule

While each type of created aspect has its own required resource type (such as two pieces of salvage for a crafted item), you always have the option of including other kinds of resources by accepting some cut on the creation roll. There are also a few ways you can break this rule. The first is to take a **relevant aspect**, such as the Rattlehand's Wolf-Skin Gloves (which eliminates the cut taken from using specimens). The second is simply to set the **Unusual Ingredients rule** as a convention at your table, where if a resource is of the wrong type, but makes *great* thematic sense, you can roll without cutting for it (such as using a Flexing Tongue specimen for the end of a grappling hook).

Advanced Creations Optional Rule

There are a few additional creation-based options we've seen crop up as house rules over the years, and a lot of them make a good amount of sense. The two that stood out to us the most are here, bundled together as an optional rule for Advanced Creations - taking temporary aspects *even further* than before.

Adding to a Creation's Track

Sometimes a rattlehand or char puts something together that's just too good to lose, at least after only a couple of boxes. In these situations, you should feel free to break the usual two-box limit on created temporary aspects in the following ways...

- If a creation's effect is mild, add one or two boxes.
- If more resources than necessary were added to it, add one or two boxes.
- If it has a built-in caveat, on top of anything the roll result might add, add one or two boxes.

***Example**: Yevena, an alchemist, wants to put together a potion that will help their ardent crash see in the dark (the rest of the crew have their own unusual methods of sight). It's not the strongest effect, but it's definitely worth an aspect - no extra boxes there. She adds an extra ingredient while making it, so adds another box to the track for that. Finally, she adds a caveat before she rolls - however this goes, it's going to take a couple of actions to 'kick in', as the ardent's eyes adjust. Another couple of boxes there and she's ready to go, aiming for a four- or five-box creation.*

Increasing the Power of a Creation

'Power' is a rarely used word within the Wildsea. But some creations, by dint of being necessarily temporary, can be *powerful* in a way that transcends the usual rules of impact. If it works for the table and Firefly both, **combining resources with rare positive tags, creating as a long-term project rather than a single task,** and **rolling extremely well** (sixes and twists) may allow a temporary aspect gained through cooking, concocting, or crafting to outshine regular aspects in terms of the effect it can have. *This particularly suits tables that dive into the more creative elements of the resource system.*

"Now this one's a wild one!"

Silly thing to say, really. When it came to whispers they were all wild ones; that was the nature of words.

But as the other fishers looked on with a mixture of jealousy and admiration, even they had to admit that Cazeen might be right.

Spiders crawled the length of his rod, grabbing the twine in tiny mandibles and pulling as he ratcheted the reel again and again. The silk of his arms strained, even tore in places, but he was determined. He'd been a whisper-fisher for only a few years, but judging from the resistance this one was putting up these words might be the ones that defined him.

"Get the jar, Samson!"

The assistant rushed over, one hand full of clay, the other glass, a third with a bowl of warm wax for the lid. And even he could tell, new as he was, that this wasn't one his employer would ever trade.

Whispers in the World, or 'More Guidance on Living Words'

By their nature, whispers may seem like the most enigmatic and fluid of resources. They can be used in powerful ways, they're obtained through obscure means, and even their very form - living words that rattle from skull to world - makes them sound difficult to handle. This section aims to rectify that.

Volume Matters!

There are three ways to use a whisper in the core book, excluding any specialist uses that might come from a character's aspects. We'll go over them again here, but we'll add an example or two for each for as much clarity as possible.

Whispering to Discover

Volume: Literally a whisper
Explanation: Words have meanings, and this lets you unlock them. When you actually *whisper* a whisper, you gain a secret related to the words it contains. This will usually be granted by the Firefly, but could easily be thrown open to the table like a twist normally would be. Whether the player using the whisper gets to put some direction behind the kind of information they want to collect (usually by having it be situationally relevant) is entirely up to the table.

***Example**: Dovara's crew are taking a montage, but there's nothing he really needs to do. After some thought he decides to learn a little about the world, releasing a whisper into the air - Glows From Below. His Firefly asks if he wants to have some bespoke information or to open it up to the table, and he chooses the latter. Together, they start to flesh out a little detail about the world, and decide what information Dovara learns that most would never guess.*

***Example**: Inge is trying to negotiate with a huskpa, an ancient tzelicrae conglomerate that's closer to a hive-god than the usual hive-mind. It speaks in riddles, and she feels like she's missing something vital, but she has a whisper - Sunset Through Branches. She whispers the words and, as they pass through her lips, understanding blooms. She gains a fragment of knowledge from the Firefly related to the huskpa itself, that the spiders it's comprised of all have their own views and experiences, their own standards of whether a sunset through branches might be beautiful or not - it can't deal in declarative statements, and has difficulty even interpreting them with a consciousness so naturally split. She adjusts her approach accordingly, slipping into metaphor and inexactitude, and tries to listen not to every word spoken, but those spoken with the most mouths.*

Speaking to Twist

Volume: A spoken word
Explanation: Letting a whisper spill naturally from your mouth, the power of the thing changes the world around you. It's a small change, maybe even barely noticeable, but important to the narrative - a twist, in essence. This is the 'standard' form of using whispers, and most players will already have experience with twists and know what the limits and possibilities their table has settled on might be.

***Example**: Pale Hex is being chased through a crowded market by agents of the Twinhorns. He turns and spits out a whisper, A Welcoming Fleet, and decides that moments later a surge of merchants carrying furniture just happen to be crossing the marketplace. He ducks nimbly through them but the Twinhorn enforcers crash right into the group, scattering products and being forced to placate angry traders as Hex makes his escape.*

Shouting to Force a Change

Volume: Loud enough for the world to take notice
Explanation: Shouting a living word works the same way as speaking one, except the effects are more dramatic and they're out of your control. They might still benefit you, and they'll certainly change the situation, but you've put your fate entirely in the Firefly's interpretation of your words.

***Example**: Pale Hex is being chased through a crowded market by agents of the Twinhorns. He turns on his heel and shouts a living word, feeling it rip out of his mind as he does so. The whisper, A Welcoming Fleet, is released into the world with force, under the Firefly's control - and a second later a rogue trading ship runs aground, smashing into the dockside markets and scattering Hex, shoppers, and pursuers alike.*

Acquiring Whispers

Specimens, salvage, and charts are easy to track down, but where can you pluck whispers from?

There are a few places that the core book suggests - from wonders and horrors, from momentous events, and from tackling the hazards of the waves. But where else might whispers turn up?

- As an overheard rumour in a junction
- As the result of a revelation about some truth of the greater wilds
- By stargazing, or meditating on the night sky
- From anchored spirits still clinging to their corpses, echoing their final words
- From a particularly spectacular failure or mistake
- From achieving something related to a drive

Alternative Whisper Storage

Heads are precious, and some people may not want a bunch of living words jumbling up the place. Whispers sit well in the mind, but they can also be captured and traded in jars and clay pots, or transcribed with quill and ink. Depending on the flavour of your own personal wildsea there may be caveats and necessities - perhaps a whisper can only be written in crezzerin'd ink, for example.

Rolling for Whispers Alternate Rule

Sometimes, even when the effects of a whisper are decided upon, their potency might not be. This is the perfect time to use a fortune roll (page 272) to determine just how much havoc a whisper might cause.

Example: *The whisper Total Collapse is used to cause a roof to cave in mid-combat, but who does the destruction rain down on? The Firefly asks for a hierarchical-style fortune roll from everyone, and makes a roll for each of the hostile hazards in the room too. The highest rolls will be spared any damage, the middle of the pack will take a bit of light Blunt damage to represent falling slates and choking dust, and the unluckiest few will be pinned under beams or knocked dizzy by the event.*

Skill-Based Rolls

Every now and then, a whisper's effects might be related to (or directly aiding the use of) one of your ranked skills. In this case, the Firefly might ask you to roll dice equal to the number of ranks you have in that skill to determine something about the whisper's effectiveness or scope. This might even be a normal action roll, using edges and advantages as well, but whispers don't usually need this sort of mechanical complexity.

Words in the Wild - Whispers & NPCs

This may not have been mentioned much (or really at all) in the core book, but just like specimens, salvage, and charts, NPCs can have whispers of their own too. What's more, there's nothing stopping them from using those whispers, in any of the ways described on the previous page.

The caveat here is that whispers *are* a little more odd than the other wildsea resources - wildsailors and important folks who have done a bit of travelling might well have them, but the common dockworker probably doesn't.

NPCs might use whispers to aid or harm the crew, and can even use them in combat for some utterly unexpected shenanigans. Characters should be able to react to this, potentially with a cut if the whisper was shouted into reality, just like they can with most other offensive actions taken by NPCs and hazards.

Example: *A gang of tooth-thieves operating out of an abandoned theatre are confronted by a plucky crew of wildsailing types. They're all able to use arconautic energy to control loose teeth, an ability related to the ridgeback's aspect that gives bone-based telekinetic-style powers, but their leader has a trick up her sleeve - she shouts a whisper into existence, A Reckoning of Jaws, and the toothless members of the crew feel uncomfortable changes about their person. The amber in a rattlehand's pocket turns to incisors, canines blossom from a ketra's stolen bones... The thieves have the upper hand now, whether a member of the crew would usually be affected by their abilities or not.*

Shouts in Play

Firefly: A long arm bursts through the window, sending shards of amber scattering across the floor. It's groping for the door handle, but it seems not to want to touch it, too.

Kyllian: Wow, makadrill hatred goes that far? They really do take it to the extremes, don't they?

Todd: I pick up the nearest chair and break it over the arm. Do you want me to roll for that?

Firefly: No, you've got a clean shot - there's a howl from outside as the chair hits, and the arm snakes back out through the window. There are scratching and thumping sounds from the roof now too, though...

Kyllian: You know what? I've had it. I've had it with these damn monkeys smashing our stuff.

Inge: I think makadrills are apes, actually.

Laura: Primates, definitely.

Kyllian: I don't care! They've been hounding us for this entire journey now and I'm just sick of running and getting caught. I step forward, grasp the sides of the porthole with both hands, take a deep breath, and I shout. I'm using my whisper, End of the Line.

Todd: Wait, you can shout whispers?

Firefly: I'm going to ignore that one for the moment Todd - Kyllian, you know if you shout that it's entirely in my hands as to the outcome?

Kyllian: But the outcome is high-impact, whatever happens. So yes.

Firefly: The words reverberate around the cabin, and in the near-silence that follows you pick up a noise you couldn't hear before - the whine of your engine running way too hot.

Kyllian: It's going to explode, isn't it?

Firefly: *Bingo.*

Non-Standard Bloodlines

We say it every now and then, but we're going to say it again here: the wilds of your table are unique to you. You should feel free to change any element of the setting, flow of play, or even the core rules, to suit the way you play games. We add alternate presentations to bloodlines, origins, and posts for a reason – we want people to engage with the kinds of things that spark their imagination!

Over the years we've seen some questions and suggestions pop up again and again, mostly around the main presentations and assumed histories of the core bloodlines, so we'll take the plunge and address them here. Everything on these pages is entirely optional, but if it works for your own wildsea, then we encourage you to use it as you see fit.

Note to players and Fireflies: *It's rare we put a caveat on the use of ideas or aspects, but these are things that run contrary to some of the setting-based conventions of the core book. Check with everyone at the table that these changes work before you make a character using them, especially if other players are intending to use a more standard presentation of the same bloodline.*

Bestial Ardent

There aren't that many playable mammals on the wildsea. There's no grand reason behind it other than that they're difficult to get 'right' in terms of the art and design, especially alongside the less traditional character options of 'living cactus' and 'bag of spiders'. But if you want your ardent to have adapted to the waves by embracing fur, teeth, and tails, you might want to consider using...

Luxury Covering 3-Track Ardent Trait

You're covered with fur, or feathers, or maybe even scales. You are resistant to the effects of crezzerin, to Frost damage, and also to damage from swarms and insect bites.

Bite & Gouge 2-Track Ardent Trait

Evolution has turned you into something more predator than prey. You can deal CQ Hewing or Spike damage, which increases to high-impact damage if this aspect's track is marked.

Hackles Raised 4-Track Ardent Trait

You've learned to listen to your instincts. Consume a whisper to determine whether or not an approaching individual has harmful intentions towards you, your ship, or the rest of your crew.

As A Pin Drops 3-Track Ardent Trait

Your hearing is preternaturally sharp. You can 'see' through murk, sporeclouds, and even utter darkness by relying on your ears alone, but you gain a weakness to Blast damage. Any effect or injury that would interfere with your hearing temporarily cancels out the benefits of this trait.

Cryptobrachiate 1-Track Ardent Trait

Longer arms, stronger fingers, and an impeccable sense of balance – you're made for the treetops. You have resistance to all LR damage while among the branches, and treat disasters as conflicts while climbing or wavewalking.

Animal Musculature 3-Track Ardent Trait

You're built for speed, a rarity among bipeds on the waves. Treat conflicts as triumphs when attempting to flee, chase, or outspeed while on foot, and ignore cut in these situations as well.

Tropical Ektus

Not many of the wildsea bloodlines have 'hard' histories, but several of the ektus options directly reference a specific pre-V location - *the Eaten Desert* (now more commonly known as the Icterine). But if you find sand to be coarse and irritating, then a tropical ektus might be more your speed...

Longstem 1-Track Ektus Trait

Rather than defensive spines, you're covered in delicate stems that collect and filter water from the air as you move. You're immune to bad air and Toxin damage, and may use a task to gain a rare resource, *Pure Water*.

Vibrant Blooms 2-Track Ektus Trait

All the hues of the jungle, old and new. Increase impact OR treat conflicts as triumphs when trying to dazzle, stun, or impress, either with actions or words (choose which effect to benefit from before you roll).

Senecio Bolas 3-Track Ektus Trait

You have long flexible limbs with clusters of pearl-like buds at the tip. These can be used as a weapon, dealing LR Blunt damage, but double as an aid to swinging through the treetops. When wavewalking with a cut, remove any result you choose (not necessarily the highest).

Mesmerotropic 2-Track Ektus Trait

You're immune to mesmeric, compulsive, and emotion-altering effects, and deal Toxin damage to any creature that attacks you with their own body in close quarters (such as with tail or bite attacks).

Sea-Born Gau

Oddly enough, the very first gau ever played in a wildsea game was a non-traditional presentation of the core idea; one made of kelp and brine rather than shroomlike flesh, as thirsty for saltwater as the usual gau are for experiences. So if you too want to play a vestige of waves long-lost...

Slippery Customer 4-Track Gau Trait

You're a constant source of briny damp. You're immune to Flame damage, but weak to Frost.

Natural Salter 3-Track Gau Trait

You can mark or use a task to give any specimen the *Salted* tag. Salted specimens increase the track length of temporary benefits by one when used as an ingredient.

Waves of Kelp 2-Track Gau Trait

Your motions are almost impossible to accurately read thanks to a covering of shaggy weeds. Treat disasters as conflicts when trying to conceal objects, pick pockets, or perform sleight of hand.

The Call of the Old Sea 3-Track Gau Trait

Consume a chart to learn the history of a piece of nautical salvage, gaining information that dates back even to pre-V times if appropriate (supplied by the Firefly).

Automaton Ironbound

The punch-card ascendant, the birth of true artificial life! The Corron, an additional bloodline specific to the Prophet's Fall reach, touched on this as an option based on pre-verdant technology, but the ironbound aspects presented here take a different approach. If you want ironbound to be the creations of rattlehands, imbued not with the souls of sailors but with a punch-card based intelligence all of their own, you might want to try...

Apportioning Sequences 2-Track Ironbound Trait

Processing fear and disgust seems like a waste of energy. Ignore the first mark of mire you would take in a scene.

Card Swap 4-Track Ironbound Trait

You change your mind, literally. Once per scene, you may use an ally's skill or language ranks in place of your own for a single roll.

Major Malfunction 4-Track Ironbound Trait

For every mark on this aspect's track, gain a temporary rank in a skill or language that no other individual on the crew has ranks in (though a fully marked track breaks this aspect and ends the effect, as usual).

They weren't an easy group to miss.

An ektus you could barely focus on if you drew close. A mothryn with gloriously full wings, gliding with the kind of ease reserved for birds and century-old spirits. An ardent with tusks protruding a full foot from their mouth, bristling hair poking out from the cracks in their wooden armour. And a ketra, if that word even applied anymore, the size of a small house.

Yes, they were the sort of folks that drew stares, even among the cosmopolitan masses of the wilds.

"And you say you're... detectives?"

The ketra nodded, a movement like the roll of a chemical vat in an unsteady ship's hold.

"Not very suited to undercover work, though."

Monstrous Ketra

The ketra were a bloodline that became more 'human' the more they developed, and in the early stages of the core book, their need for bones was more of a hunger than a reminder of their connection to the humanesque. If you'd like to bring back some of that early gelatinous horror to the waves, consider...

Ooze Trap 2-Track Ketra Trait

Triumphs rolled while defending yourself against attacks made with CQ weapons pull them out of their owners' hands, absorbing them into your body. You gain a piece of salvage based on each weapon absorbed in this way.

Catalyst Growth 1-Track Ketra Trait

You can mark a temporary benefit given by a concoction or meal to grow in size, rather than to activate the usual effects. For the rest of the scene you increase the impact of all CQ attacks you make.

Wrecker's-Yard Pangoska 3-Track Ketra Trait

You're protected by a layer of haphazardly arranged scrap metal and stolen bones, giving you resistance to Keen and Serrated damage. Cut when attempting deft movement, but increase impact on all rolls to turn aside or counter incoming CQ attacks.

Slugger 3-Track Ketra Trait

You favour strength over speed, destructive potential over accuracy. You naturally cut one on all CQ attacks, but treat conflicts as triumphs on those same actions.

Marrow Supper 4-Track Ketra Trait

Whenever you take a montage, you may choose to consume a bone-based specimen in addition to your normal task. If you do so, heal one mark of damage from this aspect and one mark of damage from any other trait.

Mothryn, Restored

In keeping with the aerial themes of this supplement, the alternate take of the mothryn presented here focuses on their wings. The options below strip out that common mothryn trope of being beautiful gliders, and replace it with erratic, but effective, flight. To be a more traditional 'mothly' type, try using...

Ancient Danger 4-Track Mothryn Trait

You have the Float, Hover, and Flap styles, but they come at a cost - flying in the presence of a strong light source forces you to treat conflicts as disasters when manoeuvring in the air.

Death's Shadow 3-Track Mothryn Trait

Beauty belies dark intention; rolling a twist while attacking from above allows both a critical and a table-decided twist effect, rather than a choice of the two.

Skinless Tzelicrae

Whether it's mimicking one of the other bloodlines or more of a unique adornment, all tzelicrae are expected to have a skin of some kind that keeps their shape as they move through the world. But the appeal of playing the truly alien can be strong, and if you want to try your hand at embodying a tzelicrae that exists in its natural swarming form, then you could try taking...

Moving Mass 3-Track Tzelicrae Trait

You're a carpet of chitin and scuttling limbs, able to move through the smallest gaps with ease and climb almost any rough surface without having to roll. You also have an innate weakness to attacks that hit multiple targets.

We Are The Mire 3-Track Tzelicrae Trait

Inspiration is the closest cousin of fear. Whenever you mark the first box of a mire, clear a box on this aspect's track. Whenever you mark the second box of a mire, clear a box on every one of your traits.

Scatterscree 4-Track Tzelicrae Trait

Mark to disperse your form, crawling into cracks, knotholes, and between the folds of clothes. While in this state you're almost impossible to detect, but you must coalesce again before taking actions that would require your many bodies to work as a collective unit.

Original Mantids

The itzenko are well-known for their rapid adaptation to new circumstances, and a speedy integration of new ways of living into their own cultural norms, but every group has traditionalists. The original mantids are a result of those traditions being as much physical as they are social, a living chitinous snapshot of a stubborn past. If you'd like to play an ancestor to the itzenko, a mantid that refused to move with the times, consider...

Wicked Claw 3-Track Itzenko Trait

You have a recurved claw on the end of at least one of your limbs. It deals CQ Keen or Serrated damage (choose which when you gain this trait), and you treat conflicts as triumphs when grappling with or restraining targets.

Immutable Chitin 3-Track Itzenko Trait

You are resistant to Blunt, Keen, Spike, and Blast damage. When this aspect's track is fully marked, you gain a weakness to Spike damage instead.

The Sudden Orchid 1-Track Itzenko Trait

A tradition of stillness and movement. Once per scene, when you would be forced to react to an opponent's attack, hijack focus and take an action of your own instead. If this action deals damage, increase the impact of it by one step.

Copper Plating 3-Track Itzenko Gear

An augment worn over weaker areas of chitin. Burn a box of this aspect to ignore a single instance of damage, having it absorbed or deflected by the copper plating.

Tracking Nymph 3-Track Itzenko Companion

A tiny but useful creature raised by mantid hunters. Mark to have the tracking nymph secretly attach itself to a creature you can see. From that point on, the creature leaves a chemical trail as it moves that only you can detect. You can only track one target at a time in this way.

A World Before The Waves

With deeper delving comes deeper questions. It's the nature of humanity to ask for answers that are better left unknown, and the nature of wildsailors of every stripe and hue to go poking about in a past that's long dead.

So far we've staunchly resisted detailing anything particular about the pre-verdant world, because as far as we're concerned, that's exactly the kind of creative space that ideas at the table thrive in.

Why listen to what *we* have to say about it when your players can create that history themselves, taking the shards of the past that they find and piecing them together into a rich (and most likely bizarre) tapestry of what pre-V cultures and societies might have been like?

We're keeping to the same course for Storm & Root, as you might have guessed. While some reaches may give hints at what lies in the Under-Eaves below them, and some pieces of pre-V gear or salvage invite comparisons to things we might recognise from our own world, the past is still firmly in the past.

... Until someone decides to dredge it all up.

Delving Into The Past

With the addition of submersibles, wildsailors can draw closer to the pre-V world than ever before (if they can brave the increase of pressure, obviously). Games and campaigns are more likely to feature bigger chunks of pre-V information than before, and we *know* that some crews are going to make it their goal to walk the Under-Eaves for themselves.

In the core book we gave suggestions of what the Eaves might be like - a mist-choked ruin, a tangle of roots that dwarf cities - so we're not going to go back over that here. Instead we're going to focus on how cultures of the days before the waves *might* have operated, especially in terms of the technology they used and the relics they left behind. What follows is an exploration of three different possibilities for the past, along with resources and cargo items that they might add to the game, and a single example of a themed location for each.

None of them are true, by default. None of them are accurate, by design. Feel beholden to nothing you read here.

Mechanical Ascendancy

This is what the future could have been, without the trees. An ever-scape of wire and light and invisible connections, of networked minds and luxury... Or of bitter rain and dirty streets beneath neon the colour of lost hope.

Sample Locations

A Neurawire Facility: So many skeletons in comfortable couches or tubes, each hollow skull seemingly infected by jacks and wires. Lights still play through the air at random, images that a wildsailor wouldn't recognise, words they couldn't hope to pronounce.

A Working Walker: Spider-like in design, but with none of the hallmarks of post-verdant construction, this relic of a technologically advanced age might not even have noticed the mass extinction of its creators. It walks still, singing to itself, in search of something that was lost an age before anyone on the crew was born.

Resource & Cargo Opportunities

Salvage:	Holographic Blade, Flexing Servo-Hand
Specimens:	Jar of Nutrient Paste
Whispers:	The Bright Lights, 01010111
Charts:	A Holographic Map
Cargo:	Coil of Cables, Smooth Plastic

A Place Like Here & Now

Cars travelled paved streets outside well-lit homes, televisions peacefully burbling the nightly news out to over-fed families. They would never have known what hit them, living in their suburban bubbles, and those peaceful lives would be quickly forgotten by survivors and their descendants. But the ruins, the only evidence they'd leave behind, would spark tales of wonder and mystery spanning centuries.

Sample Locations

An Overgrown Block of Flats: Wrenched free from the ground and caught up in the tangle, the bulky regularity of this ancient structure stands in stark contrast to the junk-and-hope nature of most wildsea buildings. Hundreds of empty windows have allowed the creatures of the waves easy access, and the interior might hold anything from a pinwolf pack to a marauder base, a growing colony to a hive of manifold bees.

A Tangle of Chassis: Skeletal cars still sport bent wheels and rotting rubber, but the fabrics that made up their cushy interiors have long since turned to dust. The engines they hold won't run on anything that occurs naturally on the wavetops, but rattlehands are an ingenious lot when it comes to adaptation.

Resource & Cargo Opportunities

Salvage:	Twisted Metal, Sturdy Piping, Scavenged Screws, Cutlery Set
Specimens:	Scraps of Fake Leather
Whispers:	It All Ends So Suddenly, Two Point Four, Stories By Screen-Light
Charts:	Impossibly Folded Roadmap, Confused Compass-Voice
Cargo:	Glass-Fronted Box, Bricks and Mortar

Iron, Blade, & Stone

How can two worlds be so alike, yet so staggeringly different? The pre-verdant times were as much a struggle of civilization against the wilds as they are now, ancient battle-sites choked into slumber by the roots of the new world. The swords were keener, the armour heavier, and ships were relegated to the old salt seas, but strong stone still meant safety and a forested expanse could still spell death.

Sample Locations

A Vine-Choked Castle: It's impossible to know how much of the feeling of the place has been maintained over its years in the tangle, for as inhospitable as it might be now, it doesn't look to have ever been the most comfortable place. There's an unsettling amount of bars on the windows, and of implements best not spoken of in the deeper rooms.

A Stagnant Lake: Fed currently by rains rather than mountain streams, this chunk of pre-V earth and mud is clogged with pieces of armour that would sink a wildsailor in seconds, and weapons too large and long to have been held by even the surest of hands.

Resource & Cargo Opportunities

Salvage:	Ancient Gauntlet, Rusted Morningstar, Tattered Pennants, Torture Devices
Specimens:	Bones of a Great Beast
Whispers:	Safety in Stone, Taming a Lower Wild, Lost Crusade
Charts:	A Stone Scribed with Runes
Cargo:	Suit of Heavy Plate, Ruined Trebuchet, Castle-Stone

"I've seen worse... But I've seen much better too. By the Eaves, Makhis... How did you manage this?"

The gau tried to shrug, but winced with the pain, the new growths covering his arms and shoulders scraping together.

"Just... Chose the wrong spot for an ambush, that's all. Leant forward to set the scope and..." He nodded down at his arms rather than move them again. "Didn't even see the sap. Should've been more careful."

She clucked her tongue, tapping a piece of the newly formed bark. "You feel that?"

He nodded.

"Sorry, my friend... It's here to stay."

Crezzerbloom Alternate Rule

The Wildsea treats crezzerin as a hazardous effect, like any other - it might deal Toxin or Acid damage, it could manifest as injuries based on searing pain or confusion, and it may even have mutative properties (handled more narratively than mechanically).

But what if it was **more** than that?

With the important role crezzerin plays in the growth of the wilds, and the regularity with which it appears in the text of both the core book and this expansion, some groups may want it to be a more central part of their experience on the rustling waves. If that's the case, then this rule is for you; a treatment of crezzerin that turns it into a separately tracked element represented by a unique mutative aspect on every character's sheet.

Warning - this optional rule makes exposure to the rustling waves FAR more dangerous for a character, an activity liable to make permanent changes to their very nature.

New Mutative Aspect

If you're playing with these alternate rules, every character gains an additional aspect at creation...

Crezzerbloom 3-Track Mutative Trait

For good or ill, crezzerin takes hold. This aspect can **only** be marked by crezzerin exposure - when fully marked, roll for a mutation and then clear the aspect's track.

- If you have crezzerin resistance, add two boxes to this aspect's track. If you have crezzerin immunity, add four boxes. *Like other aspect tracks, this trait's track has a maximum of seven boxes.*

This aspect has no effect at first, other than being marked whenever you would take damage from crezzerin, but will gain new rules (or change other aspects) during the course of play.

If the Crezzerbloom aspect's track is allowed to fill, either...

- Make a **d66** roll and apply the effects described within the table on the following page, or...
- Create a unique effect, based on the situation.

Whichever method you choose, the affected character also clears all marks from the Crezzerbloom track. Marks on a Crezzerbloom track can also be reduced by healing, working the same as damage taken to any other trait.

Crezzerin Exposure

Without this alternate rule, contact with strong sources of crezzerin is usually treated as damage to a character, which can be reduced or negated by their resistances.

With this alternate rule, crezzerin is inescapable - resistances and immunities to the effects of crezzerin only add boxes to the Crezzerbloom aspect's track.

That means they don't reduce crezzerin damage or effects the way a resistance normally would, but they wouldn't get the chance to either. When a character with the Crezzerbloom aspect is exposed to crezzerin, there's no immediate negative effect other than damage taken to the Crezzerbloom track. The number of marks made for this damage is related to the type of exposure, as shown in the examples below.

- **One Mark**: Representing light exposure, which might come from eating crezzer-rich food, a brief brush against ironroot leaves, or passing through areas of crezzerin-rich mist.
- **Two Marks**: Representing moderate exposure, which might come from pushing your way through ironroot leaves or being caught in crezzer-rich rain.
- **Three Marks**: Representing heavy exposure, which might come from being tangled in the leaves and branches of the sea for more than a few moments, from coming into contact with ironroot sap, or from drinking undiluted liquid crezzerin.

Crezzerbloom Mutations

1-1: **Withering:** A lasting weakness that never quite fades. Reduce the number of boxes on any one of your traits by one.

1-2: **Rust & Break:** Liquid crezzerin flows from you, warping and weakening one of your trusted tools. Reduce the number of boxes on any one of your pieces of gear by one.

1-3: **Recalcitrance:** There's a scent to you that you can't shake, and even your closest allies grow wary. Reduce the number of boxes on any one of your companions by one.

1-4: **A Settling Fear:** Crezzer-born visions claw at the edges of your mind. Reduce the number of boxes on one of your Mire tracks by one. When a single-box Mire track is marked, you're hit with the full force of the mire immediately.

1-5: **Susceptible:** The wildness of the waves is inside you now. Reduce the number of boxes on your Crezzerbloom track by one.

1-6: **A Hole in the Memory:** People tell you that nothing is ever truly forgotten... But they're wrong. You lose one of your drives. Next time you fully satisfy a drive, choose a new one to replace it and add an additional drive to take your total back up to three.

2-1: **No Room For Conflict:** Add a new benefit to your Crezzerbloom aspect, 'You gain resistance to Toxin damage'.

2-2: **Tendrilous:** Add a new benefit to your Crezzerbloom aspect, 'Tendrils sprout from your crezzer-burned skin, increasing impact on actions made to swing or clamber'.

2-3: **Second Skin:** Add a new benefit to your Crezzerbloom aspect, 'Deal Toxin damage to any creature that attacks you with their own body in close quarters'.

2-4: **Herald:** Add a new benefit to your Crezzerbloom aspect, 'Mark this aspect's track to cause crezzerin in the surrounding area to glow with a soft, dangerous light'.

2-5: **Uncomfortably Sharp:** Add a new benefit to your Crezzerbloom aspect, 'You gain *crezzersense*, the ability to determine the potency of nearby sources of crezzerin'.

2-6: **Unbidden Adaptation:** Add a new benefit to your Crezzerbloom aspect, 'You gain resistance to the first damage type you're hit with during a scene, but gain a weakness to another damage type chosen by the Firefly. Both effects last until end of scene'.

3-1: **The Inherited Hunger:** Add a new drawback to your Crezzerbloom aspect, 'Whenever you would consume an edible resource (for any reason), you must attempt to consume a second edible resource as well for no additional benefit'.

3-2: **Uncomfortable Reminder:** Add a new drawback to your Crezzerbloom aspect, 'Whenever you mark mire, your next roll treats triumphs as conflicts'.

3-3: **Desaturated:** Add a new drawback to your Crezzerbloom aspect, 'Your vision clouds slightly, making colours harder to distinguish. Reduce impact on vision-based actions'.

3-4: **Impulsive:** Add a new drawback to your Crezzerbloom aspect, 'Crewmates can't hijack focus from you, or to aid you, in any way'.

3-5: **Skeletal Dirge:** Add a new drawback to your Crezzerbloom aspect, 'Your skeleton, or internal structure, is beginning to audibly splinter. Treat conflicts as disasters when attempting to stay quiet or move without being noticed'.

3-6: **Echoes of Pain:** Add a new drawback to your Crezzerbloom aspect, 'You take a cut of one on any action that would bring you in contact with crezzerin'.

4-1: **A Change Externalised:** You suffer a coughing fit, which shakes loose both the crezzerin building within you and one of your whispers. The whisper immediately takes effect as if shouted.

4-2: **Reborn!:** One of your resources that was once alive (such as a bone or plant cutting) rips itself back into the world of the living, beginning to grow back to its former glory.

4-3: **Acid Sweat:** The effort of containing mutation prove too much for your system, and the sweat you produce whilst fighting the change dissolves either all of your salvage, all of your specimens, or all of your charts.

4-4: **Fight Within the Mind:** Your whispers turn on each other, with your head as a battleground. Consume all of your whispers, and gain a single new whisper with words taken from each whisper consumed.

4-5: **Material Corruption:** Crezzerin doesn't merely mutate, it melds. Consume a single specimen or piece of salvage, then give all of your other salvage and specimen resources a tag based on the materials of that consumed resource.

4-6: **Woken Paper:** Your charts flutter and unfold, crawling and flapping and desperate for escape. Consume a single chart, and any charts that remain gain the Living tag.

5-1: **Host of Darkened Thoughts:** Gain an additional two-box mire, 'Your suspicion threatens those closest to you'.

5-2: **Malady:** Gain an additional two-box mire, 'Your moods change with the weather'.

5-3: **Sleep With The Forest:** Gain an additional two-box mire, 'Sleep is evasive, almost impossible to find without a cloak of leaves to surround you'.

5-4: **Gnash:** Gain an additional two-box mire, 'Eat that which would otherwise eat you'.

5-5: **The Change Within:** Gain an additional two-box mire, 'Spoken words are a struggle, a mark against your secret nature'.

5-6: **Too Much Beauty:** Gain an additional two-box mire, 'Music drives you into a rage that's difficult to hold back'.

6-1: **A Lucky Escape:** What are the chances of that? The track clears, but you suffer no lasting effects whatsoever.

6-2: **A Broken Clock:** What is healing, if not a form of mutation? The track clears, and you may entirely heal any other injury track you're currently suffering from.

6-3: **An Unexpected Boon:** Your body manages to channel the overactive liveliness of crezzerin into healing wounds you've already sustained. The track clears, and you can clear a mark from each of your other traits as well.

6-4: **A Moment of Clarity:** You're wracked with visions for a moment, but when they clear you feel sharper than ever. The track clears, and you can clear a mark from each of your mires as well.

6-5: **A Surge of Power:** All that potential needs to go somewhere. The track clears, and the next action you take gains increased impact.

6-6: **A Learned Resistance:** It's an extreme rarity, but your exposure has left you stronger without any side-effects. The track clears, and you may add an additional box to it (though this can't take the number of boxes above seven).

CHAPTER 08
EXTRAS

Glossary of Terms

A

Aeronaut - A wildsailor that can confidently take to the skies and explore the wild blue
Airship - A vessel that can move through the wild blue
Amberglass - Chemically treated amber that can withstand great pressure
Arconautics - Concentrated weirdness attained by harnessing the wildness of the waves

B

Bafflers - An optional attachment for airships that helps distract the attention of watchers from below and above
Bite - The part of a ship that moves it through the waves, most often a chainsaw-like component running along the prow and underside of the hull
Branch-town - A settlement built directly into the branches of a tallshank (or, more rarely, directly into the branches of the thrash)

C

Cartographising - Creating a map of the waves as you travel
Cartoika - A portside space for collecting and displaying charts of the rustling waves
Char - A shipside cook, usually a culinary master when it comes to turning the seemingly inedible into something edible
Chop-station - A portside space that butchers creatures brought in by hunters and wildsailing crews, taking only a few choice cuts from each beast as payment
City-port - A settlement large enough to have its own dedicated dock
Chameleocuda - A camouflaged reptilian predator with a long, fish-like tail
Crewmate - Any member of your ship's crew controlled by a player
Crezzerin - A mutative substance that causes the wildsea's rapid growth, sears the skin on contact and causes confusion and hallucinations if an individual is exposed for a longer period of time
Crushing Depths, The - One of the names for the deeper layers of the sea, also known as the Underthrash

D

Delving - The act of exploring the underthrash, also known as diving
Diver - A catch-all name for wildsailors that explore the lower layers of the rustling waves
Drifting - The ability to 'drop anchor' while airborne and let the wind carry an airship while the crew rest
Drydock -A place for fixing damaged ships, or creating new vessels ready to launch onto the wild waves

E

Ektus - A cactoid wanderer from the eaten deserts of the East, fibrous and spined
Edges - Particular approaches a character can take that give them a bonus to their dice pool

F

Firefly - The wildsea's GM figure, the one that runs the game
Flap - A flight style that allows for ungainly flight, usually using wings of some kind
Flight Styles - Methods by which an airship can traverse the skies of the wildsea
Float - A takeoff style that allows for lifting off vertically
Freeports - Independent ports that aren't contained within a defined reach

G

Glide - A flight style that allows for unpowered movement, and the ability to gain lift with thermals
Grace (edge) - An edge of dexterity and speed

H

Hacker - A specialist in path-clearing and dealing with the sea's most dangerous plants
Highport - A living area in the branches of a tallshank, dedicated to trade and airship docking facilities
Honey-mead - A delicious drink favoured by those that love both alcohol and sweetness
Hover - A flight style that allows both slow but controlled movement and the ability to stay in one place while aloft

I

Icterine - An Eastern reach of treetop sand dunes and ironspine cacti, the ancestral home of the ektus
Instinct (edge) - An edge of gut feeling and reaction
Iron (edge) - An edge of determination and willpower
Itzenko - A newer bloodline of mantid types

J

Jagserry - A serrated blade with a handle that allows it to be used as either sword or saw

K

Ketra - A much-changed descendant of ancient humanity, with translucent skin and self-made skeletons of scrap or driftwood

L

Lift Systems - The essential component of an airship, something that allows a vessel to take to the skies
Looking For Trouble - An action that can be taken while on an aerial journey, identifying and engaging with hostile situations while also gaining whispers
Lookout - A position on the ship, essential for cautious crews
Lowports - Settlements built in places only easily accessed by submersibles

M

Mire - The slow slipping away of control and reason that affects sailors out on the waves for too long
Mothryn - Beautifully coloured insect individuals, with short lives but the ability to repupate into a new person multiple times

N

Nautilization - The process of cutting a port off entirely from the surrounding depths, making a truly self-sustaining environment that's immune to pressure

P

Pinwolf - The wildsea's most common predator, wolf-like hunters with stiletto limbs well-suited for climbing
Post-V / Post-Verdant / Post-Verdancy - Used to describe the time after the initial day of the Verdancy, the catastrophic event that led to the wildsea's existence
Pre-V / Pre-Verdant/Pre-Verdancy - Used to describe the time before the wildsea's arrival, the near-forgotten history of the old world

Pressure - A force that acts on submersibles and their crews, both physically and mentally, as they descend
Pressure Gauge - A special kind of track that measures the level and severity of pressure
Pressure Shells - Necessary additions to a ship in order for it to more easily explore the underthrash
Prototerritories - Smaller territories that aren't contained within a defined reach
Punchcard - A type of programming used by rattlehands and some pre-V machines

R

Rattlehand - A shipside engineer, tasked with creating useful machinery and fixing broken equipment
Repupation - The process of a mothryn shedding their past self at the end of their life and shifting into a 'new' individual
Rogue Factions - Organised groups that don't restrain their activities to a defined reach
Rootless - Nomadic groups that live their entire lives on ships, usually as part of trading fleets
Rootquakes - Violent changes to the topography of the branches caused by roots finding a new source of sustenance, causing short but intense periods of growth and change
Rush - A takeoff style that allows for building up horizontal speed and then lifting into the air

S

Saprekk - The ancient language of the ektus, well-maintained
Satellite Cities - Settlements in the upper atmosphere
Sawprow - A common bite consisting of a chainsaw running down the middle of a ship's prow, for cutting through branches and dragging the ship forward as it does so
Scrubbers - Optional submersible systems that help keep the interior of a ship free of hostile environmental effects
Scrutiny - A mechanical system representing the increased attention a ship and crew draws while airborne, especially from potentially dangerous watchers
Shadow-spring - A place to rest, relax and clean after a long voyage, shaded pools of chemically treated water
Sharps (edge) - An edge of quick-thinking and smarts
Ship-colony - A group of ships lashed or otherwise attached to create a mobile wavetop city
Sinkcity - A large settlement built beneath the waves, most often found in the sink
Skyport - A floating city with a dock for airships, and sometimes cranes and winches for wavetop ships
Skyworthy - A ship altered to be able to take to the air, leaving the branches of the waves behind
Smokehouse - A stone-walled building found in ports that lets citizens and visiting wildsailors indulge in flame-based tobacco products and narcotics in safety
Snapperpillar - A hybrid of reptilian and insect, an aggressive predator often found making its lair in ruins
Snaps - Negative twists that can relieve some of the pressure on a crew at depth
Soar - An elegant flight style that gives a ship or aeronaut impressive aerial mobility
Soilship - A ship carrying arable soil, usually collected after a rootquake brings new land to the surface of the waves
Spit - A temporary island, often of pre-V material such as stone or metal, bought up to the surface by a rootquake
Sporecloud - Clouds of drifting spores that can clog engines and root into skin before flourishing
Sporehund - A gau companion beast, a mushroom-made wolfhound
Sporeling - Slang for a young gau
Submersibles - Ships that are outfitted with pressure shells to help them withstand the crushing depths

T

Takeoff Styles - Methods by which ai airship can leave the wavetops
Tallshank - A tree huge even by wildsea standards, often standing a mile or so higher than the ironroots surrounding it
Teeth (edge) - An edge of direct violence and savage action
Thrash - The uppermost layer of the rustling waves, thin branches and treetops that roll like waves in the wind
Tides (edge) - An edge of knowledge and contemplation
Tree-shanty - A wildsailor song for keeping spirits high out at sea
Trisketar - A complex guitar-like instrument made to be played by those with more than the 'usual' number of arms
Tzelicrae - Sapient spider colonies that form themselves into humanesque bodies

U

Undercrew - NPC crewmembers with specialised roles on the ship
Underthrash - A commonly-used term for the deeper layers of the wildsea

V

Veils (edge) - An edge of ciphers and secrecy
Verdancy - The cataclysmic event that acted as the genesis of the wildsea, a rolling tide of fast-growing greenery that covered the known world in titanic trees

W

Watcher - A potent and dangerous force that is attracted to airships as they travel, linked to Scrutiny
Watchful Eyes - A special two-box track that indicates how much attention an airship has drawn from watchers
Wavecutter - The term for a normal wildsailing ship, used more now in the age of airships and submersibles
Wavewalking - the act of leaping, scrambling, and brachiating from place to place across the waves without a ship, a dangerous but useful skill to learn
Wavewalker - One who explores the wavetops without relying on a ship
Wild Blue - The most common name for the skies of the wildsea, used by aeronauts and explorers
Wildsailor - A sailor of the rustling waves
The Wildsea - A vast expanse of impossibly tall trees, their branches making up a treetop sea
Wormapples - Insect-fruit hybrids that cluster under the branches of the thrash, a common food for the average wildsailor

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RULES BREAKDOWN

UNDERTHRASH RULES

Crezzer Corruption (Optional)

Deeper, there is frequent and potent crezzerin exposure.

Ship Effects: Ship ratings may be damaged (Seals/Armour protect normally). Ships might mutate or take massive Acid or Toxin damage.
Crew Effects: Characters immune to crezzerin become resistant. Those resistant, lose it. Those with no resistance gain weakness. Rapid mutation, massive Toxin or Acid damage (burning tracks), or mire via hallucination/mutation are possible.

Hostile Environments

These are Bad Air, Drifting Spores, Insect Incursions, Wandering Spirits.

General Ship Effects: Most can affect a ship's engine or bite (reducing Speed/Saws or preventing Forging Ahead) and might damage Seals or Armour over time.
General Crew Effects: Choking/nausea inflicts cut. Reduced visibility reduces impact. Hallucinations cause mire. Traits/gear might be damaged by toxins, corrosion, or infection.

Bad Air: Stenches, overwhelming damp, low oxygen, intense heat/cold, strange gases.
Drifting Spores: Clogging may reduce Tilt.
Insect Incursions: Might steal or devour resources/cargo.
Wandering Spirits: Rarely affect ships. Can disturb dreams or distract, add cut to long-term tasks or boxes to tracks. Might attack directly, causing damage or mire.

Submersible Watch Rolls & Threat

Unless in lowport patrolled or otherwise protected area, threat roll is 2d6 (cut highest).
Relevant chart provides additional d6 before cutting and taking highest result.

Watch Roll Results table is on page 56.

Pressure

Physical and psychological impact of going deeper, measured on a Pressure Gauge.

Pressure Level: Large number on left.
Starts at 0, goes up to 3. Increase when the crew descends a level or the Pressure Track is filled. Decrease when they ascend a level or dock at a lowport (once per journey).

Pressure Track: Linked circles on the right.
Mark when the crew engage a leviathan, encounter horror, drop anchor/rest the night, leave the ship, the ship's Armour/Seals take damage. Clear a mark when they encounter wonder, survive a leviathan with ship unscathed, replace a twist with a snap, find safe haven, repair damaged Seals/Armour. Clear track completely when they dock at a lowport (once per journey).

Pressure Effects

Increasing pressure makes things worse, can exacerbate existing effects or create ongoing effects (damage, mire, burn, consume or degrade cargo/resources, add cut/reduce impact, prevent use of a skill/language/edge).

Random Pressure Effect tables are on pages 60-61.

Snaps

Once per scene, single player rolling twist can treat it as a snap (clear Pressure Track mark).

A snap is always something negative for the character, ship, or crew and should be depth-related and caused by being under pressure.

WILD BLUE RULES

Takeoff Styles

There are two Takeoff Styles:
Float: Enables vertical takeoff.
Rush: Requires forward momentum.

Takeoffs require an action and a roll. When a character takes off, there's no associated damage. When a ship takes off, there is usually a cost paid by marking a rating.

Takeoff Rolls

For **Characters**, a takeoff roll may be aided by Vault, Wavewalk, Flourish, or even Brace or Sense.
For **Ships**, a rating is used for the roll, likely Speed for Rush or Tilt for Float. Airship lift systems indicate which rating is damaged during takeoff. Particularly difficult takeoffs can also damage other ratings, cargo, or crew. Takeoffs from Highport Docks ignore the rating damage.

Flight Styles

There are four Flight Styles:
Glide: Cannot gain height without updraughts, thermals, etc. and cannot hover. Can travel without engine running and Cut a Path when flying.
Flap: Ascend, descend, manoeuvre in an ungainly manner, and Cut a Path when flying. Cannot hover.
Hover: Stay airborne without motion or momentum, Drop Anchor without landing, and use the Drift journey action. Only moves at walking speed.
Soar: Ascend, descend, and manoeuvre with speed and ease. Can Cut a Path and Forge Ahead when flying. Cannot hover.

Landing

Difficult or dangerous conditions require rolls to land safely, for both ships and characters.
For **Characters**: Brace, Vault, or Wavewalk are normal.
For **Ships**: Tilt, Armor, or Saws are normal.
Conflict/Disaster: May mark tracks, damage cargo/resources, or overshoot.

Crash Landing: Landing in a way unsuitable for the takeoff style inflicts damage to tracks, ratings, resources, cargo, or injury. Even a Triumph cannot avoid this. A Highport Dock does eliminate it however.

Aerial Manoeuvres

Difficult, dangerous, or dramatic flight may require action or ratings rolls, especially when the flight involves stunts or complex manoeuvres.
For **Characters**: May be aided by Flourish, Vault, or perhaps Brace or Wavewalk. Excessive muscle-powered flight can also mark the aspect, or call for rolls and cuts.
For **Ships**: Normally call on Tilt or Speed ratings.
Recklessness: Player may reduce cut on a manoeuvre roll in exchange for damage to something or someone within the ship, e.g. cargo, crew, or undercrew overboard.
Conflict/Disaster: May indicate simple failure, or damage to the cargo, crew, or ship.

Atmospheric & Environmental Conditions

Positive Conditions: May reduce cut or eliminate the need for rolls to takeoff, manoeuvre, or land. Examples include favourable winds, beneficial thermals, known magnetic fields, and soft, lush leaves.
Negative Conditions: May add to cut, force rolls when not normally needed, or reduce impact. Examples include Fog or Sporeclouds, Storms, Unpredictable Forces, and Harrying Fliers. Damaged Lift Systems can count as a negative condition — or worse.

Journeys Through the Wild Blue

Drifting: Without Hover, it is almost impossible for airships to Drop Anchor while airborne. With Hover they can also Drift, floating while winds move the ship. The Firefly secretly rolls 1d6 (2d6, take lowest in bad winds): On a 6, drifts in helpful direction (add mark to Journey track). On a 5 or 4, stays where it is. On a 3, 2, or 1 drifts far off course (clear mark from journey track).

Watch: Use the Watch Roll Results for the Wild Blue table on page 28 instead of the normal one.

Looking for Trouble (New Optional Station): Create a three-box vertical track at the start of the aerial journey. Any time the ship progresses when Cutting a Path or Forging Ahead, a crewmember can go Looking For Trouble, mark a box on the Trouble Track, and use a brief phrase to describe what they glimpsed. It cannot be investigated!

When all three boxes are filled, the entire crew selects two of the phrases to combine as a bad event or location they come across. The unused phrase is given as a whisper to the player who created it and the Trouble Track is cleared. Finding trouble always provides something valuable if investigated or dealt with, e.g. cargo, survivors, milestones, useful information, etc.

Altitude

There are three layers:

- **Below the Clouds**: The default. No special rules.
- **Within the Clouds**: Cut on vision or awareness rolls. Obstacles when Forging Ahead normally add the Crash Landing rules to the obstacle too. Increase impact when hiding though.
- **Above the Clouds**: Cut on rolls to hide/evade anything above the clouds. Increase impact to hide/evade anything below the clouds. Prolonged exposure on deck may cause Frost damage.

Scrutiny

Watchers: At the start of an aerial journey, the Firefly secretly chooses 1-2 Watchers (normally one from above and one from below). They create a two-circle Watchful Eye track (the topmost circle for above, the lowest for below). Example Watchers are on pages 36-40.

Being Watched: Imposes cut (normally one) in situations related to the nature of the Watcher.

Cut Results & Drawing Attention: Whenever a player cuts a result, it may draw attention. Take the lowest number out of every result that was cut and consult the Cut Results & Scrutiny table on page 33.

Scrutiny Effects: Mostly narrative, but the Firefly might impose a Scrutiny Action. This will clear a mark or burn too.

Scrutiny Actions that Clear a Mark: Examples include medium damage to a single crew member, light damage to entire crew, mire or negative tags on resources, temporarily disablement of part of the ship, reduce impact on certain actions for a time, negatively affect a Journey or Project track, negatively affect passengers/undercrew/cargo, increase cut imposed by the most relevant watcher.

Scrutiny Actions that Clear a Burn: Examples include heavy damage to a single crew member, medium damage to an entire crew, mass mire or destroy certain resources, injuries on crew/undercrew/passengers, serious structural damage on the ship, temporarily disablement of certain skills/languages, burn ship ratings or aspect tracks, Watcher boards the ship as an encounter.

Avoiding/Reducing/Removing Scrutiny: Bafflers aid in this, as can landing.

Confronting a Watcher can also reduce or remover Scruinty, though they are impossible to fully triumph over by default.

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FROM THE HUNGRY SKIES...

A horizon more yawning, more open, than she'd ever thought possible. With chemical gas and leviathan-bone struts, with taut canvas rippling in the storm-winds, they rose from the canopy and crested the wild blue above. Their ship, once bound by the waves of leaf and branch, was free. A tiny speck in the endless, but one full of laughter and hope for a new frontier.

And she remembered the depths.

No less ravenous than the skies, a cloying, clinging darkness that washed over portholes and crept through door-seals like tar. The rustle of the waves above replaced with chittering, keening, and the roars of creatures that would break the mind if fully understood. A constant clamour of life, the thrum of predator and prey and predator again, locked into a cycle pierced only momentarily by the passing of a ship, by the sound of saws on ancient wood. In those moments, the seas were united against an invader. In those moments, she had been prey in a way she'd never felt before.

But for a wildsailor who chooses to dive, the riches are worth the risk.

...TO THE WILDS BELOW

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