THE WILDSEA

by Felix Isaacs

CORE RULES

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Overview

Whether you're browsing a hobby store or convention hall, scrolling through a pdf, or the proud owner of your very own copy of the book, what you're reading now is the Wildsea - a tabletop RPG of danger and exploration in an impossibly verdant weird fantasy world. Let's give you a quick overview of what awaits you throughout the rest of these pages...

The Setting

Some three hundred years ago the empires of the world were toppled by a wave of fast-growing greenery, a tide of rampant growth spilling from the West. This event, the **Verdancy**, gave rise to the world you'll explore as you play - a titanic expanse of rustling waves and sturdy boughs known as the **Wildsea**.

Now chainsaw-driven ships cut their way across dense treetop waves, their engines powered by oilfruit, ropegolems, honey, and pride. Their crews are a motley, humanity's weathered descendants rubbing shoulders with cactoid gunslingers, animated wrecks and silkclothed spider-colonies, humanesque slugs with driftwood bones and other, stranger things. Each has a role and a reason to be out on the Wildsea, and it's their stories - your stories - that this game is designed to tell.

The wildsea hungers and grows, roots still questing down into the world's depths as its waves ripple with life. Spits of ancient earth and the heights of old-world monuments now serve as ports, cities, farms and jails, each with their own laws and ways. The years after the Wildsea's arrival were harsh, and by the time the art of sailing was rediscovered most old cultures had splintered into new, often unrecognisable forms. The economies of the verdant world are unpredictable and ever-changing, but there's always value to be found for those willing to brave the perils of the wild.

That's where you come in.

The Game

Your character is a **wildsailor**, part of a crew cutting their way across the island-studded wilderness of the treetop sea on a vessel of your very own. You'll clash with survivor cultures and wild beasts, scavenge and salvage for wreckage and trade-goods, chase rumours, and uncover secrets. The focus of this game is on exploration, progress, and change - you'll define the world of the Wildsea as you sail it.

Adventures on the Wildsea start as **hooks**, elements of the setting or of a character's history with the potential to blossom into an **arc** - a story for you and your crew to experience. While playing through an arc you roleplay scenes, montages, and journeys to make decisions, take actions, and resist your baser impulses. Completed arcs, and the triumphs and disasters within them, will allow you to develop your character as you play.

Decisions are made through the **conversation**, a collaborative process that keeps all players at the table involved in the outcome of an event. The Wildsea's GM figure, **the Firefly**, is there to ask the right questions to keep the conversation flowing, as well as to bring the rules into play when necessary.

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.

Influences

This book wouldn't exist without a hell of a lot of media, but there are some influences that stand above the rest.

When it comes to other roleplaying games we have **Belly of the Beast**, **Blades in the Dark, Heart: The City Beneath**, and **13th Age** to thank the most, though **Pathfinder** and **Call of Cthulhu** should definitely get a shout-out here too. As for other sources,
Bastion and **Sunless Sea** helped to shape some of the core ideas behind the world through both their gameplay and their soundtracks, and you certainly wouldn't be reading this now if I'd never watched **Firefly** or read China Miéville's **Bas Lag** trilogy. In a more meta sense, Reddit's **RPGDesign** and **RPGCreation** communities were also instrumental in giving me the drive to get this game up and running.

Options

The Wildsea is designed to be accessible 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.

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The Waves of Jatter's Hand

CHAPTER 1
SETTING

It was a stupid idea.

Tarak knew it, & her grandfather knew it. The leaves were so full of life they scorched the skin with a touch. Beasts the size of mountaintops wound their way through the shade of the lower trunks. Rootquakes shook the treetops, reconfiguring them, pushing remnants of a world long dead up to the surface.

It was a stupid idea to look at the rusting, dented hull thrust up between the leaves before them, a stone's throw away, & think it would ever sail again.

The seas her grandfather once charted had long been emptied. There were no waves to crest, no currents to ride.

It was a stupid idea. Obviously.

But still...

Core Concepts

This page highlights the most important aspects of the world - the core concepts of the Wildsea. If you have a little more time, the rest of the chapter delves into more detail.

The Treetops are a Sea

Though made up of branches and leaves rather than water, the treetops still act as a traditional sea in many ways; there are **waves** (formed by the natural contours of the canopy), **ports** (built onto what little solid ground remains), and a vast number of **ships** (their hulls supported by branches). While it's possible to move through the canopy without a vessel of some kind, to do so for any length of time is a huge risk.

Land is Scarce and Valuable

Mountaintops and large chunks of earth or debris caught up in the canopy act as islands and archipelagos, fiercely guarded by their inhabitants. The settlements built on these outcroppings of remaining land are constructed with safety more in mind than comfort, leading to ramshackle appearances and multiple layers of defence against the ever-threatening waves.

Plant Growth is Rampant

The plants of the sea grow at a dramatically accelerated pace, but only when connected to the **ironroots** (the huge mile-high trees that act as the foundation for the canopy you'll sail). A cut branch will stay inert, but another will have grown in its place within hours. Though the upper limits of the sea may have settled, the topography is constantly changing, and every now and then an unexpected spurt of growth claims a ship or colony.

Open Flames are Forbidden

Almost all cultures have prohibitions against the use of fire while at sea, and for good reason. Flame burns hot and long on wildsea wood, and spreads at a terrifying pace. If a fire does break out, even the most bitter enemies will likely put their differences aside to fight it together.

Crezzerin Corrupts on Contact

Secreted by some of the Wildsea's more dangerous vegetation, crezzerin is a potent toxin. Brief contact does little more than sear skin, but long-term exposure warps both body and mind in terrifying ways. This, along with the threat of predators and falling, keeps most sailors on their ships during long voyages.

The Economy is Barter-Based

With much of the pre-verdant world's technology and resources lost in the murky depths around the roots, salvage and recycling are particularly important. The economy is based on barter, usually of food or materials, but sometimes acts of service (bounty boards are a common fixture in most settlements, allowing locals to farm out tasks and have others solve problems they can't deal with themselves).

It's a Weird, Weird World

The Wildsea setting is designed to be low-magic, high-weirdness. It's a world of unusual creatures, woken spirits, and unbelievable abilities, but they're mostly tangibly connected to the waves themselves - there's very little in the way of wands and spellbooks, or magical study. The practice of twisting the world in mysterious ways is referred to as **arconautics**, literally a delving into the unknown and uncanny.

“The first thing you need to understand about the sea,” the old mothryn intoned, voice as dusty as a buried library, “is that it’s the one in charge.”

“Sure, you can hack routes through it, scar the canopy with a prow and a keel, slash and bite until you’ve carved out a little space of your own... but it’ll never be anything more than temporary. And the sooner you learn that, the easier a time you’ll have.”

He scratched at his braided beard, long fingers brushing up against the scars beneath it. His tone softened, just a little.

“See that rise over there, in the distance?” He pointed, and the assembled children nodded solemnly. “That was another port once - Kyther, we used to call it. Or Kynner, can never remember which. But either way, there were people there just like us, a stone’s throw away... But they’re not there now, and never will be again.”

The Rustling Waves

Capricious. Beautiful. Dangerous.

There are many ways to describe the branch-and-leaf waves of the wildsea, but no single word could ever do them justice. They’re a sprawl of life, or of many lives; nature at war with civilization and itself, a churn of growth and wind and trade and blood.

The first thing most notice is the movement. Whether through the kiss of high-altitude winds or the constant motion of beasts and insects, the canopy of the wildsea is never at rest - in fact, the effect is similar to that of the waves of the old salt sea, swells and tides and all. Even a ship at anchor still sways gently from side to side, moving with the rise and fall of the branches beneath its hull.

The second thing is the sound, another constant in a changeable world. Leaf on leaf, branch on branch, the rattle and buzz of uncountable insects, the calls of birds and lemurs and sailors at the rail. Tree-shanties are sung and secrets shouted, and ship's hearts roar deep within their hulls.

Life makes noise, and the wildsea is nothing if not full of life.

The third thing, which should have been the first, is the danger. It's not that everything out on the waves wants to kill you, it's that enough of it does that it makes no difference. There are beasts that hunt ships, eager to feed on the scraps in their wake or the wreckage they leave at the end of their usage. Insects build hives in timber and flesh, more than mindless in inscrutable ways. Even spirits hunt, and are hunted in return. And, a deeper presence beneath the layers of prey and predation, leviathans lurk... and bide their time.

Opening Your Mind

There are mistakes some make about the nature of the waves, that they’re a tapestry of trees and little else. In actuality, nothing could be further from the truth - the wildsea is not a world of trees but a world of *vegetation*, with all of the glory and diversity that that entails. The ships of the east cut through giant cactus pads, their hulls reinforced against unforgiving spines. Other places are overgrown with all-consuming fungus, or mired with belches of noxious gas, or choked by stalks of mile-high wheatgrass. In Terminus, the branches spear like rails. In Belltower Spry, brass grows and flowers sing.

And that’s just the surface.

The deeper you travel, the more the immensity of the sea becomes apparent. There’s a pressure that builds as you descend; not a physical presence, but a mental weight. When dipping below the canopy you’re travelling not only through space but through history, passing from the light into a darkened space of ruins and mysteries, of ancient things unearthed. The branches down there snake around secrets not only of a lost age, but of an age before that, and before that again. The knowledge itself is a weight, and those driven to dive train themselves not to buckle under it.

What Came Before?

Nobody really knows. The sea's oldest inhabitants have only scattered memories, for their bodies last longer than their minds. Some, woken from amber, remember the old world as if it's a dream. Others rely on scraps of tapestry, or mouldering books. Whatever knowledge of the past people have is what the sea chooses to give, or what they can dredge up from the deeper places - most have become accustomed to living in the present, making use of what they can without trying to understand the deeper mysteries behind their finds.

Important Terminology

Though much of the setting is designed to be uncovered and defined through play, there are a few terms you should know before diving in.

Pre-Verdant

Commonly abbreviated to **Pre-V**, this describes anything that has survived from the old world without being corrupted by the oddities of the new. *Pre-V materials aren't exactly rare, but they're prized for the benefits they offer and the difficulty endured in attaining them; in a world without money a collection of ancient relics, heirloom seeds, or curated information is the mark of the new elite.*

Ironroot

The foundation of the wildsea, the ironroots are the titanic trees whose sprawling branches make up the majority of the wavetops. *The average ironroot is usually somewhere around a mile high, but there's little uniformity from grove to grove. One area of the waves may be dominated by proud hybrid oaks, another by half-mile willows, yet another by some specimen never recorded before the Verdancy's arrival.*

Tallshank

A massive tree that dwarfs even the ironroots, sometimes spearing miles above the rest of the canopy. *Their trunks and upper branches are often settled by those that lack a healthy fear of heights, far enough removed from the waves below that marked out climbing routes, airships, or elevators are needed to gain access.*

Spit

A temporary landmass resting on the surface of the canopy, impermanent but sturdy enough to colonize. Spits take many forms, from the picked-clean bones of a leviathan to chunks of old world material raised by the movement of roots and branches. *Some last no more than a few days on the surface, while others stay standing for decades. Colonists looking to settle a spit reinforce it as best they can, but these measures can only delay the inevitable – all spits fall, eventually.*

Island

A larger landmass in no danger of being swallowed by the sea. Most islands are the tips of mesas and mountaintops, or the upper reaches of still-standing monuments. *Almost all discovered islands are heavily colonized as quickly as possible, especially if they have some kind of arable land or useful resource. Many also end up as the core of larger settlements, lashed-together ships and criss-crossing walkways giving the inhabitants space to expand over the nearby waves.*

Reef

A collection of junk, usually mechanical in nature, either on top of or just below the leafy waves. Reefs are hazardous to ship hulls but extremely sought after regardless, often hotspots for salvage operations. *But it isn't just wildsailors that seek out reefs. Complex ecosystems grow around them, unique interplays of predator and prey that can make them particularly dangerous (and lucrative) to explore.*

Rift

A gaping hole in the sea that leads down to the darkened roots far below, the kind of place a sensible sailor steers clear of at all costs. *Most rifts are created when an ironroot falls, and are often used as places of study, pilgrimage, worship, or sacrifice.*

Crezzerin

A mutative chemical substance found all across the wildsea, often particularly concentrated in leaves and tree sap. It's crezzerin that drives both the rampant growth of wildsea plants and the hyper-accelerated (and increasingly uncanny) evolution of its creatures. *Most sailors build up a natural resistance to crezzerin over time, enough to eat food and drink water that contains traces of the stuff without falling ill. Large doses or direct contact with undiluted crezzerin are still dangerous though, even to the hardiest individuals – skin sears, bones split, forms mutate and minds warp.*

Rough Timeline

300 years ago: An explosion of fast-growing greenery known as the Verdancy unrolls across the land. Within days the known world is covered with forest, mile-high trees whose roots churn entire civilizations to mulch. Those with foresight move to higher ground. They are, as far as they can tell, the only survivors.

299 years ago: Pocketfuls of these survivors are hit by their first high-altitude winter. Entire cultures are lost to biting cold, lack of water, and virulent new diseases.

299-280 years ago: More die. Few thrive. Though there is an abundance of food and wood, fresh water is scarce and crezzerin-contaminated rainwater burns. Most believe the world has ended.

280-240 years ago: A new generation is born - few, but strong. They don't fear the surrounding treetops as their parents do, striking out in rags to hunt and explore, searing themselves terribly on the chemical coating of the leaves.

240 years ago: Tarak Tar works with her grandfather, a sailor of the now-buried seas, to build a ship capable of crossing the treetops. A hull of old iron reinforced with wildsea wood, an engine fuelled with honey and rotting fruit, a rudimentary chainsaw running the height of the prow to cut them a path. Against all odds, they succeed.

240-20 years ago: Thousands of ships are built, bridging the gaps between cultures and bloodlines. The old world is mostly forgotten as new generations are born, raised to view the canopy surrounding them as a sea to be tamed. A short-lived and foolish war scars the north, setting it ablaze. Entire cultures dedicate themselves to keeping that fire from engulfing the rest of the world, yet it burns still - a constant reminder of the apocalyptic danger that untamed flame represents.

The Present Day: The ideas of a saltwater sea or of land larger than a mesa seem absurd to most, fairytales. Blood, salvage, and exploration drive the economy. The world is different, but it thrives once more.

The Layers of the Sea

There are **six distinct layers** to the forest that ate the world, with only the upper three commonly considered safe enough for travel and habitation. They are...

The Skies

A broad blue expanse above, the skies are home to insects, birds, and the occasional airship (though strong winds and frequent storms make reliable air travel impossible). Most that settle the skies base themselves on mesas, mountainsides, or floating cities.

The Thrash

The topmost layer of the great iron-rooted trees that make up the wildsea, the thrash is a place of life and trade, a forest canopy studded with mountaintops, reefs of wreckage, and ramshackle cities. What remains of civilization is mostly centred on these last spits of land, and ships sail the leafy seas surrounding them.

The Tangle

Though the thrash is thick enough to sail, it's the tangle that most large ships rest their hulls on, where the branches of the sea begin to thickly intertwine. Insect and animal life thrives in the half-dark heat, and it can be moved through in relative safety with enough preparation and skill.

The Sink

Where wrecks often lodge themselves and the largest creatures of the wildsea rule. As thick as the tangle but far more dangerous, the sink is named for the treacherous properties of its branches - whether through natural or unnatural means, most vessels that make their way down to the sink find it almost impossible to reclaim the surface.

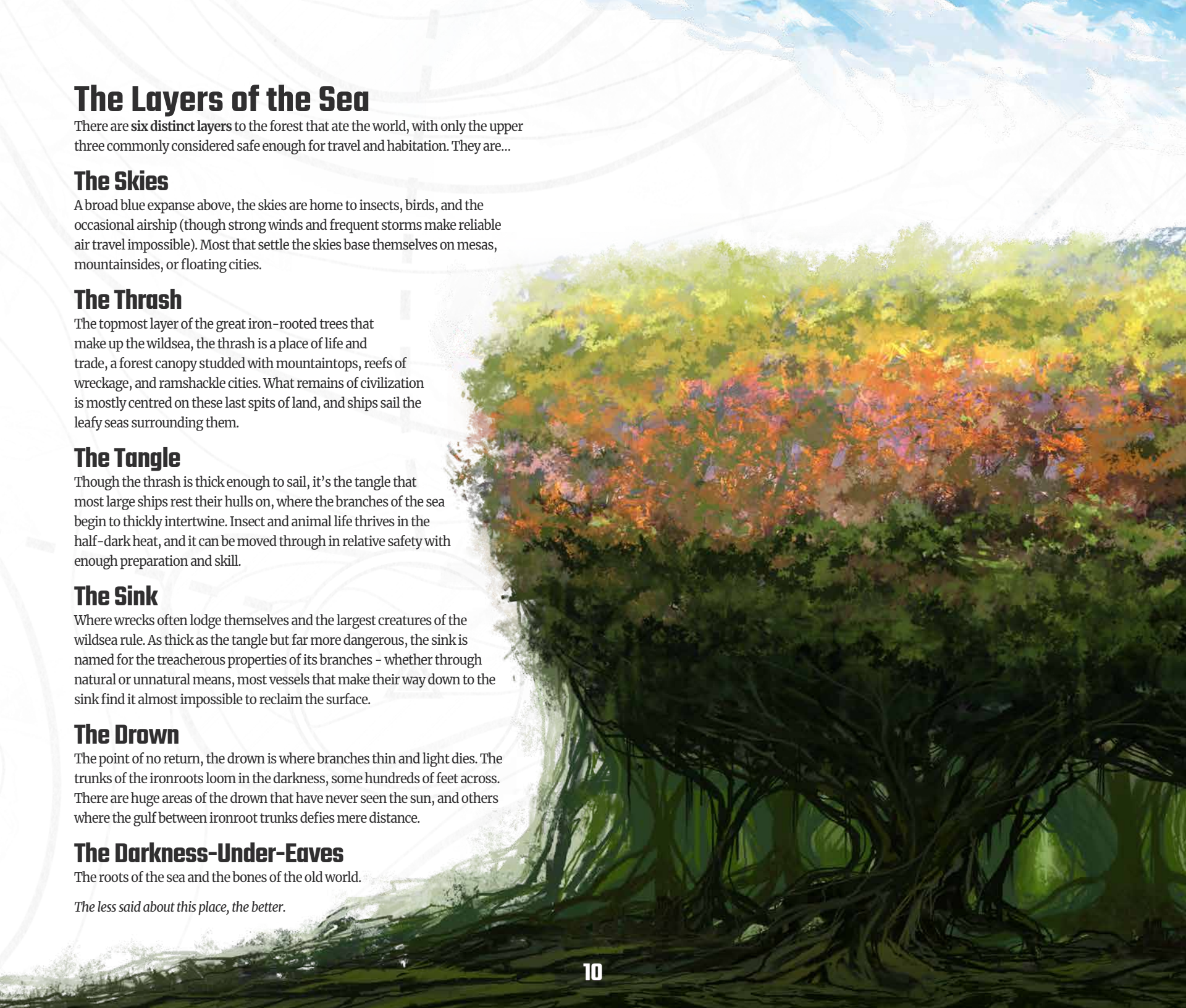
The Drown

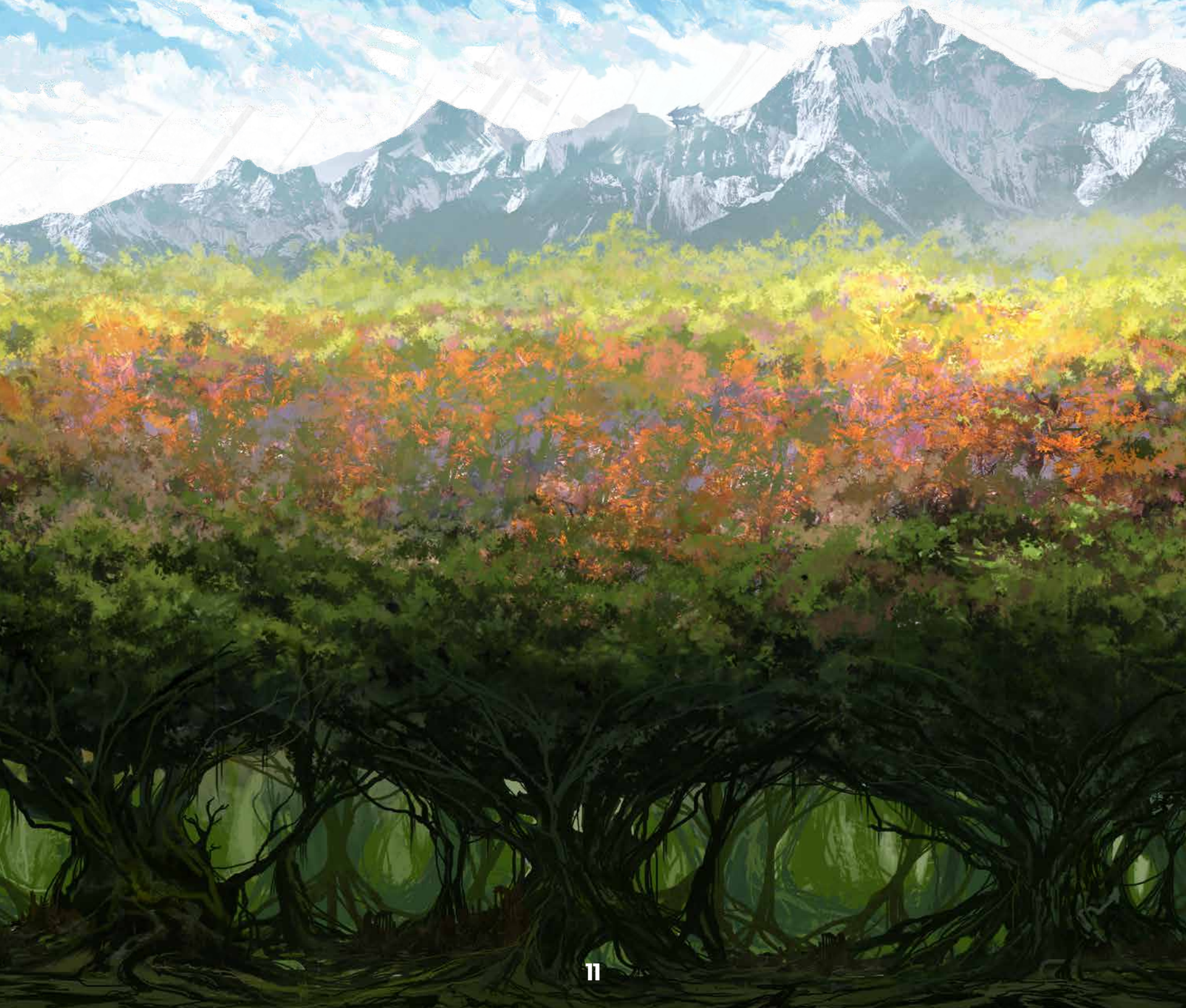
The point of no return, the drown is where branches thin and light dies. The trunks of the ironroots loom in the darkness, some hundreds of feet across. There are huge areas of the drown that have never seen the sun, and others where the gulf between ironroot trunks defies mere distance.

The Darkness-Under-Eaves

The roots of the sea and the bones of the old world.

The less said about this place, the better.





The Crew of the Three-Salt Bloom

The Core Four

The four species most commonly found building communities across the waves are the **ardent**, the **ektus**, the **gau,** and the **tzelicrae**. Each have their own strengths and weaknesses, and are uniquely adapted to life on the treetop seas.

The Ardent

The post-Verdancy descendants of ancient humanity, forged by hardship and disaster. The ardent vary in terms of culture, traditions, and appearance, just as their human ancestors did, but they share a common trait in perseverance. They are a race of survivors; tough, weathered, and naturally attuned to the spiritual elements of the waves.

The Ektus

Fibrous cactoids from the Icterine east, the world-forest robbed the ektus of the dunes and waterfalls of their ancestral home. Most now travel the seas, determined to prove themselves in a world that tried to snuff them out. Though ektus bodies come in a variety of shapes and sizes, they tend to stand head and shoulders above the next largest person in any given room.

The Gau

The gau are grown rather than born, cultivated within the warm darkness of fungal colonies before being sent out into the world when they come of age. Though each surviving colony has its own traditions and biological quirks, natural curiosity and a sense of adventure are common traits among all but the most conservative gau.

The Tzelicrae

Each tzelicrae is a hive-mind of spiders, thousands of them, which has shaped, bargained for, or stolen a humanesque form. Many tzelicrae spin themselves silken exterior, or inhabit discarded clothes and armour much like a hermit crab huddling within a shell. A rare few win the lottery of skin, passing unnoticed among the communities of other bloodlines.

The Rising Three

Though the most common, the core four are far from the only species adapting to life on the rustling waves. In more recent years others have made their presence known, the most notable three of these being the **ironbound**, the **ketra,** and the **mothryn.**

The Ironbound

The souls of wrecked ships sometimes gather material from the shattered hulls around them, creating a body with which to escape the loneliness of the open waves. These flickering minds call themselves ironbound, a reference to some of the strongest ships of the old salt-sea (as the legends tell it, anyway). Some mistake them for machines, but in truth they're just as capable of learning and emotion as any other ensouled being.

The Ketra

Like the ardent, the ketra are descendants of a humanity long-consigned to the churn of history. Unlike the ardent, they were trapped below the new wilds as the Verdancy tore across the world, in mountain-heart mines and industrial edifices large enough to withstand the questing roots. Exposure to crezzerin and cramped, pitch-black environments warped them into something far removed from their ardent kin.

The Mothryn

Short-lived but determined to fill their time with meaning, mothryn are fast, fragile, and often wildly decorated; bright colours and elaborate clothes are common, a direct result of their pre-verdant history of harshly enforced monastic isolationism. Though mothryn have wings, the ability to truly fly is a rare one, leaving most capable of elegant gliding manoeuvres but with little opportunity to gain height without thermals and updraughts.

Wildsailors

What makes a wildsailor?

Heading out onto the waves as part of a ship's crew is the first step, but that alone does not a wildsailor make. It's a willingness to explore, to engage, to cut and bite and tread where sense or logic drive others back to safety.

Some wildsailors love the sea. Others respect it, or fear it (the healthiest approach, in all probability). But whatever their attitude every wildsailor is drawn, inexorably, to the rustling waves.

Crews & Goals

Few wildsailors make it alone, or at least not for very long. Most band together into crews with others who share similar goals. Though these are manifold and often unexpected, the most common are...

To Explore

Some crews sail just to find out what's over the next wave-peak, forever chasing the unknown - there's an endless variety of cultures and creatures on the waves of the wildsea, and even the most dedicated explorers will never exhaust the possibility of new and unexpected encounters.

To Salvage

Be it wrecks, reefs, or ruins, there's always something of value to be found. Salvagers seek to root out and utilize the scraps that others leave behind, often delving deep beneath the thrash and into eerie, long-forgotten places to do so.

To Hunt

Whether for the thrill of the chase or the rewards it brings, a large number of wildsailors spend their time hunting - sometimes beasts, sometimes bounties, and sometimes much stranger marks. But a hunter is a hunter, whatever form their prey takes.

To Trade

Though the economies of the wilds are unstable, merchant crews quickly learn how to identify what a customer needs and get it to them for the right price. These crews tend to focus on diplomacy, politics, and the intricacies of import and export.

To Adventure

Some would say that any trip out onto the waves is an adventure in itself, but that doesn't stop certain crews from embracing a more thrill-seeking lifestyle. Adventurous crews are as likely to find themselves in a pitched battle against marauders as a friendly wavetop race, as likely to end up scaling cliffsides as brawling in a dockside bar-room.

To Escape

Not every spit or island is a pleasant place to live, either due to the ravages of the nearby waves or the culture of the place itself. Sometimes the dangers you don't know are preferable to the dangers you do.

The Tools of the Wild Waves

While not every wildsailor carries a strong, reliable version of these tools, it's rare to find an individual who doesn't carry at least a couple of the essentials (even if they're salvaged from the corpses of the unfortunate, or knocked together in minutes by an eager but amateurish rattlehand). We'll list the 'classic' versions of each of these tools, as well as some common substitutions.

A Sporescarf

Beloved by those bloodlines with oxygen-processing lungs (which is... well, actually quite a small amount of them), sporescarves are a useful barrier against the airborne particulates that drift through the rustling waves. Though the tar-treated fabrics were originally designed to be easily pulled up and over the mouth in case of a sporecloud, they've shown just as effective at protecting their wearers from all manner of airborne hazards, from toxins to tiny insects.

Might be replaced by: A rebreather and air-tank, a spore-hungry companion

A Rope & Grapple

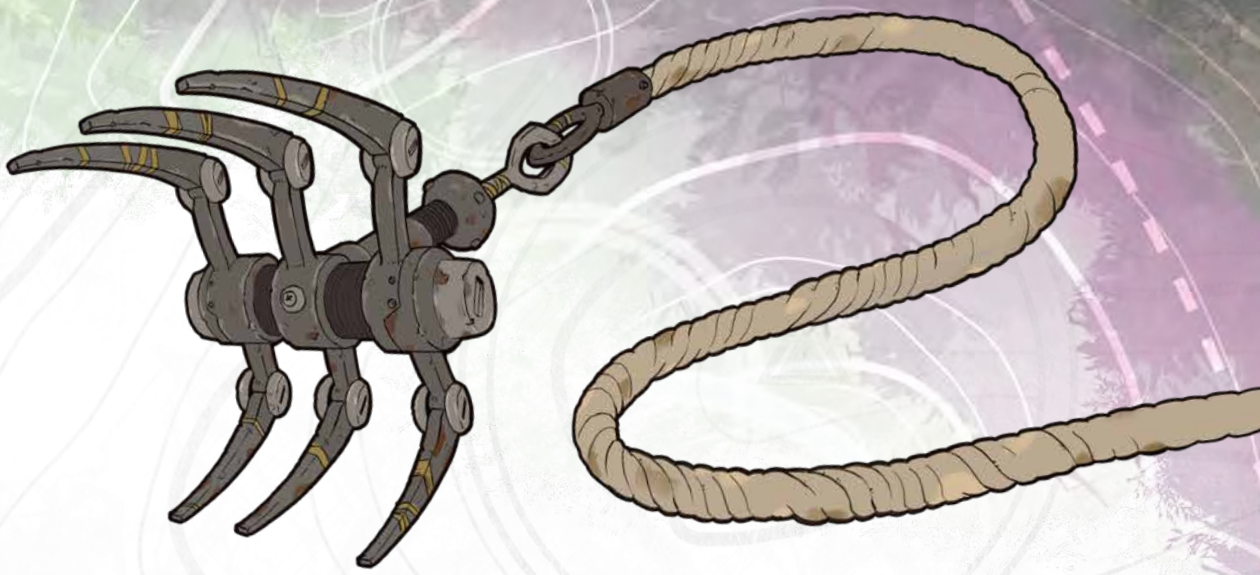
The landbound often question sailors as to the danger of going over the rail, off of the deck, and into the waves themselves. Most shake their heads, turn, refuse to answer. There isn't a wildsailor alive that hasn't seen someone go over the edge, and many never return - the branches of the sea can be clung to, but between biting insects, searing crezzerin, and predators zeroing in for the kill, those grips rarely last. A rope and hook may be simple, but they've saved countless souls from an express trip down to the Under-Eaves.

Might be replaced by: A claw and chain, a natural tentacle, an animated vine

A Blade

Used for combat, for food preparation, for surgery, for clearing branches, and really for anything else a wildsailor can involve it in. Some choose serrated edges, or poisoned tips, or elaborate engravings... But most just focus on trying to keep a reliably sharp edge.

Might be replaced by: An axe, a pair of shears, a cleaver



Draws & Drawbacks

There are many draws to a life on the waves. Foremost among them is a sense of freedom, the chance for an individual to escape the trappings of their origin and spread some metaphorical wings. The acquisition of knowledge is another, the simple drive to learn more about an expansive, verdant world. Then there's the lure of adventure, or at least excitement - even when engaged in something as simple and routine as cargo hauling, a journey across the waves tends to throw up some unexpected obstacles.

It's these obstacles that are a major drawback, however, and the danger they often bring. Between marauders, weirdnesses and predatory beasts, infections and sporeclouds and the ever-present risk of turning truly wild, sailors have few chances to recover from a mistake and many opportunities to make them. Every trip across the waves holds potential danger, and few sailors reach port without an extra scar and a cautionary tale to go with it.

Experience may increase a sailor's chance of survival, but it never lessens the hunger of the waves themselves.

Common Deckside Superstitions

- Crew knocked overboard are never considered lost until their bodies are recovered, or a full winter has passed. There are too many tales of wildsailors appearing at thrashside ports, mired and crezzer-seared, having dragged themselves through mile after mile of waves in search of their old crews.
- Gazing northwards while out on the open waves is bad luck, given that it often affords a view of the distant blackened smudge of the Conflagration, the greatest shame of the post-verdant world.
- The first mouthful of drink should be spat out into the waves if possible - it's unclear if this tradition began as an offering to the sea or a safety precaution against crezzerin contamination.
- The bodies of crew dead from accident or old age can be disposed of in many ways, depending on their cultures and beliefs in life, but for those without families or firm post-mortem plans releasing them to a rift is one of the highest marks of respect a crew can offer.
- A green-dyed sporescarf invites ruin on the wearer, making it that much harder to spot them if they're knocked over the edge of their ship and left hanging in the tangle.

"Do you ever think about what we lost, Tavah? About what the world must have been like before the Verdancy?"

She paused for a moment, ichor & amber chips oozing out from between her fingers as she swallowed.

"Not really."

A flick of her wrist sent the insect's remains over the side of the rail, a sad spatter on the passing leaves quickly swallowed in their wake.

Travel

Even the shortest journey across the seas is a dangerous prospect, but trade, mapping, and exploration promise bounty enough to offset the risk. Though the waves are vast, they're also crowded, and it's rare that a journey between even the closest ports ends without crews sighting, greeting and, occasionally, skirmishing with each other.

Charts & Mapping

Current charts are a highly valuable resource when away from port. As the roots writhe and quest for ever-deeper sources of nourishment, the topography of the rustling waves above shifts and changes in kind. Trade routes alter, animal migrations change, and entire spits of land are dredged up from below or abruptly and violently returned to the depths.

An exchange of charts is a mark of respect among ships meeting peacefully at sea, even if the exchange isn't physical - sometimes all it takes is an update to an existing map (such as marking out a new spit or a recently emerged threat) to make such a meeting worthwhile.

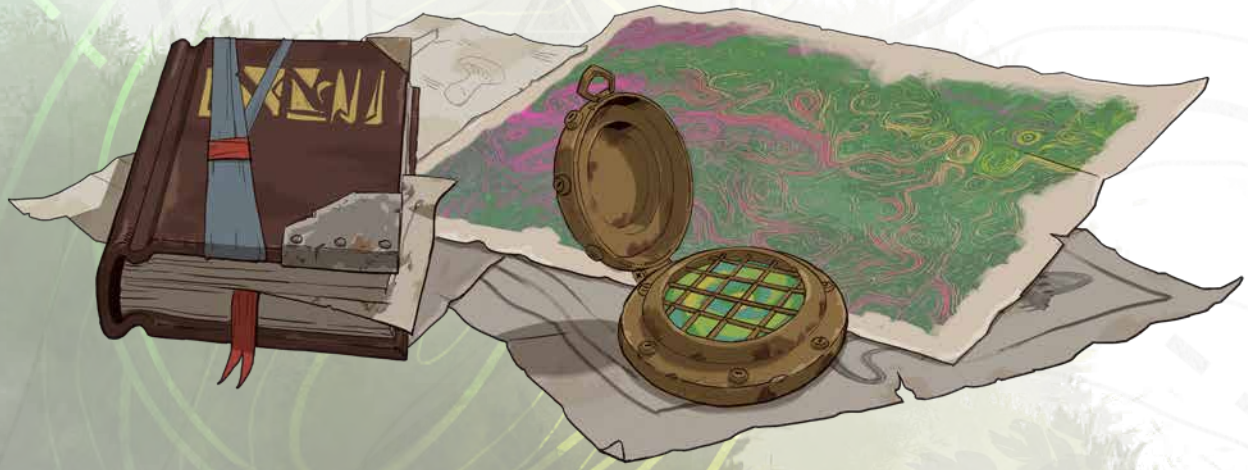
Wavewalking

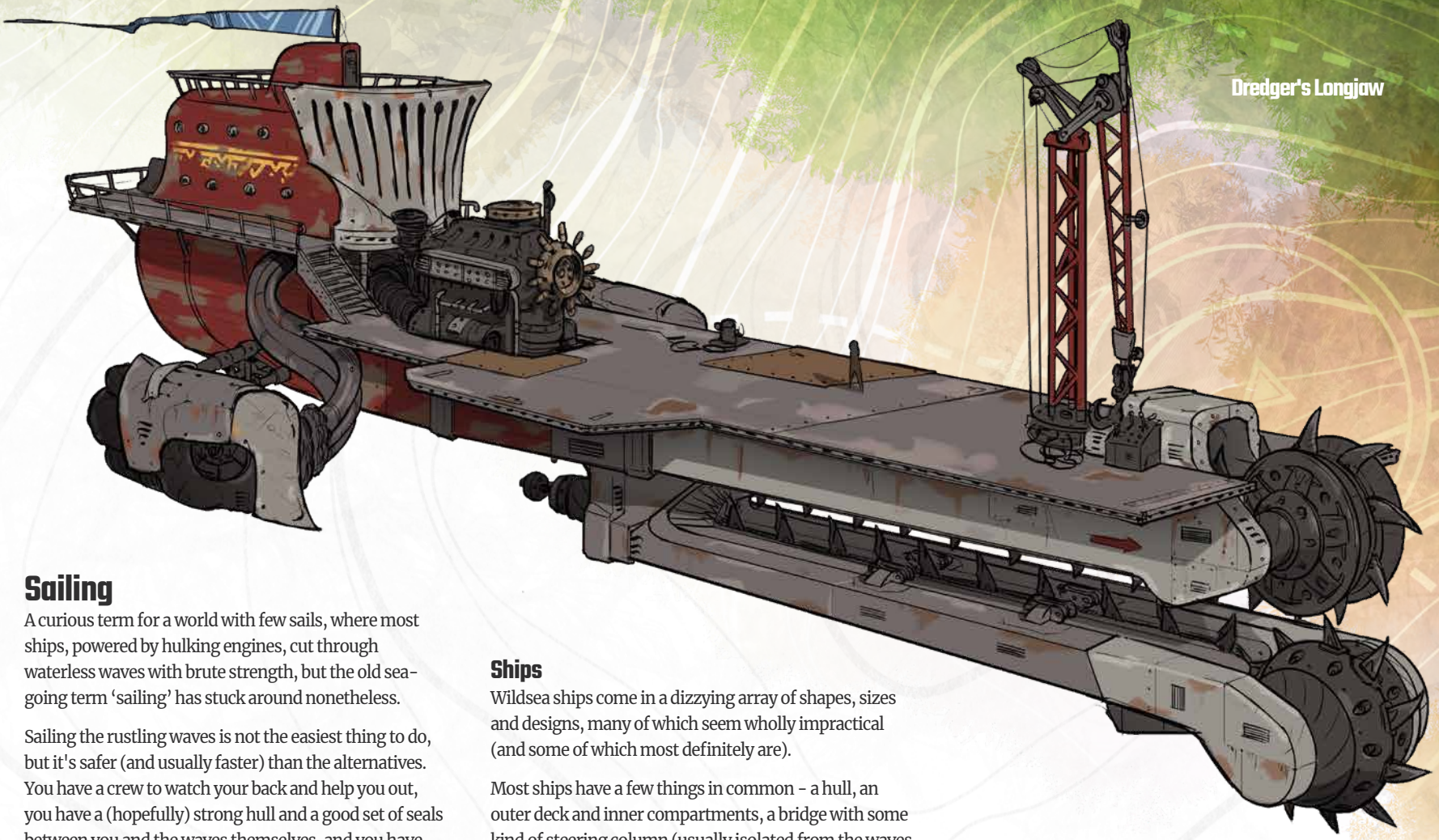
For most people, venturing out onto the waves without a ship is a terrifying prospect. First of all, they risk drawing the attention of predators without much in the way of defence, and there are things out there that can swallow even the bulkiest individual in a single gulp.

Then there's the threat of falling through the canopy - the branches are thick, but they're not infallible. All it takes is one to bend, shift, or break at the wrong time to send an explorer tumbling - they may be able to catch themselves before they hit the Under-Eaves, but climbing up comes with a host of its own dangers to worry about.

And then there's the third reason, the threat of corruption. Crezzerin threads its way through every part of the sea, but particularly leaves and newly grown branches. Staying on reliably thick bark and keeping clear of the leaves is far from easy, but it is technically *possible*.

And it's just that possibility that makes wavewalking an option (and sometimes the first option for the brave or the terminally foolhardy). Wavewalkers use a mixture of brachiation, leaping, and scrambling to move through the canopy, with most augmenting their training with clawed boots and grappling hooks. It's dangerous, but it's also a useful skill to learn, even if you plan to spend the majority of your time on deck or solid ground.





Dredger's Longjaw

Sailing

A curious term for a world with few sails, where most ships, powered by hulking engines, cut through waterless waves with brute strength, but the old sea-going term 'sailing' has stuck around nonetheless.

Sailing the rustling waves is not the easiest thing to do, but it's safer (and usually faster) than the alternatives. You have a crew to watch your back and help you out, you have a (hopefully) strong hull and a good set of seals between you and the waves themselves, and you have the ability to stop the ship, drop anchor, and wait out any adverse weather or quake that threatens to capsize you.

In order to sail effectively a ship needs a good navigator, someone that knows how to read the rise and fall of the branch-based waves, that knows whether a patch of foliage will hold a ship's weight or collapse under its hull. Most ships also have a captain, but that's hardly a necessity; a small and well-trained crew can take care of a vessel and make their choices democratically, as long as they can agree on a solid course of action in the middle of a crisis.

Ships

Wildsea ships come in a dizzying array of shapes, sizes and designs, many of which seem wholly impractical (and some of which most definitely are).

Most ships have a few things in common - a hull, an outer deck and inner compartments, a bridge with some kind of steering column (usually isolated from the waves in case the ship has to dive down below the thrash), and a method of propulsion; a combination of engine and bite. The bite is particularly important - an arrangement that cuts or drags or pulls the rest of the vessel through the branches of the sea.

Most ships are large enough for a complement of both crew (experienced sailors who take charge and make decisions) and undercrew (less experienced, still learning the ropes). Every now and then you'll get outriders - solo wildsailors on single-seater ships. They rarely last long, but the thrill is unparalleled.

There are also ships that spurn the usual riding-height of the thrash (or at least the uppermost area of the tangle), choosing to travel the depths as a matter of course. These submersibles have to be particularly sturdily built - it's dangerous to dive too deep.

And some even brave the winds and storms of the upper air to soar high above the rustling waves, in airships or kite-pulled contraptions. These are even rarer than submersibles, partly due to the engineering feats needed to make such a ship viable, but are becoming more and more common as technologies spread and improve.

The hunt has a scent all of its own.

The elation of sweat. Leaves pulped by boot-spikes and boat-hulls. Blood, spit, and chitin.

Breath after glorious breath filled her nose with it as she scrambled, howling the same wordless cry as her fellows. The stag-worm would tire in the shadow of the great old ribs, end the chase, roll over, and wait to be taken.

Butchery waiting. New bones laid fresh under old.

This was what she lived for.

Danger at Sea

The life of the wildsailor isn't for everyone. It takes a special breed of brave (or a healthy dash of stupid) to want to face the seemingly endless dangers of the sea.

It's a weird world out there.

Crezzerin

The trees of the wildsea grow with astonishing speed, broken branches sprouting new shoots within minutes. Crezzerin is the eldritch chemical that causes this rampant regrowth, suffusing the sap, fruit, and leaves of the ironroots (and the smaller trees that feed parasitically from them).

Caustic to the touch and dangerously corrupting, skin that comes into contact with crezzerin is left seared and blackened. Prolonged contact lets the chemical seep into both body and mind, though its effects can be countered with the liberal application of certain salves and spices.

A good alchemist can use crezzerin as the base for numerous body-altering concoctions, and mystics burn and inhale the vapours to commune with the secret heart of the sea.

Spores

Disturbances below the tangle often throw clouds of spores into the air, their effects varied and unpredictable. Some are mere obstacles, choking clouds that block out the sun until dispersed by the winds. Others are infectious, worming into skin and wood before bursting forth with terrifying speed. Still others are hallucinogenic, bringing with them dreams and visions of the Under-Eaves or other, stranger places.

Though most ships have sealed interiors for the crew to flee to when necessary, few wildsailors would be seen dead without some way of protecting themselves in a pinch. Each of the bloodlines has a method tailored to their biology, but sporescarves are perhaps the most common; thick fabric worn loose around the neck and shoulders, ready to cover the mouth and nose at a moment's notice.

Seasons

Each season brings its own challenges - the explosion of insect life throughout spring, the sweltering heat and violent storms of summer, the rot and fogs of autumn - but winter is the only one that drives even the most experienced sailors to port. In winter, the waves shed their leaves and turn brittle, bare branches buckling beneath hulls and sending ships toppling to the Darkness-Under-Eaves. All but the crazed spend their winters in port, or moored to the sturdiest place they can find with supplies enough to last them 'til spring.

Flora & Fauna

Perhaps the most dangerous aspect of the wildsea is the fact that you'll never be sailing it unnoticed. Strange forces sped the adaptation of numerous old-world species, which have carved out their own unique niches and territories. When you leave the relative safety of land, it's their world you're stepping into.

Insects are the most numerous denizen of the waves, hives and colonies grown huge off of the crezzerin'd bounty of the sea. Smaller specimens tend to gather in swarms, moving from food source to food source, but smaller is an imprecise term in the verdant world - an insect might be the size of a thumbnail, of a hand, of a house or ship or city.

After them comes beasts and birds, the descendants of those that managed to adapt quickly enough to their new environments to flourish. Of these, foxes and wolves both deserve a special mention - each area has its own variations, some far stranger than you might expect. Similarly strange are the more predatory plants, often as beautiful as they are deadly.

Finally there's the bizarre, the unworldly sorts shaken into existence by the movement of the roots. Forgotten gods, ossified titans, and the ghosts of lost ships all have their place in the order of the sea.

Cults & Cultures

Though there exist treaties and agreements between the majority of settlements ensuring a degree of safety, a meeting at sea or landfall at a new island often comes with the potential of danger. Cannibals, cultists, and pirates are always looking for the opportunity to strike, and some salvagers take a rather more proactive approach than is strictly necessary.

Weather & Waves

The wildsea is a world of extremes, and nowhere is that more apparent than in its weather.

The high altitude means that driving winds are a part of life wherever you are. Storms are common and varied, coming with anything from lashings of lightning to rains of teeth and sizzling fat. Even clear days come with their own dangers, the heat of the sun bringing creatures of the lower depths up to bask and leaving sailors slick with sweat - an enticing scent for many of the more predatory beasts.

The waves below are as capricious as the skies. Bloomtides can catch ships and push them for miles on a wave-crest of blossom. Rootquakes reform the treetop topography as the great trunks that support the sea shift and settle. Semi-sentient rifts roam; maws of threshing branches. Roach-rivers spill through the leaves.

Mire

Not all of the wildsea's dangers come from without. Mire is insidious, the slow degradation of thought and morals and reason that creeps up on you in the untamed places between ports.

Most manage it as best they can - by seeking out wonders to match the horrors they witness, or by indulging in drink, drugs, and relaxation in the quieter moments. Those that fail to manage their mire sink further and further into their own cruellest natures, eventually reduced to little more than a beast of the waves themselves.

Encountering a crew, or even entire settlement, fully immersed in their mires can be a harrowing experience. But one fact stands above all others: no matter how deep the mire, it can always be escaped.

Flame

The fear of fire is an undercurrent that runs through almost every community across the sea, and for good reason. In the pre-V world, a roaring fire could mean many things - companionship, warmth, security, a bastion of light against the darkness. There was a danger there, of course, but a manageable one.

Not so on the wild waves.

Fire spreads on wildsea wood like a tide, a hungry, primal force that's almost impossible to stop. An errant spark can result in the destruction of miles of thrash and tangle, and a blaze can spread for days or even weeks without a passing storm or the concerted effort of multiple settlements to throttle it.

Part of the danger is understandable, expected; the waves are flammable and wind-swept, dense enough that flame spreads fast. But there's an additional horror in the fact that the crezzerin-accelerated growth of wildsea vegetation means that charred trunks will put forth new branches in hours, giving a forest fire almost limitless fuel. It's not uncommon for a flame-front to tear through the treetops around an island one day, then return the next with redoubled vigour.

And, if any denizen of the waves ever needs a reminder of the terrifying destructive force that an unchecked fire can bring, all they have to do is look to the North.

Nobody quite remembers which of the region's warring factions set the fire, but everybody knows the result. An inferno, still burning after two hundred years. A scar of smoke on the sky. A funeral pyre visible for thousands of miles. A reward for hubris.

The Conflagration.

Civilization

Islands on the wildsea stand out like stars in a hungry cosmos, fragile constellations of civility and law amid the vast expanse of the wilds.

But civility (and, by the same token, law) are relative terms - with the massive split of culture and the harsh conditions that followed the Verdancy, even the comparative safety of solid ground can be a dangerous and unpredictable place.

Most permanent island settlements take the form of port-towns, busy places ringed with docks, landing struts, and jetties. Port-towns rely on passing ships to bring trade and fresh supplies, and are often on the lookout for building materials and foreign technologies to fuel their own expansion. Many of these port-towns act as hubs, ringed with small artificial islands; these might be used as watchtowers, farms tending parasitic fruit-trees, breeding pens, or even vast apiaries.

Spits are likely the second most common type of civilization - rougher than ports, and even more reliant on trade and barter to survive. A spit might consist of a piece of old stone, a leviathan bone, or a wrecked ship with decks divided into streets and apartments built into long-cold smokestacks. Spits tend to be far more crowded thanks to the limited building space available, or spread drunkenly out onto the waves with wooden platforms and stationary barges to give more space.

The rest of the 'civilized' world is a mess of roving fleet colonies, rolling mycosanctums, floating skyports, and tallshank branch-towns. Each of these places has their own ways of living, their own festivals and conventions, and most definitely their own laws - it might be illegal to throw objects off of the side of a high-port, for example, or not to duel when challenged in a particularly overcrowded spit, or to leave your fruit to spoil in a place ravaged by seasonal hunger.

Ports and Harbours

What defines a port? A place to rest and a place to repair - those are the essentials that every wildsea port strives to offer, the minimum they can do to attract passing ships and increase their chance of trade and bounty. While it's true that not every port offers these three particular services in an official capacity, you'll rarely ever go wrong when looking for...

Markets

The import/export business is rarely a quiet one, in both the literal and metaphorical senses. Wildsea markets tend to be raucous affairs, collections of bright canvas or decorated shop fronts filled with multilingual signage and enthusiastic hawkers. Most merchants specialize in particular types of salvage, foodstuffs, or supplies, and even if they can't supply what you need, they'll likely be able to point you toward someone who can... for the right price, or a 'quick' favour.

Junctions

Junctions are meeting and sleeping places for all who need them, but they mostly cater toward wildsailor crews. A junction offers private rooms, repairs, medical treatment, beds, food, drink, and entertainment, and usually has a series of boards for bounties and crew requests. Junctions also often have separate counters for sending and receiving mail.

Shipyards

Anything from a jetty and a toolbox to a full warehouse-style workshop with space for multiple vessels, shipyards may not always be able to make their own ships, but their workers will always have a crack at repairing yours if you provide payment (and occasionally your own materials).

Most ports will also offer a complement of other services, non-essential but extremely useful, which we've collected in the box to the right. Even if a port doesn't offer a particular service, the port's inhabitants will likely know where a crew can find a nearby settlement that does.

Non-Essential Services

Though every port has its own cultures and traditions, the prevalence of wildsailors has ensured that most offer at least a few extra luxuries.

Smokehouses

Open flame on the Wildsea is a dangerous proposition, but tobacco (and other narcotic burnables) remain popular. Smokehouses are typically sturdy stone buildings that allow patrons to indulge in such vices without fear.

Shadow-Springs

These are hot springs (natural or artificial), surrounded by layers of tar-sealed canvas and reinforced walls, used as a combination of clothes-washing, bathing and decontamination facilities.

Cartoika

Small libraries of ever-changing maps and charts watched over by keen eyed cartographers, these places serve the dual purpose of allowing crews to mingle and having them familiarize themselves with the current topography of the nearby waves.

Chop Stations

Extracting the most nutrition from the strange beasts of the wildsea is an art form in itself. Chop stations are meat preparation and grill-houses where the workers will render a creature down into every edible cut and prepare it for cooking or long storage. This service is performed free of charge on the understanding that the chop station takes roughly a quarter of every specimen for themselves.

Scratch

The lowest form of barter, scratch is a catch-all term for the mushroom stems, rusted bolts, and chips of amber that end up filling a wildsailor's pockets after a journey. Most places will happily trade a drink or a meal for a handful of scratch, but it can't be used to buy anything substantial.

Food, Drink & Cooking

Everyone needs to eat (in some form or another, at least). The wildsea brims with enough herbs, spices, fruits, and meats to delight even the most jaded gourmet, and each port across the waves has its own local dish or brew that they'll absolutely *insist* visitors have to try.

Crates, Casks & Cargo

With civilization as scattered as it is, the movement of food and drink has become a lucrative business. Few crews will turn down the opportunity to carry such cargoes to ports in need... While skimming a little off the top for themselves, of course.

Cooking Without Fire

Given that an untended flame has the potential to start an all-consuming blaze, typical methods of frying or roasting are reserved for the extremely careless and the safely stone-bound. But wildsea chefs are a resourceful lot, so when dropping by a street-stall for something hot you might find it cooked by way of...

- **Engine Heat:** If you're going to run ships with dangerous machines, you might as well let their housing (or exhaust) serve a dual purpose.
- **Chemical Stove:** The closest a lot of places get to pre-V cooking methods, a chemical stove produces heat and smoke without flame.
- **Bonfire Bug:** A classic wilds technique, bonfire bugs use a searing liquid for self-defence. Careful training can encourage them to hunker down under pots, slowly boiling whatever is inside. Excellent for soups.
- **Lightning Strike:** Rare, ineffective, and dangerous in an entirely different way, storm-frying is nevertheless surprisingly popular in certain ardent-majority communities.
- **Pitcher Acid:** Harvested from the guts of predatory plants, when mixed with salt, the digestive enzymes do a passable imitation of broiling whatever unfortunate foodstuffs are immersed in them.

Common Staples

As you might imagine, the lion's share of the average wildsea diet is made up of **fruits**, **nuts,** and **berries** - the kind of foods that can be plucked fresh from the waves and require little in the way of preparation. The **seeds** and **husks** of such foods (where crezzerin tends to concentrate) are usually thrown back into the waves for good luck (or kept as scratch if you're particularly miserly), and excess portions are dried or pickled for emergencies.

Vegetables are rarer thanks to a lack of arable land, though some traditional farms exist on stolen soil and step-cultivated mountainsides. Far more common are parasite-farms, swathes of **weirdfruit** trees that anchor themselves to the upper branches of the great ironroots for sustenance. Workers move through them on stilts or rope bridges to rid them of predators and pick the produce, a job considered only slightly less dangerous than crewing a ship.

Meat is still a common component of most meals, though the denizens of the rustling waves are as likely to accept cuts from an insect as they are beast. For those that go meatless, **fungi** and **grains** do a good job of filling in (though the existence of the gau and ektus causes some to question the ethical nature of even these habits). **Eggs**, whether avian, reptile, or insect, are just as common for breakfast on the waves as they were pre-V.

With uncontaminated fresh water a rarity, **ale**, **wine,** and **mead** are the standard drinks for most. Some swear by **coffee** or **tea**, despite the hassle of heating them up, and fresh herb, boiled bark, or bitter chocolate **draughts** are a common winter pick-me-up. **Milk** is drunk up on the old mountainsides, but the inability to keep it fresh limits its general usage. **Blood**, **tree-sap,** and **beast oils** are all available at most junctions, though they're... something of an acquired taste.

Rare Delicacies

For most, the rarest of delicacies is a flame-cooked meal - roasted wolf flank dusted with mountain salt, fresh fried mushrooms, warm oven-baked bread... These are the foods sailors dream about when they're idle on watch. Couple that with a glass of pure water, untouched by crezzerin or the storage barrel, and you have something that even an ironbound would salivate over.

The sound of bow on string was nothing less than a disappointment. The ajna, this grand spiritual instrument her ardent crewmates had been hyping up for weeks, was a sorrowful, tinny thing.

She glanced at the crowd around her, collective breath held - despite the performance having started, they were still waiting.

"Is this really—" she began to whisper, but Tasikov elbowed her into silence.

"Just wait!" they hissed.

And the bow left the strings, but the music continued.

A melody finger-picked on an echo of an instrument, vibrations and tones compounding and flowing together. Each string played once with bow and once with spectral finger, an instrument shared between the living and the dead.

And, when the last notes of the song rang out, her applause was the loudest of them all.

Post-Verdant Culture

The Verdancy was not only a decimation of people, but an abrupt shattering of cultures. Bereft of recorded history and sites of worship, forced into a survivalist struggle that none were prepared for, the scattered enclaves of survivors abandoned many of their old ways for the brute pragmatism required by the new world.

But those days are over, at least for the most part, and in the place of each lost culture a hundred new variations have flourished. Settlements have their own new rituals and traditions, beliefs born of half-remembered rites and traded information. Travel and trade ensure a constant exchange of ideas. Wildsailors pick up habits and recipes and stories, and spread them like seeds on the wind.

There is no single post-verdant culture to be found across the rustling waves.

There are thousands.

Law

Though the specifics of what is allowed and forbidden change from place to place, several broad rules hold true across almost all cultures. Murders are punished, at least when they happen in port and without a socially acceptable reason. Open flames are either heavily regulated or outright banned, and the deliberate setting of fires commonly invites a community's harshest possible punishment. Theft is looked down on, but scavenging and salvaging are often protected activities. Larger communities usually have their own form of watch, guard, or militia to ensure that local laws are being followed and visitors are toeing the line.

Past these few basics, an individual community's laws are often the result of the melding of history and experiences. An ektus spit-colony might allow traders to stay for only a single night, or demand gifts of honey and wine on entry, or require business deals to be conducted only in Saprekk with local representatives present. Shankling ports might regard anything lost over the edge of a branch as fair game for salvage, no matter the state or feelings of the original owner. A gau monastery may enforce a strict code of silence, communicating by spore-trail and hand-sign alone.

Part of a wildsailor's job, especially a trader or explorer, is to quickly learn the rules of each new settlement they find themselves in (and often then learn how to bend or break them in interesting or profitable ways).

Vices

Just as sure as there'll be local laws to follow, each port a wildsailor visits will have local vices to indulge in.

The terrifying nature of fire on the waves means that one of the most popular old-world vices, the smoking of tobacco, is an activity relegated to specially constructed smokehouses at various ports (places with thick stone walls where an errant spark won't doom the patrons). While some still insist on lighting up their pipes and hookahs in their own ships, such indulgences are seen as wildly irresponsible by most.

Alcohol and other mood-changing drugs are common and almost infinitely varied and routinely consumed. Honey-based meads and fruit ciders are often easier to come by than fresh water, so most meals are an excuse to knock back a few mugs of something delicious and brain-fogging. Spices, mushrooms, and alchemical salts can often induce hallucinations and euphoria, but are rarely restricted by anything other than the user's good sense. Caution is a must, though, when dabbling in a new type of drink or drug - a pleasant distraction from the world's ills for a tzelicrae may be a deadly poison to a gau.

Sport

Wherever there's something to be thrown, kicked or hit with something else, there's competition - the wildsea is no exception. The lack of large areas of solid ground makes traditional ball games extremely rare, so many sports revolve around feats of athletic and acrobatic agility mixed with a heavy dose of combat. One such sport that seems to have caught on in various settlements involves a combination of abseiling and target practice, another the delivery of fragile insect-hives into another team's scoring zone with devastating force, another a type of blindfolded sparring contest.

But perhaps the most common type of competition is also the simplest - racing. Sometimes trained beasts, sometimes ships, sometimes even barefoot across the wavetops, a good race gets a community shouting and betting and celebrating together, and can be an excellent excuse for a feast or festival to reinforce social bonds.

Music

Whether as an accompaniment to a performance, as the spectacle of a festival, or as an instructional device, the practices of song and string are alive and well in every known corner of the post-verdant world.

An understanding and shared appreciation of music can be one of the fastest ways to bond with individuals from an unknown culture, and it's rare to find a ship without at least one of the crew fancying themselves a musician of some sort. There are even recorded cases of wildsailors turning up at a new island only to be greeted with strains of a song they already know - a pre-verdant classic maintained through the collapse, played and replayed by successive generations, given new life by new instruments.

It's often said there are as many instruments on the wild waves as there are players. This is admittedly false, but it is true that a lot of budding musicians end up making their instruments themselves. Here are a few of the most common designs, the instruments that give the waves their natural soundtrack.

Trisketar

A large guitar-like instrument with a pyramidal bridge and a deliberately difficult string placement, intended to be played only by those with more than the 'standard' number of limbs.

Jawcordion

A classic wildsailor instrument used to evoke the feelings of the lost salt spray, jawcordions serve as backing for tree shanties and as punctuation during stage performances and long-form storytelling.

Mezz Horn

Unsubtle, discordant and near-impossible to ignore, the origins of the mezz can be traced back to the warning blares of early portside alarms .

Wolf-Wire Ravito

A long-necked stringed instrument traditionally crafted from the bones and sinews of pinwolves; often used for festival performances in ardent communities.

Rabir

A metal spinning-top that produces a calming drone when spun, which serves the dual purpose of giving ambient noise to stringed instrument performances and (curiously) keeping insects away.

Scorpion-Tail Maracas

Made by filling hollowed-out stingers with seeds, many of these instruments are also ringed with animal bones that can be clapped or scraped together for additional percussive force.

Ajna

Designed to be played by a duo of the corporeal and spectral working as one, an ajna's strings are plucked from one side of the veil and bowed from the other.

"Watch your heads!"

Etzico's workshop was a confusion of leaf-rubber cables and bubbling vats, amberware vials spread out across their workbenches like scattered stars.

"It's beautiful," one of the children whispered, just loud enough to be heard over the din. Etzico turned with an expansive gesture.

"Ah, what do I hear there? A young rattlehand-in-the-making?" The child shrugged, suddenly self-conscious. "Never be afraid to follow a dream, young one. Especially a dream of making something bigger than yourself."

They slapped a switch on a nearby worktop and the children jumped as one, startled by the sudden hiss as a chemical vat boiled over.

"Now," he said, their voice dropping to a stage-whisper, "Who wants to take a look at the acid maw?"

Turns out they all did.

Technology

The wildsea sits in an awkward technological niche, with chainsaw-prowed ships rubbing hulls with sailboats, gas-bloated dirigibles floating above beast-drawn chariots. You're as likely to be hit with a crossbow bolt as a bullet, and far more likely to fall to the serrated edge of a squirrel-jaw blade.

But why? In a world with access to ancient technology, modern innovation, and a surfeit of smart, driven engineers to develop new techniques, why are blades and sails still common?

Industry. Or rather, the lack of it.

The wildsea has no widespread industrial movement, no centralized or standardized push toward technological innovation. People use what they have available nearby, what works in a pinch, and whatever they can cobble together from driftwood and salvaged metal. The few places solid enough to have factories have to rely on tenuous supply chains, and most materials used for building and development are second or third-hand, at best. Wood is common, but anything beyond that is hard to collect and even harder to reshape.

And then there's the restriction on fire. Without internal combustion, heat-exchanges and steam-power machines have to rely on low-grade chemical batteries (if they're lucky) or hand-cranks and sweat (far more common). Without fire there's no smelting, and without smelting the metal available is scarred and battered.

Common Technology

There are some technologies that the setting treats as standard, either as things that might be salvaged from the average wreck, or created in large, solid settlements. Of these, the most ubiquitous are...

- Ship-mounted chainsaws
- Chemical engines
- Salvage-made clockwork
- Chains, ropes, and pulleys
- Bone-carved blades
- Crossbows and other string-tension weapons
- Chemical-propulsion firearms

Rarer Technology

Once you move away from the morass of necessitated production and into more artisanal work, your options for technology expand terrifically.

Engines get more powerful, but they also get weirder - living hives and acid-filled maws that can run on just about anything. Hulls become more stable and better equipped to brave the repeated jostling of branches and crezzerin-infused leaves. Weapons become more complex, able to deliver blasts of salt or noxious defoliant chemicals. Communication moves from firebug signals to short-range radios and semaphore towers.

A good engineer is always in high demand, especially one that will work to fill a crew's specific needs. A high-quality workshop might offer...

- Punchcard-minded constructs
- Complex springwork
- Ceramic batteries
- Electromagnetic arrays
- Solar compressors
- Attachments for diving deeper, or for soaring high above the waves

Stone & Sweat [Option]

Technology on the wildsea is a fluctuating mess of old and new, traditional and innovative, but it doesn't have to be this way - if your group prefers a setting without the roar of chainsaws and the bursting of chemical compressant, there's always the option to scale back and go for a grittier, sweatier world.

Weapons are made of stone or wood, or the rare piece of salvaged metal that can be easily shaped. Ships are sleek-hulled and driven by elaborate, sweeping sails. Settlements are smaller, conditions harsher, and the beasts of the wild far more of a threat.

Pre-Verdant Technology

This book doesn't define the exact state of the old world in terms of technology. This is partly because most of it was lost during the Verdancy (and remains almost inaccessible now), but also because standardizing history leaves less room for group consensus and experimentation at your table.

That said, delvers live to delve and rootquakes bring all sorts of wonders to the surface - pre-verdant technology has a habit of working its way back into circulation. If you want phosphorescent neon-signs, go for it. If you want the most advanced pre-V tech to be an axe, that can work too.

Here are a few examples of what the Verdancy *might* have left behind, in terms of technology...

- Wheezing, bellows-driven airships
- Complex counting machines used in shops across the world
- Data storage devices, now rendered unreadable
- A horse and cart, trapped in amber
- A genuine six-shot revolver
- A network of pipes and ceramic-lined tunnels
- A weather-station brimming with rusted mechanical servitors
- A train terminal, its tracks now sheared off by shifting branches
- A stagger-saint, an engine of unwavering religious servitude

Spirituality

There's a strong spiritual presence to the rustling waves, as one might expect of a world where the vast majority of civilization was swallowed by an apocalyptic catastrophe. The precise nature of this spirituality differs from region to region, but as a general guide, the following information will stand you in good stead.

Spirits and Spectres

The denizens of the rustling waves have no doubt about the existence of the soul. Ardent ancestors whisper and advise, tzelicrae husk-drifts sift the memories of long-dead swarms, and any wildsailor lost at sea might walk back into port as an anchored spirit, their bodies still warm but leeched of essential physicality.

But there's still debate over what the soul is - what it encompasses, how closely it relates to the person that existed before, even if it ever needed a person there to begin with. Perhaps the soul is a memory, or bundle of memories, left to linger after death? Perhaps an artefact of thought itself? A gift from the absent divine?

Some say the soul is not a product of death, but a product of stories unwritten. The strongest and most vivid spectres are often those with unfinished business, a drive to stay among the living even without that spark of life themselves.

But then there are insects with souls, and plants, and ships (and if you believe the tales of harried, haunted-looking wildsailors, even fruit). So perhaps it's not the story, but the *potential* of a story that keeps these spectral entities around.

Whispers

And there's some evidence for that in the form of whispers, living words that worm their way into an individual's mind, nestling there until they're ready to be spoken. These whispers are regarded by many as 'words with souls', by some as narrative parasites, and by others as a cryptic expression of ancient stories that pre-date the rustling waves (though the truth of them is one of the wildsea's great mysteries). What is known is that whispers carry potential, power enough to change the world when uttered... If you believe the tales of wildsailing folk, anyway.

Religion

Organised, widespread religion is something of a rarity on the wildsea, with the constant threat and tangible danger of the here-and-now leaving little time for philosophical musing or missionary activity.

But religion can exist in many forms, and smaller cult-based practices specific to single spits and islands are far more common. An island might have legends of a protective spirit that stalks the nearby treetops, never quite seen, but with a comforting presence. A mountaintop society might gather around the remains of a lightning-split stone to give thanks to the storms, for providing them fresh water and sparing them the crack of lightning themselves. A rootless family may pray or leave offerings to their semi-mythical ancestors, the ones who bought or built the ships that they still sail (though their faces are long-erased from the world).

Most cults and smaller religious enclaves are isolated, studied by the occasional passing horizoneer or scholar, or celebrated raucously but without devotion by wildsailor stop-offs during the long winter months. Proselytizing and zealotry are largely unnecessary, though some brave few still take up the mantle of spreading the word. Their success is often limited - why take on a new godling when your home-spit has one of its own, or when the waves have majesty enough?

Worship at Sea & Leviathan Cults

The canopy of the wildsea bustles with life, an endless, unceasing struggle of beast and bird and sailor and insect. Is there room for worship amongst the thrash, or in the canvas-shadowed awnings of a tradeship's deck?

Well, yes... But only if you look at it a particular way.

The line between gods and leviathans has blurred over the years since the Verdancy. With the traditional old-world deities seemingly deaf to the cries of their supplicants, some have turned to the immense new behemoths of the waves - just as distant and unapproachable, equally if not more inscrutable. They don't answer prayers or bestow boons, but they certainly accept them (with the same blank animality as they live the rest of their lives).

A wildsailor knocked overboard and struggling for purchase in the thrash may whisper pleas to Many-Scarves, the tentacular fabric leviathan glimpsed slipping sinuously from branch to branch on the coldest days of summer. A trader might flick a hard-earned rivet behind them in honour of Ox, the first merchant vessel of the new world (long since turned mawlike and wild).

The bottom line is that most of the 'gods' of the wildsea aren't divine beings that demand worship, rather unusual instances or creatures that catch the eye and mind.

No Gods, No Ghosts [Option]

There are many reasons a group might remove elements of the deific or spiritual from their game, from personal taste to religious conviction. Whatever your reasons might be, you can most definitely play the Wildsea without any of those elements taking the fore, or even being a part of your world at all.

This might come in the form of relegating these elements to unconfirmed superstition - ghosts are whispered about in junctions, and people pray to the gods but will never truly expect an answer.

It could also mean removing these elements entirely, not just from the crew's skills and aspects, but from the wider waves as a whole. A world without faith would likely be more focused on technological innovation to fuel their wellbeing, but this needn't necessarily be true either.

Speaking More Softly [Option]

Whispers are one of the more mysterious elements of the Wildsea, powerful words that thrive on being spoken in dramatic situations.

If you're aiming for a game without the presence of the spectral, these potentially ensouled utterances can be left out entirely with a few rules tweaks. What might be better though is to re-flavour them - use whispers as presented later in the book, mechanically, but treat them as either...

- A quirk of arconautics, still weird and uncanny, but no longer potentially spiritual
- A metagame resource, an abstract for the table rather than something that exists within the fiction of the game.

You'll find more on whispers and how they're used in later chapters.

Everyone has their tipping point. It might be a chance word at the wrong moment, an opinion spilled in the wrong kind of room, something small and insignificant that nonetheless changes the very nature of a person, their core.

As the marauder's scrapgun fired, Gant found hers.

A flex of bitter power, a skip of her heartbeat, and something that had been growing and shifting inside her for years was released, and she...

... Pushed.

Rivets buckled and nails burst, a cloud of shrapnel splitting around her in defiance of every natural law she could name.

Potential, realized - after years of practice she'd been starting to think would never bear fruit.

She'd done it.

Arconautics

Arconautics represents concentrated weirdness in an already weird world, the art of delving into the mysteries of the uncanny and turning the inherent strangenesses of the wildsea to your benefit. It's not quite magic, not quite science, but something that sits between the two - a bundle of abnatural laws and consequences controlled.

Basic Principles

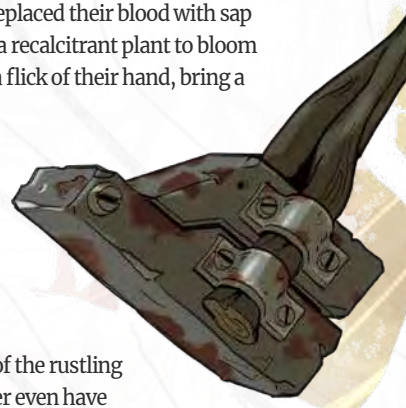
The first step to harnessing arconautic power is to find an element of the natural world with some strangeness to it. Once you've found that element you need to obtain it, or at least a fragment of it, and learn how to tap that power for yourself. There are many, many ways of doing this, but a few common ones are...

- **Befriending and bonding with an unusual creature to adopt some of its abilities** (such as keeping a chameleon that can alter your colouring as well as its own)
- **Forging an uncanny material into a relic or tool of some kind to keep on your person** (such as forging a hammer out of supramagnetic ore, or a grappling hook out of still-moving leviathan bones)
- **Using alchemy to extract and ingest the essence of a particular strangeness** (such as a solution of pinwolf staccatomygdala to gain their jerky, physics-defying speed for a short time)
- **Incorporating a part of the wilds into your own body as a permanent fixture** (such as replacing your heart with the heart of a living storm)
- **Overcoming a weird injury or experience that would otherwise have ended you** (such as surviving a lightning strike or spending a century trapped in amber)

Training and Crisis

There's a huge gulf between the potential for power and the ability to control it at will, and that's where training comes in. There are no spellbooks to learn from, no quick ways to mastery; arconautic potential has to be trained like a muscle or a new sense until it becomes a fundamental part of your own body.

For some individuals, this training yields control in small increments - an ardent that's replaced their blood with sap might spend months learning how to coax a branch to bend against the wind, or to bring a recalcitrant plant to bloom on command. Years later that very same ardent might be standing at the prow and, with a flick of their hand, bring a bloomtide roaring in from nowhere to carry their ship to its destination.



For others, training is a thankless and time-consuming process that yields nothing in the way of results until a moment of crisis; an unexpected event that catapults them into the realm of effectiveness. This might come as a triumphant moment, a relief, or even an unexpected shock. *In the example on the left, Gant unlocks the ability to manipulate magnetism in a moment just like this.*

So Why Aren't There More Arconauts?

With such power to be harnessed, you might expect arconautics to be a common feature of the rustling waves, but in truth, it's rare enough that citizens in more isolated settlements might never even have seen it in action. In the view of most non-wildsailors there are far easier ways to amass power, such as through wealth-hoarding, trade, skilled labour, and information gathering. Becoming an arconaut is messy, dangerous, painful and, ultimately, unpredictable - and the wild world is harsh enough for most already.

And Why Not Just... Magic?

Because there is no magic on the rustling waves.

... Okay, that might need some clarification.

The wildsea is a world of the weird and unexplained, of spirits and beasts and crewmates that break the fundamental rules most expect from reality. It's a world of wildness and discovery and questing into the unknown. But it's also a world of understanding, where oddities are studied and dissected (sometimes literally) and explained. The explanations themselves may be uncanny, but they're understandable.

There are no spells to learn in pre-V tomes, no conjurations of matter from empty air. A spectrapede may slip into this reality to feed, but it returns to some unphased plane once it's done - it 'disappears', but it's still *somewhere*. Whispers change reality when they're spoken, and some even have wills of their own, but you can catch them in a bottle and study them if you need to. Tempests blast their targets with lightning, but they stole it from a storm, or generated it biologically - they don't just will it into being.

Arconautics is the study, capture and use of the uncanny, the delving into secrets that underpin a weird reality. It's an art, a science, an exploration... But it's not magic.

The Rebirth of Science [Option]

The precise *limits* of arconautic power are left purposefully vague by the core rules, but this doesn't need to be so for your own game. There's a lot of mileage to be had in presenting a world in which arconautics aren't a rare fluke or the obsessions of a driven few, but a widely accepted and used part of everyday life and culture. As you play, you might consider representing...

- Devoted arconauts using their talents to pursue jobs useful for civilization rather than mostly focusing on sailing as a profession - screws and their manipulation of metal helping to build settlements, for example.
- The wider understanding of arconautic creatures means more will be found domesticated, or as beasts of labour.
- Far more wildsailors having an arconautic ability or two to their name.

The Brute Mundane [Option]

And there's always the option of ignoring arconautics altogether. It definitely removes some of the flexible uncanniness of the world, but that's not necessarily a bad thing - that can be replaced with pragmatism, more survivalist leanings, and a deeper study of or focus on those elements of nature that are both mundane and fascinating.

When excising arconautics completely you might consider abandoning arconautic character options, or re-theming them to run off of technology or spirituality. You could also implement whispers as a meta-narrative resource, awarded and used outside the fiction of the game by the **players** rather than their **characters**.

CHAPTER 2
MECHANICS

The storyteller sat straight-backed and still. She had no eyes but, if she had, they'd surely have been closed in reverence.

"No gods, then," she signed, the light from the fireflies playing across her spined hands as she spun her tale. "No gods and no sand, no hint of the world left save the clothes they shivered in."

The children around her exchanged glances, reassuring. This was a story they know, but not one they'd ever seen told like this.

"They spent that night caressed by clouds, cold on their high mesa, bees quiet. The leaves around them rustled, spoke like fresh ghosts."

A sharp intake of breath from one of the young, though none turned to scold them. Sound was less important here, in this circle.

"But nights never last, and though the sun was tired she pulled herself up over the horizon again. The world was different... but the light was the same."

The Wild Words Engine

The framework of rules for the Wildsea is provided by the Wild Words engine. It's low on crunch, focused instead on letting narrative, character, and setting develop during play, but there are a few important rules. That's what this chapter is for - as a player, almost everything you need to know before sitting down to play can be found here.

Before you play you're also going to need a couple of things for your table.

A Firefly

One of your group needs to take on the role of Game Master (GM), to describe situations, play Non-Player Characters (NPCs), threaten the crew with monsters and marauders, and keep the story you're all pushing for running along smoothly. In the Wildsea, the GM is referred to as the **Firefly** - a guide to the world for the rest of the crew, just as fireflies lead ships to safety on the waves. *If your group would prefer a more collaborative experience, the appendix to this book has a section on **Dragonfly Rules** - a way of playing the game where the duties of the GM are split between everyone at the table rather than given to a single player.*

A Set of Dice

The Wildsea uses ordinary six-sided dice, referred to throughout these rules as **d6s**. You'll never be rolling more than six dice at a time, and if you're the Firefly you'll hardly ever (though may occasionally) need more than one. A digital dice roller works just as well for this too.

A Character Sheet

Each player at the table needs a character sheet, or at least a piece of paper or laptop that you'll use to record and reference information about your character. You'll find a printable sheet at the end of this document, and there's a reference page in this chapter that gives a brief rundown of everything you'll see on the sheet.

A Crew Sheet

Chapter 8 of this document holds the information necessary to build a ship, a roving home on the waves owned by the entire crew. The information for your ship is recorded on the Crew sheet, shared between all players at the table. There's also a reference page for the crew sheet in this chapter that gives a brief run-down of everything ship-related.

A Running Example

Learning rules can be hard, especially when you've only got some text to draw from. To hopefully make things a little easier the rest of this document will contain a running example of play, which you'll find in boxes on the right-hand side of some pages. This example follows **Todd** (an ardent corsair), **Laura** (an ardent hacker), **Freya** (a gau rattlehand) and **Kyllian** (an ektus alchemist) as their Firefly runs them through a short arc.

The Character Sheet

This page gives an overview of the different parts of the character sheet, in brief. You'll find this information useful as you read through the rules.

1. Quick Reference

A handy guide to constructing the most common dice pool for a variety of actions, and a table of related results.

2. Background

This details a character's bloodline, origin and post, as well as their name and a little bit of descriptive text. These choices define the core of your character and may also have an impact on social situations.

3. Edges

General areas in which a character excels. When you take actions that line up with one of your edges, you gain an extra d6 on your roll.

4. Skills

More specific areas a character excels in. Skills are ranked from one to three, and give dice in relevant situations.

5. Languages

The languages a character can speak and understand. Like skills, these are ranked from one to three. The higher the rank, the greater your grasp of the language.

6. Aspects

These are the few traits, gear pieces, or companions that make you unique. Far more permanent than resources, these give your character special abilities and act as a measure of their health. Aspects can add advantage dice to certain rolls.

7. Resources

The temporary things that your character has scavenged from the seas; old clothing, battered weapons, wreckage and food, charts and secrets. These can be used to craft, trade, or add advantage dice.

8. Milestones

A place to keep track of major and minor milestones, used for advancing your character.

9. Drives

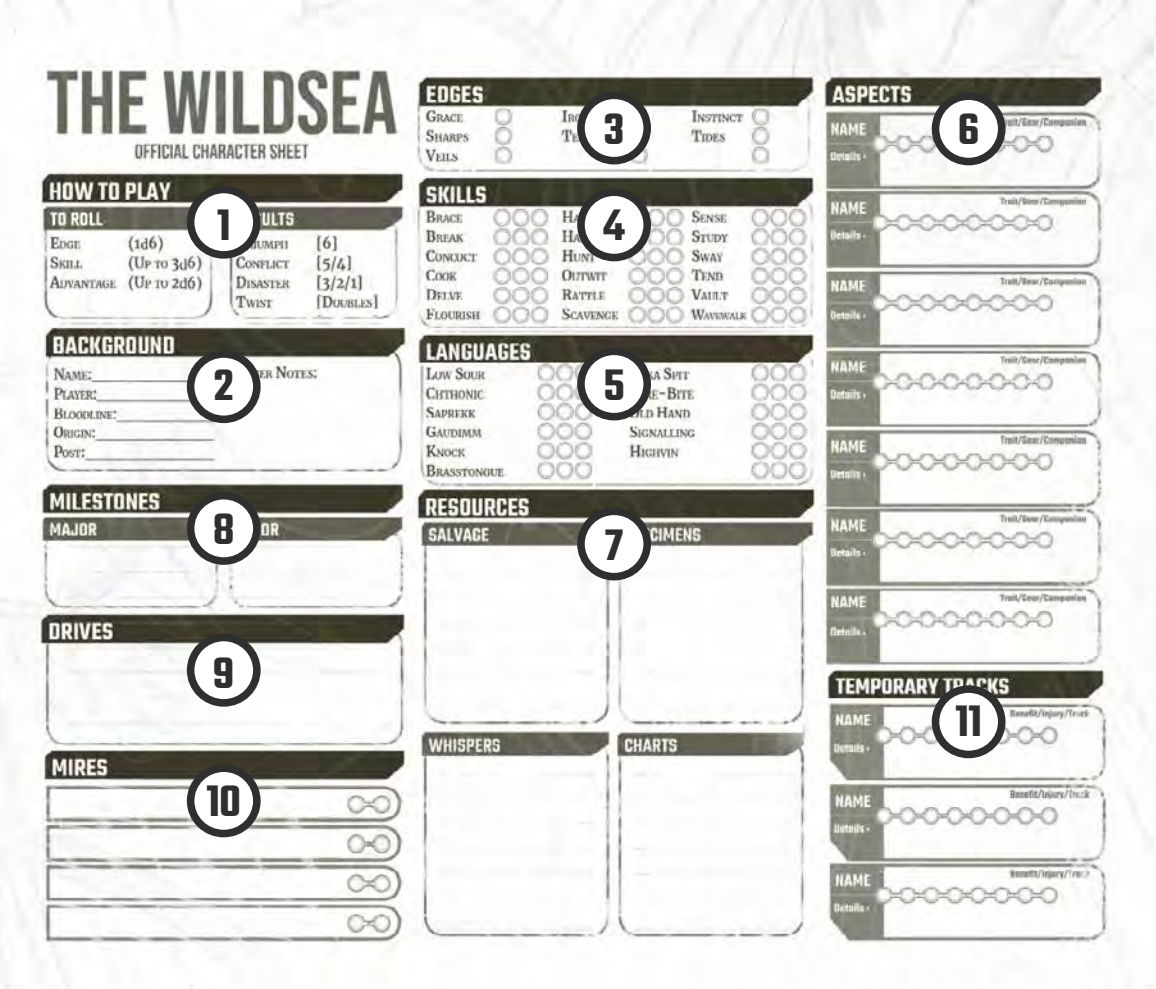
A character's drives represent their immediate and long-term goals.

10. Mires

A character's mires are the vices and curses that drag them down. The effects of these are mostly roleplay-based.

11. Temporary Tracks

A space to record temporary conditions, such as benefits and injuries, that allow (or force) your character to act in a different way. These conditions usually fade after affecting your character a number of times. This space can also be used for personal progress tracks.



The Crew Sheet

A sheet shared by everyone at the table, with information on your ship, undercrew, passengers, cargo, and the way various factions see you.

1. Name

A place to record the name of your vessel.

2. Ratings

A set of six named tracks representing the strengths and weaknesses of your ship. Each rating starts with a single box, and additional boxes are added to the tracks depending on your design, fittings, and undercrew choices.

3. Design

An overview of the main structure of your ship, comprised of size, frame, hull, bite, and engine. Each of the choices you make here directly impacts the ship's ratings, but can also have narrative effects.

4. Fittings

Additional modifications made to your ship over time to better suit your crew's activities as you cross the rustling waves. Fittings are split into five categories: motifs, additions, rooms, armaments, and outriders. Some fittings may also add to your ratings.

5. Conditions

A place to note down any structural damage the ship has taken, or any short or long-term effects that might change the way it handles.

6. Undercrew

A space for recording the details of the undercrew, the NPC officers, gangs and animal packs that help keep your ship running smoothly. Each undercrew entry has a track of its own and works similarly to a character aspect. Some undercrew choices may also add to your ratings.

7. Stakes

Used to purchase parts for your ship, stakes are a unique resource shared by the crew.

8. Reputation

A set of short tracks used to mark the opinions that certain important factions within the wildsea have of you as a crew. Each Reputation track contains three distinct boxes - respect, fear and favour.

9. Cargo & Passengers

A section dedicated to the contents of your cargo hold and passenger compartments.

10. Notes

A space for miscellaneous notes, useful for recording details on possible story hooks and important information that has the potential to affect the entire crew. Can also be used for a quick sketch of your ship!

Structure

The game follows a particular structure to help the story flow, a mix of **scenes**, **montages,** and **journeys** to suit the various situations you'll find yourselves in. There's a quick rundown of them here for reference, but you'll learn more about them over the next few chapters.

Scenes

Most of your time playing will be spent in scenes, short bursts of action, exploration, and discovery that give you a chance to develop the narrative and roleplay your character.

Scenes are treated as a conversation between every player at the table, with the Firefly breaking in to ask questions and enforce rules where necessary. When that conversation leads to moments of uncertainty or drama, **action rolls** are used to determine the outcome.

Montages

Periods of rest, unhurried exploration, and training are usually treated as montages, condensing the mundane but necessary parts of an adventure into the shortest time possible. They let each character undertake a **task**; a long action that benefits the crew in some way or uncovers something about your location.

Montages are the most common way to explore new ports, allowing characters to split up to find information and resources before meeting up as a group again for the start of the next scene.

Journeys

Journeys allow your crew to take to the waves in your ship, cutting your way to a new destination. While you travel, you'll take turns **at the helm** and **on watch** (or at other stations around the ship), making decisions and facing challenges as you make progress across the waves.

Journeys should never be taken lightly. The wildsea is a hostile place, and the longer you sail, the more risk your ship, crew, and characters face.

The Conversation

This is the natural back-and-forth between players and Firefly that drives a story forward, the exchange of ideas, intentions, and actions. The rest of the rules come into play as a reaction to this conversation, not to halt it but to focus it in a particular direction when necessary. Keeping the conversation flowing is one of the keys to a good session of the Wildsea.

The Firefly has a role to play in this, but there are some ways you can help out as a player too.

Make Decisions

On the wildsea, indecisiveness gets you killed. Of course, decisiveness may also get you killed (or perhaps horribly maimed) but at least there'll be a purpose to it.

Ask (& Answer) Questions

Don't be afraid to ask questions, in or out of character - an answer could suggest an action you might not have otherwise considered. That answer doesn't have to come from the Firefly, either; offering your own thoughts and opinions is a great way to keep the conversation flowing.

Take Action

When the time comes to act, be bold and take the plunge. Don't think about the rules, or how you can get the most benefit from the mechanical side of the game - think about what your character would do and how they'd do it, and stay true to that.

Mute Topics if Necessary

The rustling waves are harsh and unforgiving by nature, but that doesn't mean your conversation has to be. It's often worth taking a few minutes to discuss the tone you're aiming for before you start to play, or to mute any topics that you don't want to be a part of your crew's ongoing story.

The Conversation in Play

Firefly: You're passing under a crooked tallshank when there's a long, grinding crunch from somewhere below, and the ship lurches awkwardly to a halt. The engines are running, but the leading edge is still - an eerie silence descends.

Todd: This tallshank we're under, any signs of habitation?

Firefly: Not that you can see, though you'd have to head up into the branches to make sure.

Kyllian: Not good. I'm going to head over to the prow, take a look over the side, and see if I can make out anything through the leaves that we might have run up against. And someone kill the damn engine, we're wasting fuel!

Freya: I'm on that. I was tinkering with some salvage on the deck when we stopped, which is probably scattered all over the place now. I'll sigh, leave the clean-up for later, and sprint toward the engine block.

Firefly: Okay then Freya, you turn off the engine without any trouble. Kyllian, you can't see anything through the leaves - if you want to know what stopped you, you're going to have to head down there for a closer look.

Kyllian: Count me out of that one, that's really not my scene. I am, however, going to head down to the front cargo space and check the interior, make sure we haven't got any serious damage. I'll grab Laura on the way; she's more the climbing type. Laura, fancy a quick trip into the tangle?

Focus

Focus is a kind of 'narrative spotlight', which will move from character to character during the game. It shifts naturally in response to the conversation - whenever your character is doing something interesting, the focus is on you. When you finish, another player will take it for a question, comment, or action of their own.

Shifting Focus

Ideally, every character (and thus every player) will have some time in the spotlight throughout the course of a game. The Wildsea works best when the whole crew are involved in a situation, reacting to each other's ideas and decisions.

If you feel like you've had the focus for too long, **try to pass it off to one of the other characters**. You can do this within the fiction of the game by asking another member of the crew a question, or by involving them in an action you're taking.

The Firefly will also be keeping track of focus. If a member of the crew hasn't had the chance to contribute for a while, the Firefly will likely shift focus back onto them with a reaction, prompt or question.

Hijacking Focus

Some crewmembers may have the ability to hijack focus, taking it from an opponent, ally, or element of the world before they can act. There are two simple rules to follow here...

- If you're hijacking from another player, they have to agree - it was their time to shine, after all!
- The focus always returns to whatever it was hijacked from when your time in the spotlight is done.

Shadows danced on the junction walls, every peal of thunder rattling the moth-lanterns overhead and causing the patrons to wince. There hadn't been a storm this bad in living memory.

"It's that ship that docked last week, I tell you."

There was no answer from the wider room, and the speaker knocked back the rest of his pint before continuing.

"It was them that brought the storm. I heard them talking about it when they were in the shadow-spring, saying they didn't have much time 'fore it caught up to them. So they left, and now it's here to find them. Mark my words, I'll..."

He was interrupted by the scrape of a chair, the jingle of chain and cutlass and well-oiled pistol.

"So," the corsair's tone was like honey as she took the seat next to him as the thunder rumbled, "Tell me more about this ship..."

Hooks

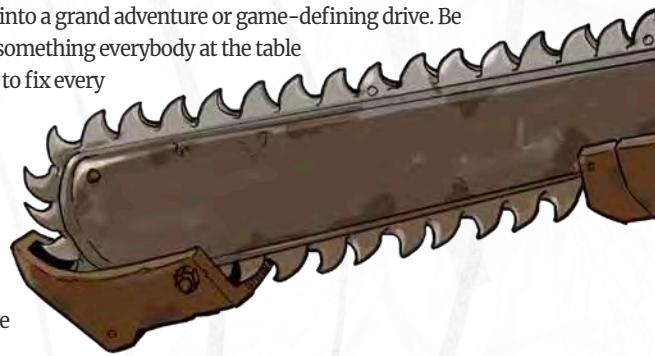
The Wildsea is not a game of long, planned-out campaigns and pre-written stories; **the focus of the narrative is always on the crew**, and the wants and goals of the characters it's comprised of. The Firefly's role isn't to give you an adventure to follow, it's to present you with a world to explore and experience.

To facilitate this, your Firefly will be giving you **hooks** as you play, snippets of information or opportunity that might interest your crew. It's up to you as a group to decide which hooks sound appealing to you, which you want to engage with, and whether you want to explore them immediately or put them on the back burner for a while and come back to them later. Here are a few examples of hooks, and what they might lead to...

- The Firefly describes the preparations of a local festival while the crew are docked at port. *This could be treated as a little bit of local colour and moved past, or it might lead to the crew helping to supply food or drink for the locals, taking part in the festival itself, or solving some problem that's been troubling the organizers.*
- As the crew explore the wreck of a pre-verdant ship, the Firefly describes a room that's been recently used as a campsite. *This could just be an opportunity for a rest or a montage, or it might lead to the crew finding an individual marooned here by a previous crew, tracking down a scavenger that's made off with something important or discovering that there's something else on the wreck with them that's been eating other visitors.*
- While putting their ship into a portside repair bay, the crew overhear two of the engineers discussing recent thefts from a nearby scrapyard. *The crew might note the location of this scrapyard down in case they need it later, engage the NPCs in discussion to find out more, decide to case and rob the scrapyard themselves, or visit the local junction to see if any of the locals have posted a bounty or reward for catching the thieves.*

Choosing Wisely

Not every hook the Firefly presents is going to be something that appeals to your group, and the Firefly won't be expecting you to spin every single detail they add to the world into a grand adventure or game-defining drive. Be selective with the hooks that you explore - make sure they're something everybody at the table is happy to engage with, and don't overload yourself by trying to fix every problem you come across.



And even if a hook does sound appealing, that's not always a sign that you should jump right in and start exploring it. Listening to scarred old wildsailors talk about a fabled leviathan that's said to have surfaced nearby might be intriguing, but if you're a crew of young guns out on their first voyage, it might be better to save that one for when you've got a ship made of more than driftwood and hopes.

A Hook of Your Very Own

Not all hooks have to come from the Firefly! Often a player will have an element of the world they particularly want to explore, an NPC they want to interact with more, or a personal goal or drive they want to chase. Bring these up as part of the conversation and don't be afraid to make yourself heard if there's something specific that you want out of the game.

Arcs

Most hooks signal a small, self-contained narrative to explore, but some have the potential to spiral into something much greater - an **arc**. These are the big, important stories that define your campaign, the ones that span multiple games, take you back to settlements as they change and grow or lead to you developing complex relationships with NPCs.

And apart from their size, they're no different to any other story.

They're still driven by the opinions and actions of the crew, they still need minimum planning and preparation from the Firefly, and they should still be something that interests or has the capacity to involve everyone at the table.

Front-Loaded Arcs

Sometimes you'll go into a game knowing exactly what the main arc of the story will be. Maybe you're playing with that exact arc in mind (such as a game where wandering musicians compete in multiple 'battle of the bands' style performances at different ports around the wilds), or a particular idea or concept that comes up in pre-game chat really captures everyone's imagination (like the aim of converting the ship into a skyworthy vessel to track down an airborne marauder that robbed the crew in a previous session).

Emergent Arcs

... And sometimes you'll just find yourselves drawn into a larger story, perhaps even unwittingly. Maybe there's a connection between several pre-V artefacts you've dredged up in different locations, or the location you happen to be in is ripe for a character to explore one of their personal drives.

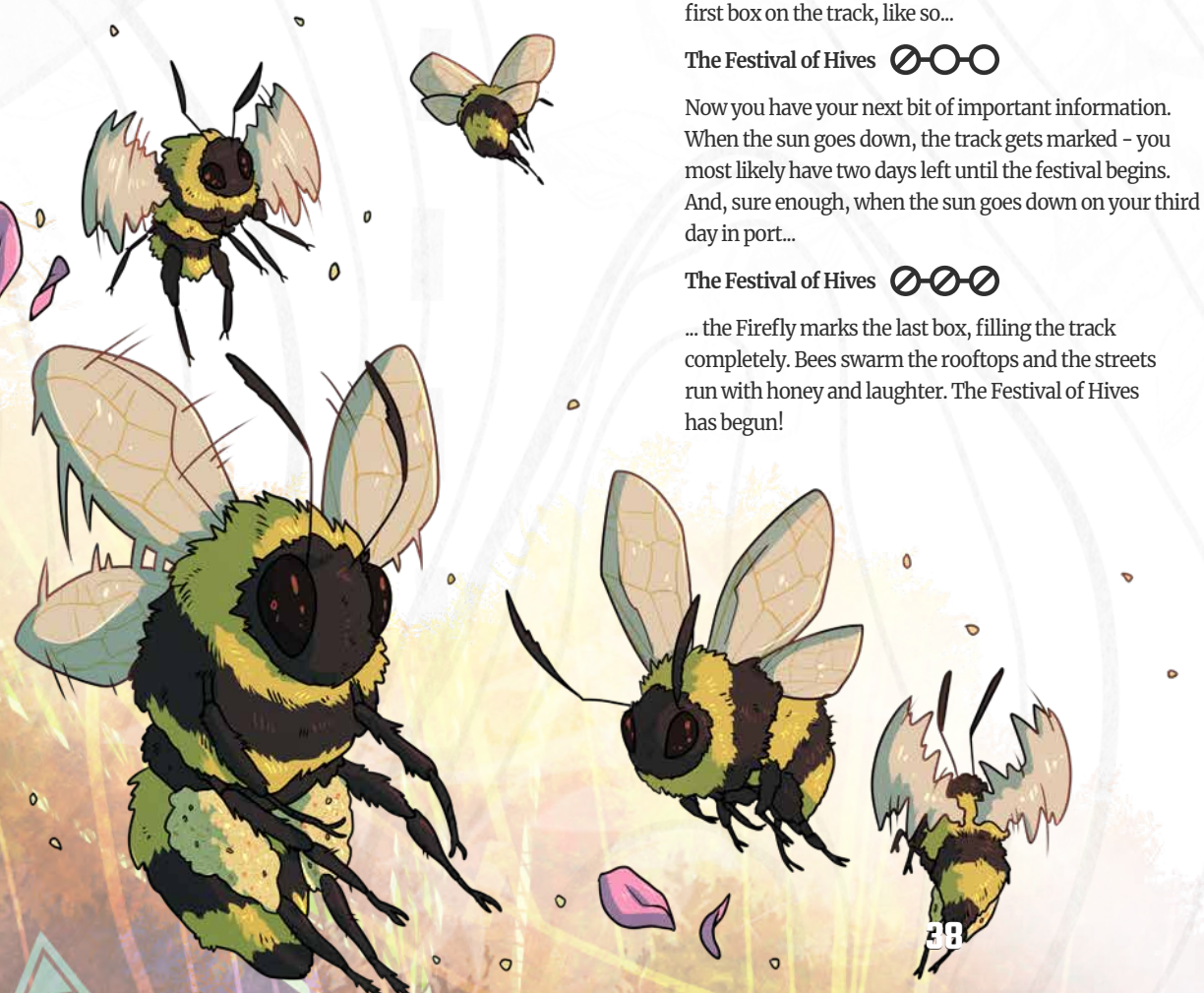
Tell Your Story

Whether the big things you tackle are pre-defined and discussed or opportunistically stumbled on, the most important thing to keep in mind is that **your story is about your crew**. It might involve bigger things, or outrageous passengers, or terrifying creatures, but the focus should always be on something that matters to you as players and to the characters you've created.

Tracks

A **track** is a named string of boxes or circles that are filled, or '**marked**', to measure progress towards an event, accomplishment, or danger. They're used pretty often during play, for everything from the condition of your character's gear to your progress on a jaunt across the waves.

But tracks do more than measure progress - they're an excellent **visual reminder** as to what your character could (or should) be doing in a particular scene or situation. Marks on a track leading up to something negative? Maybe you should try to clear those off. Empty boxes on a track you want to fill? Might be worth finding out how to fill them.



The Basics

Here's an example of the kind of track you'll run into a lot, one set by the Firefly to measure progress toward a particular event.

The Festival of Hives ○-○-○

Even though the track hasn't been marked yet, it's already giving you information. The **name** of the track, **The Festival of Hives**, clues you into what it's counting up to and what's likely to happen when that final box is marked. The **length** of the track (3 boxes) lets you know how many marks it'll take for something to happen.

Imagine you and your crewmates are spending time in port. When the sun goes down, the Firefly marks off the first box on the track, like so...

The Festival of Hives ⊘-○-○

Now you have your next bit of important information. When the sun goes down, the track gets marked - you most likely have two days left until the festival begins. And, sure enough, when the sun goes down on your third day in port...

The Festival of Hives ⊘-⊘-⊘

... the Firefly marks the last box, filling the track completely. Bees swarm the rooftops and the streets run with honey and laughter. The Festival of Hives has begun!

Naming Tracks

Most of the tracks you'll come across will already have names, either taken from the pages of this book or made up by the Firefly as they reveal a new track to the table.

If you get the chance to name a track, try to go for something that makes sense at a glance. The easier it is to understand, the better it is at conveying information!

Marking Tracks

When something advances a track, (for good or ill) you **mark** it, putting a single line through one of the boxes. There's a whole host of actions and events that might mark a track, including but not limited to...

- A crewmember's actions
- The passage of time
- The results of a die roll
- A decision made
- The use of a resource
- Events in the wider world
- An advancing story or plotline

The specifics of marking a track are very much down to the situation. For some, the conditions are strict - a character's aspect tracks (measuring the condition of their traits, gear and companions) are marked by damage or the use of certain abilities, and very little outside of that. In contrast, a track made to earn the trust of a local merchant NPC might be marked by doing favours for them, supplying them with useful resources, buying their wares, or even telling the right kind of joke.

Some tracks might be marked normally in one way, but accelerated in others. **The Festival of Hives** on the left might start early if an enterprising crew brings extra supplies, for example. The reverse is possible too - a particular event or environmental effect may make marking a track impossible (in the case of **The Festival of Hives** this could be a problem with the supplies or a serious sporestorm rolling in that halts preparations).

If you ever need extra information on how you might mark a track, **ask your Firefly** - they'll likely drop a few hints as to how you could proceed.

Clearing Tracks

Marks aren't always permanent. Sometimes an event or ability will **clear** a box on a track, removing a mark rather than making one. Healing an aspect, for example, will clear marks that represent damage, and buying from a merchant's direct competitor would likely set your friendship with that merchant back a step.

Burn

A **burn** is a special kind of mark that can't be cleared without expending considerable extra effort. Represent it by putting a cross through whichever box is burned, rather than the usual line, like so...

The Festival of Hives

Burn is usually the result of a serious event or complication with lasting consequences. A bite from a leviathan might burn boxes on a ship's Armour track rather than mark them, showing structural damage that's difficult to repair. If you need to remove a burn, ask your Firefly - there will always be a way, but it might not be easy.

Impact

In situations where something has a serious impact on a track, you'll be able to mark more than one box. Perhaps your crew has a track running to investigate the circumstances of a portside murder. Finding evidence or a successful witness interview would likely mark one box, but having a spiritually inclined crewmate summon the spirit of the deceased for direct questioning would have a lot more of an impact, marking more boxes than usual and shortening the investigation considerably.

You'll find out more about impact (and how to increase it) over the next few pages, but for now, all you need to know is...

- With **normal** impact: Mark **one** box
- With **high** impact: Mark **two** boxes
- With **massive** impact: Mark **all** boxes

Open, Hidden & Secret Tracks

Most tracks are **open** - everyone at the table can see how many boxes they have and when they're being marked or cleared. This usually gives a good sense of how much progress it will take to trigger an event.

Some tracks are **hidden** - you know they exist, but not how long they are or how much you've marked them. With these tracks, the Firefly may give you some in-game hints when you're getting close to marking the final box.

Finally, some tracks are **secret** - they're created to track your progress toward something without your knowledge. Perhaps a particular course of action you take has unintended side effects, or a trusted friend is slowly working up the courage to stab you in the back. Whatever they're counting toward, you'll only become aware of secret tracks when you unwittingly mark the final box and the Firefly reveals their secret.

Track Breaks

Imagine there's a rootquake on the way: the Firefly sets three tracks, each describing part of the experience...

The Rumbling Begins

The Rootquake Proper

Shifting and Settling

This is just fine, but there's an easier way to represent the growing and waning intensity of the rootquake by using **track breaks**. These are extra lines on a track that show when something major is about to change (and if the track is open, how long that'll last in terms of marks). Here's an example...

The Growing Rootquake

Track breaks aren't just a great way to save space, they're a reminder that certain events *should* shift and change as they progress; evolving situations help keep the narrative moving and prevent longer scenes and journeys from getting stale.

Tracks in Play

Firefly: Laura, you were down below decks when the ship lurched to a stop, am I right?

Laura: Yeah. I hear Kyllian calling out to me and head up. So, we've hit a snag, yeah?

Kyllian: Could say that. Something under the waves.

Laura: Right, I'll grab one of the guide ropes and take a look. Do I need to roll to get down there?

Firefly: No, you're close enough to the ship for the guide rope to keep you reasonably safe. Might be a different story if there was more pressure on you though.

Laura: Got it. So I lower myself down into the tangle and take a look around. What do I see?

Firefly: You feel the temperature rise as you descend into the leaves. You're surrounded by swarming insects, but if I remember right, you don't have to mark damage for that?

Laura: Not unless they're particularly big, no - my Wilds Explorer aspect lets me reduce impact on bites and stings.

Firefly: So it does. Well, the insects are an annoyance, but nothing you haven't handled before. You make your way around to the leading edge and find the problem - there's a rusted iron chain tangled in it, leading off to the east.

Todd: In the direction of the tallshank?

Firefly: That's right. Looks to be some kind of ship-snare. I'm setting a track, **Called By The Snare**. I'm marking the first box too, for the jolt the ship made when it got tangled up.

Freya: Hmm... I'm guessing we don't want to be here when that fills up. How long do we have?

Firefly: It's a hidden track, so you don't know exactly... But it's safe to assume 'not long'.

Kedrik had seen a lot of pirate bands in her time on the waves, and these were hardly the most impressive - a ragtag group of ardent, their clothes branch-torn and stained with sap.

That said, the crossbow they had aimed her way looked to be in perfect working order.

"We can do this the easy way," a voice floated out from the back of their group, "or the hard way". The one with the crossbow gestured with an appreciable attempt at menace.

Kedrik sighed, flexing thousands of tiny arachnid muscles under her jacket. About as inventive as they were impressive, it seemed.

"Would you mind terribly if I chose option three?"

The crossbow bolt pierced the unexpectedly empty jacket as it fell, its wielder having a fraction of a second to consider his mistake before being overwhelmed by a wave of spiders.

Actions

When your character does something during the game, it's referred to as an **action**. Usually, performing an action is as easy as stating your intention out loud. "I want to open that door", "I draw my pistol", or "let's see what this bastard has to say for himself" all let your group know you're performing an action.

Most actions are entirely **freeform** - if it feels right for the situation and you think your character has a chance of pulling it off, you should go for it.

Action Rolls

Sometimes the action you want to attempt will be **difficult**, **dangerous,** or **dramatic**. In these cases, the Firefly may ask for an **action roll** - a roll of the dice to determine whether your action results in **triumph**, **conflict** or **disaster**, and whether there were any unexpected narrative **twists**. The specifics of these outcomes are on the next page, while the rest of this section details how to roll and read your dice.

There are four stages to any action roll...

1. **Building a Dice Pool**
2. **Describing Your Action**
3. **Rolling and Reading the Dice**
4. **Playing the Outcome**

There are also some situations where the way you make a dice pool or read the results are a little different; these are covered during the next few chapters.

1. Building a Dice Pool

Actions are rolled with between one and six **d6s**, by making a pool and looking for the highest result. To create a dice pool for your action, you can draw from...

Edge (1d6)
+
Skill or Language (up to 3d6)
+
Advantage (up to 2d6)

Edges, **skills,** and **languages** are found on your character sheet, representing the ways you most effectively tackle problems. If one of your edges is appropriate for the action, it adds **1d6**, and if one of your skills or languages is appropriate, it adds d6s equal to its rank. **You can only gain the benefit of one edge and one skill or language per action roll.**

An **advantage** is anything you can use from your possessions or situation that works in your favour. This might be a piece of the **environment**, a **resource**, an **aspect** of your character (such as a trait or piece of gear), or even a **helpful crewmate**. If you have an advantage that helps with your action, it usually adds **1d6**, but if you have many different sources of advantage, the Firefly might raise this to **2d6**.

If you're attempting an action roll but have nothing to draw from to make your pool, roll 1d6 and count triumph results as conflicts instead.

2. Describing Your Action

As you build your dice pool, you should also be describing your intentions and approach - how is your character performing this action? What methods are they using and what are they trying to achieve? This helps other players visualize what you're doing and aids the Firefly as they consider possible outcomes.

The way you phrase your actions will often have narrative effects. For example, saying "I open the door as softly as possible" will give you a very different outcome than "I kick open the door and leap into the room," or "I pull the door out of its frame with my grappling hook".

3. Rolling and Reading the Dice

When your dice pool is ready, you roll all the dice in it at once, then read off the **highest number** as your **result**.

You should also read off whether you got any **doubles**. The number shown on the doubles doesn't matter, just whether two (or more) dice came up the same (managing a triple or higher still counts as a double, so there's no mechanical difference to the outcome of the roll).

Example: A roll of 2, 3, 5 would give a result of 5. A roll of 1, 2, 2, 3 would give a result of 3 with doubles.

4. Playing the Outcome

Reading off your result kick-starts the conversation again, usually with a description of what the outcome of your action looks like in-game.

In some cases you'll be describing the effects yourself, in others, the Firefly will take the reins. If there's a twist involved, the description might be a group effort, as other players suggest possible unexpected outcomes.

Action Roll Results

6

Triumph

A complete success with no drawbacks. If you're affecting a track, this lets you mark or clear a box.

5 4

Conflict

Still a success, but with a drawback of some kind (such as taking damage or losing a resource). If you're affecting a track, this usually still lets you mark or clear a box.

3 2 1

Disaster

A failure that also introduces a narrative complication or drawback of some kind. If you're affecting a track, this usually doesn't let you mark or clear at all.

Doubles

Twist

An unexpected outcome in addition to the usual result, often something small but potentially useful. This twist can be suggested by any player at the table, but the Firefly has the final say.

Actions in Play

Todd: Well, I suggest we make ourselves scarce before whoever set that snare up arrives!

Laura: Agreed. I'm going to try to untangle this chain from the sawprow then, that should get us going again. You killed the engine, right? I don't want this thing starting up again as soon as the chain's free...

Freya: Yep, it's off. Be careful though - that's still a ship-sized chainsaw you're messing with.

Firefly: Freya's right - however you approach this, it's likely to be pretty dangerous, so I'm going to ask you to get a roll ready. Focus is on you!

Laura: And I'm ready for it! I think I'll try something simple first, just yanking the chain free. I can use my legs to push against the hull, and I've got the guide-ropes to keep me stable...

Firefly: Sounds like a d6 of advantage. What else have you got?

Laura: My Iron edge feels like it's going to work here, and I've got the Brace skill at rank 2, which seems fitting. That's 4d6 in total, so it could be a lot worse. Well, here goes nothing...

Laura rolls her dice pool, getting a 1, 2, 4 and 5.

Laura: Five's my highest, that's a conflict!

Firefly: Well, the good news is that you've pulled that chain free of the leading edge, but you weren't exactly quiet about it... The ship is free, but you hear more bells ringing in the distance - I'm marking that track again.

Twists

Twists occur whenever a roll of the dice comes up with a double – they don't replace the usual result, but instead signify that something extra and unexpected has happened (usually related to the action or situation that caused the roll). *Twists are often something beneficial, though they don't technically have to be.*

Twists aren't decided by the player that rolled the dice. Instead, they're thrown over to anyone else at the table, including the Firefly – if anybody has an idea for the effect of a twist, they can put it forward in the moment. Here's an example...

Reya rolls to convince a surly engineer to work on her crew's damaged ship, getting a triumph with a twist. Leo, one of the other players, suggests the twist could affect the engineer's stock – he has a surplus of the materials needed, which might lower the price of the repairs.

If there are multiple ideas put forward for a twist, it's up to the Firefly to choose which one best fits the situation at hand, but they might defer to the player that rolled instead (especially if it's something that affects their character's backstory). Here's a continuation of the previous example...

Cody, playing another one of Reya's crewmates, suggests that the engineer might recognize a family resemblance in Reya's character to a previous customer. After all, Reya's grandfather was pretty famous around these parts. The Firefly loves this idea, but checks with Reya first, as it directly affects her character's history. She's completely in favour, and the conversation continues with that extra detail thrown in.

The Limits of a Twist

It's easier to set out what a **twist** *can't* do than what it can; though some twists have explicit mechanical benefits (such as a twist rolled while defending allowing a counterattack), most are a purely narrative experience. They allow players to step into the Firefly role for a moment and contribute their ideas to the wider story. Because of the flexibility they offer, it's really up to your table to determine whether a twist would be 'too powerful' in a given situation, but there are a few hard rules you should stick to. **Twists should never...**

- Invalidate or override the result of the roll that caused them (a disaster with a twist is still a disaster, just one with an unexpected narrative extra)
- Force a player to accept something about their own character that they hadn't planned themselves (so in the example above, creating a grandfather for Reya's character in the moment would have been a step too far)

You'll find more examples of, guidance on, and alternate rules for using twists in the Firefly chapter of this book.

Cut

'Cutting' a dice roll is represented by removing a number of results **after** the roll is made, **starting with the highest**. The larger the cut, the less likely you'll get a straight success or doubles.

Example: A roll of 1, 5, 5 and 6 would usually give a result of 6 with doubles. If you had to cut two results, you'd remove a 6 and a 5, giving a new result of 5.

Cutting for Difficulty

If the action you're attempting is particularly unlikely to succeed, the Firefly will ask you to cut for difficulty. Sometimes it means you're attempting a harder-than-average action (such as climbing onto the back of a rampaging beast versus climbing a wall), sometimes that you're approaching a task in a way that makes it less likely you'll succeed (such as trying to pick a lock with a splinter of bone rather than a normal lockpick).

The Firefly will usually warn you of **cut** as you describe your approach. This gives you a chance to reconsider your methods, try to get the most out of your dice pool, or at least ready yourself for a higher chance of disaster.

Cutting for Precision

When in combat with a creature, you can **cut 1 result to aim at a particular part with precision**. This often allows you to deny the creature access to some of its special abilities, or to deal extra damage by hitting a weak point. Cutting for precision is voluntary, but must be requested **before** you roll.

Cutting for Impact

If you want to achieve more than you'd usually be able to, you can **cut 1 result for extra impact** (you'll find more information on impact in the next column). Cutting for extra impact is voluntary, but you have to request it **before** you roll your dice.

From the Jaws of Victory

Cutting often leads to unexpected conflicts and failures, so play into that as the conversation continues! You were so close - what went wrong? Or, if you managed a decent success even with the cut, how did your character pull that off against the odds?

Impact

Impact is a measure of the effect your action has on the world, usually determined by the approach you're taking and how effective it is. There are four levels: **low**, **normal**, **high,** and **massive**.

Example: Karabet picks up a chair and swings it full-force at the marauder squaring up to him in a dockside junction, an action with normal impact. If the marauder had been completely unaware and unable to defend themselves, the Firefly might have bumped the impact up to high, and if the marauder had been holding onto the chair as well to diminish the force of the blow, the impact would likely have been low.

If your action will have higher or lower impact than usual, the Firefly will let you know, though sometimes not until the action is in full swing.

Low Impact

Your action is weaker, having less effect on the world. This might reduce the number of boxes you mark or clear when affecting a track, or downgrade the raw power of whatever you're attempting (such as only letting you kick a panel out of a door rather than kick the door fully open).

Normal Impact

Most actions you take throughout the game will have normal impact, with no special rules to follow at all.

High Impact

Your action is stronger and has more effect on the world. This normally lets you mark or clear an additional box when affecting a track, but in some circumstances might upgrade the raw power of whatever you're attempting (such as letting you kick a door off of its hinges rather than just kick it open).

Massive Impact

Usually reserved for damage from ship-mounted armaments, an action with massive impact is terrifyingly potent. If you're marking a track, mark every box (and if you're kicking a door open you might take part of the wall with it as well, even if you didn't mean to).

Actions in Play, Alternate

Todd: Well, I suggest we make ourselves scarce before whoever set that snare up arrives!

Laura: Agreed. I'm going to try to get this chain off of the sawprow. Do I have to roll for that?

Firefly: Definitely, and since you're doing it while dangling off a rope in the middle of the thrash, I'm giving you a cut of one.

Laura: That's fair... Now, how am I going to do this?

Freya: Ooh! Don't you still have some of those rust-beetles we picked up back at Myrin? Would they be interested in the chain?

Firefly: Definitely! They're voracious little things, so I'm actually going to increase your impact.

Laura: Great, that works for me! Time to build that dice pool. I'm hanging awkwardly but my grace edge helps with that, so that's 1d6 already. I'm going to use my break skill here too - I don't care about keeping the chain intact as long as the ship gets free.

Firefly: Your beetles will give you an extra d6 of advantage too, but you'll risk losing them if something goes wrong.

Laura: Sounds like 1d6 from my edge, 2d6 from my skill, and 1d6 from risking those beetles. 4d6 in total. Not great with the cut, but it'll have to do. That's... 1, 1, 5 and 6. Cut the 6 and that's a conflict with a twist.

Firefly: The chain falls free after a few seconds, your beetles making short work of it with their increased impact. They're a little over-zealous though, so you take two marks of Spike damage as they search for more food. Anyone got an idea for a twist?

Todd: She could grab a length of chain before it falls, getting a new resource?

Laura: Nice! I'll add 'Rusted Chain' to my salvage.

Clash with Old Ornail

CHAPTER 3
SCENES

Saprekk was not an easy language to learn, or so the common wisdom went. With its complex forms of address, low rolling tonalities, and pause-based punctuation, it had a decent number of barriers to the non-cactoid tongue, and even more to those without a tongue at all.

Argan was, unfortunately, a member of that last group. Ghost-driven and rusting, the old ship's horn that acted as his voice-box was hardly the most precise of instruments.

But three years on an ektus dredging-crew had given him the time he needed to learn the basics, and it was moments like these where those basics could pay off. He stepped forward, clearing his throat with a metallic groan, and put his hand on the spined shoulder of the mercenary in front of him.

"Hey there, friend," he intoned, the Saprekk quite literally rusty, but passable. "I hear you've got some knowing 'bout a certain captain, fellow by the name of Karabet..."

A Time for Action

Most scenes focus on exploration, interaction or combat (often a mix of the three). As a player, you'll be choosing which actions to take, rolling dice for them if they're difficult, dangerous, or dramatic, and engaging the Firefly and the rest of the crew with questions and in-character dialogue.

Scene Basics

To run a scene, you need to know **who**'s in it, **where** they are, and **why** they're there - the conversation can take over from that point.

The **who** is easy, as scenes typically involve the entire crew. This gives every player at the table (including the Firefly) a good chance to get some time in the spotlight and contribute to whatever is going on. While you can run scenes with only a fraction of the crew (or even a single character if it makes sense for the story), those kinds of situations are usually better handled with a montage. *You'll learn more about montages in the next chapter.*

The **where** is usually pretty easy as well, as the Firefly will make clear the kind of location you're in at the beginning of a scene. Usually this'll be obvious, as scenes will be happening in chronological order - if you were walking up the stairs to the deck of your ship in the last scene, you'll probably be on deck in the next one. If this isn't the case (for example, if there's a significant amount of time or a location change in between scenes) the Firefly should make that clear.

The **why** is the most important part, so if you're not sure, you shouldn't be afraid to ask questions. Every scene should have a purpose of some kind - it might not be a grand one, and it might not even be one that moves the main narrative of your adventure forward, but it should be there.

Scene Examples

The rest of this chapter deals with the archetypal scene types you'll find yourself in, moments of **exploration**, **interaction**, and **combat**. But before you leap into the specifics, here are a few examples of what a crew of wildsailors might find themselves doing during a scene out on the rustling waves of the wildsea...

- Exploring an ancient ruin, brought up to the surface by a recent rootquake
- Haggling with a merchant over the exchange rate of salvaged copper bolts to fresh wormapples
- Clambering between the whiplike branches of the thrash in pursuit of a glistening beetle
- Chatting idly with your crewmates as you cruise across the leafy waves
- Fending off a horde of hungry squirrels as they zero in on your galley
- Chasing the broken-branch wake of a leviathan moving through the tangle beneath you, harpoons at the ready
- Sawing and blasting your way through a gnarled branch blocking your ship's progress into a hidden grove
- Listening to tall tales in a junction, ale in hand, waiting for that snippet of information that will expose a spy
- Climbing the rigging of a beached soilship, seeing plumes of woodsmoke racing closer and closer
- Docking at a spit as a festival roars with life around you, coconut shells on strings hanging between the rooftops
- Picking your way silently through a nest of sleeping pinwolves toward an ancient artefact
- Tuning your trisketar before a battle of the bands, one crew of troubadours against another
- Fishing for eel-snouted foxes as your crew scrape recent catches free of their valuable oils
- Tangling toe-to-toe with tzelicrae marauders, their ship's bite gnawing at your own hull
- Battling the effects of a personal mire as you negotiate with a black market trader for medicines
- Sharpening your blades and discussing your plan of attack as you draw close to a protoleviathan's nest
- Standing atop a mountain, surveying the path you walked to get there, your crewmates smiling at your side

Exploration

Exploration is important, especially when you're entering a new area. Who knows what secrets are hidden down side-streets, cosseted by the waves, or buried in the risen ruins of the pre-verdant world?

Points of Interest

When you start a scene or enter a new area, the Firefly will describe the most important features of your location. This description will usually cover at least one **point of interest**, something intriguing or possibly useful that your characters could interact with.

This is a good time to ask questions like "what can I see by the _____?" or "what else do I notice about the _____?", making sure that every player is imagining the same kind of scene in their mind.

In response to your questions, the Firefly might simply give an answer or require you to do something (like get closer or roll an action) before you can learn more.

Different People, Different Interests

You can even angle your questions around **creating new points of interest** that can help out your crew, or even your specific character. Asking "is there anything we can take cover behind?" might prompt the Firefly to add another point of interest to the scene that can be used in just that way. This gives you more to interact with as you play and also clues the Firefly into what your possible intentions might be (allowing them to tailor the narrative accordingly). And if you really want something, just ask!

Below are a few example questions, ones that both gain you information and suggest possible points of interest to the Firefly.

- "Where's the light coming from in this ruin? Is there a hole in the roof?"
- "I imagine they'd have to store their whisky somewhere - are there any barrels around?"
- "What kind of tool is the rattlehand using as she works on the ketra's outrider?"
- "How long have the monks been tending this garden? Some of the trees here must be ancient..."

Vision

The average crew of wildsailors will likely have at least one individual that sees the world differently from their fellows, and if that sounds like something that might give you an advantage or extra bit of information during play, feel free to lean into it. An ektus sailor's iris blooms might see the body heat of a camouflaged sea-beast while their ardent companions see nothing, or a screw's innate sense of magnetic distortions identify a hiding ironbound thief. While you explore, feel free to ask the Firefly if there are things you might notice about a scene that your crewmates would miss.

But vision is a double-edged sword, and can be blocked or reduced by the various environmental oddities of the waves. A sporecloud or heavy fog might reduce the world to indistinct swirls and looming shapes, or an area of super-heated industrial piping dazzle the heat-sensitive like a spotlight on an uncovered eye.

When you find yourselves in a situation where your senses (usually sight, but less commonly hearing or smell) are taxed by the environment, the Firefly will likely **impose cut** or **lower the impact** of related rolls.

Lights in the Darkness

During scenes set at night or in the depths of lightless ruins, the lack of a light source can pose a serious problem. And, although a burning torch may not be the best idea, the waves are full of luminous mosses, glowing insects, and senses outside of the usual five - a little bit of planning or creativity will have you exploring the darkest of ruins in no time!

Movement

Once you've got a handle on where you are, you'll likely want to move around; climb to vantage points, scramble through ruins, or just generally explore. Sometimes this will be to indulge a natural curiosity, an idle change of position with little riding on it. Other times you might want access to a particular place to set up an ambush, spy on a supposedly secret conversation, or root out an especially hard-to-find resource.

Theatre of the Mind

Moving your character around during a scene is part of the 'theatre of the mind' - you usually only have to say that you're going somewhere or investigating something for it to happen.

Certain movements don't even need to be mentioned. If there's nothing actively stopping a character from moving as they like around a scene, feel free to talk about their actions with the movement implied (such as "I'm looking up at these carvings, trying to work out what they might mean," without explicitly stating that your character moved across the room towards the carvings).

Negotiating Terrain

If what you're attempting is dangerous, difficult, or dramatic you'll likely have to roll. The **Vault, Delve,** and **Wavewalk** skills will likely be useful in these situations, but different characters move in different ways. Your personal approach to negotiating a terrain-based challenge might not be so easy - or even at all possible - for other members of your crew.

A bank of thorns growing across a mountain path is a perfect example of how approaches might differ. For some characters this is a chance to rip and tear, hacking at the growth with an axe or jagserry until it's suitably cleared. Another might carefully pick their way through, avoiding the worst of the thorns, while another could avoid the patch entirely by scaling the rough stone to the side of it, or leaping clear over the obstruction.

Each of these approaches is a decent way to negotiate the hazard, and some of them don't even rely on movement-based skills for a good chance of success.

Exploration in Play

Firefly: You pull up alongside and kill your engine.

Todd: What can we see?

Firefly: The ship looks old, the majority of the hull overgrown with moss and vines. A rusted goods crane is bolted to the deck, next to what looks like a cargo-bay door. You can hear shuffling noises from somewhere - perhaps inside the cabin at the rear?

Laura: Well, that's a bit eerie, isn't it? Is there anything special about the vines?

Kyllian: And those shuffling noises, do they sound like they're coming from something big? We're not in great shape at the moment, we should avoid another run-in with the unknown...

Freya: And speaking of repairs, that crane - does it look like we could salvage it?

Firefly: Well, the good news first. Those vines are mundane, or as mundane as anything gets around here. As for the rest... Kyllian, you can't tell exactly how big the shuffling thing is, but it isn't big enough to rock the ship.

Kyllian: I'll take that as a good sign.

Firefly: As for you Freya, you could probably salvage it, but it wouldn't be easy - it's an old design, and the sturdiest part of it looks to be the bolts holding it down.

Freya: Well, I'm always up for a challenge. I leap over onto the deck.

Kyllian: What!? We don't even know if it's safe!

Freya: Good time to find out then, really. Do I have to roll for that?

Firefly: Only if you want to be stealthy about it.

Freya: Not the worst idea. I'll start with Veils...

"What've you found, lad?"

The hawkwolf growled playfully, backing up a few steps before turning tail and disappearing deeper into the ruins. Imp met the scattering of laughter from his crewmates with a choice gesture before levering himself upright, his driftwood thighs grinding. So much for a relaxing afternoon.

The ruins were overgrown, thrash-caught, a spit sat low in a natural canopy trough. He brushed creepers away as he picked his way across the old temple stones, slapped at the occasional insect desperate enough to settle on his gelatinous flesh.

A yip from up ahead. He was getting close.

"I swear, if this is just some interesting stick, I'll..."

His words trailed off as he entered the clearing, took in the scorch-marks, the pirate symbols daubed on pillars and crates. The blood.

Time to call the crew.

Collecting Resources

While exploring a scene, you should be on the lookout for opportunities to scavenge resources that might come in useful on your travels. These can come from a variety of sources – picking over wrecks or corpses, clearing the vaults of forgotten ruins, taking down and butchering animals, or even plucking produce straight from the waves. As a general rule, **if something isn't nailed down, you can take it**.

When you gain a resource, you should note it down on your character sheet. Larger resources (such as full crates, weighty machines, or animal carcasses) might be taken back to your ship as **cargo** and noted on the ship sheet instead.

When rolling to acquire a resource, certain results can give it a **tag**, a descriptor that changes how it might be used. Some characters may also have aspects that let them acquire resources with special tags, or multiple different resources from the same roll. You'll learn more about resources and possible tags on page 92.

While trying to ferret out resources from the environment, the **Delve**, **Harvest**, **Hunt** and **Scavenge** skills will often be useful. In more civilized areas, social skills like **Flourish**, **Outwit, Study** or **Sway** will likely garner better results.

The **results table below** is specifically tailored for **rolls made to acquire resources**.

Resource Roll Results

6

Triumph
You gain a solid example of whatever resource you were looking for, untainted by waves or use or time.

5
4

Conflict
You gain a resource with a negative tag – it can still be useful, but it won't exactly impress anyone.

3
2
1

Disaster
You either fail to find what you're looking for or ruin the resource in the process of collecting it.

Doubles

Twist
The resource you gain has a unique or positive tag, provided by you or another player at the table. Unusual resources are more valuable and often have a wider variety of uses.

Location, Location...

A quick overview of the kinds of resources you might find in some common wildsea environments.

Wrecks & Ruins

The resources you can find on a wreck or within a ruin very much depend on the age of the thing. A recently abandoned location will likely be full of charts, salvage, and specimens still fresh and unspoiled, and perhaps even be echoing with the previous occupants' whispers.

Older locations will likely have a huge amount of detritus to pick over, with great opportunities for larger salvage or cargo pieces and specimens cut from the encroaching greenery of the seas.

Reefs

Collections of junk and rusting hulks, there are very few places more suited for a salvaging crew. An enterprising crew with a lot of time would be able to strip a reef-caught wreck down to its frame, collecting huge amounts of salvage and cargo along the way.

Spits & Settlements

The social nature of civilization makes it invaluable for two resources in particular - whispers (which burrow into the minds of living beings until spoken) and pristine technology (untouched by the near-instant wearing effects of the waves). While whispers might be traded at junctions and smokehouses, good quality machinery will usually require some heavy bargaining to get a hold of (or some particularly impressive thieving).

Corpses and Remains

Now, there are two approaches to gaining resources from a corpse, neither of which are particularly wholesome. The first is to loot what you can from satchels and pockets, or even take the clothes themselves. This is a great way to get smaller pieces of salvage or personal effects. The second way is all sawblades and blood, and while you may come away with trophies, you'll likely end up mire-stained in more ways than one.

The Waves Themselves

Never overlook the bounty of the open waves themselves, a quite literally infinite font of nature-based specimens useful for eating, crafting, and everything in between. Of particular note is fruit, which is easy to find and tends to hold very little in the way of crezzerin outside of its seeds. With a competent cook and a set of decent fruit-pickers, a crew will never run out of good, wholesome food.

Exploring with Companions

Crewmembers who have trained (or built, or stolen) some kind of pet or companion will often have the edge when exploring; an extra set of eyes or point of view is rarely a hindrance.

Rolling for Companions

Mechanically, companion animals are as much a part of your character as your traits and gear. If you need to roll, you make the dice pool the same way you would for yourself, drawing from the same edges and skills you have access to.

What exploring with a companion might give you is **a different set of fictional permissions**, which could change the kinds of area you can access, the advantages you can call on or even whether you have to roll at all.

- A gau's sporehund may well be faster than its master when it's not keeping to heel, able to nip through a dangerous gauntlet of traps with ease that would have posed a serious threat to its owner
- A dredger's key-tail scorpion is tiny, able to fit into spaces and crevices barely bigger than a hand and slip into areas that would usually be inaccessible
- A sentry falcon might spend its time in a scene flying slow circles around the area, using its height as a benefit to spot potential threats or opportunities below. That would likely translate to an advantage on rolls to search or evaluate surroundings made by its owner

Communication While Exploring

How much a companion can understand (or communicate to its owner) is something best left for individual tables to decide. As a baseline, we recommend having companions understand and pass information on reasonably freely, as this usually facilitates a good swift narrative.

Instead of trying to police *how* a companion might communicate, think about *what* it could communicate. A hunting slink might be able to alert its owner to a threatening creature nearby, but without a language it likely won't be able to make clear what that creature *is*.

Interaction

Scenes are where you're most likely to encounter NPCs, either as free agents or representatives of the various major factions active on the wildsea.

Interacting with NPCs can be a great source of information, as they're likely to have access to some knowledge that your characters lack. Some NPCs, such as merchants, may also have resources you can purchase or barter for. Others might even be persuaded to join you temporarily as a passenger, or even permanently as a new member of the undercrew.

Approach

When trying to get information or favours out of an NPC, you'll likely have to make an **action roll**. Be sure to match your approach to the kind of NPC you're talking to. A wily trader should be approached differently to a frightened child, for example, or a straight-talking engineer, or a mystic sage. The **Flourish**, **Outwit**, **Study**, and **Sway** skills come in particularly useful here.

Language

Being able to communicate with someone in their native or favoured language can be a real boon as far as conversation goes, even if you only know a smattering of it - it shows respect, dedication and a willingness to learn.

Languages can also stand in for other social skills you might be lacking in a pinch, though the Firefly will likely impose **cut** or reduce **impact** in these situations.

Finally, languages offer a huge amount in terms of cultural information. Learning to speak Saprekk will naturally expose you to ektus culture, history, and legends, and while you might not be as familiar with them as someone raised in an ektus colony, you should be able to call on simple facts and roll for deeper concepts.

Factions & Favours

Each reach of the wildsea has its own factions and groups vying for power, and certain services or actions might earn you their favour, respect, or fear. These favours can be called in with various NPCs to get extra information or aid when you need it. *You'll learn more about factions in the Reaches chapter, starting on page 274.*

Trading

Some NPCs will also have goods and resources they're happy to trade away. Since the wildsea runs on a salvage-based barter system, you'll likely end up swapping some of your scavenged resources for their goods. It's a good idea to ask what kind of resources interest them - trading something they actually need will likely get you more of whatever they're offering. A community rich in mountain-mined ore and fine steel, for example, might be in dire need of arable land, willing to trade away vast stores of good quality metal for a hold full of stolen earth or a formula for effective pesticides.

Knowledge

What exactly does a character know about the world of the Wildsea? That's a question that's ultimately up to the players, the Firefly and the needs of the situation, but there are a few guidelines.

Implicit Information

The sea is made of trees. The coming winter is going to be hard. Pinwolves probably won't make great pets. These are the kind of facts that every character should have access to **without the need to roll** - they might come out as an answer to a question posed to the Firefly or, for more confident tables, simply be said and assumed to be true.

Your character will also have implicit information about **their past**, **their family,** and **the elements that make up their own background**; a ridgeback will know the names of the most famous mountaintop islands, a hacker will be able to identify a good number of plants and trees without issue. If it's something you feel your character should know, something they'd have likely picked up over their time at sea or something that they'll call upon often to fulfill their role on the crew, **you should never have to roll for it**.

Possible Information

What are the exact properties of these leaves when they're stewed? Which of a pinwolf's glands contribute to their stilting, staccato movement? What trade routes do Writling ships take as autumn rolls on and they finish their voyages for the year? These are more specialized questions that require specialist knowledge. A steep, alchemist, or navigator would have a chance to know these answers, but a corsair or screw would likely be completely in the dark. **Roll for information like this**, either to recall it or to study materials you have on hand.

Impossible Information

There are some mysteries that are simply beyond the knowledge of anyone you could care to name, some things only understood by an extremely select few. The history of the pre-verdant world, the precise nature of the Under-Eaves... these are things that a character might guess at, but will likely never have a concrete answer for.

Interaction in Play

Firefly: The door to the cabin bursts open and a figure stumbles out - an ektus, chin thick with beard-like spines. As soon as he sees you, he starts ranting in Saprekk, cringing away from you with his hands outstretched as if to ward you off.

Laura: Oh damn... Does anyone here actually speak Saprekk? Can we understand him?

Todd: I've got a smattering...

Firefly: Todd, you can get the edge of it. He's talking about some kind of terrible event, and his comrades belowdecks. That's all you get.

Laura: We need information. I'm going to roll, uh, try to get him to give us more. Grab him by the shoulders and shake him?

Kyllian: Wow, I'm glad you've never tried to calm me down in a crisis.

Laura: Well, has anyone else got a better idea?

Todd: Than that? Yeah, several!

Laura: Okay then, you go for it!

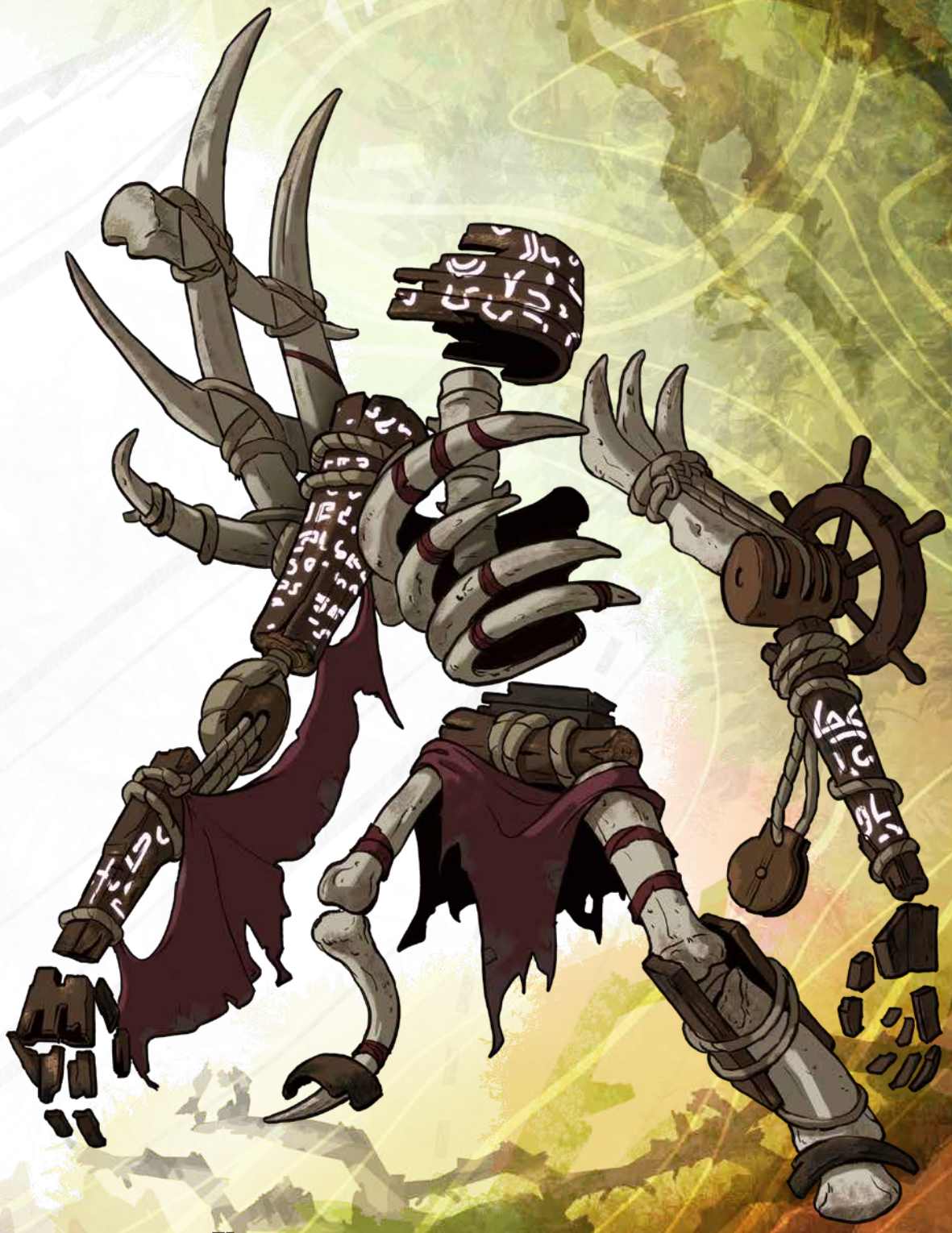
Todd: Right, I've only got a smattering of Saprekk but I think I'll be able to get this across. I'm going to use Sway and Iron, try to communicate that we're friends and that we mean him no harm. Can I get an advantage if I make a show of putting my weapon down as I do that? I want to be as reassuring as I can.

Firefly: Definitely, but you'll still be cutting one.

Todd: No problem. That's a six - nope, that's cut - a five. Not too bad.

Firefly: Nice job! The ektus grabs your hammer once it's down, holds it as if he's ready to attack you, but when you don't make an aggressive move his ranting slows and he visibly calms.

Laura: Alright, that probably was a better plan.



Combat

Whether a bar-room brawl or an ambush at sea, combat on the wildsea is usually a quick and brutal affair - blades are drawn, pistols primed, and blood (or some equivalent) almost inevitably spilled.

Whatever the specifics, combat has an element of tension - you'll have to act and react quickly, and others might live or die due to your decisions.

The Golden Rules of Combat

When teeth are bared and notched blades drawn, there are a couple of things you should keep in mind to have the best experience possible. These are...

- **You don't need a weapon to enter the fray**. Use your fists, your resources, the environment around you - anything's a weapon if you try hard enough, and the damage rules reflect that.
- **You don't need combat skills to help out your crew**. Ingenuity can make up for a lack of training, as can a willingness to take some risks. Combat-related skills like Hack, Hunt or Break give you a broad range of options, but other skills can stand in when you're in the right situation.
- **Focus is fluid, and still determined by the narrative**. Just like any other scene, the spotlight will pass from character to character to elements of the world as it best fits the story. The Firefly will be tracking focus to make sure nobody gets left out, but if you have a burning desire to do something you should take the plunge and do it!
- **Focus gives you the opportunity to do more than just attack**. When the spotlight is on you, it's your time to shine - plan, position, question, discover, do whatever it is that makes your character special.
- **You'll never die before you're ready**. Damage may mount up, injuries may compound, but death on the wildsea is a narrative event, not a mechanical one - if it's not your time yet, you'll always pull through.
- **A foe undefeated is not a combat failed**. Outsmarting, escaping, or driving off an opponent is just as valuable as cutting them down, and will often have more interesting narrative consequences.

Is Combat an Essential Part of the Game?

The wildsea is a bright, beautiful, dark, dangerous place. Most crews that head out onto the rustling waves will find themselves in dangerous situations before too long, either at the hands of bandits or the jaws of a relentless predator... But *most* does not mean *all*.

If your group wants to run a game or campaign of the Wildsea without explicitly delving into combat and bloodshed, it's entirely possible. Diplomacy, trickery, and bargaining can be just as effective as a blade when wielded with conviction.

Location

Where you fight can be just as important to a combat as what you fight; a struggle against a band of mothryn marauders will play out very differently if you're facing them on the deck of your own ship as opposed to the heart of their hanging-silk stronghold, for example.

Points of Interest

At the beginning of a combat, you should take note of any **points of interest** that might be useful. These might be things you can use as **cover**, that you can use as a **weapon,** or that you can engage an enemy on or near to give yourself some kind of **advantage**.

Example: *A snapperpillar crawls toward the crew across the ruins of an abandoned settlement. They've been caught off-guard, in the middle of an evening meal, and they're not the most combat focused group... but that doesn't mean they're defenceless. The cookpot could serve as a decent bludgeoning weapon, and the dim light of their chemical burner means that all of them can see clearly enough to defend themselves.*

Zones

Some groups may also want to take note of **zones** at the beginning of a combat, broad areas that the fight might encompass. If you do so, we recommend ignoring the precise geographical location of the zones (Wildsea combat is theatre of the mind by default, it's not the kind of game where a precise combat map is ever really needed) and instead focusing on their defining factors. What are they near, or what do they encompass that might matter in the fight to come?

Example*: The players take stock of the area their characters were caught in and note down a few important zones: the* ***Crumbling Walls*** *of a nearby house, the* ***Light Around the Burner,*** *the* ***Path Downhill*** *that they climbed to get here.*

Zones don't need anything other than a name as long as the players all know what they are, but a few notes on their features and points of interest here and there might help (especially if you're the kind of table that prefers larger, more intricate combats).

Groups that don't focus heavily on combat encounters can safely ignore zones altogether.

Focus in Combat

There's no initiative or standard turn order to follow once blades are drawn; the spotlight moves from character to character just as it does during any other part of the game, giving a member of the crew the chance to take some kind of action before swinging to something else. There are a couple of extra things to keep in mind though...

Actions and Reactions

Combat is usually a lot choppier than a scene based on exploration or interaction, with more shifts in focus for dramatic happenings and death-defying escapes. Characters will likely be **reacting** to events (such as incoming attacks or changes in positioning) as often as they're taking actions themselves.

Example*: A chameleocuda lashes its tail like a whip, aiming at Kerend, an ironbound dredger. The Firefly prompts Kerend's player for a reaction in response to the attack - probably to get out of the way or somehow mitigate the incoming damage.*

Reactions are 'worth' a little less than an action in terms of the spotlight, as they don't give a player full agency over what their character is doing in that moment. A reaction is still a chance for a character to show off their unique approach to a situation (in the above example Kerend might forgo dodging or blocking the attack and try to grab the chameleocuda's tail, something very relevant to their character), but it doesn't give the same level of free expression as a usual action.

How Long is an Action?

As long as it needs to be to achieve something important.

An action might be as short and simple as plunging your axe into the petals of some horrendous predatory plant, or as long and complex as leaping off of the prow with a memorable battle cry to land inside that same plant's gaping mouth, attacking it from the inside as digestive juices spray.

It's not the length of an action that matters in combat, it's whether you got to do something you enjoyed.

The Focus Tracker

Because of the increased number of reactions, the Firefly might use a **focus tracker**, a quick set of tracks to show how many times different characters have acted (A) and reacted (R) over the course of a combat.

- Kerend: ARAA
- Simica: RAAR
- Marcus: AAR

In the above example, Kerend has had the majority of the focus, with three actions and a reaction. Simica has also had the focus four times, but hasn't acted as much - they're probably due some time in the spotlight soon. And Marcus is lagging behind a little, having only acted twice and reacted once - maybe the Firefly will have him react to something next time the focus changes.

Actions and reactions don't need to balance out perfectly between crewmembers - the tracker helps to **suggest** what might happen next, rather than mandate it. Narrative flow and player enjoyment are still the two primary concerns.

The guardians of the sinkcity weren't quite the pushovers that the crew had expected.

"But they're just bloody bells!" Carchas shouted, barely heard over the violent clanging echoing down the passage behind them.

Bells they were, but there was very little 'just' about it - as soon as their dredger had pushed on the sinkcity's great crumbling doors, the bells on either side had started ringing. An old warning system, they'd thought at first... until crab-like pincers and jointed limbs had emerged from their cavernous insides, wrenching them free of their alcoves and sending them scuttling noisily towards the crew.

They turned a corner. Seconds later, one of the guardians smashed into the wall behind them, awkward movements and lack of grace made up for by their singular punchcard-born drive to protect their city.

"They're not just bells, they're very, very angry bells!"

Combat Terms

Though combat scenes tend to play out just like any other scenes, they do have a few more terms you might want to be aware of (especially if you're in a combat-focused crew).

Range

An attack is either classed as **Close Quarters (CQ)** or **Long Range (LR)**. Close-quarter attacks can hit nearby opponents, and long-range attacks (unsurprisingly) can hit opponents farther away.

- When using an LR weapon to attack a nearby foe, you take a cut of one on your action.
- When attacking a distant foe with a CQ weapon (by throwing it, for example) you take a cut of one on your action.

Damage

The creatures and pirates you'll likely be fighting have aspects and tracks of their own, which can be damaged just as yours can. **A successful attack usually marks a single box on one of these tracks** - an attack with increased impact, or using a damage type that's more effective (such as a serrated weapon against a fibrous foe) marks an additional box. The more enemy tracks you fill, the likelier they are to surrender, flee or die.

When you're attacked enemies will deal an amount of damage, but ***you can choose which aspect receives it****. A weak hit may only deal one or two marks against you, whereas a powerful blow could deal anywhere up to six. If you'd ever take damage to an aspect that would exceed its track, either take an injury with a track equal to the remaining amount or deal burn to that aspect equal to the remaining amount.*

Effects

When attacking, you may have the chance to inflict an effect as well as your damage, such as staggering your target or setting them on fire. Effects often give advantage on future attacks against a creature, or negate some of their inherent strengths or abilities.

A list of damage types and suggested related effects is found on the next page.

Positioning

The fictional positioning between a character and their opponent can be extremely important - it helps determine range, may give an advantage related to the environment, and can even activate the benefits of certain aspects.

Loss

Relating directly to a character's resources, some actions you decide to take (or damage you suffer) might cause you to lose a specific resource (either temporarily or permanently). Attacking with a glass bottle may smash it, for example - you'd lose the resource, but might be able to pick up a new resources'Shards of Bloody Glass' at the end of the fight. Sometimes a resource is lost without being destroyed - plucked out of your hand or pack or knocked over the edge of a ship, for example.

Injuries

Most often caused by unique or powerful attacks, catching a disease or taking a large amount of damage that can't be absorbed by an aspect. While you're affected, an injury might...

- Force you to cut on some actions
- Take away a skill or sense
- Add negative effects to some actions

Injuries are represented by temporary tracks on your character sheet. See page 97 for more details.

Damage Types

A list of the Wildsea's twelve damage types, and the sorts of effect they might cause in the right situation.

Blunt

Crushing damage, good at stunning and breaking. This might come from a club, hammer, or tail swipe, or impact with an object or the ground at high speed. It could cause bruising or leave a target with broken bones.

Keen

Cutting damage, good at slicing and bleeding. This might come from a cutlass, claw, or sharp-edged leaf, and will likely leave wounds that need bandaging to prevent heavy blood loss.

Spike

Piercing damage, good at penetrating and impaling. This might come from a spearhead, arrow, or bite, or high-speed impact with a sturdy branch at the wrong angle. Lasting damage to internal organs is a real possibility.

Hewing

Chopping damage, good at splitting and breaking. This might come from an axe or the claws of a particularly powerful creature, and hewing injuries are likely to come in the form of lost limbs and bone breaks.

Serrated

Sawing damage, good at ripping and tearing. This might come from a jagserry, sawtooth prow, or any other kind of serrated edge, and will leave ragged-edged wounds that scar prominently.

Toxin

Poison damage, good at sickening and confusing. This might come from tainted food or plant venom, and will usually cause illnesses and short-term loss of senses.

Acid

Corrosive damage, good at melting and searing. This might come from... well, acid (and other caustic or corrosive substances). It's likely to disfigure or blind, even if only temporarily, or dull and damage nerves.

Blast

Explosive damage, good at stunning and shattering. This might come from gunshots, massive sounds, or the impact of nearby detonations, such as from cannon fire. Likely to leave a sufferer dazed, confused, deafened, and staggering, and can definitely break bones.

Volt

Electrical damage, good at shocking and paralysing. This might come from lightning strikes or electrically charged weapons, and is likely to temporarily knock an individual out as well as leaving burns.

Frost

Cold damage, good at slowing and freezing. This is most likely to be an environmental threat, caused by winter winds and exposure, but some creatures can manipulate cryonic glands as a weapon. Causes shivering, numbness, and invites future illnesses.

Salt

Crystalline damage, good at drying and banishing. This might come from spirits or dessicants, and can leave weird and arcane complications or rough, tender skin.

Flame

Forbidden damage that burns, melts, and inspires fear. Comes from fire, or occasionally searing liquids.

Weakness

Some aspects or situations may give your character a **weakness** against a particular source of damage, damage type or effect. In these cases, **increase the amount of damage you mark by two boxes**. Weakness to an effect or injury increases its impact - even the weakest effects will be able to bowl you over, and injuries will last longer and have more detrimental effects.

Resistance

Some aspects or situations may give your character **resistance** against a particular source of damage, damage type or effect. In these cases, **reduce the amount of damage you mark by two boxes**. Resistance to an effect or injury (like being thrown or poisoned) reduces its impact - a powerful detrimental effect will be reduced in scope, and a weaker one can be shrugged off entirely.

Immunity

Being **immune** to a source of damage, damage type or effect is exactly what it sounds like - **you take no damage at all**. Effects and injuries are ignored too.

Stacking & Cancelling-Out

Think of **weakness - resistance - immunity** as a ladder for each damage type, and an instance of these words appearing on your character sheet as a step up or down a rung. *If you have two resistances to a certain type of damage, count that as an immunity. If you have an immunity and a weakness, treat it as a resistance. If you have a weakness and a resistance, they cancel each other out.*

Combat Results

The mechanics behind actions and reactions in combat are the same as for any other situation - you state your intent, build your dice pool, roll it and play out the results. The only difference during combat is with reading results: attacking and defending have their own special results spread.

Attacking

An attack could take the form of a strike or shot with one of your weapons, an unarmed lunge or grapple, or even a clever use of the environment. When attacking, you'll have a choice of inflicting damage or an effect (and sometimes you'll get to deal both!).

Having a weapon makes attacking a little easier - you get to use it for advantage dice and it reliably lets you deal a specific damage type. If you don't have a weapon to hand, that doesn't mean you're out of options though - it just means you need to get creative!

Defending

Your opponents don't roll for their attacks. Instead, the Firefly declares what they're doing (or attempting to do) and you roll for your reactions to those attacks, mitigating or avoiding the damage in a way that best suits your character - this might be by dodging out of the way, attempting to knock a blade or charging foe aside, or simply leaping under the nearest table.

Like your own attacks, enemy attacks can deal damage or hit you with effects. The better your roll, the more likely you are to escape unharmed.

Attack Roll Results

6 — Triumph
Your attack lands on its target, a powerful blow. You'll likely deal some damage, and might inflict an effect associated with the damage type if it suits the situation.

5, 4 — Conflict
Your attack lands on its target, but something goes wrong - you still deal damage and maybe an associated effect, but you also take some damage, suffer an effect yourself, lose a resource, or end up in a less favourable position.

3, 2, 1 — Disaster
Your attack either misses its target or lands and does no damage. You'll definitely take some damage or an effect yourself, and might lose a resource, or be put into a less favourable position as well.

Doubles — Twist... or Critical
An unexpected narrative effect or, if you're in a particularly bloodthirsty mood, a critical hit which increases your impact.

Defence Roll Results

6 — Triumph
You completely avoid whatever threat was incoming - you usually take no damage, effects, or loss of position (though some powerful opponents may have aspects that make even a triumph dangerous).

5, 4 — Conflict
You avoid the worst of the situation, but something goes wrong - you'll take either damage, an associated effect, a negative change in position, or the destruction (or temporary denial) of a resource.

3, 2, 1 — Disaster
You're hit square-on, and everything goes horribly wrong. You'll definitely take damage, and likely an associated effect and loss of resource or position as well.

Doubles — Twist... or Counter
An unexpected narrative effect or, if you're eager to punish your attacker, a counter that deals a mark of damage against them (if in range).

Combat in Play

Firefly: It's the old ektus' shout that gives it away, a wordless cry of warning as he points to the sky.

Freya: Oh damn, I knew this was going too smoothly. What can we see?

Firefly: Three dark shapes descending fast on dust-coloured wings -

Kyllian: Oh god damn it, it's those mothryn assassins from Kyther! I knew we should have finished off those bastards when we had the chance.

Firefly: Perhaps you should have... before you have the chance to scatter for cover, their leader dives, knife outstretched. Give me a reaction, Todd - how are you defending yourself?

Todd: I'm meeting this head-on. I'm going to leap at him as soon as he gets close enough, try to avoid the knife and bring him out of the sky at the same time.

Firefly: Sounds dangerous, but possible if you manage a double for that counter-attack - roll with a cut of 1.

Todd: That's Teeth, my hammer... Looks like 4d6. Okay... Yes! That's a conflict with doubles, even after the cut! I'll use them for a counter.

Firefly: You don't manage to avoid the knife entirely - take two marks of Keen damage as it slashes at you. But you do manage to tangle yourself up with it, and you both hit the deck hard. Focus is open, people.

Laura: And I'm taking it! An attack on the one Todd's got down, do I get advantage for that?

Firefly: You do indeed, it came down hard.

Laura: Right, so I'm going to try and sink my grapple into it and then yank it away from Todd, maybe even off the side of the ship. I think Iron's going to work for this...

The Threat of Death

Death on the wildsea is a narrative event, not a mechanical one. It's an option always open to you – an ending for your character when the time feels right. Whenever you take a serious enough injury, run out of space to mark damage on any of your tracks, or are put into a position you can't escape without stretching narrative plausibility, death is there as a final option.

When?

The best time to take this option is when it feels dramatically appropriate, but there are a few questions you should ask yourself first...

- **Is it really my time?** If you're not sure, or if you can't see a narratively satisfying way of your character escaping the event that caused you to take death as an option, consider an 'ambiguous' end – a fall into the rustling waves, or an abduction by an enemy force. These options can let a character return later by explaining how they survived.
- **Are there plot threads or arcs that this death would leave unsatisfyingly unfinished?** If so, consider taking a serious injury instead, and keeping your character around to finish up their business. You might even take a mortal injury, but one that won't lay you low for a while – death looms, but you have time to finish up your business.
- **Is this a good end for my character?** Really, this is the most important question. Even if things are left unfinished, it might just feel like the right time for your character to die – maybe the moment is suitably dramatic, or their death would save the rest of the crew, or lead to an important revelation or opportunity that your next character could play off of.

Beyond Death

Death may be pretty final, but this is the wildsea – there's always a weirdness to take advantage of. A dead character may come back as an anchored (a ghost of their former self), an ironclad (driven by their spirit but in a new, scrap-and-wreckage body), or some kind of zombie (reanimated by fungus, bees, or a revenant whisper). Talk these options over with your Firefly if you want to bring a character back from the dead.

CHAPTER 4
MONTAGES

"Landfall!"

The exodus began before the ship was even tied, crew and undercrew alike leaping the last few feet over the rustling waves to land on Kyther's junk-strewn docks.

After weeks at sea, shore leave is a hard thing to say no to.

The char was the first to go, haring off toward the open-air bazaar to trade in delicacies. A gallant set of deck-gunners were next, shouting and laughing as they made their way to the nearest smokehouse, tobacco and pipes already in hand. One waved over her shoulder - they'd be gone for some time.

The ship's alchemist was slower to disembark, but no less eager. With injuries beyond even his arcane knowledge he dragged himself in the direction of Jeritzo's Lot, an expansive and well-renowned hospital-tent. Treatment would be expensive, but essential.

And for the rest of them? Malligan's. Honey-mead. Home.

Peace & Preparation

Montages allow your crew to benefit from one of the most useful tropes of the big screen, the condensing of long periods of time into short but narratively useful snapshots. During a montage every member of the crew gets a moment of focus to get one thing done, allowing the crew to split and pursue their own stories and wants without fear of slowing the game down too much or being caught off guard.

Though montages can be a good source or relaxation, try not think of them exclusively as 'downtime'. They can be just as useful a tool in driving the plot and the action along as a scene!

As a crew of wildsailors, the most likely times your Firefly will offer you the chance at a montage will be...

- When reaching a new port, and wanting to explore various areas quickly
- When stopping for the night on a journey or expedition
- When tooling up or preparing for a potentially dangerous encounter
- When sharing a song, a story or a meal that gives everyone some time to rest
- When splitting up to gather information or supplies
- When pursuing your own interests and projects after long periods of socialising

You can also request a montage of your Firefly at the end of a scene, if you have the time to spend on one - montages make the game flow faster, but remember that also means time passes on the rustling waves. A montage started in the afternoon might mean that your next scene takes place in the evening, or might turn a threatening storm into a torrential downpour.

Montage Examples

The rest of this chapter deals with the common activities that fill most montages; tasks of **exploration**, **acquisition**, **recovery**, and **creation** (as well as working on **projects**). But before we leap into the specifics, here are a few general examples of what a crew might find themselves doing during their personal moments...

- Taking some time to work on a personal project
- Tending to your recent injuries with a splint, bandage, and gritted set of teeth
- Exploring the streets of a new port to find a local business or likely-looking eatery
- Piecing together bones and twine and scrap to make yourself a rickety, but functional, fishing rod
- Picking tiger-limes from a treetop fruit farm
- Walking a set of circuits around the deck for some basic but almost entirely safe exercise
- Leafing through rough-bound tomes and spore-flecked correspondence for clues about a mysterious stranger
- Stargazing to pass the time on an uneventful evening stuck in port
- Talking to the undercrew about the sights they've witnessed on the waves, passing a bottle back and forth
- Submitting yourself to the ship's surgeon for treatment of a long-standing infection
- Chatting to local stevedores to pick up some fresh gossip on your first day in port
- Contorting yourself to fit into the crevices of the engine room, wrench in oil-smeared hands
- Adding peppers to a bubbling pot, enjoying the opportunity to cook on solid ground and out of the galley for once
- Hunting thrash-pigeons for their meat and feathers
- Meditating in silence, filtering the world around you out completely
- Tipping one beaker of chemicals into another of hard-won salts
- Laughing with the rest of your crew around the scratched wooden oval of a junction-house table, drink in hand

Tasks

A montage **isn't** there to track the individual actions you take - that's handled with scenes. A montage instead allows you to condense larger periods of time into brief but useful moments, known as **tasks**.

As a player, your role is to decide what task you're working towards and then use your moment of focus to describe how you accomplish it. This can sometimes involve a roll, a loss or exchange of resources, or even just engaging in the conversation with the Firefly and the other players. There's a list of general tasks you can attempt over the next few pages (**exploration**, **acquisition**, **recovery,** and **creation**), but don't be afraid to request something outside the box.

Requirements

Some tasks may require you to have access to a specific place or resource before they can be performed. A character wouldn't be able to gather specimens in an area with no plants or wildlife, for example, or go fishing without something to be used as a rod, bait, or net.

Rolls & Advantage

Most tasks work in the same way as any other action, only requiring a roll if they're **difficult**, **dangerous** or **dramatic**. Even though a task might be complex, you don't need to roll multiple times - **one roll is enough** to carry you through to the end.

You can apply advantages to these rolls just as you would a normal action. You can also add advantage to a task roll by working together with a crewmate (or other friendly NPC). That said, you can't be everywhere at once - if your montage involves you being in one particular place, you may not be able to help a crewmate in another.

Fiction First

Don't worry too much about anticipating the possible requirements for your tasks. Often the way you describe something will make it clear exactly how you're trying to accomplish it, and if there's any doubt, the Firefly will jump in and ask you to clarify.

Exploration

A common piece of advice for adventure-based tabletop games is that you should avoid splitting the party whenever possible - it often leads to characters being left out of plot developments and important moments.

But when it comes to montages, you can safely turn this thinking on its head. Especially when there's a new location to explore, there's great benefit in splitting the crew up to cover more ground. You might use a task to...

- Track down a particular individual or service
- Chase a lead that relates to your character's drives or personal backstory
- Indulge your curiosity in a particular aspect of a place's architecture or culture
- Talk to NPCs to gain some local knowledge
- Discover routes or options for further exploration that you can tackle later as part of a scene

Setting Up the Next Scene

Sometimes your exploration will lead you into a situation that demands the attention of the entire crew. If this happens, make it clear to the Firefly - "Can we wait to do this bit until everyone meets up again?" is a perfectly acceptable sentence to throw into the conversation. That way you get the benefits of your task, finding something that moves the plot forward, but everyone at the table gets to share in the experience as soon as possible by turning it into a scene.

Rolling to Explore

A huge variety of skills can come into play as you're exploring a location (though in many cases you won't have to roll at all). Movement skills like Vault and Wavewalk can help with the physical traversal of the environment, social skills like Sway can let you glean information from others, and language skills can clue you into cultural details and unexpected conversations that other crewmembers would miss.

Acquisition

Scrabbling around for bits of old stone and rusted machinery is hardly the most elegant way to spend your downtime, but it can be one of the most productive. Using a montage to focus on acquisition might take the form of...

- Trading your cargo or resources with an NPC merchant (or another wildsailor)
- Combing the locale for interesting or unique things that might not be missed
- Fishing, hunting, or herb-gathering
- Petty theft and pickpocketing
- Gathering rumours from a local tavern
- Collating information into a fresh chart

Acquisition Results

When rolling for these kinds of tasks, you'll usually be using the same results table you would for a resource-gathering action during a scene. It's printed on page 48, but we've included it here as well for ease of reference.

Specific Acquisition Tasks

Though you can likely trade for salvage or specimens if you're in a settlement, one of the easiest ways to acquire new resources during a montage is to fall back on your own skills. The following specific tasks are useful for acquiring certain types of resource, especially if the accompanying roll is bolstered with an appropriate skill, edge or aspect.

Scavenging

Requirement: An area with potential for salvage.
For sorting through detritus for useful pieces of scrap or machinery, allowing you to gain **salvage**. *The Scavenge skill will always be useful here, but Delve, Rattle, and Study might also come in handy in a pinch.*

Hunting

Requirement: An area with the potential for beasts.
For tracking and bringing down animals and insects (or rendering and carving bodies) to use as **specimens**. *Unsurprisingly, the Hunt skill comes in useful here, but Hack, Tend, and Harvest could be useful in the right situation.*

Harvesting

Requirement: An area with the potential for vegetation.
For identifying and collecting useful plantlife and produce as **specimens**, anything from fruit to mushrooms to predatory orchids.*The Harvest skill is an easy go-to, but Sense, Tend, Hunt, or Cook might help you spot and collect rare ingredients.*

Resource Roll Results

6 — **Triumph**
You gain a solid example of whatever resource you were looking for, untainted by waves or use or time.

5 4 — **Conflict**
You gain a resource with a negative tag - it can still be useful, but it won't exactly impress anyone.

3 2 1 — **Disaster**
You either fail to find what you're looking for or ruin the resource in the process of collecting it.

Doubles — **Twist**
The resource you gain has a unique or positive tag, provided by you or another player at the table. Unusual resources are more valuable and often have a wider variety of uses.

Tasks in Play

Firefly: The towers of Liar's Cove hang drunkenly above you, like flies in a web. There are pull-rope elevators at the end of the dock, leading up into the network - this feels like a good time for a montage, if you'd like to explore the cove individually and get some stuff done on your own.

Freya: Ooh yeah, a montage sounds great to me. I've got some stuff to repair after that last fight for sure.

Todd: And I could do with some healing. Is there a surgeon in town?

Firefly: Sounds like you're going for the montage then! Todd, there is a surgeon in town that you can find pretty easily, a multi-armed tzelicrae with a staggering collection of syringes.

Todd: Any port in a storm, I guess. I think I've got some salvage to trade for the good stuff.

Firefly: Right, you work out what you're trading then. Freya, are you rolling for your repairs?

Freya: That's right. I'll get that ready.

Firefly: Excellent. Laura, Kyllian?

Laura: I'm actually in pretty good shape right now, so I'm going to take a look around the... town, city?

Firefly: More of a city with the towers, but it's a bit spread out above you.

Laura: Yeah, it's those towers I'm interested in. it can't just be spiderwebs holding them up, right? I'm going to go look for myself, maybe ask around the place to see how this all got started.

Kyllian: And I've got a project to work on - I'm still refining that crezzerin down into a safer growth agent, so I'll stay in the lab for now.

Ikra could barely remember the time before he took to the sea. He'd travelled reaches, seen leviathans push their bulk up through the leafy waves like living monoliths, tasted the vicious, viscous mingling of blood & sap...

But he'd never smelled anything quite like the meal in front of him.

Canteray (more of an artist than a cook, as he often said) looked at him expectantly.

"What... Is it?" Ikra asked, keeping his voice as neutral as possible.

"Wolf meat & cactus oysters cooked in a reduction of spider-silk wine & peppering spice."

Ikra stared at the bowl in front of him.

"With rice."

Recovery

It's part and parcel of a wildsailor's life to suffer a few scrapes from time to time, or a horrendous infection, or the loss of a limb or two - the rustling waves are vast, harsh, and hungry, and constant contact with their creatures and weirdnesses takes its toll.

Using a task to recover can help you deal with lasting injuries, marked aspects, and mounting mire, as well as general maintenance of your ship. This might take the form of...

- Spending time healing yourself with specimens or using salvage to repair your gear
- Letting a ship's surgeon tend to your wounds
- Visiting a portside hospital or treatment centre
- Drinking and laughing your mire away at a junction-house
- Using salvage and cargo items to repair damage to your own vessel
- Putting your ship into drydock for repairs

Recovery Results

Removing damage during a montage has its own results table below, which can be used for healing and repair in other situations just as easily.

Recovery Roll Results

Doubles

6
Triumph
Heal two marks of damage to an aspect, ship rating, injury track, or mire.

5
4
Conflict
Heal one mark of damage to an aspect, ship rating, injury track, or mire.

3
2
1
Disaster
Add an extra mark of damage to an aspect, ship rating, injury track, or mire.

Twist
You don't consume the resource used to carry out your recovery.

Specific Recovery Tasks

The resources listed as a requirement in the tasks below assume your character is healing or repairing with little outside help. If you're in a port or settlement being tended to by or working with others, substitutions and alternative methods of payment will likely be possible. Clever use of your skills, edges, and aspects can make healing far more effective and less resource-intensive.

Healing

Requirement: An appropriate specimen.
For tending to your own wounds or giving medical aid, allowing you to clear marks from a trait or animal companion. *The Tend skill lets you work on yourself and others, and the Cook and Concoct skills can be useful too. The specimen used should fit the kind of damage that's being healed - curative herbs and such will always be appropriate, but even something as simple as a branch could help fix a broken leg by acting as a splint, for example.*

Repairing

Requirement: An appropriate piece of salvage.
For refurbishing broken mechanisms and armour, allowing you to clear marks from gear or mechanical companions. *The Rattle skill is reliable, but Study or Concoct might work in the right situations. Repairing a mark of damage to a ship's ratings or structure will usually cost several pieces of salvage, or an appropriate piece of cargo.*

Relaxing

Requirement: An appropriate whisper.
For time away from the savagery of the sea, relaxing allows you to clear marks from your mires. *A whole host of skills can help here, depending on what you think best suits your character's recovery. Skills with a social focus might help them laugh their troubles away. Sense could help them relax in a smokehouse or shadow-spring, Hunt could aid on a relaxing fishing trip - the cost of a whisper is steep, but you can approach the task however you see fit.*

Creation

In a world where salvage and specimens come fast and loose, learning to throw them together in a pinch is an incredibly useful skill for your arsenal.

Using a task to create allows you to combine resources, granting temporary aspects for yourself or your crewmates. This might come in the form of...

- Lashing together some salvage to create a weapon or tool useful for the situation
- Mixing alchemically useful specimens to create a potent but potentially dangerous concoction
- Cooking a meal for yourself or your crewmates, to fortify them against hunger, cold or sickness

Temporary Aspects

These temporary aspects come with a name, a track, and some kind of useful ability related to the resources used. Whenever you benefit from the ability, you mark the track. **When a temporary aspect's track is fully marked, the effects wear off and it's gone forever.**

Normally, a temporary aspect created using the cooking or crafting skill only applies to a single crewmember, but certain character choices relax this restriction.

Creation Results

The precise nature of a new creation is a little more fluid than the results of other tasks, relying on Firefly input and more of a conversational back-and-forth. As well as the usual results table below, we've offered some examples as guidance.

Creation Outcomes

The benefits you create while cooking and crafting are freeform, meaning you should work together with your Firefly to determine exactly what you can achieve before you roll.

This could be something mechanical, narrative, or both; a measure of damage resistance, a new weapon, access to an ability you wouldn't normally have, or even a number of extra ranks in a skill or language. You'll find more information on temporary benefits in the Characters Chapter.

Example: *Kyllian is attempting to create a meal that will offer whoever consumes it protection against cold temperatures. He suggests using steaming rice as a base and then seeds from a scorpion pepper, and the Firefly agrees. Kyllian's result is a 5, a conflict. The Firefly rules that whoever eats the meal will have their core temperature raised, giving them resistance to frost damage and cold environments, but will also sweat and cough constantly.*

Creation Roll Results

6 — Triumph
The recipient of your creation gains a temporary 2-track aspect related to the resources used.

5, 4 — Conflict
The recipient of your work gains a temporary 2-track aspect, but there are downsides inherent in using it. Alternatively, it might grant an aspect without a downside, but that doesn't quite offer the intended benefits.

3, 2, 1 — Disaster
You've created something that might work as a bizarre ornament or culinary curiosity, but little else. It gives no benefits whatsoever.

Doubles — Twist
Your creation gives an unexpected benefit in addition to the usual result, something small but useful.

Specific Creation Tasks

When creating something, you'll usually be combining **at least two resources** of some kind. Clever use of your skills, edges, and aspects can make creating far more effective and less resource-intensive.

Cooking

Requirement: Two specimens.
For gaining some delicious fortification against the dangers of the waves, with effects based on the flavours of the specimens used. *The Cook skill lets you make traditional dishes with ease, but the Concoct skill would work just as well for soups, broths and herbal teas. Flavour is important here for determining the effects of a creation.*

Concocting

Requirement: Two resources (specimens or salvage).
For concocting potions that allow you to transfer the properties of the resources used and have them alter the drinker's form or abilities for a short time, with effects based on the properties of the resources used. *The Concoct skill is an easy go-to, but Cook, Tend or even Hack could also work for extremely simple mixtures.*

Crafting

Requirement: Two pieces of salvage.
For allowing you to repurpose salvage into useful gear; it won't last too long but should get the job done. The effects are based on the qualities of the salvage used. *The Rattle skill can be used for a wide array of gear, but some characters might use other skills to create specialized equipment (such as Hunt to create a rough-and-ready ranged weapon, or Brace to make a tool or piece of armour).*

Projects

There are some activities that fall outside of the timescale of both actions and tasks, such as writing a book, assembling a complex machine, or learning a language. These are **projects**, multi-stage tasks that are completed over the course of several montages. Whenever you have the chance to perform a task, you can choose to work on a project instead.

Starting a Project

Like actions and tasks, projects are mostly freeform. You might start a project to earn the trust of a recalcitrant passenger, to study an ancient artefact, or even to build an outrider ship from scratch. Once you've decided on the scope of your project, the Firefly will set you a project track to fill, which you can note down on your character sheet.

***Example**: Freya wants to create a set of goggles for each crewmember that will protect their eyes from the radiance of the Icteric sun. She tells the Firefly of her intentions – a crafting task would be able to make a single pair, but making so many definitely suits a project. The Firefly sets a six-track for her to fill to represent the scale of the task at hand. She notes it down on her character sheet, and will work on it in her spare time as the crew draws closer to their destination.*

Working on Projects

There are multiple ways to mark off the boxes of a project track - you'll likely use a mixture when working on your own projects, depending on the situation.

Time

You can often mark off a box just by spending some time working on a project, even without rolling; study, practice, and hard graft all have their place. Not all project tracks can be marked in this way, however.

***Example**: Freya draws up some plans and schematics for the goggles, making sure they'll work for the various bloodlines that are part of her crew.*

Rolls

A quicker but riskier way to make progress on a project is to roll for it, just like you'd roll for a normal action.

***Example**: Freya rolls with Sharps and her Craft skill, using the ship's workshop to give herself an advantage.*

Resources

Sometimes the best way to get a project moving along nicely is to spend one of your resources on it. Some projects, such as crafting, might require specific resources to be used before they're completed.

***Example**: Freya chips down some salvaged amber plating from a recent wreck to act as lenses, and one of her crewmates supplies pinwolf leather to work as straps and housing.*

Aid

Just because you started a project yourself doesn't mean you have to finish it alone - others may offer you their aid, giving their skills and expertise as a reward or favour.

***Example**: A trader they meet along the way has some impressive onyx spectacles of his own, and Freya gets friendly enough with him to study their design and ask about the process of making them.*

Projects in Play

Firefly: Well, you won't be moving into the ruin until the sun goes down, so this seems like a good time to give you a montage. Are there any tasks you want to attempt as you wait?

Laura: Not for me, I think I'm just going to relax. I'm pretty sure I've earned it after our run-in with those smugglers.

Todd: Yeah, I think you have. I'd love to relax, but I'm pretty conscious of this arm wound, so I'm going to choose clean it and bandage it as best I can.

Firefly: Probably a wise choice. Relaxing will clear a point of mire for you, Laura, and Todd that sounds like a Heal. You know how that works?

Todd: Yep.

Firefly: Great. Anyone else?

Kyllian: Well, the deck's covered in mothryn dust motes now, and I think I might be able to use those as a component. I'll collect some up, then head down to my lab alcove and see if I can concoct anything exciting. A salve, maybe?

Freya: Well, while they do that I'm going to keep an eye out for anything interesting we might pass. I don't think there's really a task for that... Can I just roll for it instead?

Firefly: Yes, that would work. Kyllian, I'm setting out a three-track for you, 'Possible Salve', and I'll mark the first box now. Right then! The engines growl pleasantly as you cut through the treetops. By sundown, you've...

Longer Montages

In most montage situations, a single task is enough to do whatever you need to do, an important or useful thing that passes the time until the next scene comes or the journey continues.

There are exceptions, though not many. When the crew are waiting for a particular event and have little else to do, taking multiple tasks to represent time spent idling could be appropriate. This is particularly useful in longer campaigns where the seasons change, as it's natural for wildsailors to hunker down in a settlement and work on their own projects (and basic survival) during the leafless months of the year.

In these situations, it might be worth taking two, or even three tasks as part of an extended montage.

Timing Extended Montages

In terms of real-world time, they're best used at the very end of a session. Montages have a way of dovetailing into new scenes based on the information characters acquire - with multiple tasks this information runs the risk of being overwhelming, so leaving a follow-up scene until the beginning of the next session gives the Firefly time to plan ahead a little and focus on the most important possibilities presented.

The Chitinomad's Bounty

CHAPTER 5
JOURNEYS

It took a few seconds for the engine to kick into gear, but when it did the entire village knew it; a lion-like roar of combusting chemicals and steam-driven pistons drowning out the rustle of the waves.

Locals shouted back and forth as they loaded crates, struggling to be heard over the noise. Gau sporelings skipped stones off the side of the dock, trying to bounce them off of branches and up onto the deck. Ships were a rarity here - the crew pretended not to notice the clattering as they checked their charts and marked out routes.

The territory wasn't a particularly harsh one, but that wasn't the point - every trip across the waves was a journey into the unknown, a flirtation with danger.

Elders looked on, silent, from their porches. The ship would return, those crates full of fresh herbs and foreign medicines.

... Or it wouldn't.

Traversing the Waves

Journeys move you from one place to another, usually by means of a ship. They also allow you to discover new locations and opportunities as you travel, and to define some truths about the wildsea itself.

It Starts With a Ship

The game tends to assume that you own a ship of your own in some form, but just in case you don't (or if attaining one is part of your personal story) we've added some information on how you might do that over the next few pages, as well as a quick primer on some of the elements of your ship that will naturally come up during a journey. *For a deeper explanation of the ship's features and mechanics, as well as the rules on how to create your own, head to page 162.*

Sequence of Play

Journeys tend to follow a particular sequence of events, laid out below and explained in more detail throughout the rest of this chapter.

Departure

Readying your ship to set sail as the Firefly creates Journey tracks for you to fill. This is a time for your crew to pick up cargo and passengers, hire undercrew to work for you, and choose where on the ship you'll station yourself for the duration of the journey.

Progress & Encounters

The choices you make as you travel allow your ship to progress through a journey, and may end up in you coming across encounters too - moments of tension or oddity that might require something as simple as a choice or as complex as a scene to deal with. This sequence of making progress and dealing with encounters repeats as your Journey track fills.

Arrival

Once the Journey track is full you sight your destination, then decide how to approach and what to do when you arrive. Ports are usually well-equipped to deal with a wildsailor's troubles, and arriving at one is a great opportunity to deal with any damage your ship (or crew) might have taken out on the waves.

Journey Examples

Before we delve into the specifics of crossing the sea, here are a few narrative examples of what you might find yourself doing out on the waves...

- Racing to make a trade meeting with the impatient captain of a merchant vessel
- Cutting your way through a particularly thorny patch of the tangle, beady-eyed squirrels watching as you struggle
- Hunting the famed Whitecollar Snare, a leviathan fox too beautiful to live
- Exchanging fire with a marauder submersible, unexpectedly risen next to you as you rested at anchor
- Churning and listing as ironspine cactus-spikes gouge at your hull
- Competing in a race against other ships, your hull and engines screaming at the strain
- Dredging up the wreckage of a pre-verdant vessel, pushed into the thrash by a recent rootquake
- Searching for a particular bounty-head, the eyes of your crew straining for a glimpse of their distinctive airship
- Smashing through a poorly erected pirate barricade, deck guns firing and chainsaw prow roaring
- Resting at anchor in the shade of a tallshank's crown, waiting for a storm to pass

Before You Depart...

... You're going to need a ship. Most traditional games of the Wildsea assume your crew starts with a ship of their own (which is made using the ship creation rules on page 166), but this might not always be the case. Your characters might be...

- Meeting for the first time and purchasing a ship of their own (as part of the story of the first session)
- Recovering from the loss of their previous ship, trying to work whatever jobs they can to barter for or construct a new vessel
- The crew on someone else's ship, likely an NPC captain
- Completely unprepared to sail the rustling waves, thrust into the business of wildsailing by unexpected events

But regardless of the specifics, finding a ship to call home will likely be your first priority if you start without one. The Wildsea is a game of travel and stories, after all, and your characters are referred to as the crew throughout these rules for a reason.

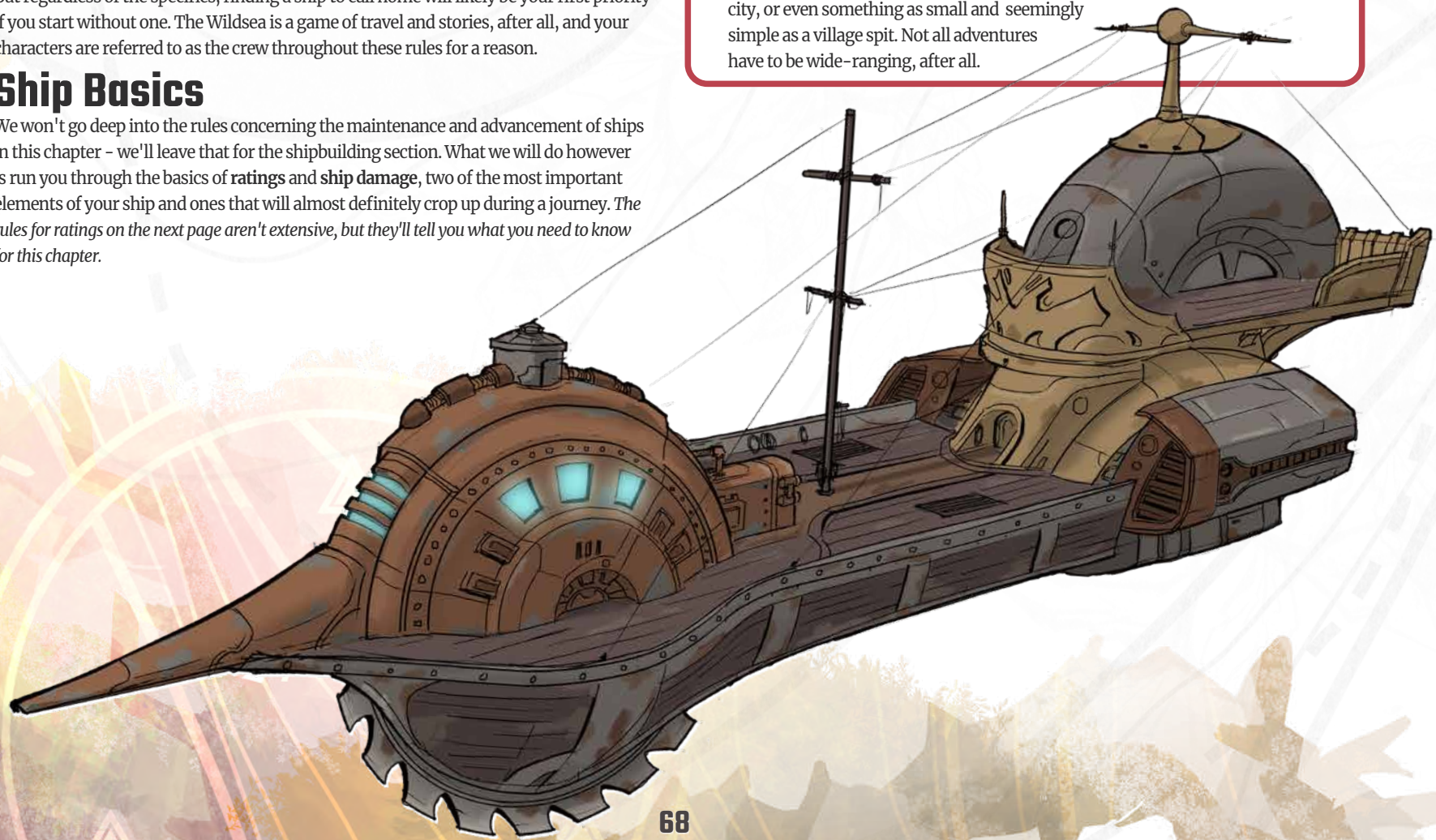
Ship Basics

We won't go deep into the rules concerning the maintenance and advancement of ships in this chapter - we'll leave that for the shipbuilding section. What we will do however is run you through the basics of **ratings** and **ship damage**, two of the most important elements of your ship and ones that will almost definitely crop up during a journey. *The rules for ratings on the next page aren't extensive, but they'll tell you what you need to know for this chapter.*

No Hull, No Deck, No Leading Edge [Option]

As mentioned to the left the Wildsea is a game of travel, novelty, and the bonds and growth of a crew. But it's also a game about stories, and if your group's story never takes you near a ship of your own... Well, we say good luck with it! But even if you decide to play without a ship, that doesn't mean you're not allowed to get out there and travel. You might consider...

- Hopping aboard or buying passage on other ships, acting as passengers yourself as you cross the waves in directions dictated by wants and whims outside of your own
- Taking advantage of vast inter-spit train networks built on rumbling platforms running through the waves (do these exist? They do if you need them!)
- Ignoring the waves and focusing on a single location - a range of mountains and the colonies atop them, or the innards of a bustling port-city, or even something as small and seemingly simple as a village spit. Not all adventures have to be wide-ranging, after all.



Ratings

Every ship has a set of **ratings**, tracks that describe a vessel's strengths and weaknesses. The six ratings are **Armour**, **Seals**, **Speed**, **Saws**, **Stealth** and **Tilt**. *You'll find more detailed information on these in chapter 8.*

Ratings Rolls

When the ship is **in danger** or **trying to overcome an obstacle**, the Firefly will often call for a **ratings roll** to determine the outcome of any manoeuvres.

Making these rolls under particularly difficult circumstances leads to a high likelihood of cut, especially if you're travelling at speed. You're also far more likely to cut when the ship is in a naturally hazardous area, such as deeper in the tangle than usual (or below).

To make a ratings roll, roll dice equal to the unmarked boxes of the rating in question and check the result on the table below. No edges, no skills, no advantages – it's all up to the ship and how you built it.

***Example**: The Justice Without's lookout informs the rest of the crew there's an obstruction ahead, some kind of venom-dripping flowers. They could give them a wide berth, but they're in a hurry – they rely on their Saws rating to see them through, rolling dice equal to the unmarked boxes on their saws track (4d6, in this case).*

Ratings Roll Results

6 **Triumph**
You bypass the obstacle safely.

5 **4** **Conflict**
You bypass the obstacle, but take a mark of damage to the rating.

3 **2** **1** **Disaster**
You fail to bypass the obstacle and also take damage to the rating.

Doubles **Twist**
An unexpected event in addition to the usual result that might involve the ship, the crew or the environment you're travelling in.

Ship Damage

Failing a **ratings roll**, moving through a particularly hazardous area of the waves, or simply being in the wrong place at the wrong time can lead to your ship becoming damaged. There are a few ways this can be represented mechanically, and when damage occurs the Firefly will let the crew know the unfortunate outcome they'll need to deal with.

Rating Damage

The most common form of damage treats the ship's ratings just like an aspect track; damage is **marked off of the most appropriate rating** (if you're rolling, likely the one you rolled with).

***Example**: The Justice Without is cutting through a bank of venomous spine-lilies as part of its journey. Its Saws roll comes up a conflict – it cuts through the obstruction, but not without cost. The Firefly rules that the venom of the lilies has reacted with the finish on its sawtooth prow, corroding the teeth and the chains that run them. The crew mark a point of damage to the Saws rating – next time they roll it they'll be rolling one fewer die than usual (3d6 as opposed to their usual 4d6).*

Ratings can be repaired while out at sea, but it'll often be difficult and resource-intensive. It's far more cost-effective to have your ship repaired in port if possible.

Structural Damage

Just as a character can take injuries, ships can take structural damage. This will likely render a room, armament, or fitting of the ship inoperable until it's fixed.

***Example**: The Justice Without is struck by a falling shard of something nacreous and unknown that lodges itself in the deck, piercing through the ceiling of the engine room. Tools are scattered and workbenches split – the room is impossible to use until the shard is removed.*

Structural damage is harder to fix than damage to the ratings, and if your ship takes it the Firefly will set a **Repair track** for you to fill. In the case above the Firefly might set a 3-box track to be filled as various repairs are made, which could come in the form of replacing tools, removing the shard or even remodelling the room around it.

Cargo Damage

By far the most terrifying outcome for the mercantile, damage taken out on a journey might well leave the vessel unscathed while ruining some of the cargo it holds.

***Example**: The Justice Without spends a leg of its journey in the clutches of a petulant living storm, pelted with a constant downpour. The ship survives without a scratch but a leak in the hold means that one of the pieces of cargo, a stack of pressed pre-V paper, is ruined.*

Broken cargo is usually impossible to repair (and deliveries of damaged merchandise are frowned upon), but a canny wildsailor might gather several resources from the remnants.

"Bloomtide!"

A drawn-out cry of elation & fear that set the crew scrambling for purchase wherever they could find it - at the railings, the tightly coiled anchor chains, the hulking arch of the central cannon. Only the captain stayed firm, pitching the ship around & holding tight at the wheel.

It hit moments later, a surge of blossom like a tidal wave, an elemental storm of petals & pollen lifting them up, carrying them on its crest. One league, two. Three.

Joyous throats turned hoarse before they came to rest.

Departure

The departure phase allows both players and Firefly to prepare for the journey ahead.

When getting ready to depart on a journey you should set your **destination**, make any **preparations** you might need and have each member of the crew choose their **station**. While you do this, the Firefly will create a set of **Journey tracks**.

Destination

Nobody heads out onto the wildsea without a very good reason. Your first point or order should be to set a destination that will mark the end of your journey, usually a port or settlement of some kind, but occasionally a creature you're hunting or a ship you're aiming to meet.

Setting a destination is as easy as stating your intentions out loud and agreeing on them as a group. For example...

- *"We're heading to Kyther, up North - there's an old steep there that owes us a favour."*
- *"We need pinwolf staccatomygdala to help Tzal cure the slowsight plague, probably a decent number of them. Time to find a pack of the bastards."*
- *"The priest-captain of the Dated Summit wants to meet us somewhere in Jawbone Straight, says we'll know the place when we see it."*

Changing Destinations

Not every journey goes as planned. Some would say that very few journeys go as planned, in fact. If your crew decide to change their destination for any reason, tell the Firefly so that they can make a new set of Journey tracks for you (more on those on the right).

Preparations

There are a few other things you might want to consider before leaving port. Some groups may want to treat this stage of departure as a montage, others as a scene, others as a simple checklist.

- Hiring extra gangs or officers for your undercrew
- Taking on passengers
- Picking up some cargo
- Picking up extra information on the surrounding waves, often from junctions, cartoikas, smokehouses, and shadow-springs
- Planning a route, usually to include or exclude certain areas

Undercrew & Passengers

Most ports will give you the opportunity to hire on new undercrew (usually at the cost of an initial payment of salvage and a nominal share of future earnings) or pick up a passenger or two (who will often pay their fare half up-front, half on delivery). Junctions and noticeboards are good places to pick up both.

Cargo & Information

Both usually cost, but can be invaluable in the right circumstances. Larger trade goods should be bought cheap for export and sold to places willing to pay top scratch. Information comes at a premium, but may translate into useful knowledge on hazards that might be faced or areas to avoid.

Route Planning

Only available if you have local knowledge at hand (such as from a local captain or a cartoika) and a chart to consume, planning your route in advance will give you a shorter, safer journey with a number of options (supplied by the Firefly) of where you might avoid or drop by. For example...

The crew of the Sokoliov find a cartoika, a map-house full of information on the local waves. By consuming a chart of their own they plan their route, the Firefly informing them of a wondrous tallshank, the common routes of some mothryn assassins, a floating bazaar, and a roach-river. They can choose to encounter or avoid these for sure.

Stations

For optimal operation of a ship, certain stations have to be manned, but there are other positions a crewmember can keep that allow them particular options or opportunities during a journey. We'll keep the details brief here and delve into them when relevant over the next few pages, but before the ship leaves port, your crew should decide if anyone is...

At the Helm Essential

When **at the helm,** you control the ship's speed and direction.

On Watch Essential

When **on watch,** you roll to see what the ship is about to encounter as the journey progresses.

Tending the Engine Optional

When **tending the engine,** you have the option of overloading it with fuel for a burst of speed if necessary.

Cartographising Optional

When **cartographising,** you keep a look out for landmarks and distinctive places, using them to sketch out a new chart.

Watching the Weather Optional

When **watching the weather,** you gain some idea of what future weather conditions will be like based on your meteorological and environmental assessments.

Crewmembers not at a particular station are assumed to be busying themselves with other small tasks around the ship.

Journey Tracks

As you prepare to depart the Firefly will set a number of hidden tracks for your journey - always a Progress track, but sometimes a few others too. *Advice on track lengths for Fireflies is found on page 196.*

Progress

The essential journey-related track, **marked every time the ship makes progress toward their goal**. Once the last box on the progress track is marked, you've reached your destination. The length of a Progress track is decided by the Firefly based on your proposed route - taking a direct path will make it shorter, swinging out of your way to avoid dangers or make extra stops will make it longer.

Risk

Set when you're travelling through particularly dangerous territory, even for the wildsea. Risk tracks are marked differently depending on the nature of the threat; a powerful oncoming storm might get marked when you drop anchor, for example, whereas a period of stillness and quiet might be just what you need to clear a box when pursued by a predator or pirate band.

Pathfinding

Only used if someone is cartographising during the journey, a Pathfinding track fills every time a significant landmark is sighted (the cartographer should point out when they're noting a landmark down). When it's complete, the crewmember acting as cartographer is rewarded with a chart relevant to the area they're travelling through.

Riot

A track used to measure the discomfort and mutinous feelings of the undercrew, passengers on board, and sometimes even companions. Hardly ever necessary unless they're being taken into extreme danger, suffer heavy losses or disagree with the crew's moral stances and the actions they're expected to perform.

Departure in Play

Firefly: The engineers weren't lying - your ship looks almost as good as new, the gouges across the hull firmly patched and painted.

Freya: I think that's our cue to leave then. Does that work for everyone?

Todd: Hell yes, it's time to move on. We've got a hold full of cargo we can't shift here, so it's time to find somewhere we can.

Firefly: A journey it is then! Departure phase first, people.

Kyllian: I think we'll head back to Rao Ze. It's a rough place, but we'll be able to trade just about anything if we get to Marrow.

Laura: Solid plan, I'm with it. I'm going to take a cursory look around the dock as well, see if there's any passengers we could pick up who want to head that way.

Freya: And I'm going to burn a whisper, see if I can get a good idea of the weather for the next few days.

Firefly: Fair enough. Anything you want to hit or avoid on the way to Marrow?

Kyllian: Yeah, that parasitic fungal area we bypassed on the way in. I think if we go straight through it this time -

Todd: Come on, really?

Kyllian: Hear me out! I could pick up some specimens that might help me make better medicines, and we'll get to Marrow faster.

Laura: Okay... I guess we're ready then.

Firefly: And your tracks are too, Progress and Risk. I'm ready when you are.

Progress

Once you're out on the waves, the narrative relies on your choices and dice rolls to progress. Each member of the crew will take turns **at the helm** and **on watch** (you can determine the order yourself).

At the Helm

When you take the helm you have direct control over the ship, and can choose one of the following three options - **Cut a Path**, **Forge Ahead**, or **Drop Anchor**. Each choice has both narrative and mechanical consequences.

CUT A PATH

- **Narrative**: You travel at a decent speed while keeping the ship and crew as safe as possible, and give whoever is on **watch** a good chance of spotting oddities early.
- **Mechanical**: You mark a single box on your Progress track. When the **watch roll** is made you can usually choose to encounter whatever is sighted, or steer clear of it without any problems.

FORGE AHEAD

- **Narrative**: Your passage across the waves is rough but swift, the roar of engines and cracking of branches heralding your arrival. Watch is almost a formality - you have little chance of coming within visual range of anything without being spotted yourself.
- **Mechanical**: You can mark two boxes on your Progress track. When a **watch roll** is made, you'll usually blunder straight into whatever encounter is rolled, or damage your ship trying to avoid it.

DROP ANCHOR

- **Narrative**: The ship stops so everyone on board can rest with minimal fear of interruption. The undercrew take over **watch** duties, keeping their eyes out for dangers to the ship. This is the safest way to spend the night-time hours, and a great opportunity to work on personal projects and ship repairs.
- **Mechanical**: You and your crew have time to take a montage while the ship is at rest. The undercrew **keep watch** for danger, and no other watch is rolled.

Challenging Terrain

Some areas of the wildsea are more difficult to traverse than others, especially for certain types of ship. A vessel that relies on a chainsaw-type prow might find a thicket of iron-hard vines almost impossible to traverse, whereas one with centipedal legs could pick its way across with no problem at all, for example.

When cutting a path or forging ahead in challenging terrain, the character at the helm may have to make an additional **ratings roll** to determine whether they manage to make any progress. More information on these rolls can be found in the encounters section of this chapter.

On Watch

As one player is deciding which option to pick at the helm, another should be putting their character **on watch**. When it's your watch, you decide whether you're going to spend some of your resources to make a **discovery**, or to leave things up to chance and make a **watch roll**.

Watch Rolls & Threat

If you decide to make a **watch roll, roll a single d6** and check the result against the table below to determine what your character has spotted. The result of your roll is open for everyone to see, but you won't know the specifics of the encounter until it's introduced by the Firefly (check the table below for the result of this roll).

While the player on **watch** explains their discovery or rolls to determine what the crew encounter, the Firefly also **rolls 1d6** to determine the level of potential threat. A result of 6 represents a danger-free opportunity, a 5 or 4 gives a hazardous encounter with a useful payoff, and a 3, 2 or 1 indicates that there's an immediate danger to the crew with little payoff. The result of the Firefly's threat roll is **hidden**, but owning a chart of the area you're travelling through makes travel a little safer - **in these circumstances, the Firefly rolls 2d6 and takes the higher result**.

Watch Roll Results

6 Peace

An entire watch passing without a sighting of anything out of the ordinary. You might experience...

- A watch so uneventful you have time to take a **montage**. Useful for healing and repairing.
- A **meeting** called by one of the crew or undercrew, a time to exchange information and make plans.
- A chance for one of the crew to tell a **tall tale**, allowing another crewmate to gain a whisper.
- A stretch of calm, ripe for the breaking - create a **tree-shanty** to lift spirits and learn about the world.
- A problem or event concerning the **undercrew**, such as a fight, a sickness, or a personal discovery.
- A time for **reflection**, confronting and coming to terms with your actions. Usually heals mire.

5 4 Order

An encounter with one of the various cultures living across the wildsea. You might experience...

- A **ship** passing within hailing distance, anything from a trading ship to bug-fishers to pirates.
- The discovery of an **outpost**, usually supplying a nearby port (such as a drilling rig, farm or refinery).
- A **survivor** of some terrible disaster, stranded and waiting to be rescued.
- A **wreck** or **ruin**, a remnant of past expansion, now abandoned and ripe for salvaging.
- A **cache** of cargo or supplies, left by those trying to make the sea a little safer... or by smugglers.
- A sign of **conspiracy**, perhaps pointing to an impressive secret or shadowed truth.

3 2 1 Nature

An encounter with something born of the wild unknown, or a feature of the sea. You might experience...

- A change in the **weather**, affecting the sky above, the branches below, or both.
- A natural **feature** of the rustling waves. Useful for orientation when pathfinding and mapmaking.
- A **wonder** of the waves, a sight that fills the crew with hope. Heals mire.
- A **horror** of the wilds, an experience that leaves a lasting scar. Marks mire.
- An unsettled place, sturdy enough to moor your ship - **landfall**. Useful for finding resources.
- A sighting of (or tussle with) the **true wilds**, in the form of a plant, creature, or force of nature.

Progress in Play

Firefly: You pull out of the port, squirrel-gulls and dragonflies scattering in your path. Who's at the helm and who's on watch?

Todd: I'll take the helm first, I think. And Kyllian...?

Kyllian: Yep, I'll take watch. We want to make the best time possible, right? At least until we've reached that fungal stretch.

Todd: Yeah, but we don't know these waves like the one back home. We'll Cut a Path for now.

Firefly: Got it! The engine roars and the sawprow kicks up a spray of broken branches and torn leaves around you. I'm marking a box on your Progress track.

Kyllian: Okay, and for my watch roll I get... a 3. That's nature, right?

Firefly: It is indeed. And let me roll the threat... Okay, gotcha.

Laura: You don't tell us that, right?

Firefly: That's right. What I can tell you is that after a few hours of swift progress, Kyllian, you spot something - a dash of red among the waves ahead. You're moving fast, but not so fast that you can't warn Todd.

Kyllian: Yep, I raise a hand and let him know there's something close by. What is it?

Firefly: It's a pitcher plant, a huge one... You can only see the curling lips of its mouth, but from the size of it you reckon the chamber it leads to could hold your ship several times over.

Discoveries

Choosing to make a **discovery** while on **watch** allows you some creative input into a newly discovered location. As long as the location is something that might be recorded on a map or chart, it's viable as a discovery.

When you make a discovery, the Firefly still makes a **threat roll**. You may have narrative agency over what the location contains, but you still don't know what condition you'll find it in.

Making a Discovery

To make a discovery, first choose one of your charts. This will give you some information about the locale, and possibly the kinds of resources you'll find there (using a 'Salt-Stained Chart', for example, might imply the discovery is near a saltwater waterfall).

Once you've chosen a chart, the next step is to add one of your whispers. It's these wild words that breathe life into the discovery - they allow you to describe an event, a cultural facet, or a happening in the location you've discovered. The whisper 'A Welcoming Fleet', for example, might imply there's a rootless family moored in the area, or a naval battle in progress with one side looking for help).

Both the chart and whisper are lost during this process.

Discovery Examples

A Bronze Inscription + Toothstorm might lead to...

- An ancient metal temple with a rowdy tooth-selling bazaar
- A huge copper-coloured plant with a ravenous maw
- A living storm chained to an ancient obelisk

A Tattered Map + Howls on the Wind might lead to...

- A pinwolf graveyard
- A pre-verdant library settled by a strange cult
- A trade channel with a constant noisy gale

A Hasty Starchart + Never Alone Again might lead to...

- An abandoned mountaintop island with an eerily silent monastery
- A deep rift filled with phosphorescent fungal constellations
- A floating city-port with a warm, welcoming atmosphere

And, While You Make Progress...

Taking the helm and going **on watch** are essential, but there are other stations that crewmembers might fill - they're not strictly necessary to the running of the ship, but they can make a journey much easier than it would otherwise be.

Tending the Engine

When you're stationed at the engine you have three choices that you can make, usually in conjunction with whoever is **at the helm**. The first is to make minor adjustments in the engine room, the second to give your ship a burst of speed and the third to run more quietly than usual.

TEND TO THE ENGINE

- **Narrative**: A quick fix here, an adjustment of valves there. You're not really *doing* much, but you're poised to act in case anything goes wrong.
- **Mechanical**: Doesn't use a resource or give any additional benefits as you travel, but allows you to immediately hijack focus if there are any problems or issues relating to the engine to attempt an instant fix or bypass.

OVERLOAD THE ENGINE

- **Narrative**: You shovel extra fuel into the engine, probably much past its technical capacity. The burst of power it gives you is impressive, but unsustainable.
- **Mechanical**: Uses a resource suitable for fuel. Either **increase impact** on a roll made to take advantage of the ship's temporary power or speed, or mark an additional box on the Journey track while moving.

MUFFLE THE ENGINE

- **Narrative**: You surround the engine with bedding and whatever else is to hand - it's not perfect, and it doesn't reduce the noise of the bite, but it means you'll be able to travel quieter than your usual.
- **Mechanical**: Uses a soft, muffling resource. Either **increase impact** on a roll made to take advantage on the ship's new quieter profile or stealthily leave an area without making a roll (only if you haven't yet been spotted).

Cartographising

Cartographising allows you to slowly create a chart of the area you're travelling though - the Firefly sets a Pathfinding track, and every time you find a particularly important landmark (such as an island, a spit, a horror, or a wonder) that track gets marked. When the track is fully marked you gain a chart - add it to your resources and name it after the area you're passing through, or something related to one of the landmarks (a Chart of the Rustling Wastes, for example, or Map of the Reften Surrounds).

Watching the Weather

Just as important as watching the waves, watching the skies clues you in to weather changes before they happen, allowing you to plan for or avoid dangerous weather. When you're watching the weather, roll 1d6 just as if you were on a normal watch, but use the table on the right to read your results...

Weather-Watching Results

6

Clear Skies

Whatever the weather was doing before, it clears. For the next part of your journey, you might have...

- A period of comfortable sunshine that brings easy-to-hunt creatures to the surface.
- A light rain followed by a blossoming of flowers and ripening of fruits.
- A strong but pleasant wind that clears away sporeclouds and mists and increases distance visibility.

5
4

Continuation

The weather continues as it is, for good or ill - storms rage, periods of uncomfortable warmth drag on or, if you're lucky, perfect sailing conditions persist.

3
2
1

A Change for the Worse

The weather is about to turn against you. For the next part of your journey, you might have...

- Driving rain or hail that lowers visibility and makes it harder to perform actions out on deck.
- Blazing sunshine that threatens heatstroke, evaporates liquids, and brings out hordes of stinging insects.
- A living storm or other bizarre weather phenomenon bearing down on you, hateful and hankering.

Encounters

Once your watch roll is made, the Firefly will describe a potential encounter. It's up to you as a crew to decide whether you engage with the encounter or not.

Avoiding an Encounter

If you don't like the look of what your watcher spotted, or have more pressing matters to attend to, you can try to avoid the encounter. In some cases, this is as easy as steering well clear of whatever it is - giving a newly discovered island a wide berth, for example. Your journey continues and you choose a new pilot and watcher, no harm done.

In others you might have more trouble. You may need to make a **ratings roll** to escape a pursuing ship, or sacrifice a specimen to distract a predator. Avoiding an encounter is far harder when **Forging Ahead**, as your speed will usually carry you right into the middle of it and swing the focus of play onto the encounter itself.

Engaging with an Encounter

Engaging with encounters can be both lucrative and dangerous. The Firefly will likely give clues as to the relative threat of an encounter, as they introduce it, but you'll never know for sure until you engage. If you do decide to engage with the encounter it'll usually take the form of a **choice**, a **challenge**, or a **scene**.

Choice Encounters

Brief and simple, the outcome of the encounter will depend on your choice. The Firefly will provide you with options, and it's up to you as a crew to pick your course.

Example: Your travels are interrupted by a flare on the horizon, illuminating the evening sky. Do you investigate, and risk an ambush or trick, or do you sail on by and risk mire, or the ire of your undercrew, as you ignore a potential distress call?

Challenge Encounters

Usually used when there's a threat of some kind to your ship. The Firefly will ask the player at the helm to make a **ratings roll** that best fits the situation, and the outcome will depend on the result of the roll.

*Example: A nearby ship launches a salvo at you from their shrapnel cannons. The Firefly asks for a ratings roll to see if it can be avoided, or how badly the ship will be damaged - maybe **Speed** to avoid the worst of it, or **Armour** to tank the incoming damage, or **Tilt** to dive quickly beneath the thrash to avoid the shot.*

Scene Encounters

Used most often when an encounter involves leaving your ship, in these cases you'll be plunged into a new scene entirely. Make the most of your time during these scene encounters, as it may be difficult to return once the journey is done.

Example: The wildsailor on watch spies a broken-down tower off to the east, silhouetted drunkenly against the horizon. Drawing closer, you can see signs of habitation there, colourful tents and ropeways fastened to the sloping structure, and a port at thrash-level with a few ships docked. This might be a good place to pick up cargo or information, if you have the time to dock...

Encounters in Play

Firefly: The pitcher's maw quivers as you draw closer. What are you intending to do?

Laura: I mean, on the one hand there's bound to be some kind of treasure in there. On the other, it'll be from the wrecks of ships just like ours.

Freya: Right... And it's not like we don't have cargo already, and places to be.

Laura: Still, though...

Freya: You want to do it, don't you? You want to investigate the giant ship-eating plant.

Laura: I heft my jagserry up, testing the edge of the blade with my thumb and smile at Freya. Yeah, I definitely do.

Kyllian: If this goes wrong, you're going to have to make it up to us somehow.

Laura: Only if we survive!

Freya: That... doesn't reassure me. But okay, I'm in.

Todd: Me too. Let's head as close to this thing as we can without putting ourselves in danger.

Firefly: Okay, well, I'm going to ask a ratings roll for that. Stealth, if you could.

Todd: We are not the stealthiest ship, but... Okay, that's a 2, a 3 and a 5. Conflict.

Firefly: Ha, okay. Well, you manage to quiet your engine enough to get alongside the pitcher without being dragged in and you were right - there are ship hulls down there. But... you don't entirely escape notice. You catch a glimpse of something large and spiderlike in the darkness of the pitcher's gut, which hisses before withdrawing into a sizeable wreck. It knows you're there, and it's waiting.

Laura: Fighting spider monsters in the belly of a giant pitcher plant? This is my kind of encounter.

Arrival

When your **Progress** track is filled, you've reached your destination and the journey ends. The Firefly will describe the port you've arrived at, and you'll be able to disembark safely (hopefully). Whether you pull into port, drop anchor, signal for a ferry-vessel, or clamber over branches toward your destination is up to you.

Portside

Once you're portside you should tend to your needs, unless you have other pressing story-based concerns.

Healing

Few journeys end without the crew suffering some kind of damage. While a ship's surgeon can patch up most injuries and rid your aspects of marks, a portside surgeon (when paid with resources) will likely do a more thorough job, with cleaner facilities, and without requiring a roll.

Relaxation

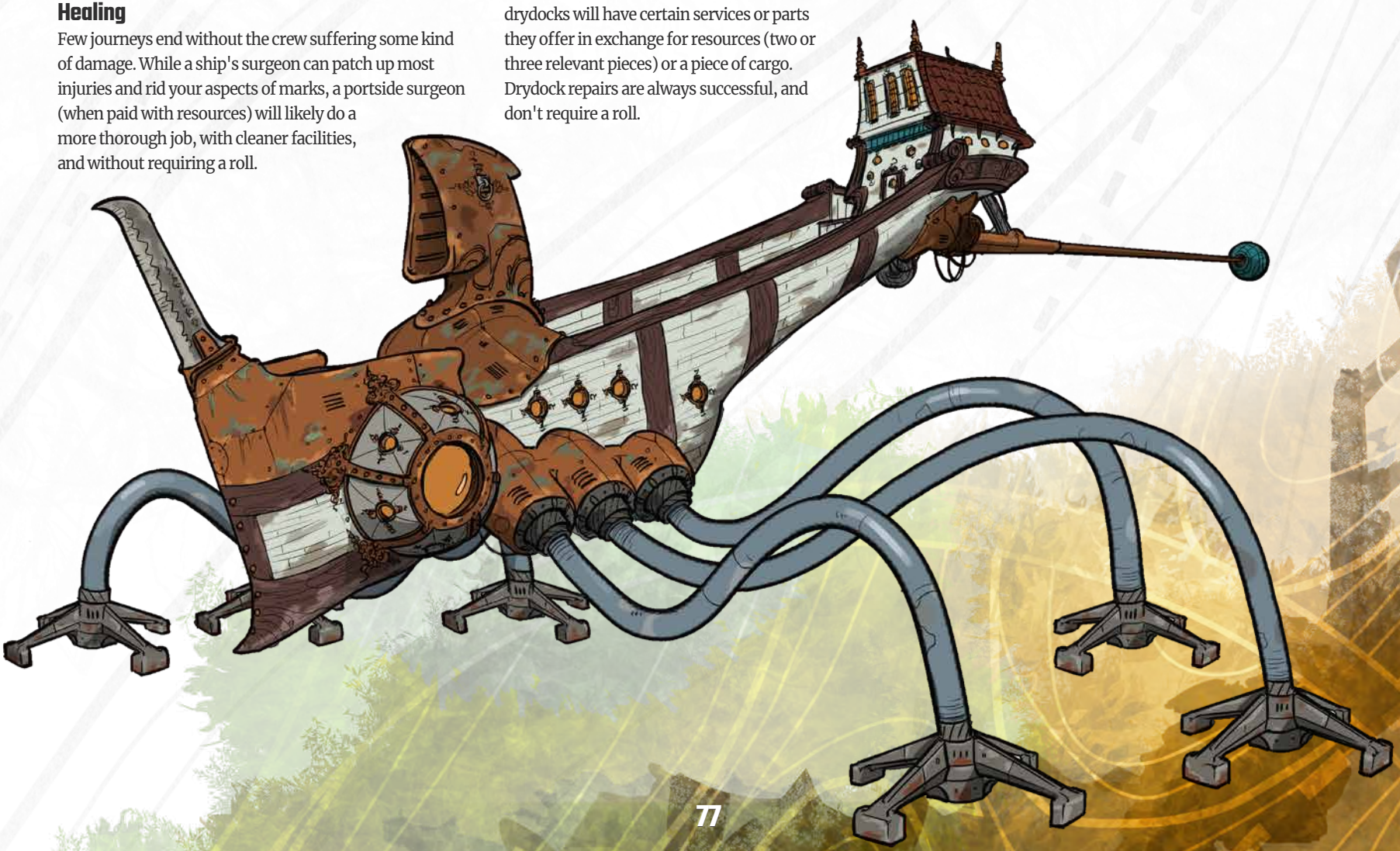
Mire tends to accrue faster out on the open waves, those dark thoughts sloshing around inside your brainpan, churned up by the constant danger and lack of civilization. Dealing with it in ports is usually a lot easier than dealing with it out on the waves, by seeking out a junction to drink in, a smokehouse to indulge vices or a shadow-spring for a long, hot bath.

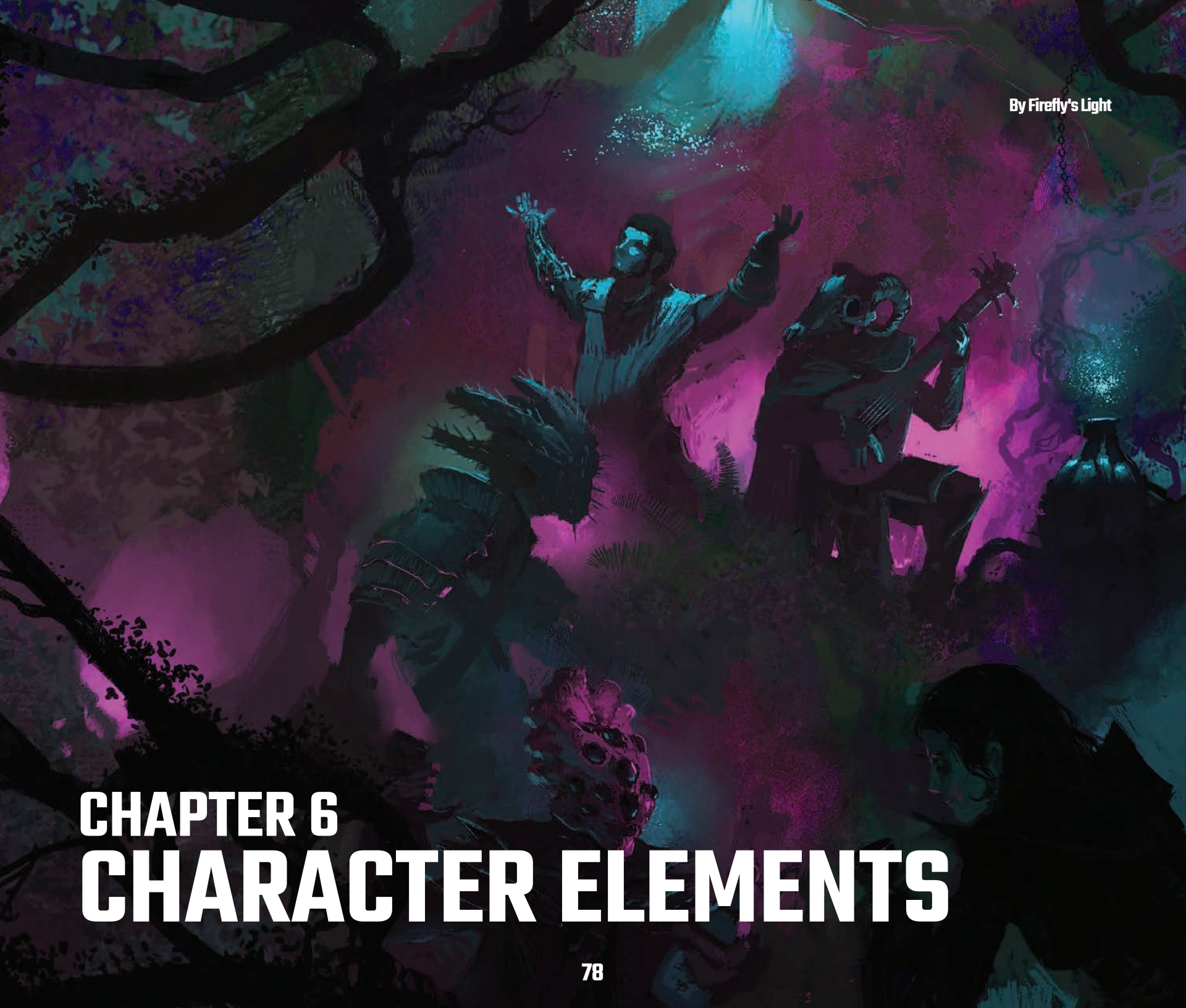
Drydock

Repairs, alterations, and additions can be made to your ship at a drydock, though they come at a price. Most drydocks will have certain services or parts they offer in exchange for resources (two or three relevant pieces) or a piece of cargo. Drydock repairs are always successful, and don't require a roll.

Ship Security

Having your ship stolen every time you leave it unattended to engage in portside scenes and exploration would be terribly, terribly dull. In all but the most piratical and morally bankrupt ports, assume that leaving some of your undercrew behind will keep your ship safe from harm. Alternatively, assure your ship is taken care of by the dockworkers by buying their attention with a resource or **favour**.





By Firefly's Light

CHAPTER 6
CHARACTER ELEMENTS

"You're far from perfect."

Kallyridge looked from the spore-streaked paperwork in her hands to the crestfallen applicant on the dock below her. The few feet between them may as well have been miles - the gulf between employment and yet more wasted time.

"You were the navigator on the Red Sparrow, and again on the Calumnist, and then a third time on the Southern Dawn." The applicant nodded. "Three ships. One torn apart by lackey-thorn, one lost after cutting through the midst of a pirate war, and one sent to the Under-Eaves with all hands on board... except you."

The applicant nodded again. Kallyridge groaned.

"You don't see a pattern there?"

The applicant shrugged.

"At the very least, I'm tenacious."

Character Background

All characters in the Wildsea are a combination of three main elements - a **bloodline**, an **origin**, and a **post**.

A **bloodline** sets your character's species, letting the rest of the table know what you are in the most basic sense (especially physically). An **origin** determines how your character lived their early life, letting the rest of the table get a handle on the kind of culture you're most used to. A **post** describes the kind of niche your character fills within the crew, the particular set of skills that make them valuable as a wildsailor.

The combination of your bloodline, origin and post is referred to as your character's **background**. Your background can have a big influence on how your character interacts with the world, and how the world will treat them in turn. Some settlements may be easier to explore for characters of a particular bloodline (such as the high hanging buildings of tzelicrae cities), or the citizens wowed by someone with the talent to take a particular post (such as the innate respect a frontier town might pay to a hacker). Each choice you make carries with it a narrative risk and reward.

The Rest of this Chapter

The bloodlines, origins, and posts on offer are covered in detail in the next chapter. The rest of this chapter is devoted to running over the elements that all characters share: the information on a character sheet.

But I Want to Make a Character Now!

If you're the kind of player that wants to dive right in and learn by trial and error at the table, that's entirely fine! At the start of the next chapter you'll find information on how to make your character (using either quickstart or freeform rules).

Narrative Background

Just because your character's background is a set of mechanical choices, doesn't mean they can't also have fictive or narrative impulses and importance behind them. When coming up with a concept for your character, it can often help to tie it to elements of the world that have piqued your interest.

For example, if you like the idea of chop-stations, you might style your character as an ex-butcher. Certain background choices could definitely help (the char and hacker posts, for example), but no matter what you choose, that history with the chop-stations can have an impact on your character's ongoing story.

Or maybe you want to bring a sense of theatrical magic to the waves, even if it's got nothing to do with arconautics or spirituality. You might make some kind of stage magician, a ship-based wanderer that puts on shows in exchange for food, drink, and information in every port they stop at, cleverly using the resources you have at hand to perform tricks and illusions.

And if you're playing in a particular area of the wildsea, such as one of the Reaches detailed in chapter 11 of this book, you might consider having your character be a member of one of the factions found there. You might play a goldsighted mercenary working for the Writlings, a disaffected engineer from the depths of the hearth, or an impossibly old ektus holding on to the ancient secrets of the tricenturi.

Edges

Edges represent the way your character is most used to solving problems and tackling challenges, the approaches they're usually the most effective with. When you attempt something using an edge you're in your element – when rolling, you can **add 1d6 to your dice pool**.

Edges also add a lot of **narrative flavour** to the rest of an **action roll**, changing the way a skill or aspect gets used in play. Rolling to gather specimens using the **Tides** edge might mean you're focusing on quality, whereas rolling with **Veils** might let you gather those specimens without letting anyone else know, or without disturbing local wildlife.

The edges on offer are **Grace**, **Iron**, **Instinct**, **Sharps**, **Teeth**, **Tides,** and **Veils**.

Grace

An edge of elegance, precision, & agility

You're at your best when you're free to move, using superior mobility and unexpected speed to run rings around a problem. Grace gives you the edge when dodging and balancing, performing acrobatic feats, and attacking with lighter weapons.

Iron

An edge of force, determination, & willpower

You're at your best when relying on direct action, using sheer grit to carry you through. Iron is often used for weathering incoming damage, keeping your cool in tense situations, imposing your will on others, and attacking with heavier weapons.

Instinct

An edge of sense, intuition, & reaction

You're at your best when going with the flow, acting without a plan, and trusting either your gut or your body's natural senses. Instinct is often used to react to unexpected events and hazards, learn more about the world around you, and connect with the weirder elements of the waves.

Sharps

An edge of logic, wit, & planning

You're at your best when you can bring intelligence and preparation to bear, relying on the knowledge that your mind (or tongue) are sharper than any blade. Sharps is often used to solve problems, untangle complexities, design or create new objects, and outmanoeuvre others in verbal conflicts.

Teeth

An edge of savagery, passion, & destruction

You're at your best when letting loose, exposing the wilder parts of your nature, and damning the consequences. Teeth is often used to inflict fear on others, to destroy objects and relationships, to disregard convention, and to make brutal, uncompromising attacks.

Tides

An edge of exploration, learning, & lore

You're at your best when relying on your knowledge of the waves, the quirks and secrets of the wildsea that others might write off as mere folktales. Tides is often used for unearthing secrets and mysteries, spinning engaging tales, charting new courses, and steering ships.

Veils

An edge of shadows, ciphers, & secrecy

You're at your best when your influence is near-impossible to detect, managing situations from behind the scenes. Veils is often used to go undetected or cover your tracks, to backstab and betray, and to manipulate others in both social and combat situations.

Using Edges

While the primary effects of your edges are easy to grasp (mechanically to add 1d6 to your dice pool, narratively to flavour an action you're taking), they serve a few other functions as well. Your edges are...

Flexible

Don't fall into the trap of thinking that certain edges are **required** for certain things – that's not how they work. You can easily swing Iron, Grace, or Teeth to add to a roll made to attack, but Tides might apply if you have some knowledge of the target you're exploiting, or Sharps if you're using some pre-planned tactic, or Veils if you're lining up a backstab, or even Instinct if you're just launching yourself into a dangerous situation without any idea of how it'll turn out!

Informative

If you're ever at a loss for what to do in an unfamiliar situation, look to your edges for a hint. Even if you don't have a skill that's appropriate, if one of your edges can come into play that gives you the single d6, you need to start putting together an action roll.

Reliable

Edges are broad and permissive by design, intended to encapsulate a wide variety of behaviours and situations. If you're attempting something, you'll almost always be using an edge to help you out unless it's *completely* out of your wheelhouse.

Edges in Play

Firefly: The councillor leans back in his chair, multi-jointed fingers steepled. It can be hard to read the expression on an ironbound's face, but he looks pretty unimpressed by your arguments.

Kyllian: Well, unimpressed or not, we need access to that tower. We could beg, but...

Laura: Screw that - we might not be the most convincing crew when it comes to fancy words, but we have Todd. You want to talk some sense into him?

Todd: With pleasure!

Firefly: Alright Todd, I know you're usually more the hammer-first type, but are you treating this as a social roll?

Todd: That I am. I *was* thinking of using Iron - just trying to convince the guy through sheer force of will... but he's an ironbound, and a city councillor. He's probably sat there through thousands of angry tirades.

Firefly: Yeah, you're onto something there. If you just tried to convince him straight-out, you'd be taking cut - maybe even lowered impact.

Laura: Oh, Teeth then? Are we going to try to threaten this guy into submission?

Todd: Not exactly. Tides.

Firefly: Tides?

Todd: That's right. Tides and Break, to be more precise. I'm not going to try to convince this guy that he should let us in because we're angry, or desperate. I'm just going to point out that I know councillors are elected by popular vote here, and I also know how long it'll take until that tower falls... and I know how to whisper words in the right ears about the councillor that could have stopped it.

Firefly: ... Damn. No cut, Todd. Make your pool.

Malligan's was the kind of place you went to find people with many blades & few scruples, somewhere between training ground, alehouse, & butchery. The smell hit her like a hammer, sweat & spice. A familiar bouquet.

The clientele were a rough sort, but honest in their own way - they dealt in blood & salvage, & they were comfortable with it. Junkers played cards with dissident cultists, pirates drank alongside pirate-hunters. Malligan brooked no bloodshed within her walls, less there was money riding on it.

Freya nodded to one scarred marauder, gave a half-mocking salute to a retired captain in one of the corners. This place fit her crew like a glove.

Skills

Skills are areas in which your character has training or a natural advantage, making it more likely for you to succeed when taking related actions. The skills on offer are **Brace**, **Break**, **Concoct**, **Cook**, **Delve**, **Flourish**, **Hack**, **Harvest**, **Hunt**, **Outwit**, **Rattle**, **Scavenge**, **Sense**, **Study**, **Sway**, **Tend**, **Vault,** and **Wavewalk**.

Skill Flexibility

Skills on the wildsea aren't quite as broadly applied as **edges**, but many can still be used in a wide variety of situations. Each of the skill write-ups gives you bullet-pointed examples of what they can be used for in-game, but **these are by no means your limits** - if you can think of a clever use of a skill that fits the situation, we encourage you to attempt it!

BRACE

A skill of defence, hard-headedness, and immobility. Use Brace to weather the ravages of weather, exhaustion, and those that want to see you fall. *This might take the form of...*

- Clinging to life in the toughest situations
- Shrugging off attempts to manipulate or confuse you
- Blocking or parrying an incoming attack
- Keeping your footing through a storm or rootquake
- Shouldering your way through a crowd

BREAK

A skill of fragments, shockwaves, and hammer-blows. Use Break to smash through stone, metal, and machinery, working against the efforts of civilization. *This might take the form of...*

- Reducing a building or obstacle to rubble
- Charting a course through ruins and wreckage
- Relying on hammers and fists in a skirmish
- Assessing a structure's stability and weak points
- Setting and disarming explosives

CONCOCT

A skill of reactions, essences, and deeper understanding. Use Concoct to collect or distill chemicals, and to unpick the mysteries surrounding the mutative potential of crezzerin. *This might take the form of...*

- Creating and administering potions and poisons
- Catalyzing unstable alchemical elements
- Mulling hearty brews for healing or relaxation
- Analyzing and altering potential ingredients
- Parsing the essence of the crezzer-tinged

COOK

A skill of spices and speculation, meats and fruits and heat. Use Cook to prepare meals, brew herbal drinks or alcohol, and render specimens into their most valuable parts. *This might take the form of...*

- Using specimens to create meals and beverages
- Developing bolstering dishes to prepare for danger
- Turning spices and seasoning into weapons of war
- Handling heat sources safely in tense situations
- Butchering, rendering, and storing specimens

DELVE

A skill of dust, remnants, and forgotten ways. Use Delve to explore the ruins of the old world, traversing barriers and unearthing secrets. *This might take the form of...*

- Abseiling down a collapsing passageway
- Squeezing through narrow spaces and collapses
- Cracking locks and disarming ancient traps
- Scrambling through wreckage and detritus at speed
- Interpreting pre-verdant art and artefacts

FLOURISH

A skill of showmanship, rhythm, and performance. Use Flourish to enchant, impress, or dazzle those around you, worming your way into their heart with words and deeds. *This might take the form of...*

- Playing songs or telling stories with dramatic flair
- Dressing or acting to stand out and be noticed
- Moving with poise, flow, and balance
- Creating art that stirs the soul
- Inking skin with memories of triumph and loss

HACK

A skill of sweat, sap, and serrated blades. Use Hack to carve a path right through the wilderness of the rustling waves, imposing order on chaotic growth. *This might take the form of...*

- Chopping or slicing your way through the wilds
- Charting a course through snarled, confusing waves
- Rushing into combat with axes, saws, and blades
- Identifying the hazards of an unknown plant
- Spinning tales of petalled leviathans and living rifts

HARVEST

A skill of reaping, gleaning, and culling. Use Harvest to gather fruits, flowers, and other edibles from the wild waves, and to understand the flow and cycles of nature. *This might take the form of...*

- Locating and collecting useful specimens
- Identifying plants and their properties at a glance
- Noticing breaks and oddities in the wilds around you
- Understanding and exploiting natural phenomena
- Shepherding spores, sprouts, and insects

HUNT

A skill of observation, marksmanship, and precise action. Use Hunt to turn the tables on the sea's many predators, and pick the best of their trophies. *This might take the form of...*

- Tracking effectively across hostile terrain
- Lining up shots from afar in a fight
- Reeling off information about beasts you've bested
- Rendering kills into useful specimens
- Showing off trophies and hard-won scars

OUTWIT

A skill of shadows and secrets well-kept. Use Outwit to avoid threats, or to move them right to where you want them. *This might take the form of...*

- Moving quickly and quietly
- Surprising opponents before melting away again
- Infiltrating spaces that are definitely off limits
- Disguising your voice, scent, or even your whole self
- Talking smoothly and lying disarmingly

RATTLE

A skill of mending, maintenance, and adaptation. Use Rattle to weave oddments and salvage into workable equipment in a pinch, or to tinker with gear and objects. *This might take the form of...*

- Using salvage to repair damaged gear
- Understanding schematics and blueprints
- Spewing confusing jargon or incisive questions
- Crafting temporary gear with odds and ends
- Patching up a ship to keep it running 'til next port

SCAVENGE

A skill of searching, spit, and polish. Use Scavenge to root out valuable salvage from dross, to pick treasure from trash. *This might take the form of...*

- Locating and collecting useful salvage
- Weighing the worth of an object or trade
- Using damaged mechanisms effectively
- Turning the environment to your benefit in a brawl
- Identifying the properties of refuse and oddities

SENSE

A skill of glances, insight, and intuition. Use Sense to push your awareness of the world past its usual limits, both in terms of environmental awareness and social understanding. *This might take the form of...*

- Honing one of your senses to gather information
- Reacting to an unseen or unexpected attack
- Detecting and defining nascent whispers
- Becoming aware of attention focused your way
- Empathizing effectively with others

STUDY

A skill of meticulous recording and focused investigation. Use Study to learn the import of details others would miss, make connections, and sort information. *This might take the form of...*

- Creating a chart as you travel a new area
- Discovering evidence in the aftermath of an event
- Slowly improving your knowledge of a language
- Determining a pattern, flaw, or weakness
- Gleaning information from cryptic notes

SWAY

A skill of convincing, arguing, and capitulating with aplomb. Use Sway to convince others to act or hold back from acting, or to change hearts and minds to suit your purposes. *This might take the form of...*

- Convincing others to change their minds on a topic
- Making friends and influencing people
- Taking the reins of a crowd's emotion
- Bandying words while absorbing information
- Threatening through inference

TEND

A skill of healing, sustenance, and recovery. Use Tend to heal injuries to the crew, nurture plants, and soothe the minds of both beasts and your fellow crewmates. *This might take the form of...*

- Using specimens to heal an injured crewmate
- Growing fruits, herbs, and spices
- Calming and understanding the emotions of others
- Devising and discussing new medical treatments
- Communicating your intentions to beasts and birds

VAULT

A skill of dizzying heights and impressive acrobatics. Use Vault to climb, leap, and tumble your way through an environment at speed. *This might take the form of...*

- Scaling rigging, walls, or leviathan-hides
- Landing safely after falling from a great height
- Dodging away from incoming damage
- Leaping from rooftop to rooftop during a chase
- Controlling a glider as you soar through the skies

WAVEWALK

A skill of seared soles, brachiation, and animalistic elegance. Use Wavewalk to personally navigate the wilds without the use of a ship, despite the danger. *This might take the form of...*

- Leaping from branch to branch as they sway
- Swinging on vines or grappling-ropes
- Passing through foliage without fear of crezzerin
- Brachiating as fast as others can sprint
- Discovering the secrets of the surrounding waves

Skill Ranks

Each of your character's skills has a **rank**, starting at **one** and topping out at **three**. When used as part of an action, **skills add a number of d6s to your dice pool equal to their rank.**

***Example**: Jevin is attempting to climb up a crumbling wall. They have the Grace edge, which gives them 1d6, but that's not exactly great odds. Luckily, they also have the Vault skill at rank 2. That gives them an additional 2d6 on their roll, making their pool 3d6 (for edge + skill) before they've even factored in any benefits from their aspects or environment.*

Crossover

There are multiple skills on this list that share some thematic space, rubbing shoulders with others in terms of what they might let you do. **This is by design** – it allows your skills to be more easily flavoured by the edges you choose, giving an added level of flexibility and letting you apply them to unexpected events.

In essence, try to view your skills as something you can *and should* bend to fit a new situation, just as you would in real life. The Firefly may reduce your impact or apply cut if the circumstances of using a skill are *particularly* tenuous, but these are limits you'll find at your table through the course of play.

***Example**: Jevin doesn't have the Vault skill, but they do have Break at rank 3. They tell the Firefly they're going to take advantage of the wall's ruined state, smashing handholds into the sturdier parts and using their knowledge of destruction to avoid the weakest ones. They may not be much of a climber, but they know how to smash a good hand-hold! The Firefly should allow this, as it's a clever use of a skill, but might impose cut or lower their impact by making the climb slower than usual.*

Helping Hands

A well-put-together crew will have a variety of skills to call on, but sometimes what one character wants to do may be better-rolled by another in the group. In these cases, two crewmembers can work together on the same task, but they are **both** affected by any negatives that may result from rolling a **conflict** or **disaster**.

***Example**: Sheva wants to explore a half-buried room in a recently risen tomb, but her Delving isn't up to much – she only has one rank. Her crewmate, Ferris, has three ranks, and agrees to help out. They share the action – Sheva uses her edges and advantages while Ferris offers his 3d6 of Delve skill ranks. If the action goes well, everybody benefits, but if it goes poorly – perhaps the junk in the room begins to shift and fall onto Sheva as she explores – Ferris will be right there with her in the deluge.*

Skill Recommendations

There are certain acts and actions on the wildsea that come up again and again due to the nature of the environment and the opportunities (or hazards) it presents. When creating a character in the next chapter, a set of **quickstart kits** will suggest useful skills as you go through the process, but the choice is ultimately yours. When picking your skills, you should probably grab a few ranks in...

- Something that can be used to **traverse** an environment (such as Wavewalk, Vault, Outwit, or Delve)
- Something that can be used to **survive** (or **fight**) in a skirmish (such as Break, Hack, Hunt, Flourish, Brace, or Vault)
- Something to **acquire** resources (such as Hunt, Harvest, or Scavenge)
- Something to **uncover** information (such as Sway, Study, Outwit or Sense)

Do I Have the Right Skill to...?

It doesn't matter, at least not to the greater story – you can run across the waves without Wavewalk, you can steal through the shadows without Outwit, you can find important salvage without Scavenge. Having a skill means you're **better** at doing something, not that you're allowed to do something. You're allowed to do anything... or rather, you're allowed to *try* anything (results may vary catastrophically).

Skills & Combat

There are no skills dedicated solely to combat, but there are quite a few that have some obvious uses in a skirmish. While Break and Hack can be used to swing a hammer or blade, you're by no means forced to take them if you want to play an active part in a fight. Just about any skill on the list can be turned to violence if needs be. When creating your character, think about how they carry themselves (or their crew) in a fight, what they use to attack and defend themselves, and what skills might be best used to represent that mechanically.

***Example**: Aliyah is playing a corsair, a swashbuckling type that wants to be at the forefront of every fight. But she also wants to hold herself with grace and poise, treating an encounter more like a dance than a brawl: with this in mind, she picks the skill Flourish to serve as her main combat skill, for elegant bladework. She could also use Vault to dodge incoming strikes, and Study to notice weak spots in her opponents' defences.*

Skills & Weirdness

There are no dedicated skills for arconautics or spirituality on the list: if your character is based around interacting with those kinds of forces, then your methods are entirely your choice. When creating your character, think about how the weird and uncanny manifests for you, or how you interact with it, and what skills might be best suited in those circumstances.

***Example**: Kleine has an aspect that allows him to levitate and control bone. He can usually do it without rolling dice, but in situations that are difficult, dangerous, or dramatic, he has to roll like everyone else. The exact skill he uses will vary depending on the situation – he might use Break to jam floating bone shards into the delicate gears of a machine, Flourish to use them for a playful (if slightly macabre) puppet-show, or Study to manipulate them like tongs while picking up and examining an unknown insect.*

Skills in Play

Laura: I stumble back, looking for shelter from the assault. We really did not think this tower thing through, did we?

Todd: It's still upright, isn't it? Sure, we angered some of the locals...

Firefly: It's at that point that you hear the screeching of metal above you – one of the huge sheets of salvaged iron has been pushed free of the tower, and is hurtling down towards you. Reactions please, people!

Freya: Running for cover! I'll roll that as a Vault, I think...

Todd: I don't think I'm going to make it if I run. I could always use Brace, but...

Firefly: But that would be a hard sell, even as tough as you are.

Kyllian: Actually, maybe not – I'm going to go with Concoct for my reaction.

Laura: To get out of the way? How? And Vault for me as well, thanks!

Kyllian: No, no, remember we got those seeds from Arkan? I'm going to use those as a resource, and my concentrated crezzerin I've been brewing too – I'm going to grow a tree over us, seed to sapling in seconds! I've already done it accidentally, time to make it useful!

Firefly: ... You know, that is actually not the worst idea. Take a cut of one to get it done fast enough, and if this fails...

Kyllian: It's really going to hurt, I know. Here goes nothing – 3d6 for Concoct, using Tides as my edge, another 1d6 for the resource.

Todd: And if this works, does that give me an advantage on my Brace roll?

Firefly: Most definitely it does. Okay Kyllian, let's see you grow a tree in self-defence!

Translation was something Garrun had gotten used to over the years.

Indenya did alright with a smattering of the more common blood-langs, but Carrington was a slow learner. Then there was Kovir's mumbled Raka Spit (already hard enough to understand coming through that damn beard), and even Zaritze's cursing had to be fluttered from Knock into Old Hand for the benefit of their lemurs.

Still, nowhere near as bad as his first crew. All Saprekk, all the time, no matter who they were talking to. You could only watch the ship's char shout and point at ingredients for so long before it became embarrassing.

And every now and then - rare, yeah, but sometimes - he got a genuine burst of pride. And here, in this crowded bar in an Icterine junction, thorns and fibre wall-to-wall, hearing Carrington order in halting Saprekk made him smile.

Languages

Like skills, languages you know are given **ranks** (from 1 to 3). Unlike skills, these ranks are named: **smattering**, **knowledge**, and **fluency**.

You don't usually need to roll the dice to benefit from your language ranks - if you have a smattering of Saprekk, you'll be able to converse with others that speak it... to a degree.

Here's a rough guide to what each rank means in terms of your overall ability.

Smattering

Having a smattering of a language allows you to use and understand simple words and sentences without a problem. You can order food, chat about a few common wilds-related topics, and pronounce names with reasonable accuracy.

Knowledge

Having knowledge of a language allows you to engage in normal conversation without a problem; you can discuss a wide range of topics, give opinions and directions, and easily follow conversations at the speed of a native speaker (even if you miss a word here or there).

Fluency

Being fluent in a language shows you have complete mastery of it - you can read, write, listen, and speak without the fear of misunderstanding or being misunderstood.

Dialects

One of the only times your Firefly will ever ask for an action roll to check your understanding is when you come across a dialect that deviates far from the language you know. Even fluent speakers can be confused by the intricacies of a dialect grown in isolation, and the wildsea is full of little enclaves and oddities where they might spring up.

Using Your Languages

Learning a language has a way of immersing you in the lore and culture surrounding it; a bundle of references, historical facts, and turns of phrase.

This is what you'll likely roll your languages for most of the time - to **draw on cultural knowledge** and **gain information**.

***Example**: Freya speaks a smattering of Saprekk. She can understand a little of conversation happening at the bar of the junction they're visiting, but what's more important are the tar-scrawl tattoos on one of the speakers - they mark him as an outcast and a dissident, exactly the kind of ektus her crew needs to make contact with.*

Each language entry on the page to the right also comes with suggestions of the kind of lore a learner might have access to.

You might also use languages to...

Make Friends

Being able to communicate with an NPC in their own natural language (rather than the catch-all common tongue of Low Sour) is a great way of building rapport, putting others at ease.

Impress Others

Particularly appropriate when using the less common or more difficult to learn languages, such as Brasstongue, which have a limited number of speakers often with highly specialized knowledge.

Gain Extra Information

People love to be a part of the in-group, in general, and showing an NPC that you can slip into their language as needed may encourage them to share information with you that wouldn't normally be shared with 'outsiders'.

Low Sour

All characters start with a free fluency in Low Sour.

A mongrel language that has developed in the years since the shattered post-Verdancy cultures started making contact with each other. *Low Sour is the closest thing to a 'common tongue' on the waves, and doesn't come with any particular lore or cultural knowledge besides what every wildsailor would know about the world they live in.*

Chthonic

An ancient human language, once split into thousands of unique dialects spoken by different groups of ardent survivors and now slowly merging into one true tongue again. *Lore might include the details of ancient human rituals and spirit-knowledge, as well as cultural information on the ardent.*

Saprekk

The thick, rolling tongue of the ektus, almost entirely unchanged despite hundreds of years of development on the wild waves. For non-ektus to have learned even a smattering of Saprekk is often seen as a great mark of respect. *Lore might include tales of deserts, heat, and winds, as well as cultural information on the ektus.*

Gaudimm

A chemical language of subtle twitches and soft clicks used by the gau. Though the structure and grammar are surprisingly easy to learn, pheromonal bursts are required to communicate complex concepts. *Lore might include detailed knowledge of caves, tunnels, and the progression of rot, as well as cultural information on the gau.*

Knock

The hissing, chittering voice of the tzelicrae hive-minds. Many of the sounds are impossible for a single mouth to form, so most outsiders that learn Knock speak a simplified form, relying partly on gesture. *Lore might include a deeper understanding of insects and arachnid habits, as well as cultural information on the tzelicrae.*

Brasstongue

A clipped and precise language used by experienced traders, adapted from the punch-cards of ancient ordinators. Knowledge of Brasstongue is likely to garner respect among merchants and grifters. *Lore might include cargo routes and tales of great sales or negotiation tactics.*

Raka Spit

The rapid patter of hunting-families and leviathaneers, known for its incredible depth of descriptive words. *Lore might include facts about the beasts and birds of the waves, and great conquests of hunters across the wilds.*

Lyre-Bite

The lilting tongue of poets and songwriters across the wild waves, well-suited to performances and long-form poetry. *Lore might include ancient pre-verdant songs and a deeper understanding of whispers.*

Old Hand

An entirely gesture-based language with no spoken component, perfect for those naturally quiet types. Old Hand has existed since before the Verdancy, and has changed remarkably little despite the passage of years. *Lore might include expansive descriptions of long-lost relics.*

Signalling

An unspoken code broadcast with flags, flares, or signal-lamps, often known by experienced travellers, military types and smugglers. Relies partly on colour. *Lore might include information on various ships, weather types, and seagoing hazards.*

Highvin

Exceedingly difficult to master, Highvin is a primarily written language often found on old pre-verdant ruins. Usually understood by scholars, antiquarians, and treasure-hunters. *Lore might include details of the pre-verdant times, though always fragmentary.*

"She's doing that thing again. With the bugs."

It was an uncharitable tone. Kepra looked over at their navigator, sat cross-legged at her platform by the prow, then back to the grimacing wildsailor that had spoken up.

"Unsettling, isn't it? Twists you up inside, that feeling of weirdness. That power." The sailor nodded. Fireflies danced in the night air.

"Yeah, it is for me too. Tell you what though," Kepra continued, laying a massive thorny hand casually across the sailor's shoulders, "You ain't never going to hear a complaint about it out of me. Know why?"

The sailor met Kepra's petaled gaze with defiance, but it couldn't last. There were fireflies on his shirt, on the deck, a constellation of them around the navigator's post. She clapped, dreamily, and they rose as one and scattered to the north-east.

"'Cause she just found our next port."

Aspects

Your aspects are the things that make your character distinct, giving them new abilities and unique ways to tackle challenges on the wildsea. You can have **seven** aspects in total (though most characters will begin play with four or six, additional aspects are gained through character progression).

There are three types of aspect - **Traits**, **Gear** and **Companions**.

- **Traits** represent the benefits of training and experience, or the innate functions of your biology.
- **Gear** acts as a catch-all term for the weapons, armour, and tools that your character relies on.
- **Companions** can be anything from a trained animal to a construct, a living spell to a captured spirit; something that fights alongside you, acts as a mount, or scouts out places you wouldn't normally be able to access.

Reading an Aspect

Each of the bloodlines, origins, and posts you'll find in the next chapter has a set of aspects for you to choose from, but before you get there, you'll need to know what information to look out for. All aspects have the same three components; a **name**, a **track,** and a **rule**.

Name

The name of an aspect doesn't just give it flavour, it gives it narrative power. Whenever you roll for an action, you can add 1d6 if one of your aspects would help, based on their name (a dagger would give you an extra d6 when attacking, obviously, but perhaps also when prying open a chest or threatening someone secretly in a crowd).

Track

When your character takes damage, you have a choice - take an injury, or mark it off an appropriate track. The longer your aspect's tracks are, the more punishment you can take before suffering a serious injury.

Some aspects also let you mark their track to access special benefits. If an aspect's track is ever fully marked, you lose access to any advantage dice, rules, or other benefits it would usually offer.

Rule

The main meat of an aspect is how it lets you add to, change, or break the usual rules of the game. An aspect might let you do something impossible for other characters, deal a certain damage type, resist harm from a variety or sources, gain extra information from the Firefly or even change the way you read dice results.

Aspect Examples

There are hundreds of pre-made aspects available throughout this book to suit different types of characters and styles of play. Here are a few examples taken from the next few chapters...

Towering 5-Track Trait
You stand head and shoulders above most others.

Shank Worker 4-Track Trait
Increase impact when working on a project using wood, sap, or blossoms.

Nothing Stays Buried 4-Track Trait
Mark to identify a hidden or forgotten space in your vicinity by gut feeling alone.

Jagserry 3-Track Gear
The archetypal hacker weapon, a sawtooth sabre that deals CQ Hewing or Serrated damage.

Hexed Tooth 3-Track Gear
Mark to levitate and control exposed bone.

Iron-Ring Jacket 3-Track Gear
You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Blunt, Spike, Serrated, Toxin, Volt.

Swarm-Scout 3-Track Companion
A single spider you can send ahead as a scout, allowing you to see and hear at a distance.

Prow-Nose Porcupine 2-Track Companion
Not the easiest creature to pet, but you learn to live with it. Ignore cut caused by pain or discomfort.

Beyond the Name

Some aspects also come with a line or two of descriptive text, especially aspects where the name might not be quite enough to clue you in on how they look or function within the fiction of the game. These descriptions can help you gain advantage dice from an aspect, just like their name can.

***Example**: One of the crew wants to grab the attention of a group of hackers drinking at the local junction, so she slams her own jagserry hard enough to bite down into the wood of the table. If this had been another type of weapon it might have angered the drinkers, but the jagserry's description points out that it's the 'archetypal hacker weapon' – they're more likely to be impressed, see her as one of their own or forgive the interruption.*

Aspect Damage

When your character takes damage, it'll likely be directed to one of your aspects and taken in the form of marks on that aspect's track. **You choose which aspect the damage is dealt to**, but it should be one that narratively fits the damage being taken – a piece of gear might work well to absorb damage from an incoming shot, a trait maybe for damage dealt straight to your body.

***Example**: A marauder's cannonball smashes through the deck next to Hegvin, showering him with splinters and dealing two marks of Spike damage. Hegvin's player chooses to mark that damage to the character's Ragged Longcoat aspect, judging that the coat would be most likely damaged by such as event.*

Abstract Damage & Injuries

Some traits might seem too abstract to absorb damage in this way at first – Nothing Stays Buried, an example on the opposite page, is a unique action that a character knows how to perform – how can that be damaged? By a blow to the head, a ringing in the ears, a distracting, painful slice. You can afford to be a little abstract in the way you mark damage, to traits especially.

And if you *really* don't have an aspect that can take the damage for you (or if you choose not to use an aspect, or if all of your aspect tracks are full), you should probably take an **injury** instead (see page 97 for more detail on injuries).

Developing Aspects

As your character grows in strength and experience, you'll have the chance to **develop** your aspects. This might come in the form of adding new rules to them, removing or altering rules that act as a hindrance or drawback, or even just changing the name or descriptive text to give you advantage dice in different situations. This development takes **time** (usually the length of a project), costs **milestones** (signifiers of progress and experience which are explained a little later in this chapter), and will usually change the length of the aspect's **track** (removing boxes if the aspect is getting stronger or more complex, adding them if you're introducing new limitations or complications).

To develop an aspect, choose one of the options from the box on the right and alter the aspect's track accordingly. For example, if you wanted to add an extra damage type to one of your weapons, you'd choose the type and then remove one box from the aspect's track.

Remove One Box

- **Result Upgrade**: Turn a **conflict** into a **triumph** (in a niche situation).
- **Add Damage**: Gives the aspect a new damage type (either Blunt, Keen, Spike, Hewing, Serrated, Toxin, Acid, Blast, Volt, Frost, Salt, or Flame) and a range (either CQ or LR).
- **Useful Utility**: Such as creating light or heat in a limited area - small but helpful things.

Remove Two Boxes

- **New Sense**: Gain a new way of sensing the world, or expand an existing sense. *If a new sense is particularly potent, remove 3 boxes rather than 2.*
- **Resist (General)**: Reduce damage by 2 marks and impact on all effects from a particular element of the wildsea, such as spirits or beasts.
- **Increase Impact**: Have a higher impact on your actions (in a niche situation or on a specific action).
- **Resist (Damage)**: Reduce damage taken by 2 marks on three incoming damage types (chosen from Blunt, Keen, Spike, Hewing, Serrated, Toxin, Acid, Blast, Volt, Frost, Salt, or Flame).
- **Learn a Secret**: Ask the Firefly for some information. *If the circumstances you can use this in are particularly broad, remove 3 boxes rather than 2.*
- **Repair**: Clear a mark of damage from a track in a particular situation.
- **Create a Resource**: Create a particular rare resource. *If you want to be able to create a resource from a pool of three options, remove 3 boxes rather than 2.*

Gain One Box

- **Limit**: Attach this to an existing rule. That ability can be used either as a task, once per scene, or must be marked to use (if using burn, add another box).
- **Consume**: Attach this to an existing rule. That rule can only be used if you consume a resource.

Don't Add or Remove Any Boxes

- **Name or Description Change**: Change an aspect's name, or add/change an aspect's descriptive text. *This may change the way it offers advantage dice.*

Combining Aspects

Instead of developing a single aspect as your character evolves, you might want to take two existing aspects and smash them together. This can give some unusual results depending on the aspects you choose, but also serves the triple purpose of saving space on the character sheet, keeping your number of aspects under the maximum seven allowed, and giving you some beefier tracks to absorb large amounts of damage. Just like developing an aspect, this process takes time and milestones.

Creative License

When you combine two of your existing aspects, you'll...

- Give the new aspect a name
- Give the new aspect a type (trait, gear, or companion)
- Give the new aspect a track (length equal to the sum of the two combined tracks, maximum eight boxes)
- Add all of the rules from both combined aspects

This is a great time to get creative, as long as you can justify the change in your character's aspects from a narrative viewpoint. Here are a couple of examples (one straightforward, one a lot stranger) of how you might combine two of the aspects mentioned on page 88, the *Jagserry* and *Hexed Tooth*...

Squirreltooth Jagserry 6-Track Gear
A serrated sabre hewn from the jaw of a protoleviathan squirrel. Deals CQ Hewing or Serrated damage, and can be marked to levitate and control exposed bone.

Sawtooth Tattoos 6-Track Trait
Jagged tattoos of hexed ink run the length of your arms, shifting and hungry. They deal CQ Hewing or Serrated damage, and can be marked to levitate and control exposed bone.

Though the resulting track length and rules are the same in both of the combined aspects above, the flavour for each is very different, and they'll offer advantage dice in different situations.

Creating Unique Aspects

If none of the existing aspects quite fit your character concept, you can create a completely new aspect instead. To create a new aspect, you'll need to...

- Choose the aspect's type (trait, gear or companion)
- Start with a track (a five-track for traits and gear, a four-track for a companion to represent the flexibility of having a semi-independent ally)
- Add one or more rules from the box on the left (changing the track length as detailed, minimum one box and maximum eight boxes)
- Give the resulting aspect a name and, if you wish, some descriptive text

Creating an aspect from scratch should be done with the help (or at least the approval) of the Firefly. Just like developing or combining aspects, this process takes time and milestones.

The Truly Unique

If you have an idea for something that isn't covered by the options to the left, talk it over with your Firefly and give it a try. If it needs adjusting, do it after playing a session. Keep doing that until it feels right. If you're not sure how many boxes should be on the track, go with three and adjust it up or down depending on how it feels during play.

Unique Aspect Examples

Here are a few unique aspects made with the rules on the left. Each one also lists the type and rules used to create it.

Silver Carp Style 3-Track Trait
A fighting style practiced by those of your family fleet, developed to turn away blades. You're resistant to Keen, Spike and Hewing damage. *Trait + Resist Damage*

Spinning Rabir 4-Track Gear
A metal instrument that resembles a spinning-top. Produces a calming drone that repels insects when spun. *Gear + Useful Utility*

Plasm Gauntlets 3-Track Gear
Viscous slime-like gauntlets that deal CQ Acid damage. Consume a specimen to immediately clear a mark of damage from this gear. *Gear + Add Damage + Repair + Consume*

Dream Spider 3-Track Companion
A tiny arachnid that catches dreams in its spectral web. Use a task to pluck a secretive dream from a nearby individual (details supplied by the Firefly). ***Companion + Learn a Secret + Limit***

Resources

The wildsea is a scavenger's paradise. Wrecks are taken apart for iron and machine parts, beasts provide meat and bone, and the waves themselves offer a bounty of fruits, fungi, and living secrets eager to burrow into active minds.

These are your **resources** – the useful oddities that your crew will collect during their travels. There are four broad categories – **salvage**, **specimens**, **whispers**, and **charts**.

Risking Resources

As well as the listed uses for each resource type on the right, **all resources can be used to gain advantage on your action rolls**. This only applies if they fit the situation; throwing a handful of cogs as a distraction before an attack makes sense, but those cogs would likely be no help with picking a lock.

There's a catch, though – using your resources in this way puts them at risk. If your roll is **disaster**, or if you **take damage** as part of the action, there's a good chance the resource will be damaged (in the form of gaining a negative tag) or outright destroyed.

Tags

Some resources will have one or more **tags** attached, descriptors that mark a resource as being unique. Tags often change how a resource can be used during play – a *Rotten Lemon* might be useless for cooking but still useful to trade, whereas a *Pure* or *Medicinal Lemon* might serve as the base of a healing tonic.

Developing & Discovering Tags

When your crew comes across a particularly interesting resource you might have the chance to develop a new tag, giving it a property that might help (or hinder) the narrative. This tag, once developed, becomes a part of your world. You might also be able to discover new tags by researching or experimenting with your resources.

Salvage

Salvage describes inorganic material plucked from wrecks, ruins, and corpses. It might take the form of torn canvas, shards of metal, curious artefacts, or poorly-made weaponry.

Salvage is most often acquired by using the Scavenge skill, by looting stores, combing through engine rooms, or taking apart machines and mechanisms. The Scrutinize skill may also help you identify particularly useful or valuable items when looking through a shop's inventory or a corpse's pockets.

You can use salvage to...

- **Repair** damaged gear (usually by using a task)
- **Craft** new temporary gear (by using a task, though more complex creations might be a full project)
- **Attack** your foes if you don't have a dedicated weapon

Possible Tags

- **Sturdy**: Clears an extra mark when used to repair damage to an aspect track, or an injury.
- **Ornate**: Has far more worth than usual.
- **Broken**: Almost useless for its intended purpose.

Salvage Examples

Broken Ship's Wheel, Moth Lantern, Bronze Rings, Cat's-Eye Topaz, Ancient Sawn-Off, Mouldering Tome, Inscribed Hatchet, Stone Cube, Ancestor's Ceramic Mug.

Scratch

While most barter on the wildsea is done using resources, smaller things (such as a low-quality beer or a storyteller's musings) are often paid for with **scratch**, the odds and ends left behind by more valuable resources that have passed through your hands.

Scratch is too small to bother keeping track of – usually consisting of old fruit seeds, amber fragments, insect wings, and splinters – but is enough that your character should always be able to grab a cheap drink in port. Mechanically, this means you don't have to go about adding and removing resources every time you want a basic amenity.

Specimens

Specimens are the organic bounty of the wildsea, usually taken from insects, beasts, or the waves themselves. They might take the form of meats and organs, chitinous shells, spices, fruits, fungus, or bones.

The Hunt skill is useful for taking down beasts and carving their corpses for useful parts, as well as for fishing with a rod or spear. The Harvest skill is used to collect leaves, roots, and spices; anything that grows out in the wild that might come in useful.

You can use specimens to...

- **Heal** damaged traits (usually by using a task)
- **Cook** fortifying meals that offer temporary traits when consumed (by using a task, though a grand feast would likely be a full project)
- **Attack** your foes if you don't have a dedicated weapon

Specimen Tags

- **Pure/Medicinal**: Clears an extra mark when used to heal damage to an aspect track, or an injury.
- **Heirloom**: Has far more worth than usual.
- **Rotten**: Makes you sick if you eat it.

Specimen Examples

Springfox Ruff, Scorpion Stinger, Nasturtium Peppers, Green Strawberries, Pouch of Salt, Beast-Blood, Snowspice, Curving Bones, Tiger Limes.

Whispers

Whispers are wild secrets that leap from mind to mind, parasitic words with a will of their own. They can be a single word or a short phrase, but they can only exist in one mind at a time - when spoken, a whisper is lost.

Whispers often worm their way into your head as you witness the horrors and wonders of the wildsea, or they can be traded-for in the weirder bazaars, but a canny wildsailor might seek them out in other, stranger ways...

You can use whispers to...

- **Discover** secret information related to their wording (by whispering them under your breath)
- **Twist** the narrative of the world in your favour (by speaking them aloud, which allows you to create a **twist** related to the whisper)
- **Force** a change (by shouting them, creating a high-impact **twist** that's completely out of your control)

Whisper Tags

- **Echoing**: Can be used twice before fading.
- **Hungry**: Twists made with a hungry whisper remove an element of the world, rather than add one.

Whisper Examples

Ravenous, All's Well that Ends, Tree of Souls, Damned by Fate, Cut to the Quick, Soft Melodies, Sped and Bundled, Sparks on the Breeze, New Wave Carriageway, Forgotten.

Charts

Charts are the lifeblood of travel, documents that record the location of spits, islands, hazards, and trade routes. They're often kept in locked navigator cabinets on ships, or in specially made libraries (known as 'cartoikas') in port. A chart can be anything from a traditional map to a journal of trading routes, a star chart to a pre-V carving.

Like whispers, charts are difficult to acquire outside of ideal circumstances. They can be traded for in port or when you meet another friendly ship, or plucked from the strongboxes of old wrecks. Some characters are also able to scribe charts as they travel.

You can use charts to...

- **Discover** new locations out at sea (usually by combining them with other information you know)
- **Record** safe routes between certain locations (usually after a successful journey, which makes subsequent journeys easier as long as you have the chart)

Chart Tags

- **Faded**: Almost impossible to read.
- **Detailed**: Shows far more information than normal.

Chart Examples

Red-Ink Trademap, Journal of Old Routes, Channeler's Song-Sheet, Dredge Record, Silken Chart, Promise-Tattooed Hand, Route-Inscribed Plating, Low Star Chart.

Cargo

Sometimes your crew will happen upon resources that are so large, or present in such high amounts, that they can't just be picked up and carried around (usually salvage or specimens). Finds like these should be treated as **cargo** instead of regular resources, recorded on your ship sheet instead of your character sheet. Note that most pieces of cargo you find will need to be transported back to your ship, which might require a dedicated scene or a montage task to accomplish unless you have NPCs around that can help with such tasks.

Cargo isn't as easy to obtain as normal resources, but you can use the same skills to attempt it in the right situations.

You can use cargo to...

- **Barter** for upgrades to your ship, in which case a single piece of cargo acts like a new stake (though not every shipyard will have exactly what you want)
- **Disassemble**, breaking it into three or four smaller pieces that are then recorded as regular resources
- **Repair** large amounts of structural damage to your ship even without the aid of a shipyard or repair crew

Cargo Tags

Cargo rarely has tags of its own, but if it does, they're likely to be unique to it. A barrel full of delicately spiced meat might have the **Time-Sensitive** tag, for example, to make clear that it will go off and lose its value before too long, and a living animal transported in the hold might be **Dangerous** or **Ornery**.

Cargo Examples

Free-Standing Clock, Crate of Spike-Wine, Makadrill Carcass, Collection of Statues, Fruiting Lemon Tree, Tamed Springfox, Chest of Icterine Tobacco, Canting Spore Colony, Barrel of Ancient Whisky.

"You didn't have to do that."

Veris sighed, turning her back on the cabin as it began to smoulder.

"Yes." Her expression was unreadable. "I did."

Romanoska watched her as she trudged back to the ship. Clenched fists, deliberate steps. He'd seen their corsair cut down pirates by the dozen, laugh as mothryn harpoons rained down on the deck around her, tear the jaws of a snapperpillar from her own leg with nothing more than a grunt of effort & a wild smile.

But that shack, outwardly no different from any of the others? Whatever she'd seen in there, to drive her to flame as a recourse...

Romanoska shivered despite the heat of the growing blaze.

Whatever she'd seen in there, maybe it was better that it burned.

Mires

The wildsea takes its toll on those that sail it, bringing out more of their insecurities, phobias, and savage tendencies the longer they stray from port. These are your mires, the things that drag you down.

Mire Tracks

Every character has a set of three mires, chosen during character creation, and each of these mires has a special two-box track. Here's an example...

- Your trigger finger itches uncontrollably
- Metal around you sparks and crackles
- The sky is too distant - it calls to you

When to Mark Mire

Your Firefly will usually tell you to mark mire in response to an event you're caught up in, something you're forced to do against your better judgement or as a consequence of discovering or witnessing something truly disturbing. Here are a few examples...

- You witness the death of a member of the undercrew
- You're forced to eat or drink something beyond description to survive
- You see one of the horrors of the waves
- You step foot in a place not intended for visitors, a place that you know doesn't want you there
- Your journey extends past its expected length due to damage or delays
- You're betrayed by an individual you'd come to trust
- You suffer a particularly savage attack from a beast, especially unexpectedly
- You turn to cannibalism without prior agreement
- A choice you make leads directly to the death or injury of a passenger or friend

Essentially, whenever your character experiences the horrors of the sea or turns to savagery where civility would do, you mark a box of mire.

The Effects of Mire

As soon as one of your mire boxes is marked, it'll start having an effect on your character. Some of these are mechanical, tangible, defined - some of them are left more up to your interpretation.

Narrative Effects

If **one box of a mire is marked**, let hints of the condition bleed through into your roleplay. Perhaps you shy away from choices that would usually be easy, or bring the effects of the mire into a description of a related action.

If **both boxes of a mire are marked,** the mire should be at the forefront of your roleplay when possible, informing your choice of words and actions. Things you'd usually be able to do might be impossible, you may not be able to quell fears or vices, and the way you describe your actions to the other players should make it clear that your character is suffering.

Mechanical Effects

The effects of mire aren't merely narrative either. Whenever you try to act in a way that **contradicts** a mire, you **automatically cut a number of dice equal to the amount of marks on that mire track** (such as trying to balance on a high branch with a mire marked that relates to instability or vertigo).

Clearing Mire

While the easiest way to remove a mark of mire is by playing to your **drives** (see the page on the right for details), it's not the only way. You will also be able to clear mire by...

- Encountering an unexpected wonder while travelling the rustling waves (will clear one or two marks depending on whether you merely see the wonder or have a chance to interact with it)
- Setting time aside at port for rest or relaxation (though it'll likely cost you some resources)
- If your ship has a surgeon, they may also be able to help in more extreme cases, through the application of soporific drugs or amateur psychotherapy

Drives

Everyone at sea has goals they want to achieve, dreams to chase, and secrets to uncover. These are your drives, the goals that keep your character going - and making progress on these drives can pull your character out of even their darkest moods. Here are a few examples...

- Find my lost family
- Rid myself of the Karka parasite
- Discover and loot unexplored pre-verdant ruins
- Hunt and capture the Great White Wolf
- Decimate the Ripsong Marauders

Using Your Drives

Whenever you achieve something that advances or satisfies one of your drives, you have a couple of options to choose from...

Gain a Whisper

You gain a whisper that relates to the drive in some way, making it easier to tie that drive in to the narrative in the future.

Clear a Mark of Mire

Immediately clear any one of the marked boxes on any of your mire tracks.

Gain a Minor Milestone

Once per session you can add a minor milestone to your character sheet as the result of advancing one of your drives. Name the milestone something related to the drive in question.

Gain a Major Milestone

Completely satisfying a drive can give a major milestone if you wish, but if it does you'll need to wipe that drive off of your sheet and choose a new one to replace it. When you gain a major milestone in this way, name it based on the drive that was satisfied. You can only do this once per session at most.

There was a turtle by the door, red clay shell covered in towers; a leviathan writ in miniature, product of some youthful artistic urge.

The door was amber-glass, a smoky sliver of the stuff. She tried not to meet her reflection's eyes as her prosthetic flexed, iron fingers snapping shut reflexively.

She knocked again. Glanced up, took in a mane of spore-streaked hair and an encyclopedia of scars.

Gods, she looked so old.

The turtle's face was angled upwards. She was in the process of nudging it gently with her foot when the door opened, suddenly enough that she went for her sabre on instinct - a telltale sign of years on the rustling waves.

The man at the door looked her up and down before the realisation hit.

"Sammy?"

And then she was in her father's arms, and twelve again, hot tears on turtleshell. She was home.

Milestones

Milestones are narrative achievements that you can record on your character sheet to use as fuel for various advancements; extending the length of an aspect's track, adding a rank in a skill or language, or even gaining a new aspect entirely. They're split into two types, **minor** and **major**.

Milestones represent things that are important for your character - whether an event is worth recording a milestone over is entirely your decision.

Minor

You can record a minor milestone once per session, usually immediately after an event that you want to have a small but lasting effect on your character. You might do it after accomplishing a personal goal, taking part in a particularly memorable NPC encounter, or surviving a hard-won fight.

Minor milestones come in the form of short memorable sentences related to the situation that caused them, much like a whisper. You write the sentence yourself, so you can tailor it to how you want your character to advance. 'De-fanged a Giant Snake', 'Showed Barton He Was Wrong', and 'Escaped the Cave-In' are examples of minor milestones.

Major

These work in the same way as minor milestones, but should only be recorded once per narrative arc. They have a larger, long-lasting effect on your character, so choose your memorable sentence carefully!

'Solved the Mystery of Taurobol Tower', 'Took Down the Mawship Dawntongue', and 'Visited the Under-Eaves' are examples of major milestones.

Extra Milestones

The Firefly may also give out an additional minor milestone to the entire crew after a particularly impressive shared achievement, or a major milestone as a reward for completing a narrative arc. These don't count towards your normal limits, but it's the Firefly that chooses when to offer and what to name them.

Milestone Projects

Once you have a milestone under your belt, you can consume it to start **advancing your character**, improving their tracks, skills, and aspects. To do this, you start a special project (a montage action discussed on page 64) which can only be filled through the use of appropriate milestones. **Using a task with a minor milestone marks 1 box, and using a task with a major milestone marks 3 boxes.**

You don't need to roll while taking these tasks - instead describe what your character does to improve themselves with a **narratively appropriate** milestone (representing your character growing from their experience). You can also spend up to three minor milestones at once, marking multiple boxes, as long as they're all narratively appropriate.

Here's a quick breakdown of the tracks you can create, and how many boxes you'll have to fill to reap the rewards.

Add a box to an aspect's track ..... 3-Track Project
Develop an aspect ..... 3-Track Project
Gain a new skill rank ..... 3-Track Project
Gain a new language rank ..... 3-Track Project
Gain a new aspect ..... 6-Track Project
Combine two aspects ..... 6-Track Project

When you make the track, title it something that makes it obvious what you're working towards - *Improving my Wavewalking*, for example. Once the track is full, update your character sheet and start your next Milestone Project!

Personal Tracks

The final section of the character sheet is reserved for any personal tracks you might need to keep an eye on (such as project tracks, or tracks for temporary gear), but will likely be most used for **benefits** and **injuries**. Personal tracks are usually constructed like aspects - some might have special rules, but most are purposefully broad in terms of scope.

Benefits

Benefits are temporary bonuses that your character is subject to. Think of them like limited-use aspects, if that helps. Essentially, the wording of a benefit tells you **narratively** what you're able to do with it, but the **mechanical** implications of that are left until the benefit is used. They might give you the chance to...

- Absorb incoming damage or detrimental effects
- Increase impact on an action without cutting
- Gain bonus dice on certain actions
- Gain an ability you wouldn't usually have access to
- Gain temporary ranks in a skill or language

When you gain a benefit, the Firefly will set a track for it. Every time you use it you mark its track; when the final box on the track is marked, you lose the benefit entirely.

A benefit might also be lost if you go too long without using it. The 'Well-Fed' benefit, for example, probably wouldn't last more than a few scenes.

Something for the Future

If you found a benefit particularly fun or useful, you might not want to wipe it off your character sheet entirely when it's used up - feel free to keep it around and make it a personal mission to try and get a permanent version as your character travels (such as by making a unique aspect with the rules on page 91).

Injuries

An injury is like a 'negative benefit' - something you have to suffer the effects of until you fully mark its track. They're most often caused by special monster attacks, catching a disease or taking a large amount of damage that can't be absorbed by an aspect.

While you're affected, an injury might...

- Force you to cut on some actions
- Reduce the impact of some actions
- Take away a skill or sense
- Add negative effects to some actions, no matter the roll

Injury tracks can be marked by bed rest, medicinal treatments, and some surgeon abilities. When the track is fully marked, the injury is healed.

Walking it Off

Serious injuries, like a broken bone or lasting sickness, will have to be treated medically for your character to recover. Lesser ones can be 'walked off', allowing you to mark their track every time they negatively affect you (so continuing to fight while dazed would shake the effect off after a couple of affected actions, for example).

Benefit Examples

Spicy Meal 5-Track Benefit
A warming presence in your belly.

Icterine Spike-Wine 4-Track Benefit
Tears at the throat but seriously insulates the stomach.

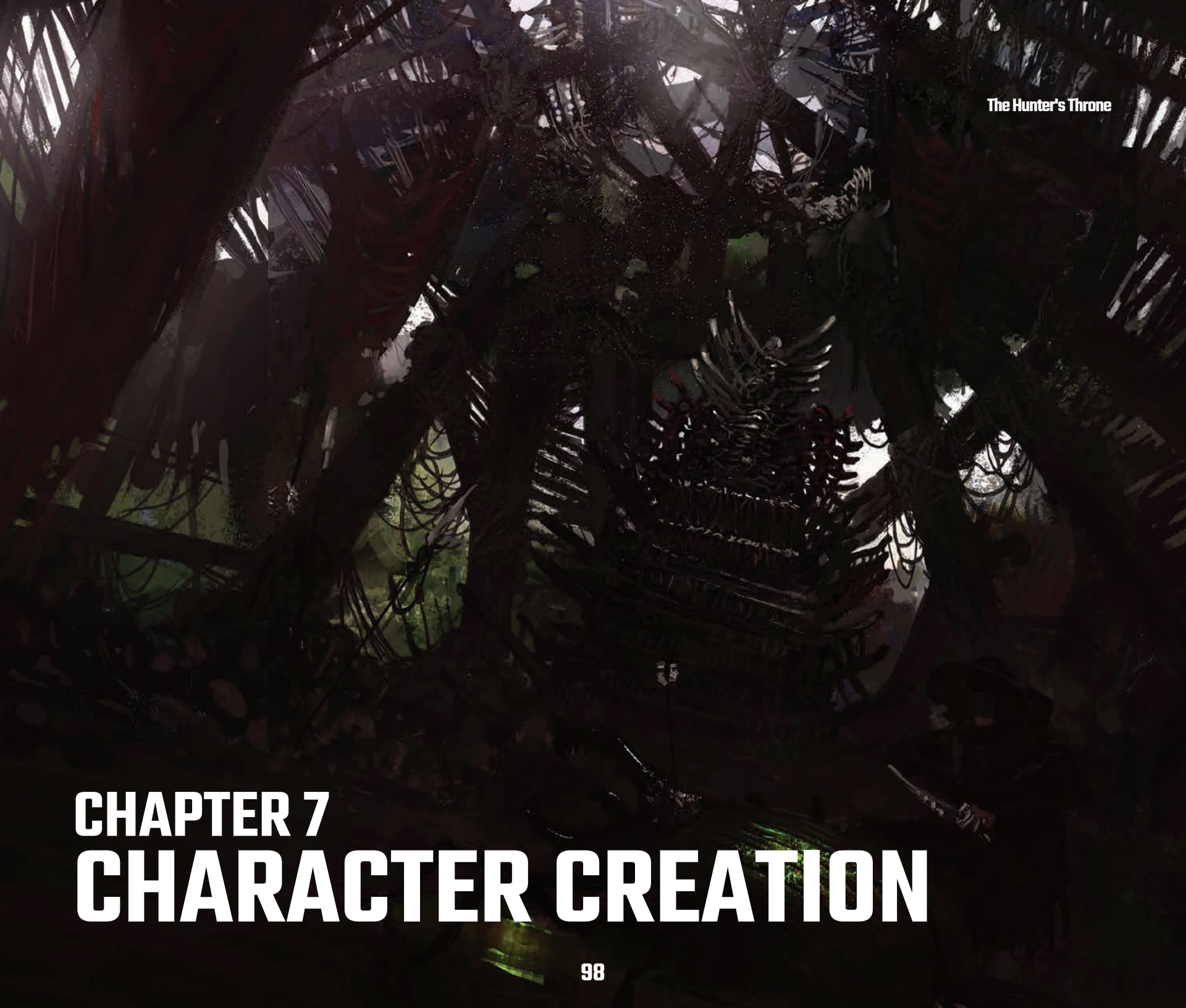
Paralyzing Net 3-Track Benefit
Mark to stun or tangle a nearby target.

Injury Examples

Sporelung 4-Track Injury
Cut on rolls for physical exertion and stealth.

Karka Parasite 8-Track Injury
Tightens around your heart whenever you laugh.

Acid-Splashed 2-Track Injury
Your jacket sizzles and smokes from time to time.



The Hunter's Throne

CHAPTER 7
CHARACTER CREATION

The four of them cut an odd silhouette as they waited, framed against the setting sun through the junction's amber-glass window.

An ironbound, body made out of pottery shards and old rig-roping. A mothryn with broken wings, leaning back in her chair and absentmindedly sharpening the teeth of her jagserry. An ardent with three prosthetic limbs and a glint of flame behind their eyes, and an ektus sat too close to them that anyone would mistake it as mere friendship.

They had drinks in front of them, oka-nut wine and thick mushroom tea, but they sat untouched - they were here for their contact, and the information they'd been promised, not the relaxation.

The crew of the Harkened Hawk had only been together for a few years, but they had a bond that would last a lifetime.

Unfortunately on the wildsea, a lifetime isn't always that long.

Quickstart Characters

A quickstart character is created by choosing one **bloodline**, one **origin,** and one **post** from the lists on the next page, and then following the quickstart instructions for each choice through the rest of this chapter. This gives you a character with skills, aspects, and other elements split evenly between the three parts of your background - perfect for new players and those taking part in a one-shot.

Example: *Vic wants to get into a game as soon as possible, and doesn't have the time to browse through all of the options available. They decide to create a quickstart character, and look at the bloodline, origin, and post descriptions on this and the next page. Ektus, Shankling, and Corsair all stand out to them, so they note down the page numbers and work through the quickstart kits on each of those pages. With all choices made, they've got a character ready to go!*

When picking skills and languages from a quickstart kit, you can pick the same one multiple times (so you might take the Chthonic language three times when creating an ardent character, for example). **As long as you don't raise the rank of any individual skill or language above three**, you're in the clear.

Personalisation

Never be afraid to make one-to-one switches as you put together your character - one skill for another, a suggested aspect for another that catches your eye. Perhaps none of the resources offered by a kit suit you - in that case, make up a few of your own, or take one from the resource lists found between pages 208 to 215.

If you find yourself making multiple substitutions, you might find a freeform character is more your speed!

Freeform Characters

Freeform character creation gives you maximum freedom. You pick or create every facet of your character, allowing you to make something unique - hopefully exactly what you want to play. It'll take more time than a quickstart character, but also offers far more flexibility. You'll also benefit massively from creating your character with the other players in your group, which can be a great session zero activity.

When creating a freeform character you have the choice of starting as a **Young Gun** or an **Old Dog**. Young Guns have limited choices, forcing you to focus on exactly what you want, and give huge scope for growth and development through a campaign. Old Dogs are on par with a quickstart character in terms of power, better for one-shots.

A Unique Background

A freeform character should still have a bloodline, an origin, and a post, but they don't have to be pulled from the options presented in this chapter. This is your chance to define yourself entirely as you like - make a gau-ektus hybrid with aspects from both, write your origin as 'sky city' or your post as 'rancher' - as long as it fits the tone of your game, you should feel free to go for it (or stick with the official ones, it's entirely up to you).

A Young Gun begins with...

- 3 edges
- 8 skill or language ranks (maximum starting rank 2)
- 4 aspects taken from any bloodlines, origins, or posts
- 4 resources
- 3 drives and 3 mires

An Old Dog begins with...

- 3 edges
- 15 skill / language ranks (maximum starting rank 3)
- 6 aspects taken from any bloodlines, origins, or posts
- 6 resources
- 3 drives and 3 mires

The quartermaster looked the new recruit up and down. it wasn't a quick process - not only was the man something approaching eight feet tall, he had muscles the sailor didn't even know an ardent's body could hold.

"I'm guessing you were born on the old mountaintops, yeah? A ridgeback?"

"How did you know?" the recruit intoned, every word falling like a stone slab as they reached up to adjust the ram-skull mask that covered their face.

"Just a hunch. Ever, uh... Ever worked on a ship before?"

"No. But I learn quickly."

The quartermaster looked around the bustling docks around them, at the complete absence of mountain.

"You're... Pretty far from home," was all he could think to say.

The recruit regarded him, expression hidden by his mask.

"Not far enough."

Bloodlines on Offer

Your bloodline describes what you are, a truth written in blood or sap or chitin. You'll be instantly recognizable as a member of your bloodline, unless you go to impressive lengths to hide it.

The bloodlines on offer are **ardent**, **ektus**, **gau**, **ironbound**, **ketra**, **mothryn**, and **tzelicrae**.

Ardent [Pg 102]
The descendants of those humans that survived the explosive growth of the wildsea. The ardent are natural survivors watched over by ancestral spirits.

Ektus [Pg 104]
Towering, spine-studded cactoids whose deserts were eaten by the Verdancy. The ektus are strong, resilient and in tune with their natural surroundings.

Gau [Pg 106]
Fungal humanoids set free from their old homes by this new world of rot and growth. The gau are swift and spry, making the best of their freedom.

Ironbound [Pg 108]
Ship-spirits with driftwood bodies, out to sail the waves once more. The Ironbound are naturally spiritual and sturdily built.

Ketra [Pg 110]
Humanity's less fortunate descendants, making their way up from hidden mines and buried buildings. The ketra are gelatinous, tech-savvy, and bio-electric.

Mothryn [Pg 112]
An insectile bloodline exploring the leafy sea after the collapse of their restrictive pre-verdant culture. the mothryn are short-lived and colourful.

Tzelicrae [Pg 114]
Secretive spider-colonies wearing humanesque skins. The tzelicrae are mysterious and unsettling, masters of movement and mimicry.

Origins on Offer

Your origin denotes the kind of environment you lived in before you became a wildsailor. It doesn't need to be where you grew up, though it can be - it could also be a place or culture that left a lasting impact on you.

The origins on offer are **amberclad**, **anchored**, **ridgeback**, **rootless**, **shankling**, and **spit-born**.

Amberclad [Pg 116]
Woken from centuries of slumber inside amber prisons, fresh to (and often unprepared for) the new wild world. Amberclad are perfect blank slates with a dash of weirdness to them.

Anchored [Pg 118]
Those lost to the waves but unable to rest, their true origins superseded by spiritual energies. Anchored are spectral, souls given solid form.

Ridgeback [Pg 120]
Raised on mountaintop islands, battered and hardened by the elements. Ridgebacks are larger and much tougher than the average wildsea denizen.

Rootless [Pg 122]
Those born to the seafaring life, on a ship cutting through the rustling waves. The rootless learn how to handle the dangers of the sea from a young age.

Shankling [Pg 124]
Those that spent their early lives in cities hanging from the boughs of tallshanks, the wildsea's largest trees. Shanklings usually have a devil-may-care attitude and a great head for heights.

Spit-Born [Pg 126]
Raised in the relative safety of an island or ruin caught up in the wildsea's growth. Most spit-born value trade, trust, and hospitality to strangers.

Posts on Offer

Your post denotes your position on the ship, or at least the kind of activities you've trained for while travelling the rustling waves.

The posts on offer are **alchemist**, **char**, **corsair**, **crash**, **dredger**, **hacker**, **horizoneer**, **hunter**, **mesmer**, **navigator**, **rattlehand**, **screw**, **steep**, **slinger**, **surgeon**, **tempest**, and **wordbearer**.

Alchemist [Pg 128]

Manipulators of salt and chemicals, able to extract and transfer the very essence of specimens and salvage.

Char [Pg 130]

Culinary masterminds who use meats and spices to imbue their dishes with lasting positive effects.

Corsair [Pg 132]

Dextrous masters of close quarter combat, ready to take on anything that threatens their ship.

Crash [Pg 134]

Sturdy individuals with an eye for demolition and an appetite for destruction.

Dredger [Pg 136]

Scavengers who trawl wrecks and ruins for loot and treasures. Most dredgers can gain entry to closed-off areas and pick out valuable trinkets at a glance.

Hacker [Pg 138]

Brave souls who take blade and acid to the verdant sea, carving paths for their companions. Hackers thrive when armed with hewing and serrated weapons.

Horizoneer [Pg 140]

Blending the disciplines of explorer and scholar, horizoneers are silver-tongued travellers able to charm hearts and waves alike.

Hunter [Pg 142]

Patient trackers who bring in food and supplies for their crews. Many hunters specialize in bringing down a particular type of quarry.

Mesmer [Pg 144]

The mind is a difficult place to plumb, but mesmers do it anyway - sometimes their own, sometimes the minds of those around them.

Navigator [Pg 146]

Experienced pathfinders in a shifting world. An experienced navigator makes journeys across the rustling waves faster, safer, and far more profitable.

Rattlehand [Pg 148]

Wilds engineers with a passion for salvage. The average rattlehand is at their best when repairing ships or crafting new, unusual gear.

Screw [Pg 150]

Masters of magnetism, screws merge themselves with scrap and salvage to increase their control of the world's detritus.

Slinger [Pg 152]

The long-range equivalents of the corsair, slingers engage their enemies from a distance with well-placed bolts and arrows or barrages of gunfire.

Steep [Pg 154]

Meditative brewers and herbologists with a strong connection to the spiritual world.

Surgeon [Pg 156]

Surgeons combine the skills of portside doctors, combat medics, and psychologists into a single field.

Tempest [Pg 158]

Those that have tasted the storm, and come back changed - destructive dervishes of thunder and lightning.

Wordbearer [Pg 160]

The last precious few tasked with ensuring messages and packages get from place to place across the vast expanse of the treetop sea.

ARDENT BLOODLINE

The weathered remnants of the ancient human race.

The ardent are the wildsea form of the human race, the descendants of those that survived the Verdancy and lived through the harsh years that came after. They are ethnically and culturally diverse, although in recent years have begun banding together to form trade partnerships, military alliances and fledgling nations.

The ardent are human in appearance, but with a genetic tendency toward looking and being rough, sinewy, and weathered. Even the weakest of the ardent are still far better suited to the world of the wildsea than their human ancestors.

Carved by the Waves

Though the changes from their ancestral stock may be minimal in terms of appearance, they run far deeper than the surface - the ardent excel in sheer survivability, with even their souls clinging tenaciously to the material realm after death. The poisons and plagues of the rustling waves seem to pass them by, and even simpler hazards like spoiled food are easily ignored.

Ancestral Echoes

The ardent are far from the only creatures of the post-verdant world to have a connection to the more spiritual side of existence, but theirs might be the most curious - spirits bonded to family lines, offering wisdom and aid to those that listen. Different ardent cultures and groups interact with these spirits to varying degrees, but it's rare to find one that ignores or denies their existence completely.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the ardent into your character, consider the following questions...

- How far back can you trace your ancestry? Do your family still tell tales of those that fled to the mountains, or were trapped in broken architecture as it rose on branch and wave?
- To what extent does the spiritual side of your bloodline affect your life? When your ancestors contact you, what form does it take?
- What pushed you toward the life of a wildsailor? Was it something you felt born to be, or a choice that became clear due to some happening or event?

Alternate Presentations

Perhaps the most obvious alternate interpretation of the ardent would be to cast them as true humans, clinging on to existence in the wake of the Verdancy without having undergone the adaptations noted in their fiction. The aspects presented could also work very well to represent a more bestial character, a humanesque individual that draws from other mammalian concepts.

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.

Tough as Nails 4-Track Trait

You're a natural survivor. Rolls made to heal an injury you're suffering from treat **conflicts** as **triumphs**.

Ghostsight 3-Track Trait

You can clearly see and easily communicate with spirits and the spectral realm, and can identify spirit-anchored objects by sight.

Strong Stomach 3-Track Trait

Reduce the impact of poisons, diseases and sickness.

Ironclad Mind 4-Track Trait

You are immune to hallucinations, mesmerics and mental compulsions.

Guide My Hands 3-Track Trait

Burn to borrow a measure of an ancestor's competency, gaining two ranks in any skill for the duration of a scene.

Sporescarf 4-Track Gear

Thickly-woven fibres sealed with tar. Resist the effects of bad air and airborne spores.

Pre-Verdant Heirloom 3-Track Gear

A vestige of the long-buried past. When you would mark mire you can choose to mark this instead.

Segmented Torc 2-Track Gear

Crafted from reclaimed wreckage, said to hold the luck that others lack. Whenever you gain a temporary benefit, increase that benefit's track by one box.

Ajna 4-Track Gear

A stringed instrument designed to be played by a duo of the living and the dead, one using a bow and one plucking with spectral fingers. Mark to allow all present to see and communicate with spirits and the spectral realm for the duration of a song.

Scimitar 4-Track Gear

A curved blade that deals CQ Keen damage.

Machete 2-Track Gear

A trusty blade used as a tool as often as it is a weapon. Deals CQ Hewing damage. Increase impact when clearing vegetation with this gear.

Hand Crossbow 4-Track Gear

A compact crossbow. Deals LR Spike damage.

Ragged Longcoat 3-Track Gear

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Blunt, Keen, Spike, Hewing, Serrated.

Ancestral Spirit 3-Track Companion

You're haunted by a benevolent spirit. Mark to learn a secret from the spectral realm (once per scene).

Watch-Wolf 3-Track Companion

A loyal lupine companion that will defend you to the death. Deals CQ Spike damage.

Grizzled Ratter 3-Track Companion

A sly ship-born feline, adept at pursuing tiny creatures. Mark to create a resource, *Hunter's Offering*.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose ardent as your bloodline, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Iron, Teeth, Tides

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Harvest, Hunt, Sense, Sway, Tend, Wavewalk, Vault

Languages: Chthonic, Old Hand, Raka Spit

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Stone Fragments, Highwood Planks

Specimens: Caged Bird, Milkweed

Whispers: Grove of Twisted Trees

Charts: A Copper-Coloured Chart

Drive (Choose 1)

Solve problems in ardent settlements

Make amends for an ancestor's wrongs

Mire (Choose 1)

The call of the Under-Eaves grows strong

Your ancestors whisper of their disappointment

"My kin are proud of what I've become, both those I can touch and those I can only honour with words."

- Tirik Zethenya, ardent hacker

EKTUS BLOODLINE

Proud cactoid wanderers from the Eaten East.

Fibrous and towering, the ektus embody pride and stability in the face of hardship. Though their ancestral deserts were lost to the hunger of the Verdancy's roots they survived, and some of their oldest kings still remember the days of sand and soil.

The typical ektus is cactoid, long-limbed, and weighty, their thick skin decorated with spines, blooms, and rough-healed scars. Though they lack identifiable facial features, each ektus is set apart from their fellows by size, posture, bloom-scatter, and head-shape. Despite this, the flowers growing on an ektus are far from decorative, and many double as sensory organs.

Ancient Culture Preserved

The ektus are the longest-lived of the bloodlines (save perhaps for those that exist in a permanent state of un-life), and many of the oldest specimens claim to remember, if a little vaguely, the time before the wildsea's arrival. While this sheds little light on the specifics of the wider pre-Verdant world, it has had the effect of keeping various ektus enclaves (which were as split as those of any other bloodline during the verdancy's apocalyptic arrival) culturally homogenous, at least for the most part.

The Eaten Desert

Many ektus still hold a strong connection to the Icterine, a blazing hot reach of ironspine cacti far to the East. It's not the current state of the reach that intrigues and pulls them back, but its history - in the pre-verdant era the desert played host to a huge empire of bronze and white stone, the greatest achievement of this now-scattered civilization.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the ektus into your character, consider the following questions...

- What is your connection to ektus history, or the eaten desert? Is it a legend you hold in your heart, or a ghost of the past you're trying to move on from?
- Do you trim your spines for the benefit of those around you, or leave them long to scratch and catch on your fellows?
- Though lacking a mouth, ektus still eat (usually by crushing food in their hands and absorbing the juices). What delicacies have you discovered on your travels that keep you coming back for more?

Alternate Presentations

Ektus are treated as singular cactoid entities by the rules, but their cultural focus on grafting might be played up by creating an individual composed of many cactus specimens grown together, working in harmony. Alternatively, the spined element could be downplayed to make a more traditional plant-based bloodline - an ektus based on intertwined bromeliads perhaps, or lilies, or roses.

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.

Towering 5-Track Trait
You stand head and shoulders above most others.

1000 Needles 3-Track Trait
Deal Spike damage to any creature that attacks you with their own body in close quarters (such as with tail or bite attacks).

Iris Blossom 2-Track Trait
You can see heat the way others see colour.

Heliovore 3-Track Trait
Heal a mark of damage on any one of your traits after spending a day in strong sunlight.

Cactus-Flesh Filtration 3-Track Trait
Use a task to give any liquid resource the 'Pure' tag.

Longspine 4-Track Trait
Your body is covered in iron-hard spines that deal CQ Spike damage.

Tar-Scrawl Tattoos 4-Track Trait
Resist the effects of bad air and airborne spores.

Solid Footing 4-Track Trait
Treat **conflicts** as **triumphs** when attempting to avoid being tripped, pushed or forcefully moved.

Grafted Limb 3-Track Trait
An ancient seal of a trade and fealty. Burn to call attention to this trophy and request a favour from another non-hostile ektus - it should not be refused.

Stone-Bound Histories 3-Track Gear
A tattered tome of ancient stories handed down by the eldest ektus survivors of the pre-verdant days. Use a task to gain a sliver of Pre-V information.

Zephyrskin Drums 4-Track Gear
A set of hip-drums decorated with Saprekk-influenced patterns. Zephyrskin drums heat the air around them when played.

Tower Shield 5-Track Gear
An immense shield of wood and iron, built to last.

Wedge-Axe 4-Track Gear
A long-handled axe that deals CQ Hewing damage.

Heavy Chakram 3-Track Gear
A set of weighty throwing blades, dealing LR Keen or Hewing damage.

Desert Harness 3-Track Gear
You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Spike, Hewing, Serrated, Frost, Flame.

Catekora 3-Track Companion
A quilled, fibrous feline with a penchant for firing spines when provoked. Deals LR Spike damage.

Burrowing Bees 2-Track Companion
Flightless desert bees that crawl across your body, fiercely territorial. You are immune to damage and effects caused by swarms.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose ektus as your bloodline, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)
Iron, Sharps, Tides

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)
Skills: Brace, Break, Delve, Hack, Harvest, Sense, Wavewalk
Languages: Saprekk, Brasstongue, Highvin

Resources (Choose 2)
Salvage: Porous Stone, Bronze Locket
Specimens: Scarab Shell, Iron-Hard Needles
Whispers: A Desert Lost to Time
Charts: A Dusty Chart

Drive (Choose 1)
Solve problems in ektus settlements
Seek out relics of the eaten desert

Mire (Choose 1)
Your thorns cut, scratch and catch
Your vision dims, your blooms wilting

"No matter how far I travel, no matter what sights I see, the deserts will always call me home in the end."

- Oren Galga, ektus horizoneer

GAU BLOODLINE

Fungal explorers gifted freedom by the rustling waves.

The Verdancy was a death knell for many cultures, but for the gau it was a flourishing - an opportunity to leave the warm, safe darkness of their mycosanctums and explore a new world of rot and growth.

Most gau have flexible limbs and mottled fungal flesh, but the differences between various families are vast. Some gau lack eyes while others have many, some sprout tendrils, others spore-sacs, while yet others are sculpted remarkably close to an elfin visage of humanity lost.

Mycosanctums

Somewhere between a ship, a spawning-ground, and a fortress, a mycosanctum is a living construction of protective fungus (sometimes miles across). In the pre-Verdant times they were usually located in shadowed marshes and mountain caverns, but much like their inhabitants, they've gained a lot more mobility since the world-forest came.

Living within a mycosanctum for an extended period as any other bloodline than gau is often a less than pleasant experience. Those that try find their clothes and hair thick with spores, their noses (if they have one) clogged or streaming depending on the chemical breezes of the day, and the food... Well, best not talk about the food.

Yearning Growth

Gau biology is something of a puzzle, even to the most learned scholars and surgeons. While each family has certain traits that are passed on over the generations, an individual gau also seems to change and adapt to fit their environment at an impressive pace. In a world of mutative crezzerin this may not seem unusual on the surface, but it's the process that makes it unique - an ironbound might build their own body, or a tzelicrae craft their preferred skin, but the fungal form of a gau adapts to what the individual *wants* it to be, without training or conscious effort.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the gau into your character, consider the following questions...

- How many of your family traits show in your form, and how much of you is a response to the yearning growth?
- Did you grow within the confines of a mycosanctum and, if so, what was it from the outside world that tugged at you to leave?
- How much kinship do you feel with other gau out on the waves, especially those with vastly different lives to your own?

Alternate Presentations

Gau physiology is already extremely flexible. A gau colony or character could be based not so much around mushrooms, but instead mold, or lichen, or even something far less common to the wildsea like seaweed or coral.

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.

Luminous Patches 4-Track Trait

You can shed light at will.

Unfurling Flare 4-Track Trait

A flexing mantle of myconic flesh that unfurls to increase your physical size. Treat **conflicts** as **triumphs** when intimidating smaller targets.

Camouflage Mottle 3-Track Trait

Increase impact when using stealth in either a natural or urban environment (choose which environment when you take this trait).

Fungal Tendril 3-Track Trait

You have an additional tendril-like limb, allowing you to hold and manipulate more objects than usual.

Mycofiltration 2-Track Trait

You can see perfectly within sporeclouds, and you resist the effects of bad air and airborne spores.

Spore-Sacs 4-Track Trait

Mark to obscure your current area with a dense cloud of sight-blocking spores that persist until carried away by the wind.

Naturally Hallucinogenic 3-Track Trait

Your sheddings have mild psychotropic properties. Mark to create a rare resource, *Hallucinogenic Spores*.

Fungal Fortress 3-Track Trait

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Keen, Hewing, Toxin, Acid, Frost.

Proliferation 3-Track Trait

Burn to grant an ally a copy of any one of your aspects (other than this one) as a temporary benefit. The benefit's track is equal to the original aspect's track.

Medicine Pouch 3-Track Gear

Others rarely ask where the medicines are collected. Use a task to create a rare resource, *Medicinal Herbs*.

Nurturing Pitch-Jar 2-Track Gear

A blackened glass jar that holds an eager colony of ironroot mold. Use a task to create a specimen copy of any piece of salvage you own, with the 'Fungal' tag.

Jag-Lash 4-Track Gear

A leather cord studded with teeth or salvaged metal. Deals CQ Serrated damage.

Spore-Slinger 3-Track Gear

A sling-like contraption for lobbing spore-bombs, dealing LR Toxin or Blast damage.

Pangoshroom 4-Track Companion

A slow-moving but well-armoured fungal companion that wants nothing more than to keep you safe.

Sporehund 3-Track Companion

A loyal companion that deals CQ Toxin damage.

Cordysect 3-Track Companion

A slow-flying beetle riddled with fungal growths. Mark to gain a burst of dense sensory information from its surroundings, revealing oddities and secrets.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose gau as your bloodline, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Grace, Instinct, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Concoct, Flourish, Harvest, Outwit, Tend, Wavewalk, Vault

Languages: Gaudimm, Raka Spit, Old Hand

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Fluted Stone, Fossilized Fungus

Specimens: Fat-Bodied Beetle, Sourvine Extract

Whispers: Mycosanctum Rumblings

Charts: A Chart of Many Colours

Drive (Choose 1)

Solve problems in gau settlements

Help other gau explore the wider waves

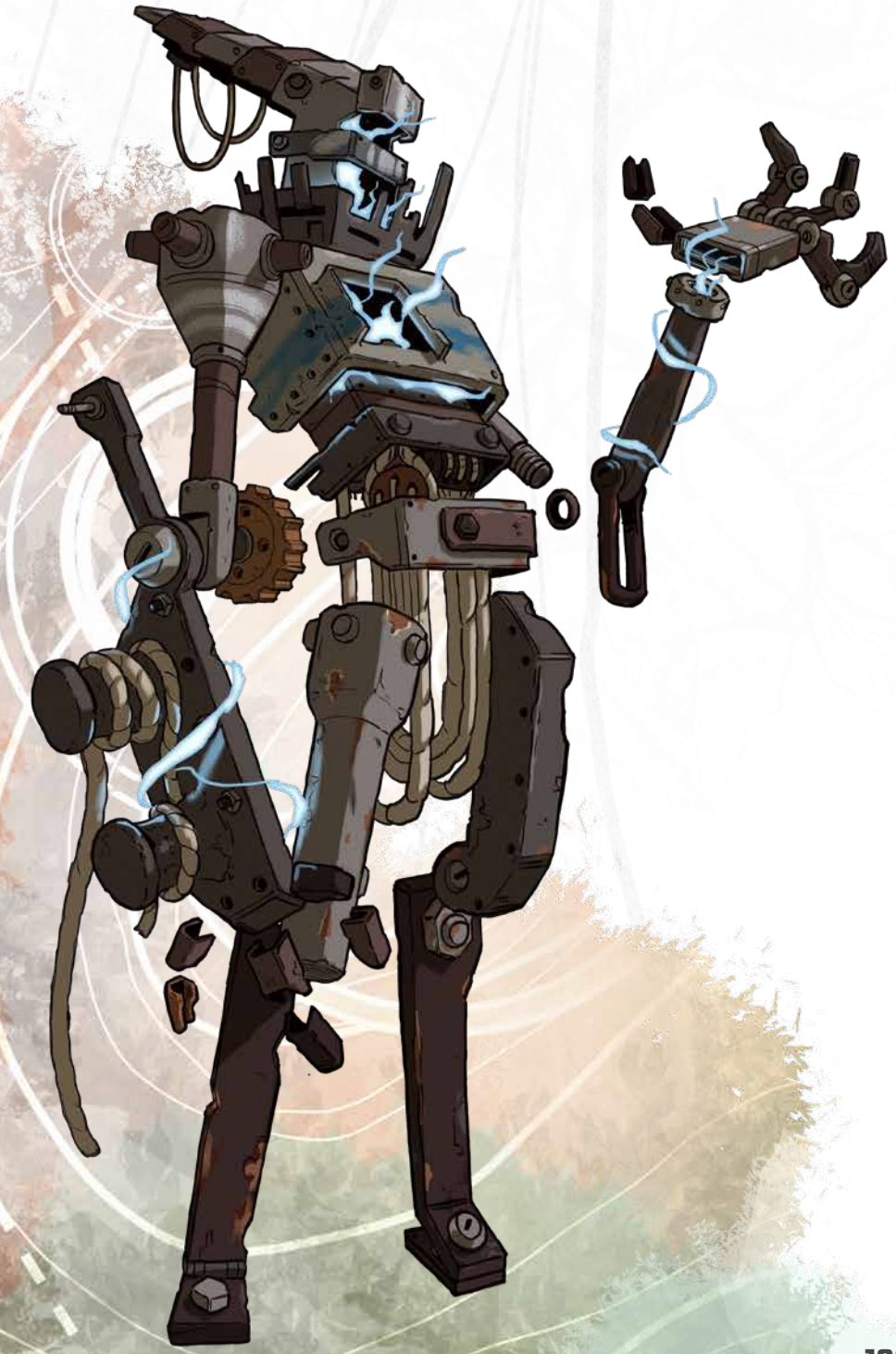
Mire (Choose 1)

Your flesh turns brittle, making it harder to move

You leave a trail of spores as you move

"The waves are a freedom many of us never thought we would have. To grow, to explore... to be more than we were in the dark."

- Elgos, gau horizoneer



IRONBOUND BLOODLINE

Seafaring automatons, ship-made spirits gone rogue.

Everybody knows the legend of mawships, the vessels gone wild after too long out on the crezzerin-drenched waves. Far fewer know what happens to their crews, and fewer still have ever considered the fate of the loyal constructs that once served alongside them.

An ironbound straddles the line between ghost and machine, an animated presence in a shell of ship-stuff. With no childhood to speak of, the personality of an ironbound develops over time from the moment of their awakening. Many strike out alone, defining their new lives by their actions, yet most eventually find themselves drawn back in some way to the rustling waves.

Of Gears and Ghosts

There are two main types of ironbound - those born of a construct or simulacrum and those that assemble themselves from the detritus of shipwrecks and ruins. The first of these tend to augment themselves a little, but mostly keep to the basic shape they were fashioned in. The second are far more varied in their appearance, often combining unusual materials and using whatever useful salvage is at hand.

Personality

Those unfamiliar with the ironbound are often surprised by the complexity of their thoughts, expecting the logical simplicity of a golem or machine, but the ironbound aren't driven by commands. Their souls and minds are their own, growing along with their experiences and needs. Ironbound personalities develop just like those of any other bloodline, and are just as distinct.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the ironbound into your character, consider the following questions...

- Are you a rescued construct or a self-organized collection of wreckage? Are you perhaps something in between the two?
- Are you a soul first and foremost, a ghost in a shell, or is your body just as much a part of you as your soul?
- How much of your previous existence do you remember? Your travels, your experiences, the laughter and chatter of the crew you served with?

Alternate Presentations

An ironbound can work well as an animated ruin with very little to do with ships and travel - a section of city street, a forge given life and self-organized, all of these things could easily exist using the ironbound as a basis. You could also go the route of the traditional golem, or a complex clockwork automaton.

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.

Titanic 5-Track Trait
You're an imposing presence, a weight on the world.

Ghost-Heart 3-Track Trait
You count as fluent when communicating with ghosts, spirits, and other ironbound, regardless of languages used.

Monument to Travel 4-Track Trait
Whenever you gain a chart, mark to gain a related whisper as well.

Fruiting Limb 3-Track Trait
Use a task to create a resource, *Keel-Fruit*.

Attenuate 2-Track Trait
Your animating spark can leave your body for a short time, becoming ghost-like and insubstantial, but still capable of movement.

Structural Integration 3-Track Trait
Once per journey you may repair a mark of damage on your ship without rolling.

Vocal Recovery 3-Track Trait
You can dredge up the voices of sailors long-lost, changing your pitch, tone, and accent on a whim. Burn to speak the truth of a lost sailor.

Spotlight Lantern 4-Track Gear
Flameless, but terribly bright nonetheless. Consume a resource as fuel to allow your entire crew to see perfectly in darkness, sporeclouds, and general murk.

Ancient Tar-Seals 2-Track Gear
You're immune to the effects of crezzerin.

Living Workshop 4-Track Gear
Your own wreck-salvaged body contains an array of useful tools - all crewmates gain an automatic 2d6 advantage on rolls taken to create temporary gear and machinery when in your presence.

Prowhammer 4-Track Gear
A ship's prow, refashioned into a massive bludgeoning weapon. Deals CQ Blunt damage.

Ornate Cannon 2-Track Gear
A huge ship's cannon loaded with explosive shells. Deals LR Blast damage. Increase impact when targeting a horde or swarm of targets.

Broadwood Carapace 3-Track Gear
You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Blunt, Keen, Serrated, Acid, Volt.

Reef-Iron Plating 3-Track Gear
You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Spike, Hewing, Serrated, Frost, Flame.

Shipside Symbiote 3-Track Companion
When your ship would take damage to any of its ratings, you may mark boxes equal to that damage on this companion instead.

Sailghast 4-Track Companion
A mass of living canvas capable of flight. Mark to have it tangle around a target, restricting their movement.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose ironbound as your bloodline, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)
Iron, Teeth, Tides

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)
Skills: Brace, Break, Delve, Hack, Rattle, Scavenge, Wavewalk
Languages: Old Hand, Signalling, Raka Spit

Resources (Choose 2)
Salvage: Sawprow Teeth, Defused Shells
Specimens: Crezzerin'd Leaves, Rooted Fungus
Whispers: Woken to Thought
Charts: An Old Tradeway

Drive (Choose 1)
Rescue an abandoned ship
Free a shackled ship-construct

Mire (Choose 1)
The world away from the waves is quiet, distant
Your body cracks and splits, weakness spreading

"My lost crew stand with me against the waves even now, just as I stood with them while their bright lights shone."

- Tar On Tar, ironbound mesmer

KETRA BLOODLINE

Humanity skewed, rising from the depths.

For centuries after the Verdancy it was assumed that everything below the canopy-line was lost, chewed up and used for fuel by the growing wilds. The recent emergence of the ketra laid that assumption to rest, and heralded a renewed interest in delving deeper into the rustling waves.

The ketra are the descendants of those fragments of ancient humanity trapped in tunnels and sturdy temple complexes, mineshafts, and mountain-seams. Like the ardent, they have adapted to face the post-Verdant world, but with a far more dramatic biological change - tentacular mantles, translucent flesh, and swirling, ever-moving inkblot patternings are common. Many ketra reinforce their malleable forms with self-made skeletons of salvaged driftwood or repurposed scrap-metal.

Out of the Dark

Ketra 'settlements' have historically been more like prisons, enclosed areas beneath the treeline that they managed to eke out an existence in as crezzerin worked its mutative malignancy upon them. Rough, utilitarian, and almost always pitch-black, there are few stories of the brute choices that had to be made by those trapped before they adapted.

Self-Made Skeletons

The process of replacing a bone in a ketra's skeleton isn't exactly a painless one, but their malleable flesh and adaptable musculature make it a lot easier than it would be for an ardent. The most traditional bone replacement is driftwood or metal, but some use animal bones, stone, or other, weirder materials for internal support. Ketra wildsailors have also been known to replace their bones with functional tools, like grappling hooks or concealed weaponry, to get an unexpected edge out on the waves.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the ketra into your character, consider the following questions...

- Have you spent any time in the 'ancestral' ketra places and, if so, how did you find their dark, crampled confines?
- How original is your skeleton, and if you've replaced parts of it yourself, what new materials do you rely on for support?
- Were you passed down any stories of your family's old human days, or is your pre-verdant lineage lost to history?

Alternate Presentations

An interesting alternate take on the ketra could be the result of playing up either of their main thematic components to the extreme - treating them as a lich-like skeleton controlled by an organic, slug-like core or an entirely gelatinous mass with only the barest suggestion of a skeletal structure (or even none 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.

Gelatinous Form 5-Track Trait

You have an inherent weakness to Salt damage, but can squeeze and compress your body enough to move through spaces much smaller than expected.

Sensory Stalks 4-Track Trait

A rare mutation that hones your sight. You can see clearly without light.

Crawling Pattern 4-Track Trait

The glowing patches on your flesh crawl at your command, even onto others nearby. Mark this track to create a dim but lasting light on you or a nearby target.

Tunnel-Wise 3-Track Trait

Treat **conflicts** as **triumphs** when navigating or moving through enclosed areas.

Whispers in the Dark 3-Track Trait

While in a dimly lit or unlit area, mark to learn a secret from the darkness (once per scene).

Scrapper Enzymes 3-Track Trait

You can use salvage as a component when concocting a potion or chemical mixture, no matter its form.

Voltaic Mantle 4-Track Trait

The tendrils of your mantle crackle with lightning as they strike, dealing CQ Volt damage.

Driftwood Core 3-Track Gear

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Blunt, Spike, Toxin, Frost, Volt.

Rebreather Mask 3-Track Gear

You have a short supply of clean air you can tap into when you need to, and you also resist the effects of bad air and airborne spores.

Climbing Hooks 4-Track Gear

Attached to a harness or embedded in your gelatinous flesh. Ignore cut while climbing, as long as you're moving with care.

Driving-Chain 3-Track Gear

A rusted chain from a long-dead machine, now wielded as a weapon dealing Blunt damage at CQ or LR.

Scrap-Metal Skeleton 3-Track Gear

The internal structures you've collected can store biovoltaic energy. Use a task to create a resource, *Scrap-Bone Battery*.

Old Ore Piercings 1-Track Gear

You're immune to the usual effects of crezzerin. Concentrated sources of crezzerin heal rather than harm you.

Oiljelly 4-Track Companion

A slick, symbiotic slime-like creature bonded with your body.

Drone Attendant 3-Track Companion

A simple punchcard-driven repair construct. Increase impact when repairing or tinkering with other machines.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose ketra as your bloodline, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Iron, Sharps, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Concoct, Delve, Outwit, Scavenge, Sense, Sway, Vault

Languages: Chthonic, Raka Spit, Signalling

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Ceremonial Dynamite, Old Driftwood

Specimens: Luminescent Bone, Curled Centipede

Whispers: The Comforting Dark, All Tunnels End

Charts: A Faded Schematic

Drive (Choose 1)

Raise a pre-verdant structure

Hoard treasures of the wider waves

Mire (Choose 1)

Sparks and jolts course through your extremities

Your inkblot patterns whirl dizzyingly

"The tunnels are a comfort, but they can also be a curse. There's a new world waiting up there, and I intend to see as much of it as I possibly can."

- Jask, ketra rootless

MOTHRYN BLOODLINE

Vibrant and chaotic, blurs of swift insect colour.

The mothryn empires of the pre-verdant world remain an area of mystery to modern scholars - what little information has been gathered on them paints a picture of staunch, drab isolationism, with common references to 'the Rationing of Colour'.

But those days are long gone and root-eaten, and the mothryn of the new wilds could not be more different to their ancestors. Widely respected for their bursts of ingenuity, creativity, and flair, mothryn tend to live elegant but erratic lives of adventure and discovery. Most revel proudly in this reputation of fierce individualism, decorating their wings, clothes, and skin with stylized renderings of their triumphs and failures alike.

The Lost Art of Flight

Mothryn wings are delicate, beautiful, and sadly mostly for show - though their distant ancestors were small and light enough for their wings to allow for true flight, modern mothryn are generally capable of little more than a controlled glide. Many mothryn cultures now treat them as a canvas for self-expression, using a mixture of dyes and piercings to create intricate, personalized designs (though the harsh environment of the rustling waves tends to leave them tattered and torn before long).

Repupation

With an average lifespan of little over twenty years, the mothryn are depressingly short-lived compared to many of the other bloodlines... Or at least they would be, without the option of repupation. A risky but rewarding process, repupation allows a mothryn nearing the end of its life to return to the cocoon, breaking themselves down and reforming into a fresher, younger individual. This new mothryn shares a name and a smattering of memories with their pre-pupated self, but that's about it - they often vary massively in terms of personality, attitudes, and appearance.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the mothryn into your character, consider the following questions...

- What patterns and pictures do you decorate your clothes and wings with? Depictions of personal achievements, mementos of family, perhaps geometric designs?
- Beards and complex hair ornamentation are common among the mothryn - do you follow any particular fashion or style?
- Have you repupated, and if so how many times? How much of your previous lives do you remember, and to what extent do they influence you?

Alternate Presentations

If you hew close to the original concept, then the mothryn aspects work just as well for butterfly or dragonfly-inspired humanoids. To diverge more without being completely dissimilar to the theme, a bat or bird-inspired presentation could work equally well.

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.

Dust and Paper 5-Track Trait

Your form is slim, light, and deceptively difficult to land a solid hit on.

Elegant Wings 3-Track Trait

Though most mothryn wings now serve as decoration, yours are uncommonly strong. You can glide with ease, or mark for a short burst of elegant flight.

Scatterscale 2-Track Trait

Mark to create a cloud of fine dust that refracts light and distorts perception - your own senses are unaffected.

Thick Fur 4-Track Trait

You're weak to Flame, but resist the effects of bad air and airborne spores.

Elaborate Beard-Braids 3-Track Trait

Your beard is a rich, intertwining mass of fur and braids, perfect for concealing small objects. Burn to gain a new piece of salvage or specimen from within it (that you might conceivably have stashed there).

Prismatic Antennae 3-Track Trait

Dense clusters of sensory fronds grow from your antennae, letting you see clearly without light and through clouds of dust or spores.

I Used to Know This 3-Track Trait

You can treat a **conflict** as a **triumph** when rolling for an action without a skill adding to your dice pool (once per scene).

Chaos Dancing 3-Track Trait

A fighting style that makes use of wing-edges and scything kicks. Deals CQ Keen or Spike damage.

Ceremonial Patterning 4-Track Gear

Your wings are a riot of colour and style. Mark to increase impact when trying to impress or convince.

Marks of Where We've Been 3-Track Gear

Chart-like decorations cover your wings and fur. Mark to use this aspect in place of a chart, but only when travelling through an area you've visited before.

Flowing Fabrics 3-Track Gear

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Keen, Blast, Acid, Frost, Salt.

Wing-Studs 4-Track Gear

Can be launched like shrapnel with a deft twist, dealing LR Blunt damage.

Silkspire Byx 4-Track Companion

A living golem of beautifully spun silks, usually in vaguely lupine shape.

Tolycat 2-Track Companion

A domesticated felinesque insect that sheds medicinally potent scale-dust. Your entire crew has resistance against infections and diseases.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose mothryn as your bloodline, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Grace, Tides, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Cook, Flourish, Hunt, Sense, Study, Vault, Wavewalk

Languages: Raka Spit, Knock, Signalling

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Bolt of Fabric, Damaged Scrap-Flute

Specimens: Berry Pigment, Raw Silk

Whispers: Rationing Ended, Vibrant Riot

Charts: A Tapestry Map, A Painted Wing-Scale

Drive (Choose 1)

Throw yourself into dire situations with vigour

Solve baffling problems with style

Mire (Choose 1)

Your elegance evaporates, leaving you clumsy

The rationing returns - your colours and stories fade

"Some say that our lives are short, too short by far. I say that twenty years of exuberance, exploration, and experience are longer than eighty years of simply waiting for the Eaves."

- Ellevente, mothryn rootless

TZELICRAE BLOODLINE

Spider-colonies wrapped in humanesque skins; thousands of tiny arachnid minds threaded like beads on a string to produce a full, rich sapience.

Becoming a more common sight across the wildsea by the year, the tzelicrae are spider colonies raised to sapience through an unknown and mysterious process. Though technically thousands of individual minds and bodies working together, most tzelicrae think of themselves as a singular being. Tzelicrae are no more or less likely to be dangerous than any other denizens of the wildsea, but fear and distrust of them runs deep in many communities due to their unsettling attempts at mimicry.

Self-Made Swarms

In their youngest form the tzelicrae are a coherent swarm, arachnid masses with little in the way of a defined shape. As their minds develop with age they naturally incorporate parts of their surroundings into the swarm, most often rags, canvas, and pieces of salvage. These, combined with spidersilk, serve as the foundation of the adult tzelicrae's body - a shell to protect the swarm within.

From this point a tzelicrae is considered mature, but self-improvement is a constant process. Some test the limits of their control by adding additional limbs or unusual materials, others by adopting additional spiders into their colony to increase their mass and weight. Many adopt the shapes and mannerisms of other wildsea creatures, particularly of the other common bloodlines - a very lucky few of these win the Lottery of Skin, obtaining and inhabiting a cast-off body to puppeteer.

Hive-Mind Perspective

The level of individuality a colony settles at varies from tzelicrae to tzelicrae. Some refer to themselves as a collective 'we', organizing and compartmentalizing their minds to allow different areas to consider alternate viewpoints at the same time. Others revel in the singular 'I', with every component spider working and thinking in perfect harmony.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the tzelicrae into your character, consider the following questions...

- What are you made of, in terms of outer layer? Bone and silk, canvas and brass, stolen skin or something else entirely?
- Have you ever had a true disagreement with yourself, a topic or opinion on which your colony is split?
- Have you incorporated spiders from other tzelicrae throughout your life, or adopted foundlings? What memories have such additions gifted you?

Alternate Presentations

Though tzelicrae are arachnid by default, there's no reason yours *has* to be. A hive-mind colony of termites or bees would work just as well, or perhaps even of something even more bizarre - squirrels, maybe, or miniature machines?

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.

Arachnid Mobility 3-Track Trait
You never cut for difficulty when climbing.

The Lottery of Skin 4-Track Trait
Choose either ardent, ektus or gau. You can pass as a member of this species under casual inspection.

Ersatz Limbs 4-Track Trait
You have one or more additional arms, allowing you to hold and manipulate many objects at once.

Tremorsense 2-Track Trait
You can feel even the smallest vibrations in the air and ground around you.

Gossamercraft 3-Track Trait
Mark to produce a resource, '*Silk-Like Web*' (either dry or sticky).

Manifold Linguist 3-Track Trait
You count as fluent when communicating with intelligent insects, hive-minds, and other tzelicrae, regardless of languages used.

Spiderbite 4-Track Trait
You have a set of fangs that can deal CQ Toxin damage.

Shirk the Skin 5-Track Trait
Burn to leave your skin for a short period. When outside your skin you are a mass of moving spiders, and can easily move through small spaces and climb any surface.

Shroom Hookah 3-Track Gear
You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Keen, Spike, Serrated, Hewing, Toxin.

Motley Carapace 5-Track Gear
You've incorporated an assortment of discarded armour pieces into your skin.

Hush-Silk Garments 4-Track Gear
Your clothes are woven of fine silk that naturally dampens sound, making even your dramatic movements almost entirely silent.

Iron Satchel 4-Track Gear
A secure, wearable lockbox that can only be opened by a single specific spider within you.

Blade of Husks 3-Track Gear
A ritual weapon made from the chitin of lost colony-members. Deals CQ Keen or Salt damage.

Swarm-Scout 3-Track Companion
A single spider you can send ahead as a scout, allowing you to see and hear at a distance.

Rogue Doomsayer 3-Track Companion
An unsettled fragment of personality. Mark to request a dark and unbidden (but likely pertinent) thought from the Firefly.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose tzelicrae as your bloodline, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)
Grace, Teeth, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)
Skills: Concoct, Delve, Flourish, Outwit, Scavenge, Vault, Wavewalk
Languages: Knock, Chthonic, Saprekk, Gaudimm

Resources (Choose 2)
Salvage: Frayed Ropes, Patterned Canvas
Specimens: Spider Husks, Venom Extract
Whispers: A Prison of Skin
Charts: A Port Manifest in Knock

Drive (Choose 1)
Solve problems in tzelicrae settlements
Show others they are wrong to fear your kind

Mire (Choose 1)
Spiders escape your skin, striving for individuality
Your movements are staccato, disturbing

"I remember the shadows under branches, the mad flight from voracious sparrows, the glistening tangle of dew-licked webs. I miss it, sometimes... but I'm happy with what I've become."

- Tazik Che, tzelicrae shankling

AMBERCLAD ORIGIN

After three centuries of dream, the world you wake to is not the one you left

The Verdancy was an explosion of plantlife, a ripple across the waves - the amberclad are those that were caught on the crest of that wave, drowned in crezzer-soaked sap and left in an uncanny sleep after it hardened into amber.

Once freed into the wild world, an amberclad has almost no idea of their former life or who they were, but no understanding of the world around them either. The weight of dreams is heavy on them, no matter how they try to shake it off.

Prized or Prisonbroken?

Most amberclad are found by accident, within the bark of split ironroots or lying atop the waves after a rootquake. Breaking them out of their organic prisons is a tough process, and keeping them alive while doing so is tougher - fatal accidents make an already rare phenomenon of survival ever rarer.

Good-natured crews take these confused individuals under their wing, teaching them the ways and dangers of the new wild world until they're confident enough to strike out on their own (or stay on with the crew as a member). But charity only runs so deep, and some unscrupulous sorts never open the prison at all - instead they haul the amber whole, then sell it to collectors of curiosities and pre-verdant researchers.

In Mourning

Some amberclad never get over the loss, not only of the lives they used to lead, but the faded memories of that life - they're haunted by the idea of friends lying dead for centuries, of the uncertain fates of family members, or of their own names and achievements long-forgotten. These lost and mournful souls sometimes return to dream, hoping to sleep away the memory of their lost memories... It never takes.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the amberclad into your character, consider the following questions...

- What scraps of the pre-verdant world do you remember? For that matter, what do you remember of yourself from the time before your long and unexpected sleep?
- How did you wake into the wildsea? Was your prison broken open by reclaimers, by accident, or did you wake and force your own way out?
- Few amberclad escape their slumber without a fragmentation of their own body - where are you broken, and can you even feel it?

Alternate Presentations

To gain the same essential feeling of pre-verdant life maintained, an amberclad character could be divorced from the concept of amber (or even the natural world) entirely. Instead they might be a scientist or test-subject from a technologically advanced past, the result of an experiment in slowed aging, cryogenics, or even chronological displacement.

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.

Endless Golden Age 5-Track Trait

You didn't age throughout your imprisonment, and you don't seem to be aging now that you're free either. A blessing, but a curious one.

All So Familiar 3-Track Trait

Muscle memory takes over. Treat **conflicts** as **triumphs** when interacting with newly uncovered pre-Verdant artefacts.

Unbroken Family Line 3-Track Trait

You may have been asleep for hundreds of years, but some of your kin have been thriving. Burn to tie an individual or settlement to your family in some way.

Ambervein 4-Track Trait

You're weak to Blunt damage, but immune to the harmful effects of crezzerin.

Dream-Dredge 3-Track Trait

There are impressions of a forest-less world, but grasping them is like holding onto a dream. Use a task to gain a sliver of Pre-V information.

Resokinesis 4-Track Trait

Mark to gain a measure of control over sap, resins, and amber.

Just a Scratch 3-Track Trait

Mark to produce a resource, *Warm Amber Shards* or *Dripping Resin*.

Shattered Eye 3-Track Gear

Something you usually use to see is broken, ambered and still lingering in sleep. You can see glimpses of a person's recent dreams clinging to them if you concentrate.

Fragmented Limb 3-Track Gear

Cracked and floating just free of your body. When you take this gear, decide whether it deals CQ Blunt, Keen, or Spike damage (you can change this damage type by using a task).

Heart of Resin 1-Track Gear

Burn to create a perfect copy of yourself in living amber and drift into a deep sleep. You control the copy until it dies or you choose to destroy it, upon which time you wake with its memories and experiences as dreams.

Half-Clogged Firearm 4-Track Gear

A double-barreled pre-verdant shotgun, one of the firing chambers hopelessly clogged. Deals LR Blast damage.

Shard-Cloak 5-Track Gear

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Keen, Spike, Serrated, Hewing, Salt.

Pre-V Pet 4-Track Companion

A faithful friend from the old times that was trapped, and freed, alongside you. Not particularly suited to the wild world, but most likely revelling in it.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose amberclad as your origin, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Grace, Sharps, Tides

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Break, Delve, Outwit, Scavenge, Sense, Study, Tend

Languages: Old Hand, Highvin

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Amber Chips, Tarnished Memento

Specimens: Strong Coffee, Gold-Winged Bee

Whispers: The Longest Sleep, Clear Coffin

Charts: A Book-Block, A Crisp Sketch-Page

Drive (Choose 1)

Discover remnants of your old life

Free other amberclad from their prisons

Mire (Choose 1)

Sleep pulls at your mind, an old and dangerous friend

Your blood slows, your skin cracks, your heart creaks

"That history they speak of? I was there, I lived it, but it's no less a dream to me than it is a legend to them. An entire life lost to sleep. Who might I have been back then? What have I lost?"

- Moll Corvenus, ardent amberclad

ANCHORED ORIGIN

Your body was claimed by the Under-Eaves, but your soul refused to follow.

Even on the weird waves of the wildsea, death is usually the end of your direct interaction with the material world. Most ancestral spirits and honour-bound ghosts require a boost from the spiritually sensitive in some way for them to affect reality.

Not so the anchored, a tangible, physical presence on the waves despite being, by almost all definitions, very much dead. These souls are given substance by their anchor, a single physical object that was left at the surface when their body fell. It might be a memento, a favoured weapon, a chart pointing the way home - whatever it is, it was enough of a tether to keep them from passing over, and to confer a level of impressive material control.

A Whispered Theory

There are some who swear blind that the anchored aren't quite what they seem to be; those that knew someone both in life and death, and noticed the smallest changes in their moods and memories that stood out like a sore thumb. Are the anchored truly ghosts, they ask, or are they stories? The narrative of a sailor's life given form, a living postscript after the final chapter? There are no hard answers, of course... But there are suspicions.

Anchors Broken

The precise mechanics of death may be a mystery on the rustling waves, but one thing's for sure - you can die twice if you're unlucky enough. An anchored that loses their reference point to the world deteriorates rapidly, shredded and scattered to the winds. With speed, quick thinking, and some spiritual know-how it's possible to slow the process, but an anchored needs their anchor as surely as an ardent needs air.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the anchored into your character, consider the following questions...

- Do you remember your death? If so, what caused it?
- To what extent do you feel connected to the world around you, now that you don't follow quite the same rules of physicality as most?
- Have you ever come close to losing your anchor? If so, what happened?

Alternate Presentations

The usual presentation of an anchored is that the soul of a once-living individual attaches itself to an object after their death, but what if an anchored was never living at all? An anchored character could be a genius loci, a spirit grown organically from a place or thing, or even the personification of a concept or idea.

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.

By a Thread 1-Track Trait

Your grip on the world is tentative, but that does come with certain benefits. You are weak to Salt and Volt damage, but immune to Blunt, Keen, and Spike.

Spectral Variance 3-Track Trait

Mark to become insubstantial for a short time, allowing you to float and pass through solid objects.

Mortal Needs 2-Track Trait

Though you can do so if you choose, you have no real need to eat, drink, sleep or breathe.

Ethereal Healing 3-Track Trait

When being healed or having your gear repaired, resources used are not consumed as normal - instead they degrade, giving them a negative tag (if they already have a negative tag, they're consumed as normal).

Touch of the Beyond 2-Track Trait

Once per scene, when your crew gains a resource, you can choose to give it the 'Spectral' tag.

Geist Hand 3-Track Trait

You can manipulate nearby objects without touching them, though the heavier they are, the harder it is.

Death Mask 3-Track Gear

Some anchored prefer to hide their face, letting the memories of their time among the living fade. Treat **conflicts** as **triumphs** when attempting to unnerve or unsettle.

Siphoning Fork 3-Track Gear

Whenever your crew gains a piece of cargo, gain a whisper related to it (or its previous owners) for yourself.

Phantom Blade 3-Track Gear

The ghost of a sword hovering at your hip. Deals CQ Salt damage, and doesn't have to be held to be used.

Anchor Fragment 3-Track Gear

A smaller piece hewed from a greater whole. Burn to immediately and completely heal any one of your injuries.

Resonant Tether 2-Track Gear

Spirits and the spectral realm become more visible and tangible to your entire crew in your presence.

Battered Ajna 4-Track Gear

A stringed instrument meant to be played in tandem by the living and the dead, but you can play both parts. Empowers nearby spirits when played.

Tempered Anchor 5-Track Gear

Your anchor to the world is reinforced against damage and tampering, a wise move for a fleeting ghost.

Faithful Spirit 4-Track Companion

Loyal to the grave, and beyond. Mark to ignore the effects of an active mire for the rest of the scene.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose anchored as your origin, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Iron, Tides, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Brace, Delve, Hack, Hunt, Outwit, Sense, Wavewalk

Languages: Old Hand, Signalling

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Old Memento, Broken Locket

Specimens: Glowing Plasm, Spectral Flower

Whispers: Back from Beyond, Drowned and Not

Charts: A Sketch of Shadowed Paths

Drive (Choose 1)

Send other spirits to a peaceful rest

Reconnect with your friends and family

Mire (Choose 1)

Your material control wavers erratically

Visions of your past death are difficult to banish

"I've died once already.
What fear do you think it holds for me now?"

- Calsey Calabrakta, ketra anchored

RIDGEBACK ORIGIN

Raised on a mesa or mountaintop island. Solid ground, but far from safe.

In the earliest days of the Verdancy, many mountain-dwelling folk considered themselves divinely spared from the forest that ate the world. Unfortunately, their sanctuaries quickly turned to graveyards; the harsher weather and lack of food meant that many died from exposure and disease, and those that clung on too often found dark solace in cults or cannibalism.

Those days are over now, for the most part, but their influence still shows. Those raised on the ridgebacks are built larger and stronger than their kin, and often worship strange, tenuous godlings.

Sturdy Ground

Unlike most on the wildsea, children growing up in ridgeback communities did so with solid ground under their feet and interaction with the waves around them as an option rather than a necessity. Despite their colonies being larger than most they produce comparatively few sailors, with most drawn to tasks making use of their unique environment - mining, stoneworking, smithing, and cattle-herding.

Gods for the Godless

While many small settlements (and even some larger cultures) have deities and godlings that they worship or sacrifice to, organised religion is a rarity on the rustling waves. Ridgeback communities are more likely than most to have preserved the pre-verdant idea of warring higher powers and omnipotent watchers, but even these ideas become corrupt or debase over time. Bestial iconography is common, as are stories of divine punishment.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the ridgeback into your character, consider the following questions...

- Did you settle a mountaintop island post-Verdancy, or did your ancestors flee to one in the chaos of the event itself?
- The ridgeback life is often tough and uncompromising. What lasting scar do you have from what you thought would be a harmless task?
- What animals are tended to on your safe-stone home, and why? For milk, meat, wool, or something else entirely?

Alternate Presentations

To keep the 'stable ground' feeling of the ridgeback while divorcing it from the mountains, consider the hide or carapace of a slow moving leviathan as foundation for a community. On the other hand, running with the concept of life being a superstitious struggle, a ridgeback community could easily exist on a spire of rock trapped at the edge of a rift or shankfall, a great empty darkness perpetually beneath 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.

Barrel-Chested 5-Track Trait
You may not be built fancy, but you are built sturdy.

Stone Hearted 4-Track Trait
Once per scene, increase impact on any successful action taken whilst on ancient ground.

Search for Omens 3-Track Trait
Mark to ask a question and receive an omen to interpret in return (supplied by the Firefly).

Thick Skin 3-Track Trait
You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Blunt, Toxin, Cold, Salt, Volt.

Crushing Blows 4-Track Trait
Your fists and feet are the only weapons you need. They deal CQ Blunt damage.

Fragments Like Gods 3-Track Trait
Whenever you gain a stone-based resource, give it the 'Sacred' tag.

Archaeodermis 2-Track Trait
Your skin (or whatever you have as an outer covering) mimics the mountain you were raised on. You're immune to Keen damage, as well as bites and stings from small creatures.

Chipping Tools 3-Track Gear
Treat **conflicts** as **triumphs** when altering or working with stone or bone.

Leviathan Furs 4-Track Gear
You never mark mire when confronted with an unknown or terrifying beast, no matter the size.

Ritual Mask 3-Track Gear
You can clearly see spirits and the spectral realm.

Whispering Charm 3-Track Gear
Consume a whisper to learn a secret about a nearby individual (supplied by the Firefly).

Hexed Tooth 3-Track Gear
Mark to levitate and control exposed bone.

Great Beast Horns 3-Track Gear
These might have deep ceremonial meaning, or just cut an impressive silhouette - either way these horns deal CQ Spike damage, and you ignore cut when defending yourself against charging opponents.

Shamanic Idol 4-Track Gear
Holds a sliver of power from a not-quite-god. Deals LR Salt damage.

Swift Hawk 2-Track Companion
A surly, vicious bird that can deal LR Keen damage. Once per scene, hijack focus to temporarily blind or distract an attacking opponent.

Mountain Snouter 3-Track Companion
An ill-tempered boar with cruel tusks. Deals CQ spike damage, and is large enough to ride.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose ridgeback as your origin, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)
Grace, Iron, Teeth

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)
Skills: Brace, Break, Cook, Harvest, Rattle, Tend, Vault
Languages: Chthonic, Brasstongue, Old Hand

Resources (Choose 2)
Salvage: Knucklebone Dice, Sharpened Stones
Specimens: Giant Wolf Jaw, Gorse Root
Whispers: Caves Beneath
Charts: A Faded Almanac

Drive (Choose 1)
Climb the highest peaks
Discover and claim an unknown mountain-top

Mire (Choose 1)
The roll of the waves sickens you
Your mind turns to sacrifice in times of trouble

"Timbers, bonds, and bones all break, but mountains? Mountains stand forever."

- Norit, ardent ridgeback

ROOTLESS ORIGIN

Born into the wildsailor's life, on a ship of floating colony.

In a world where solid ground is hard-won and reliable clean water scarce, nomads are common. The rootless are those that have fully embraced the nomadic lifestyle, drifting from place to place on family-owned ships handed down from one generation to the next. For many rootless, family ties are forever... but the call of the horizon is strong.

Rootless tend to be hardy sorts, raised among the perils of the open sea - they have no illusions about the waves, understanding their danger and their beauty in equal parts.

Fleetfamilies

Rootless families aren't decided by who shares blood, but rather who shares a ship - serve on a vessel for long enough and you become more than just crew. There are no distinctions between bloodlines, no tests to pass or arduous examinations. All a fleetfamily is, at its heart, is a group of people who have sailed the same waves and come to both respect and rely on each other. Large galleys, shared sleeping spaces, and communal eating areas are all entirely normal.

A Roving Lifestyle

You go where the waves take you - it's a common adage among the rootless, but life is rarely as simple as that. Rootless ships choose their destinations based on need; perhaps for medical supplies, or a certain foodstuff, a trade opportunity, or a bout of nostalgia.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the rootless into your character, consider the following questions...

- Were you born on your fleetfamily's ship, destined for inclusion?
- What port have you visited that left a mark on you, for good or ill? Were you ever tempted to stay behind as your ship left?
- Have you ever offered a place in the family to an orphan, an unfortunate, or a runaway? If so, do you still see them now?

Alternate Presentations

Rather than focus on a roving lifestyle, rootless colonies could take on elements of the trade-ships of old, cutting precise paths between multiple settlements repeated year after year. You could even remove the concept of movement altogether but keep the proximity to the sea, treating the rootless as wreck- or reef-dwellers.

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.

Family Ties 3-Track Trait
When you make a discovery during a journey, mark to tie it to your family in some way (such as a blood relative, fleetfamily member, or family friend).

Hull Hearted 3-Track Trait
Once per scene, increase impact on any successful action taken whilst aboard a ship you own or crew.

Wild Words 3-Track Trait
Mark to remember a rumour or folktale pertinent to your situation (supplied by the Firefly).

Needs Must 4-Track Trait
You never mark mire for consuming food or drink, no matter the source or condition.

Born to Sail 4-Track Trait
You always know true North, and ignore cut on movement-related actions caused by adverse seas or damage to your ship.

Sundew Senses 3-Track Trait
You can instantly identify the presence and potential dangers of nearby predatory plants, no matter how well they're camouflaged.

Fleetfamily Scarf 3-Track Gear
A beautifully made sporescarf passed from traveller to seasoned traveller. You're immune to the effects of bad air and airborne spores.

Nomad's Phrasebook 2-Track Gear
Whenever you take a montage, you can study your phrasebook (in addition to your usual task), gaining a smattering of any one language until your next montage.

Mechanical Limb 5-Track Gear
A rusting prosthetic that feels no pain.

Fishing Lure 3-Track Gear
Add a positive tag to any living specimen you acquire while fishing.

Patterned Sash 3-Track Gear
Treat **conflicts** as **triumphs** when using social skills to affect animals.

Shortspear 4-Track Gear
Traditionally used for deckside defence. Deals CQ Spike damage.

Slingshot 3-Track Gear
A simple slingshot, loaded with anything from stones to scrap to seeds. Deals LR Blunt or Blast damage.

Tarscale Armour 4-Track Gear
Resist the hazardous effects of crezzerin exposure (searing, hallucinations, mutation).

Springfox 3-Track Companion
A nimble wildsea vulpine known to dance in the wake of larger ships. Once per journey you may treat the outcome of a watch roll as **peace**, no matter the result.

Ring-Tailed Rabble-Rouser 4-Track Companion
A pugnacious lemur companion with a natural curiosity when it comes to the running of a wildsea vessel.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose rootless as your origin, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)
Grace, Instinct, Tides

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)
Skills: Delve, Flourish, Harvest, Rattle, Scavenge, Sway, Wavewalk
Languages: Brasstongue, Raka Spit, Signalling

Resources (Choose 2)
Salvage: Rusted Cogs, Sailcloth
Specimens: Wormapple, Firefly Bulbs
Whispers: A Welcoming Fleet
Charts: A Many-Folded Chart

Drive (Choose 1)
Aid rootless ships and colonies
Solve the problems of your family members

Mire (Choose 1)
The open sky is wide, oppressive
Outsiders are difficult to trust

"There's no better dawn than a dawn over new waves, no better sunset than one seen from the prow."

- Kion Se, ardent rootless

SHANKLING ORIGIN

A youth spent leaping branch to branch, high above the rustling waves.

Tallshanks are trees titanic even by the standards of the wildsea, their trunks spearing up through the waves, their crowns rarely less than half a mile wide.

The shanklings saw potential in the lofty reaches of these crowns, a separation from the predators of the wider waves below. Their cities and airship high-ports sprawl across the branches, old ruins dredged from the depths now hanging from sturdy chains and linked by ropes and bridges. Shankling citizens tend to be elegant, decisive, and entirely unfazed by heights, typically dressed in clothes styled to resemble the birds and feathered lizards of their towering homes.

It's a Long Way Down

There are dangers inherent to living at such a height, and it's not uncommon to find visitors to shankling settlements clinging to guard-rails and guide-ropes for dear life. For the inhabitants, it's a different story; growing up aware of the risks (and with the occasional plummeting-related death as a reminder) few are daredevils, but most move with a simple confidence around dizzying drops that a wave-level citizen never could.

High Fashion

Perhaps inspired by the birds they share their homes with, shanklings have a reputation for using bright, vibrant colours for everything from shop-fronts to clothing, bridge-ropes to hull plating. Aesthetic is important in most shankling communities, and fashions grow and wither with the seasons.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the shankling into your character, consider the following questions...

- Why fly the nest? What was it about the waves that brought you down from your perch to explore among the thrash?
- What's your personal aesthetic, and how (if at all) do your clothes call to mind the realities of your home environment?
- Did you ever fall from the boughs of your tallshank home? If so, what saved you?

Alternate Presentations

While most shanklings present as colourful, elegant, and bird-inspired, the aspects and general theme of the origin would work just as well with shanklings mimicking mammalian tree-dwellers like raccoons or squirrels. You could also replace the theme of branch-based living with one of trunk-based living, having shankling communities burrow their way into tallshank interiors and take cultural inspiration from beetles.

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.

Head for Heights 4-Track Trait

You're immune to vertigo, nausea, and mire caused by heights and precarious positions.

Skybridge Step 5-Track Trait

An elegant defensive dance that keeps you out of harm's way.

High Ground 3-Track Trait

Once per scene, increase impact on any successful action taken whilst you have the high ground.

Rising Meteor 4-Track Trait

Mark to sprint up a surface that would usually require you to climb it, even if it's unstable.

From Bough to Brain 5-Track Trait

Use a task to study a tree (of any size) and learn its secrets, age, and condition (supplied by the Firefly).

Hawksight 4-Track Trait

You can see much further and in greater clarity than the typical wildsailor.

Grappling Hook 2-Track Gear

When the hook is thrown and anchored, it allows you to swing over chasms and climb sheer surfaces. Treat **conflicts** as **triumphs** when climbing or swinging.

Glider's Cloak 3-Track Gear

You can land safely after any prepared fall.

Balancing Staff 4-Track Gear

Both a weapon and an acrobatic aid. Deals CQ Blunt damage.

Raptor's Claw 3-Track Gear

A talon-like gauntlet inspired by the hunting patterns of wingless birds. Deals CQ Hewing damage, and can be used to make controlled descents down vertical surfaces.

Broadwood Bow 3-Track Gear

Exquisitely crafted. Deals LR Spike or Toxin damage.

Feathered Mantle 3-Track Gear

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Blunt, Serrated, Toxin, Frost, Salt.

Sentinel Skywing 2-Track Companion

A watchful bird, often used for scouting remote areas. Mark to learn a secret of the surrounding waves.

Bark-Peeling Ferret 4-Track Companion

Expert at routing hidden bugs, even from the mighty ironroots. Mark or use a task to gain an insect specimen from a nearby branch or tree trunk.

Feathered Raptor 3-Track Companion

A beautifully feathered lizard, the result of generations of careful breeding to engender a modicum of sociability (still not quite there yet). Deals CQ Hewing damage, and is large enough to ride.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose shankling as your origin, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Grace, Tides, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Flourish, Hack, Harvest, Hunt, Study, Vault, Wavewalk
Languages: Knock, Signalling

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Ancient Stone, Length of Chain
Specimens: Broadwood Branch, Crowning Leaf
Whispers: Sunset Through Branches
Charts: An Etched Branch-Map

Drive (Choose 1)

Climb the highest shanks
Establish a high-port

Mire (Choose 1)

Branches break and bend beneath you
The opposite of vertigo, a deck-level queasiness

Height and hubris will forever be intertwined, but one of the other things you realize when living so high is how damn small you are in the vastness of the wider waves."

- Hondagra, ektus shankling

SPIT-BORN ORIGIN

Born on a spit of land dragged to the surface by the ever-growing boughs of the sea.
The spit-born are raised in temporary port-colonies, often built around the wavetop ruins and remnants of the old world. Their lives are full of life of struggle and trade, suspicion and tenacity - for such isolated places, strangers bring both opportunity and danger.

Spits rarely last a lifetime, and a healthy knowledge that their entire home could be swallowed by the waves at any point encourages most spit-born to live without many possessions and to travel light, often keeping everything they own close at hand.

Hubs of Corruption

The cramped conditions and lack of renewable resources that typify most spits mean their residents grow up with few illusions about what a struggle life can be. Street gangs are common among the youth, and those that don't find something productive to move onto often graduate to low-level mob activity and black-marketeering. The most successful of these groups tend to gain a healthy level of fear from the spit's other inhabitants, but some win their respect too - a cut-throat attitude can do wonders when it comes to securing important trade deals and smuggling opportunities.

Time to Move On

There are many signs that a spit might be on the verge of being reclaimed by the sea's deeper layers, ranging from changes in local animal behaviour to sudden cracks in architecture. When a spit is on the verge of collapse each of the residents has a choice to make - reinforce and prolong the fall or trade for passage on a ship to get out as fast as possible. Both have their benefits, but the latter is almost always the safer option.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the spit-born into your character, consider the following questions...

- What was the main material that made up your spit? Temple-stone, ancient architecture, ship-wreckage, or something else entirely?
- How was your youth on the streets of a spit? Were you part of a gang and, if so, did your inevitable rowdiness progress to genuine criminal activity?
- Does your home spit still stand above the waves? Do you even know?

Alternate Presentations

'Spit' is a broad term on the wildsea, which can cover anything from a shard of stone to a raised ruin or a leviathan's skull. The spit-born presented here are assumed to have a reasonably dirty, cramped, and urban life, representing the general overcrowding most spits face, but this needn't be the case - consider a more monastic or ascetic existence as a possibility, or dive deeper into grit, gutters, and gang warfare.

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.

Pit-Fight Survivor 5-Track Trait
You learnt how to take a beating and stay standing.

Urban Exploration 3-Track Trait
Mark to discover a friendly lead on services or information when in a port or city.

Cobble Hearted 3-Track Trait
Once per scene, increase impact on any successful action taken whilst in a port or city.

Every Street Tells a Story 3-Track Trait
Mark to learn a secret of a port or city you're docked at.

Through the Throng 3-Track Trait
Treat **conflicts** as **triumphs** when moving through crowds, herds, and swarms.

Shrewd Marketeer 3-Track Trait
Treat **conflict** as **triumphs** when haggling over an exchange of cargo or resources.

Spit & Polish 3-Track Trait
Use a task to remove a negative tag (such as 'Rusted' or 'Broken') from any piece of salvage.

Life of Scraps 3-Track Trait
When gaining a benefit from a meal or alchemical concoction, ignore any associated negative effects.

Scrutineer Eyepiece 4-Track Gear
You can tell a fake, forgery, or counterfeit item at a glance.

Acrid Long-Stem 4-Track Gear
A spice-filled pipe made to burn its contents with acid rather than flame. Injury tracks you become subject to are one box shorter than normal.

Docker Threads 4-Track Gear
Resist the hazardous effects of crezzerin exposure (searing, hallucinations, mutation).

Brass Knuckle 4-Track Gear
A brute but reliable weapon for street fights. Deals CQ Blunt damage.

Black-Market Pistol 4-Track Gear
A firearm sourced from unsavoury types. Deals LR Blast damage.

Trained Ratroach 1-Track Companion
A gutter-scavenger by nature, now working on your behalf. Once per montage gain a small salvage or specimen resource with a negative tag (in addition to your usual task).

Calico Slink 3-Track Companion
A semi-spectral cat winds its way around your legs. You have the ability to see clearly without light.

Pangopod 4-Track Companion
Half pangolin, half squid. Surprisingly cute.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose spit-born as your origin, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)
Iron, Sharps, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)
Skills: Break, Cook, Delve, Outwit, Rattle, Study, Sway
Languages: Brasstongue, Highvin

Resources (Choose 2)
Salvage: Engine Piping, Ancient Glass
Specimens: Hog Bones, Chicken Feathers
Whispers: A Newly-Risen Spit
Charts: A Cryptic Map

Drive (Choose 1)
Supply spit-born colonies with food and fresh water
Deal harshly with gangs and grifters

Mire (Choose 1)
A keen fear of shakes and quakes
A ravenous hunger for novel and exotic foodstuffs

"Permanence is overrated, I say - take what space you can, what food you can and what joy you can in the moment."

- Waxen Simica, ardent spit-born

ALCHEMIST POST

An expert on the guts of the sea itself, a student of chemical smoke and the spatter of reactions, the roiling chaos of elements reimagined.

Alchemists are masters of concoction and reaction, able to combine chemicals and arconautic knowledge with unexpected (and occasionally unstable) results. Some alchemists focus on the healing arts, some on transformation and understanding, and others on more... explosive pursuits.

Alchemists tend to dress in thick coverings to protect themselves when working with unpredictable ingredients, but even the best of them are marked with scars and burns from the inherent danger of their calling.

A Deeper Understanding

The core of the alchemist's skillset is understanding, a deeper knowledge of the sea's bounty and what it can be twisted into releasing. A char might take a pinwolf's meat as the base for a meal, a rattlehand its bones to fashion into a blade, but an alchemist can take any parts left over and pull out some of that brute, staccato, hungry essence and distill it into something useful.

Problems and Solutions

The most powerful tool in an alchemist's arsenal is the ability to concoct solutions primed with crezzerin, potions containing some of the rapid-growth weirdness inherent to the waves. These concoctions can be drunk fresh, stored for later tinkering, or handed out to the crew when the right moment comes. Though they rarely come without side effects, the lure of power - even accompanied by pain, or discomfort, or the unexpected - is an intoxicating one.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the alchemist into your character, consider the following questions...

- Do you specialize in certain ingredients, or take whatever you find and do your best?
- What was the worst unexpected side-effect you (or an unfortunate crewmember) ever experienced from one of your alchemical creations?
- What draws you to such a specialized field of study? The lure of knowledge and understanding, or the power to change the world to your own design?

Alternate Presentations

The alchemist already contains elements relating to the idea of a rogue scientist or chemical researcher, but these could be magnified to change the thrust of the post from one of practice to theory - a wandering scholar of burgeoning science, perhaps. Alternatively, the trappings of discipline and logic could be dropped to make something more akin to a hedge witch or cauldron-watcher, focusing on the manipulation of arconautic essences rather than the more traditional chemicals.

ASPECTS

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Component Scrounger 3-Track Trait
When one of your crewmates acquires an alchemically useful specimen, gain a copy of that specimen for yourself (once per scene).

Alchemical Unearthing 3-Track Trait
Whenever you discover a new location, choose a unique property (represented by a tag) to be easily found on specimens or salvage there.

Ulcerous Alembic 4-Track Trait
You can swallow two alchemical components, keeping them safely in your stomach. You can concoct them internally when you choose, benefitting immediately from the results or spitting the resulting solution out.

The Old Ways 2-Track Trait
Increase impact when concocting using only bone, organs, or insect parts as components.

Pestle-Pound 3-Track Trait
Use a task to grind a specimen into a powder, changing its form to a dust or salt and giving it the 'Pure' tag.

Baseline 3-Track Trait
Mark to briefly ignore any positive or negative effects stemming from a temporary benefit or injury. You are always immune to the negative effects of crezzerin.

Heady Vapours 2-Track Trait
Mark to ruminate on a question and receive a confusing, but accurate, answer. Burn instead to receive instant clarity from that answer.

Chemicokinesis 3-Track Trait
Mark to levitate and control impure liquids.

Metabolize 2-Track Trait
Consume a specimen to gain a brief burst of sensory information related to the specimen consumed (such as tremorsense by consuming a spider's web, for example).

Catalyst Belt 3-Track Gear
A heavy work-pack containing reagents and catalysts, tried and tested. Mark to use a chemical from the belt in place of a specimen when concocting.

Explosive Vials 3-Track Gear
Not an endless supply, but potent and disorienting. Mark to deal LR Blast, Salt, Acid, or Toxin damage to multiple nearby foes.

Dilution Agent 2-Track Gear
When you create a concoction, the entire crew can gain the benefit it offers as a one-track temporary aspect.

Pressure-Sealed Linkage 2-Track Gear
Treat conflicts as triumphs when using at least one liquid as a resource for a concoction.

Accelerant Vial 3-Track Gear
Once per journey you may create a concoction during a montage without using your usual task to do so (though you must still roll to create the concoction as usual).

Living Liquid 2-Track Companion
Winds its way around your form, studded with broken glass. Deals CQ Acid or Keen damage.

Syringiosquito 4-Track Companion
A diminutive alchemical construct designed to hold and drain fluids without being detected.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose alchemist as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)
Grace, Sharps, Tides

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)
Skills: Brace, Break, Concoct, Harvest, Scavenge, Study, Tend
Languages: Highvin, Brasstongue

Resources (Choose 2)
Salvage: Pouch of Vials, Rust Extract
Specimens: Dried Locusts, Draketongue Root, Beast Blood, Poison Glands
Whispers: A Stained Snapograph
Charts: A Tale of Choking Mists

Drive (Choose 1)
Discover a previously unknown alchemical effect
Gather bile from an ancient leviathan

Mire (Choose 1)
You're the perfect test subject for your own work
Explosives are unstable around you

"Art or science, learning or inspiration, arconautic puissance or natural power... these are the binaries you must break from in order to truly appreciate the fundamentals of alchemy."

- Ix Jaspero, ardent alchemist

CHAR POST

For a char, the wildsea is an endless new frontier of excitement and discovery... in culinary terms, at least.

Whenever you smell something delectable, there's a good chance that a char is behind it. Chars are somewhere between chef and survivalist, with a dash of healer and vintner thrown in for good measure.

Many chars lack formal training, instead putting in years of trial and error until they come up with a set of flavour combinations that suit their unique tastes. A precious few do manage to study under one of the old culinary masters, spreading their patented recipes across the sea.

The Value of Preparation

Some would argue that the wildsea provides enough edible material, and in enough variety, that a skilled chef would be little more than an afterthought when a ship takes on crew. Not so - apart from the obvious benefits to taste and presentation that a char brings, their most basic techniques and seasoning blends work to counteract the low levels of crezzerin found in most wildsea meat and produce. This leads to better health, better sleep, happier crews, and more productive ships.

Food Without Flame

Cookfires are, as you might expect, a rarity on the rustling waves... But meat needs to fry and tea needs to brew, so chars have found various ways around this limitation. Some eschew heat altogether, focusing on salts and pickling, spice-rubs, and sun-drying. Others treat the engine room as an extension of the galley, using engine warmth and pressure in place of actual flame. The most adventurous experiment with trained glowbugs, chemical hot-plates, and distilled sunlight.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the char into your character, consider the following questions...

- Do you have a signature dish and, if so, how is it prepared?
- No galley runs smoothly 100% of the time - what happened the last time you made the wrong culinary decision?
- Have you ever had the luxury of cooking over an open fire? If so, how did it feel? Did the resulting taste outweigh the danger?

Alternate Presentations

There are a lot of paths a char might walk that diverge significantly from 'ship's cook'. A char might be an obsessive gourmet, a travelling butcher or chop-station worker, or even some sort of wildsea confectioner, focusing more on the taste and presentation than the utility of their creations.

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.

Only the Best 2-Track Trait

Mark when gathering a specimen to give it the 'Pure' tag.

Ingredient Scrounger 3-Track Trait

When one of your crewmates acquires a potentially delicious specimen, gain a copy of that specimen for yourself (once per scene).

Golden Nose 4-Track Trait

Mark to identify a rare ingredient in your vicinity by scent alone.

Bountiful Discovery 3-Track Trait

Whenever you discover a new location, choose a single specimen type to be easily found there.

Deep in the Barrel 3-Track Trait

Increase impact when cooking with rotten or otherwise tainted ingredients. Meals made with these ingredients won't sicken your crew.

Enough for Everybody 2-Track Trait

Even a small meal can confer the benefits it offers as a one-track temporary aspect for the entire crew.

Taste Test 4-Track Trait

You're immune to poisons, and can determine their presence and characteristics by taste alone.

Flavour Engineer 3-Track Trait

You can treat salvage as specimens when creating meals. The results are still oddly edible.

Acid-Etched Cookpot 5-Track Gear

A hefty pot of near-unbreakable construction, used to prepare and store food or hide under in a tense situation.

Mechanical Grinder 3-Track Gear

Consume an additional specimen to create a lasting meal as an action (rather than the usual task).

Spice Bandoleer 3-Track Gear

A bandoleer containing your own secret blend of spices that never seems to run dry. Mark to create a rare resource, either *Wilds Pepper*, *Hangman's Blend*, or *Smouldergrit*.

Trademark Herbs 4-Track Trait

The right seasoning can make anything taste good. Mark to treat conflict results as triumphs while cooking..

Seasoned Cleaver 2-Track Gear

As useful on the battlefield as it is in the galley. Deals CQ Hewing damage. Increase impact when acquiring dangerous or disruptive specimens.

Reef-Iron Pan 4-Track Gear

A colossal implement. Deals CQ Blunt damage.

Husk-Leather Apron 3-Track Gear

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Toxin, Acid, Blast, Salt, Flame.

Sous Squirrel 2-Track Companion

A red-furred bundle of activity. Once per montage, gain a common insect specimen appropriate to the region (in addition to your usual task).

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose char as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Instinct, Teeth, Tides

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Concoct, Cook, Flourish, Harvest, Hunt, Sway, Tend

Languages: Brasstongue, Raka Spit

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Boiling Casks, Heating Element

Specimens: Medicinal Herbs, Distant Sea-Spices

Whispers: That Delicate Taste, Forbidden Food

Charts: An Annotated Cookbook, A Spice-Stained Map

Drive (Choose 1)

Prepare a banquet for the worthy

Harvest a truly unique ingredient

Mire (Choose 1)

Fruits you collect rot and sour in their jars

Your sense of taste becomes unworthy

"Share my recipes? Without hesitation - it's not what goes into the pot that makes the meal, it's the one that puts it there."

- Clattershot, ironbound char

CORSAIR POST

Fighters tasked with protecting their ships from the myriad dangers of the sea.

Every wildsailor is expected to be able to take up arms in a crisis, but the corsair elevates combat to an art form. Tasked with protecting their ship in close combat, they often focus their training on blades, hammers, and axes.

Most corsairs follow the ancient wisdom that the best defence is a strong and punishing offence. It's not unusual for them to switch between a mixture of esoteric fighting styles and acrobatic feats mid-combat to keep their foes off balance and under pressure.

Pragmatic Elegance

Whether it's across thrashing branches, crumbling ruins, or the rolling deck of a ship mid-combat, most corsairs are constantly on the move. While there are those that weigh themselves down with salvage-hammered armour and heavier weapons, these are in the extreme minority - the constant threat of an unexpected tumble into the waves is a strong motivator for staying nimble.

The Tools of the Trade

Given that corsairs tend to earn their place on a crew through the willingness and capacity to do violence, the weapons they carry are of paramount importance. Devoted, reliable weaponsmiths are uncommon across the waves, so for many corsairs their first 'rite of passage' is the creation of a tool that suits their purposes, or an array of them.

Sabres and cutlasses are the obvious choice when it comes to blades, picked for ease of use and (sometimes) a sense of carrying on the old salt-sea legacies whispered about by the oldest ektus. Hammers and axes are another good choice, useful for breaking through doors and defences. Spears are rarely used, seen more as a hunter's weapon, and daggers (though useful in a bar-brawl) have limited effect on many of the sea's wilder creatures.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the corsair into your character, consider the following questions...

- Where did your weapons come from? Trade, inheritance, or long hours of toil?
- What do you do in your spare time to keep yourself sharp, or to train the rest of your crewmates to defend themselves more effectively?
- What enemies have you made in your clashes with other ships - do they remember you and, if so, for what?

Alternate Presentations

Given the shifting nature of wildsea alliances and fortunes, a corsair could just as easily be a reformed pirate or marauder as they could someone trained to defend against them. For a more classic fantasy take, pairing the corsair's abilities with a dose of heavier armour could lead to an effective knight or paladin-style 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.

Steel-Step Dance 5-Track Trait
The key to survival is mobility. They can't hurt you if they can't hit you.

Stamp-Down Samba 5-Track Trait
The key to survival is solidity. You can take whatever they throw your way and stay standing.

Dirty Fighter 3-Track Trait
Treat conflicts as triumphs when attempting to trip, knock down, blind, or stun opponents.

Surgical Strike 3-Track Trait
You can target attacks precisely (such as when aiming for a weak point) without cutting for difficulty.

Prowess 4-Track Trait
Mark to increase impact when attacking at close quarters.

Dangersense 4-Track Trait
Mark to hijack focus from a trap or ambush as it triggers.

Chain Attack 4-Track Trait
You can deal damage to multiple nearby opponents with a successful CQ attack.

Scars That Tell Stories 4-Track Trait
Mark to gain a whisper based on damage or an injury you've just taken, supplied by the Firefly.

Protective Beacon 5-Track Gear
Treat conflicts as triumphs when attempting to prevent harm being done to a member of the undercrew.

Berserker 4-Track Trait
You're immune to mire while in combat, or any mire that would be caused by witnessing violence.

Flashpowder Pouches 4-Track Gear
Shake gently to produce temporary torchlight, or mark to produce a blinding flash.

Corsair's Sabre 4-Track Gear
A classic wildsea blade. Deals CQ Keen damage.

Boarding Axe 2-Track Gear
A savage weapon used to chop through foes. Deals CQ Hewing damage. Increase impact when attacking ships, objects, and structures.

Slinghammer 3-Track Gear
A versatile weighted hammer with a fabric tether. Deals Blunt damage at CQ or LR.

Throwing Knives 3-Track Gear
Perfectly weighted. Deals LR Keen or Spike damage.

Dragonfly Mantle 3-Track Gear
You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Blunt, Keen, Spike, Hewing, Blast.

Hooded Crow 3-Track Companion
A loyal bird trained to distract opponents in close-range combat. Mark to hijack focus from a nearby enemy as they attempt to attack, once per scene.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose corsair as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)
Grace, Iron, Teeth

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)
Skills: Brace, Break, Hack, Hunt, Tend, Vault, Wavewalk
Languages: Old Hand, Signalling

Resources (Choose 2)
Salvage: Armour Shards, Blackpowder Pouch
Specimens: Suspicious Finger, Beast Bones
Whispers: A Sobbing Mawship
Charts: A Stolen Starchart

Drive (Choose 1)
Protect the crew from terrifying entities
Make a name for yourself among bandits and raiders

Mire (Choose 1)
You cause more pain than necessary
Your weapons dull and rust, even when maintained

"Next time, give me a challenge."

- Sumak Tzul, ketra corsair

CRASH POST

Sometimes things just need to be broken.

While some people value the goods that can be dredged up, the crash isn't worried about that. They are specialists when something needs to be cleared away, torn down, or simply turned to rubble.

The crash may rely on carefully calculated explosions to bring down a wall, or may simply throw themselves at it with reckless abandon. Whatever their methods, a crash can be recognized by the plume of dust that follows them.

What About Pre-V Artefacts?

For many, the thought of destroying pre-Verdant relics is somewhere between distasteful and sacrilegious; such rarities are things of value and should be preserved, or at least repurposed. The crash may or may not agree with these people, but they also realize that sometimes the old must be cleared away to make space for the new. This is not wanton destruction - this is pragmatic.

Untrusted by Some

There are many people who understand the value a good crash can bring to a community. Given the destructive nature of their work, there are still some who regard the crash with some apprehension. For many, when they think of explosions, fire is also present. Nonetheless, the crash rarely has a hard time finding a niche for their unique set of skills.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the crash into your character, consider the following questions...

- Where did you grow up, and how did that colour your craft?
- What is the most collateral damage you have created? What happened, and who was affected?
- Have you encountered someone who hated your craft? What was the outcome of the run-in?

Alternate Presentations

The crash can be someone who is fundamentally interested in creation just as much as they are destruction. Like a sculptor, their focus could be in removing all the parts that do not belong in a piece of art or design. And with a more architectural bent in mind, communities on ridges are always in need of someone to create living space within mountains, ruins, and rock faces.

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.

Thick Skin 5-Track Trait
A history of breaking yourself while breaking other things has toughened you up.

Zero Days 3-Track Trait
Once per scene, ignore any damage to yourself that comes as a result of your own destructive actions.

The Seams Bear Secrets 4-Track Trait
Ancient buildings remember. Receive a whisper when you destroy an ancient structure.

Load-Bearing Wall 4-Track Trait
Use a task to identify hidden elements essential to the integrity of a structure.

Cannonball Dreams 3-Track Trait
You jump headfirst into destruction. Literally. You can use your own body as a projectile, dealing LR Blunt damage. You end up wherever you land.

Padded Boilersuit 3-Track Trait
You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Blunt, Spike, Hewing, Blast, Volt.

Broken Points 4-Track Trait
Increase impact when you break something as a show of strength or intimidation.

Crude Tools 3-Track Trait
Your solutions may not be clever, but they work. You may use the Break skill to construct simple tools.

Canis Box Detonator 4-Track Gear
A simple detonator used to set off explosives from a (presumably) safe distance.

Crash Mask 2-Track Gear
A mask favoured by those who work in dusty environments. You can see clearly through dust and smoke, and resist the effects of spores and bad air.

Baby Bombs 2-Track Gear
Handheld explosives waiting to be thrown. Deals LR Blast damage to multiple nearby targets at once.

Demolisher 2-Track Gear
An over-sized weapon, usually a hammer or pickaxe. Deals CQ Blunt or Spike damage. Increase impact when destroying architecture.

Wrecker's Globe 3-Track Gear
A large, heavy ball on the end of a chain. Deals CQ Blunt damage. Useful for knocking foes back.

Torteaver 4-Track Companion
A small creature with a hard shell known for gnawing through wood and stone.

Burrowhip Colony 4-Track Companion
A small colony of burrowing insects. Mark to weaken a structure without destroying it.

Blitceros 3-Track Companion
A quadruped large enough to be ridden. Tends to bring down barriers by charging into them horn-first.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose crash as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)
Instinct, Teeth, Sharps

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)
Skills: Brace, Break, Concoct, Delve, Outwit, Scavenge, Study
Languages: Knock, Raka Spit

Resources (Choose 2)
Salvage: Fine Red Powder, Slab of Masonry
Specimens: Flare Beetle Horn, Vermillion Herbs
Whispers: A Creeping Seam
Charts: A Weathered Chart

Drive (Choose 1)
Carve out livable space from a spit
Destroy a monument to something you hate

Mire (Choose 1)
Your burns, bruises and scars make others distrustful
Things around you break at the slightest touch

"Nothing lasts forever. I make sure of that."

- Renwick Quislino, ardent crash

DREDGER POST

Brave explorers with an eye for value.

The art of dredging is a difficult and painful one to learn, but the benefits are well worth the struggle. Dredgers make their living by diving into the waves in search of valuable specimens and salvage, sifting through dangerous wrecks and exploring ancient ruins as part of their daily routine.

Dredgers traditionally dress as lightly as they can, leaving as much space as possible free to carry their finds back to their ships. Most dredgers are easily distinguished by the stained, seared skin of their hands and feet - the effects of long-term crezzerin exposure are hard to hide.

Ancient Dangers

The truth of the pre-verdant era is a mystery to the vast majority, but slightly less so to the dredger. Even the most inexperienced of their profession run across artefacts and oddities of those old days from time to time, snagging them for trophy-cases, bragging rights, or the ministrations of a ship's rattlehand.

What is Treasure, Anyway?

Different folks specialize in the retrieval of different things when they head below the surface. Some search exclusively for the massively valuable, the ruins of the old world and the mysteries they contain. Others, no less important, set their sights a little lower - on salvage pieces and wrecked hull-plating, a captain's old cutlass, or a cupboard brimming with charts. The sea is loath to let such items go, or at least that's how it feels, but salvage - as it's often said - is the lifeblood of civilization.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the dredger into your character, consider the following questions...

- What's the most valuable thing you've ever found, and what did you end up doing with it once you reached the surface?
- There are sights below the canopy that few see, and fewer talk about. How have they shaped you?
- Nobody gets through a career in such hostile territory without making a mistake now and then - what scars has your profession left on you? What great treasure did you glimpse, but fail to acquire?

Alternate Presentations

Dredgers can work well as more general looters and scavengers, but you can also twist the concept into a far stealthier direction by making them into some combination of cat-burglar and classic dungeoneer (relying on their aspects for working in dark conditions and gaining entry to places they shouldn't).

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.

Seared Skin 4-Track Trait
Resist the hazardous effects of crezzerin exposure (searing, hallucinations, mutation).

Master Salvager 1-Track Trait
Add a positive tag of your choice to any salvage you acquire from wrecks, reefs, and ruins.

Mental Catalogue 4-Track Trait
Mark to discern the use or history of something ancient.

Lurid Cartography 3-Track Trait
You can use charts to find shipwrecks and disasters, as well as the usual islands and oddities.

Devil May Care 3-Track Trait
Treat conflicts as triumphs when avoiding traps and environmental hazards.

Arborofathometer 3-Track Gear
A complex depth-gauge for measuring your precise distance from the Darkness-Under-Eaves. Increase your ship's **Tilt** rating by one when you're aboard.

Scrounge 3-Track Trait
Whenever your crew gains a piece of cargo, gain a resource (likely salvage, but perhaps a specimen or whisper) related to that cargo for yourself.

Cramped Conditioning 3-Track Trait
Ignore cut that would be imposed for taking actions in enclosed or architecturally unstable spaces.

Silkwire Coil 5-Track Gear
A near-unbreakable coil of thick wire that is somehow soft to the touch. Can be re-coiled with a simple flick after being unwound.

Amber Lenses 4-Track Gear
Goggles that allow you to see perfectly through smoke, mists, and sporeclouds.

Moth Lantern 4-Track Gear
Uses luminous moths to illuminate a small area around you.

Springheel Boots 4-Track Gear
Mark to make a prodigious leap and land safely without having to roll.

Tomb Hammer 2-Track Gear
As much a tool as it is a weapon. Deals CQ Blunt damage. Increase impact when smashing stonework and structures.

Key-Tail Scorpion 2-Track Companion
A curious little beast with a skeleton-key stinger. Once per scene, you may open any mundane lock.

Sanctipede 3-Track Companion
Drawn to history and forgotten things. Consume a chart to identify and retrieve a piece of ancient and valuable salvage in your vicinity if possible.

Tickerclick 4-Track Companion
A punchcard intelligence in a noisy construct body, the whirring and clanking of this mouse-like companion is useful for drawing attention away from your position.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose dredger as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)
Sharps, Tides, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)
Skills: Break, Delve, Outwit, Rattle, Scavenge, Study, Vault
Languages: Brasstongue, Highvin

Resources (Choose 2)
Salvage: Copper Rings, Ancient Engine
Specimens: Soporific Sap, Leviathan Claw
Whispers: A Risen Wreck
Charts: An Ancient Shipping Manifest

Drive (Choose 1)
Discover an untouched pre-verdant ruin
Salvage a working machine from an ancient wreck

Mire (Choose 1)
Doors and seals stay stubbornly closed to you
Your movements cause wrecks to shift and creak

"Finding the stuff is the easy part, it's getting it back to the ship that takes an extra few sets of hands."

- Zotse Xeker, tzelicrae dredger

HACKER POST

The marks and scars of your profession are writ large on your skin.

A hacker's job is to clear the way for settlements, ships, and exploration, plunging into the wilds to tear open paths and clearings.

The earliest hackers used fire, before quickly realizing that the ironwood boughs re-grew faster than they burned. Now they know, like every other survivor, that fire is more trouble than it's worth. For the more modern of their kind, sharpened metal, chemicals, and honest sweat reign supreme; and worth is measured in snapped branches and rough-cut routes.

Axe-Heads and Sawteeth

A hacker's work is some of the most dangerous on the wildsea, the very nature of their job calling on them to plunge into the waves at a moment's notice. And, though the core of their work is checking for safe paths, soft-spots, and the kinds of hazard that don't show up on a map, they're also called upon to defend their ships from more mobile dangers when necessary.

Luckily for a hacker, their wilds-clearing arsenal doubles as a pretty effective set of weapons. No other post can deal with plant-based threats with the same level of competence, and those skills allow them to put up a sturdy defence against insect and mammalian aggressors as well.

Crezzerin Waves

A danger for the average sailor, but a constant threat for a hacker. Crezzerin's searing, mutative liquidity isn't omnipresent, but it might be in any leaf or branch-tip they aim to cut. Even with their protective gear kept in peak condition, they'll suffer the effects before too long - crews with a dedicated hacker almost always find themselves in need of a dedicated surgeon as well before too long.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the hacker into your character, consider the following questions...

- Where do you watch the waves from on your ship? The prow, ready to spring into action, or somewhere higher for a more commanding view?
- What's the biggest predatory plant you've ever bested, and what marks did it leave on you in return?
- Not every path can be cleared - what was your greatest failure, and how did you make up for it once the sting had faded?

Alternate Presentations

Though a hacker's usual presentation is one of pathfinding and threat detection, a less martial approach can also work - hackers make excellent harvesters and gardeners, able to withstand the waves long enough to bring in choice specimens of plantlife to supply a surgeon, alchemist, or char.

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.

Scars Remember 5-Track Trait
The wildsea teaches harsh, but useful, lessons.

Trailblazer 3-Track Trait
Increase impact when finding routes and clearing paths through vegetation.

Living Antidote 3-Track Trait
Use a task to create a rare resource, 'Pure Spit' or ' Pure Sweat'.

Wild Harvest 3-Track Trait
Treat conflicts as triumphs when attacking or defending against plant-type hazards.

Crezzercamo 3-Track Trait
Mark to become undetectable to plant-type hazards and creatures for the duration of a scene.

Hard-Won Instincts 3-Track Trait
You can tell which branches will break and which will hold at a glance. Increase your ship's **Saws** rating by one when you're aboard.

Petalcrusher 3-Track Trait
You ignore mire caused by plant-based hazards and horrors, and are resistant to acids, toxins, and hallucinatory effects caused by predatory plants.

Rusting-Leaf Ale 2-Track Gear
Becomes more flavourful the more it gets jostled and shaken. Whenever you gain a benefit from a concoction or meal, increase its track by two boxes.

Grappling Chain 2-Track Gear
Designed to find quick purchase in bark and boughs. Treat conflicts as triumphs when traversing the sea.

Chemical Censer 3-Track Gear
Mark to create a small area of smoke that repels insects and lowers visibility.

Wavestrider Jacket 2-Track Gear
Resist the hazardous effects of crezzerin exposure, insect bites, and poisons.

Jagserry 3-Track Gear
The archetypal hacker weapon, a sawtooth sabre that deals CQ Hewing or Serrated damage.

Sawtooth Chakram 3-Track Gear
A set of sharpened circular blades made for throwing, dealing LR Keen or Serrated damage.

Defoliant Grenades 3-Track Gear
Explosive packets that burst when lobbed with force. Deals LR Acid or Salt damage.

Gyrewing Moths 5-Track Companion
A trained swarm of ragged insects. Burn to neutralize the effects of bad air and airborne spores for your crew for the rest of a scene.

Prow-Nose Porcupine 2-Track Companion
Not the easiest creature to pet, but you learn to live with it. Ignore cut caused by pain or discomfort.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose hacker as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)
Iron, Instinct, Teeth

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)
Skills: Concoct, Hack, Harvest, Hunt, Outwit, Sense, Wavewalk
Languages: Knock, Signalling

Resources (Choose 2)
Salvage: Wreck-Iron Plating, Abandoned Scrap
Specimens: Wild Apricots, Scorpions in a Jar
Whispers: An Ironroot Fallen
Charts: An Arboreal Diagram

Drive (Choose 1)
Lay a mawship to rest
Survive a leviathan plant encounter

Mire (Choose 1)
Insects seek your skin
The waves call for you to travel deeper than necessary

"The waves will teach you, whether you're willing to listen or not. Luckily for all concerned, I was."

- Motsje Morencja, ardent hacker

HORIZONEER POST

A fountain of facts about the sea and its cultures, its dangers and hidden places.

Part scholar, part explorer, horizoneers make it their business to learn as much about the rustling waves as possible. They root out its secrets, study its beasts, and integrate almost seamlessly into its manifold cultures, mimicking even the most novel customs with ease.

Many horizoneers also take on the task of disseminating this gathered knowledge as effectively as possible; sometimes through the medium of songs and poems, sometimes lectures and manuscripts. If there's one thing every horizoneer has in common, it's a way with words.

It's Not All Blood and Guts

One of the defining elements of the horizoneer is a push toward peace and understanding rather than conflict and bloodshed. Even dire situations can often be defused by a few well-chosen words, and when you get down to it, even the wildest of beasts can be turned from their immediate predations with enough skill. This doesn't mean that a horizoneer is inherently a pacifist - a well-swung lute can leave a bruise as reliably as a stave - but it does mean that crews with a horizoneer are less likely to treat combat as the go-to option when presented with hostility.

Bardic Tradition

While not every horizoneer carries an instrument, it's rare to find one without at least some musical inclination. Songs and poems have a way of sticking in the mind, a memory aid for the horizoneer themselves and something to help them draw crowds and create a sense of community in new places. It's not uncommon to visit a distant port and hear the strains of a familiar tune, evidence that a horizoneer has passed through at some point and left their musical mark on the place.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the horizoneer into your character, consider the following questions...

- Have you ever discovered a culture previously completely unknown to you? What did you learn or take away from your interactions with them?
- When did you manage to turn your knowledge about one group into an advantage when dealing with another, and how did the situation play out?
- If you have an instrument, what is it and how did you come to own it?

Alternate Presentations

The general feeling of a horizoneer can be skewed toward scholarly knowledge (by creating an antiquarian type, interested in the legacies and artefacts of the wildsea's scattered cultural enclaves) or enjoyable whimsy (by leaning into the idea of a bard or roving performer) with equal ease.

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.

First Impressions 2-Track Trait
Increase impact when communicating with an individual for the first time.

Silver Tongue 4-Track Trait
When communicating with a friendly individual in their natural language, treat **conflict** results as **triumphs**.

Hyperadaptive 4-Track Trait
Mark to learn a smattering of any language you hear and have no ranks in. This knowledge remains until you choose to mark and replace it with a new language.

Wealth of Knowledge 3-Track Trait
Mark to learn a secret of the sea related to one of your whispers (the whisper isn't consumed).

Nothing Stays Buried 4-Track Trait
Mark to identify a hidden or forgotten space in your vicinity by gut feeling alone.

Open Hands, Open Heart 3-Track Trait
Whenever you or your crew successfully defuse a situation that was heading toward a fight, clear a mark of mire.

Exports Tell Stories 3-Track Trait
Whenever your crew gains a piece of cargo, gain a whisper related to that cargo for yourself.

Watch and Learn 3-Track Trait
Use a task to tag along with one of your crewmates, gaining a temporary rank in any skill they display. This rank lasts until you next use Watch and Learn.

Bait Bandoleer 4-Track Gear
Intoxicating to certain species. Treat conflicts as triumphs when trying to distract, divert, or drive off a wildsea creature.

Spike Wine 2-Track Gear
An ektus delicacy that sharpens the palette. Whenever you or a crewmate gains a benefit from a meal or beverage, increase the track for the benefit by one box.

Tuning Fork 4-Track Gear
Once per scene increase impact when engaged in a performance of some kind.

Padded Gauntlet 2-Track Gear
Used to help train the wild creatures of the sea. You're resistant to bite attacks, no matter the damage type.

Sheaf of a Hundred Stories 3-Track Gear
Gain a whisper whenever you encounter a spectacle, horror, or new port during a journey.

Bundled Correspondence 3-Track Gear
When you enter a new port, mark to find a friendly contact you've exchanged letters with in the past.

Sturdy Instrument 4-Track Gear
Anything from a guitar to maracas, a hip drum to an accordion, a sitar to an ocarina. Can be played, but also acts as a CQ Blunt weapon in a pinch.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose horizoneer as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)
Sharps, Tides, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)
Skills: Flourish, Harvest, Outwit, Sense, Study, Sway, Tend
Languages: Lyrebite, Brasstongue, Highvin

Resources (Choose 2)
Salvage: Drinking Horn
Specimens: Bark Wine
Whispers: New Horizons, Over the Ridge
Charts: A Hasty Sketch

Drive (Choose 1)
Discover a hidden culture or enclave
Forge a relationship between disparate peoples

Mire (Choose 1)
You stumble over your words at the worst of times
You slip in and out of the various languages you know

"The blossoms and boughs are beautiful, no doubt, but nothing compared to the stories of those that live upon them."

- Gahon Kesstera, ardent horizoneer

HUNTER POST

Some hunt for food, others challenge. Yet others to reassure themselves that they are not the hunted.

A hunter's role is to provide food and materials for the crew, usually in the form of animal parts. Some hunters prefer more complex prey, styling themselves as bounty hunters and roving the waves looking to bring down bounties for payment. Either way, stealthy movement and hidden snares often pay dividends.

Hunts and Honour

Several well-recognised groups in the wildsea base their culture and philosophies around hunting, and almost every settlement has citizens engaged in the practice. There's an undeniable thrill to the activity, the snapping-shut of a trap or the spray of blood from a piercing arrow, but despite this hunters are typically characterised as reclusive, sombre folk.

It might be that the waves demand a certain level of respect - when you're in among the branches, in a world designed to aid your quarry and stymie you at every turn, you quickly learn your place in the grand scheme of things.

Bounties and Payment

When you've got the skills to track down something that doesn't want to be found, it's natural that at some point you'll be asked to track down *someone* that doesn't want to be found. Not all hunters are willing to take the moral step required to target members of other bloodlines (or even their own), partly due to the extra risk involved and partly the lax attitude toward law that pervades across the wider waves.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the hunter into your character, consider the following questions...

- What's the most dangerous creature you've brought down without it ever knowing you were there?
- Have you ever had to call off a hunt and, if so, why? Injury, exhaustion, or were you simply outclassed by your prey?
- Have you ever been tempted by bounty hunting and, if so, did you ever actively engage in it?

Alternate Presentations

While certain elements of a hunter's fiction point toward the possibility of bounty hunting, these can be taken to another level by using the post's long-range weapons and skill at concealment to create an assassin. Alternatively, a more classic rogue-type character could easily fit the hunter's archetype without too much trouble.

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.

Ghost of the Wilds 3-Track Trait

Choose either *wild* or *urban* areas. You leave barely any trace (and are almost impossible to track) when moving through your chosen area.

From Nowhere 3-Track Trait

Increase impact when attacking from a hidden position, or attacking an unaware target.

Whisper on the Wind 3-Track Trait

Consume a whisper to gain cryptic information on a target's whereabouts and actions.

Bloodhound 3-Track Trait

Your sense of smell is highly developed, allowing you to hunt and track by scent alone.

Running Quiet 2-Track Trait

Your guidance allows your vessel to keep a lower profile, disturbing fewer creatures and leaving less of a telltale trail. Increase your ship's **Stealth** rating by one when you're aboard.

Rare Musk 4-Track Gear

Collected from sleeping leviathans, apparently. Burn to drive a beast or insect of the waves into an intense instinctual behaviour (such as fear, hunger, or frenzy).

Slacker's Line 2-Track Gear

A fishing rod designed to be left unattended. Once per journey, gain a live specimen appropriate to the area you're travelling through.

Butchery Kit 3-Track Gear

You can butcher dangerous specimens without risk or cutting for difficulty, and increase impact when gathering resources from a creature you've hunted.

Snare Set 3-Track Gear

Count conflicts as triumphs when readying traps, snares, or ambushes.

Venomous Trophy 3-Track Gear

Use a task to create a resource, *Paralyzing Venom*.

Masterwork Leathers 2-Track Gear

When you take this trait choose either beasts, plants, or insects. You're resistant to all damage from your chosen source.

Boot-Knife 3-Track Trait

Deal Keen damage to any creature that attacks you with their own body in close quarters (such as with tail or bite attacks).

Jawspear 4-Track Gear

A long-bladed spear with cruelly curving teeth. Deals CQ Serrated damage.

Manifold Bow 2-Track Gear

A finely crafted bow paired with an expansive quiver. Can deal LR damage of three types chosen from the following list: Spike, Toxin, Blast, Volt, Salt.

Target Dragonfly 3-Track Companion

Every moment of its life is a hunt. Mark to identify a weak point or weakness of a creature you can see.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose hunter as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Grace, Instinct, Teeth

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Hack, Harvest, Hunt, Outwit, Rattle, Sense, Wavewalk

Languages: Raka Spit, Signalling

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Leather Cord, Rusted Mantrap

Specimens: Scorpion Carapace, Bait Worms

Whispers: Leviathan Breeding Grounds

Charts: A Chart of Old Hollows

Drive (Choose 1)

Bring down a leviathan

Provide meat for a grand feast

Mire (Choose 1)

Crezzersear pushes you to the brink of madness

Something is hunting you -you're sure of it

"I've never found a creature I couldn't hunt, but that just means I obviously have more to learn."

- Olem-Orn, gau hunter

MESMER POST

An explorer of the mind, dabbling in the mysteries of memory and the power of thought.

The waves are an illusion, a rustling dream lain across ironwood spindles. Crewmates are bundles of thought and emotion, impulse and memory. A ship is a carcass, a nebula, a home.

To a mesmer the world is a tangled pattern to be unfolded, a veil hiding deeper mysteries within. With a combination of subtle trickery, self-control, and arconautic know-how, no secret stays buried for long.

Not Just The Power of the Mind

A mesmer's own mind is their most important tool and, with enough dedication, it becomes strong enough to impose its will on the outside world. But it can't get there without help, and each mesmer has their own way of augmenting or expanding their own inner power - some use mantras and dances, others cryptic hand-gestures and pre-verdant tongues. Some draw arconautic power from the denizens of the waves, taking trophies from naturally mesmeric beasts and plants. And some, of course, rely on a healthy appetite for unhealthy vices, usually in the form of massive amounts of psychotropic drugs.

The Limits of Control

There are mutterings around the junction-house when mesmers are mentioned, of stolen minds and sleeper agents, of people puppeteered. What could drive someone to practice such arts, those whispers continue - what kind of a person could do something like that?

Well, luckily for those concerned, the answer is 'none'. While mesmers are adept at rooting out information that some would prefer stay hidden, their ability to actually *control* another sentient individual is limited. As a general rule, existing emotions and impulses are key to the more manipulative side of their art.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the mesmer into your character, consider the following questions...

- How disciplined is your mind? Do your powers come from a natural calm and self-possession or a diligent study of your own inner workings?
- What secret have you discovered that changed your life, for better or worse?
- How open are you with displays of your talents, given the natural prejudice many hold against those of your particular skillset? Do you embrace their fear or work to ameliorate it?

Alternate Presentations

The more world-affecting abilities of a mesmer can easily lend themselves to the creation of a classic psychic character, or a mysterious magician type. Focusing on the less arconautic side can give you a convincing stage-magician, rabble-rouser or con artist.

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.

Autohypnosis 5-Track Trait
You've learned to meditate rather than sleep, allowing you to stay far more aware while resting than most.

Meditative Healing 4-Track Trait
Using a task to meditate in a peaceful environment allows you to heal each of your damaged traits or each of your injury tracks by one.

An Uncomfortable Understanding 4-Track Trait
Burn to clear one of a crewmate's mire tracks entirely.

Empty the Mind 4-Track Trait
Ignore cut from pain, hallucination and distractions while trying to act.

Knowing The Unknown 3-Track Trait
Mark to identify a target's secret fear, or burn to accurately evaluate the truth of a statement.

Parasite Thought 2-Track Trait
A living thought that's taken root in your mind, invisible but able to interact with the world. Allows you to hold and manipulate more objects than usual.

Intricate Tattoos 3-Track Trait
You're immune to confusion and hallucinations that you don't invite or create yourself.

Staredown 5-Track Trait
Locking eyes with an opponent allows you to assail their mind with unwanted sensation, manifesting as LR Salt damage. Only works on creatures with sight.

Chameleon Veil 3-Track Gear
Use a task to hold still and blend in with your surroundings, becoming almost impossible to notice until you move again.

Shard of Dream-Soaked Amber 3-Track Gear
Consume a specimen to experience a thought or memory from a nearby individual.

Seven-Eye Scrawl 2-Track Gear
Eyes are daubed across your body, each of them able to perceive the world in a different way. Mark to gain a specialized form of sight for a brief time (such as the ability to see ghosts, or heat, or magnetism).

Smoked-Glass Hookah 3-Track Gear
Releases a steady stream of wispy smoke. Mark to control smoke or vapours.

Chromiguana 4-Track Companion
Slow-moving and sleepy, usually found curled up around your shoulders or at the bottom of a bag. A surprisingly relaxing presence - treat conflicts as triumphs when trying to calm yourself or others.

Pinned Butterfly 3-Track Companion
Mark to wake the butterfly for a brief time. While awake, the hypnotic patterns of the butterfly's wings induce drowsiness in those that catch sight of them.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose mesmer as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)
Sharps, Instinct, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)
Skills: Concoct, Flourish, Outwit, Sense, Study, Sway, Tend
Languages: Signalling, Old Hand, Highvin

Resources (Choose 2)
Salvage: Broken Pocketwatch
Specimens: Hallucinogenic Leaf, Soporific Draught
Whispers: Beneath the Surface
Charts: A Dream-Drawn Sketch

Drive (Choose 1)
Uncover a great mystery buried in the mind
Help those suffering from great distraction

Mire (Choose 1)
Your own thoughts are cloudy, mercurial
Calm eludes you; you are full of nervous energy

"If the mind is a maze, mine is positively labyrinthine."
- Dream of Claws, ardent mesmer

NAVIGATOR POST

A bridge between the waves and the ship itself.

Overlooked by youngbloods and praised by the old hands, navigators make sure a ship can get from A to B with the minimum of trouble and the maximum of opportunity.

Navigators have had a connection to the dancing fireflies of the wildsea since the earliest days of sailing, but there are many that eschew this 'weirder' side of their ways and focus on the accurate use and creation of maps and charts. Even with the changing topographies of the rustling waves, a good chart can mean the difference between port and death.

Cartography and Changing Waves

The uninitiated often wonder how maps can be of much use given the ever-growing, ever-changing topography of the canopy. The truth is that maps are often outdated, but even an outdated map is more useful than no map at all - even after the grand shifts caused by rootquakes, the largest ironroots, ports, and structures rarely change position, meaning navigators spend much of their time correcting and updating maps as they travel. An average navigator's logbook is as much a record of history as of direction.

Augurs

Hex-touched navigators that have moved beyond compass and chart, augurs eschew the mundane and delve straight into the embrace of the weird. Routes are divined through the movement of insects, the whispers of spirits, or the reading storm-patterns, and the augur develops an intense, unique connection to the ship they serve on. Despite the different approaches of the various disciplines, most have a healthy respect for each other and the unique skills they call upon.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the navigator into your character, consider the following questions...

- How do you read the waves, and with what tools? Is navigation a discipline of learning for you, or more of a process of instinct and gut feeling?
- Have you ever discovered an entirely new location, or charted a route to a place once thought inaccessible?
- Where do you keep your charts, and how do you update them?

Alternate Presentations

A navigator's aspects and skills lend themselves quite well to a character filling the role of a scholar or historian, but can also be used to create an effective travelling merchant-type. Devoting yourself to the arconautic side of the navigator's options can easily create a ship-centric psychic.

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.

In the Firefly's Glow 4-Track Trait

You know the secret paths of the fireflies. Mark to discover a location without using a chart (once per scene).

Years at Sea 4-Track Trait

Mark to request an omen of the future (supplied by the Firefly).

Wildlung 3-Track Trait

You resist the effects of bad air, and are imune to airborne spores.

Revelatory 3-Track Trait

When you discover a new route or location, uncover a secret about that area as well.

Hullsight 4-Track Trait

While aboard your ship you can see as though you had eyes at any point across the outer hull.

At The Right Moment 2-Track Trait

Whenever your crew take a montage during a journey, choose one crewmember to perform an extra task of their choice (you can't choose yourself).

Journeys Unfinished 4-Track Trait

Mark to learn the never-reached destination or port of origin for any wreck you come across. Burn to learn it for a ship still travelling.

Skoinesis 2-Track Trait

You have uncanny control over nearby ropes and rigging, which twist and move according to your will.

Gale Flute 3-Track Gear

A simple musical instrument at first glance, playing the gale flute has the curious property of bringing favourable winds your way.

Cartographika 3-Track Gear

A map-maker's ordinator. Use a task to create a rare resource, *Chart of the Rustling Waves*.

Bundled Charts 3-Track Gear

When you uncover a new route or location, you can mark this aspect. If you do so, the Firefly will inform you of a second route or location at the same time.

Ornate Spyglass 3-Track Gear

A spyglass that allows you to see much further and in greater clarity than the average wildsailor. When you have a commanding view, mark to learn a secret of the surrounding waves.

Flare Pistol 2-Track Gear

A small sidearm loaded with chemical flares. Deals LR Acid damage. Can also be used to shed light over extremely large areas at will.

Scout Falcon 2-Track Companion

Once per journey allows a crewmember to roll 2d6 when on watch, then pick the preferred result. Also deals LR Keen damage.

Weatherbug 3-Track Companion

Mark to accurately predict the weather for the next few days.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose navigator as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Grace, Sharps, Tides

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Brace, Delve, Hack, Outwit, Study, Vault, Wavewalk

Languages: Signalling, Old Hand, Highvin

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Torn Canvas, Ship's Timber

Specimens: Glowing Mushrooms, Ancient Amber

Whispers: A Spit On the Rise, Dawn Over New Waves

Charts: A Leather-Bound Journal, A Detailed Chart

Drive (Choose 1)

Discover a great secret of the distant waves

Have an island named after you

Mire (Choose 1)

The waves seem callous, unpredictable

You're tongue-tied when trying to relay important information

"They say the waves are impossible to chart, their paths impossible to number. Doesn't sound like wisdom to me."

- Jarl Nodesku, ektus navigator

RATTLEHAND POST

Everything breaks eventually, but most of it can be repaired.

Hull-iron rusts. Sawteeth blunt. Engines cough and struggle. In a world of salvage and barter, nothing lasts forever... unless you have a good rattlehand on your side.

A rattlehand is somewhere between an engineer, a blacksmith, and an artist, able to use the scrap of the seas to repair, reinforce, and create. Many rattlehands excel in crafting new and unique gear for their crewmates, perfectly suited to the troubles they face.

A Second-Hand World

The first thing almost every rattlehand learns is how to make the best of a bad situation; relying on imprecise tools, twisted salvage, and broken machinery to ply their trade. The lack of wide-scale mining and ore processing makes metal shortage an unfortunate reality, so those that balk at the idea of repurposing the same wreckage for the twentieth time often turn to wood or bone as a stand-in.

Salvage or Specimens?

Salvage is by far the easiest material for a rattlehand to work with, tried-and-true pieces of wood or metal that stood the test of time (at least for a while). As most materials on the wildsea are second-hand, using fragments of old machines and discarded pieces of ship-stuff is a natural part of the job.

But some rattlehands like a challenge, particularly those that spend a lot of time around the unusual creatures of the wider waves. These engineers combine the coldly artificial with the unpalatably organic, using plant and animal specimens alongside more traditional materials to create effective (but occasionally unsettling) products.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the rattlehand into your character, consider the following questions...

- Most rattlehands have a favoured material to work with - what's yours?
- Which experiment or repair job of yours failed spectacularly at just the wrong moment, and what were the consequences?
- What was your crowning glory, technologically speaking? The development of a new technique, the completion of a grand machine, or the unlocking of a pre-verdant industrial secret?

Alternate Presentations

Alternate rattlehand presentations are as diverse as rattlehands themselves; you might want to aim for a dockside engineer or ship-builder called to the waves, a blacksmith struggling in a world without forges, a technology-focused scientist, or even an artist or sculptor that works in salvage.

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.

Mastercraft 2-Track Trait
Choose wood, metal, or bone. Increase impact when crafting or repairing with your chosen material.

Made to Last 3-Track Trait
When you craft, the resulting creation's track is three boxes longer than usual.

Multitasker 3-Track Trait
You can use a task to work on repairing up to three pieces of gear or mechanical companions at a time.

Surefire Smith 3-Track Trait
Count conflicts as triumphs when repairing gear and mechanical companions.

Deckside Engineer 3-Track Trait
Tiny, incremental adjustments that you make without thinking keep your vessel's hull and superstructure in remarkable shape. Increase your ship's **Armour** rating by one when you're aboard.

Breakdown Specialist 3-Track Gear
When a crafted benefit's track is fully marked, gain a piece of salvage related to it before removing the benefit.

Inkstamp Mechanism 2-Track Gear
Consume a chart to quickly create a set of schematics for a machine or mechanism you can see (represented by a new chart). All actions to create such a machine yourself gain increased impact while you have this new chart.

Toolbelt 2-Track Gear
Once per scene, swiftly craft a one-track creation without needing to roll.

Salvage Kit 3-Track Gear
Contains salvage useful for crafting. Mark to use the contents in place of a resource when crafting.

Multi-Lens Goggles 3-Track Gear
You gain ferrosight, the ability to see electric and magnetic fields.

Wolf-Skin Gloves 4-Track Gear
You never cut for difficulty when including specimens in your crafting, no matter how grisly or unpalatable the process is.

Volt-Rail 2-Track Gear
An insulated grip around a crackling, rudimentary cattleprod. Deals CQ Volt damage, and you're immune to Volt damage yourself.

Vortex Box 4-Track Gear
A concertina-like weapon that compresses and fires air. Deals LR Blast damage.

Hazard Suit 3-Track Gear
You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Spike, Acid, Blast, Volt, Flame.

Artillery Spider 3-Track Companion
A self-made automaton designed to offer fire support. Deals LR Blast damage.

Autocrawler 2-Track Companion
A nimble little scavenging construct. Once per scene, add a positive tag of your choice onto any piece of salvage you acquire.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose rattlehand as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)
Iron, Sharps, Tides

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)
Skills: Brace, Break, Concoct, Delve, Rattle, Scavenge, Tend
Languages: Brasstongue, Highvin

Resources (Choose 2)
Salvage: Ancient Wiring, Ceramic Battery
Specimens: Crushed Beetle, Giant Insect Mandible
Whispers: Locomotive Power
Charts: An Indecipherable Blueprint

Drive (Choose 1)
Repurpose a pre-Verdant machine
Craft a weapon that can take down a leviathan

Mire (Choose 1)
The monomania of scavenging takes you
Machines jump and backfire in your presence

"Broken, you say? Give me a roll of leather, a set of screws, and a firefly bulb - it won't stay broken for long."

- Hizero, mothryn rattlehand

SCREW POST

A disciplined manipulator of unseen forces.

Metal is a common sight across the rustling waves, spat or dredged up from the darkness of the Under-Eaves or mined and refined in the shadowed depths of the last remaining mountains. For most it's a weighty trade good, a means of repair or crafting.

But the screw sees metal in an entirely different way.

Screws are masters of an ancient pre-verdant technique, a branch of arconautics rarely seen in the wild world - ferrokinesis, the uncanny control of metals and magnetism. Iron is commonly the screw's tool of choice, though the economy of salvage and scarcity across the waves has led some screws to adapt their techniques to other, less common metals.

Ferrous & Free

Most of the screw's unique abilities revolve around the manipulation of metal, at least to the layman, but it's often more a case of magnetic field manipulation. Screws tend to have serious trouble with certain metals, such as lead, and also feel their powers tend to be less controllable in areas already full of strong magnetic forces.

Do Machines Have Souls?

Some screws are more than happy to rip a machine apart to suit their needs, but others are hesitant - there's life in the even the most basic of constructs, they say, not the cold intelligence of punchcard functions, but something paradoxically organic. To break a machine for its pieces... would it then be tantamount to murder?

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the screw into your character, consider the following questions...

- What is your favoured material to work with? Iron, cobalt, perhaps nickel? Or even one of the more 'difficult' metals?
- Do you feel like the power comes from you, or that you're merely a conduit for something deeper and greater?
- What's the largest, heaviest thing you've ever moved? How did it feel to exert those arconautic muscles, and did it leave any lasting damage?

Alternate Presentations

A screw's metal-manoeuvring aspects could be represented as the powers of an old-school psychic type, a product of mind over matter rather than arconautic application. You could also change the materials a screw works with to create a mancer focused on earth or stone, or even water (if you can find enough of the stuff).

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.

Ferrokinesis 3-Track Trait
Mark to control or reshape exposed metal.

Heart of Ore 2-Track Trait
Choose a single type of metal (such as iron or copper). Increase impact when repairing, crafting, or using arconautics with your metal of choice.

Ironsight 3-Track Trait
You can sense nearby metals, see magnetic fields, and always know the direction of true north.

Smart Repulsion 2-Track Trait
Treat conflicts as triumphs when dodging or blocking attacks from constructs or metal weapons.

Magnetic Levitation 3-Track Trait
You can manipulate your own magnetic field, allowing you to fly for short periods when close to dense masses of metal (such as a ship's hull or kinetic anchor).

Reactive Riveter 3-Track Trait
Deal Spike damage to any creature that attacks you with their own body in close quarters (such as with tail or bite attacks).

Field Charge 3-Track Trait
Once per scene, give any piece of salvage you acquire the Magnetic tag.

Pre-V Ingot 4-Track Gear
Worn as a simple decoration, but holds incredible magnetic potential. Burn to briefly move a massive amount of metal, up to the size of a ship.

Deconstructor 3-Track Gear
Ignore cut when attempting to damage, break, or deconstruct a machine or mechanism made of metal.

Iron-Ring Jacket 3-Track Gear
You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Blunt, Spike, Serrated, Toxin, Volt.

Chaff Pouch 4-Track Gear
Mark to produce a cloud of metal fragments, obscuring vision around you.

Kinetic Anchor 3-Track Gear
A large mass of metal shaped to make it easy to carry, often used to enable ferrokinesis in places otherwise empty of metal. Deals CQ Blunt damage.

Rivet Swarm 3-Track Companion
A cloud of floating debris you can direct with a flick of the wrist. Deals LR Spike or Keen damage.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose screw as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)
Iron, Grace, Teeth

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)
Skills: Brace, Break, Flourish, Rattle, Scavenge, Sense, Vault
Languages: Brasstongue

Resources (Choose 2)
Salvage: Bundle of Rivets, Iron Ore
Specimens: Rust-Beetle Chitin
Whispers: Unknown Forces, The Floating Fortress
Charts: An Iron Scroll, A Curious Compass

Drive (Choose 1)
Discover a source of pure metal
Reclaim and refurbish a pre-verdant ironclad

Mire (Choose 1)
Your metals rust and corrode
Magnetic forces in your surroundings are unpredictable

"It's a dance, the way it moves - pieces glittering in the sunlight as they defy the laws that would hold them in place; as we defy those laws together."

- Samaen, ketra screw

SLINGER POST

Distance fighters that announce themselves with a cacophony of gunfire.

Usually found keeping a watch on the sea from the tallest vantage points on their ships, slingers are the first line of defence against attacks from pirates and wild beasts. Lightly armoured and possessing heavy firepower, their aim is usually to drop their targets before they even get close enough to fight.

Though most slingers use hammerpin and blackpowder to make their mark on the world, traditionalists exist - bows, crossbows, and even slingshots can all be just as deadly in the right hands.

Unwieldy Ammunition

With wide-scale machining an almost unthinkable rarity, there's no standard size or calibre of ammunition used in wildsea weapons. Firearms are created to be as generous as possible in terms of what they'll load and propel, but jams are still common and maintenance is a must. Many slingers craft (or at least alter) their own weapons and ammunition in their own time, or keep spare weapons to hand in case their favoured tool jams or backfires.

Lawbringers

In many of the more frontier-style settlements, slingers are often contracted to work as short-term lawbringers, outside forces that care little for local conflicts but much for the chance of earning some scratch. This practice has earned a lot of slingers respect in places they wouldn't expect it... and ire in places they would.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the slinger into your character, consider the following questions...

- What's the most desperate situation you've gotten yourself out of with clever gunplay and well-timed trickery?
- Have you ever taken on lawbringer work for one of the smaller spits or settlements/ if so, were there any long-term repercussions?
- Are you the type to hunt down gunsmiths and pay exorbitant amounts for custom-made pieces and ammunition to suit them, or the type to cobble together weapons in your downtime and load them with whatever comes to hand?

Alternate Presentations

Slingers fit well into the ranger archetype already, but can also work when flavoured more along the lines of a traditional cowboy or gunslinger. Alternatively, re-flavouring some aspects can give you a monk-like fighter with a focus on ranged energy blasts, if you're craving a full-fantasy approach.

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.

Gunslinger's Poise 5-Track Trait
You're hard to shake, no matter what comes your way.

Trigger Discipline 3-Track Trait
When attacking at long range, mark to count a conflict result as a triumph.

Deadeye 3-Track Trait
You can target attacks precisely (such as when aiming for a weak point) without cutting for difficulty.

From On High 4-Track Trait
A true eagle's view. Increase impact when attacking from an elevated position.

Thunder 4-Track Trait
Mark to increase impact when attacking at long range.

Trick Shot 5-Track Trait
Burn to attack a target you can't see or don't have line of sight to.

Amateur Gunsmith 4-Track Trait
Extend the track of any temporary LR weapon you craft for yourself by two boxes.

Toe to Toe 4-Track Trait
You can use LR weapons in close quarters combat and tight engagements without cutting for difficulty.

Essence Grinder 2-Track Gear
Consume a specimen to add a thematically appropriate damage type to one of your existing LR weapons. This added damage type persists until you use essence grinder again.

Precision Denial 4-Track Gear
Once per scene, you may instantly hijack focus when targeted by a ranged attack.

Barrage 4-Track Trait
You can deal damage to multiple distant opponents with a successful LR attack.

Smoke Bombs 4-Track Gear
Mark to produce a cloud of smoke, obscuring vision in your area for others, but not for you.

Hammerpin Revolver 3-Track Gear
A heavy revolver with a rotating cylinder. Deals LR Blunt or Blast damage.

Bolt-Action Rifle 2-Track Gear
A long-barrelled rifle with an amber-lensed scope. Deals LR Blast damage. Increase impact when attacking from a hidden position.

Copper Sawn-Off 3-Track Gear
A sawn-off shotgun that can be loaded with shrapnel or salt rounds. Deals LR Blast or Salt damage.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose slinger as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)
Grace, Iron, Sharps

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)
Skills: Break, Flourish, Hack, Hunt, Outwit, Rattle, Vault
Languages: Saprekk, Brasstongue, Lyrebite

Resources (Choose 2)
Salvage: Shell Casings, Blackpowder Pouch
Specimens: Wormapple Cores
Whispers: Distant Thunder
Charts: An Old Drunkard's Log

Drive (Choose 1)
Protect the crew from boarders and pirates
Find and restore a legendary pre-verdant weapon

Mire (Choose 1)
Your weapons jam and misfire at inopportune times
Your distance vision blurs, turns hazy

"I could have joined a marauder crew, but where's the fun in that? Better morals here. Better food too."

- Lace DeCastin, ardent slinger

STEEP POST

Beveragiers who connect you to the deeper mysteries of the wildsea with but a sip.

Food and water are nourishing to the body; concoctions feed the spirit. A steep is the hand by which concoctions are mixed. Steeps provide all sorts of solutions to a group of wildsailors, their curiosity and imagination limited only by their ingredients.

As drinks come in many forms, so do steeps. Whether hot or cold, hard or soft, drinks made by a steep leave you feeling a bit more. Whether more courageous, more relaxed, warmer, taller, more discerning, more perceiving, how your 'more' tastes all depends on the steep. All steeps leave you more in one more way or another because they are more deeply understanding how the veil parts with every swallow. Theirs or yours.

The Warmths Within

The first organized gatherings before and after the Verdancy were centered around drink. Water is more than a necessity. It is an ingredient in the recipe for community. Warmth, comfort, and wonder are instilled around a steep as they distill. As with all recipes, they'll vary individually. Invariably they'll be indivisible when considering the connections they forge.

Steeps have not always been, but there have always been steeps. A steep persists wherever companions do, whether their presence is present, or solely their gifts. Crewmates share tales over ales, but when a steep joins in the telling, the well from which they all draw grows deeper. Perspectives can fuse in the mull, whether the thinking or the drinking.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the steep into your character, consider the following questions...

- What is your signature beverage, not necessarily one you invented but one you have perfected? Is there anyone who doesn't like it, or anyone who can't get enough?
- What personal rituals surround your brews, what do you do before, during, and after creation? For whom do you change them, for whom do you make accommodations (whether adding or removing ingredients, or something else)?
- What mysteries have your drinks revealed? How do you ponder them, and with whom?

Alternate Presentations

The steep already fits the role of ship's morale officer reasonably well, but that's by no means a limit. Leaning into the spiritual aspects and flavouring of the steep will give you a serviceable wildsea seer.

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.

Anima Presence 2-Track Trait

Spirits can always see and hear you, and you can always see and hear them.

Rite of Bloom 3-Track Trait

Old flavours burst in novel ways. Consume a whisper when an ally imbibes one of your concoctions, and benefit from an aspect of theirs until the concoction has worn off.

Potion of Youth 5-Track Trait

Your body doesn't look it, but you are far older than you seem. You have learned many tricks to keep it so.

Steeping Reality 3-Track Trait

Tangible things steep and disperse their essence through the Physical Realm. Mark to know the past of an object.

Not a Drop Wasted 4-Track Trait

A steep never spills. Once per journey, a crewmate may suffer your disaster to add a box and a word to a benefit you brewed. If there was no **twist** you both may alter a word in a whisper.

Reading the Remains 3-Track Trait

Whether leaves, grounds, draff or bones, all concoctions leave remnants. Consume a specimen to ask a question and read an omen in your remnants.

Zephyrous Stir-Spoon 2-Track Gear

The cooling breezes carried by this lengthy stir spoon always reach the bottom of the pot. It'll carry you, haltingly, too. Mark to poorly fly upon it for the duration of the scene.

Coterie Drugget 4-Track Gear

A place setting made of woven complexities. Allies may mark an aspect to benefit from one of your concoctions (with reduced impact).

The Winning Wishbone 3-Track Gear

Given the proper time and equipment, a steep can brew a hearty stock using this arm-length wishbone chunk. Triumphs on rolls made to brew heal one mark of damage for all crewmates who share in the result.

Crezzagrean Kantharos 2-Track Gear

A vessel ancient even in the pre-Verdancy, used to infuse more than just flavour into a mull. While brewing with this vessel, cut 1 to add a 1 rank of a skill or language you know as an additional boon to the benefit provided.

Ossein Kettles 2-Track Gear

This heirloom, eternities old, is used to create beverages that warm more than your body. Triumphs on Concoct rolls grant a whisper.

Salamini 3-Track Companion

Like a salamax, just smaller. Their boiling spit is just the perfect temperature for a mull. Their scalding saliva deals CQ Flame damage.

Steam-Familiar 4-Track Companion

Warmth, wonder, and moisture are familiar to a steep, and sometimes the spirits they call linger on to comfort others. Mark to neutralize the effects of bad air, spores, or cold.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose steep as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Veils, Tides, Instinct

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Concoct, Cook, Flourish, Harvest, Outwit, Sense, Sway

Languages: Old Hand, Lyrebite, Raka Spit

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Ancestral China, Blackened Brew-Pot

Specimens: Hightower Tea-Leaves, Drip-Crystal

Whispers: Circle of Friends, Truth in Steam

Charts: A Tea-Stained Map

Drive (Choose 1)

Bring calm to others in the midst of turbulence

Brew with leaves from the most remote regions

Mire (Choose 1)

Your gear is scalding, too hot to touch

Paranoia engulfs you - has something taken root?

"Sit down. Relax. It'll be ready in good time. Let us warm your spirit along with your body."

- Batrava Botay, mothryn steep

SURGEON POST

Experts in shattered bone and split vegetable matter, few turn down their ministrations out on the waves.

The surgeon combines the skills of a traditional portside doctor, a therapist, a scholar of research, and a butcher into one terrifying package. Expert at mending broken parts and curing illnesses, taking the surgeon's post on a ship tends to ensure that you'll be welcome wherever you end up - nobody wants to offend the one that might be saving their life in the future.

Portside surgeons train for long years in what passes, in the post-Verdant world, for the halls of academia... But ship-posted surgeons have to learn on the job.

It Won't Be Pretty

The wildsea is a world of aches and scars, imperfect healing and old breaks. Surgeons do what they can to stem the tide of spilled blood and broken bones, but they're often left working with inexact materials and under trying circumstances. If you take a serious injury on the seas, there's a good chance it's going to leave a scar.

Luckily for the average crew, the lingering sight of past trauma has little to do with the standard of care received. Those living with scars tend more to focus on the 'living' part than the 'scar' part, and that first part is almost always thanks to the ministrations of an overworked surgeon.

Medical Materials

For some ailments there's little more needed than a hearty bowl of hot food and a day of rest, but the wilds are nothing if not inventive - weirder injuries require weirder curatives. Many surgeons keep their medical bays stocked with splints, bandages, healing mosses and coagulant leaves, herbs to shock a mind into wakefulness, and leeches to draw out crezzer-tinged blood. A lot of the surgeon's go-to treatments involve specimens gathered from the waves themselves, so many become quite accomplished in searching these things out on their travels.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the surgeon into your character, consider the following questions...

- What's the worst injury you've treated, and did your patient survive?
- Have you ever been forced to operate on yourself, either with or without the assistance of anaesthetic or crewmates? If so, what happened?
- Are you the type that studies and researches potential maladies to come up with preventative medicines, or that reacts solely to the problems right in front of you?

Alternate Presentations

Perhaps the most terrifying presentation of the surgeon is as a last resort, the enthusiastic amateur that's the best you're going to get while away from a friendly port. For a less worrying take, a wilds pharmacist or biological researcher would be a good bet.

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.

First Aid 3-Track Trait

When a nearby ally takes damage, hijack focus to immediately heal one point of that damage (once per scene).

Evolving Techniques 3-Track Trait

Increase impact when healing others in a safe, stable environment.

The Limits of the Crew 4-Track Trait

Mark to allow a crew-mate to benefit from a fully-marked trait or companion for the duration of a scene.

Biological Maestro 3-Track Trait

Choose a bloodline. When healing a member of that bloodline, treat conflict results as triumphs.

In the Absence of Journals 3-Track Trait

You receive a whisper whenever a crewmate fully heals from an injury.

Wilds Theoretician 4-Track Trait

Consume a whisper to discern the properties of a mysterious illness or injury.

Vigilance 2-Track Trait

You scrub, clean, and de-spore surfaces with regularity. Whenever you or one of your crew takes an injury, reduce the injury track by one box.

Ceaseless Tending 3-Track Trait

You can use a task to work on healing up to three traits, injuries, or companions at a time.

Leviathan-Blood Infusion 3-Track Gear

Hard to get hold of, but terrifyingly potent. Burn to give you or a crewmate resistance to all damage for the duration of a scene or increased impact on all attacks for the duration of a scene.

Herbal Sealing-Wax 3-Track Gear

An odd-smelling unguent for spreading on a vessel's doorways, dispensed liberally as a matter of course. Increase your ship's **Seals** rating by one when you're aboard.

Spice-Nosed Mask 2-Track Gear

You're immune to disease, and resist the effects of bad air and airborne spores.

Doctor's Trusty Satchel 2-Track Gear

Mark to acquire one of three resources, *Hungry Leeches*, *Soporific Draught* or *Medicinal Herbs*.

Surgical Spectacles 3-Track Gear

Mark to identify one of a target's weak points or weaknesses.

Bonesaw 4-Track Gear

Works just as well on foes as it does patients. Deals CQ Serrated damage.

Whisperspit Leech 2-Track Companion

Mark mire to drain the falsehood out of a statement, hearing the truth behind it. You gain a whisper based on the excised lies.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose surgeon as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Iron, Sharps, Tides

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Concoct, Hack, Harvest, Rattle, Study, Sway, Tend

Languages: Chthonic, Gaudimm, Saprekk, Knock

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Pristine Bandages, Iron Leg-Brace

Specimens: Medicinal herbs, Rubbing Alcohol

Whispers: How Bones Mend, A Scar That Never Fades

Charts: Directions To a Surgery

Drive (Choose 1)

Divine the cure for a previously incurable ailment

Have a procedure named after you

Mire (Choose 1)

Your hands shake under pressure

Alcohol calls to you in your darker moments

"Am I a specialist? Well, let me put it this way, only one member of the crew apart from me has blood, one's made of wood and one's made of spiders. What do you think?"

- Betse Lora, ardent surgeon

TEMPEST POST

Your blood crackles with sparks, your heart beats with thunder.

Internalising the wild power of a storm is no small feat, but it's not impossible - either through technological application or obscure arconautic methods, tempests have managed to embed the essence of lightning within themselves.

Holding onto such raw power is difficult even for the most disciplined, and many find themselves the subject of wild moods and sleepless nights as thunder roams their minds. Only the most dedicated tempests manage to typify that dangerous, deadly calm of thunderheads massing on the horizon.

A Fragment of Storm

The most common road to becoming a tempest is to hunt down a living storm and capture some of its lightning for yourself, but it's far from the only way. Some tempests pierce themselves with the spines of an ironjaw ray, or cultivate colonies of voltaic moss along their arms, or befriend a potently electric wildsea creature in order to borrow its puissance. Whatever the precise method, one fact holds true in all cases - a tempest's own body is the host of their power.

Lightning Without Thunder

... Well, *almost* all cases. It's extremely rare, but there are tempests out on the waves whose mastery of electricity comes from purely technological means (as a result of accident, endeavour, or self-experimentation). These artificial tempests are often more akin to rattlehands in their approach to the art, treating voltage as a resource for crafting and repair rather than a source of combat prowess, but they're no less powerful than their storm-blooded kin.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the tempest into your character, consider the following questions...

- How did you attain the power of storms? Through theft, alchemy, injury, or some other wildsea weirdness?
- To what extent are you in control of the lightning within you? In what ways, if any, have you unintentionally released it?
- Do you resonate with the world around you and, if so, how does this manifest? Crawling sparks, misfiring engines, gathering striations of cloud far above?

Alternate Presentations

The easiest non-standard interpretation of the tempest is as some kind of elemental magic user, a mage-type with power over lightning drawn from nothing but training. Alternatively, the tempest aspects can be adapted mechanically to represent other wildsea damage types - an arconautic user of frost, for example, or even (and this is *definitely* not recommended) flame.

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.

Storm-Stride 4-Track Trait

Mark to float for a brief time, electricity crackling around you as you do so.

The Pulse 3-Track Trait

You can sense nearby electrical fields, such as those produced by living organisms.

Bolt-Switch 3-Track Trait

Mark to instantly switch places with a willing crewmate within sight, or burn to switch with them and hijack focus at the same time.

Old Accord 3-Track Trait

Use a task and mark to quiet or banish a storm, or use a task and burn to summon one.

The Skies Agree 4-Track Trait

Increase impact when dealing Volt or Blast damage during an electrical storm or heavy rainfall.

Thunder's Tone 3-Track Trait

You can raise your voice to an ear-splitting shout, dealing CQ Blast damage and being easily heard over long distances.

Lightning's Call 3-Track Trait

You can direct bursts of voltaic energy through your palms or fingers, dealing LR Volt damage.

Ground Zero Overload 1-Track Trait

Mark to deal Volt damage to all nearby foes, or burn to increase it to massive Volt damage.

Ironjaw Seven-String 5-Track Gear

A guitar-like instrument carved from the bones of an ironjaw ray. Produces a harsh, buzzing tone when played that seems to awaken the spirit of rebellion in some.

Mesh Relay 3-Track Gear

Deal Volt damage to any creature that attacks you with their own body in close quarters (such as with tail or bite attacks).

Voltomotive Interfacing 3-Track Gear

You can act as an additional (or main) engine for your ship, powering its bite with your mere presence. Increase your ship's **Speed** rating by one when you're aboard.

Voltaic Lantern 3-Track Gear

A simple light source that runs off of your own internal charge. Mark to deplete a nearby source of electricity, absorbing it into the lantern for a brighter glow.

Singed Coat 3-Track Gear

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Frost, Flame, Salt, Blast, Volt.

Internal Battery 4-Track Gear

Mark to kickstart a machine, charge a depleted power source, or temporarily increase the effectiveness of an engine.

Squallkitten 2-Track Companion

A small, playful feline made of roiling stormclouds. Gives your entire crew resistance to Volt damage.

Sparking-Eel 4-Track Companion

Winds around limbs and under clothes, always moving. Mark to identify the nearest source of potent electricity, no matter the distance.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose tempest as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Grace, Sharps, Teeth

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Break, Flourish, Outwit, Rattle, Scavenge, Sense, Vault

Languages: Old Hand, Signalling

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Ceramic Battery

Specimens: Phosphorescent Beetle

Whispers: The Calm Before, In the Blood

Charts: A Sketched Lightning-Strike

Drive (Choose 1)

Communicate with a living storm on equal terms

Avert a disaster by causing another disaster

Mire (Choose 1)

Sparks pinwheel from you as you move

Your voice is thunder, impossible to lower from a shout

"It's not something to be taken lightly, that kind of power. It changes you in ways you won't be prepared for. I know I wasn't."

- Ropperly, ketra tempest

WORDBEARER POST

The routes may be longer and a lot more dangerous than in the pre-verdant times, but the post still needs to get from A to B.

Some think the position of wordbearer is little more than a ridiculous affectation - how can a sender be sure their message will be delivered with the waves so unpredictable? How can one be trusted with words in a world where they're known to latch parasitically into the mind? With trained crows and dragonfly-messengers, who even *sends* letters to be delivered by hand anymore?

But that mockery and disbelief falls to a hush when an actual wordbearer walks by, laden with twine and packages, charts and envelopes and cages. Their scars speak volumes, their gazes (if they are the sort with eyes, at least) tell stories, and their lips shape secrets only meant to pass from one mind to another. They are the personification of whisper, the wordbearers - conveyors of quiet truth.

The Oath

Four words: This Will Be Delivered.

A wordbearer's oath is a powerful force; some say as powerful as the wildest whisper. Most of their role on a ship is to pick up packages and missives from whatever junctions they stop at, to take messages from crews far from home, to commit phrases and well-wishes to memory for those that lack ink. People pay for their services, and for the trust they've earned. In more isolated regions, to impersonate a wordbearer and take the deliveries for yourself would be something approaching blasphemy.

Not Rain Nor Snow

Implacable is a word often used in connection with this post, and for extremely good reason. Wordbearers have a well-earned reputation for taking their oaths of delivery seriously, sometimes seriously enough to travel for months in order to hand over a single letter. It can hardly be a practical way to live, but it's the path they've chosen.

Questions to Consider

When you incorporate elements of the wordbearer into your character, consider the following questions...

- What was the first thing you delivered, and what was special about it?
- Have you ever broken the wordbearer's oath? If so, was it by accident or by design?
- Is there any missive you won't carry, any material you refuse to transport? Why, and what experiences led to this personal rule?

Alternate Presentations

The wordbearer can make a fantastic diplomatic type, the trustworthy face of a crew in their interactions with strangers. On the flipside, a lot of their secret-keeping aspects can lend themselves well to the role of a spy or saboteur, and if you want to stick to a particularly nautical theme an oathbearer would make an excellent smuggler.

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.

Respect Runs Deep 3-Track Trait

Your clothes, your posture, your look - wordbearers are afforded a rare respect. Treat conflicts as triumphs when commanding authority in a settlement with a junction.

The Words Always Know 3-Track Trait

Once per scene you can gain a fragment of accurate information on the whereabouts of any individual you're trying to deliver to.

The Safest Wrapping 4-Track Trait

Use a task to convert a spoken or physical message of some kind into a whisper (if the message was a resource, you keep it in addition to gaining the whisper).

Rightful Owner 4-Track Trait

Increase impact when defending your deliveries, and when attempting to retrieve something stolen from yourself or your crew.

Oathbound 4-Track Trait

You're immune to chemical, arconautic, and mesmeric effects designed to draw information from you.

Weatherbeaten 3-Track Trait

You're resistant to three damage types, chosen from the following list: Blast, Acid, Toxin, Frost, Flame.

Promise-Twine 4-Track Gear

When a resource you're trying to deliver would be destroyed or lost it degrades instead, gaining a negative tag (if it already has a negative tag, it is consumed as normal).

Courier's Cage 3-Track Gear

Consume a specimen to call a nearby messenger creature to you safely, and retrieve both the creature and whatever message they're holding as resources.

Glyph Flares 4-Track Gear

A set of chemical fireworks that burst in bright, recognisable glyph shapes.

Pattern-Reader 4-Track Gear

A miniature gramophone for playing scribed cylinders of wax, ceramics, or cured bark. Mark to record a fragment of conversation or sound you can hear, to be played back at a later time.

Undeliverables 5-Track Gear

Sometimes the oath is broken by the death of a receiver. You carry those undelivered letters and parcels around as a memorial, or possibly a penance.

Canvas Sling 3-Track Gear

A simple but effective weapon. Deals LR Blunt damage, and increases impact on CQ actions made to trip or restrain a target.

Sortomaton 2-Track Companion

A wheezing machine used for the sorting and categorizing of mail. You count as fluent in all languages, but only when reading addresses, listening to directions, or commiting a sender's message to memory.

Retired Courier Dragonfly 4-Track Companion

Still swift, but lacking stamina. Mark to gain a resource from your surroundings with some kind of text as a component, such as a chart or painted sign.

QUICKSTART KIT

When you're making a quickstart character and choose wordbearer as your post, you gain the following bonuses...

Edge (Choose 1)

Iron, Tides, Veils

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Delve, Hunt, Scavenge, Study, Sway, Vault, Wavewalk

Languages: Chthonic, Old Hand

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Packaging Twine, Dented Birdcage, Old Wax

Specimens: Inscribed Centipede, Slug-Gum Sealant

Whispers: My Heart to Yours, Safe and Secure

Charts: A Junction Network Book, A Scrawled Envelope, A Tattered Schedule

Drive (Choose 1)

Deliver a fragile package or missive to a distant receiver
Establish connection and community between disparates

Mire (Choose 1)

Of course you could open one... Who would know?
Sad old secrets from messages past tug at your dreams

"This will be delivered, I said, and she laughed. But six months, three reaches, and two leviathans later, it was."

- Half-Ghost Galway, ketra wordbearer

CHAPTER 8
SHIPS & SHIPBUILDING

"Well, it's going to need a complete refit." The rattlehand stood at the end of the dock, checking over a scrap-metal clipboard. She could tell from the looks on their faces that it was exactly what the Moritania's crew had been dreading.

"Well, I'm not saying it won't sail as it is." She patted the hull affectionately. "You've got yourself a goodly frame here. But," she counted off on fibrous fingers, "the broadwood's starting to rot, which shouldn't even be possible. The firefly lanterns on the aft side are all cracked, as are most of the portholes. The steering column hangs left, which is fine if you don't mind drifting off course for the rest of your life. And the engine's clogged with... what was it, chitin? No idea how you managed that one. And that's not to mention-"

One of the crew, an alchemist with his arm in a makeshift sling, held up his good hand in acceptance.

"Gotcha. It's been... a rough week."

Take to the Waves!

What's a wildsailor without a ship? Stranded, most probably.

One of the core ideas behind the Wildsea is that you'll have a ship to explore the rustling waves with, but you might not start with one - depending on how your game begins you could be ashore somewhere, crewing a ship on behalf of another captain or (if you're lucky) in charge of your own vessel.

If you do have a ship of your own, or if you get the chance to commission or construct one, this chapter is for you.

Stakes

To create your ship you'll need to spend **stakes**, a special resource used exclusively for ship-building.

Six to Share, Then Three Per Sailor

You get **six stakes** as standard to create your ship, plus **another three stakes** for every player with a character on the crew. That way, every player at the table has a (literal) stake in creating the vessel they'll be travelling on. These stakes are spent on making choices about the ship's design, fittings, and any extra NPC crew-members sailing with you.

Having your own stakes to spend allows you to ensure that if there's an option you can't live without, you can afford it on your own, or lets you contribute something toward the basic functionality of the ship and keep a little back for personalized choices that better suit your own character.

Most choices cost a single stake, but more powerful or advanced options can cost two or even three.

Personal Touches

There's more to creating a ship than the rules could possibly encompass, a whole host of minor narrative-focused choices that may or may not impact the game, but will certainly go the distance toward making your ship feel more like a safe, reliable home. When creating a ship, you might want to consider the following non-mechanical choices...

- **Colour and style**. What kind of patterns or artwork adorn your hull, and who painted or inscribed them there?
- **Shape and construction**. There are no hard rules on what shape your ship has to be, but having everyone at the table be on board with a rough layout can help in both roleplay and combat scenarios.
- **Quarters decoration**. Do you have your own little place on the ship, or do the crew sleep in a single room? What kind of personal effects do you keep in your quarters, and what do they mean to you?
- **Quirks**. There isn't a ship on the rustling waves that hasn't developed some sort of non-threatening fault or peculiarity that refuses to go away no matter how many times the crew tries to fix it.
- **History**. Where did your ship come from, and who crewed it before you? If it's a completely new vessel, how did you scrape together the resources needed to pay a dockyard to put it together? Or perhaps you made it yourself - if so, where did you get the materials, and what was the process like?

None of the above are essential to the game, but they can all add flavour, depth, and character to something that (for a typical wildsea crew) you're going to be spending a lot of time with.

Creating Your Ship

There are three stages to ship creation: deciding the **design**, adding **fittings,** and hiring the **undercrew**. When choosing these, keep in mind that every character should have a place on the ship to call their own.

Design

When spending your stakes, your group first needs to cover the basics of the ship's design. Every ship needs to have **at least one option** chosen from the following sections...

- **Size**: A measure of how many crew and passengers a ship can comfortably hold.
- **Frame**: A ship's basic profile and appearance.
- **Hull**: The main material used in a ship's construction.
- **Bite**: The mechanism that lets a ship cut through (or otherwise traverse) the tangled waves of the Wildsea.
- **Engine**: The motive force behind the ship's bite.

Fittings

Once the design is covered, you can add more specialized options to your ship in the form of fittings. **Fittings choices are all optional**, and come in the form of...

- **Motifs**: General themes you can choose for the ship, giving you basic equipment and alterations useful for certain common activities.
- **Additions**: Useful parts, resource-gathering options, and other oddities.
- **Rooms**: Quarters and workrooms for the crew.
- **Armaments**: Deck weapons used for defence against the hazards of the wild.
- **Outriders**: Smaller vessels with limited range that can be launched from the main ship.

Undercrew

The undercrew are NPC crewmembers loyal to the ship (or at least loyal to the percentage of spoils and profits they garner). Undercrew choices are entirely optional, and come in the form of...

- **Officers**: Named NPCs specializing in certain skills, languages, or aspects.
- **Gangs**: Small groups of unnamed NPCs that perform basic tasks during journeys.
- **Packs**: Creatures trained to aid, defend, or otherwise benefit the ship in some way.

The Falcon's Flight

An example ship made for a four-person crew, giving it eighteen stakes for construction (the Falcon's Flight is pictured on the opposite page).

Design (8 stakes)

Standard Size (1 Stake, Armour +1)
Sleek Frame (1 Stake, Stealth +1)
Broadwood Hull (1 Stake, Tilt +1)
Reef-Iron Hull (1 Stake, Armour +1)
Sawprow Bite (1 Stake, Saws+1)
Chemical Compressor Engine (1 Stake, Speed +1)
Ceramic Batteries Engine (2 Stakes, Saws +1, Seals +1)

Fittings (7 stakes)

Signal Flares (1 Stake)
Steam-Whistle (1 Stake)
Workshop (1 Stake)
Cargo Bay Extension (1 Stake)
Galley (1 Stake)
Luxury Quarters (1 Stake)
Spearing Prow (1 Stakes)

Undercrew (3 stakes)

Cartographers (2 Stakes)
Lemur Pack (1 Stake)

Final Ratings

Armour 3, Seals 2, Speed 2, Saws 3, Stealth 2, Tilt 2

Ratings

Every ship has a set of **ratings**, tracks representing the ship's condition and construction. **Each of these ratings starts as a 1-track**, but will gain more boxes as you spend your stakes on design, fittings, and undercrew choices.

We'll give the rest of this page over to a description of each of the ratings, as well as a cut-away diagram of the Falcon's Flight example on the left-hand page.

Armour

A measure of your ship's resistance to damage. You'll likely roll your **armour** rating when a larger creature attacks your ship, when you're fired on by pirates, or when you brute-force the ship through a hazardous area of the sea.

Seals

A measure of how well your ship keeps the wildsea out while travelling. You'll likely roll your **seals** rating when there's a sporestorm, insect swarm, or other potentially invasive presence.

Speed

The speed of your ship when the engines are running smoothly. You'll likely roll your **speed** rating when attempting to outrun a pursuer or weather pattern, or if you somehow find yourself in a race.

Saws

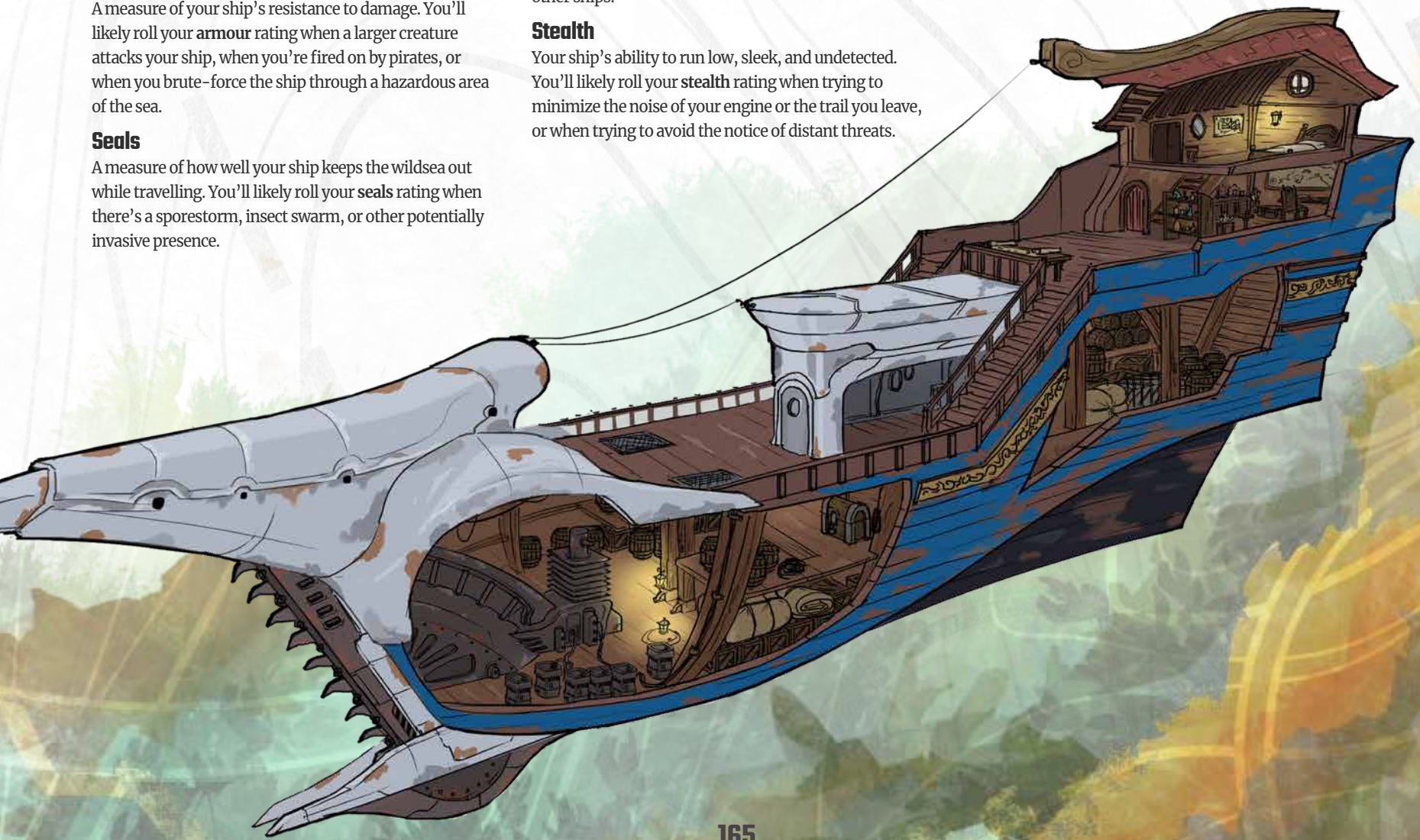
How good your ship is at cutting through the denser parts of the sea. You'll likely roll your **saws** rating when cutting through thicker areas of the sea or trying to ram other ships.

Stealth

Your ship's ability to run low, sleek, and undetected. You'll likely roll your **stealth** rating when trying to minimize the noise of your engine or the trail you leave, or when trying to avoid the notice of distant threats.

Tilt

A measure of manoeuvrability, and how well your ship can tackle the sharper dips and rises of the waves. You'll likely roll your **tilt** rating when tackling one of the larger treetop waves, when diving down into the tangle to evade a pursuer, or when trying to keep steady during a rootquake or storm.



The city of Kyther (or Kynner) had many bells, each rung with their own purpose. Most warned of danger, as one might expect of a reefback settlement in the middle of a dangerous territory. Some rang to signify general meetings, or the handing-out of newly acquired foodstuffs, or funeral rites.

But the bell that summoned Rolgis that morning wasn't any of those. It was a bell rang so rarely that he almost didn't recognise it, which would have been particularly embarrassing as it was a bell meant purely for him.

Master shipwright needed urgently.

By the time he reached the dockyards he was starting to doubt himself - the bay was overflowing with fur and chains and viscera, chop-station workers crawling over the corpse as they worked.

But the crowd opened up around him, and the choppers gestured hopefully to the bones.

They were right. He was needed.

Step One - Design

Your ship's design covers most of the main components that make it... well, a ship. These are the essentials - the material that makes up the hull, the method you use to get from port to port. In many ways these are the most important choices you'll make as a crew, as the ship is your shared possession.

We recommend spending stakes by committee for this step of the shipbuilding process, talking to everyone at the table about what catches your eye and how it might benefit you. The choices you make here do have a mechanical component, in that they're the main way of raising your ship's ratings, but they have a lot of fictional weight to them as well (a crew turning up to a new port in a wheezing scrap-hulled junker may well be regarded and treated very differently to one showing up in an elegant bone-plated sailship, for example).

Make sure you pick up at least one option from each of the design sections (size, frame, hull, bite, and engine).

Size [Required]

A ship's size determines its profile on the waves and the amount of crew and passengers that can coexist aboard it before things start getting crowded and tempers begin to fray.

When you spend stakes on a size, note it down on your ship sheet, as well as any rating ranks it gives. You can only pick one size for your ship - choose wisely.

Issues of Space

While a larger ship may fictionally have more cargo space available, we haven't set any hard limits on the amount a ship can carry based on size.

By the same token, we haven't limited the amount of internal rooms or additional fittings you might want to kit your vessel out with later on in the shipbuilding process. Your ship should be a product of imagination and creativity rather than number-crunching, if possible.

Weighing Your Options

There's more to successful survival on the rustling waves than simply being the owner of the biggest ship. Larger ships are inherently sturdier, true, but they often have difficulty going unnoticed or even docking at certain ports. Smaller ships are often more swift or manoeuvrable, able to play cat and mouse with pursuers or slip unnoticed beneath the waves at a tactically opportune moment.

Available Sizes

There may well exist ships that are smaller, and there are certainly ships far more vast. *Your choice determines the amount of crew and passengers your ship can comfortably hold, as well as actual physical size.*

Nano 1 Stake

Suited for a single sailor and maybe a passenger or two. Perfect for the lone wildsailor, possessed of excess bravery (or a deathwish).

- **Stealth +1**

Small 1 Stake

Suited for 2-4 people, cramped but serviceable for double that. Ideal for a first ship.

- **Speed +1**

Standard 1 Stake

Comfortable for 5-10 people, but can hold double that number if necessary. The majority of ships out on the Wildsea are of standard size, hence the name.

- **Armour +1**

Large 1 Stake

Can house 10-20 crew with room to spare, many more if necessary, depending on the internal designs and additional fittings. Large ships are most often used to patrol trade-routes around more lawful areas, or to transport settlers and research teams for large factions.

- **Armour +1**
- **Stealth -1**

Frame [Required]

Beneath the weapons, fittings, and hull plating of every ship is a solid frame, a superstructural skeleton built to withstand the constant jostling roughness of travel across a wavescape of chemical-coated leaves and thick wooden branches.

When you spend stakes on a frame, note it down on your ship sheet, as well as any rating ranks it gives. You can only pick one frame for your ship - choose wisely.

Attitude

Your frame choice says a little about the overall shape of your ship, but not too much - it's really up to your crew to decide how you ultimately want the ship to appear.

What your frame choice does determine is a certain attitude - though hidden by hull and accoutrements, your frame will influence how other sailors think of your vessel when it first appears.

Available Frames

The bare bones of a ship, a staging ground for every future choice. *The frame you choose may have an effect on how your vessel is perceived by others.*

Sturdy 1 Stake

Built to last in a place of temporary things, a sturdy frame helps weather the strongest assaults.

Armour +1

Moulded 1 Stake

A single unbroken structure running through the ship - quite a feat of safety-conscious engineering.

Seals +1

Light 1 Stake

Made with the lightest possible materials in the smallest possible amounts.

Speed +1

Scything 1 Stake

Often wedge or blade-shaped, scything frames are constructed specifically to cut as efficiently as possible through the waves.

Saws +1

Sleek 1 Stake

Quiet is hard to come by on the wildsea, but a sleek frame ensures that no matter how noisy your bite and engine might be, you'll always be low to the waves.

Stealth +1

Flexible 1 Stake

Built for adjustability and responsiveness, flexible frames are often multi-segmented or jointed in some way.

Tilt +1

Hull [Required]

Though the vast majority of ships are constructed of a few common materials (wood from the ironroots, salvaged metal, and sturdy bones), they're far from the only ones on offer. With the sea such a dominating presence, there are few things that people haven't tried to turn into a ship at some point.

A hull keeps the wildsea out and the cargo and crew in. It might well be the most important part of the ship (and if it's not, it'll certainly feel that way once the shrapnel-cannons start firing).

When you spend stakes on a hull note it down on your ship sheet, as well as any rating ranks it gives. You can purchase multiple hulls if you wish, but must take at least one.

Patchwork or Pristine?

Though your **hull** choice usually mentions a single material, wildsailor vessels are rarely as uncomplicated as that. Most ships are a patchwork of different materials, oddities dredged from the waves or spied in salvage yards, poor-quality fixes that were rushed out at sea, and cargo or resources filling the gaps. While your hull choice may specify the *original* material of your hull, it doesn't necessarily speak to your time at sea and the damage it's done. Wildsailors tend to wear their scars with pride - their ships are no different.

That said, there are some vessels whose crews keep them as close to perfect as possible. They're often looked on with suspicion, sometimes awe and reverence. If you're one of those crews that wants to keep their ship as close to 'factory standard' as possible, the best way to do it is to be careful when repairing any damage it takes. Use the same materials as the hull if you can, or wait until you can get back to a port and have one of their dockside workshops carry out the repairs for you. It may not ever be as good as new, but it might be damn close.

And what really is 'new' on the rustling waves, anyway?

Common Hulls

Most common hulls are distinguished not by the relative abundance of the materials used, but the ways in which those materials are shaped and hardened to withstand the constant grinding ebb of the waves. *Your hull choice is at once cosmetic and uncomplicated - choose one that suits the feel of your crew, that embodies why you're out on the waves.*

Reef-Iron 1 Stake

Metal plating from decommissioned ships, reshaped for your frame. Durable and rust-resistant.

- Armour +1

Leviathan Bone 1 Stake

A hull crafted from one or more pieces of leviathan skeleton. Solid, if a little morbid.

- Seals +1

Broadwood 1 Stake

Wooden planks cut from the more reliable trees of the wildsea. Strong and flexible.

- Tilt +1

Rough Bark 1 Stake

Harvested from the ironroots. Irregular and tough to maintain, but easy for others to overlook at distance across the waves.

- Stealth +1

Chitinous 1 Stake

Made from the collected shells of the wildsea's larger insects. Smooth, offering little in the way of friction or snags.

- Speed +1

Razorscale 1 Stake

An exterior of interlocking scales sloughed or harvested from a wildsea beast, sharpened for effectiveness.

- Saws +1

Beastback 2 Stakes

A half-living hull of flesh and bone, flexible and unsettlingly warm.

- Seals +1
- Tilt +1

Ceramic 2 Stakes

A shell of heavy baked clay. Ostentatious and brittle unless *very* carefully maintained.

- Armour +1
- Seals +1

Chrysalid 2 Stakes

A hull adapted from the cast-off chrysalis of a massive insect, excellent protection against the sea's incursion.

- Seals +1
- Stealth +1

Ghost-Oak 2 Stakes

Pale as death and remarkably flexible, ghost-oak is rarely found growing outside the lightless depths of the drown.

- Armour +1
- Tilt +1

Arachnesque 2 Stakes

Less of a hull and more of a giant insect grown to fit the specifications of your frame, usually something spider-like.

- Tilt +1
- Stealth +1

Exile's Copper 2 Stakes

A rare metal that weighs far, far less than it has any right to, prized for racing-ship hulls.

- Armour +1
- Speed +1

Unique Hulls

A set of hulls that come with their own special rules, and not always for the better. Remember to add these rules to the notes section of your ship sheet if you choose any of the options below.

Junk-Strung Free

The mark of a ship well-scarred and oft-repaired, a junk-strung hull is barely a hull at all... More a collection of scavenged metal, driftwood, and animal bones; unstable, rusting, and leaky.

- Armour +1
- Seals -1
- Mark your **seals** or **armour** rating to pull a piece of useful salvage from the hull.

Floraflage 2 Stakes

A hull of living vegetation grown purposefully around your frame. Blends easily into the seascape.

- Stealth +2
- Armour -1
- A floraflage ship at rest is almost impossible to detect - increase impact when using **stealth** while motionless.

Monument 3 Stakes

An absurd affectation in a world of flexible branches and endless depth, monument hulls are made of appallingly heavy mountain-stone.

- Armour +2
- Seals +2
- A ship with a monument hull can't Forge Ahead during a journey.

Bite [Required]

A ship's bite determines its motive force, how it cuts through (or otherwise traverses) the vast canopy of the rustling waves. In most cases your bite is directly connected to your ship's engine – the next choice you'll make in the shipbuilding process – and as long as the engine is running, you'll have control of the speed and direction of your ship.

When you spend stakes on a bite, note it down on your ship sheet, as well as any rating ranks it gives. You can purchase multiple bites if you wish, but must take at least one.

The Wake You Leave

The nature of your ship's bite also determines the kind of wake you leave behind when you travel, which can have an impact on how easy or difficult you are to tail or track down. As a general rule, the more destructive the bite, the greater the wake.

Sawprows, impellers, longjaws, and mulchers are all designed to tear through leaves and branches rather than skim atop them, and even with the wildsea's increased rate of growth and repair, travelling through the thrash will leave a trail of vegetative disaster behind you.

Crawlers, underscales, and other less destructive bites deal less obvious damage, but experienced trackers will be able to follow the marks they leave just as easily.

Ramming Speed

A lot of bites are just as effective at cutting into an enemy ship's hull as they are cutting through the treetops. Most of the bites listed on the next page have an associated damage type, allowing you to deal massive CQ damage to things that you purposefully (or accidentally) ram your ship into.

But everything comes with a cost. Ramming other ships is a dangerous activity, almost as likely to damage your own vessel as it is to damage your target. Certain options you'll have access to later in the shipbuilding process will give you alternate methods of attack with less risk to your own crew, but don't forget that if you're ever in need of a weapon out on the waves, you're likely already riding on one.

Common Bites

Found on salvaging craft and trading vessels from the Fractured West to the Eaten East. *Each of these bites also allows your ship to deal a particular type of damage when ramming another vessel.*

Sawprow 1 Stake

A wildsea favourite, the sawprow is a chainsaw edge that runs down the curve of the prow. Capable of cutting through most obstructions with ease.

- **Saws +1**
- **Deals massive CQ Serrated damage**

Impellers 1 Stake

Large jet-like outboard engines that push the ship through the waves with brute force.

- **Speed +1**
- **Deals massive CQ Blast damage**

Crawler 1 Stake

Large finger-like mechanisms spread out around the front of the ship, allowing it to move through the waves with a crawling motion.

- **Tilt +1**
- **Deals massive CQ Blunt damage**

Underscales 1 Stake

Thousands of flexing scales that worm the ship forward with a sly, sinuous motion.

- **Stealth +1**
- **Deals massive CQ Keen damage**

Jag-Tracks 1 Stake

Motorised grapple tracks along the keel and hull-sides; a slow, solid, and reliable choice.

- **Armour +1**
- **Deals massive CQ Hewing damage**

Sluicejets 1 Stake

Pressurised sluice systems filled with phytophobic chemicals, for coating the hull and pushing the ship.

- **Seals +1**
- **Deals massive CQ Acid damage**

Longjaw 2 Stakes
An underslung chainsaw arrangement that extends from the front of the ship, chewing and pulling forward.
- Saws +1
- Speed +1
- Deals massive CQ Serrated damage

Propeller-Cage 2 Stakes
A cage housing that holds large airboat-style propellers used to push the ship forward.
- Speed +1
- Armour +1
- Deals massive CQ Blunt damage

Navapede Limbs 2 Stakes
Centipedal limbs lining the hull, letting a ship scuttle through the thrash. If such a vessel could truly now be called a ship, of course.
- Tilt +1
- Stealth +1
- Deals massive CQ Spike damage

Voltaic Runners 2 Stakes
Crackling with barely contained lightning, these outboard contraptions let a ship float just above the churning branches of the sea.
- Seals +2
- Deals massive CQ Volt damage

Mulcher 2 Stakes
Grinding teeth in a lamprey-style mouth. Terribly noisy but dreadfully effective.
- Saws +2
- Armour +1
- Stealth -1
- Deals massive CQ Serrated damage

Tentaculari 2 Stakes
A living cluster of tendrils or tentacles attached to the ship's hull, carrying it through and across the waves in an unsettlingly alien motion.
- Tilt +2
- Deals massive CQ Salt damage

Sails
For those that find sawteeth too brutal, or who have a reverence and respect for the lost salt seas of old. *Sails don't require an engine choice to power them, but each sail only works out on the open thrash (or in certain conditions).*

Square Sail 1 Stake
Taut canvas that relies on a strong breeze, this design harks back to an age of calm, clear waters.
- Speed +1
- Only effective in favourable winds

Sleek Sail 1 Stake
Triangular and manually angled, relying on an attentive crew to catch the right breezes.
- Stealth +1
- Only effective in favourable winds

Sweat-Sails 1 Stake
Held low to the waves, unfurled canvases shaped to catch the rising under-canopy heat.
- Speed +1
- Only effective in warm weather

Tethered Kites 2 Stakes
An array of kites that catch the stronger winds of the lower air.
- Speed +2
- Only effective in favourable winds

Gecko Sails 2 Stakes
A reinforced multi-sail arrangement designed to tame even the wildest gusts.
- Speed +1
- Armour +1
- Only effective in favourable winds

Unique Bites
A set of bites that come with their own special rules, not recommended for first-time wildsailors. *Remember to add these rules to the notes section of your ship sheet if you choose any of the options below.*

Sharpened Prow Free
Simple and straightforward, a honed blade running the length of the ship's prow to cut through vegetation.
- Provides a basic cutting edge, but no motive force. Just about works when paired with oars, but you really should choose something better.
- Deals massive CQ Keen damage... or it would, if you could get up enough speed.

Beast-Reins 1 Stake
An arrangement similar to a leash or yoke, allowing well-trained beasts to pull the ship like a chariot.
- Tilt +1
- When you choose beast-reins, decide what kind of beasts they hold (giant centipedes are a solid choice).
- A ship with beast-reins **doesn't require an engine choice** from the next section, but the beasts themselves do require care, feeding, and sleep.

Grappling Array 1 Stake
Prow-mounted grappling hooks that are fired out to catch on branches and then laboriously wound back in for slow, inexorable progress.
- Tilt +2
- Speed -1
- A ship running solely on a grappling array can't **Forge Ahead** during a journey.
- Deals massive LR Spike damage.

"And this," the friendly shout was punctuated by the slamming open of a heavy, iron-edged door, "is the engine room!"

Axa had seen the guts of a lot of ships in his day; some neatly organized, some on the chaotic side, some a confusion of piping and valves and interchanges that would have taken an amateur weeks to untangle.

But the Salavida's engine room was something else.

"It's... bees." A fat drop of honey trickled down his shoulder as he spoke, words almost lost in the bass drone that filled the room. "It's all bees."

"Well, not quite!" The Salavida's rattlehand reached out to smudge at the drop with the end of their sporescarf. "There are the flower vats, the melliferous exchange relays, the queen's den and honeycomb frames..." He caught Axa's sceptical look. "... Yeah, it's pretty much bees all the way."

Engine [Required]

The heart of most seafaring vessels, engines exist primarily to give power directly to a ship's bite. Different engines take different types of fuel, but whatever they require can surely be found among the waves with a little searching.

When you spend stakes on an engine, note it down on your ship sheet, as well as any rating ranks it gives. You can purchase multiple engines if you wish, but must take at least one.

More than Motive

In some ships, especially those with more complex equipment, the engine may well be used for a lot more than running a chainsaw prow or impeller. Clever use of an engine might...

- Power ship-wide systems, pre-Verdant artefacts, or technologically advanced equipment
- Turn it into a ship defence weapon (by venting steam or scalding fuel)
- Allow it to act as a defensive bastion or hiding place when the ship is under attack
- Let it provide salvage or specimens, such as engine oil (though usually at the risk of damaging the engine itself)

Fuelling the Engine

Each of the engine choices presented to the right specify a particular type of fuel they need to run, but that doesn't mean it's something you have to explicitly track. No amounts are listed, and that's by design - instead, assume that for each journey you set out on, you've got enough fuel stored and ready to make it to your destination without any serious worries. That said...

... accidents *do* happen.

Perhaps you're raided by pirates and have your cargo room cleared out. Perhaps you run aground on a reef of wreckage or some rootquake-risen temple. Perhaps a mold or fungus makes its way into the engine housing, requiring the entire thing to be stripped and cleaned.

Whatever the reason, sometimes you might find yourself in a position where the fiction suggests fuel is a concern. These are the only cases where you should pay attention to precisely what your engine demands, engaging in a montage, scene, or even a small quest to get your ship moving again.

Optional Rule - Tracking Fuel

Depending on the tone of your own version of the wildsea, and the influences on your table, a grittier approach to fuel and travel might be appropriate.

In these cases we recommend treating stored fuel as a cargo item, able to be bought, sold, and traded at ports, or collected while out on the waves with high-impact resource-gathering tasks.

If you want to take the concept even farther, you might allot a certain amount of fuel to undertake a particular journey, or tie the use of the **Forge Ahead** mechanic while travelling to a consumption of some kind of fuel unit.

Common Engines

Assembled by artisans, ripped from wrecks, or plucked from the waves themselves. *Each of these engines runs smoothly under normal circumstances, but might require a particular type of fuel in a crisis.*

Chemical Compressor 1 Stake

The most common engine on the rustling waves, reliably unreliable but extremely easy to fuel.

- Speed +1
- **Fuelled with crushed fruit and insect husks**

Springwork 1 Stake

Wound exhaustively by hand, springwork engines store and release kinetic energy with surprising efficiency.

- Saws +1
- **Fuelled with sweat, labour, and time spent winding**

Parasite Pitcher 1 Stake

A large pitcher plant coaxed into taking root in an engine housing, vines intermingling with the ship's systems.

- Stealth +1
- **Fuelled with organic material (preferably living)**

Steam Piping 1 Stake

Hellish contraptions of tangled piping, rare chemicals, and scalding steam.

- Seals +1
- **Fuelled with water (the cleaner the better)**

Ratwheel Exchange 1 Stake

Exactly what you might imagine, a pure transfer of kinetic energy from restless rats to wheel to bite. Ethical engineers tend to give their rats the run of the ship.

- Tilt +1
- **The rats need feeding every now and then, but they're not fussy**

Pulsing Cocoon 1 Stake

An unknown insect shifts inside, glutting on dreams and spinning them into an ebb of arconautic force. Crews report intensely vivid dreams.

- Armour +1
- **Fuelled with the dreams of the crew**

Unique Engines

A set of engines that come with their own special rules and fictive oddities. Remember to add these rules to the notes section of your ship sheet if you choose any of the options below.

Tamed Hive 2 Stakes

A buzzing organic engine of honeycombs and crawling workers, their movements a complex dance.

- Speed +1
- Seals +1
- Fuelled with stolen flowers and unprocessed pollen.
- Crew can use a task while at sea to gain a resource, 'Fresh Engine-Honey', once per journey.

Reclaimed Burner 2 Stakes

An ancient burner that runs on processed chemical fuel, salvaged from the innards of a pre-verdant ship. Requires excessive ventilation. Don't use this.

- Speed +3
- Seals -1
- Runs on processed chemical fuel.
- Liable to explode if seriously damaged.

Rope Golem 2 Stakes

A semi-sentient mass of animated ropes running through the rooms and corridors of the ship.

- Speed +1
- Stealth +1
- Takes no fuel, but the ropes must be replaced when they begin to fray.
- Rope golems have an unpredictable will of their own that may manifest at unexpected moments.

Leviathan Heart 2 Stakes

An actual leviathan heart, still beating reflexively, hooked up to the ship. Pumps viscous black fuel through pipes and valves.

- Speed +1
- Tilt +1
- Requires no fuel, but in a particularly ominous way.

Jawbox 1 Stake

Noisy, wood-fuelled engines that create huge clouds of smoke and dust but with minimum chance of flame.

- Saws +1
- Speed +1
- Stealth -1
- **Fuelled with wildsea wood**

Solar Compressor 2 Stakes

Made to store, liquefy, and pressurize sunlight.

- Speed +1
- Stealth +1
- **Naturally fuelled on sunny days**

Magnetic Coils 2 Stakes

Spinning cylinders that, ideally, maintain a state of almost perpetual motion.

- Tilt +1
- Stealth +1
- **Fuelled with magnetic scrap**

Ceramic Batteries 2 Stakes

Volt-storing batteries rigged up to regulate and distribute power. Their crackling hum makes nearby insects (and superstitious undercrew) uneasy.

- Saws +1
- Seals +1
- **Fuelled with lightning strikes**

Acid Maw 2 Stakes

An open chemical vat that melts down scrap metal, piping the resulting pressurised slurry around the ship. Potent and almost impossible to interrupt.

- Saws +2
- **Fuelled with salvage and scrap**

Step Two - Fittings

Once your ship's design is decided, it's time to move on to the fittings. These represent the more niche aspects of your ship, the useful extras and personal touches that turn it from a simple vessel to an enduring home. Specifically the fittings section covers motifs, additions, rooms, armaments, and outriders.

While you can still pool your stakes together here, many of the fittings will suit certain choices of bloodline, post, or origin more than others. Don't be afraid to make choices that benefit you directly, spending your stakes on something that catches your eye.

No fittings are essential for a ship, but a lot of them can make life out on the waves (especially on longer journeys) substantially easier. Spending your stakes on fittings is entirely optional.

Motif [Optional]

A fittings choice that affects your entire vessel, choosing a motif allows you to 'theme' your ship towards a certain activity (such as salvaging or exploring).

Mechanically, a motif doesn't just give you a set of useful equipment and oddities to add to your ship, it also affects how others perceive you - ships with a chosen motif will be easily recognized as a particular kind of vessel to even the most inexperienced sailors.

When you spend stakes on a motif, note down the benefits it confers. You can only pick one motif for your ship - choose wisely if you're spending stakes here.

Shared Headspace

Purchasing a motif for your ship can also help every player at the table get into the right kind of headspace in terms of how the ship might appear, even without discussing lots of finer details. That said, it's still worth describing the look and feel of some of the ship as a whole - a motif gives a general theme, but few specifics.

Rustling Up Resources

One of the most important things a motif gives you as a crew is a set of fictional permissions, the knowledge that your ship probably has certain things on it even if you haven't spelled them out exactly. This can let you search your own ship for low-quality resources while out at sea, rooting through cupboards and lockers for salvage and specimens that fit the theme of your vessel. Searching a ship with the hunting motif might turn up a rusted mantrap, old bowstrings, and spearheads or the bones of past kills, for example.

Available Motifs

There's a lot to be said for dressing for success - a motif allows you to extend that principle to your entire vessel. *A motif choice allows the kind of work your crew routinely engages in to be identified by others at a glance.*

Transport 2 Stakes

No matter what is happening on the waves, no matter the problems or curiosities its denizens face, there will always be a space for those willing to move passengers from point A to point B. Ships themed around transport will likely have...

- A clean and professional **paint job** to attract potential passengers
- Built-in **passenger quarters** with varying levels of comfort
- A sturdily constructed **panic room**, suitable for holding passengers unwilling to fight in the event the ship is attacked or boarded

Hauling 2 Stakes

Just as essential as transporting passengers, the movement and trading of cargo is a reliable path to success for dependable types. These ships will likely have...

- **Gangplanks, winches,** and **bay doors** for swift loading and unloading at port
- An **expanded cargo area** with extra security and webbing for odd-shaped packages
- A reliable **cargo crane** built into the ship's structure for holding and transporting particularly heavy crates and objects

Hunting 2 Stakes

The oldest wildsea profession, a ship kitted out with a hunting motif will likely have...

- **Trophies** of bone, fur, or chitin prominently displayed on the outer hull
- A **modified cargo area** complete with animal pens
- An array of **hunting and butchery tools**, allowing crew fighting on or below decks easy access to CQ Keen or Spike damage

Salvaging 2 Stakes

Useful for scrappers, dredgers, and wreck-wranglers, salvaging ships will likely have...

- A **scratched and dented appearance**, making you look almost like a wreck yourself
- A **modified cargo area** with work benches and tools for disassembly
- A **grappling crane** built into the ship's structure for attaching to large wreckage, allowing it to be hauled onto the deck or towed behind the ship

Pathfinding 2 Stakes

Pathfinding ships are built with tenacious exploration in mind, and will likely have...

- **Trinkets and gewgaws** from various contacted cultures affixed to the hull
- A **reinforced engine room** with a secondary set of seals or bulkheads protecting it
- An array of **wilds-clearing tools**, allowing crew fighting on or below decks easy access to Hewing or Serrated damage

Raiding 2 Stakes

For wildsailors who take to the waves with violence in mind, for noble or not-so-noble reasons. Ships with a raiding motif will likely have...

- **Fortified deck-rails** to give the crew cover while shooting (or being shot at)
- **Bulkhead doors** that can be closed and locked to isolate boarding parties
- An **armoury lockbox** containing weapons taken as spoils from previous encounters, allowing crew fighting on or below decks easy access to Blunt or Blast damage

Rescue 2 Stakes

Yours is the kind of ship people call on when other ships don't make it back to port. Ships with a rescue motif will likely have...

- **Emergency medicine** for some of the more common maladies of the waves
- **A photoscope** for picking out glints of wreckage or distress flares at a great distance
- An **isolation room** packed with soft amber resin, for keeping the crew insulated from and slowing the progress of illnesses during a journey

Research 2 Stakes

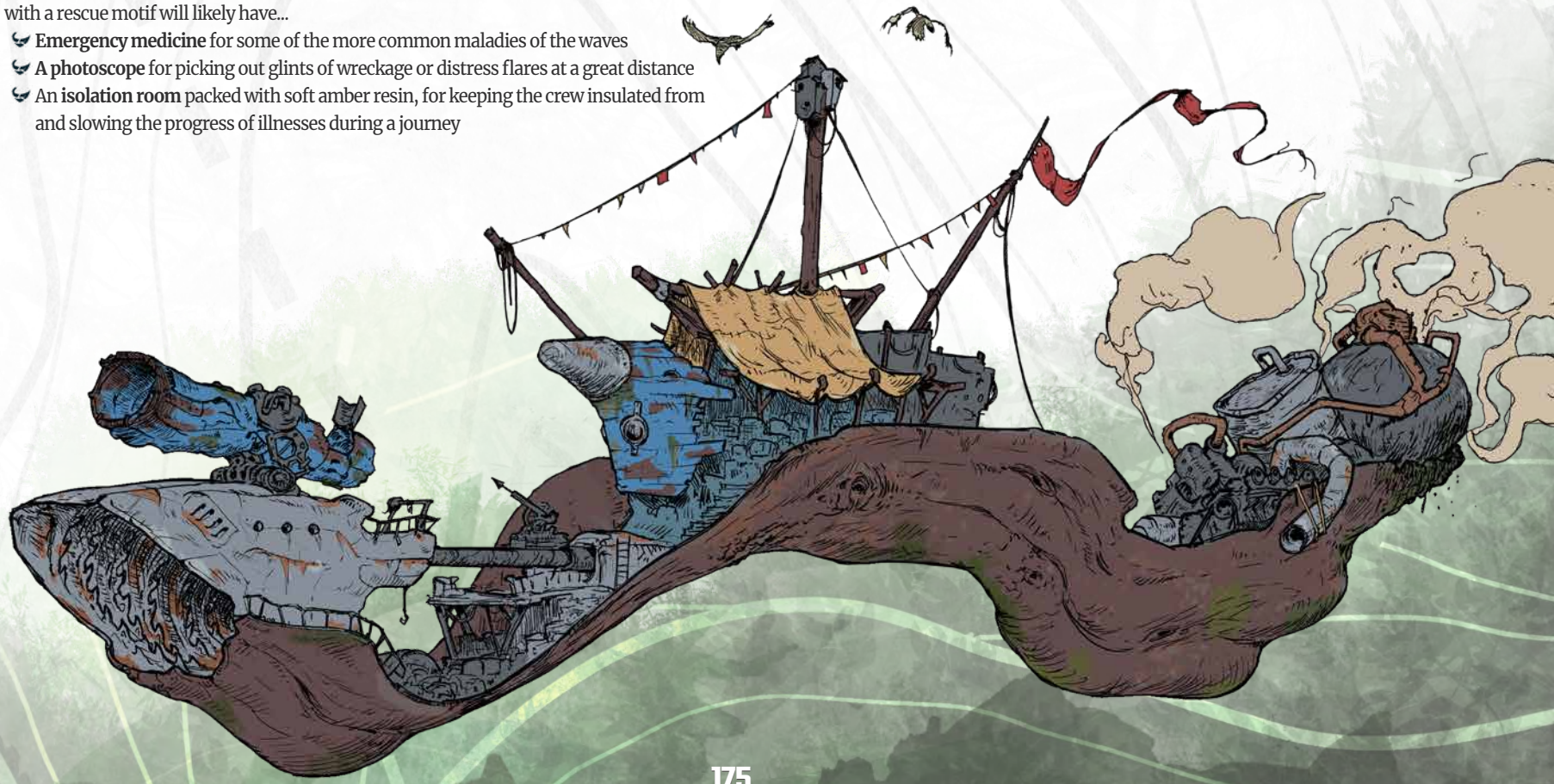
The mysteries of the rustling waves are an egg waiting to hatch, and a research vessel is just the right sort of tool to crack them right open. Research ships will likely have...

- A higher level of **general technology** on show than average
- A **library** for recording new findings and delving into secrets and lore
- A **snapograph arrangement**, a complex deck-mounted photography system for catching images of the waves and printing them on light-sensitive paper

Entertainment 2 Stakes

For actors, musicians, performers, and travelling circuses, those that make their living by entrancing the public. Ships with an entertainment motif will likely have...

- A **gaudy appearance** that catches the eye
- A **theatrical stage** built into the main deck
- **Costuming supplies** for the representation of various creeds and characters



Additions [Optional]

A broad category of fittings covering the type of things that tend to make life on the waves just a little bit easier for everyone.

General Additions

With no more a unifying theme than 'usefulness'. *These additions grant fictional permissions in a variety of situations, usually giving you more options in terms of interacting with your own ship and the surrounding waves.*

Anchor System Free

Lengths of chain with heavy curved hooks, used to anchor ships to the branches of the Wildsea. *Almost every ship comes with this as standard.*

Rig-Ropes 1 Stake

Ropes strung up above the deck for various purposes, often climbed, used as safety lines for trips over the edge of the ship, or hung with drying washing.

Firefly Lanterns 1 Stake

A network of lanterns, their glowing inhabitants woken or sent to sleep with a tap on the glass, ready to illuminate any part of the ship.

Luminous Blooms 1 Stake

Patches of moss or flowering plants that shed pale light in the darker hours.

Chemical Spotlight 1 Stake

Illuminates surrounding areas with day-like clarity.

Survival Station 1 Stake

Containing flares, flags, grapples, wraps, and emergency rations.

Cargo Crane 1 Stake

A sturdy crane for loading and unloading cargo, capable of carrying extremely heavy objects without overbalancing the ship.

Wrecker's Magnet 1 Stake

A curious electromagnetic crane, often used by salvagers. Controls on the crane can increase, decrease, or cut the magnetism entirely.

Signal Flares 1 Stake

Colour-coded flares meant to be fired up into the heavens to communicate findings, threats, and positioning. *At least a smattering of the Signalling language is required to use or understand them effectively.*

Shutter-Lamps 1 Stake

A bank of lights and shutters for blinking visual signals across vast distances. *At least a smattering of the Signalling language is required to use or understand them effectively.*

Steam Whistle 1 Stake

A shrill, piercing whistle used to announce your presence or scare the more skittish denizens of the sea.

Vox-Horn 1 Stake

A deep, blaring horn that can also be used as an effective voice amplifier.

Tethered Kitesail 1 Stake

A glider tethered to the deck with a long rope, allowing aerial exploration on windy days.

Trained Messengers 2 Stakes

Flying creatures trained to seek out distant landmasses (or nearby ships), deliver messages to them, and return with replies. When choosing trained messengers, specify the type of creature you're using (such as dragonflies or crows).

Fixed-Band Radio 2 Stakes

A short-range radio system capable of sending and receiving static-laden signals, based on recently rediscovered pre-verdant technology. Allows instantaneous communication, but relies on fragile antennae affixed to the uppermost portion of the ship.

Bounteous Additions

Fittings focused on the gathering of additional resources during the course of a journey. *These additions grant even more fictional permissions in a variety of situations, usually giving you more options in terms of interacting with your own ship and the surrounding waves.*

Fruiting Tree 1 Stake

An ancient tree rooted to your deck, laden with fast-growing fruit.

- Automatically acquire a fruit-based specimen when you use a task to tend to the fruiting tree.

Night Farm 1 Stake

A dark, covered soilpit for growing mushrooms.

- Automatically acquire a mushroom-based specimen when you use a task to tend to the night farm.

Lightning Rod 1 Stake

A multi-pronged metal array for attracting lightning and storing it in ceramic batteries.

- Automatically acquire a charged ceramic battery whenever your ship enters a lightning storm.

Water Purifier 2 Stakes

A funnel filtration system.

- Automatically acquire a barrel of fresh water with the 'Pure' tag whenever you drop anchor or cut a path in rainy conditions.

Trawler Nets 2 Stakes

Reinforced nets meant to be draped over the sides of the ship during relaxed journeys, catching larger insects and small mammals before they're hauled back in.

- Automatically acquire one normal specimen when you cut a path.

Rooms [Optional]

Subdivisions of the ship outfitted for specialist tasks. Though more niche than a motif, rooms serve the same purpose - they skew the operations and capabilities of your ship toward being useful in various situations or to various bloodlines, origins, or posts.

Rooms don't make your ship any bigger, so adding a lot of rooms onto a small- or nano-sized vessel is going to leave it pretty cramped.

The Basic Layout

Even if you decide not to spend your stakes on any of the specific rooms available in this section, your ship will hardly be a hollow shell (unless that's what you're going for). All wildsea vessels are assumed to come with a basic layout of rooms as standard, usually consisting of...

- A Pilot's Cabin
- A Main Deck
- Crew Quarters
- An Engine Room
- A Cargo Bay

Common Rooms

Found on many ships, but definitely not on all. *These rooms particularly suit crews who treat their vessel as a home rather than just a mode of transport.*

Galley 1 Stake

A space for gathering, cooking, and eating, filled with pans, cookware, and usually a chemical stove.

Medical Bay 1 Stake

A clean space with tables and soft beds for the wounded and their carers.

Workshop 1 Stake

A (probably cluttered) room with smithing and repair tools, as well as a mechanical workbench.

Navigational Suite 1 Stake

A room devoted to the storage and usage of maps, charts, and navigational equipment.

Butchery 1 Stake

A clean space for rendering and preserving specimens.

Tap-Room 1 Stake

For the creation, storage, and consumption of ales, mead, and spirits (the alcoholic kind). Usually furnished with comfortable seating, and maybe card tables.

Panic Room 1 Stake

A small room stocked with salted supplies and bedrolls, able to be triple-locked from the inside and extremely hard to break into.

Cooling Facility 1 Stake

An insulated room where breath mists in the air, perfect for storing perishables and escaping the sun's glare.

Luxury Quarters 1 Stake

Individual spaces for each crewmember to sleep, complete with soft furnishings and tasteful decoration.

Lens Room 1 Stake

A room of telescopes and ocular magnifiers offering a commanding view, a good interior alternative to an observation platform.

Brig 1 Stake

A hammock. A bucket. A lockable door and a set of iron bars. The cramped conditions of most ships rarely allow for much more.

Cargo Bay Extension 1 Stake

A larger space with cargo webbing, wall racks, and reinforced sections for more dangerous items.

Underdeck Gymnasium 1 Stake

A set of weights, ropes, and fitness equipment for keeping yourself in shape without braving the treetops.

External Structures

Built onto the deck or the outside of the hull. *These rooms are more likely to be damaged by hostile seas.*

Lounger's Tent 1 Stake

A rest area on the deck of the ship, the canvas providing shade and a break from the wind without being cooped up belowdecks.

Observation Platform 1 Stake

A strut-like protuberance giving an unparalleled view of the surrounding waves, usually with some kind of line of communication to the pilot's cabin.

Underthrash Platform 1 Stake

A sturdy door leading to an open platform at the base of the ship, usually at the rear, below the riding-line.

Cupola 1 Stake

A blister of glass or amber, usually at the side or rear of the ship, with a small seat inside.

It's almost impossible to describe the feeling of a shrapnel cannon going off right next to you.

Partly because it would be a sisyphean task to accurately capture the complexities of a sudden explosion of noise, the frantic dynamics of screws and glass as they fly, the pressure-change and rushing of air.

But mostly because if you're in the kind of situation where shrapnel cannons are firing, you've probably got other things to worry about.

Armaments [Optional]

The final set of fitting options for your ship, but by no means the least important. Armaments are deck weapons that deal huge amounts of damage, scaled for ship-on-ship combat or combat with large predators (perhaps even leviathans, if a crew feels like pushing their luck).

When you spend stakes on an armament note it down on your ship sheet, as well as the damage type it deals.

Massive Damage on Massive Targets

Deck weapons deal **massive damage** as a matter of course, the kind of damage that doesn't just mark boxes but entire tracks when fired against something person-sized. That said, firing your ship's armaments at person-sized things would feel not only cruel, but rather wasteful - especially when there are so many inviting larger targets out on the rustling waves.

When a ship or leviathan takes massive damage it usually treats it as normal impact damage, due to its inherent size.

Ammunition and Reloading

Just like we don't recommend tracking fuel for your engines, tracking ammunition for your deck weapons is likely outside the purview of the Wild Words ruleset. If you've created special ammunition to fire that might well be worth tracking, or if your ship is going through some kind of resource-crisis as part of its adventure, but usually you won't have to worry about counting shots.

What you **may** have to worry about is reloading. As large weapons, armaments have similarly large ammunition. The most important thing to know here is that **reloading should never be the main part of your focus** - it may be necessary, but it's not exciting. If you're in the middle of a pitched battle with another ship, skidding across the deck to grab and load another shell might be a great, dramatic moment, but only if you get to fire it a moment later.

The crew around you can be great help here - consider asking crewmates to load an armament in between your shots, or calling over an NPC passenger or member of the undercrew for aid (more on them in the next section).

Deck Weapons

The wildsea, it's often said, is a dangerous place. Having one of these weapons bolted to your decks doesn't make it any less dangerous in general, but might make it a little less dangerous for you in particular. *Deck weapons can be angled independently from the ship, allowing for easy tracking of moving targets. They're also assumed to come with a limiter, preventing you from turning them far enough that you'd catch your own ship as you fire.*

Trebuchet 2 Stakes

Lobs stones, chunks of wood, or salvage clusters.

- **Deals massive LR Blunt damage**

Harpoon Turret 2 Stakes

Fires barbed spears for piercing the hulls of ships and the hides of larger creatures.

- **Deals massive LR Spike damage**

Shrapnel Cannon 2 Stakes

Fires clouds of tearing metal, usually just armfuls of scrap offcuts tossed into the barrel.

- **Deals massive LR Serrated damage**

Viper's Tooth 2 Stakes

An unstable weapon that fires corrosive liquid.

- **Deals massive LR Acid damage**

Grand Blastbow 2 Stakes

A crossbow-like emplacement that fires explosive bolts.

- **Deals massive LR Blast damage**

Storm-Rail 2 Stakes

Two huge brass rods wrapped with poorly shielded cables, attached to a voltaic generator.

- **Deals massive LR Volt damage**

Hull Weapons

These weapons are affixed to (or part of, or poking through) the hull of the ship. *Hull weapons are cheaper to purchase than deck weapons in terms of stakes, but may require more careful manoeuvring to be effective in a high-stakes situation.*

Winch-Claws 1 Stake

A bank of short-range grappling claws on the sides of your ship, used to draw enemy vessels close for boarding.

- **A tool to aid in close-range encounters rather than a weapon in its own right**

Broadside Cannons 1 Stake

A blast from the half-forgotten past, these banks of cannons can only fire at targets to either side of you.

- **Deals massive LR Blunt or Blast damage**

Ramming Prow 1 Stake

Allows you to ram creatures (and ships) without danger to your own hull.

- **Deals massive CQ Blunt damage**

Spearing Prow 1 Stake

A set of reinforced spikes jutting from the front of your ship, for ramming others without danger to your own hull.

- **Deals massive CQ Spike damage**

Bladed Prow 1 Stake

A wedge-like cutting edge for slicing into enemy ships without danger to your own hull.

- **Deals massive CQ Hewing damage**

Ripsaw Prow 1 Stake

A serrated leading edge for cutting through enemy ships without danger to your own hull.

- **Deals massive CQ Serrated damage**

Boarding Equipment

Hand-to-hand fighting on a ship can be a sudden and brutal affair, but these options give even characters unused to combat a slight edge when they need it. *These weapons are assumed to be kept within easy reach in a crisis, but your enemies may make use of them too.*

Limited Armoury Rack 2 Stakes

A rack stocked with simple weapons.

- When leaving or defending the ship, crewmembers can take a temporary piece of gear with the LR or CQ tag and a single damage type (either Blunt, Keen or Spike). This temporary weapon comes with a two-track and can't be repaired.

Wrecker's Armoury Rack 2 Stakes

A rack stocked with less straightforward weapons.

- When leaving or defending the ship, crewmembers can take a temporary piece of gear with the LR or CQ tag and a single damage type (either Hewing, Serrated or Blast). This temporary weapon comes with a two-track and can't be repaired.

Outriders [Optional]

These are single-seater craft made for cutting across the waves for short distances, usually deployed from a larger ship or mid-wilds watchtower. They have limited range and don't offer much in the way of protection, but they're perfect for certain specialist tasks and niche activities, depending on their construction.

Outriders are custom-built using stakes, much like normal ships, using the rules on the next page.

When you spend stakes on an outrider, note it down on your ship sheet, as well as any special rules it follows.

Constructing an Outrider

The process of building an outrider is similar to that of building a larger ship, but much quicker and simpler. Outriders are comprised of two components...

- A **chassis**, which determines the craft's basic appearance and capabilities
- And **fittings**, small additions to improve an outrider's performance or usefulness

An outrider can only have one chassis, but multiple fittings can be added to it. Other elements of the craft (such as the particular kind of bite it uses or what powers the engine) are handled fictionally, to keep complexity as low as possible.

Limited Fuel

One of the main differences between an outrider and the smallest of ships is that they have no real way of storing large amounts of fuel. An outrider will function for a scene or so of hard use before having to return to refuel.

Sacrificing for Simplicity

Outriders are designed to be as simple and quick to assemble as possible. If you're looking for more complexity, purchase a nano-sized ship using the normal ship creation process and treat it as an outrider - it's almost the same size, and you'll have a lot more flexibility with your choices!

Alternative Approach - Outrider Gangs

Outriders are usually small craft made for temporary use, scouts, or attendants to a larger vessel. But what if there was no larger ship, no shared vessel for the crew to call home? Well, then you'd just have a group of wildsailors, each relying on their own personal transport to cut through the rustling waves. Horrendously dangerous, of course... But an attractive prospect for some, nonetheless.

If you want to try your hand at being an outrider gang, we recommend ignoring most of the options presented on the rest of this page. Instead, keep these suggestions in mind...

- At ship creation, each player gets six stakes to spend on a personal nano-sized vessel.
- These ships follow most of the usual rules for larger vessels, except that space is a concern - when confronted with a piece of cargo, think about whether your ship would be able to feasibly carry it.
- Increase impact on all personal repair jobs made to these ships - each rider knows their vessel's quirks.
- When journeying, replace '**at the helm**' with '**out in front**' to determine which ship leads the fleet. Watch rolls are made normally, and dropping anchor is usually a decision for the entire group to come to a halt.
- If one character's ship becomes too damaged to run, it can be towed by another ship from the group at the cost of being able to **Forge Ahead**.

Launching & Docking

There are several methods of storing and deploying an outrider from a larger ship - taking one is recommended. *Purchasing an outrider without a method of launching it is possible, but... not particularly useful. These options can also be used to launch and dock other nano-sized ships if your main vessel is large enough.*

Tow-Line Free

For the crew on a budget, sometimes there's no other option than to tow an outrider behind the main ship and hope it doesn't get too damaged in the process. Tow-lines are usually made of thickly-wound ropes or chains.

Docking Crane 1 Stake

A method of launching outriders, usually from a ship's deck. Can also retrieve outriders directly from the waves.

Wild-Bay Doors 1 Stake

A set of bay doors built into the hull that open directly to the waves from the interior of the ship, allowing outriders to launch and dock on their own or be 'scooped up' by their parent ship as it moves.

Hull Clamps 1 Stake

A set of docking clamps on the outside of the ship to hold an outrider in place, most often used for holding life rafts and small transport skippers.

Catapult Track 1 Stake

A spring-loaded section of deck used for catapulting outriders onto the waves at speed. Great for taking opposing ships by surprise, but the logistics of getting an outrider back into place for another launch are... tricky.

Outrider Chassis

The main body of your little ship. *Mechanically, this determines the outrider's base ratings – you can only purchase a single chassis per craft.*

Workhorse 1 Stake

Most denizens of the wildsea have never seen a horse, but the word survives as a descriptor of effort and consistent reliability.

- **Base Ratings: Armour 2, Seals 1, Speed 2, Saws 1, Stealth 1, Tilt 1**
- **Gain two outrider fitting choices for free**

Skipper 2 Stakes

Sleek and compact, skippers are made for speed and stealth above all else.

- **Base Ratings: Armour 1, Seals 1, Speed 3, Saws 2, Stealth 3, Tilt 2**

Chopper 2 Stakes

Brutish and noisy, choppers are designed to cut their way through the toughest wildsea vegetation.

- **Base Ratings: Armour 3, Seals 1, Speed 2, Saws 3, Stealth 1, Tilt 2**

Sidewinder 2 Stakes

Mobile and resilient, but lacking in speed.

- **Base Ratings: Armour 2, Seals 3, Speed 1, Saws 2, Stealth 1, Tilt 3**

Outrider Fittings

Additions bolted onto your outrider chassis. *These increase base ratings or confer special benefits.*

Windglass 1 Stake

A shell of hardened amber or ancient glass affixed to an outrider's steering column.

- **Armour +1, Seals +1**

Overburner 1 Stake

A chemical battery for adding extra power to the engines. Used, hopefully, with great caution.

- **Speed +1, Saws +1**

Mucoid Rub 1 Stake

A slimy adhesive coating along the lower hull, muffling engine noise and allowing the ship to better handle sharp turns.

- **Stealth +1, Tilt +1**

Personal Modification 1 Stake

What exactly have you done to the thing? Portside engineers would weep.

- **Increase any three ratings by 1**
- **Decrease any one rating by 1**

Weapon Housing 1 Stake

A mount for a larger deck weapon, the firing controls rigged up to the outrider's steering column.

- **Deal massive LR Blunt, Keen, Spike, or Blast damage (chosen when you take this fitting)**

Flatbed 1 Stake

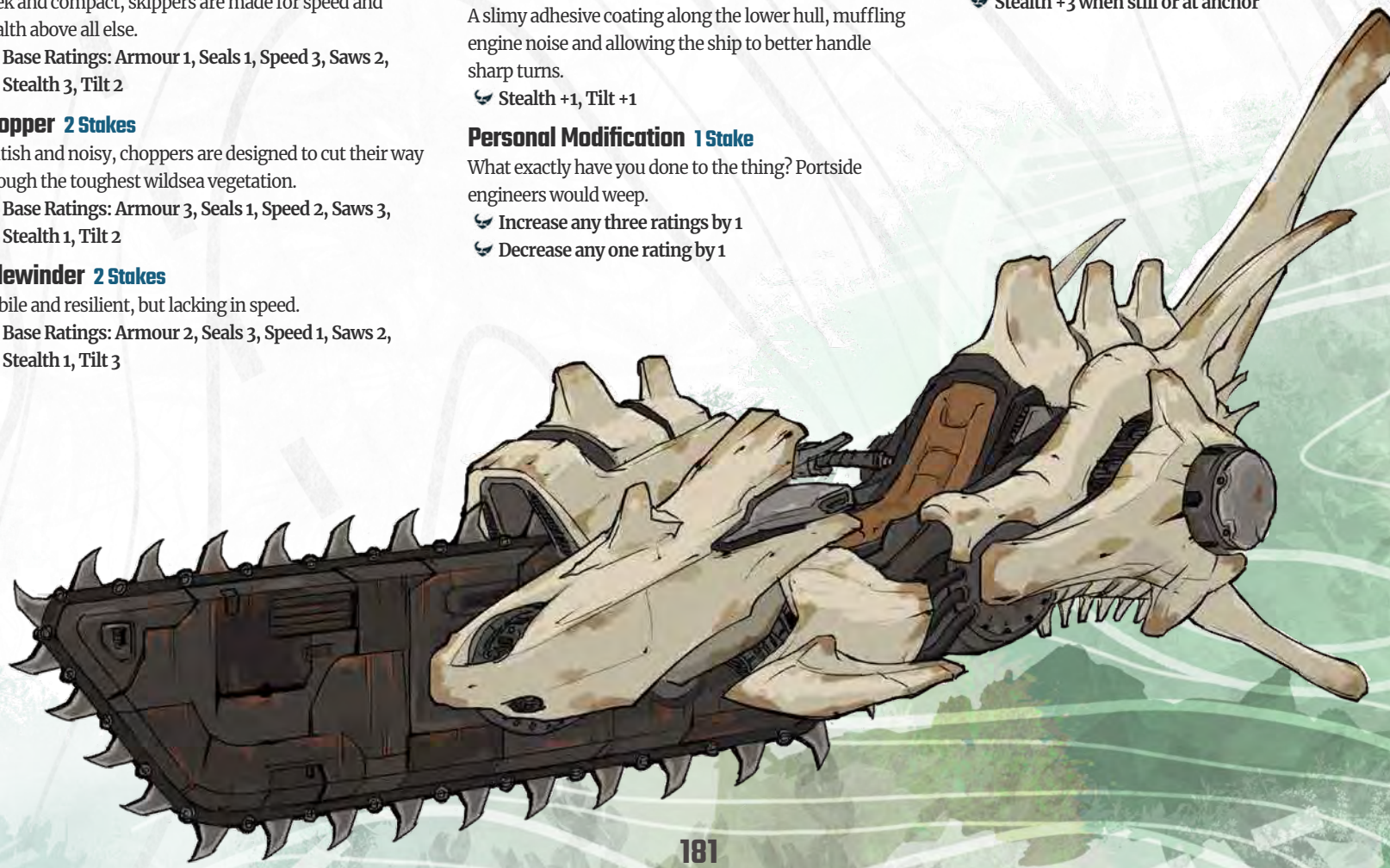
A truck-style rear portion, affording a bumpy ride.

- **Allows you to carry a small number of crew or pieces of cargo**

Camouflage 1 Stake

A combination of paint and clever use of vegetation make the outrider almost impossible to spot at rest.

- **Stealth +3 when still or at anchor**



The galley was a mess, tables piled high with the spoils of their most recent salvaging run. Rusted metal, rotten ropes, shards of glass worn smooth by the years.

A pauper's haul... to the untrained eye at least, but she knew better than to write it off just yet.

"How's it going down here, Tamen?"

The wiry little gau surfaced, his head jerking up from the pottery he'd been investigating.

"I think you're going to like this, captain. The info was good."

Tamen waved her over to the rear of the galley where a pot was bubbling gently over one of their old chemical burners. It was hard to see through the steam, but she could just about make out a set of jars sitting beneath the surface.

"Intact?" she asked. Tamen shot her a smile, nodded enthusiastically.

"Not just intact, boss... Pre-V."

Step Three - Undercrew

For some wildsailors, the tight bond of friendship (or at least mutual respect) between a small core of cohorts is enough to see them through on their expeditions out into the wilds. But ships can be roomy places, with a lot of moving parts to watch, to tend, to maintain; that's where the undercrew comes in.

Spending stakes on an undercrew option gives you an additional NPC based on your ship, a loyal crewmate that will work in your best interests. They're not *quite* crew - they're unlikely to head into port with you unless you specifically need them, and in narrative terms they'll have little impact on the overall story. But they're useful, reliable, and often eager. They'll have their own opinions, their own hopes, and - most importantly - their own mechanical benefits.

Undercrew choices act just like aspects - they have names, descriptions, tracks, and abilities. Many of these abilities only work during a journey or when the action of the game is focused on the ship, but some can be useful in port.

Adding undercrew choices your ship is entirely optional - if you'd rather every person aboard be a player character, that's entirely fine.

Officers [Optional]

Seasoned sailors, essentially NPC crewmembers. Officers don't affect the running of the ship, but instead fill in potential gaps in the crew's skills or aspects.

When you purchase an officer, give them a name and a short description, then note this (along with their track and any benefits they give) on your ship sheet.

Rolling for Officers

Some officers come with skills and languages that might help your crew out in a pinch. When you want to make use of these skills, simply allow an officer's skill or language ranks to supersede your own. You can also gain an additional d6 on most rolls by treating the officer as an environmental advantage.

Damage and Death

Officers come with a track which can get marked (or be healed) like that of any other companion-type aspect. The difference here is that when an officer's track is fully marked, they have a very real risk of dying - they may be wildsailors, but they're not as hardy as the true crew.

Advancing Officers

Officers have the chance to grow and develop, just like a player character. To advance an officer by giving them a new skill rank, language rank, or aspect, spend stakes as if they were major milestones.

Available Officers

Single individuals hired for a particular skill, language, or aspect they possess. *Remember to give officers a name when you spend stakes on them - it'll help to develop their personality through play.*

Skillful Officer [3-Track] 1 Stake

A seasoned wildsailor, likely on the verge of leaving the undercrew and setting out to find a main crew position of their own. Skillful officers have access to...

- **2 ranks in any skill**
- **1 rank in any other skill**

Well-Travelled Officer [3-Track] 1 Stake

An eager contributor to discussions and font of lore, wise in the ways of the wider waves. Well-travelled officers have access to...

- **2 ranks in any languages**
- **1 rank in any other language**

Experienced Officer [X-Track] 1 Stake

A seasoned wildsailor, likely on the verge of leaving the undercrew and setting out to find a full crew position of their own. Experienced officers have access to...

- **Any one aspect**
- **An experienced officer's track is equal to the track of the aspect they have access to**

Gangs [Optional]

Small crews of fresh wildsailors, usually amateurs out learning the ways of the rustling waves. Gangs give unique benefits, but often only during journeys or ship-based scenes.

When you choose a gang, give them a few distinguishing features - a descriptor based on their appearance, for example, or a catchy name for their little troupe.

Rolling for Gangs

If a gang needs to act in any capacity outside of their unique ability, a single d6 roll is usually enough. It's often far more useful to treat a gang as an environmental advantage while rolling yourself than trying to direct them into action they're unfamiliar with.

And Then There Was One

A gang is only as strong as its members, and the wildsea is a place of endless hunger, danger, and predation. When a gang's track is marked, that usually represents the death of one of the sailors within it. The only way to heal a loss like this is to hire a new gang member at port, usually at the cost of a piece of cargo bequeathed to them. *For a friendlier, brighter game, assume that a marked box on a gang's track implies an injury or experience that prompts the member to take some time off, to be renewed and reinvigorated by a treat of cargo when next at port.*

Available Gangs

Rough, ready and with a worryingly high mortality rate. *Gangs rarely leave the ship, but are adept at protecting it in the absence of any other crewmembers.*

Spear-Fishers [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Tasked with plucking insects and small mammals from the sea as they travel.

- Automatically acquire one normal specimen when you drop anchor

Magnet-Fishers [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Laconic scavengers that prefer the comfort of the deckside to the embrace of the waves.

- Automatically acquire one normal piece of salvage when you drop anchor

Stargazers [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Sky-watching tale-spinners.

- Automatically acquire one normal whisper when you drop anchor

Cartographers [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Navigator-adjuncts tasked with keeping a record of the ship's journeys and surroundings.

- Automatically acquire one normal chart when you drop anchor

Deck Engineers [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Tasked with keeping the ship in working condition.

- Automatically clear one mark from any damaged ship's rating when you drop anchor

Bonesaw Troupe [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Amateur surgeons eager to keep the crew in some semblance of good health.

- A single crewmember can heal a mark from any damaged trait or injury when you drop anchor

Tinker Troupe [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Amateur metalworkers and clothiers, maintaining the crew's possessions as best they can.

- A single crewmember can repair a mark from any gear when you drop anchor

Scholars [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Students working on unlocking the mysteries of the sea.

- You learn a secret of the surrounding waves whenever you drop anchor, supplied by the Firefly

Marauders [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Rough sorts that take the protection of the ship (and the celebrations after a fight) extremely seriously.

- They fight in close combat to defend the ship, gaining focus every now and then to deal CQ Blunt, Keen or Spike damage

Picaros [3-Track] 2 Stakes

Adventurous slingers armed with crossbows, pistols, and blunderbusses.

- They fight at range to defend the ship, gaining focus every now and then to deal LR Blunt, Keen or Spike damage

Packs [Optional]

Think of a pack as an extremely wild version of a gang, beasts, or insects tamed and trained to work together for the benefit of a ship and its crew. Packs are less capable than gangs, and more prone to unexpected behaviour.

When you purchase a pack, note their name (along with their track and any benefits they give) on your ship sheet.

The Illusion of Control

Having a pack on your ship isn't the same as having a companion. While they will likely feel affection to at least some of the crewmembers, they're far harder to directly control, usually lacking the training to take complex orders that go outside of their usual behaviour. Packs act on instinct, for the most part - in certain situations they're as likely to be a hindrance as a help.

Beast Packs

There are certain beasts found on ships across the wild waves, existing in rough harmony with their crews (or at least tolerated for the benefits they offer). *Depending on the creatures they consist of, a pack will defend themselves or flee when attacked, something to keep in mind if your ship is ever boarded.*

Lemur Pack [3-Track] 1 Stake

A group of nimble helpers that keep the ship clear of smaller insects.

Spring-Foxes [3-Track] 1 Stake

A pod of spring-foxes that dance and leap through the waves around your ship as you travel. Their behaviour can warn of dangers from the deeper canopy.

A Stretch of Slinks [3-Track] 1 Stake
Semi-spectral cats usually found in dockyards and spit-city alleyways, ship-born slinks spend most of their time hunting down rats and finding ways to get into the most absurdly awkward spaces.

A Brace of Hounds [3-Track] 1 Stake
Perhaps not best friend material, these dogs are at least fiercely protective of their ship (despite having few other uses than comfort and the ability to play a great game of fetch).

Rig-Ferrets [3-Track] 1 Stake
Used to tie and untie knots far above deck on ships that evoke the feeling of the old salt sea.

Whirling Bats [3-Track] 1 Stake
Lend an appreciably gothic look to your ship from a distance, but are unexpectedly friendly up close.

Frenzy-Parrot [3-Track] 1 Stake
Possessed of a shrill and annoying squawk, but tolerated as an early warning system for dangerous predators roaming nearby.

Trained Pinwolf [3-Track] 2 Stakes
One of the most dangerous predators of the wildsea, raised from birth to regard a ship as its home and the crew as its pack.
- They fight in close combat to defend the ship, gaining focus every now and then to deal CQ Blunt, Keen or Spike damage

Squirrel Flingers [3-Track] 2 Stakes
Tiny but ferocious, a pack of squirrels armed with miniature slings.
- They fight at range to defend the ship, gaining focus every now and then to deal LR Blunt, Keen or Spike damage

Geist Octopus [5-Track] 3 Stakes
A little bit of everything in one cool cephalopackage.
- Once per journey, the geist octopus allows a single crewmember to roll 6d6 in place of their usual dice pool on any task it could conceivably help with

Insect Packs
Far more difficult to train than beasts, insects are usually left to their own devices in the hopes that they'll bring some sort of benefit to the ship as a whole. *Just like beasts, insects may flee or attack boarders, depending on their nature and situation.*

Dragon-Tail Butterflies [5-Track] 1 Stake
Butterflies with beautiful, elongated wings. Don't do anything useful, but are regarded by many as a good-luck charm.

Spider Colony [3-Track] 1 Stake
Once a tzelicrae, now barely holding it together, a spider colony can achieve little on a ship other than keeping insects and rodents away.

Glass-Shell Snails [3-Track] 1 Stake
Crews with glass-shell snails on board learn to tread lightly, especially at night.

Scorpion Set [3-Track] 1 Stake
Surly, patient, and venomous, often found sunning themselves on railings or hiding inside boots.

Medical Mosquitoes [3-Track] 2 Stakes
An annoyance for sure, but a useful one - carry a symptomless infection that increases a crew's resistance to other infections
- Infections and viruses don't naturally transfer from crewmember to crewmember

Glowbug Parade [3-Track] 2 Stakes
A horde of fireflies that follow crewmembers around as they traverse decks and corridors.
- Gives all crew members their own dim lantern-like light while they're on the ship (unless shooed away)

Mantis Sentries [3-Track] 2 Stakes
Stone-still sentries that let their prey come to them, waiting for the perfect moment to strike.
- Automatically acquire one normal specimen when you dock at port.

Rust-Roaches [3-Track] 2 Stakes
Feeding off of rust and metallic impurities, these tenacious little things tend to root out forgotten pieces of scrap for their meals.
- Automatically acquire one normal piece of salvage when you dock at port.

Etterescu [3-Track] 2 Stakes
Lurking centipedes that prefer darker places, listening to secrets and fragments of lore.
- Automatically acquire one normal whisper when you dock at port.

Library Boatmen [3-Track] 2 Stakes
Spider-like creatures that have a habit of making their homes in discarded paper plucked from the waves.
- Automatically acquire one normal chart when you dock at port.

Looming Teeth

CHAPTER 9
THE FIREFLY'S GUIDE

The rustling of the waves is ceaseless, but even an eternity has lulls. A drop in the wind, a quieting of beasts, a pause in the drone of mantras and mantis-wings.

It's at times like those that you can hear the heartbeat of the sea. A creaking, not of branches or ship-hulls, but of the ironroots themselves. Thrumming with near-silent life. Sap and crezzerin.

And, if you sit up late often enough, on deserted decks and empty jetties, often enough that you learn to tune out even that creaking heartbeat, there's something else beneath it. A deeper layer. Not topographical, not quite spiritual.

Something wild.

Untamed.

Narrative in nature.

It's a sea of leaves, and blood and salvage. But it's also a sea of stories.

The Firefly's Roles

If you've been the GM, Keeper, or Storyteller for other roleplaying games you'll likely have a good idea of what's expected of you. But, just in case you're new, here's a quick list of the jobs you'll have at the table...

Narrator

You bring focus and cohesion to the story as it progresses, spinning a tale in reaction to events and actions. What effect are the characters having on the world? What's going on around them, or might affect them in the future? Immersion is key here.

Guide

... In the loosest sense. Your descriptions and the information you share should always offer options to the players rather than forcing them down pre-defined paths. Draw from character quirks and backgrounds where you can, relating your descriptions to aspects of a particular character's emotion, history, or experiences.

Threat

The sea is hungry. Beasts howl on the hunt. Spores take root and insects burrow. Pirates, wreckers, and scavengers haunt the waves... and you're the one that has to throw these challenges in the path of the characters. But remember, threats don't always have to be immediate, or physical. Trying to reinforce a ship in the face of a looming storm can be just as tense as an all-out battle, especially if there's a track-based time limit involved.

Voice

Of the world in general, but also specifically of the NPCs; antagonists, allies, the general crew. Try to develop distinct voices, personalities, and mannerisms to help the players tell your NPCs apart. You don't need a detailed biography for everyone who shows up, just start with one or two simple facts and build from there if the players take an interest. They might not remember 'Kasndrad', but they'll remember 'the grumpy ektus with the scarf'.

Teacher

As the Firefly, you'll likely be introducing the game to the rest of your group. Try to do this during play, as situations come up. Start slow - don't feel the need to explain all the particularities or variations of a rule right away, just how it applies in the current circumstances. A lot of the engine's rules build off of a few simple concepts: tracks, dice pools, cut, and tags. Establish these basics first and players should pick up the rest with ease.

Judge

Whenever there's a rules dispute or a mechanic in need of clarification, you have the final say. This means different things for different groups - always be aware of how your group is most comfortable addressing these moments; remember, it's a game rather than a contest.

Designer

Due to the reactive nature of your role, you'll often find yourself designing scenes and encounters on the fly. While this can be a challenge in terms of the fiction, it's also important mechanically. You need to be able to quickly identify the most useful or effective rules and systems to use for a particular chain of events. The key here is not to overcomplicate any given moment. While the other players are learning the system, you need to make sure you clearly set out which rules are being used and, if necessary, how they work in this particular case.

Session Zero

While not *strictly* necessary, running a quick session zero before a longer campaign can be a real boon to both the crew and to you as a Firefly.

If you have the time to run a session zero, focus on...

- **Setting Goals**. Each of the players will likely have goals for their characters, some described by their drives and some born of what kind of things they want to engage with or experience. Make a note of some of the party's goals and try to incorporate those as the story progresses.
- **Discussing Tone**. The clearer everybody is on the tone, the smoother the game will run. This discussion should include muted topics and hard limits, but also what kind of general slant the players are expecting from the narrative (dark, light, witty, serious, etc). we recommend looking over the basic **safety tools** in the next column for more information on making your table (physical or virtual) a safe and productive place for all involved.
- **Core Rules**. As long as you know what you're doing as the Firefly, the players don't need to know the intricacies of the full rules. What they should have a grasp on is the **core rules** - how to roll for an action, how tracks work, what the different parts of their character sheet mean. Run through these if you have time to ensure that everyone is on the same page.

And, If You Have More Time...

- **Make a Ship**. Nothing ties a new crew together quite like making their first ship. The process of spending stakes is written to be a mixture of collaborative endeavour and personal expression - encourage players to pool their stakes together when necessary, but not to forget they can add some things to the ship that are just for their own personal enjoyment (or to make their character's life easier).
- **Discuss Themes**. Just as the players are likely to have some personal drives or moments, the group as a whole probably settles quite naturally onto some themes that they want to explore. These don't have to resonate with every player all the time, but finding some the crew want to generally work with can help you in directing and shaping the narrative, and the world's reaction to player-caused events.
- **Lay Some Groundwork**. Talk about some things that are true for your own version of the wildsea, maybe things that the players felt themselves particularly drawn to even if they're not immediately relevant for their character. Unsetting and Framing Questions (the details of which are found on the next page) can actually work really well here to get the crew into the same creative headspace, and to provide narrative elements and ideas that can be incorporated into the world as the crew explores. Is there anything in particular the crew wants to see, any place they want to explore?
- **Set an Initial Goal**. Something the players can think about before the first proper session, a particular task they're trying to accomplish or achievement they're chasing. For some groups, having this goal be explicitly talked about gives them a story hook with some automatic investment, a seamless road from planning to play. Other groups want to be completely surprised while playing in-character - if yours is the latter, skip this particular bit of advice.
- **Fill in the Crew's History**. In broad strokes and splotches - some events they faced together perhaps, or how they overcame a certain threat. If they're entirely new to each other, have them talk about what they're expecting, both from themselves and from their fellow crewmates.

Safety Tools

The waves can be a dark place, and even a good discussion and group understanding of the tone you want to achieve doesn't mean you won't fall foul of the occasional slip-up or uncomfortable reference.

The Wildsea comes pre-loaded with some basic safety tools, adapted from what has thankfully become standard for the industry. Below is a list of common lines and veils that cover many of the thematic areas of conversation that may be uncomfortable, or that some players may wish to avoid in order to have the safest and most enjoyable experience at the table.

Talk is a Tool

... So don't undervalue it as a solution to potential problems. A slip-up probably doesn't mean the end of a game, but it might require a break in the narrative and a frank conversation to address. The relationships between everyone at the table as players, and between them as a crew and you as a Firefly, are valuable ones. Real life, and real feelings, should always take precedence over fantasy, no matter how engaging the story might be.

"When you stop having fun, it stops being a game."
- Ric Heise

Common Lines and Veils

A line is a topic that shouldn't appear in your game, a hard line your group has decided they won't cross. A veil is something potentially unsettling that can usually be mentioned, but not focused on.

Alcoholism
Bullying
Childhood Abandonment
Classism
Dental Horror
Drug Abuse
Epidemics
Eye Injuries
Graphic Gore
Harm to Animals
Harm to Children
Homophobia, Transphobia
Mind Control
PC Betrayal
Racism
Rioting
Sexual Assault
Sexual Content
Slavery
Spiders
Starvation
Suicide
Torture

Unsetting Questions

An excellent session zero activity that also doubles as a reusable pre-session warm-up, asking Unsetting Questions allows the group to flex their creative muscles within the setting.

An unsetting question is a simple, open-ended question about the world of the Wildsea. Here are a few examples...

- The figurehead of the Golden Dawn is famed for its beauty. What creature is it carved to represent?
- What are the Spires, and why do wildsailors avoid sailing between them?
- Sawnanas are far more versatile than most fruit. What are some of their unexpected uses?

Make it clear before you ask the question that anybody at the table can answer - in fact, Unsetting Questions work best if multiple people address the same question with wildly different answers. You might want to choose specific players to answer in sequence, or let people jump in when they have an idea.

The answers given to an unsetting question are specifically not true. Players should think of them as junction-house stories and half-remembered legends, possibilities, or unsubstantiated rumours.

Why Ask Unsetting Questions?

Running through a couple of these questions before you start a game helps to get all players at the table into the same creative headspace, giving a shared experience without the pressure or potential of any suggestions being rejected. Players can throw out wild theories and ridiculous ideas safely without worrying about how they might affect the upcoming game.

Once your group is comfortable with the process of unsetting questions, they might have some of their own from time to time. Encourage this - it helps to break the GM/player divide and lets even more creativity flow. Activities like this might even inspire players to try their hand at the Firefly role themselves at some point!

Useful Unsetting Question Structures

- The _____ pirates are famed for their...?
- What do people claim...
- What do you hope is not true?
- Why does a particular world element work the way it does?
- What's the purpose behind x?
- What do you think is...?
- Someone believes X - why are they wrong?
- What's a secret about X that you've heard whispered of in portside junctions?
- What is a capability of the vessels of the _____ that you've heard tales of?
- Insert specific name - why are they famous?

Pre-Made Unsetting Questions

- What fruit do the citizens of Distant Dirge glut themselves on every spring?
- The Black Chrysanthemum was a pleasure barge lost to the waves many years ago. Many of the cargo items were looted and distributed in the days following the wreck- what's something that was taken, and where did it end up?
- There have been reports of unnatural weather around a nearby port- what is a rumour you hope is not true about this meteorological oddity?
- What is a crime or atrocity you've heard of being committed by the Hunting Families?
- What is the name of the favourite food/drink of wildsailors at the Lazy Cat junction house?
- What invention or creation has changed the way people live on the Gatling Archipelago?
- What is a sad song that people sing anyway?

Framing Questions

An alternative approach, Framing Questions follow the same sort of format as Unsetting Questions but differ in a single important way - the answers are true, and will likely have an almost immediate impact on the characters or narrative of the game. These are questions that, when answered, fill in important information for the story going forward. They might be about a shared bond (or even a shared dislike), a fact about a place, a creature or element of the world, or even a reaffirmation of previously discussed goals and themes. Here are a few examples...

- Why does everyone hate NPC x?
- What do you all think of (world element)?
- What is it about this port that drew you here?
- What is a story you tell of your ship?
- What is a story people tell of where you grew up?
- What is a feat that you are associated with out on the waves?
- What is a story people tell of your ship?

Some wildsailors say that silence on the waves is a bad omen; those moments where the insects and birds stop chirping, the engines calm, and a lull in the winds quiets the otherwise-ceaseless rustle of the leaves.

It was in one of those moments that the shout came.

"Surgeon! Surgeon!" It was hoarse, ragged, enough to shake the undercrew out of their time-wasting reveries as the landing party's boots sounded heavy on the dilapidated jetty.

There had been seven of them when they left, sabres drawn and pistols primed for trouble. There were three of them now, two on foot and one slung between them like a dead weight. Their pistols smoked at their belts. Their sabres dripped with sap.

"Help us, damn it! Surgeon!"

Behind them, the island's foliage moved in ways that had nothing to do with the resurgence of wind.

Planning

The wilderness abhors a plan, and the Wild Words Engine was built with that in mind. It's low-prep by nature, designed to encourage a narrative flow driven by the crew and their actions rather than by an omniscient GM figure. Methodical, beat-by-beat story structures aren't the way to go here.

So what can you do with your planning time?

Focus on Moments

Rather than crafting a story-line for the crew to follow, come up with some unique and engaging moments that suit the interests of the crew and the tone of your table. With the game's underlying theme of discovery often inviting the unexpected, you'll be able to slip these pre-prepared moments into the narrative when the opportunity presents itself, making their inclusion feel natural without railroading the players towards them.

For example, you might want to plan out...

- **The introduction of a potentially important NPC**. The more impactful their entrance, the more likely the crew are to engage with them and keep them around to further affect the plot.
- **The discovery of a pre-defined wreck, ruin, port, or island**. You don't need to fill in *all* the details, or the precise purpose it will play in the ongoing story - the other players can do that with you at the table. Just plan enough to give them a solid introduction and let the conversation do the rest.
- **A clash with or threat from a particular hazard that you're eager to use**. All the best journeys have a dash of danger to them, and having the broad strokes of that danger planned out can help you foreshadow and transition into it with ease.
- **A vivid consequence or knock-on effect from one of the crew's previous actions or decisions**. Again, the hard details don't matter as much as the feeling like the crew have had an impact on the world that they can see or feel.

Focus on Characters

What have they been doing, and what are their goals? Treat the crew's character sheets as packets of information that you can draw from to challenge or reward them in ways that make them feel an integral part of the ongoing game.

Pay particular attention to...

- **A character's drives**. What locations or situations could you introduce during the game that would play to those drives? What seeds could you sow that they'd pick up on during play, hooks for later sessions and adventures?
- **A character's skills and aspects**. Players chose these because they wanted to get a chance to use them - plan for those opportunities if you can, even if it's only to the extent of 'running into problem X will let player Y use aspect Z'.
- **A character's background and personal history**. Planning ways you might incorporate these into the game is sure to make that character's player feel special for a while.

Focus on the World

Not everything that happens on the rustling waves will involve the crew. They may be the main characters of their own story, but the rest of the world will rarely see it that way.

Before a game, think about what else is happening around the characters that might not even involve them. Upcoming festivals, disagreements between NPCs (even ones that haven't been introduced yet), the problems and triumphs that the crew have no part in. Throwing in a few details like this can help the world of the Wildsea come to life at the table, making it less of a backdrop to the action and more a character in its own right.

Maintaining Tone

No matter what intentions you start with, the tone of your game will likely change as time passes - the players will become more accustomed to each other, as will their characters. More events will be referenced, either tragic or humorous, or somewhere in between. In-jokes will burst into being, develop, become passe, and then mutate into something else that makes people laugh (or groan).

And there's nothing wrong with a tonal shift! But it's easy to lose control of the tone of a game by accident too, so if you're aiming to hew close to a certain common Wildsea tone, we've got a few guidelines for you below to keep in mind as you play (and feel free to mix and match these for your own personal table's tastes, of course)...

Positive But Dangerous

The default Wildsea tone - the world is strange and full of problems and terrors, but nothing that can't be overcome with a little teamwork and some rash decisions. When you want a game that feels positive, but dangerous...

- **Cut every few rolls, but keep it low**. That way there will commonly be complications, but rarely outright disasters in situations where they're not expected. It fosters a feeling of challenge and competency.
- **Keep tracks open when in doubt**. You want your players to feel confident in what's happening with the world, and what they can affect. A hidden or secret track from time to time adds spice, but keep it rare and surprising.
- **Give information freely when you can**. Exploration, questioning, and study should usually yield results without needing difficult rolls. The sea is there to be experienced and understood.
- **Make ports friendly, but give them problems**. If the crew want a place to relax or repair their ship, give them one - but don't make it idyllic.

Light, Fun, and Maybe Even a Little Bit Silly

It's a weird world, and it might even still be a dangerous one, but it's not taking itself too seriously.

- **Ask for as much player input as possible**. They should be comfortable expressing themselves and sharing *ideas* - less pressure to come up with something perfect.
- **Focus on sound and colour.** Make the sea feel as vibrant as possible, as alive as you can - the more people can interact with, the more opportunities they have to find something they personally enjoy.
- **Make NPCs as distinctive as possible**. Break out the voices and expansive gestures if you can - the more relaxed and 'into it' you are as a Firefly, the more chance you have of your players following suit.

Dour and Deadly

The sea is grim, a dark and brutal place with the occasional stab of friendship and hope.

- **Cut often, and remember impact**. Cutting too often makes situations feel hopeless, feeling more like a penalty than a challenge. Mix your cuts with lowered impact, and encourage players to find ways of boosting that impact by using everything they can.
- **Treat the undercrew as expendable**. Nothing enforces horror more than the sudden absence of a nameless sailor, and a tendril slipping back below the waves.
- **Offer death as an option**. Inflict damage and injury as you like, but make it clear that the narrative option of death is one that can be taken... and maybe should.

Pacing

The pace of play for scenes, montages, and journeys in the Wildsea is something that will develop naturally for your group, but proper pacing during a one-shot or multi-session campaign can be a little trickier to nail down. Consider the following points before your group starts making characters and deciding goals, as each of them can have a huge impact on the feel and pace of the game.

- **Character Experience**. Wildsea characters always have space to grow and change, but the more competent and well-rounded a starting character is, the less inclination their player will have to strike out in new directions.
- **Milestone Frequency**. The more often milestones are handed out (especially major milestones) the faster characters develop. Characters growing in power too swiftly can trivialise certain encounters and events on the waves.
- **Building Danger**: A single pinwolf can be a potentially deadly challenge, if handled right. A pack of them is more dangerous, and adding quirks can make them a threat to an entire community. The rate at which you throw dangerous encounters at the crew is important.
- **Recovery Time**: A game with more injuries and lasting consequences (such as damage to the ship) is likely to progress at a more measured pace, because characters will rarely be at their best without taking time out to rest and recover. Adding death as a narrative event is a choice that should be discussed at the table.
- **Escalating Achievements**: If the crew can take down a leviathan in their first jaunt out on the waves, what do they do next? Where do they go from there? The speed at which larger, more impactful world events are introduced affects the speed of the game, as well as the interest of the players in the world and their own characters. Why develop if you're already at your peak?

One-Shots

A Wildsea one-shot should feel like an episode of a particularly exciting TV show, a bundle of drama and intrigue and plot developments. There will likely be threads left hanging that might draw the crew back for another session, but the most important thing is to start with a small, clear, achievable goal, and direct the action towards it as best you can. A one-shot might focus on...

- Attending a festival and solving a related problem
- Finding and exploring a newly-risen spit or recent wreck
- Escorting an individual through a dangerous area of the waves

In a one-shot, Old Dogs will feel competent while Young Guns will struggle and fail far more often. Milestones can safely be ignored, as the characters won't be developing past the session anyway (or can be retroactively awarded if it becomes a campaign). Threats can be small, dealing damage that the players won't worry too much about healing, or more substantial to really put characters through the wringer. Dramatic deaths and sacrifices hold little long-term consequence, but can be memorable. If you want a good overview of the kinds of things to throw into a one-shot, the box on the next page should help.

Limited Campaigns

These might run from four to twelve sessions, giving space for some growth and character exploration, but with a definite shared goal in mind, an end the crew are working towards together. This could be based on an individual character's drive, a shared event in the backstory of the crew that they agree upon before the game, or an opportunity presented by the Firefly that leads to an unfolding story or mystery.

Young Guns have space to breathe here, but Old Dogs can focus on developing unique aspects and approaches. Aim to give a major milestone every couple of sessions to promote swift character growth and exploration. Vary the threats and consequences that the crew faces, but have them tend towards the more severe over time. Avoid character death if possible - new crewmembers won't have much time to feel welcomed. And maybe, by the final game, the crew might face a leviathan and live.

Unlimited Campaigns

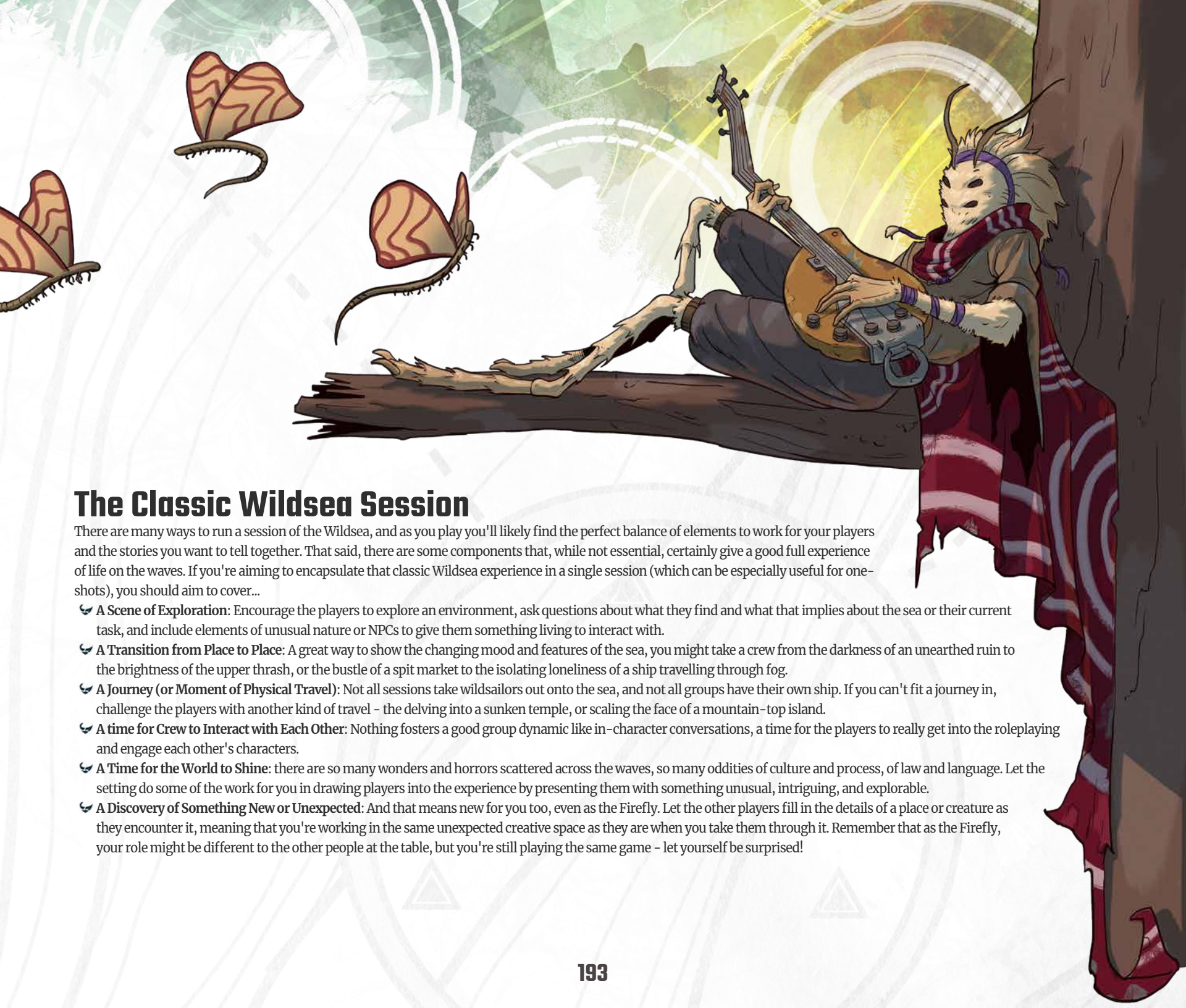
Though the crew may well have a defined goal, there's no set schedule for it to be achieved and no end in sight - NPCs and their problems, local oddities or the drives and personal vendettas of the crew will likely take precedence over the 'main story' from time to time, and this should be encouraged.

The setting of the Wildsea works well for endless exploration, for stories linking into other stories, but certain mechanics need to be altered a little to keep these kinds of games fresh.

Whether the crew start as Young Guns or Old Dogs, they'll eventually reach a level where they're competent enough to take on just about anything that's thrown their way, up to and including that legendary leviathan that other sailors flee from. It's a good idea to slow progress, especially in terms of milestones, to hold off from this point for a while. Hand a major milestone out only at the end of a major arc, and give fewer in-session milestones as bonuses.

Alternatively, have injuries and damage play a much larger role in the game. Just as with the old, battered leviathaneers the players will likely meet, have the waves take as much as they give. Characters may die and be replaced, or reborn as anchored, or ironbound, or NPC spirits. NPCs will turn up again and again to help, or to backstab and betray. Change the seasons as the game progresses. Cross horizons. Kill leviathans.

Conquer the waves.



The Classic Wildsea Session

There are many ways to run a session of the Wildsea, and as you play you'll likely find the perfect balance of elements to work for your players and the stories you want to tell together. That said, there are some components that, while not essential, certainly give a good full experience of life on the waves. If you're aiming to encapsulate that classic Wildsea experience in a single session (which can be especially useful for one-shots), you should aim to cover...

- **A Scene of Exploration**: Encourage the players to explore an environment, ask questions about what they find and what that implies about the sea or their current task, and include elements of unusual nature or NPCs to give them something living to interact with.
- **A Transition from Place to Place**: A great way to show the changing mood and features of the sea, you might take a crew from the darkness of an unearthed ruin to the brightness of the upper thrash, or the bustle of a spit market to the isolating loneliness of a ship travelling through fog.
- **A Journey (or Moment of Physical Travel)**: Not all sessions take wildsailors out onto the sea, and not all groups have their own ship. If you can't fit a journey in, challenge the players with another kind of travel - the delving into a sunken temple, or scaling the face of a mountain-top island.
- **A time for Crew to Interact with Each Other**: Nothing fosters a good group dynamic like in-character conversations, a time for the players to really get into the roleplaying and engage each other's characters.
- **A Time for the World to Shine**: there are so many wonders and horrors scattered across the waves, so many oddities of culture and process, of law and language. Let the setting do some of the work for you in drawing players into the experience by presenting them with something unusual, intriguing, and explorable.
- **A Discovery of Something New or Unexpected**: And that means new for you too, even as the Firefly. Let the other players fill in the details of a place or creature as they encounter it, meaning that you're working in the same unexpected creative space as they are when you take them through it. Remember that as the Firefly, your role might be different to the other people at the table, but you're still playing the same game - let yourself be surprised!

The Toolbox

Think of the rules of the Wild Words Engine as a set of useful resources, a toolbox that you can dip into to produce the perfect tool for a situation. Over the next few pages you'll find an overview of how different parts of the system can be used as you play.

Using The Conversation

The conversation exists to promote a natural flow of ideas, to give players the space they need to engage in both in-character and out-of-character creativity.

Natural Conversation

Though the Firefly's role is to 'run the game', that doesn't mean you have to be talking all the time, or shaping every conversation and event that occurs. Often the other players speaking to each other in character is a good sign that they're engaged not only with what they've made, but with the situation they find themselves in.

This could be a discussion about what they're doing next, with players weighing up their options and trying to decide what makes the most sense for the unfolding narrative of the world. It could be a sharing of backstories, thoughts, or secrets during downtime, such as a montage or a peaceful leg of a journey. It could even be a specially requested scene, or something the game just naturally slips into - the discovery of a new element of the world prompting in-character conversation based around thoughts and differing opinions, for example.

While you can break in and join the conversation here (either by speaking through an NPC or with more general questions and prompts), it's often better to step back and let these natural conversations play out. Instead of inserting your own voice, do your best to...

- **Recognize**. These moments are precious.
- **Understand**. What led to this kind of natural communication?
- **Plan for the Future**. Listen to what these in-character moments reveal about the wants and motivations of your players. How can you reinforce or incorporate these into the narrative?

Directed Conversation

Though in an ideal world the conversation would always flow smoothly and productively, there will inevitably be times when the other players need a bit of prompting or direction.

This is where you can use conversation as a tool rather than simply as a convention. You can shape the conversation (without railroading your players) by...

- Introducing a new element or idea to the game.
- Reminding players of something they might have forgotten or overlooked using an NPC.
- Suggesting possible actions, or forcing reactions to specific events.
- Calling for an action or reaction roll as a prompt.
- Encouraging a discussion about the crew's goals.
- Asking a player how their particular character is feeling, or what they think about a situation.
- Have an element of the scene elicit a reaction from a passenger or the undercrew.

The best times to use these techniques are when there's a lull in the story, or if the current scene feels like it's getting stale or losing a sense of narrative direction.

You can also utilize the above techniques as time-savers, pushing for resolution to a scene when you feel the players have gotten as much out of it as they can and you're eager for them to experience something else.

In these situations, though it's important to remember that while there may be a time limit on your session, there's not a clock running on enjoyment - for some groups, extended periods of in-character discussion are half the fun of being on a wildsailor crew.

Meta-Conversation

Not everything said during a game will be in character, or even related to the characters and their present situation. It's natural for a game, especially a fiction-focused game, to draw players into discussion concerning story elements, past events, and possible future plans.

Though it might feel like this kind of conversation should be kept to a minimum (and if it ends up being a distraction for the entire table, it could be argued that it should), these kind of exchanges can be just as telling as natural conversation when considering the wants and goals of the crew as a whole.

If meta-conversation repeatedly brings the table round to a particular plot or element, consider hinting at or including it in the near future.

Using Focus

Focus is your spotlight - shine it on what's important, what needs highlighting, what is in the dark and needs bringing into the light.

Directing Focus

When you begin a scene, montage, or journey, the focus will be on the environment as you describe it. From there onwards, the focus is fluid - one player might ask a question, another take an action, yet another state their opinion about something. The focus should flow from person to person, and character to character, through the natural progress of the conversation.

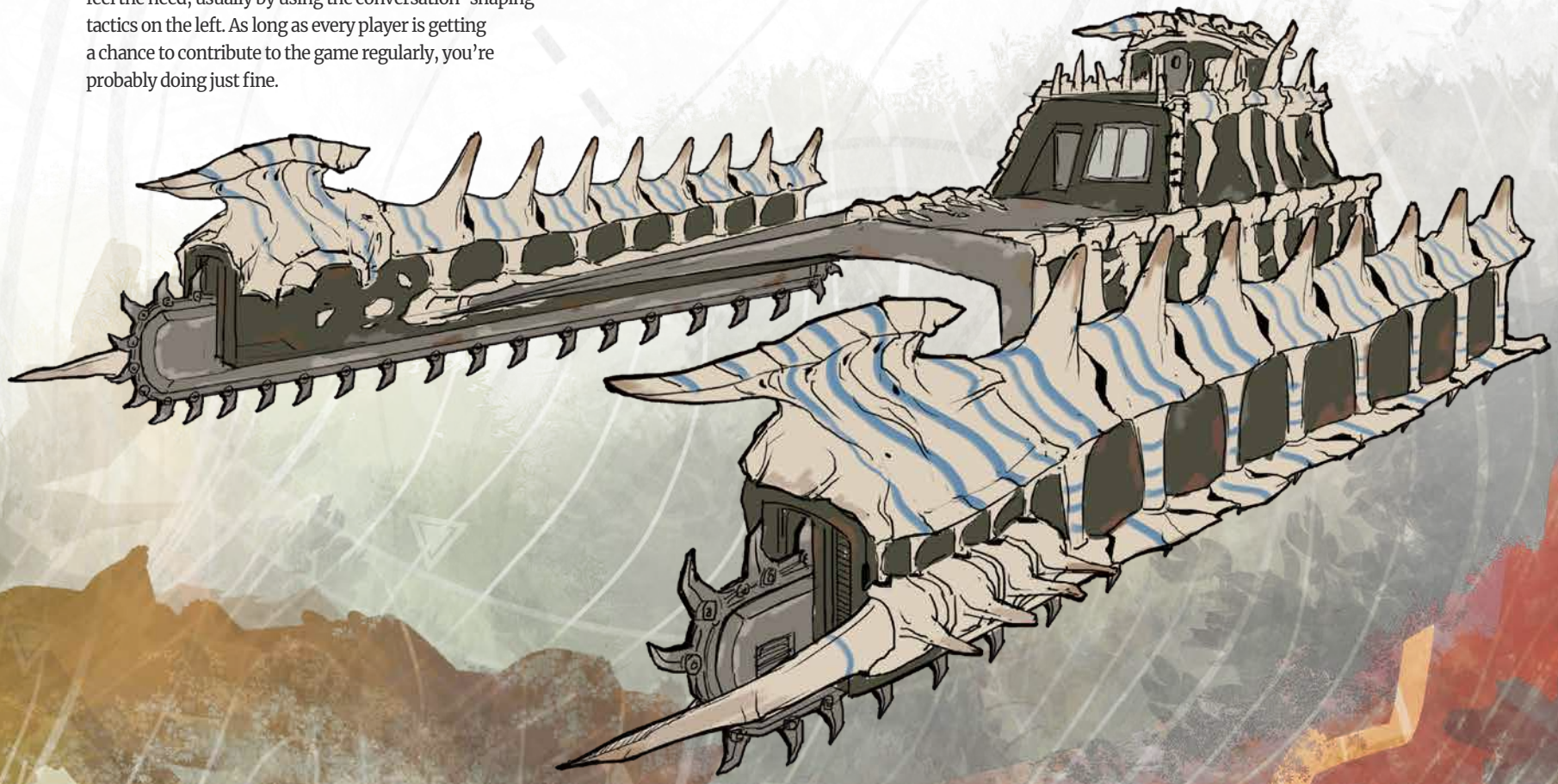
As the Firefly, you have the power to direct focus if you feel the need, usually by using the conversation-shaping tactics on the left. As long as every player is getting a chance to contribute to the game regularly, you're probably doing just fine.

The Focus Tracker

When the narrative turns dramatic (such as a during a fight, a chase, or an escape) you need to ensure that everyone gets their time in the spotlight. To this end, it's often useful to set a focus track, an easy way to track which characters have acted or reacted. Here's an example of a focus track, mid-combat - 'A' represents an action, 'R' a reaction. Keeping track of when players have acted or reacted allows you to easily shift the focus to them, keeping everyone's time in the spotlight roughly balanced even during a hectic period of action or narrative.

Kyllian: AR
Laura: ARA
Todd: A
Freya: RA

From the tracker you can see that Laura's had most of the focus, and that it should probably move to Todd to even things out (either by the Firefly specifically asking him for an action or forcing a reaction). Allowing every participating character the chance to act and react if possible should be the Firefly's goal during a dramatic scene.



Using Tracks

Tracks are an extremely versatile tool, and can be constructed quickly and easily in response to events. Whenever you need to measure progress of some kind, you should consider setting a track.

Set a track when...

- Counting down to a specific time or event, such as a festival or market day.
- You want to add granularity to an unfolding situation, such as an attempted ship hijacking.
- Building up to a deadly hazard, such as a rootquake or a stampede of wildsea beasts.
- Determining the staying power of enemies in combat, usually by counting damage to either their health or their morale.
- Measuring the changing attitudes of a faction or NPC towards the crew, such as a group of outsider hunters, slowly learning to trust.
- A character begins work on a project, such as the creation of a new piece of gear or training in a skill, aspect, or language.
- A character takes a lasting injury, either in combat or from an environmental hazard.

Track Length

The length of a track dramatically changes the impact it will have on the narrative of the game. The longer the track, the more time and effort it requires to fill and the more it will be at the forefront of the narrative. This goes for tracks that the crew have to fill themselves and for tracks that fill naturally due to the passing of time or world events - an unfilled track is a near-constant reminder that *something* is afoot.

So choosing the right length for a track is important, and it's something you'll have to get used to as the Firefly, because you'll likely be doing it a lot. No doubt it'll become second nature after a while, but until then, there's a good bit of general guidance you can follow...

If in Doubt, Choose Three

A three-box track is the easiest go-to for just about any situation. It's extremely unlikely to be filled by a single action or roll, but short enough that a couple of actions will knock it on the head. The achievable length means crews will often band together to fill it quickly, which can help bring direction and cohesion to a scene. And, for many people, it just feels right - three is a useful number after all.

Two or Fewer Boxes - A Reminder

It might seem tempting not to make a track at all that can likely be filled with a single good roll, but they do serve a purpose. A one or two-box track is more of a reminder than a challenge, so you should use them you want the crew to focus on something that they can't immediately effect - think of them as a kind of checklist for future events, a diary entry with a checkbox next to it, a textual representation of a goal, or an extra, crew-wide drive.

Four or More Boxes - A Challenge

Longer tracks are often a challenge to fill, and can dominate both the narrative and the creative focus of the crew's efforts. Use longer tracks when an event is going to take multiple scenes (or multiple sessions) to come to fruition, or when representing a particularly difficult obstacle or hazard that the crew will struggle to overcome in the short-term.

Open, Hidden or Secret?

When setting a track, one of the first things you should decide is how much you want the players to know. Should they be aware of how many boxes are on the track, of when those boxes get marked, or even of its existence in the first place?

An open track is a known quantity in more ways than one. It doesn't just set a ticking clock out for the players to see; it acts as a reminder that *something is happening.* Players are much more likely to focus their efforts on filling an open track because immediate feedback on how, when, and why it's marked means that open tracks are easier to work together and fill. Because of this, open tracks are extremely useful for marking character-driven plot or world developments (events that the players have direct agency in) and looming threats (as the players will have a constant reminder of the threat itself).

Hidden tracks work well for adding a dash of flair and mystery to proceedings. The very words 'Just so you know, I'm setting a track...' can be powerful in their own right - you've clued the players in that their actions are affecting something, usually in the current scene. Their attention may not be as constantly on it as an open track, but it provides a puzzle for them to solve as they play. What actions or events mark this track, and what is it building towards? You can also vary the information you give players for a hidden track, choosing to show or hide the name, number of boxes, amount of marks, or precise conditions of marking and clearing as the situation demands.

Secret tracks are, for the most part, just for you; a tool for the Firefly to keep accurate counts of certain things behind the scenes. There is the option of revealing a secret track at the moment of completion, making it clear that you've been paying attention to the crew's actions and marking it accordingly, but this doesn't work for every group. If it makes your players feel like you're trying to catch them out or punish them without their knowledge, avoid it.

Filling Tracks

When you set a track for something, you need to understand (and make clear to the other players at the table) whether the track is active or passively marked. You don't need to use those particular words - often context clues will be enough to put everyone on the same page.

Actively marked tracks require some kind of input or effort from the crew to advance - usually either time spent working on a related activity, a successful action or a sacrifice of resources.

For example, Hunting the Chameleocuda would be an actively marked track. The crew might mark it by studying chameleocuda habits, talking to other hunters, catching sight of the beast, and giving chase or setting traps and lures to bring it out of hiding.

Passively marked tracks fill in response to something outside of the crew's control, usually a world event. The crew might be able to mark or clear it themselves as well, but they won't be the primary driving force behind each mark.

For example, Festival Preparations could be a passively marked track. It might be marked when a large ship comes to harbour laden with supplies, when a local chef debuts their new street food ahead of the festivities, or when night falls on the town the day before the festival. It might also be marked by crew's efforts, such as them supplying bunting or trophies to the organizers, but the festival will be prepared for eventually whether they help out or not.

Mark Conditions

So how do players actually fill a track? Though it may feel odd, the best answer might very well be 'however they want to'. Signpost options, but don't specify.

Remember, tracks are goal-oriented. Though you probably have a rough idea of how the players will be marking or clearing the boxes on a track, don't just tell them what to do unless you really have to - half the fun of tracks is often working out how to fill them. Your players will often surprise you!

Breaks

When using longer tracks (five-nine boxes), it can be a good idea to split them into multiple shorter tracks by inserting 'breaks' - moments where filling a certain number of boxes causes a smaller effect. Here's an example...

The Oncoming Rootquake:

In the above track, marking the second box leads to a break - maybe the crew notice birds spiraling up, wildlife fleeing. Marking the next three boxes leads to another break, this time a warning tremble from below, perhaps a siren from a nearby spit of land. Then that final box brings the full effects of the rootquake.

Be sure to give players the opportunity to mark longer tracks in various ways. Don't just have them repeat the same sort of actions, as it quickly becomes both mechanically and narratively boring. If the players come up with a novel way of filling a track, let them give it a go - it means they're engaging with the problems and challenges presented by the scenario, and that can't be a bad thing.

Using Burn

Very few hazards or aspects detailed throughout this book are serious enough to burn tracks rather than simply mark them, but that doesn't mean you should avoid doling burn out from time to time, and certainly doesn't mean you shouldn't know how to deal with it as a Firefly.

Burning Tracks

As mentioned earlier, you can burn a progress track to show that the change you're making to it is permanent. This might come in the form of a symbol of lasting friendship, an inescapable countdown or signifier of permanent damage or decay.

When a character's aspect tracks or a ship's ratings are involved, burn usually represents damage that's incredibly hard (but not impossible) to undo. You might want to use burn when a leviathan deals a serious blow to an already-damaged track, or when the incoming damage relates to a character's marked mires or backstory in some way.

Removing Burn

Healing marks of damage is easy, relatively speaking, but healing burn should be much harder. You might let a character heal a burned box on one of their aspects (or on a ship's rating) by...

- Making a roll to heal using an appropriate piece of cargo rather than an appropriate resource
- Treating the burn as an injury or project, giving it its own track that must be healed box by box over time
- Visiting a portside surgeon and supplying not only resources for their treatment, but additional supplies for their other patients
- Undertaking a short quest or journey for a unique resource that's perfect for treating the damage that the burn represents

"It all happened so fast..."

The young marauder inclined his head absent-mindedly, focused on cleaning the leaf-pulp out of his pistol. There was a calm in the air, the kind of calm that only settles once violence has been done.

"That's usually how a fight goes, yeah. Not usually much time for thinking, just a lot of blade and bullet and back-and-forth."

Pistol cleaned, the marauder set it back in its holster and busied himself with the bodies. There were pockets to go through, satchels and sacks to upturn.

"How do you keep up with it?"

The engineer was shivering. In shock, most likely, but the blood on his jacket wasn't his.

"How do you... enjoy something like that? How is that just a... a part of your day?"

There was no answer to that. Or none the poor soul would be happy with, at any rate.

Using Action Rolls

Calling for a roll lets players know that the action they're taking has weight to it, and that failure in this situation will have consequences. As a rule of thumb, if a character is attempting something that has no consequences for failure, they shouldn't roll.

Players Roll Edge + Skill + Advantage When...

- They attempt an action that's difficult (convincing an NPC, climbing a wall), dangerous (engaging in combat, avoiding a trap), or dramatic (chasing down a target, sneaking to avoid detection).
- They work on a complex task or project, such as cooking or crafting.
- They want to acquire salvage or specimens.

Calling for Reactions

Call for a reaction roll when there's a threat that needs addressing immediately, such as an enemy attack, a direct question in a heated argument, or a trap being sprung.

In some situations, one player might not know how to react, but another wants their character to step in and help. This is entirely acceptable if it happens occasionally, but if it happens too often, it might lead to one player's character dominating the spotlight.

Other Rolls

Dice can be used to determine more than the results of actions.

Players Roll 1d6 When...

- They take a shift **on watch** during a journey.
- They determine the effectiveness of a friendly NPC's action.

Players Roll a Ship Rating When...

- The crew try to avoid or react to a hazard during a journey.

The Firefly Rolls 1d6 When...

- Determining the threat level of a watch result during a journey.
- An outcome of pure luck is needed, related to the environment or an ongoing event.

Positive and Negative Outcomes

While the actual results of a roll are split into **triumph**, **conflict**, and **disaster**, all this *really* means is that a roll can cause good things, bad things or a mixture of the two. The following lists are intended to help you as you work out the effects of a roll on the situation, giving both mechanical and narrative options to draw from once the numbers are on the table and the other players look to you for a description.

Positive

- An action goes exactly the way it was planned
- Not quite what was hoped for, but still good
- Aid an ally in achieving something
- Make future attempts easier
- Make future attempts automatically successful
- Avoid a negative outcome
- Gain information or understanding
- Reveal a secret or gain clues to a mystery
- Mark a track (twice if acting with high impact)
- Gain a resource of some kind
- Unexpected healing or relief
- Gain a bonus on a future plot-critical roll
- Deal damage or an effect

Negative

- An action fails to have the desired effect
- Exactly the opposite of what was hoped for
- Hinder future attempts at related activities
- A new threat or problem is introduced
- An existing problem becomes far worse
- Avoid a positive outcome
- Gain false or inaccurate information
- Clear a mark on a track (or mark a damaging track)
- Lose a resource or take damage to an aspect
- Mark mire or take an injury of some kind
- Worsen an existing injury or situation

Describing Actions & Outcomes

The amount of narrative control you'll have as a Firefly will partly depend on your group, and the style of storytelling they enjoy. This extends to the description of actions and how they affect the world – the wildsea 'standard' is for a player to describe the action and the Firefly to describe the result it has.

Give Up Control

Not every time, but from time to time, it's a good idea to give up control of the narrative entirely – put it in the hands and minds of the other players. One of the easiest ways to do this is to frame the results of an action as a **question** rather than a **statement** – rather than **telling** the crew what happens, **ask** them what happens instead.

This might come in the form of letting the player in question describe the narrative effects of their action but handling the mechanical outcomes as the Firefly. Some groups much prefer this, allowing them to focus entirely on the roleplay aspect rather than miring themselves in mechanics.

Make Disasters Memorable

In the average Wildsea game conflicts are common, which add elements of uncertainty or damage to proceedings, but actual disasters are rare. So when it does come up, a **disaster** result really should be *disastrous*. It's not just a failure in achieving something, it's a calamitous event that changes the track the narrative is running on. Hurt characters, foil plans, kill members of the undercrew, turn sure things into distant possibilities.

But while doing this, show some restraint. Be harsh, but not cruel – a **disaster** should be memorable as something that was terrible but eventually overcome, rather than something that logjammed an entire session.

Using Twists

Though technically part of the action roll itself, **twists** are one of the most versatile narrative elements you and the other players have at your disposal.

What Are Twists For?

For affecting the narrative in unexpected ways. These might be (and often are) beneficial in the moment, but some might be setting up an event for later and others may even be something inherently dangerous or negative, but narratively fitting or compelling. **Twists** are a great way for players to bring in their character quirks and histories, satisfy or work towards drives, or simply steer the story in a pleasing direction.

General Guidance

Rule zero for **twists** is purely an order of play concern – describe the action before handing over narrative control for the twist, at least as a common rule. Oftentimes the effects and description of the action itself can inform players as they try to think of an effective **twist**.

The first thing to remember with **twists** is that you're not alone – anyone at the table can contribute an idea for a potential **twist**, meaning you have the creative power of several minds working on the same element of the game (usually from different directions).

The second thing to remember is that **twists** don't have to be mechanical in nature, they can be purely narrative. The simplest form of a twist might just be adding an extra detail to a scene, giving a player some narrative agency over what their character caused.

The final thing to remember is that **twists** don't have to have an immediate effect. Feel free to 'bank' a **twist** for a player if nothing comes to mind in the moment, especially if the lack of an idea for a **twist** would slow the game down. Don't let them hold onto a **twist** for too long – that just becomes an extra thing to remember. But often an idea for a **twist** will come after you or another player have described the results and knock-on effects of the roll thast caused it.

Twist Examples

Here are a few common situations that players might roll for, and some examples of what a **twist** on that roll might cause. Use these as a template for creating **twists** of your own – all of the potential **twists** below can happen no matter the success or failure of the action described.

Exploring a Wreck

The crew are inside a creaking wreck, close to being consumed by the waves. One of the players rolls to make their way deeper into the dangerous structure...

- And encounters a living crewmember, close to death, a survivor of whatever wrecked the ship.
- And finds a resource among the trash on the floor.
- And discovers a bulkhead door twisted open.
- And hears ghostly echoes of the long-dead crew.
- And the ship begins to list alarmingly.
- And hears the horn of an approaching salvaging vessel ready to claim their prize.

Haggling with a Merchant

The merchant is driving a hard bargain, so one of the players rolls to make a final deal...

- And spots another item in the merchant's inventory that would be extremely useful.
- And notices a young thief about their business.
- And the merchant recognizes a family resemblance to another previous customer.
- And the merchant turns away, distracted.
- And the meeting bell begins to ring outside.
- And the merchant lets slip a secret or whisper.

Attacking a Wild Beast

It's a desperate attack, lashing out against a charging beast. The player rolls, and...

- Shears off or shakes loose a resource.
- Notices a hidden weak spot on the beast.
- Redirects the creature's charge, sending it headlong into a wall after it attacks.
- Sets up a perfect shot for another crewmate.
- Gets a flash of memory that helps them form a new plan to survive.
- Sees arrows pierce the creature from a newly-arrived NPC ally, eager to help.

Cut

Cut is most often used to represent difficulty, but that's a pretty nebulous term. Below is a quick breakdown of how best to apply cut to an action roll, based on both the circumstances and what the player is trying to achieve.

- Unusually difficult to achieve..... +1 cut
- Unusual approach/method ..... +1 cut
- Unfavourable environment..... +1 cut
- Impaired by an injury..... +1 cut
- Attacking a specific body part..... +1 cut
- Increasing an action's impact..... +1–2 cut

Make Cut Clear

When using cut to represent difficulty, tell the player before they've rolled (unless the difficulty is completely unexpected). This gives them the chance to alter their approach or intention if they want to. If you are going to spring cut on your players as a surprise, that can be effective... If used sparingly. Used too often, cut out-of-nowhere tends to be more of an annoyance than a dramatic tool.

Overcutting

If you're tempted as the Firefly to impose cuts of four or five dice, instead ask yourself: should the character really be able to do this? A cut this high can occasionally feel extremely dramatic, but more often than not will merely feel punishing.

Impact

At the most basic level, increasing impact affects an additional box on a track and decreasing impact affects one box fewer.

Impact can also be linked to more narrative outcomes. Climbing a cliffside with increased impact will be faster and smoother, whereas climbing that same cliffside with reduced impact will be arduous and likely to draw attention to the climber.

When acquiring a resource, higher impact increases the rarity of whatever is scrounged up (or adds a beneficial tag, if it's already rare). Lower impact decreases the rarity or adds a negative tag.

Scene Specifics

When introducing and managing a scene as the Firefly, you should focus on the following...

Interactivity

As you describe the beginning of a scene, make sure to include something to immediately engage the characters. This could be...

A Point of Interest: Anything from a feature of the landscape to an object or resource, points of interest give the characters something physical to interact with.

An NPC: This gives characters the option to engage in immediate questioning, fact-finding, or conversation. NPCs are one of the most effective ways to relay information to the crew without narrative-breaking descriptions or instructions.

An Immediate Choice: Usually in the form of a present danger or a time-sensitive situation, these choices help kick-start a scene quickly, getting the group right into the action.

A Character-Specific Moment: One of the quickest ways to get the action going is to thrust the focus on a particular character within the group. Use your knowledge of their background, skills, and aspects to help you here, such as pointing out something that one of their unique senses allows them to notice.

A Curiosity: The sea is vast and unknowable, and even the most well-travelled crews should run up against the unknown from time to time. This could be a new creature, an unfamiliar cultural practice, or a mysterious object.

Dynamics

Try to make it feel as though the world doesn't exist purely for the benefit of the crew. As scenes continue, especially longer scenes, highlight the actions of NPCs and wildlife in the area. This helps add character and gives the players more ideas for how their characters can interact with the world.

Atmosphere

Sounds, smells, the taste of the air... Setting a consistent and engaging atmosphere for a scene is important. You don't need to describe everything, that slips into 'purple prose' territory, but adding a dash of flavour every now and then can be a real help to the players. For example...

You make your way across the jetties to meet with the skiff's captain.

This is functional, but boring. If the players are itching for what's coming next it's absolutely fine, but if they don't know much about the location or situation, you should add some more details - something more like...

You make your way across the jetties, old wooden planks creaking beneath your feet. You can see the captain ahead, relaxing at the prow of her skiff with a shotgun slung lazily across one shoulder.

The second description not only adds to the atmosphere, it gives the players more possibilities to consider for the future (the jetty planks might be a hazard if a fight breaks out, and though the captain is obviously armed, she doesn't seem aggressive).

"There's only so many hits you can take like that, you know."

Motsje winced as the surgeon pulled the wound closed, alcohol-drenched fibres stinging. As the elderly ardent stepped back to admire her handiwork, Motsje gave the injured arm an experimental flex, grimacing.

"Maybe so... But I think I've got a bit more life left in me."

Hawthorne, the surgeon, peered at him over her spectacles.

"Most definitely you have, but blood is no less of a resource than amber or seeds, young man - lose enough of it and you're screwed."

"I'm a corsair, doc." Motsje stood, reaching carefully for his jacket and sabre. "If I don't bleed, you might have to."

Her backslap, though good-natured, sent him reeling.

"Said fair, said fair. Just don't let me see you here again, hey?"

"I'll do my very, very best."

Montage Specifics

As the Firefly, there are a variety of situations that can be easily handled with a montage. These include...

Peaceful Moments

Especially during journeys, time for relaxation and personal projects can be hard to come by out on the seas.

Exploring Ports

New areas of the wild are better explored with scenes, but when in ports (which are usually at least relatively safe), using a montage can help the crew feel confident enough to split up and cover more ground or engage their own in-character interests.

Mealtimes

A great way to encourage in-character conversation between the crew is to make a mealtime into a montage, especially if there's a char in the group.

After a Combat

There's a good chance that characters will be pretty beaten-up after a skirmish, with aspect tracks marked and fresh injuries. Having a montage in these moments serves a dual purpose, giving the crew a little time to recover and giving the players time to rest with a change of in-game pace after what was probably a frenetic scene.

Suggesting Tasks

Players will often have an idea of what kind of task would be useful for their character in any given moment (healing and working on a project are the two that crop up most often). That said, you should also be ready with some location-specific tasks to suggest just in case the players draw a blank. If they're in port, shopping, drinking, and mingling can all be useful sources of resources and information. If they're out on the sea, offer up a brief conversation with one of the undercrew or a passenger.

Handling Projects

As the Firefly, you have minimal input on the crew's projects, but there are still ways you can be involved. Keep track of the projects the characters are working on and, every now and then...

- Put a useful resource in their path.
- Let them mark off a box for free without spending a task, as a consequence of something they realize or encounter.
- Have them encounter an NPC with specialized knowledge of the kind of thing they're working on.
- Suggest how one of their crewmates might use their own skills or resources to help.

The Winter Megamontage

If you're playing in a long-running campaign and tracking the change of seasons (which we do recommend, as describing the changes that take place throughout the year can build a beautiful, evolving picture of a forested world), you'll eventually have to contend with winter.

On the one hand, the challenges of taking a ship out onto newly leafless waves might be an utter thrill (the constant threat of icy oblivion and tumbling, weak-branched death). On the other hand, that level of constant danger and isolation may just not fit the tone of your group. If that's the case, we recommend you suggest to the players that they pass the winter in true wildsailor fashion; by gathering as many lasting supplies as they can, finding a safe place to drop anchor (or a port willing to take them in) and weathering the cold months in safe, insulated boredom.

Of course, this would hardly be thrilling to play out. Instead we recommend a **megamontage** - giving each of the players the chance to undertake and complete several tasks at once, and maybe to start and fill a project without rolling. This takes care of the mechanical side of the winter months, ensuring that the players get some sense of character growth and can face spring with new tools and opportunities. On the narrative side, consider asking the players to each give you a story or two, of a time during the cold that they had a personal triumph or failure, or clashed with another member of the crew, or found something out that brought them closer to someone else on the ship.

Journey Specifics

The Journeys chapter gives a pretty complete overview of the tools you have in your arsenal, but there are a few extra bits of guidance here you can keep in mind...

Before Departure

Check with players whether there are any last things they want to do before they leave port. Establish any important journey conditions, such as weather and time of day. Describe their ship leaving port, and use this to reinforce a description of the waves themselves.

Setting Tracks

For most journeys, a simple Progress track is enough. If the sea is particularly dangerous or if the crew are being chased, a Risk track is also appropriate. If the passengers and undercrew are uneasy or in danger, or if the crew are carrying dangerous living cargo, a Riot track can be useful. Finally, if the crew are unsure of the specifics of their destination, a short Pathfinding track is a great way to mark their efforts in exploration or 'picking up a trail'.

Track Lengths

For a short journey (such as to a city satellite or outpost), use **2-4 boxes** for a Progress track. For an average journey anywhere between **4 and 8**, but **6** is probably the sweet spot. For long journeys, **anything more than 12** starts to feel like a slog.

The track is marked whenever the crew cut a path, or twice when they forge ahead. Feel free to mark additionally whenever they sacrifice exploration or engagement with an opportunity for speed - they're signalling to you that getting to their destination is important, respect that.

For Risk, Riot and Pathfinding tracks, 3 is often the ideal number of boxes. Three boxes gives time for some narrative build-up to whatever event they're counting towards, but doesn't give enough time to drag on.

Time

There are no set amounts of time associated with journeys, but it's a good idea as the Firefly to describe the passage of time to help players get a sense of the duration of their journey.

Landbound Journeys (Optional Rule)

The basics of the journey rules system can also be used to simulate landbound travel with very little change. This works well when the characters are salvaging a massive wreck, exploring a dungeon-like ruin, or even climbing an unexplored mountaintop or tallshank.

Progress tracks work just the same for land travel, but you might want to create a second track marking their dwindling supplies, especially if they're exploring a hostile environment.

Because the crew are away from their ship they can't make rating rolls - normal action rolls based on specific skills are a good substitute.

Setting the Pace

This replaces **taking the helm**, and allows a character to set the speed at which their crew moves. Slowly and reasonably safely (1 mark on the Progress track), or swiftly but with less time to react to events (2 marks on the Progress track).

Scouting Ahead

This replaces going **on watch**, allowing an individual to warn the rest of the crew about potential threats and opportunities. The watch roll results found in the Journey chapter work well for the most part too.

Stopping to Camp

Just like **dropping anchor**, this allows the crew to hunker down and get some rest in the form of a montage. Foraging for food using the Hunt or Harvest skills here is a good way to refill a Supply track, if you've made one.

Night (Optional Rule)

If you want the wildsea to be more dangerous at night, roll twice for the danger of encounters and take the lower result when the crew choose to travel in this way. Having night fall after every few encounters gives the crew time to drop anchor and take a montage without feeling like they're wasting time.

Rewards

An important tool used both to keep the narrative flowing and to keep player-facing mechanics fresh.

Hooks

An explicit narrative opportunity is one of the easiest rewards to give, but can still be very fulfilling. They can be given in response to overcoming social challenges, discovering new areas, and progressing or completing long-standing story arcs. You might give hooks in the form of...

- Information on the existence of a new location (sometimes accompanied with a chart).
- An opportunity to become embroiled in unfolding events that could benefit the crew.
- Knowledge of a specific treasure or resource they could attain.
- A piece of a mystery they've been working to solve.
- Tying unfolding events to a character's family or backstory.

Relationships

Similar to hooks, a positive relationship with an individual (or even a faction) can lead to more roleplay and story opportunities as a game progresses. Respecting cultural practices, doing favours, and speaking the right languages helps these bonds develop.

NPCs might be able to offer services, safe haven, or information, may correspond with crewmembers during long journeys and are also easily used to set up opportunities for future hooks and story opportunities.

Milestones

Minor milestones are used to increase skill and language ranks and to improve or personalize aspects. They work well as a reward for overcoming an important challenge or surviving a tough fight.

Major milestones are better used to add new aspects entirely, or to combine existing aspects, creating a unique aspect with a much longer track. Major milestones should be given out as rewards sparingly, only after completing an important story arc or barely surviving an extremely tough encounter.

Resources

Perhaps the type of reward most often given, resources help to reveal truths about the wildsea just as much as they offer unique opportunities when players consider their actions. Each of the four resource types is given out in different situations - here's a quick run-down.

Salvage is the typical reward for scavenging at sea, especially if there are wrecks or ruins in the vicinity. Salvage might also be given to the crew as a gift after they've performed a service or in trade for other resources while bartering. Most ports will have some sort of market, where low-quality salvage can be easily obtained.

Rarer salvage might also act as a 'treasure' to be found deep within larger ruins, or dredged up from the lower levels of the sea.

Specimens of low quality can be easily plucked from the waves during a journey, but better specimens will likely be given as a reward for taking down dangerous wildsea beasts and plants (taken from the corpses or stolen mid-fight using the Hunt or Harvest skills). Most ports and settlements will also offer basic supplies that can be used in cooking, brewing, or medicine.

Rarer specimens come from more powerful creatures, and from heading down into the more dangerous and lesser-travelled parts of the sea.

Whispers represent living information, and should be given as a reward when the crew witness or learn something of the deeper truths of the wildsea. They can also be obtained through trade, exploration, or swapping secrets about the distant waves.

Charts are perhaps the easiest resource to give, as their acquisition and usage are comparatively limited. Reward the crew with charts in situations where they've earned the favour of other wildsailors, or have had time to study the ways of the waves. They can also be a great reward for delving into shipwrecks.

Cargo

Think of cargo as a super-resource, a large bundle of useful materials with excellent barter value. Cargo can be pulled from the holds of wrecked ships, picked up at ports as a reward for helping their denizens, or even created by the crew over time with a project.

Cargo might be swapped for extremely rare resources, but its real power is trade with portside workshops. Think of a unit of cargo as equal to a single stake when it comes to adding to a ship.

Benefits

Miscellaneous benefits, often gained by eating meals, having a good rest, or ingesting unusual chemicals.

A benefit might do something as simple as clear a point of mire or heal a mark on a damaged track, but there are far more possibilities - one of the best way to use a benefit is by giving the character a short (1-3 box) temporary track. This can either act as an additional damage soak in combat, or have an associated aspect-like effect. Whenever the benefit is used, have the player mark its track. When the track is fully marked, the benefit is gone.

Consequences

Just as important as rewards, the consequences of plunging into danger and failed plans can be harsh.

Unforeseen Troubles

A great use of hidden tracks, usually in response to a failed action. Tell the crew that you've started a track, but don't tell them the name or how it's marked - let it worry them, and reveal the details once (or if) the track is ever fully marked. This is a great way to add granularity, or the feeling of increasing danger, to any of the other consequences listed here.

Mire

Don't forget the psychological! Usually the consequence of seeing (or doing) something horrific, or perhaps just spending too long away from the comfort of civilization.

When you inflict mire, the players choose which of their mires to mark.

Don't mark mire too often for the characters to be able to recover - once or twice a session should be your maximum. The roleplay effects of marked mire can add spice to the way a character is played, but that effect is lost if the player feels constantly trapped by them.

Effects

Nowhere near as punishing as damage, most effects either change the narrative positioning of a character (such as having them knocked down, swallowed, or held), reduce their senses (such as blinding or deafening them) or make them cut when performing certain actions.

Injuries

Think of an injury as a lasting effect - a negative the character has to live with until it's healed.

When you deal an injury to a character, ask them to make a track for it. This track can be marked with successful healing, and when it's fully marked, the injury is healed and the track is removed.

It's up to both the Firefly and the injured player to bring the injury's effects into the narrative.

Vendettas

Earning the enmity of an NPC once helpful or friendly, or making a recurring nemesis out of an existing enemy, can be an extremely narratively useful consequence.

Make sure to reincorporate these NPCs and nemeses into the future arcs and stories of the crew. Not every time - that's too predictable. Just enough to remind them that the threat is there, and they'll need to deal with it sometime.

Damage

Usually taken when a character fails to avoid an attack or trap of some sort, but can also be dealt as a consequence of any failed roll in a potentially hostile environment.

When dealing damage it should usually be up to the player as to which track they mark. The exception to this is when they're using a particular aspect to add advantage to their roll - in these cases, feel free to direct damage to that aspect in particular.

There are four levels of damage a character can take, depending on the severity of the situation.

1-2 damage is appropriate for most environmental hazards and failed attacks. Most characters can brush this off without too much worry.

3-4 damage is appropriate from a serious environmental hazard, for a normal enemy's more damaging attacks, or for an elite enemy's basic attacks. This might fully mark a track for a character not suited to combat.

5-6 damage should be reserved for an elite creature's strongest attacks, and should only be used once or twice per combat. When applying this level of damage, make it dramatic and memorable. This will likely max out an entire track from any character unless they have resistance of some kind.

Massive damage is dealt by deck weapons and the attacks of leviathans. Massive damage fully marks a track, and in addition will either burn a box on that track or cause an additional injury.

The captain had been against it, as had most of the crew, but Ulfij knew that if they were going to keep their ship on the right side of the canopy, they'd have to bring in a little more scratch. And, he'd reasoned with them, what better way to do so than to take on a few passengers?

Though, looking at the array of individuals waiting to board the Gyrewing Fault for its next crossing, he was beginning to feel a little worm of doubt turn in his carapace.

That ektus there, with the violet blossoms and the untrimmed spines, was definitely running from something. He could tell by the way their petals twitched at every stevedore's cry. And the ardent twins with their mound of packages, beards down to their ankles and fresh blood under their fingernails, well, they were hardly the least foreboding sorts. And the gau who smelled a little too sweet, and the wingless mothryn corsair...

He avoided the captain's glare as he welcomed them on board.

Creating NPCs

A solid and understandable NPC can be an incredible tool to influence narrative and deliver in-world information, and is usually fun to play to boot.

There are two broad types of NPC you'll likely find yourself using while running a game of the Wildsea - **incidental** and **integral**.

Incidental NPCs

The trader that takes a load of home-honey off of your hands when you reach port. The street children that innocently drop a secret as they pass. The dispossessed pirate drinking at the bar, ready to spill their tale of woe for the right amount of liquid encouragement. These NPCs can all be categorized as incidental - with enough character and use to make them memorable, but without the need of too many details in their creation. They're one-use, most likely, and though they may affect the story by their actions, they'll likely rarely have an effect merely because of their presence.

Though 'incidental' can easily read as 'unimportant', try to avoid that trap - a good NPC should be memorable, no matter how long they stick around. Try to ensure that there's at least one distinct thing about any NPC you introduce, something that you (and the other players) can reference if they ever come up in conversation at the table. You can add individuality to an incidental NPC by...

- Giving them a distinctive physical feature (such as a piece of clothing or hard-won scar - the merchant with the three-coloured scarf, or the gau with the ancient hat, or the seven-fingered marauder).
- Giving them a distinctive descriptive presence (such as a particular smell or repeating quirk of their behaviour - the paprika-scented priest, or the child with the trembling lip).
- Giving them a distinctive character voice (allowing players to imitate it when they bring that character to mind, or allowing you to jog their memory with a few words in that voice yourself).

Integral NPCs

These are the NPCs that are, as you might have guessed, integral to the world that the characters are experiencing. That said, it's probably best to start with a few things to keep in mind about what an integral character *isn't*, rather than what one *is*...

- **Integral Doesn't Mean Omnipresent**

An NPC being integral doesn't mean they have to have a strong effect on the narrative, it merely means they have a repeated presence in it. The ship's cat, a surly ratter of advancing years, may not ever affect the story that the crew are pursuing in any way, but will likely turn up often in scenes on deck and be fondly remembered once the game is over.

- **Integral Doesn't Mean Verbose**

NPCs engaging in dialogue with the other characters can be a fantastic way to deliver information, discover opinions, bring certain topics into the limelight and so on, but no NPC should be inserting their thoughts and opinions into every conversation.

- **Integral Doesn't Mean Important**

A game of the Wildsea is, at its heart, about the story of the crew - it's the players that should be driving that story, not an NPC. While an NPC may be a catalyst for the plot, the crew should never be put into the position of just 'following' the whims of a single integral NPC. Player agency is important, and as the Firefly you have the opportunity to throw yourself into the storytelling and action in a variety of ways - you don't need a stand-in player character to get that kind of interaction.

So What Are Integral NPCs?

Put simply, they're the NPCs that provide a strong connection between the crew and the rest of the world. They're a reference point and a source of information, an element of the world that can (usually) be relied on for a certain type of knowledge, resource, or experience, a repeating point even during an ever-changing story.

Naming NPCs

Most NPCs, whether integral or incidental, can be quickly thrown together by choosing a bloodline, profession, and distinguishing feature. While an NPC made this way will likely benefit from some development during play, those bare bones will have them ready to be introduced to the crew...

... Until you're asked for a name.

This is the moment that a lot of GMs dread, unusual in that it rarely gets any easier despite its frequency.

The easy way out is to ask the players to name new NPCs, but this may be a little too meta for some tables. So, as a catch-all resource, the first page of the appendix (page 337) contains a table of naming components specifically created to suit the main languages of the Wildsea. For each name, choose between one and four syllabic components, string them together, and say them with confidence! Pronunciation will become standardized at your table after a while, so don't worry too much about the specifics.

Collaborative NPC Generation

"There's a figure on the docks as your ship draws near, one that catches your eye immediately. This is, without a doubt, the contact you've been sent here to meet... What do you notice about them?"

Questions like the one above put the onus of creating certain aspects of an NPC on the crew as a whole. This suits some tables and is entirely abhorrent to others - you'll find your own level of engagement as you play. Some crews will happily fill in the interesting details of an NPC and leave it to you to name and play them, other might want every aspect of a newly introduced NPC to be a surprise.

Creating Resources

You'll likely be handing out a lot of resources throughout play, and will often have to come up with them on the fly (because how were you to know that the crew's dredger was going to overturn the table and find a secret compartment in the floor with their twist?).

Creating Salvage or Specimens

Both salvage and specimens are highly dependent on location - where the crew is physically searching is the biggest determining factor in what they find. A bookcase will likely contain books, the storeroom of a local arms dealer weapons and weapon-making materials. If the crew are acquiring specimens by rendering a creature or harvesting a plant, give them the most interesting parts of that plant or creature. Why give them a scrap of pinwolf fur when a corkscrew tongue is up for grabs? Keep your salvage and specimen offerings logical and interesting, and don't be afraid to ask a player what they wanted or hoped to find as they searched.

Creating Whispers

As mentioned before, the best way to create a whisper is just to come up with a few words, or a very short phrase, that hints at mysterious or greater things. Keep possibilities open - whispers are barely constrained to begin with, so as long as the name triggers a player's creativity you're doing just fine.

Creating Charts

By their very nature, charts are the easiest resource to create. You choose a type of informational medium, such as a logbook, map, stone tablet, or scrap of paper, and you add a qualifier that tells the players a little more about it. It might be something descriptive, like mentioning that the chart in question is water-logged, moss-eaten or faded. It could be a hint as to what kind of directions it contains, or the topography it describes. It could even just be a colour, or a shape - players might not know what kind of place 'A Triangular Chart' might lead them, but even that small detail gives them some space to work with.

Pre-Made Resources

Over the next few pages you'll find a more detailed description of the various layers of the sea, including some sample locations for each layer. Each of those locations has a set of pre-made resources that you can hand out in a pinch, just to make your life a little easier.

Helping with Whispers

Whispers are at once the easiest and hardest to use of the Wildsea's resources. Easy to use because, well, they can do just about anything... and hard to use for the very same reason.

When a player's character gains a whisper, that player might (especially if they're new to the Wild Words Engine) ask you what they can do with it. The answer to this depends on how your group treats whispers as a whole...

If they're **living words that change reality when spoken**, they can do just about anything with it. Give them a couple of examples, including one they won't expect (the whisper 'A Gathering Storm' might cause stormclouds to appear, for example, but could just as easily be used to signal the timely approach of an unexpected fleet). And a whisper might affect the character themselves instead of thw world - a whisper might allow a character to temporarily gain a new sense, or to open their mind up to hidden information, or to fly.

If they're a **meta-resource,** less arconautic/spiritual and more just a way of bringing in 'unexpected' events, keep the examples more grounded. 'A Gathering Storm' might still relate to an unexpected fleet, but it won't let a character spit lightning and speak thunder.

The Skies

Most easily accessed by those who have an airship (or a sturdy cliffside and some climbing equipment), the skies are an open expanse of tearing winds and glorious leafless freedom.

Why Would You Go There?

Though the skies have their own hazards and potential disasters to be dealt with, they're of a different sort to those found at canopy-level. Altitude is one of the only things that can grant a measure of true safety from the beasts and spirits of the rustling waves, and it grants a unique perspective as well; height is a potential boon to **pathfinding** and **cartography**, allowing a wildsailor to get a clearer view of the leafy topography below.

Never underestimate the yearning of those trapped on the ground to achieve the air.

Potential Hooks

- A kitesailor is miles off course after being dragged by a living storm, and needs help getting home.
- An explosion of bird and insect life streams past the crew, all heading in the same direction - are they rushing toward or away from something?
- A distant flare-burst lights up the clouds in patterns of hope or warning.
- A sudden increase in pressure - stormclouds rush to encircle the crew.
- The crew find a floating wreck, a dirigible with cold engines and a leaking gasbag. The crew are nowhere in sight, but they could hardly just have stepped out.
- The ship's engine begins to whine and groan, ice forming on the pipework. Where did this sudden cold snap come from?
- Rumours of dashing sky-pirates abound, like something from a spectacular pre-verdant storybook.
- A trail of scent and spores on the breeze, the sheddings of some massive airborne leviathan.

Potential Encounters

- An ironjaw ray towing a storm in its wake
- A host of flying squirrels acting as a swarm
- Carnivorous vines crawling along a cliffside
- An unmoored lionsmane, drifting on the breeze
- A shrike with a wickedly sharp beak diving toward the crew
- A redfeather strix crawling along the branches of a tallshank
- A dirigible merchant with an honour guard in tow
- A kitesailor strapped with explosives
- A whip-crack of wind that tears at scarves and trinkets, pushing ships off course and making climbing treacherous
- A living storm circling an isolated colony like a hungry animal
- Swift insects and their droning companions
- Castaways pinned to the heavens

Describing the Skies (from a Secure Position)

The expanse of the skies can be breathtaking in the best way, giving a true view of the rustling waves as they stretch from horizon to horizon. It's from this position that the crew will realize just how much variety there is to the waves, the peaks and troughs they travel through thrown into stark relief by their position and the true immensity of the world-forest now impossible to ignore.

Sight: Clouds scudding by, or below. A vast emptiness below, giving way to untamed waves. Shades of green, striations of leaf and branch. The v-shaped wakes of distant ships.
Smell: Fresh, clean air, untainted by spores and pollen. A metallic tang if you're high enough. A harsh note of gas from an airship's balloon.
Touch: The wind, grabbing coat-tails and jackets and scarves. Damp beading on skin from a passing cloud. The warmth of the sun, unhindered by canopy-shade.
Taste: Blissful nothingness, not a hint of the usual dense flavours of the waves.
Sound: The cawing of crows, and the honking of distant gulls. The whistle and sigh of the wind. The loud drone of insects brave enough to head this high.

Infravision: The ability to see heat might allow a sailor to see updraughts and zephyrs, turning the otherwise open sky to a subtle flow of colour.

Describing the Skies (from a Perilous Position)

The sky itself can be clear or threatening, but the yawning void below - that empty space between a wildsailor and the waves they usually call home - carries an inherent threat. There's nothing to grab if you fall, nothing to slow you, nothing to break your descent but the cruel branches of the waves far below.

Sight: A gathering storm that threatens to engulf in inky darkness. A terrifying drop to land or, even worse, to the untamed sea.
Smell: Ozone in the air, threatening a lightning-storm. An updraught of choking spores from far below. The fear that comes with a hint of woodsmoke on the breeze.
Touch: Wind buffeting clothes and bodies, making footing unstable and snatching chaff and fragment away.
Taste: A sharp metal tang on the air. A dry mouth, the result of vertigo. Vomit, hastily swallowed back.
Sound: The endless rustle below. The endless howl around you. The endless silence above.

Ferrosight: A terrifying sense to rely on when high above the waves, away from the scrap and detritus that usually speckles your vision. Ferrosight gives you nothing when you're up in the skies, nothing but an absence of sensation.

Tallshank Branches (Location)

Sturdy, widespread branches ringing the upper portions of a tallshank. When colonized, these branches are converted to winding, haphazardly-roped streets bristling with buildings, near-permanently shaded by the surrounding leaves. Uncolonized, the unique ecosystem of each individual tallshank ensures a steady flow of avian, mammal, and insect life. *Getting up to the branches of a tallshank can be a challenge in itself, but it does usually provide refuge from sea-level dangers. Consider using a tallshank as an easily visible waypoint in unfamiliar territory, or as a safehouse or stronghold in a dangerous area.*

Sample Resources

Salvage: Canvas Scraps, Dirigible Wreckage
Specimens: Shank Bark/Leaves, Unusual Bird
Whispers: Crowned and Proud, Taller than Average
Charts: Scraped Bark Map, Long-Sight Sketches
Cargo: Crates of Shank-Fruit, Airship Components

Airship (Location)

Nowhere near as common as wavebound ships, airships are expensive to create and difficult to run in the harsh winds of the open sky. That said, they're also incredibly useful, acting as safe and mobile platforms from which to observe the goings-on of the world below, or to rain hell down upon it. *Airship crews rarely land as much as they would like to - consider having them eager to trade for wave-level news and equally eager to pass on letters for distant friends.*

Sample Resources

Salvage: Gasbag Stitching, Empty Canister, Quadruple-Wound Ropes
Specimens: Vertiform Rat, Old Salted Meat
Whispers: Clouds as Waves, Shadow Passing Over
Charts: An Opened Letter, A Telescopic Reckoning
Cargo: Gas Cylinders, A Folded Gasbag

Cliffside Colony (Location)

Wherever there's solid stone, the wildsea's inhabitants will find a way to build there. Most cliffside colonies are sprawling networks of creaking wood, with little difference between street and bridge. With stable horizontal areas limited, houses and stores are built vertically, clinging to the cliffside and linked by manual elevators and ropeways swinging in the wind. More ambitious settlers tunnel into the cliff itself, hollowing out cool, dark spaces away from the constant bustle of the waves below. *Cliffside colonies usually run from sea-level upwards, making them far easier to gain access to than other sky-based settlements. Many of them also utilize the clifftops for animal grazing and breeding spaces.*

Sample Resources

Salvage: Frayed Bridge-Ropes, Mountain Fragments
Specimens: Mutton, Cave Fungus
Whispers: Tunnels and Crawlways, Long Way Down
Charts: Observation Tower Notes, A Clifftop Sketch
Cargo: Unworked Stone, Mountain Rams, Barrels of Aged Ale

Unbounded Stone (Location)

A thematic cousin of sailing stones, chunks of rock or ruin that move slowly through the thrash or tangle. Unbounded stones usually float due to the magnetic ores they contain, or curiously buoyant plantlife growing through and around them. *Unbounded stones are just as likely to be settled as any other solid ground on the wildsea, though rarely by sensible sorts.*

Sample Resources

Salvage: Abandoned Grapple, Magnetic Ore
Specimens: Gas-Filled Bulb, Sailing Moss
Whispers: Limitless Rising, Slow Like a Storm
Charts: A Stone-Top Snapograph
Cargo: Ore-Riddled Stone

Tracking the Skies

When the crew are exploring the skies, consider setting one of the following tracks...

Lurking in the Clouds ○-○-○-○

Something or someone is waiting in the clouds. Start a track. Each time you mark it, reveal a detail about the mystery. When the track is full, the mystery makes itself known. Mark this track to have it appear immediately.

Migratory Flock ○-○-○-○

A large number of creatures are flying through this part of the skies. Start a track. When the track is full, the creatures come upon the group.

Fish Out of Water ○-○-○

Something that has no business being in the sky is there all the same. Mark this track to have it pose an immediate threat.

Descent ○-○-○

Something important is falling out of the skies, reminding all who see it of a meteorite. Mark this track to have something important to the party fall.

Spore Clouds ○-○-○

The oncoming clouds are not made of water vapor, but some kind of spores produced by skyreach toadstools. These spore clouds could have any number of effects.

Dancing Lights ○-○-○-○-○

There are lights that seem to dance and shimmer in the sky. Some say this is a physical phenomenon, others, spectral. Regardless, they are a sign of things to come.

The Thrash

The most travelled layer of the six-layered sea, the thrash sits light and wind-swept between sky and tangle. Comprised mostly of springy wavetops, fields of leaves, and the occasional spit or mountain-top island, travelling through the thrash without getting the ship snagged on any of the larger branches is every ship-hand's first challenge.

Why Would You Go There?

Well, in most cases you wouldn't really have a choice. The average wildsea ship is designed to cut through the thrash, its hull resting on the tangle below, and the vast majority of settlements sit on this layer of the sea as well. In many ways, travelling the thrash is the 'default' for an adventure on the wildsea, especially one where the crew don't have access to airships or submersible equipment.

And, while the thrash may have its share of dangers and hazards, it's infinitely safer than the layers below.

Potential Hooks

- A merchant ship's crew waving flags in greeting, unaware of the threat in their wake.
- The crew stumble upon new channels cut through the thrash, with crowded boats arranged either side of them - are they spectators to some sort of race?
- A nearby ruin shudders as the ship draws near, dust cascading down its flanks.
- The undercrew are fractious and worried - it feels like you've been hunted for days, but there's no sign of any kind of pursuer.
- A signpost out in the wild, miles from any kind of settlement. You'd probably never have noticed it if you hadn't run straight into it.
- An infestation of insects rampaging through the ship, hungry little mandibles latching onto anything they can find.
- A marauder vessel clips your hull as they speed past, without even bothering to fire a warning shot. Where are they going in such a hurry?

Potential Encounters

- A brace of springfoxes leaping from branch to branch, darting in and out of the wavetops like copper-and-gold fish
- A leviathan sunning itself for a moment before retreating beneath
- A pangoska gnawing at a recently broken branch
- Predatory plants hunting squirrels and cicadas
- A shrike with a wickedly sharp beak diving toward the crew
- A crew of sailors marooned on a stout branch
- A colony built onto a slab of wave-trapped stone
- A trading ship greeting you with coloured flares
- A fallen tallshank, now its own unique ecosystem
- A roachriver, black and glistening and right in the path of the ship
- Spirits and fireflies flitting in the halflight
- A marauder's ship bearing down upon you

Describing the Thrash (from a Secure Position)

The sight of the thrash is perhaps one of the few commonalities among wildsea denizens of all kinds; who hasn't looked out over the rustling waves from their ship's deck or dockside stall or cliffside tower?

Sight: An endless field of leaves swaying and rustling in the wind. Ships passing by, their bites churning up plumes of leaf-pulp and splinters. Branches breaking and growing again, new shoots appearing within minutes in the wake of destruction.
Smell: The warm, leafy smell of nature, as fresh as the first day of a pre-verdant spring. The various exhausts of passing ships. A hint of crezzerin when the wind blows just right, sweet and dangerous. Split fruits and the musk of beasts.
Touch: Dappled shade and bands of warmth as a ship passes under sparse branches above. The paper-texture of old leaves. Stings and bites and spore-blisters if a ship idles too long in one place.
Taste: Fresh air, new fruit, sweat and tar and oil. Sap and freshly-cut wood. Spores.
Sound: The ever-present rustle of the waves, leaf on leaf and branch on branch. Ship engines and the calls of beasts and insects as they hunt. Chattering crewmates.

Ghostsight: The waves here are a constant churn of tiny spirits, insects, and mammals snapped up, their ghosts rising from the leaves and dissipating in the sunlight.

Describing the Thrash (from a Perilous Position)

What greater horror could there be than the open waves, stretching from horizon to horizon, every inch of them hiding miles more in depth and any part a landmine of crezzer-touched growth?

Sight: A ship's wake abruptly ended, but no ship in sight. A churning of leaves and branches as beasts fight below. A flicker of light in the darkness that stops your heart - could that be a spark, a candle, a wild flame? Sporeclouds drifting.
Smell: Overwhelming and potent, all the scents of the underthrash rising up to encircle a ship as it rests at anchor. The sickly smell of crezzerin turned to mist as the leaves holding it are threshed. Blood and sweat, the hunter's bouquet.
Touch: The searing pain of crezzerin on bare skin. Spores clogging the throat, taking root. A sharp pain and uncomfortable numbness as one of the sea's larger insects takes aim at you with one of a thousand kinds of venom.
Taste: A wet fullness of spores. Uncooked meat and spoiled fruit. Insect matter.
Sound: The roar of beasts from deeper below. An engine stalling. Branches breaking.

Tremorsense: The world is in constant motion here, between ships and beasts and wind and growth. An overwhelming confusion, stretching as far around as can be sensed.

Ship (Location)

It's nearly impossible to accurately describe a notional wildsea ship, given the huge variety of designs and fittings that are common across various reaches and territories. That said, there are similarities of function and design that hold true for at least most vessels - controls, an exposed deck area, a bite, a hull and an engine. *The crews of wildsea ships are as varied as the ships themselves - some come to raid, others to trade, others to salvage, and others simply to explore. Meeting another ship out at sea is always going to be a gamble, based on the mood of the ship's crew and the situation they find themselves in.*

Sample Resources

Salvage: Engine Parts, Metal Fragments, Broadwood Timber, Pressed Oilfruit
Specimens: Ship-Roaches, Hull-Side Fungus
Whispers: Out on the Waves, A Chance Meeting
Charts: A Ship-Captain's Log, A Carefully Annotated Chart
Cargo: Packaged Munitions, Salted Meat in Barrels, Crates of Pure Fruit, Piles of Wreckage

Spit (Location)

Close-packed and ramshackle, most spits are a bundle of contradiction and paradox - their known temporary nature means few set down roots there that can't be quickly torn up, but their lack of space encourages complex networks of street and dwelling. *Some spits are little more than a cluster of tents on some old stone, others wooden buildings and cobbled streets sunk in earthen foundations, yet others clusters of rusting wrecks shackled to the mass of a fallen ironroot's trunk.*

Sample Resources

Salvage: Rough Cobblestone, Newspaper Ink
Specimens: Gutter-Roach, Roof-Corner Weeds, A Slink's Treasure
Whispers: Permanently Impermanent
Charts: A Scratched-Out Map, A Child's First Chart
Cargo: Thoroughbred Longhorns, A Crate of Scaffolding Pipes, Bricks and Mortar

Mesa or Mountaintop (Location)

Representing the only large areas of solid stone found above the canopy, these once-towering geographical features are now reduced to mere islands in the thrash. Ownership over mesas and mountaintops comes with an impressive amount of social power, their permanent nature making them perfect ports for weathering even the strongest rootquakes. *Ridgebacks, the owners of the first-colonized mesas and mountaintop islands, tend to live sparsely and brutally thanks to their years of suffering in the wake of the Verdancy. More recently claimed stone serves as the basis for heirloom farm networks or sprawling smoke-wreathed cityports.*

Sample Resources

Salvage: Mountain-Shard, Raw Iron
Specimens: Animal Horn, Goat Pelt, Heirloom Seeds
Whispers: Flame Without Fear, A Commanding View
Charts: A Pre-Verdant Text
Cargo: Thoroughbred Longhorns, Chiselled Stone Blocks, Ore for Smelting

Parasite Farm (Location)

Built around small solid areas amid verdant waves, parasite farms use alchemically-treated produce that can root itself in the branches of the ironroots nearest the surface. Harvests are perilous, even in these more organized areas of the sea, and parasite farmers often use small raft-like outriders or long-legged stilts and hooks to collect their produce once it's ready. *Driving a ship through a parasite farm is considered extremely rude, even if accidental.*

Sample Resources

Salvage: Broken Trellis, Clouded Amber-Glass Pane
Specimens: Oka Berries, Wormapple, Fist-Sized Aphid
Whispers: Order from Chaos
Charts: A Scrawled Almanac, A Growing-Zone Map
Cargo: Parasite Sapling, Crates of Fresh Produce

Tracking the Thrash

When the crew are exploring the thrash, consider setting one of the following tracks...

Shifting Weather ○-○-○-○

The weather is as much a force to reckon with as the leaves. For a wildsailor, the weather must be considered as much as the leaves. Change the weather on the sea.

Perilous Waves ○-○-○-○-○

The waves churn and roil, halting progress until the problem can be solved. Start a track. Mark the track when action is taken to deal with the danger. When the track is full, the danger no longer poses an immediate threat.

Unusual Sanctuary ○-○-○-○-○

A structure of unfamiliar origin and purpose is peeking up through the thrash.

That's No Leaf ○-○-○-○

Something that appears as a plant - a leaf, a vine, a fruit - is anything but. Start a track. When it is full, the true form reveals itself.

Arconautic Scenery ○-○-○-○-○

A section of the thrash doesn't obey typical natural laws. Strange growth, peculiar gravity, and spectral interference have made this place weird.

Predator and Prey ○-○-○-○-○

You are being hunted by something. Be it person, beast, or leviathan, you are marked. Start a track. When it is full, the predator launches its attack. Mark this aspect to have it attack immediately.

The Tangle

A liminal space between the inhabitable and the inhospitable, the tangle is the deepest most wildsailors will ever travel (and even then they'll rarely stay long). Branches and vines as far as the eye can see, insects and spores coating every surface, and the leaves and mosses soaked through with crezzerin.

The tangle supports larger creatures just as well as it does the hulls of wildsea ships, and is the place most leviathans come to hunt for their food (though they tend to dwell in lower layers).

There are settlements and signs of civilization in the tangle, but these are rare; usually the barricaded lower levels of spits, or pressure-sealed enclave-ports. Far more common are wrecks and unclaimed ruins, teetering on the edge of slipping down to one of the lower layers of playing nest to one of the tangle's many predators.

Potential Hooks

- Spores drifting across the deck are having an unusual effect on some of the gau crewmembers.
- A work-crew trying frantically to repair their stopped ship as night falls, desperate to regain the surface.
- A marauder checkpoint waves you through without question, their crossbows lowered and smiles on their faces.
- The food in your galley spoils far more quickly than it should - decay, for some reason, runs rampant here.
- You find a tunnel cut into the tangle, leading to the sloping maw of a rift. There are signs that many ships have used it recently.
- An octodew's tendrils wrap around the hull, but it doesn't squeeze - instead, it looks like it might be hitching a ride.
- The throaty roar of an engine gone feral... There's a mawship in the area.

Potential Encounters

- A pinwolf pack nesting in a ruined ship's hull
- Lemurs swinging from branch to branch, pausing to watch a ship as it cuts its way by
- A mass of insects in a vaguely humanesque form
- A proto-leviathan, the larval form of some great insect writhing among forked branches
- The corpses of wildsailors, wrapped gently in vines
- Leaf-shawled dancers engaged in a ritual duel
- A mangled kitesail covered in mysterious slime
- Wildcats sleeping on wide branches
- A trader's ship with navapede limbs winding its way through the shadows
- An ancient, moss-covered collection of stones
- A leviathan on the hunt, signalled by the sudden panicked flight of all other endemic creatures

Describing the Tangle (from a Secure Position)

A cosseting network of branches and vines below the ship's hull, a realm of ruins and salvage, predators and potential. Or, when you dive, a realm of warmth and woodrot surrounding the ship on all sides.

Sight: Glimpses of strong, proud boughs below. Swarms of insects glowing in the half-dark. The whipping tails of beasts as they hunt or hide.
Smell: Fresh crezzerin and tree sap. Pheromones that stuff up the nose, an endless cycle of life. Fruit juice and spices on the breeze, and the sweat of the undercrew as they work in the warmth.
Touch: Branches and leaves all around the ship, pressing up against the hull and sweeping the deck as you move. Insects crawling over exposed skin. Thick coatings of spores on the portholes.
Taste: Old wood, wet with warmth. Any fruit you could imagine, and their bitter peels.
Sound: Navigator's calling out course corrections. The whoop and roar of distant beasts. The rustle of the leaves is quieter down here, away from the wind, but omnipresent.

Infravision: The blanket of leaves that makes up the tangle traps heat, but blocks out sunlight. Some areas are uncomfortably hot, others more chill than expected, but all of them alive with constant movement as insects and animals go about their lives.

Describing the Tangle (from a Perilous Position)

The tangle is thick enough to seem like a floor beneath the ship in places, but it's an illusion - the greenery accepts a hull, but hungrily swallows anything smaller that goes over the rail.

Sight: Areas of murk or shade, unnaturally dark despite your proximity to the surface. Ironwood trunks split by fungal funnels, pumping out spores.
Smell: Mold, mulch, damp and decay, a humid cocktail of cyclical death. The sweet scent of predatory plants and their digestive juices.
Touch: A sting of crezzersear, not from every leaf-edge or stray twig, but from any of them. Insect bites and crawling horrors. Hot breath on your neck.
Taste: Spores clogging the back of your throat. Rancid meat from a stolen kill. Over-ripe fruit that burns the teeth.
Sound: Of predator and prey, though chases rarely last for long. An engine labouring to drive an over-worked bite. Crew spitting, quiet, tense as they watch the mass of leaves above, beside, and below them.

Hullsight: Like a constant pressure on the eye, everything in the world pushing up against you from all sides.

Ruin (Location)

Dredged up by a rootquake, or by the natural growth of the ironroots, ruins are most often fragments of pre-verdant architecture solid enough to survive its ascension in roughly one piece. *A lot of ruins are settled by beasts or insects as soon as they're deposited in the tangle. They're valuable sources of pre-Verdant material, especially stone, but rarely easy to find or gain access to reliably.*

Sample Resources

Salvage: Ancient Machine Parts, Broken Sculpture
Specimens: Snapperpillar Eggs, Nest Fragments, Stone-Grown Mold, Eyeless Spider
Whispers: A Risen Darkness, Unearthed Memories
Charts: A Pictographic Slab, A Book in Highvin
Cargo: A Shipment of Old Stone, Reclaimed Glass, a Captured Snapperpillar

Old Wreck (Location)

Most wildsea ships that leave port reach their destination, even if they take some damage or lose a crewmember or two along the way. But most is not all, and when a ship is overcome (by pirates, or beasts, or disease, or mire) it's slowly swallowed by the waves, sinking to rest in the cradle of the tangle. *Old wrecks are unlikely to contain survivors, but many will bear signs of those last crew that were trapped aboard as the ship was consumed by the hungry waves.*

Sample Resources

Salvage: Empty Firefly Lantern, Engine Parts
Specimens: Pemmican Biscuits, Companion's Skull
Whispers: Echoes of Past Journeys, Stopped for Good
Charts: An Annotated Chart, A Torn Logbook
Cargo: Abandoned Crates, Rotten Cargo of Rare Fruits, Barrels of Spice and Honey

Reef (Location)

Though the wildsea has no traditional tides, there are areas of directed growth and prevailing winds, odd pockets and stretches that tear at ships with uncommon viciousness. These are the likeliest areas to find a reef, an agglomeration of ship-parts and salvage crushed and tangled together. *Some reefs are sparse, a sprawl of salvage throughout the waves. Others are far more dense, almost an island in themselves. Whatever the size, reefs tend to have their own miniature ecosystems, especially in terms of insects and small mammals – the tight spaces among the salvage make an excellent hiding spot from larger predators.*

Sample Resources

Salvage: Unrecognisable Part, Rusted Cog, Broken Mast, Drained Ceramic Battery
Specimens: Unique Reef-Beetle, Rust-Coloured Slug
Whispers: Pulling Together, Treacherous Waves
Charts: Undertow Exploration Sketches, Half-Plotted Reef Map
Cargo: Unique Insect Terrarium, Crate of Reef-Metal, Ancient Engine

Low-Port (Location)

A rarity on the waves due to the inherent danger, a low-port is an area of habitation only accessible from the tangle. Most of them are built around the remains of a leviathan or a solidly held ruin, but a few are constructed entirely from scratch to take advantage of a particular natural resource. *Though typical wildsea ships can usually access a low-port, it's much easier for those unusual vessels kitted out with submersible shells.*

Sample Resources

Salvage: Ventilator Tubing, Thick Sporescarf
Specimens: Jar of Fireflies, Whiteberry Sprig
Whispers: Just Beneath the Surface
Charts: Rift Documentation, Luminous Street-Map
Cargo: Crate of Surface Trinkets, Massive Ceramic Battery

Tracking the Tangle

When the crew are exploring the tangle, consider setting one of the following tracks...

Up From Beneath ○-○-○-○

Something from a lower level of the sea is rising. Start a track. Mark the track each time signs of the thing can be noticed. When the track is full, the thing emerges.

No Way Forward ○-○-○-○-○

The way forward is blocked by vines, insects, spore, or some combination of these and other things. Start a track. Mark the track each time an action is taken to address the danger. When the track is full, the danger has been overcome.

No Bread Crumbs ○-○-○-○-○

The way you came is obscured. There is no going back the way you came. Apply cut when trying to return to where you came from, or backtrack.

Teeming with Life ○-○-○-○

A great number of creatures and beasts live in the tangle. More than a few of them have taken notice of your presence. Start a track. When it is full, a great number of creatures emerge and pose a threat to the group. Mark this aspect to have them appear immediately.

Disembodied Voice ○-○-○-○-○

Some believe that the dead descend to the thrash where they remain in perpetuity. What you believe is besides the point, because you can hear the voices now. Some possible sources: ghosts, hunters, something capable of mimicry.

Updraft ○-○-○-○-○

A burst of hot air from deep within the sea comes up, shaking branches and knocking things free. On occasion, these updrafts bring other mysteries up with it. For a prolonged event, create a track. When it is full, the updraft subsides.

The Sink and the Drown

The fourth and fifth layer of the wild world, both of them rarely ever visited by all but the most foolhardy and tenacious wildsailors. The sink and the drown are similar in terms of ecosystems and findings, separated only by the amount of branches a ship has to work with - travelling through the sink is mechanically far easier, despite the ever-present threat of leviathan-sized predators and rift-like channels of emptiness, but moving through the drown can be difficult due to the sparse sections becoming more and more pronounced the deeper a ship goes, what few branches remain fast becoming too light or brittle to hold up a hull.

Still, crews don't travel that deep for because it's easy. The sink and the drown are the last levels a wreck or treasure can be caught on before the emptiness of the Under-Eaves, and because they're so rarely visited by scavengers and explorers, there are fables of incredible treasures and arcane technologies to be found... If you can avoid becoming the prey of something monstrous.

Potential Hooks

- The crew were contracted by a wealthy merchant to reclaim the cargo of a lost trading vessel. They've tracked it to here, and opened the hold - amber glints in the lamplight.
- A rift cuts down from the surface to the sink, at an angle that's steep but still just safe enough to sail.
- Word reaches the crew of a newly discovered settlement lashed to the trunk of an ironroot, within the drown. What secrets and novelties might be found there?
- A leviathan crow grabs the ship, dragging it down to the sink and depositing it in its nest along with its eggs. They are about to hatch.
- A black-market trade in a mind-numbing spice is tracked to a deep sap-drilling rig.

Potential Encounters

- A swarm of insects in the dark, roaches crawling over the railings or fireflies resting on the prow
- A sporecloud dense enough to block out the light from your own lamps
- A sliding glimpse of scales or fur or exposed bone as a leviathan crashes past you within spitting distance
- An empty space - no branches, no beasts, no insects to speak of
- A wreck caught in a fork of branches
- A massive mantis hanging still and patient beneath a branch, eyes focused on the ship and its crew
- A single deeps-diver, attached by a long cable to the canopy far, far above

Describing the Sink / Drown (from a Secure Position)

If a crew has travelled this deep it's most often by design - their ship will be kitted out with submersible equipment, their decks protected from predators, their lights primed and ready to fight the heavy green darkness that pervades both layers.

Sight: Massive branches criss-crossing, their leaves wan from a lack of light. Holes, empty spaces between those branches, becoming wider and more pronounced the deeper a crew travels. The spores or leaving of massive predators used to the permanent darkness, thankfully elsewhere. Wrecks untouched by anything but time.
Smell: Dust, sap, and lush leaves. Pheromones and chemical bursts from unknown creatures, promising novelty and discovery.
Touch: The rough bark of an ironroot, a safe insulator for the crezzerin running within. A chitinous exoskeleton, shed and ripe for plunder.
Taste: Preserved supplies from sunken ships. Bark-stewed tea as you huddle in the galley to pass a night. Fruit and spices that few have ever tasted.
Sound: A peaceful absence of wind and movement - this may be the first time some wildsailors have ever heard true silence.

Infravision: Huge heat-sources shadowed by cold branches, allowing you to see predators far before they might be able to see you.

Describing the Sink / Drown (from a Perilous Position)

Why are you here? What madness drove you to delve so deep? You're aware, you must be, that most who keep diving through these layers never return. Not through a lack of will, but through a lack of ability - the sink draws everything downwards, and when you reach the drown you're considered lost to the world above. May as well keep going to the Under-Eaves and finish your journey as fate expects.

Sight: Holes in the canopy that threaten to swallow your ship. The wrecks of other vessels that made it down this far, but never managed to head back up to the surface. A madly rolling eye caught in your ship's lights - you are noticed.
Smell: The wafting up of vapours from below, the smell of a place none should ever reach now far closer than it should be. Crezzer-rich blood spilled in some titanic battle.
Touch: Branches shuddering beneath your ship as they struggle to hold up the hull. Leaves too papery and pale - you are reaching the lowest places.
Taste: Fruits that have never felt the sun. Bone-broth from less fortunate explorers.
Sound: Silence, oppressive and overwhelming - the only rustles here are those caused by predators moving in the darkness, there is no wind to stir the waves.

Normal Sight: Nothing without a light source of your own - what is lurking in the darkness, and how will it sense you?

Teetering Wreckage (Location)

The sink is thick enough to sail or cut through without a problem, as long as you're careful, but the drown takes a hold of ships and rarely lets them return skyward. Uncountable vessels meet their ends in the drown, either by exploring too deeply or being wrecked above and sifted down through the layers until they teeter, unstable, at the precipice of the last long fall. *Teetering wrecks are unstable by nature - like spits, they will all fall eventually. Movement on their decks and in their holds will make them fall much faster, so crews exploring them either have to be very careful or very quick.*

Sample Resources

Salvage: Preserved Wreckage
Specimens: Salted Meats, Mummified Crew Parts
Whispers: We All Fall Eventually, No Way Back
Charts: Chart From the Earliest Days, Illegible Map
Cargo: Abandoned Sail, Moss-Furred Crates

Nest (Location)

There are few small birds down in the drown, but the sink is alive with them - huge amounts of insect life comes with a commensurate increase in the creatures that thrive on them. Even the smallest birds band together when building homes, fortified nests to keep various predators at bay. Some are the size of a wagon... some more like fortresses. *Nests are usually comprised of broken branches and salvage materials stolen from wrecks, but some birds are odd even by wildsea standards - you might find a nest of clay and cuckoo-spit, or animals bones and oddly-tanned hides, or a hundred ship's bells tied together with faded ribbon.*

Sample Resources

Salvage: Old Rigging, Canvas Scraps, Ship's Bell
Specimens: Hand-Sized Egg, Woven Branches
Whispers: Life Finds Space
Charts: A Shredded Logbook
Cargo: Clutch of Enormous Eggs

Hollow Trunk (Location)

Safer by far than dwellings built onto the branches this deep, the few individuals that choose to make their settlements down in the sink or drown are more likely to bore into the interior of an ironroot and hollow themselves out a protected space. *Hollow-trunk living comes with a threat of crezzerin contamination, which is stronger and more hazardous the lower down the depths the dwelling sits. The most prepared trunk-dwellers line their hollows with protective material and find ways to pump clean air down from the canopy far above.*

Sample Resources

Salvage: Carven Idol, Leaf-Rubber Seals, Rusted Diver's Helmet
Specimens: Heartswood Pulp
Whispers: Dark and Safe, Hollow Home
Charts: Intertrunk Transit Map
Cargo: Bundle of Tubing

Leviathan Skeleton (Location)

The sink and drown are where leviathans live, yes, but they're also where leviathans tend to die. Perhaps of age, perhaps predation, a leviathan corpse fuels the ecosystem of the lower waves with meat and shelter for weeks, sometimes even months. *And when the carrion-creatures are done, the bones are left strung throughout the branches as an eerie reminder that even the deadliest foes lack immortality.*

Sample Resources

Salvage: Broken Weapon, Bent Harpoon
Specimens: Leviathan Tooth, Marrow Segment
Whispers: Never Forgotten, Inside the Belly
Charts: Ribcage Manifest, Deeps-Diver's Log
Cargo: An Intact Leviathan Bone

Tracking the Sink & the Drown

When the crew are exploring the sink or the drown, consider setting one of the following tracks...

These Leaves Tell Stories ○-○-○-○-○

The sparse leaves and thin branches tell a story like constellations in the sky. These stories are told to anybody who takes the time to listen.

Precarious Landing ○-○-○

Some kind of structure has either descended from above, or crawled up from below. Regardless, it hangs from the branches, hiding secrets. Start a track. When it is full, the structure will fall from its perch. Mark this aspect to have the structure fall at any time.

From Shadows ○-○-○-○

Something hunts from the shadows. It gives the occasional sign of its presence - a rustling of leaves, slow breaths, the beating of a heart. Start a track. When it is full, the thing is revealed. Mark this aspect to have it emerge immediately.

Familiar Face ○-○-○

Someone appears who knows, or is familiar, with at least one person in the crew. Like with anything else, it has no business being here. Then again, neither do you.

Vivid Memories ○-○-○-○-○

The growth here remembers pre-verdant times. Mark this aspect to have a pre-verdant memory play itself out like a movie. Whether it happens in the external world, or just in the minds of the observer, is unclear.

Dancing Lights ○-○-○-○-○

There are lights that seem to dance and shimmer in the darkness below. Some say this is a physical phenomenon, others, spectral. Regardless, they are a sign of things to come. Mark this aspect to have something else join the lights.

The Darkness-Under-Eaves

How to describe the roots of the new world, that eternal darkness where they twist around the ruins of the old? What is down there, truly, and how can you talk about it?

The first thing to say about it is that crews probably shouldn't go there, at least not by choice. There's a reason we don't detail the creatures that might live there or the fragments of civilization that might have survived. The Darkness-Under-Eaves is something akin to hell, a place that lost things go and nothing ever comes back from.

A place of memories, slowly fading.

A place even leviathans avoid.

So... What Is Down There?

This is something we don't define, and this is by design. The true nature of the Darkness-Under-Eaves is one of the wildsea's greatest mysteries, and we encourage any group that makes their way down there (a monumental task in and of itself) to flex their creative muscles at the table and define the truth of it together.

But despite stopping short of defining it outright, we do have some ideas. Nothing concrete, nothing you should rely on, and definitely nothing that could capture the true nature of the deeper darkness, but they might be helpful in loosely defining what you might find down there. Use these as jumping-off points - they may be true, they may be rumour, they may be ideas so wrong as to be dangerous. When you travel to the deepest parts of the world, you might find...

A Cold and Lonely Place

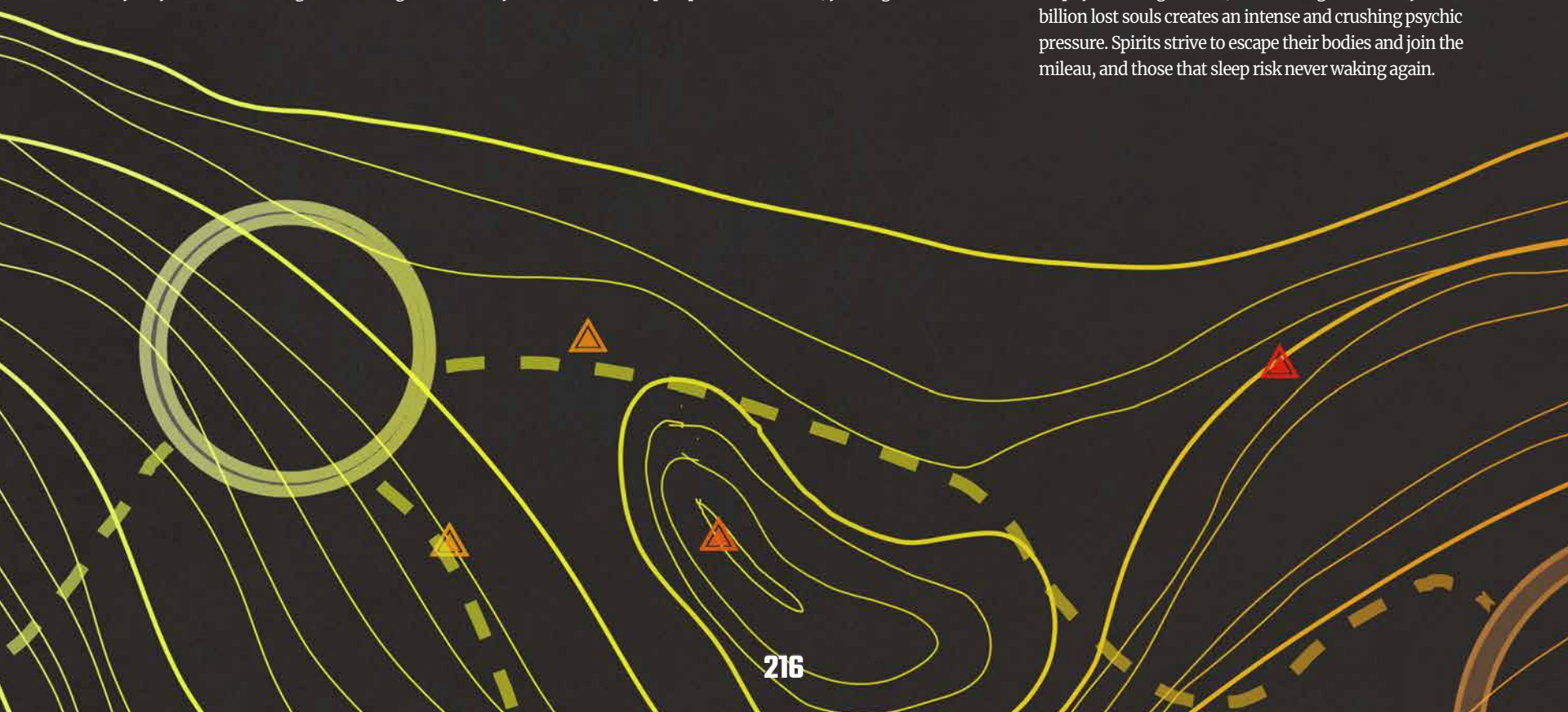
Untouched by sunlight and coated in dust and dried mosses. The roots have drunk more than the seas and the fields of the pre-verdant era, they've drunk every shred of life from this place. Nothing moves, and nothing ever will again - the crew move through the darkness like thieves in a mortuary.

Low-Level Colonies

A thriving civilization of the lightless and left-behind, communities building into and around the roots and living with a superstitious fear of the ground that betrayed and cast them off. They survive on the scraps that fall from the canopy far above, a society of salvagers and wreck-workers in the pitch black.

Sleepless Graves

A place both haunted and haunting, a world-spanning graveyard of spirits and blue-tailed fireflies. There are no physical dangers here, but the weight of history and a billion lost souls creates an intense and crushing psychic pressure. Spirits strive to escape their bodies and join the mileau, and those that sleep risk never waking again.



Paradise Lost

Though the Verdancy was violent, it was nowhere near as destructive as those wavetop survivors expected. While it's true that cities were torn apart and the traditional ways of life became untenable, civilization limped on... And before long, flourished. An odd flourishing down there in the new cold depths, but a flourishing all the same.

The Crush

The ironroots have eaten away at whatever earth remained, uncovering layer after layer of ruin and relic and lost civilization. While the Eaves are still a dangerous place, that danger comes more from collapse than it does any antagonistic force. Every shift of the roots breaks more walls and uncovers more sub-layers, exposes ages forgotten many hundreds of years before the arrival of the new wild waves.

Here Be Monsters

The roots of the world are steeped in crezzerin, lakes of the stuff, that drive the wildsea's rapid growth. But that's not all they drive - the Under-Eaves is the birthplace of leviathans, crezzer-contaminated creatures that never stop growing, and can never quell their hunger.

CHAPTER 10
HAZARDS

"There's a kind of... circle thing to it, y'know?" The old wildsailor's pipe traced shapes in the air as she tried to illustrate her point, mantle flexing around her shoulders. "Like, the worms eat the fruits, and the wolves eat the worms, and then we eat the wolves, and..."

"Turn them into fruit?" The navigator's tone betrayed a certain level of disbelief, and an even higher level of intoxication. His ketra companion's brow furrowed.

"Maybe? I mean, in the grand scheme of things? But yeah, it's a circle. Or a round thing, what are they called, an eclipse!"

"Ellipse," the barkeep murmured, though neither of them heard him.

"Anyway, any, anyway... All I'm saying is we have to be outside of that eclipse. You don't want to be a part of the food chain. And it's... Well, it's a big chain."

Hazards Entries

Hazards are intended to challenge the crew for the duration of a scene or journey encounter. Most will require multiple actions, or a full-scale skirmish to bypass, but some simply need the crew to make a choice as to how they get handled.

Basic and Complex Hazards

Basic hazards give only the barest essentials of information - a name, a quick description, and a few bullet points describing the hazard's important aspects. This suits how they should be used in session, as a useful thing to throw into a game for colour or flavour. Every section of this chapter starts off with a page of basic hazards for you to use.

Elite hazards have a lot more information to them, giving you as the Firefly all the information you'll need to involve them as the main focus of a scene, encounter, or perhaps even a small arc of a campaign. An elite hazard entry contains..

Name & Description

The hazard's name and a brief descriptive overview, along with guidance in italics on why or when you might want to use it in one of your games.

Drives

If a hazard has some kind of intelligence or agency it'll come packaged with one or more drives, giving you some information on what it wants or how it might act during an encounter.

Presence

The presence section is split into various senses, allowing you to describe what the crew experience as the hazard draws near or engages them.

Resources

A small section that details the salvage, specimens, charts, and whispers the crew might obtain after defeating or surviving their encounter (if the hazard is a creature these are usually gathered by butchering its corpse).

Aspects

The standard aspects that define a hazard, the ones that knowledgeable characters would expect to have to deal with. A hazard's aspects also contain the damage type it can deal and any effects it forces on the crew as they contend with it.

Quirks

Unusual or unique aspects that can catch even the most seasoned wildsailors by surprise. Using quirks is entirely optional - they can spice up an encounter with something the crew think they have the measure of, or be used to distinguish between several different creatures encountered at the same time. Try not to use too many at once.

Hooks & Encounters

A few of the more 'iconic' hazards have a section showing sample encounters, or ways you can work them into a session.

Special Extras

... And some hazards also come with their own little something extra, unique to them. This might be an extra set of rules or information, a specific location you can use that relates to them, or additional possibilities based on how they might act or appear during a session.

Using Hazards

Once you've decided what hazard the crew are going to encounter, you need to figure out how best to use them. In some situations you can get away with the most simple approach: 'The Lion's Mane levers itself up onto the deck out of the waves, rattling menacingly'. Boom, the crew have to deal with a Lion's Mane. But there's usually a little more to it than that...

Focus, Actions & Reactions

Hazards should have the focus multiple times throughout an encounter, and every time they take it they should be doing something different with it. This doesn't always have to force a reaction from one of the crew - when a hazard takes the focus it could also be affecting the environment or moving to a new area within its location. *As a general rule, have a hazard do one big thing and one small thing for every volley of actions from the crew.*

Damage & Effects

Major hazards should be dealing damage and effects regularly while they're active. As a general guide, intersperse lower levels of damage (1-2) with the occasional hit of 3-4, and once or twice during the encounter have the hazard deal a 5-6 as punishment for a poor tactical decision or a particularly unlucky roll.

Do the same kind of thing with effects where you can - some low-impact effects that are more narrative than mechanical (such as altering the environment or forcing a change of position for one of the crew) interspersed with the occasional higher-impact effect. You can also hand out lasting injuries from time to time, again usually in response to a botched attempt at evading damage.

Make these huge instances of damage, high-impact effects, and lasting injuries as memorable as they are rare. A hazard that constantly deals difficult-to-manage damage or effects quickly feels like a slog for all but the most battle-hardened crews.

Hazard Tracks & Limits

There are two major ways to handle tracks for an encounter with a hazard, and you might find yourself using one, the other, or a mixture of the two depending on how your group approaches potentially dangerous situations. But before you choose which to use, you should set a **limit** for the encounter.

Limits

A limit is an overall number of boxes you can split between a hazard's tracks. The higher the limit you set yourself, the longer (and likely harder) the encounter will be. As a general guide...

- A limit of 3-6 boxes will give a quick hazard (a few good hits or strategic moves will mark all the boxes).
- A limit of 7-12 boxes will give a more serious hazard (something that can weather a few blows and has more time to harry the crew).
- A limit of 13-20 boxes will give you a hazard with some serious staying power (where behaviour or abilities change as various tracks are fully marked).
- A limit of 21 boxes or more should be reserved for leviathans, extremely complex encounters, or re-occurring / multi-stage hazards.

Once you've set your limit for the encounter, choose whether you're using **Damage tracks** or **Strategy tracks**.

Damage Tracks

Perfect for crews that love a good fight, these are tied to a hazard's aspects (and any active quirks). Attacks against the hazard mark boxes on these tracks, and when a track is fully marked, the hazard loses access to the associated aspect. When all boxes are marked, the hazard is defeated (killed, rendered harmless, or driven back, whichever is narratively appropriate). Weaker aspects should have between 1 and 3 boxes, more durable aspects 3-6.

***Example**: Theo wants to surprise his crew with a pinwolf attack. He sets a limit of 12, to make it a serious hazard, then allocates those boxes to the pinwolf's aspects - Pin Limbs gets 4, Corkscrew Tongue gets 2, Staccato Movement 2 and Armoured Hide 4. When the crew attack, Theo will mark damage on these tracks.*

Strategy Tracks

Focused on putting the strategies of the players first rather than relying on their damage, this method works better for crews that approach a hazard as a problem to be solved rather than an obstacle to be crushed.

When using strategy tracks, decide your limit at the start of an encounter like normal, but **don't pre-make any tracks**. Instead, wait for the crew to devise and try to execute a particular strategy and make a track for that - the more effective the strategy, the shorter the track. This allows crews to attempt various approaches at once, avoiding more specialized crewmembers being left out of a particular type of encounter.

***Example**: Theo's crew go for a few different approaches to the pinwolf's threat, so Theo makes tracks for each of them as they're discussed. Attacking the Limbs gets 3 boxes, and can be marked by damage. Masking your Scent gets 2 boxes - it's a great idea that might give advantage throughout the rest of the combat. Cut the Tongue gets 2 boxes and their overall goal, Driving it Away, gets 5 boxes.*

Every time a track fills, represent it with a change in the hazard's behaviour or threat as normal. When a track that would naturally end the encounter (such as 'Driving it Away' from the example above) or when a number of boxes equal to the hazard's limit are filled, the encounter is over. This can end an encounter before the limit is reached, a reward for clever strategic approaches.

Mixing Tracks

You should always feel free to mix approaches. Having a limit helps keep the game moving along at a good pace, and a mixture of strategy tracks for clever play and damage tracks for going all-in keeps an encounter dynamic.

You might also want to use timer tracks to count up to a particularly devastating attack or event, such as the arrival of a new ship full of marauders, the ultimate attack of a titanic creature, or the final rolling thunder of a rootquake. When you mark this track, narrate the build-up - this gives the crew time to consider the approaching danger.

Creating New Hazards

You should also feel free to create new basic and elite hazards that suit your style of play - focus on a single idea that works for the tone of the world that you've set up, or maybe take a throwaway comment from one of the players in a previous session and spin it into a hazard to challenge them with in the future.

1. Start with a Concept

When creating a new hazard, start by focusing on the concept; everything else (the aspects, the presence, even the resources) will flow out from there. If your concept ties in to something about the crew or their ship, even better. You're making a unique hazard, so you may as well go the extra mile and make it perfectly suited to challenge your group.

***Example**: Theo wants to make a new hazard to challenge the crew of the Northern Wind. Two of them are ironbound and one's an anchored ektus, so he decides something that interacts with spirits would be good. After a few minutes of consideration, he has his concept; a predatory plant that intoxicates exposed souls.*

2. Fill in the Aspects

The concept you come up with should inform a hazard's aspects pretty effectively. Take the most interesting parts of the concept and turn them into rules you can rely on, mechanically or narratively. Once those are done, fill in the aspects that aren't as interesting, but might still be useful (such as weaknesses and resistances, or methods of movement).

Example: Theo hones in on the soul-affecting effects for his first two aspects, as he knows that'll be a unique challenge for the crew; he creates the aspect Spectral Intoxicant to describe the plant's method of luring prey, and Drink the Drunken to specify the range and damage type of some soul-snaring tendrils. Once that's done, he adds Petrified Petals to give the plant an immunity to Salt damage (sensible if it feeds on ghosts) and then adds an extra line to the Drink the Drunken aspect, making it clear that the plant both moves around and eats with the same tendrils.

3. Everything Else

Once the concept and aspects are nailed down, fill in the rest of what you need. You likely won't have to write out too much, especially if the hazard is only expected to appear once, but some notes on name, presence, and resources are often helpful.

***Example**: Theo names his new predatory plant the Ghostnectar Pitcher, adds a couple of resources based on the intoxicating brew it contains and the petrified petals surrounding it, and then writes a few notes to remind himself of what senses to evoke when introducing it in play - the smell of sweet wine (for the anchored and ironbound crew) and sharp acid (for everyone else), the stone-like petals flexing slowly without a breeze, the barely-heard scratching of fragmented, half-digested souls.*

Challenge, Don't Overwhelm

New hazards should be made to pose a credible threat or interesting encounter for the crew, not designed to completely destroy them. Don't just check the crew's damage types and then make your new hazard immune to them, for example - it'll feel cheap, and will likely drain the fun out of an encounter at the very beginning.

Forces of Nature

The elemental forces of the Wildsea - weather, wind, and branches untamed. Though the sea itself is essentially one large force of nature, the hazards presented here are particular oddities or singular dangers, the kinds of thing that make a crew straighten up and take notice... or that catch them unawares.

Forces of Nature in Play

Most forces of nature work best as a condition to go along with other things that are happening, a kind of backdrop to the rest of a scene or a brief interruption or complication to a journey or period of exploration. Focus on the **changes** that they bring as they affect a scene - the difference in behaviour of the local wildlife, the complexity they might add to simple tasks and actions taken whilst sailing. You might also use them to inform the players of the **competency** of the NPCs around them - a passenger that runs for shelter and something to hold onto in the middle of a rootquake is likely to take far less attention than one who stands on deck to watch the waves churn around them.

Branch-Sway

A ceaseless natural phenomenon, the shifting and swaying of branches throughout the thrash and tangle is driven partly by high-altitude winds, and partly by the excess of life contained in the ironroots' offshoots. *While not always a hazard, branches shifting in the wrong way can turn an otherwise simple wavewalk into a potential disaster.*

High-Altitude Winds

The air of the wildsea is rarely still, at least up on the surface. The wavetops sit high enough that high-altitude winds are a part of everyday life, but they can also occasionally become a problem in their own right. *When the winds gather enough force behind them they can make traversal far more treacherous, especially for those moving outside of a ship. Impose cut on actions taken to move against the flow of the winds, or while exposed/climbing.*

Rapid Growth

Driven by the instability of crezzerin within the ironroots, some trees occasionally experience flurries of hyper-accelerated growth - fast even by the wildsea's standards, able to choke a ship or colony in newly-formed branches and vines within minutes if not cut back. *These spurts of growth essentially turn otherwise clear areas (like the street of a port or a ship's hold) into a dense area that resembles the tangle. Insects and beasts flock to these areas instinctively, and the threat of crezzerin contamination in them is particularly high.*

Rootquakes

Violent but thankfully occasional and localized, rootquakes occur when the slowly spreading roots of the wildesea's greatest trees encounter a new source of water (or other, stranger sustenance). *A rootquake changes the topography of the wavetops, sinking spits and bringing new ones to the surface. Sailing through a rootquake is highly inadvisable, but anchoring yourself to a stout trunk and waiting it out is usually reasonably safe.*

The Drum Breeze

The wind taps a beat, and you can't help but dance. *It starts slowly - a tapping of the fingers you can't quite quell, the shuffle of boots under a galley table. The longer the crew stays in the breeze, the more compulsive and frenzied the dance becomes. Eventually, hearts will burst.*

Winter

Though it doesn't arrive unexpectedly, the long cold season is a massive change in most reaches of the wildsea. *Branches lose their leaves and slow their growth, making travel on most kind of ships far more difficult and treacherous than usual. The cold brings snow and ice, and without the ability to rely on fire to keep warm most crews and port-dwellers retreat behind layers of insulation, nibbling at salted meats and stored fruits and vegetables. Most wildsailing vessels stay at port for the duration of winter - in longer campaigns, this can allow a lot of change when spring returns.*

Sailing Stones

A chunk of stone that cuts its way through the thrash or tangle like a ship, moved by an unknown force. Though their pace is sedate (rarely faster than a brisk walk), their arrival can be particularly destructive to an unaware crew or unprepared community. Forcing one to deviate from its course is nigh-impossible, and even the strongest hulls and settlement walls are rarely more than a momentary inconvenience. *Most sailing stones are about the size of a house, though smaller and larger specimens exist.*

Uncanny Storms

Some storms smell wrong - instead of that heavy, fresh rain-smell they come with notes of oil, or sweat, or vanilla. These are uncanny storms, environmental hazards ready to pelt ship and crew with things far stranger than water. *The main product of an uncanny storm is something similar to, but not exactly like, rain. This might be a shower of animal teeth, digestive enzymes falling in sheets and melting through plantlife as they do so, shredded whispers filling the air like psychic hailstones... Some uncanny storms may even come with thunder and lightning, or at least their version of it. Try to match the presentation of these effects to the weird nature of the storm - a rain of teeth might be accompanied by thunder that sounds like an animal's howls, for example, and the lightning that strikes during a rain or whispers could be words carved briefly into the air.*

Sunshowers

Sometimes a cloud begins imitating the sun-hungry attitude of the lignin tide below, absorbing light as well as water vapours. The inclusion of illumination into its formation creates spectacular rain when the time comes for the storm to break, sheets of dazzling rainbow-fused water filling the air. *Sun showers tend to disorient creatures and crew alike, making even the usual operation of the ship a minefield of mistakes. The strongest sunshowers may even be bright enough to temporarily blind some bloodlines (though this can be avoided with the proper eye protection), or hot enough to desiccate.*

Bloomtides

[Variable] A Surge of Burst and Bloom

A rolling explosion of flowers and blossoms across the waves, strong enough to catch ships and creatures and push them along with it. *Use a bloomtide to move the crew from place to place at speed.*

Presence

Sight: An approaching haze of drifting blossoms. Ships rolling wildly.

Sound: Distant creaking, soft popping, the rattle of shed seedlings.

Smell: An overwhelming, heady sweetness.

Resources

Specimens: New-Burst Bloom

Whispers: Stranger in a Strange Land

Aspects

Riding the Tide: If encountered during a journey, a bloomtide can fill multiple boxes of the Progress track if the crew can ride its swell.

Quirks

Detritus Riptide: Debris from ships caught in the tide, pushed along by the blossom-swell, can pose an extreme hazard to the crew and their ship.

The Sudden Season: Some tides are a constant flow, others an unexpected burst. Ships caught unaware may be dashed against islands, torn apart or even beached as a result.

Sporeclouds

[Variable] Lung-Rooting Danger

A thick cloud of fungal spores drifting across the surface of the canopy, or through the branches beneath. *Use a sporecloud if you want the crew to focus more on clever survival and urgent decisions than physical combat.*

Presence

Sight: An unnatural mist, fast-sprouting mushrooms, dirty smears on surfaces.

Smell: Damp, thick and choking.

Resources

Specimens: Parasitic Spores

Whispers: Shroom-Cursed

Aspects

Bad Air: Perhaps the most classic example. When inhaled, spores might do anything from clogging the throat to taking root inside the lungs. Causes lasting injuries if not dealt with quickly.

Quirks

Fungal Fog: The drifting cloud lowers visibility in the immediate area.

Invasive: The cloud begins to eat away at the ship's seals, or spores take root in exposed wooden decking.

Under Cover of Spores: The cloud contains a creature adapted to life in a constant choking fog, which lashes out with Blunt, Keen or Spike damage at anyone stuck in the cloud.

Belching Tower: The originators of particularly dense sporeclouds, these myconic towers of fungal matter constantly seethe with restless spores. every now and then pressure builds within them, causing a venting release of particulate danger that drifts across the waves for miles before dispersing.

Blanched Waves

[Variable] Rotten, Pale Expanses

When this type of wood-rot takes hold in the great forests of the wildsea, the trees turn bone-white and their structural integrity is severely compromised. Traversing blanched waves without taking the proper care is a recipe for destruction. *Use blanched waves if you want the crew to be forced to slow down and struggle against the terrain itself.*

Presence

Sight: Sections of the waves, variable in size, that are completely white. Telltale holes where unprepared ships have plummeted through to their inevitable demise.

Taste: Stringy, wet dirt.

Touch: Spongy and crumbling.

Resources

Specimens: Spalted wood, Sponge-leaves

Whispers: A Rotten Heart, Dangerous Beauty

Aspects

Deceptive Stability: Although the only difference in the trees' appearance is their odd albinism, blanched waves are soft and will crumble under sharp movement or heavy weight. Depending on the extent of the rot within the blanched waves, ships may need to make tilt rolls with inherent cut and move at cut a path speed.

Step Lightly: The weight of a single person does not pose much of an issue. Wavewalking on blanched waves is not inherently more dangerous than elsewhere, though the spongy, crumbling texture does make the experience rather unpleasant. Outriders and smaller ridden beasts are a case-by-case basis, but are usually successful as long as they travel at a slower pace.

Crezzerin

[Variable] A Spreading Suffusion of Growth

The most basic building block of the wildsea, the chemical that drives its titanic and endless growth. It can be found anywhere and everywhere - coursing through the veins of mutated beasts, in the rain, in the leaves and sap of the ironroots - and though some are resistant, or even immune, it remains one of the most fundamental and dangerous forces on the wildsea. *Use crezzerin if you want to reinforce the inherent weirdness of the world, and the equally inherent threat that can bring.*

Presence

Sight: A dripping liquid with an uncomfortable golden-purple hue. A rolling cloud, miasmic and billowing. Growths & mutations.

Smell: Sweet and acrid, almost impossible to describe but recognized by everyone.

Touch: Sticky semitangibility. Searing pain after a few seconds, then numbness... or an even more worrying writhing sensation.

Taste: Bitter vanilla and root-bite and change.

Resources

Specimens: Liquid Crezzerin, Crezzer-Tinged Bone

Whispers: Everything Changes, Endless Growth

Aspects

Mutative: Crezzerin is wildly mutative - injuries and attacks from creatures overtaken by the chemical's influence might induce madness and searing pain in sufferers (see below), but enough exposure will always cause mutation - additional eyes or limbs if it's physical, unexpected senses and awarenesses if you're lucky.

Quirks

Searing: The most common effect of crezzerin exposure, a searing pain that deals Toxin or Acid damage. Injuries caused by searing are difficult to cure without *pure* resources being used as you heal.

Maddening: Crezzerin exposure brings uncomfortable insight into the world, usually represented by marking mire, or even the addition of new, temporary mires.

Crezzerfault (Location)

Trigger Incident: An ironroot splitting, but refusing to topple, usually as the result of a lightning strike

Local Flore & Fauna: Irrevocably changed

A crezzerfault is an area of particularly concentrated crezzerin spreading out from the trunk of a broken ironroot, the chemical contaminating and warping everything for miles around.

Suffusion (Feature)

Even travelling through the fringes of a crezzerfault can have a lasting effect on a ship. Tarred planks buckle and put forth new shoots, sail-canvas ripples and tugs without wind, and food spoils before bursting into horrendous half-lives. Even weeks or months after exposure, an engineer might find some unknown moss crawling sickly through internal vents, or a navigator that the ink on their charts refuses to stay still. The effects on the crew can be even more pronounced, starting with an increase in mire (caused by fear and hallucinations), and ending with things better left undescribed (though you are well within your rights to use your imagination).

Flame

[Variable] The Wrong Kind of Wild

The wildsea is overwhelmingly vegetative, high in oxygen and primed to burn - unkept fire has the ability to destroy anything and everything in its path. *Use flame if you want to inspire utter fear in the crew, their opponents and everything around them, or if you want them to face a spreading danger that they may not be able to contain without help.*

Presence

Sight: Light flickering in the distance. Plumes of smoke. Creatures fleeing, a mad dash. Fear in a wildsailor's eyes.

Sound: A crackle, a roar, the bells of alarm and shouts of pure terror.

Smell: Woodsmoke and death.

Touch: A growing heat. Charring flesh.

Resources

Specimens: Charred Branches, Wood-Ash, A Briefly Burning Branch

Whispers: The Fundamental Fear, A Second Ending

Aspects

The Nature of Flame: Fire, as you might expect, deals flame damage depending on the strength of the blaze (from light to massive). But that's far from the only danger...

Smoke: Often thick enough to block visibility, and sits heavy in the lungs - injuries caused by smoke inhalation are common and lasting.

Spreading Influence: Fire spreads fast, growing more and more intense with time. A track building toward an unquenchable blaze is a good way to go, paused or cleared with the application of sand, water and blanketing agents.

Fear: Uncontrolled flame marks mire - there's not much of a way around that. Even wildsailors that might be fascinated by it rather than afraid of it will suffer the effects of witnessing such a rare and destructive force.

Quirks

Malice: Some flame knows what it is. Some fires want nothing more than to spread.

Rifts

[Variable] Tunnels to the Under-Eaves

Everybody knows that the sea is hungry, but there are no hungrier places than rifts. A rift is a hole in the waves, a yawning chasm that can lead all the way down to the Under-Eaves. Most animals avoid them, and crews would do well to follow their lead. *Use a rift if you want the crew to feel a sense of vertigo, to test their minds and perceptions, and to tempt them with the promise of secrets.*

Presence

Sight: A gap in the canopy. A void that seems to yearn for ships to explore it. Branches spearing out over nothingness like gnarled fingers. Wrecks lodged on awkward slopes.

Sound: Nothing, but it feels like there should be some sort of howl.

Smell: The weird vapours of the Under-Eaves, a smell that speaks of quiet and death and lost civilizations.

Resources

Whispers: What Lies Below?, Starving Sea

Aspects

A Sense of Wrong: The Verdancy choked the world and hid the ground, and the effects continue to linger even hundreds of years later, but rifts are the antithesis to this - they're spaces without nature, without branches. Being around them slowly drives crews to introspection, vertigo, and nightmares.

Quirks

Ironfall: A rift caused by the collapse of one of the great ironroots, far larger than most.

Living Rift: Some rifts have a semblance of intelligence, though it's not quite understood how. They lure ships to them by arranging themselves to display wrecks and bounties, or contract their emptiness under thin layers of brittle false canopy.

Mobile: The strangest rifts are those that move on their own, rarely with any intent. They distort the waves around themselves, branches snapping and withering to make room for... Well, nothing.

Wonders & Horrors

Head to any port's bars, junctions, or smokehouses and you'll find wildsailors swapping tall tales of the unexplained or rarely seen. These are the wonders and horrors of the rustling waves, the sights along a journey that inspire fear, comfort, disgust, or nostalgia. *Though they may not always technically be a force of nature, they're very much a feature of the waves, so are included here for the sake of completeness and ease of reference.*

Using Wonders & Horrors

While either of these phenomena can serve as the basis of a scene (or session, or even a campaign), they're most often used as encounters during a journey. Mechanically they affect mire, with horrors marking it and wonders clearing it, but it needn't always be so clear-cut. What's horrifying for one crewmember may be wonderful for another, so it's often worth checking in with the players to find out if their character would react to a wonder or horror in an unexpected way (and let the mechanical effect reflect that if possible).

The rest of this section is given over to example wonders and horrors, though we highly recommend creating your own on the fly based on the kind of waves your crew are passing through and the experiences they've had. *The wonders and horrors presented here are deeply weird - if you want something more normal, terribly wrecked ships and decorated buoys or caches will do just as well.*

Sudden Migration Wonder

A herd, a flock...? What is the correct term for a mass of moving animals, predator and prey moving in unison and without aggression, not through fear of pursuit but for pastures new?

Undercanopy Lights Wonder

A glimpse of something dim but reassuring from the darkness through the branches, points of light in ordered movement. Whoever, or whatever, is down there, civilization remains intact in some way.

A Whisper of Salt Wonder

It comes across the crew like a wave, the sudden and fleeting sensation of salt water and seagulls and fresh fish (an entirely alien taste for most, but a pleasant one).

Titanofruit Wonder

Despite the scale of the ironroots, most of the fruit they produce is of a 'normal' size. Not so the titanofruit, which could easily feed a spit for a week.

A True Heirloom Wonder

Proud, strong, impossibly pure - a plant or tree growing wild without the slightest taint or trace of crezzerin.

The Corpse Sun Horror

Dawn breaks without any of the usual glory - the sun that rises is veined with darkness, like a cracked plate stapled to the heavens.

Roachriver Horror

A mass of roaches locked into a death-march across the wavetops, a ring of crawling chitin miles wide. They ruin bites, cover decks, and hiss incessantly.

Leviathan's Passage Horror

An unexpected channel of broken branches and snapped trunks that even the accelerated growth of the wildsea struggles to repair. A leviathan has passed through here, missing the ship by mere hours.

A Grave-Grove Horror

An ancient graveyard brought to the surface by a rootquake, at least in part. The sea is wreathed in the remains of the dead, a grisly ornamentation.

Hollow Monument Horror

An ancient tower or windmill or church, cracked open and yawningly empty, save for snatches of conversation in languages long-dead.

Beasts

Tooth, claw, scale, and horn - beasts covers everything from wolves to predatory birds, reptiles to masked makadrills. If it has blood, teeth, and predatory instincts, it's probably a beast.

Beasts in Play

Different beasts can fill different roles in a game. Some might merely be an **annoyance**, or **scene-dressing** - a group of slinks chasing roaches through a port's gutters, or hawk-wolves wheeling through the sky as the sun sets. Others can be an **extreme and present danger**, especially if they're in their home territory or the crew aren't watching their surroundings.

The real key to using beasts is to remember that they're **animals** - they may not always be smart, but they have survival instincts. They'll rarely put themselves in harm's way without some kind of pay-off, and many of them have lived on the waves for generations, and learned to deal with wildsailors and their ships in that time.

Chimestar Bats

Hand-sized bats that move in large groups, active by night and found roosting by day. Some newer wildsailors consider them a good luck charm, but old hands know the danger they bring. *Ships draw insects, and the chimestar bats are drawn to those insects in turn. Unfortunately for the ships they swarm around, the ultrasonic chimes they use to hunt their miniscule prey can draw far larger creatures to the area.*

Canopy Hyenas

Dogs and wolfhounds are a common sight on old stone settlements, but through large swathes of the waves the role of diligent scavenger is filled by the canopy hyena, opportunistic omnivores with a particular taste for things they didn't have to hunt themselves. *Canopy hyenas are prized by alchemists for their natural resistances to a whole host of rots, spores, and diseases, but they're canny beasts that are incredibly hard to catch.*

Squirrels (of Various Types)

Some say they're the most common beast of the waves, despite being rarely seen. Or perhaps because of it - squirrels are master survivalists, swift enough to avoid a whole host of predators and small enough to take easy cover within the tighter branches of the ironroots. *Wildsea squirrels are surprisingly intelligent - some groups have developed tool-use and even minor arboraforming skills, collecting and filtering clean water or herding insects for later consumption.*

Diamond Vipers

Snakes aren't found much within the thrash, but are common in the tangle - the patterning of a diamond viper keeps them pretty well camouflaged in the tangle's morass of branch, vine, and leaf. *While the viper's toxin is fatal to the smaller mammals it uses for food, for a full-sized wildsailor it's actually a common sleeping aid. A good number of surgeons have experience milking viper-fangs for their soporific draughts.*

Wilds Panthers

Large hunting cats whose cunning is as sharp as their claws. Regarded by many to be one of the wildsea's apex predators, mostly due to their forms barely changing since pre-verdant times. *Some panthers are amber-scarred - true vestiges of the past, old-world beasts trapped for hundreds of years before being freed. These pre-verdant panthers run wild with fear, confusion, and opportunity.*

Slinks

Semi-spectral felines, all mottled fur and shifting shadows. Often found living around ports, docks, and junkyards, slinks are stealthy hunters that live on a diet of rats, insects, and the occasional stolen cut of meat. *Slinks are prized as trained pets for their eyesight, which is preternaturally sharp at night. A horde of hungry slinks can even overwhelm a sailor, though few such stories are told - nobody wants to admit to being thoroughly trounced by what is essentially just a cat.*

Hydreese

A young hydroose appears a rather unassuming bird, white-feathered and orange-beaked. But as they age their more violent tendencies emerge, as does a peculiar biological quirk: the lizard-like ability to regrow lost body parts at crezzerin-boosted speed. *The most dangerous hydreese are those with multiple hissing, biting heads, sometimes so many they can barely move under the weight.*

Pangopods

A pangolin's body propelled by a bundle of squid-like tentacles, pangopods are fiercely territorial when their young are involved, but otherwise docile enough. The killing of a pangopod is seen as very bad luck for a crew. *Pangopod nests are made of old scales bound together with slime and spit that harden over time, and are usually found hanging from the upper branches of the tangle. Approaching them is usually a bad idea.*

Grove-Gulls

A common sight around shipping lanes and portside rooftops, a grove-gull is a mean, loud little bird with a vicious beak and a seemingly endless hunger. Flocking to and rapidly demolishing just about anything edible, grove-gulls are usually easily scattered by a loud noise or an aggressive motion (but will always return). *Many communities let the grove-gulls eat whatever scraps or refuse are thrown out after mealtimes, as keeping them well-fed tends to avoid some of their more savage, piranha-like tendencies.*

Conflagrant Swarms

Bright red and orange fish adapted to swim through the air with gas-bladders, usually found in groups of several hundred to several thousand. *Being naturally weak, conflagrant shoals have evolved the defence mechanism of swarming over exposed bark and leaves, their colouring and movements mimicking spreading flames. Most other wildsea creatures will flee them on instinct.*

Pangoska

[Large] Bastions of Plant and Plate

The pangoska are larger, ape-like cousins of the humble pangolin, with a physiology uniquely adapted to work with the vibrant and ever-changing ecosystems of the rustling waves. A pangoska's protective plates are the perfect rooting-ground for symbiotic mosses and lichens, which serve double duty as natural camouflage and an attractant for the insects they feed on. *Use a pangoska if you want the crew to face a powerful foe that would rather not be fighting at all.*

Drives

Keep a Low Profile: Pangoska are powerful but gentle, and prefer to avoid combat with potential predators and hunters where possible.

Seek Symbiotes: ... And nurture them, while reaping the benefits they offer.

Presence

Sight: A shaggy cloak of plants. Luminous flower-petals. Bulging muscle.

Sound: The muted scrape of scales beneath vegetation. Quiet chuffing.

Smell: Pollen and desert dust.

Resources

Specimens: Shed Plate, Beard-Moss

Whispers: Reluctant Fighter, Vibrant Platform

Aspects

Quiet Force: When a pangoska fights, it uses its fists, claws and natural weight to great effect. CQ Blunt and Keen damage are common, as are grabs and throws.

Camouflage Plate: Pangoska plating is resistant to Blunt, Keen, Spike and Serrated damage, and acts as an excellent source of camouflage when rooted with symbiotic plants.

Quirks

Moss-Cloaked: A thick layer of damp, protective moss. Immune to Blunt damage, and resistant to Flame, Blast and Toxin. Some mosses may also deal Toxin damage on contact with bare skin.

Vine-Cloaked: Writhing vines catch and tangle anything that comes into CQ range, imposing cut or lowering the impact of CQ attacks.

Porcelain Plating: The pangoska's plates are host to a spreading porcelain growth, resulting in massively increased weight and damage but a lack of camouflage.

Withered: Some sickness has withered the pangoska's symbiotic plantlife, giving it a sombre, autumnal feel.

Another pinwolf crashed down onto the deck, flank sizzling, but its packmates were still coming. They moved with unsettlingly delicate motions, tongues flickering in the spore-choked air.

"Uh, guys? They're not retreating..."

Umbridge moved back as they advanced, keeping his eyes trained on the pack as he fumbled in his pouches for more chemicals. He could hear Ro Zan cursing under her breath behind him, see a smear of sap on the decks where she'd dragged herself back. What kind of beast took a bite out of an ektus & came back for more?

Lightning fast the pack charged as one, pointed limbs scraping & skidding over the decks as they came, jaws wide & hissing.

This kind of beast, apparently.

Pinwolves

[Medium] Swift Staccato Predators

Vicious pack hunters with stiletto limbs, pinwolves are a seemingly omnipresent threat across the various reaches and territories of the wildsea. Their colouring tends to match their surroundings, most often a combination of charcoal and earthy browns to blend in with the wood of the ironroots, though paler (and stranger) specimens have been reported.

Their habits and cunning, combined with their natural speed and vicious natures, make them a serious threat to even experienced sailors. Despite this they can be trained, usually at great personal cost. *Use pinwolves if you want the crew to face something swift and uncanny.*

Drives

Hunt Incautious Sailors: Of all the beasts of the rustling waves, pinwolves are perhaps the most adept at understanding and exploiting the habits of wildsailors. Pinwolf packs will take up residence around shipping routes and reefs, ready to ambush passing ships. Even lone specimens can engage in this behaviour, sticking close to a new wreck and waiting for the inevitable arrival of dredgers or opportunistic salvagers.

Presence

Sight:	Bursts of uncanny movement. Long twitching tongues. Coarse fur and smooth skin underneath.
Sound:	The sharp impacts of their pin-like limbs. Hissing when they're readying themselves to attack. Scraping and skittering if they move over metal.
Smell:	Musky - a mixture of sweat and blood.
Taste:	Pinwolf meat is tough, and tastes bitter unless charred or fried (when it's then surprisingly buttery).

Resources

Specimens:	Pin-Limb, Flexible Tongue, Beast Bones, Staccatomygdala, Pinwolf Hide
Whispers:	Unsettling Movement, Approaching Pack

Aspects

Pin-Limbs: Pinwolves can climb any surface their limbs can punch into, with the strongest able to puncture even metal. These limbs deal light to medium CQ Spike damage, and charges can deal medium Blunt damage.

Staccato Movement: Pinwolves move in swift, unpredictable bursts, making them difficult to evade. Add cut to actions taken to dodge or otherwise escape a pinwolf while it has full freedom of movement.

Corkscrew Tongue: A pinwolf's tongue is also incredibly mobile and well-muscled, usually used to wrap around smaller prey and draw it close to the creature's mandible-like lower jaws. These tongues are also lined with delicate scent receptors, used to taste the air and allow the beasts to accurately track prey they can't see.

Quirks

Armoured Hide: The pinwolf's fur is matted and spiked, giving it resistance to Keen and Blunt damage.

Mottled: The pinwolf's hide shifts and flickers, giving it efficient camouflage against the rustling waves and making it hard to keep track of in a combat or chase.

Hulking: An alpha specimen. Deals increased damage, and can bite savagely to inflict Serrated damage.

Ravenous: Driven to desperation by hunger and crezzerin combined, the wolf's tongue, mouth and gullet are absurdly swollen. Will attempt to swallow prey whole.

Trained: The pinwolf has a collar and barding, marks of civilization and ownership, but it has returned to the wild. Such beasts might be calmed or tamed with a little effort and some appropriate food as a specimen.

Hooks & Encounters

Clattering Rush: A cacophony of pin-strikes on the deck above the crew as they examine the hold of a wreck - a pinwolf pack has caught their scent. *Consider demonstrating the pack's cunning by closing off escape routes and setting ambushes from darkened hold-spaces.*

Wolf Siren: The crew's path is taking them directly through known pinwolf territory, but the waves are oddly quiet. Something has drawn the beasts away - but what, and to where? *An opportunity for the crew to sight pinwolves engaged in some kind of non-threatening activity without engaging them.*

Alpha Transport: The crew have been hired to transport a hulking pinwolf specimen away from a busy trade area, hoping the rest of the pack will follow. *The pack's pursuit is the perfect setting for a chase-based track or desperate journey.*

Pinwolf Classic: The engine dies, the moon hangs low in the sky. A howl in the distance that grows to a chorus. The crew know what's coming, but they have precious little time to prepare. *Throw several wolves at the crew, each using a different quirk to give them personality and distinctiveness.*

Thrummingbirds

[Large] Living Drilling-Rigs

A large bird, known for destroying tallshanks in their search for sap. A thrummingbird's beak is diamond-hard (or so close that it may as well be), used for stripping bark from trees and pulverising the wood beneath in search of sap. *Use thrummingbirds if you want the crew to face a swift airborne foe, something difficult to engage with.*

Drives

Seek Sap: Thrummingbirds need a large amount of the sticky substance to fuel their high metabolism. Usually this comes from trees, but they may be attracted to certain cargo items too.

Keep Moving: Though thrummingbirds can land, they rarely do so other than to sleep or lay eggs.

Presence

Sight:	Tallshanks swaying with unusual force. Wings beating so fast they're near invisible.
Sound:	Low reverberations. Rapid knocking.
Smell:	Aged sap and fresh wood-pulp.
Taste:	Rich and savoury flesh, but their beak is a prized delicacy.

Resources

Specimens:	Gullet Amber, Delicious Beak, Speckled Egg
Whispers:	Silent Motion

Aspects

Swift-Beating Wings: Allow the thrummingbird to fly with speed and precision. Can knock over targets with CQ Blunt damage or LR Blast damage as a defence.

Crezzerin Sap: The beak of the thrummingbird drips with crezzerin, allowing it to inflict hallucinations, searing pain and other, more unusual effects.

Quirks

Destabilisation: The vibrations of the thrummingbird's wings shake machines and delicate objects apart.

Arrow-Tongue Jikari

[Large] The Hangman's Living Lash

Frog-like lizards with wide mouths and long, dextrous tongues. While not especially good at concealing themselves, their method of attack ensures most prey will be caught off guard. *Use jikari if you want the crew to face something unexpected, but with obvious weak-spots.*

Drives

Attack From Above: Hungry jikari conceal themselves in the thicker areas of the high thrash, spearing down with their tongues to pull unprepared prey into the air.

Retreat From Danger: Jikari don't stand and fight if they can help it, especially if they lose the element of surprise.

Presence

Sight:	Froggish shadows passing over the deck as branches above creak and sway. Scaled skin, wide mouths, small eyes with vertical pupils. Vivid, lash-like tongues with an arrow-shaped tip.
Sound:	Low croaking as anticipation builds. Whip-crack sounds when they strike.
Smell:	Like old pond-scum.
Taste:	Rubbery flesh with a hint of standing water.

Resources

Specimens:	Jikari Scales, Arrow-Tip Tongue, Croaker Glands
Whispers:	Toothless Mouths, Ominous Croaking.

Aspects

Arrow-Tip Tongue: Uncoiled from their toothless mouths at high speed, can either pierce lightly armoured prey with Spike damage or wrap around heavier prey. Once caught, targets are whipped around the environment for increasing Blunt damage.

Powerful Legs: Jikari can't climb, but can leap impressive distances and use their legs to deal high CQ Blunt damage as a last resort when cornered.

Quirks

Venomous: The jikari's tongue can split open to squirt lethal venom, blinding, or dealing Toxin damage.

Tinker-Monkeys

[Small] Inquisitive Engineers

Clever scavengers that live on wreck-reefs and newly risen spits. Their name is actually something of a misnomer - they're as likely to be lemurs or apes as they are monkeys, as various unrelated but dextrous species seem to develop a hankering for disassembly out on the waves. *Use tinker-monkeys when you want the crew to face the danger of theft and trickery rather than violence.*

Drives

Just Here for a Good Time: Tinker-monkeys are well-adapted to the waves, and need very little from the wildsailors they encounter other than entertainment.

Natural Curiosity: If given the chance they will steal pieces of gear, gnaw through sails, ropes and rigging, pester animal companions and members of the undercrew, and disassemble weapons and equipment.

Presence

Sight:	Limber bodies swinging through the trees.
Sound:	Chattering and soft hooting.

Resources

Salvage:	Abandoned Cogs, Ceramic Battery Shards
Whispers:	Original Trickster

Aspects

The Devil's Hands: Tinker-monkey 'attacks' are more likely to destroy resources than deal any damage to aspects, but a particularly technologically impressive piece of gear might take heavy damage from a tinker's unwanted curiosity.

Fingers, Thumbs and Tail: Tinker-Monkeys brachiate at impressive speeds, often hauling stolen gear behind them as they do so.

Quirks

Keen Minds: Certain tinker-monkey groups have keener minds than the average animal, using the gear they steal and equipment they disassemble to construct original machines and sculptures.

Ratwork Clusters

[Swarm] Rodent Replacement System

An unnatural collection of omnivorous rats, driven to eat ship-parts and replace them with their own bodies. *Use a ratwork cluster if you want to confront the crew with some unsettling weirdness.*

Drives

Spread Like a Virus: Ratwork clusters don't live naturally in the sea, preferring instead to hop from ship to ship at port or during meetings on the waves.

Eat and Replace: A cluster will lie low until it has enough mass to replace part of the ship. Once it has, it will surge out from hiding and devour an essential part (such as part of an engine or steering column) then arrange its bodies in a way that mimics the eaten part.

Presence

Sight:	Flashes of brown fur. Scattered, gnawed metal or wood. Clusters of writhing bodies where ropes and engine parts should be.
Sound:	Scratching below decks before discovery.
Taste:	Rattish meat with a metallic tinge.

Resources

Specimens:	Rat Meat, Oil-Streaked Fur
Whispers:	Enthusiastic Stowaway

Aspects

The Moving Mass: The rodents making up a cluster may move as a single organism, but they're still a swarm - conventional attacks that target single individuals have reduced impact against them.

Indispensable: A ship-part eaten and replaced by a ratwork cluster rarely works perfectly, but removing it will often cause entire systems to fail.

Quirks

Slackers: Disaffected clusters don't care enough to replace what they eat, a terror for mechanically complex ships.

Manticrows

[Variable] Mutative Avian Horrors

The undisputed kings of carrion, manticrows range from the size of a cat to that of a horse, with some unconfirmed accounts of much larger specimens. Known for cacophonous cawing and an unusual patience, multiple conflicting reports about their attributes and abilities continue to leave all but the most dedicated scholars at a loss as to their true nature. *Use manticrows if you want the crew to face an intelligent scavenger with a habit of swooping in and stealing fresh corpses, as well as a host of unconfirmed abilities.*

Drives

Swoop and Grab: Manticrows dive-bomb living targets, and take corpses and carcasses with them when they can to consume at their leisure.

Presence

Sight:	Black feathers with wickedly sharp tips. Smears like oil on tree branches. Pools of fresh blood with no corpse in sight. Hunched forms on high branches.
Sound:	The beat of wings and a seemingly endless chorus of cawing.
Smell:	Oil and feathers, rancid meat.
Taste:	Manticrow meat is foul, no matter how it's prepared, but their eggs are peppery and oddly delicious.

Resources

Specimens:	Sharp-Edged Feathers, Manticrow Oil
Whispers:	Vigilant Patience

Aspects

Feather and Beak: Manticrow feathers have edges sharp enough to deal CQ Keen damage, and their beaks and claws can deal CQ Spike damage.

Crow Oil: Secreted by adult manticrows, this oil is slick enough that it helps the crows escape from traps but also enhances the mutative properties of crezzerin.

Ragged Flight: Manticrows leave a trail of oil and feathers as they fly, making them easier to track than other avian creatures.

Mutative: Perhaps more than any other common creature of the waves, manticrows exhibit a huge array of area-specific mutations.

Quirks

Polyocular: A network of interlinked eyes give the manticrow superior 360 degree vision, and the ability to see perfectly through smoke, sporeclouds, and darkness.

Cruel and Curved: The manticrow's beak is more akin to a scorpion's stinger, and can deal CQ Toxin damage.

Needlefeather: The tips of these manticrow feathers are even sharper than usual. Creatures making CQ attacks against them take automatic Spike damage, and the feathers can be fired to deal LR Spike damage like a porcupine's quills.

Pride Tactics: A group of manticrows have banded together, attacking anything that stands between them and fresh carrion, bold enough to target even ship storage areas and portside chop stations.

"The gardens are here!"

A single shout picked up and echoed throughout the factory plant. Workers dropped tools, rising from scarred benches and rushing over to the amber-glass windows.

At first it seemed like a false alarm - the cloud bank above scudding by quietly with the wind, but after a few moments a young ektus pointed off to the west, their spines bristling with excitement.

"There!"

A shadow cutting through the clouds like a wolf through the sea, decrepit and shining, crumbling and glorious. A shattered dome and a lake of verdant green within.

It came without sound, save for the murmurs of the workers below, and a single screech in the distance just before it disappeared back into the clouds. A sound of loss and pride and longing, from an age long-dead.

Tryphoradons

[Large] Living Relics of Pre-Verdant Elegance

The true origins of the tryphoradon are unknown, though speculation runs rife. The most concrete theories involve their pre-verdant origins, often linked to their connection to the floating artefact-arboretum known as Panra Gardens (which seems to act as a tryphoradon nesting ground).

Those few alchemists and researchers that have managed to study tryphoradons over the years speak in appreciative tones about their seemingly inherent resistance to crezzerin corruption and mutation, their majestic feats of long-distance flight, and their quiet dignity. Suspiciously appreciative, actually... *Use tryphoradons if you want to confront the crew with a strong, proud creature they'll find difficult not to admire.*

Drives

Soar with Majesty: The freedom of the open skies is an unquenchable want for a tryphoradon, and many seem to regard the entirety of the heavens as their territory.

Return to Panra Gardens: To nest, to breed, or perhaps as some sort of uncanny pilgrimage - no matter how far a tryphoradon roams, it will always return to Panra if possible every few years.

Presence

Sight:	Wheeling shapes among the clouds. Scratches on isolated mountain-stone. Long, fan-like tails and wide wings.
Sound:	A cry somewhere between tiger and eagle.
Smell:	A bright past, somehow, or a sense of success or accomplishment.

Resources

Specimens:	Flexible Feather, Tryphomuscle
Salvage:	Tattered Regalia
Whispers:	Ancient and Aerial, Home to Roost

Aspects

Beak & Claws: Used for ripping into prey before carrying it aloft, the beak deals CQ Hewing damage and the claws deel CQ Keen damage.

Majestic Wings: A tryphoradon's wings are wide and powerful, and resistant to all kinds of damage except Flame and Frost.

Mesmeric Aura: Something in the air around tryphoradons engenders a sense of respect and reverence in any sentient creature, making them a popular (if wildly difficult to acquire) companion or pet for petty wavetop dictators and famous performers alike.

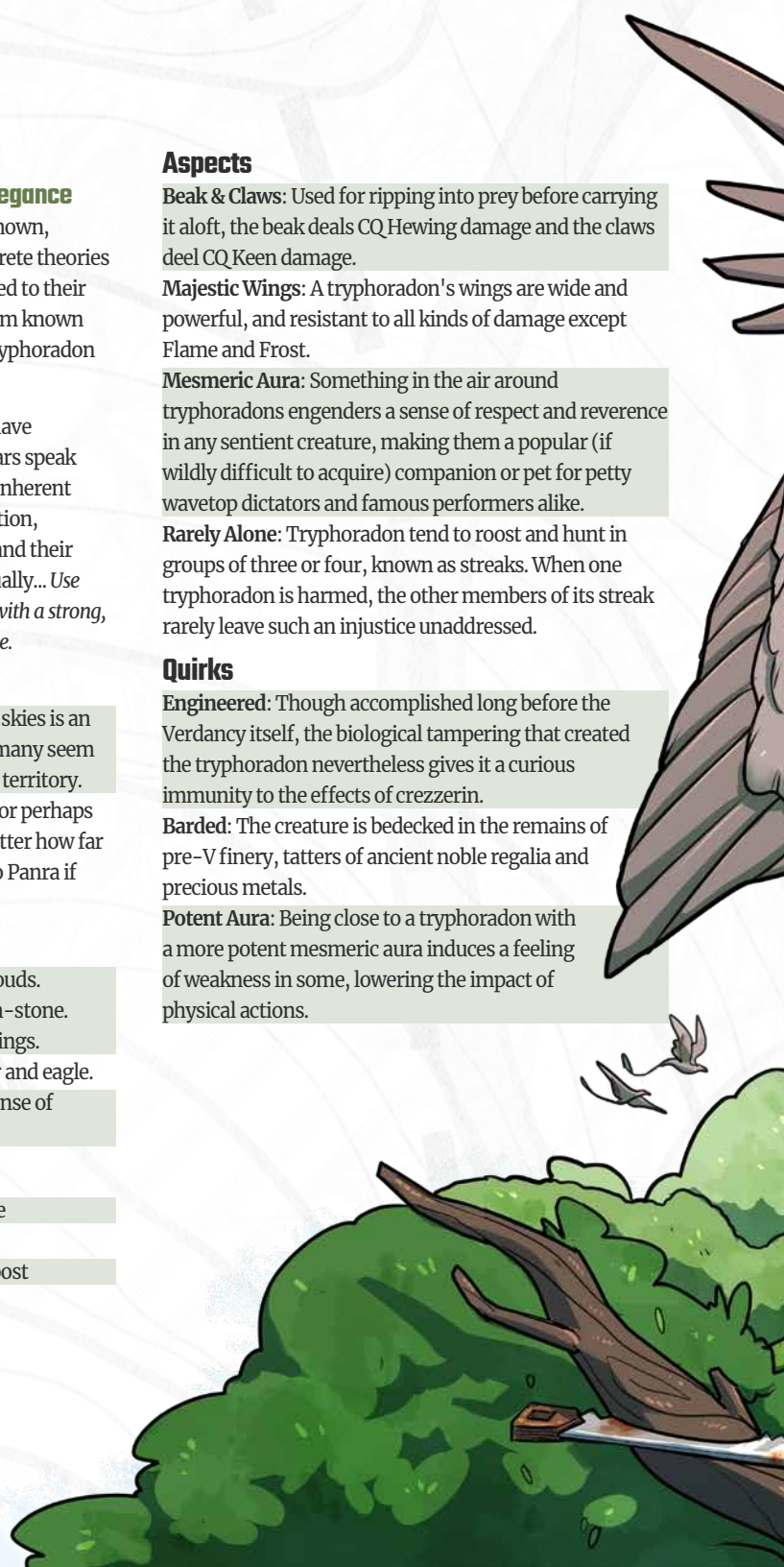
Rarely Alone: Tryphoradon tend to roost and hunt in groups of three or four, known as streaks. When one tryphoradon is harmed, the other members of its streak rarely leave such an injustice unaddressed.

Quirks

Engineered: Though accomplished long before the Verdancy itself, the biological tampering that created the tryphoradon nevertheless gives it a curious immunity to the effects of crezzerin.

Barded: The creature is bedecked in the remains of pre-V finery, tatters of ancient noble regalia and precious metals.

Potent Aura: Being close to a tryphoradon with a more potent mesmeric aura induces a feeling of weakness in some, lowering the impact of physical actions.



Panra Gardens (Location)

Riding Angle: 17–29 degrees from standard
Heirloom Species: Old Oka, Whitebelly Ash

A massive floating platform of pre-Verdant origin, sailing sedately through the upper skies with a constant escort of tryphoradons. Though the gardens were once an enclosed dome of (assumedly) rare tree specimens, the dome has long-shattered and the entire edifice floats slightly drunkenly, occasionally trailing ancient seeds and spores onto the wavetops far below.

The Relic Arboretum (Wonder)

The broken dome of the gardens sits atop the stone foundations like a firefly's bulb, the once-orderly groves within it having turned wild over the long years since the Verdancy. *The dome is isolated enough that the plants within have no hint of crezzerin contamination, and samples taken from within the old arboretum are highly prized.*

Stone Faces (Feature)

Worn by time and the elements, the stone faces ringing the base of the gardens are suggestive of ancient humanity. *Each face is emblazoned with a name in Highvin, but wildsailors would have to be very close to make them out.*

Tryphoradon Nesting Grounds (Feature)

The gardens contain several surviving pre-verdant creatures, but none so impressive as the tryphoradon. They enter and exit the shattered dome on a regular basis, using the overgrown groves inside as a nesting ground. *Clutches of tryphoradon eggs occasionally make their way onto the stalls of enterprising marketeers, but rarely ever hatch outside of Panra's untainted environment.*

Wretchbeaks

[Medium] Vulture-Maned Scavengers

These hideous half-bird creatures are rarely a threat, as they usually refrain from attacking all but the weakest of victims. Sailors still hope to avoid the sight of them as wherever they are, death is near. They are scavengers, preying on the dead and dying. The little fur they have on their naked bodies is stained with dried blood. They are agile climbers, known to circle above a creature taking its last breaths by jumping from branch to branch and tree to tree. They are unlikely to attack, unless something or someone is attempting to steal a meal they already thought certain. *Use wretchbeaks if you want the crew to encounter something grotesque and horrifying, but not immediately dangerous.*

Drives

Carrion Collection: Wretchbeaks wait patiently for injured creatures to die, hoping to be first at the corpse for the choicest morsels.

Presence

Sight: Bloody, ardent-like hand prints on the trees; sickly, naked skin and hungry eyes.

Sound: A chilling cackle; a beak breaking dead meat and bones.

Smell: Dried blood and old sweat.

Taste: Juicy and nutritious tail, otherwise almost inedible.

Resources

Specimens: Twitching Tail, Chipped Beak

Whispers: Waste Not – Want Not

Aspects

Carrion Hunger: Drawn to death and decay, they are often spotted in particularly dangerous areas. Because of this, they are seen as a bad omen by many. Some even believe they can sense disaster before it strikes.

Scavenger: While they usually feed on carrion and unfortunate sailors, wretchbeaks will take and eat anything they can get their hands on. While they are unlikely to attack a healthy crew, they might sneak aboard and try to steal their rations if desperate.

Strangling Grip: Wretchbeaks rarely attack but, if they do, they usually attempt to close their large hands or feet around the throats of their victims, choking them to death rather than hitting or biting them.

Quirks

All-Devouring: Some rumors speak of black-furred Wretchbeaks who feast on not simply the mortal remains of their victims but their spirits as well. Their attacks cause Salt damage, and they twist the whispers living in the heads of their victims with their bites.

Axehead Sloths

[Huge] Slumbering Fruit-Eaters

Slow herbivores found hanging in the tangle, usually sleeping, but hungry for fruit and nutritious bark when they wake. *Use an axehead sloth if you want the crew to face something more interested in eating their cargo than them.*

Drives

Wake to Eat: Axehead sloths are slow movers who don't bother with hunting, but they require large amounts of fruit to sustain themselves whenever they wake. When they catch the scent of a good cache, they'll do anything they can to get to it.

Presence

Sight: A huge hanging form dangling from a stout branch. Long gouges in wood.

Sound: A whooping call. The sounds of slobbering and chomping as they eat.

Smell: Animal sweat. Leaf-mould mixed with fur.

Taste: A hearty beef-like flavour with a sour tang.

Resources

Specimens: Mud-Matted Fur, Sloth Meat, Strong Bones, Axehead Crest

Whispers: Long Slumber

Aspects

Axehead Crest: A bone crest harder than iron, used for breaking open cargo crates and smashing tree trunks. Deals CQ Hewing damage, sometimes of massive impact.

Limber Limbs: With arms the size of cranes, the claws of an axehead sloth can deal significant CQ Keen damage. If a foe is small enough, they might get picked up and tossed around.

Quirks

Rageful Waking: Axehead sloths rarely stay awake for long. As their rage at being woken without nearby food decreases, they may drift back to sleep.

Spireback Lenku

[Large] Spine, Scale and Grease

Low to the ground and covered in greasy serpentine scales, the spireback lenku get their name from the 'mane' of horny growths covering their chests, shoulders, and backs. *Use a spireback lenku if you want the crew to face something uncomplicated and aggressive.*

Drives

Protect Their Territory: Lenku are aggressive and territorial, challenging intruders with a roar that will be picked up and echoed by any of their nearby kin.

Charge & Gouge: Lenku rush their foes, scraping the ground with their spines as they do so.

Presence

Sight: Scrapes and gouges on the environment. A flash of scales in the sunlight. Dull, pig-like eyes in a reptilian face.

Sound: Harsh scraping as they charge to attack. Barking roars when enraged.

Smell: Rancid olive oil.

Taste: Unpleasantly greasy, gamey.

Resources

Specimens: Spireback Grease, Mane Spines

Whispers: Deep Gouging

Aspects

Greasy: The thick grease coating a lenku's scales makes it almost impossible to grab or restrain (unless you manage to rope a spine). Lenku's grease covering leave them resistant to Acid and Toxins, but weak to Flame.

Mane of Spines: Used to catch prey and grind them against the ground (a combined form of attack and tenderization). Deals CQ Spike damage, or Blunt if a target is ground/thrown.

Quirks

Overspined: Some lenku's spines grow wild, covering their entire faces and blinding them. These variants charge wildly and frequently, and the spines act as improved armour - resist all damage save Flame until the mane is broken or neutralized. Doing so will likely also allow the beast to see again.

Basilisks

[Medium] Many Limbs, Many Eyes

Multi-eyed lizards that nest near statuary, feasting on stone. Basilisk blood has curious properties, more like slow-flowing chalk than regular liquid. Wildsailors who lock eyes with a basilisk report leaden limbs and a feeling of dangerously soporific bliss. *Use basilisks if you want the crew to face something that's dangerous even to look at, or if you want to put them in a situation where their own bodies are fighting against them.*

Drives

Consume the Past: Basilisks will eat any stone in a pinch, but they prefer worked stone over anything else - the older, the better.

Presence

Sight: Unblinking reptilian eyes. Scratches on old pre-V statues.

Sound: An oppressive silence. The almost imperceptible flicker of forked tongues.

Taste: Meat like old gravel and olive-pits.

Resources

Specimens: Basilisk Eye, Stone-Eater Stomach, Chalk Blood, Iris-Patterned Scale

Whispers: Garden of Statues, Uncountable Eyes, The Dangers of Sleep

Aspects

Multiple Limbs: The six to eight legs of a basilisk leave them slow movers but great climbers, and they know every inch of their territory.

Stone-Eater: Though a basilisk will bite and savage anyone that threatens them (dealing CQ Blunt damage with toothless mouths), they won't eat anything organic.

Soporific Gaze: Contrary to legends, basilisk gazes don't *actually* turn their prey to stone. They do, however, have a potent mental effect, inducing unnatural happiness and lasting bliss (usually in the form of an injury).

Quirks

Mesmeric Eyes: Basilisks whose scales are patterned (or are slowly transforming into) additional eyes. Their gaze attacks are far more potent, the effects lasting long after the fight and into the dreams of the affected.

Makadrills

[Medium] Avatars of Seething Simian Violence

Every now and then a crew will come across an anomalous wreck, or the ruin of a settlement that just doesn't sit right; weapons used in its destruction but no salvage taken, bodies bludgeoned or strung up on branches but their pockets and packs left full. Who would kill without looting on the waves, when the wider economy (and sometimes basic survival) are so driven by the stuff? Makadrills, that's who.

Mask-wearing monkeys with distinctive gold and black fur, the makadrill are consumed by an irrational hatred of mechanisms and machinery, especially those used for travel. An individual will often descend on a vessel, whooping and howling, to steal a single piece of technology (though even the act of touching it seems to repulse them). From that point on the ship is marked - it may be minutes later, or days, but at some point that piece of stolen 'proof' will bring a horde of simian vengeance crashing down upon them. *Use makadrills if you want the crew to face intelligent, vengeful beasts that hate nothing more than interlopers and the machines they bring, or if you want a ticking clock of impending violence.*

Drives

Technophobia: Makadrills will often prioritise damaging ships, machinery and complex weaponry before turning their attention to any offending users.

Maintain Familial Order: Many mistake them as primitive due to their rejection of technology and territorial ways, but the truth is far more unsettling - the makadrill *choose* to isolate themselves due to an intense, cult-rooted xenophobia, and organize their families into an unbreakable caste-structure. A makadrill's hatred is taught, not innate.

Presence

Sight:	A body in a recently sprung trap. Gold and black manes. Masks carved to resemble the faces of other animals. Swiftly-signed insults in Old Hand.
Sound:	Shrieks and howls. The splintering of wood and tearing of metal from metal.
Smell:	Sweat and thick fur.

Resources

Specimens:	Makadrill Hide, Throat-Gland, Maka Mask
Whispers:	Wordless Howl

Aspects

Carven Masks: Each makadrill family has an animal they've laid claim to, that they fashion their masks to resemble. This mark carving may be the only form of tool-use they can accept, and the masks block mesmeric effects.

Simian Strength: Exceedingly strong for their size, makadrill use their long limbs to for brachiation, combat, and to wrench machinery apart (usually dealing Blunt or Hewing damage at CQ). Their musculature also allows them to swing swiftly through the thrash and tangle, even while carrying large objects.

Quirks

Trapper: Whatever area the makadrill is defending is riddled with traps and hidden dangers, devoid of artificial mechanisms and made entirely from the natural resources of the area.

Mimic: Their howls mimic the voices and languages of other bloodlines, often drawing them into ambushes.

Cacophony: A constant shrieking and screaming accompanies their attacks. The noise is so overwhelming that all forms of verbal communication are useless.

Makazee Attendants: Physically smaller and less distinctively coloured than the makadrill, the makazee operate on the lowest rung of their caste-based society and attack in hordes when directed to by their superiors.

Zenta

[Variable] Enigmatic Reptilian Mimics

The zenta are an oddity, even by wildsea standards, a reptilian version of a cuckoo taken to crezzer-tinged extremes. Adult zenta lay their eggs in the corpse of another wildsea creature, and no matter its form - avian, bestial, insectile - the young zenta grow to mimic the shape and abilities of that grisly birthplace... With a few notable differences, admittedly. *Use zenta if you want the crew to face a scaled, hooded, toothen version of any other wildsea hazard.*

Drives

Nest in Remnants: Zenta are picky about their nesting spaces, choosing strong specimens that will give their young the best chance of success for their environment.

Roam Without Borders: Once mature, pair-bonded zenta may cover thousands of miles over their lifetime, eschewing territory for travel.

Presence

Sight:	Scales catching the evening light. A shed skin hanging like a ghost. A half-eaten carcass and shards of eggshell.
Taste:	Lean meat with a sour aftertaste.

Resources

Specimens:	Hood-Tooth, Scaled Skin, Porous Eggshell
Whispers:	Grown to Form, Reinvention

Aspects

Zenta Constants: No matter the form they grow into, all zenta retain certain characteristics: scaled skin (offering resistance to Keen and Spike weapons), a cobra-like hood (often lined with a toothy fringe, excellent at dealing CQ Keen or Serrated damage) and the ability to lay eggs.

Quirks

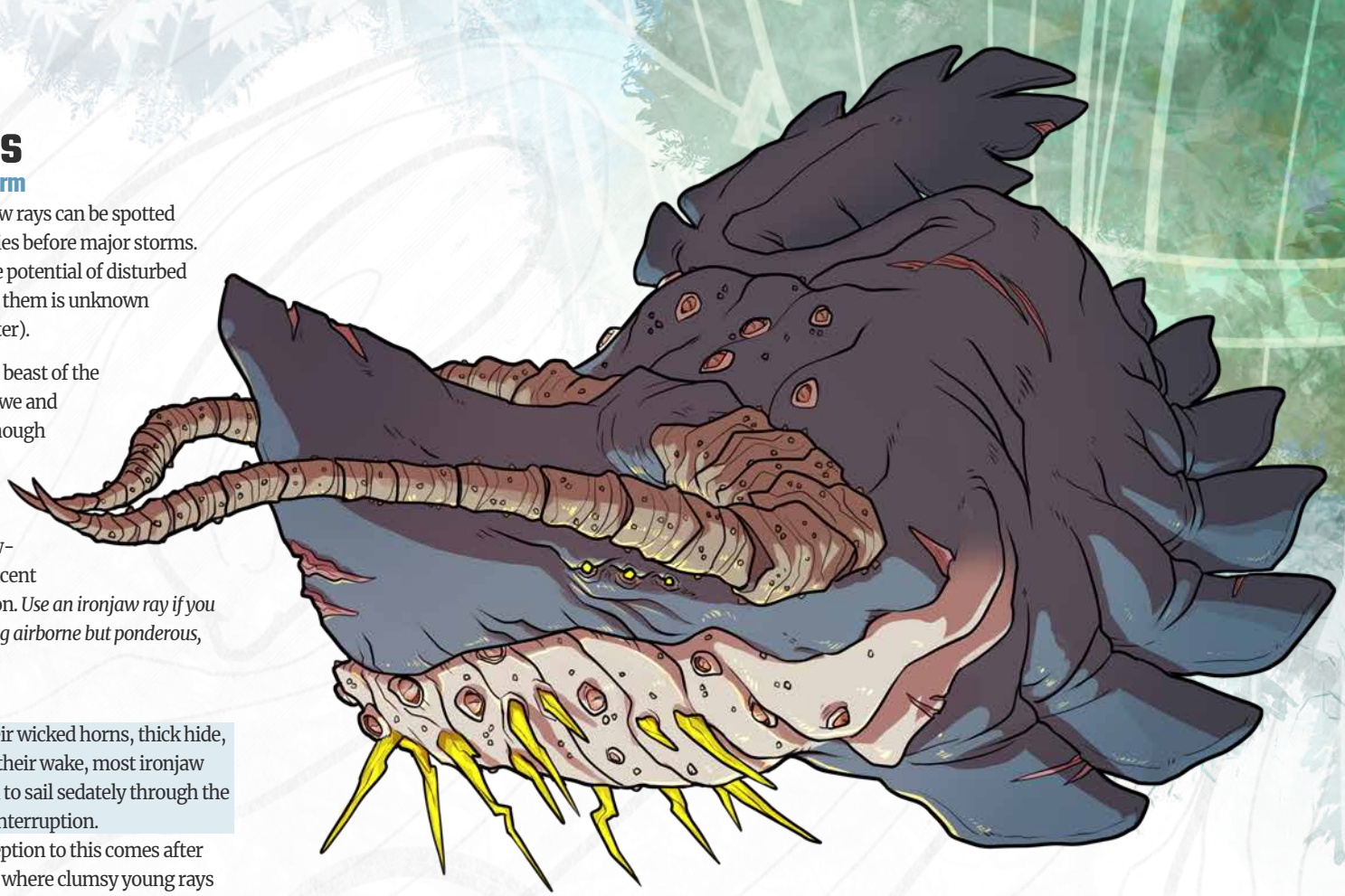
Everything Else: All other aspects of the zenta are down to the creature they fed on right after hatching - they could be anything from limbless eel-like predator to a lumbering ursine threat to a winged scavenger. *Use other hazard entries for inspiration, or get creative with unexpected forms for the crew to encounter!*

Ironjaw Rays

[Huge] Heralds of the Storm

Huge, graceful, aloof - ironjaw rays can be spotted sailing slowly through the skies before major storms. Whether they're drawn to the potential of disturbed air or drag the storms behind them is unknown (though most suspect the latter).

Perhaps more than any other beast of the rustling waves, rays inspire awe and worship in equal measure. Though they were a prime target for ambitious hunters in the earliest days of the waves, the practice of ironjaw-hunting has dropped off in recent years in favour of conservation. *Use an ironjaw ray if you want the crew to face something airborne but ponderous, with environmental effects.*



Drives

Live a Placid Life: Despite their wicked horns, thick hide, and the storms they bring in their wake, most ironjaw rays want nothing more than to sail sedately through the skies of the wildsea without interruption.

Protect The Family: The exception to this comes after the ironjaw birthing-season, where clumsy young rays travelling too close to the upper reaches of the tangle attract the attention of hunters and wavetop predators.

Presence

Sight: Dark shapes against a darkening sky. Silhouettes in lightning-flashes.

Sound: The rumble of thunder and ceaseless drumming of rain on leaves.

Smell: Petrichor gone wild.

Taste: Rubbery hides with a taste of the old sea, flesh that makes your teeth itch and tongue tingle. Trying to eat a spine will likely give an electric shock.

Resources

Specimens: Thunder-Spines, Ray Hide

Whispers: Storm on a Leash

Aspects

Spiralling Horns: Used to gouge and tear, with added electrical charge. Deals Spike and Volt damage.

Thunder-Spines: Release bursts of Blast and Volt damage when broken, but without them the ray loses the ability to make any kind of Volt attack.

Undulating Fringe: Ironjaws don't fly fast, but they can retreat into the darkening clouds above whenever they wish.

The Storm-In-Tow: Perhaps as an effect of atmospheric pressure, perhaps chemical interaction, perhaps curse or words or whispers running wild... Whatever the reason, where ironjaw rays are seen to fly the locals start readying themselves for a storm. *If you want a truly titanic storm, the rules are on page 266.*

Quirks

Titanic: The ray is almost leviathan sized, and its shock attacks deal massive damage. Damaging a ray of this size is no trivial undertaking - reduce impact of all attacks made against it unless from a deck weapon.

Winterkind: The ray is an avatar of the winter winds, dragging an uncannily unseasonal blizzard rather than a storm. Replace all instances of Volt damage with Frost damage.

Insects

Crawling, scuttling, chitinous and driven - insects on the wildsea range from ratroaches in a port's gutter to ship-sized mantids with claws sharp enough to cut through steel. Wildsailors run into insects and insect-related complications almost as much as they do beasts.

Insects in Play

Insects aren't mindless, but they're far more likely to **sacrifice** themselves for the good of a greater hive or colony. While larger insects can be a threat on their own (as larger insects are more likely to prey on humanesque individuals for sustenance, and less likely to fear or flee from ships passing through their territory), swarms of smaller insects are just as dangerous in different ways.

An encounter with insects doesn't have to be a fight - a swarm or disturbed territory might leave the ship with an **infestation**, a long-term condition that can make other actions on the ship more difficult to accomplish.

Hungry Swarm

A cloud of stinging, biting insects, usually released into the air by a ship's bite cutting through a hive. A particularly potent swarm might deal Acid damage, or a swarm of predatory glowflies could inflict contact burns represented with Flame damage. *Instead of dealing damage to the characters, some swarms will reduce the quality of their resources or damage their gear specifically.*

Firefly Wisps

Motes of light drifting through the night, the ghosts of spent fireflies that attract other spirits - firefly wisps aren't hostile or dangerous on their own, but their presence signifies restless spirits nearby. This might cause mire, or a lasting negative effect. *The presence of firefly wisps gives ghosts a measure of solidity that they usually lack, allowing them to act on the physical world with impressive potency. Dispersing the fireflies returns an affected ghost to their natural (or unnatural) state of semi-solidity. This may be linked to the presence of the fireflies themselves, or particularly to the light they shed.*

Lumberwasps

Bark-eating wasps the size of a clenched fist. Dogged in their protection of their territory, these vicious little things hold a surprisingly nutty flavour when cooked. *Lumberwasp 'nests' are an oddity, even for the wildsea - the wasps strip a tree of its bark and then root their bodies into the wood below, creating a living covering that prevents the exposed wood from rotting.*

Rusting Crawlers

Squat, iron-eating insects with multiple layers of thick chitinous plating. They spit acid to weaken metallic targets, but it works well against flesh and furs too. Burns gear tracks, marks others (Acid / Break). *When threatened, their plating reforms into a ball-like structure, allowing them to roll away and negate incoming damage. Rolls can also be used to smash into targets (Blunt / Knockback).*

Lagaju

Eel-like caterpillars, sleek and swift, yet oddly docile. Lagaju burrow into trees and rot them from the inside, letting their grubs grow fat on the denaturing wood before they split their skins and enter their mature state. *Lagaju are most often used as chariot-pullers; they're fast, easy to train and eat an omnipresent natural resource.*

Hymnal Moths

These foot-long moths, usually found circling the ruins of old temples and churches caught up in the tangle, are more of a psychological threat than a physical one. One flap of their dust-covered wings causes rapture in those close enough to inhale, with hallucinations usually centred around haunting music from all directions at once. *The dust clouds surrounding hymnal moths cause a specific injury, manifesting as religious high-mindedness and deafening choirs. Eating a hymnal moth leaves one capable of understanding religious carvings and musical pieces, regardless of their language, for a short time.*

Thorn-Sails

A common sight across the waves, thorn-sails are near-mindless insects whose carapaces have a distinctive sail-like rise running along the back. Single travellers from the hunting tribes often 'surf' these creatures across the waves, hanging from this chitin sail and steering their mounts by leaning. *Thorn-sails are unusual in that they don't technically need to eat or drink - most of their life is spent in a cocoon-like stage, absorbing nutrients from their surroundings. Once they've absorbed enough, they'll cut their way free and head out across the waves with seemingly no purpose, lasting up to a year before their energies run dry and they spin another cocoon to feed once more.*

Snowflies

White-furred insects that drift lazily in the warm air currents of the tangle, snowflies are more of a benefit than a threat. *Though large enough clouds of them can hinder vision, their sudden and spiralling disappearance is a telltale sign that a larger predator is emerging from beneath.*

Hermit-Hull Crabs

Scavenger crabs that make their homes in whatever detritus they can find. Picking up a piece of salvage with a hull-hermit inside is considered foreboding by some, a delicious treat by others. *Hermit-hulls are rumoured to grow to fit their salvaged shells, exchanging them for bigger and bigger finds throughout their lives. Some drunken wildsailors swear blind they've seen ancient hermits as big as cathedrals... And they might well be right.*

Copperclad Scorpions

The amount of fear generated by such a small creature is impressive, but not as impressive as the segmented beast's defence mechanism - the copperclad's stinger contains a toxin that causes a sudden and irrevocable change in the affected area, metallicizing flesh and bone. *A lucky few (if lucky is really the right word) survive the pain and shock caused by this process, and their body adapts to work with its new metal part. Some dedicated show-fighters even allow themselves to be stung by a copperclad on purpose, turning their fists and feet into clumsy but high-impact weapons.*

Mantid Drakes

[Huge] Bizarre Hybrid Ship-Chasers

An uncanny blend of praying mantis and dragonfly, resulting in aggressive hunters that are confident (and hungry) enough to ambush and tackle ships. Mantid drakes are patient and well camouflaged, but once they have the scent of a ship they'll pursue it until they've either fed or been driven back.

All mantid drakes are fast, but some can move their scythe-like forelimbs with such speed that they create blasts of sonic energy, rocking a ship and throwing its crew off balance to increase their chances of a successful attack. *Use the mantid drake if you want the crew to face a dragon-like foe with a wildsea twist.*

Drives

Hunt Ships, Eat Crews: Mantid drakes go to great lengths to satisfy their diet of worked wood and terrified wildsailor, and rarely retreat before sating their hunger.

Presence

Sight:	An unnaturally still patch of otherwise normal sea.
Smell:	A scent like heated soil.
Taste:	Crunchy and sour, but the eyes and wings are considered a delicacy by some.

Resources

Specimens:	Mantid-Drake Eye, Scything Limb, Dragonflesque Wing
Whispers:	The Perfect Ambush, A Hunger for Ships

Aspects

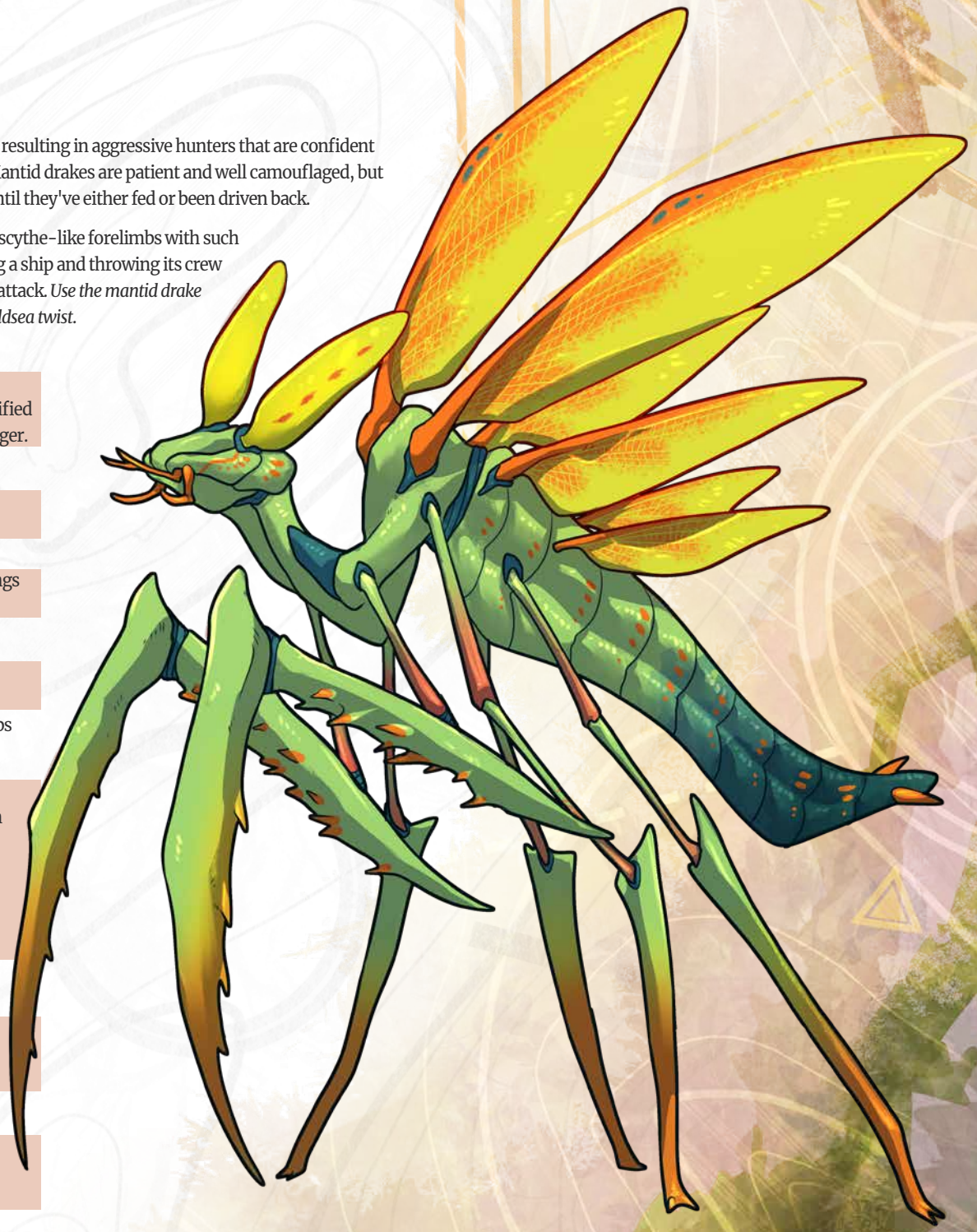
Blasting Scythes: Mantid drakes move and attack in bursts of furious energy - when the focus is on them in combat they'll move and attack multiple times, usually ending their movements far from their brutalised prey to give them time to 'charge up' again. Their scythes can deal Serrated, Spike or Keen damage at CQ, and Blast damage at LR.

Short Flight: The ability to leap or fly from vantage point to vantage point.

Hyper-Patient: Mantid drake stealth is almost beyond compare, and they might spend weeks in a statue-like pose waiting for a ship to pass.

Quirks

Scaled: A mantid drake with a covering of scales rather than smooth carapace, giving it much more armour and an old-world fantasy feel.



Snapperpillars

[Huge] Legs, Teeth & Chitinous Scales

Somewhere between crocodile and giant centipede, snapperpillars are fiercely territorial creatures that make their lairs in risen ruins. Most specimens have between ten and twenty legs, giving them a worrying turn of speed and the ability to climb sinuously around an environment despite their size. *Use a snapperpillar if you want the crew to face something as armoured as it is determined.*

Drives

Protect Territory: A single snapperpillar can lay claim to an entire ruin, jealously patrolling its pathways.

Satisfy Hunger: Impossible, but they keep trying.

Presence

Sight:	Two tonnes of muscle, armour and teeth. Four jaws spread wide. Cross-shaped bite-marks.
Sound:	The sandpaper rub of rough chitin. A low rumbling in the throat.
Smell:	Like an old swamp.
Taste:	Muddy flesh and unpalatable carapace-chitin, but a delicious tongue.

Resources

Specimens:	Quad Jaw, Snapper Tongue, Rough Chitin, Snapperpillar Eggs
Whispers:	Curious Crossbreed

Aspects

Hardened Carapace: Though the underbelly of a snapperpillar is vulnerable to attacks, most of the body is covered in thick armour-like chitin that is resistant to all forms of damage. Segments of this chitin rise and spread when the beast is enraged, making it seem even bigger than it already is.

Caterpillar Climb: Though able to move across most rough terrain with ease, snapperpillars are defeated by smooth vertical surfaces.

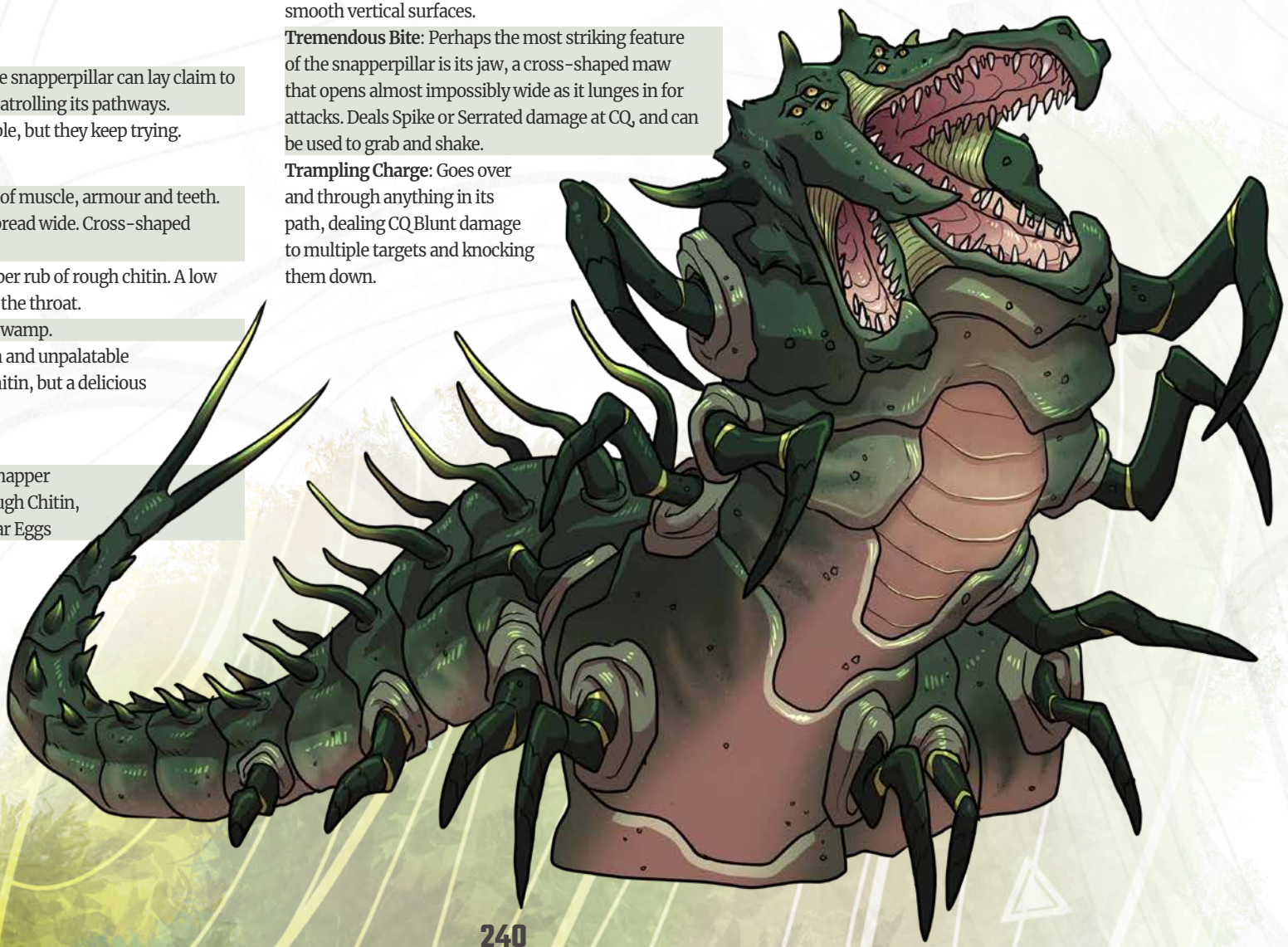
Tremendous Bite: Perhaps the most striking feature of the snapperpillar is its jaw, a cross-shaped maw that opens almost impossibly wide as it lunges in for attacks. Deals Spike or Serrated damage at CQ, and can be used to grab and shake.

Trampling Charge: Goes over and through anything in its path, dealing CQ Blunt damage to multiple targets and knocking them down.

Quirks

Hexjaw: A mutation with additional jaws - even more bite power!

Ghostly Snapper: Though not actually spirits, some snapperpillars are hatched with a curious affliction that leaves their carapace glassy and entirely transparent.



Ambush Scorpions

[Variable] Sly Arachnid Hunters

Sometimes growing as large as a trading vessel, ambush scorpions are lone predators that dwell in the thickest parts of the tangle. While hiding, they patiently wait for the nearby scuffling of beasts - or the roar of a chainsaw prow - to make their move. *Use ambush scorpions to surprise the crew at the worst moments.*

Drives

Take Choice Morsels: Ambush scorpions tend to lash out at ships as they pass, then pull themselves onto the decks to pluck at the choicest prey in the ensuing confusion. When given time to hide among the branches they are extremely hard to spot, despite their size.

Presence

Sight: A sudden stirring beneath the waves. A tail like a crook. A cluster of translucent young.
Sound: Mandibles clicking hungrily. The snap and clatter of pincers and chitin plates.
Smell: Sharp. Sour.
Taste: Scorpion chitin is (almost) inedible, but the meat within is stringy and soft.

Resources

Specimens: Chitin Plating, Venom Sacs, Twin Pincers
Whispers: Lying in Wait

Aspects

Carapace: Good camouflage against the local waves. Weak to Spike, but resistant to Blunt and Blast.
Curving Stinger: Large enough to cause serious injuries, and packed with wicked venom. Deals CQ Spike or Toxin damage (larger-tailed specimens may even reach LR).
Pincers: Strong enough to snap through wood and crush bone. Deals CQ Keen damage.

Quirks

Venom Jet: A high-pressure gland that shoots blinding, caustic liquid from the scorpion's stinger, dealing LR Toxin damage.
Whiplash: The usual curving tail is replaced with a lengthy tendrilesque whip, able to wrap around objects and hoist them aloft. Deals LR Blunt damage.

Manta Slugs

[Small] Swift Vessels of Spreading Slime

A slug the size of a dog with a wide, manta ray-like front section. These slugs are remarkably swift movers, 'swimming' in fast-exuded slime as easily up walls and across ceilings as over floors.

Manta slugs often travel with a coterie of immature sluglings, thousands of smaller creatures that swarm surfaces and turn them treacherous. *Use manta slugs if you want the crew to face something swift and horde-like, dealing an unusual damage type.*

Drives

Terraform: The slime that manta slugs exude is long lasting and difficult to clear, sometimes turning entire regions into a sticky haven perfect for their movement.

Presence

Sight: A moving mass of tiny bodies. A ray-like form, heaving and glistening.
Sound: Sucking, sliding noises.
Touch: Unpleasantly sticky.
Taste: Like wet ash.

Resources

Specimens: Manta Eye-Stalks, Searing Slime
Whispers: Horde of Hot Tears

Aspects

Soft-Bodied: Manta slugs are resistant to Blunt, Cold, Flame, and Volt damage. They're weak to Spike and Salt.
Charge: Manta slugs take advantage of their speed to charge into targets, knocking them off balance. Deals light CQ Blunt damage and knocks targets down.
Searing Slime: Exposed skin that comes into contact with the slime from a manta slug feels like it's been set on fire, dealing heavier CQ Flame damage.

Quirks

Horde: Manta slugs move with thousands of younger specimens. Areas they fill are slippery and unstable, causing cut whenever movement-based skills are used.

Rotipedes

[Medium] Fungal Insect

Rotipedes are large, many-legged arthropods who maintain a symbiotic relationship with the fungi growing on their bodies. Both host and fungal parasite have voracious appetites, and the fungus's ability to accelerate decomposition enables a rotipede to consume almost anything. *Use rotipedes if you want the crew to face a fast, ravenous hunger.*

Drives

Consume: An overwhelming drive that rotipedes will go to any length to satisfy.

Presence

Sight: Too many legs covered in finger-like growths. A smooth, yet soft, exoskeleton. Large, hooked mandibles.
Sound: Clicking and skittering.
Taste: Chewy and earthy, with a hint of lobster.

Resources

Specimens: Digestive Spores
Whispers: Voracious Consumption

Aspects

Insatiable Omnivory: Rotipedes will eat anything organic, particularly plant materials and meat. They have been known to devour whole crews and their ships, leaving only metal fixtures behind.
Decomposing Bite: The first attack of a rotipede's mandibles deals CQ Serrated damage, and the fungus follows it up with an injury-causing poison. After its target has been bitten for the first time, the Serrated damage increases.

Spectrapedes

[Large] Slipwise Spectralities

A voracious insect like creature capable of jaunting between the material and spectral realms. Though they pose a great danger, they are often hunted for their unique parts (which can be used to enhance a wildsailor's connection to the uncanny). *Use a spectrapede if you want to endanger spirit-heavy crews, or highlight the link between worlds.*

Drives

Haunt: Much like the spirits they feed on, spectrapedes take up residence in ancient and abandoned structures.

Presence

Sight: A glimpse of carapace fading from sight.
Sound: Whispering wails on the winds.
Feeling: A creeping sense of dread.

Resources

Specimens: Faceted spirit-eyes, Spectral Goo
Whispers: Between Two Worlds

Aspects

Border Walker: Residing in the wildsea the majority of the time, while hunting a spectrapede may cross over to the realm of spirits. A spectrapede may approach from any angle, increasing the impact of its first attack.
Soul Sight: Spectrapedes view the world in ways few do, registering the essence of being within the living as well as it does within constructs and spirits.
Essence Grinder: While capable of eating physical food, spectrapedes's maw can render spirits into a meal. Deals minor Spike damage, and significant Salt damage to spirits (and other such oddities).

Quirks

Flickering: The Border Walker aspect applies to every attack, as the spectrapede's movements are highly erratic and difficult to track.
Gorged: On rare occasions, a spectrapede may find an abundance of prey. Such spectrapedes are easier targets - treat disasters as conflicts when attacking.
Rapacious: Some spectrapedes actively seek living souls and fresh whispers to devour.

Winter Jackets

[Medium] Freezing Insect Gardeners

Most wildsailors go their entire lives without feeling the true sting of winter, being safely wrapped up in port through the coldest months. Not so those that encounter a swarm of winter jackets out on the waves; their internal chemical processes suffuse them with a preternatural cold, used both as a tool for survival and an effective weapon. *Use winter jackets if you want the crew to face an unusual swarm with an equally unusual damage type.*

Drives

Protect the Hive: A container of grubs and a single queen.

Presence

Sight: A powder blue blur. Uniform patterns of ice.
Sound: A muffled hum. Frosted mandibles clinking.
Smell: Saccharine snowfall. Bitter pheromones.
Taste: Like crab, straight from the icebox.

Resources

Specimens: Glacial Nectar, Frostbite Venom
Whispers: A Chilling Buzz
Charts: A Directorial Dance

Aspects

Fleeced Exoskeleton: Winter jackets are immune to Frost damage and the effects of extreme cold.

Mandibles: Winter jackets chew up biomass and mix it with ice to create a freezing, sticky propolis. Their bites deal CQ Frost and Hewing damage.

Stinger: Faced with large or particularly intimidating threats, winter jackets will dive bomb other creatures with their stinger. The Frostbite Venom they produce can turn an entire wildsailor into an ice sculpture in minutes.

Tundra Tenders: Given a certain plant specimen and a little time, a hive can find a way to make it grow in sub-zero temperatures.

Quirks

Bumble Freeze: A hive or individual winter jacket that is particularly clumsy and amicable.

Snowdrone: A special hivemember that can whip up a harsh blizzard with its wings.

Ice Queen: Ten times larger than usual but unable to fly. Any interaction will quickly stir the attention of the hive.

Hive-Glacier (Landmark)

Typically Found In: The warmer reaches of the wild waves, throughout the year
The Worst Idea: Grub theft, closely followed by heists for combs and honey

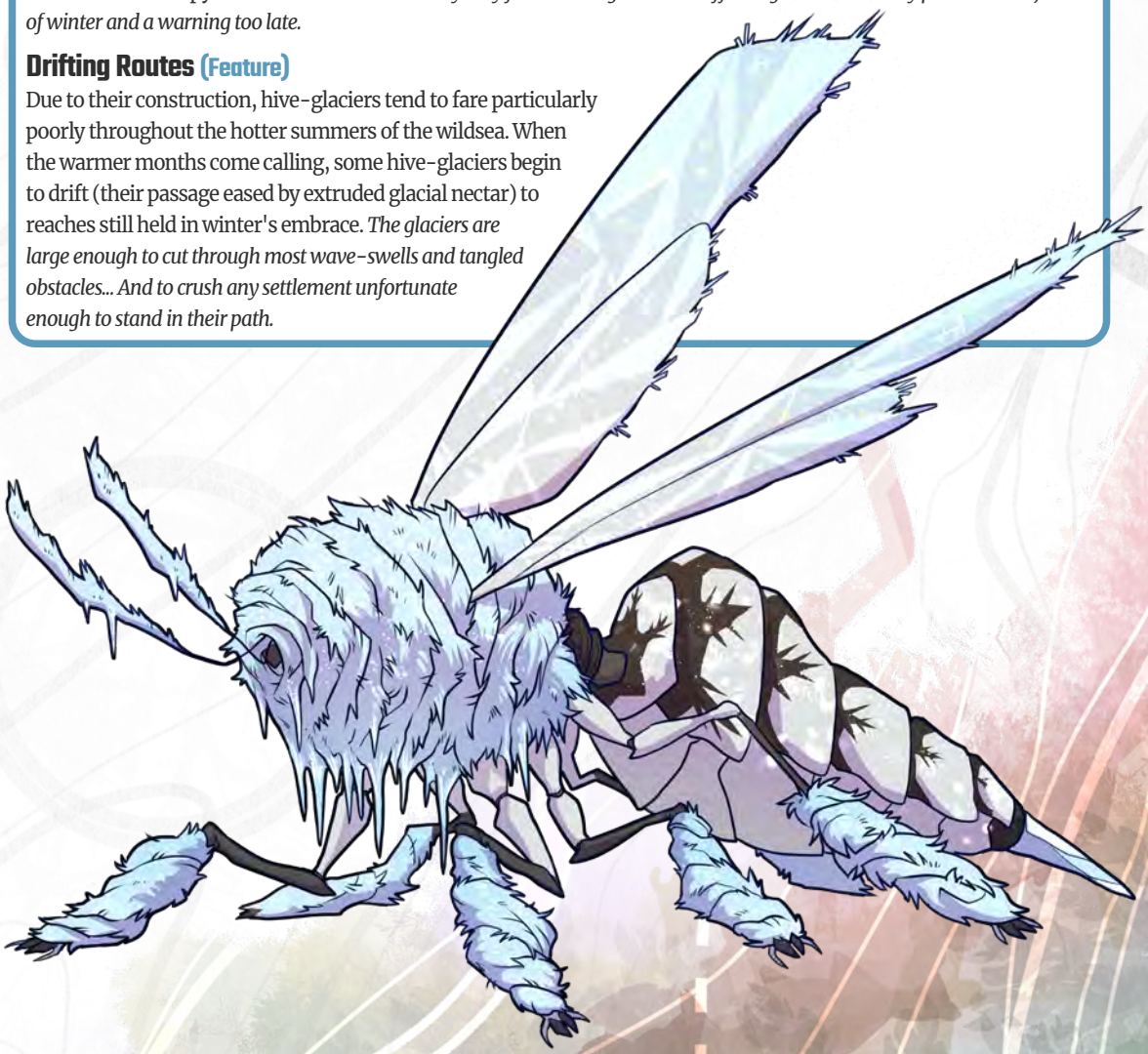
Constructions of hardened nectar and uncanny ice, hive-glaciers are kept cold throughout the year by the winter jackets swarming within them. Even the most meagre hive-glacier is an impressive sight, a sub-zero fortress surrounded by plants adapted, through the ministrations of its denizens, to the extreme cold.

The Creeping Cold (Horror)

Though most hive-glaciers are easy enough to spot by the glint of sunlight on ice, some are hidden within ironroot trunks or the canopy below. *Such hives are usually only found through the chill afflicting the crew as they pass too close, a bite of winter and a warning too late.*

Drifting Routes (Feature)

Due to their construction, hive-glaciers tend to fare particularly poorly throughout the hotter summers of the wildsea. When the warmer months come calling, some hive-glaciers begin to drift (their passage eased by extruded glacial nectar) to reaches still held in winter's embrace. *The glaciers are large enough to cut through most wave-swells and tangled obstacles... And to crush any settlement unfortunate enough to stand in their path.*



Plants

The wildsea is full of plants - some medicinal, some poisonous, some tiny or huge or winding or bursting. The plants detailed here are the ones that might do more than act as simple scenery, either because of the effects they have on the immediate area, or because they're the predatory kind that will snap you up if you're not careful.

Potential Plant Encounters

Obstacle: The plant is dangerous but stationary, and the crew have to approach it or somehow bypass it to achieve their goals. You might track the plant's awareness of their activities or position, it building up to releasing some sort of toxin or spore, or the resilience of the plant growth as they try to hack their way through it.

Moving Threat: The plant is ambulatory, a hunter on the move or a roving danger they pull too close to. You might track the plant's time spent active before it becomes dormant again, its hunger (leading up to a frenzied chase when it's gone without food), or the various important parts of its body (petals, stamen, roots etc) if a fight breaks out.

Pitcher Nests

A thicket of parasitic pitcher plants exuding a sweet, heady scent. Their trumpet-like bodies are usually surrounded by swarms of insects or the bones of smaller beasts. *The scent emanating from a pitcher nest draws insects, arachnids and even some mammals. Tzelicrae may be affected. The plant itself can deal Acid damage to anything that blunders into it, and the swarm of insects yet to be claimed can bite and sting crewmates that get too close.*

Saintbloom

Saintbloom seeds are microscopic, drifting like spores until they root themselves painlessly into a living creature. When enough of the seeds have rooted an episode of explosive growth is triggered, covering the unlucky host with lush white flowers. *A saintbloom flowering is an unpleasant experience, but not a painful one. Some even choose to co-exist with or even cultivate the parasitic flowers as a fashion choice.*

Skyward Roots

Exactly what they sound like, bizarre root-systems spearing up from the canopy to take sustenance from the clouds above. Some skyward roots are large enough to rival tallshanks, and can be just as easily adapted to host a port or settlement. *There's no hard data on what lies at the 'base' of a skyward root system - some kind of inverted flower, perhaps? A split bulb, preposterously innocent? More roots? Crews would have to travel deep to find out.*

Drift Lilies

Ranging from the size of an open hand to an open cargo hold, drift lilies are flowers without stems or roots that float lazily around the lower reaches of the sky. *Though harmless on their own, stormfronts and wind patterns can gather them into vision-obscuring clouds. Some pirates are even rumoured to travel within drifts of these lilies to disguise their activities or launch surprise attacks.*

Crabweed

Named for the flexing, pincer-like movement of its stems, crabweed grows on poorly processed wood. *If your wood-hulled ship begins to slow and catch on the waves around you, checking the outer structure from crabweed is often a good bet. Growths can be rooted out with chemicals and a good coat of tar will keep the area clear.*

Haska

Long-stemmed mushrooms that grow like ancient telegraph poles, lines of them linked by mucoid strands. *Haska are sometimes used as message relay routes, trained lemurs or centipedes scuttling along them with sealed notes.*

Surgeon's Moss

Found on shaded ironroot trunks, surgeon's moss has extreme coagulant properties - medically useful if prepare correctly, but... *Getting untreated surgeon's moss into an open wound can instantly clot a massive amount of blood, suddenly petrifying a limb or shutting down an organ.*

Phosphor Blossoms

A catch-all name for a huge variety of petalled vegetation scattered throughout the wild waves, areas dense with phosphor blossoms are never truly dark. *Phosphor blossoms commonly glow blue, but different areas carry different strains. A wildsea night might be tinged with rich crimson, purple or gold.*

Acid-Jet Lotuses

A meat-eating plant that stands statuesque and beautiful, waiting for prey to come close enough to be caught in a pressurized corrosive spray. *Different families of lotus have different chemical properties to their spray - some are caustic, some blinding, some loaded with pheromones to call larger creatures. None are pleasant.*

Wormapple Trees

Parasitic fruit-bearing trees... perhaps. Nobody is quite sure whether the chitinous apples produced are fruit, insect, or somewhere in between. They are delicious though, and have become a staple foodstuff in many reaches. *Wormapple harvests are time-sensitive, the fruit either rotting or becoming far more vigorous if left on the branch for too long.*

Fan-o'-War

A predatory jellyfish-like plant that scuds gently through the air aided by buoyant, gas-filled seeds, trailing sticky tendrils in its wake. Whenever a fan-o'-war's tendrils brush up against a warm-blooded creature, they lash out and curl up on instinct, drawing the unlucky target toward the plant for digestion. *Fan-o'-War's usually begin to sink when digesting prey, giving crews a limited time to save abducted fellows before they drift out of sight.*

Lackey-Thorn

A fast-growing vine ridged with thorns, attracted to idling ships but sensitive to light. Growing quickly even by the standards of the wilds, lackey-thorn can encircle the hull of a stalled vessel within minutes. *Cutting back a lackey-thorn is a difficult task, but made substantially easier in the presence of daylight or other strong sources of light (such as flares).*

Jawthorn Seeds

[Large] Voracious Ballistic Husks

The sentient seeds of the jawthorn tree driven to search for nutrients to consume before they take root. They resemble truncated alligators wrapped in nut-like husks, most of their body being nothing more than mouth and stomach. *Use jawthorn seeds if you want the crew to face something unusual that will hunt them doggedly in the right conditions.*

Drives

Single-Minded Pursuit: Once a jawthorn seed picks a target, they'll track it ceaselessly by scent until either it or the target is dead.

Presence

Sight: Shed husk matter. Bark ripped open.
Sound: Creaking like a ship in a storm.
Smell: Coconut and fading incense smoke.
Taste: Tough, woody, like jasmine smells.

Resources

Specimens: Seed Husk, Jawthorn Tooth-Lumber
Whispers: Ready to Root, Ceaseless Hunger

Aspects

Prodigious Bite: Being mostly gullet and stomach, jawthorn seeds tend to savage their target with Spike damage until it can no longer escape and then swallow them whole before resting and taking root.

Scramble: Jawthorn seeds climb, jump, and run swiftly but haphazardly, falling often.

Jawthorn Fungus: A mold-like infection that grows quickly in jawthorn bite wounds (creates an infection-based Injury track).

Quirks

Split Seed: An aged, overgrown jawthorn seed that's taken massive damage to its stomach, leaving it unable to absorb enough nutrients to take root.

Dreadnought: An oversized seed that moves far slower than most, but has enough built-up husk that it's resistant to almost all damage.

Fungal Squid

[Medium] Brachiative Vestiges of an Old Salt Sea

Rarely larger than the wolves they hunt, fungal squids swing dextrously from branch to branch in pursuit of their prey. Bereft of mouths, they eat by grappling their prey tight enough to break bones and then clustering around them, absorbing the natural process of decomposition. *Use fungal squid if you want the crew to face something fast and mobile that's more interested in harming their companions than them.*

Drives

Grapple and Consume: Fungal squids feed in groups, working together to take down a target before feeding.

Presence

Sight: Swinging, mushroom-like forms. Fleeing beasts.
Sound: None, save the rustle of branches and flat thump of a tentacled body hitting deck-planking.
Taste: Like the rarest and most succulent mushrooms, but more oaky than earthy.

Resources

Specimens: Fungal Tendril, Mushroom Slice
Whispers: Birth from Rot, Lithe Hunter

Aspects

Tendrils: Different varieties of fungal squid have different tendrils - some tipped with arrow-shapes, some suckered, others meaty and roped with muscle. All can deal Blunt damage at CQ, but most have other damage types they can deal up close as well.

Fungal Construction: The squids are immune to Toxin damage, but weak to Flame, Frost and Hewing.

Natural Brachiators: There are few places on the wildsea that a fungal squid can't get to.

Quirks

Specific Targets: Some fungal squids, especially smaller specimens, will target a crew's companions rather than anything else. A companion abducted by a fungal squid's tendrils will be able to struggle, but won't be able to free itself without help.

Vipervines

[Variable] Spreading Plant Swarm

A twisting mass of vines that snake through the treetops, tangling their prey before they reveal fang-like thorns and begin to feast. *Use vipervines if you want the crew to face an uncomplicated, instinct-driven opponent.*

Drives

Instinctual Feeding: Vipervines eat indiscriminately, seeking nutrients from whatever source they can to fuel their movements.

Presence

Sight: Olive-grey vines and dull yellow thorns. Diamond-patterned flowerbuds. Small skeletons with greenery twisting between the bones.
Taste: Hearty, bloody, vegetative.

Resources

Specimens: Fang-Like Thorn, Small Bones
Whispers: Coiled and Ready

Aspects

Bind and Bite: Vipervines deal light Blunt damage to anything they can grab and strangle, then Spike damage when they 'bite' with their retractable thorns.

Ever-Moving: The vines need an immense amount of energy to fuel their perpetual snake-like movements, driving them to consume prey at a worryingly high rate.

Quirks

Paralytic: Some thorns carry a fast-acting paralyzing agent, which can shut down most biological-based bodies in a matter of hours... or minutes. This is a good time for a hidden track with some slowly developing symptoms before a sudden crash.

Haskavo

[Variable] Hijacked Fungal Network Nodes

Most sailors have come across across 'haska' in their travels, long-stemmed mushrooms that form a sort of mucoid network running through the thrash. For many they're a mild curiosity, at most - for those in the know, they bring involuntary shudders and terrible memories of comrades lost.

The haskavo are moving nodes of the haska network, fungal growths that latch onto the corpses of beasts and sailors and reanimate them, using their skeletal structure as a base to build a grisly marionette. Every haskavo is attached to a haska tower by a mucoid strand, enabling them to act as a moving sensory node for an unnerving and inscrutable intelligence. *Use the haskavo is you want the crew to face unpredictable foes with unusual senses.*

Drives

Unknown: One of the true terrors of the haskavo is that despite its lack of secrecy and cunning, nobody has yet discerned what it actually wants. Individual nodes have been seen doing a variety of things - cataloguing other plants, hijacking ships, singing to the sun, carving unknown symbols into the bark of the ironroots - but it never seems to serve a greater purpose.

Presence

Sight:	A burst of spore and mucus. An individual in tattered clothes, their movements stilted.
Sound:	Soft ticking or ominous silence.
Smell:	Bursts of carrion air, tinged with something approaching raspberry.

Resources

Specimens:	Haska Mushroom-Caps, Transfer Mucus
Salvage:	Ripped Clothing, Ill-Kept Weaponry
Whispers:	A Grand Design, Unknown and Unknowable

Aspects

Sensory Relay: Haskavo nodes 'see' through vibration and keen hearing, their fungal growths entirely unable to process light. If one haskavo senses something, others nearby are immediately aware of it as well.

Spore Thrash: Animalistic haskavo may attack with bites or claws, usually dealing light CQ Keen or Spike damage, but all haskavo can (if threatened or prevented from carrying out their unknowable tasks) burst, dealing CQ Toxin damage (or LR if the wind carries the spores in the right way) to anyone nearby and potentially seeding them to become nodes themselves.

Fungal Form: The average haskavo is mostly bone, sinew, and fungus, resistant to Blunt damage.

The Central Node (Living Location)

The Smell: A Suffusion of Information

Hazard Suits: A must-have if you want to get out of there with your mind intact

The entire haska network connects, eventually, to the central node, a massive construction of fungus, stone, and leviathan bones. It moves through the upper reaches of the sink, thousands upon thousands of tendrils spearing off into the darkness, some running hundreds of miles to a distant node.

Something in the Air (Horror)

Entering the Central Node without some sort of environmentally protective suit is extremely ill-advised - even being close to the thing begins to fill the heads of any sapient creature with unusual fungal thoughts, snatches of overheard conversation and ancient secrets. The closer one gets to the node, the stronger these outside mental influences become. *An exploratory party of gau made their way here long ago, assuming that their own fungal bodies would be immune to the wild information threading the air of the node. They were sadly mistaken, and their ship is still moored to one of the node's stone clusters, towed along in its wake.*

The Lion's Mane

[Large] Petalled Apex Predator

A burst of golden petals sitting atop four wide, spider-spread limbs, the lion's mane is a hunting plant with a taste for blood. Usually moving in pairs, they attack in tandem, one rampaging wildly through an area and the other leaping upon any prey that flees the carnage. *Use the lion's mane if you want the crew to face a pair of terrifyingly single-minded predators.*

Drives

Blood-Hunger: The Lion's Mane tends to ignore creatures without hot blood in their veins until they damage it.

Pair Tactics: One lion's mane will usually begin an encounter in hiding, using the other as a distraction before leaping in for the attack.

Presence

Sight:	Toothmarks flecked with golden dust. Sun-coloured petals flexing and rippling in anticipation.
Sound:	A rattling lion-like roar.
Smell:	Old blood and sweet pollen.
Taste:	Hearty, earthy flavour for the limbs. Boiling the petals gives them an appealing sugary note.

Resources

Specimens:	Maw Petals, Root-Like Hide
Whispers:	Drawn to Blood, One Lies in Wait

Aspects

Toothen Petals: Though the petals themselves are soft, they's studded with tooth-like spines that deal Spike, Keen, or Serrated damage at CQ.

Impaling Limbs: Tough like old roots, the lion's mane limbs end in wickedly sharp points. Can deal CQ Spike damage, or Blunt damage if used to sweep.

Fibrous Skin: Lion's Manes are weak to Flame and Hewing damage, but their fibrous hides mean that their bodies (though not their petals) are unusually resistant to Blunt, Keen and even Serrated damage.

Quirks

Twin-Mane: A mutated lion's mane with multiple petal-mouths, a ship-sized solo hunter.

Strobing Communication: Petals ringed with phosphorescent patches used to spell out flickering words in Highvin, a means of lighting, hypnosis, and communication.

Wild Stamen: A lashing tongue-like stamen that curls around targets and draws them into the lion's mane's stomach. Targets swallowed in this way take Acid damage until they are freed.

Encounters

From Below: The lion's mane hauls itself onto the deck of the crew's ship with no warning, hissing and clicking and hungry. *Another can be heard in the distance.*

Distant Lights: The undercrew gather at the rail, pointing at the distant Highvin glyphs flashing over the waves. *None of them know what the source is, but maybe one of the characters does.*

Binary Rattle: Two lion's manes are hungry enough to assault a port the crew have docked at. *One stalks the streets, the other clambers over the rooftops to pick off those that flee.*

Broken Cage: A travelling circus shows off its new attraction - a tamed lion's mane that can answer questions the crowd throws its way. *When the curtains open, the cage is empty.*

A deep-throated roar echoing across the open waves.

A mass of root-like scything limbs.

A false maw lolling open, ringed with iridescent golden petals.

The lion's mane is hunting.

Manticore Blooms

[Various] Bizarre Pseudoreligious Horror

Virulent, quick-rooting blooms that favour flesh as a flowerbed. Sentient creatures infested with manticore blooms become servants to a greater purpose, the small red flowers waking a worrying religious zealotry that persists even when the blooms are removed at the root.

Manticore blooms perish easily to flame, but the natural fear almost all wildsea denizens have of the stuff has allowed them to take root in huge swathes across certain portions of the waves. Areas suffused with blooms are oddly quiet, with even insects succumbing to uncannily worship-like patterns. *Use manticore blooms to hit the crew with mental effects that have a physical root.*

Drives

Spread an Unknown Religion: It is unknown if any non-infected individual has knowledge of the 'religion' the blooms seem to inspire worship of in their hosts. Those who go through the painful procedure of being cured have no memory of it either.

Presence

Sight:	A scatter of bright-red flowers in a silent grove. A sailor orating frenziedly to a fearful crowd.
Sound:	No sound from the blooms themselves. Confused words of worship from the infected, almost but never quite fully comprehensible.
Smell:	Perfumed, sweet, uncanny, dangerous.
Taste:	Like heaven.

Resources

Specimens:	Manticore Seeds
Whispers:	An Unknown God, Red Words on the Stem.

Aspects

Truth in Worship: Listening intently to the ravings of those infested by manticore blooms causes mire, but also grants a level of gnostic understanding.

Lost in Flame: Manticore blooms are weak to Flame, but it also has the added effect of weakening the hold of nearby seeds on their hosts.

Tiricks

[Small] Playful Sensory Swarm

A tirick is a confusing little mass of bark, tendrils, and sensory vines, about the size of a day-old kitten (and about as co-ordinated). Alone one wouldn't be much of a problem (though it would still be difficult to catch), but they're never found alone - tiricks move in packs of twenty to several hundred, exploring and playing and getting caught underfoot. *Use tiricks if you want the crew to face something that holds them absolutely no malice, but can be a real goddamn nuisance.*

Drives

Swarm & Play: A tirick's short period of activity is full of innocent, inquisitive play.

Presence

Sight:	Bundles of moss and twigs. Twitching stems. Quivering moss frills.
Sound:	Inquisitive chittering.

Resources

Specimens:	Bark Sheddings, Sensory Shoot
Whispers:	The Trouble with Tiricks

Aspects

Underfoot: Tiricks have a habit of getting into places they really don't belong - in front of a sailor's legs as they're carrying supplies, into a sealed larder before a festival feast, into cracks in the engine just out of reach. They make everything a little more dangerous, a little less predictable, and a lot more distracting.

There Are Always More: Tiricks draw more tiricks. If the crew don't find some way to deal with the small number that show up at first, more and more will join them.

Quirks

Medicinal Options: Tirick secretions are a potent healing agent, but there will likely be ethical objections raised by crewmembers if an alchemist or surgeon tries to take advantage of this.

Tirick Warning System: When tiricks go into hiding and lose their inquisitive nature, it's a sign that something monumental is about to happen - a rootquake, or raging storm from a clear sky.

Octodew

[Huge] Sense-Beguiling Plant

Green and red, rich and wet, glistening and tentacular and ravenous. The octodew is technically an ambulatory plant, but it spends most of its time sitting motionless just beneath the surface of the tangle, using its sun-dew style limbs as a lure for other creatures. *Use an octodew if you want the crew to face something simple, patient and difficult to kill.*

Drives

Wait Out the Prey: Octodews rarely move far from the place they first grow, but can keep growing for decades. Even if all animals and insects in the area become aware of them, all they need to do is wait a few-short-lived generations for new unwary prey.

Presence

Sight:	Red beads gleaming under the sun. Clouds of insects, but not too big. A wide-open beak-like maw.
Sound:	Utter, patient silence.
Smell:	Overly sweet; more than honey, more than unwanted affections.

Resources

Specimens:	Attractant Polyp, Octodew Beak, Sickly Dew
Whispers:	Death is Sweet
Cargo:	Octodew Tentacle-Limb

Aspects

Patient: An octodew can wait for days, sometimes even weeks, satisfying itself with smaller insects until something large enough to merit movement and attack is snared.

Limbs and Beak: Both strong enough to deal high CQ Blunt and Hewing damage, from flailing and biting respectively.

Quirks

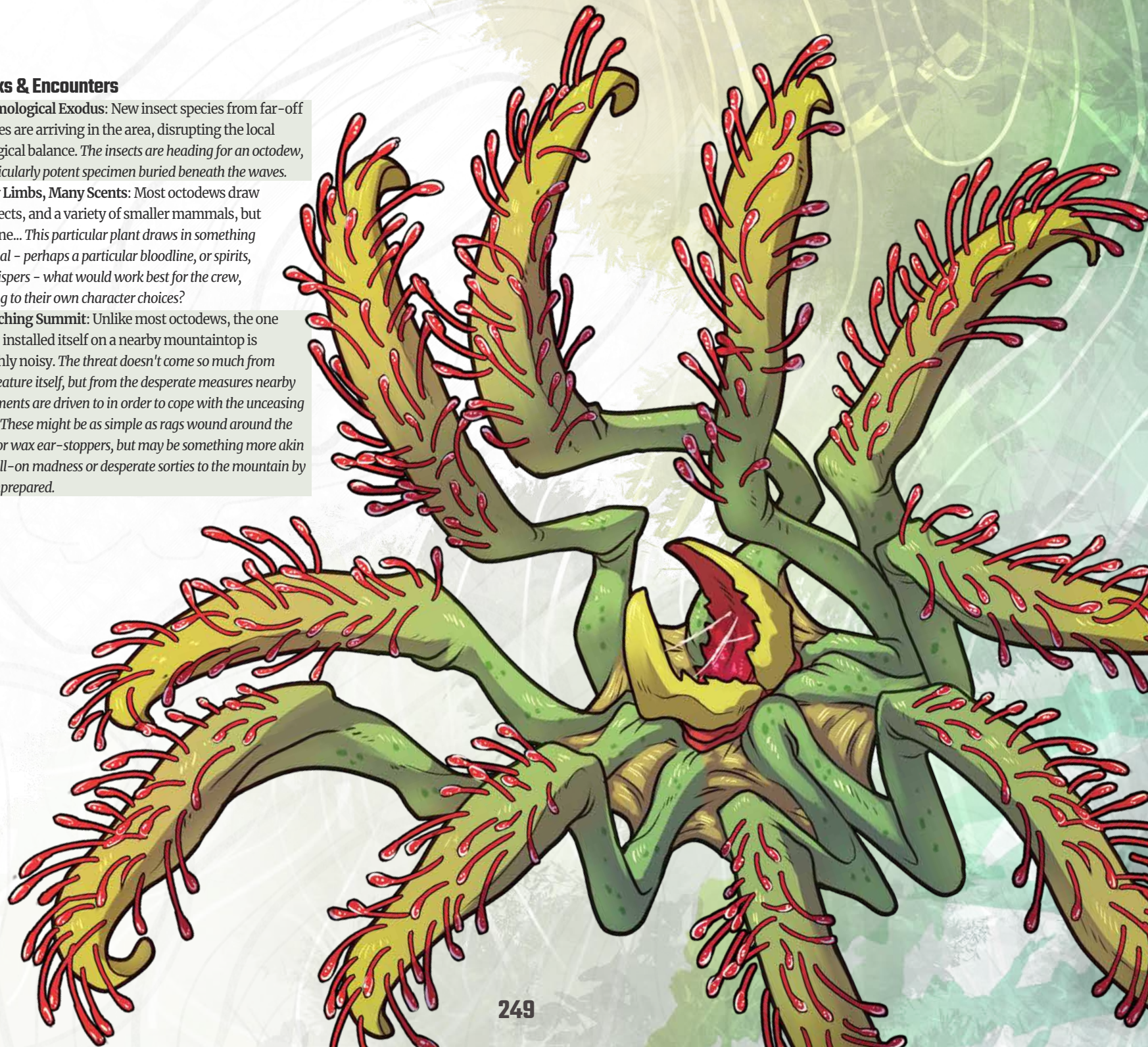
Corpseflower: Every now and then a quirk of crezzer-fuelled growth will leave an octodew stinking like a mound of corpses. This still attracts certain insects, but scares away larger prey - these octodews must hunt actively for larger creatures to consume.

Hooks & Encounters

Entomological Exodus: New insect species from far-off reaches are arriving in the area, disrupting the local ecological balance. *The insects are heading for an octodew, a particularly potent specimen buried beneath the waves.*

Many Limbs, Many Scents: Most octodews draw in insects, and a variety of smaller mammals, but this one... *This particular plant draws in something unusual – perhaps a particular bloodline, or spirits, or whispers – what would work best for the crew, playing to their own character choices?*

Screeching Summit: Unlike most octodews, the one that's installed itself on a nearby mountaintop is hellishly noisy. *The threat doesn't come so much from the creature itself, but from the desperate measures nearby settlements are driven to in order to cope with the unceasing noise. These might be as simple as rags wound around the head or wax ear-stoppers, but may be something more akin to a full-on madness or desperate sorties to the mountain by the unprepared.*



Constructs

Usually a collection of gears, pinwheels, and other assorted mechanical parts, constructs are a comparatively rare sight on the rustling waves compared to beasts or insects (and pre-verdant constructs, though they exist, are even rarer). This isn't due to a lack of materials, but a lack of skill - few rattlehands study and experiment enough to unlock the secrets of punchcard programming, the key to the majority of construct semi-intelligences.

Constructs in Play

One of the easiest facets to lean into when you introduce a construct is its **mindless nature** - unless specifically programmed for self-preservation, constructs will keep working at their tasks even if it means their own demise. Another is the concept of **internal fragility** - breaking through a construct's outer shell can be a daunting task, but once its innards are open to the world, it takes very little to throw a wrench into the works (sometimes literally). Finally, consider **time and purpose** - if not stopped, they'll work for years at a time.

Hidden Snares

A wood and iron mantrap with savage teeth, poised to snap shut at the slightest touch. *The hidden snare deals Hewing or Serrated damage to whatever it catches, but the bigger problem is its vice-like grip. Characters hit with the hidden snare will have to rely on their crewmates to free them unless they can radically alter their own body shape (such as a tzelicrae shedding its skin).*

Alarm Chains

How simple can a construct be and still be called a construct? These long lengths of chain are strung through the treetops, usually around a marauder's lair or particularly paranoid spit. When a ship moves over or gets caught on them, bells in the nearby settlement ring and alarm. *These can be a particular problem for chainsaw-prowed ships, blunting teeth and tangling in bites.*

Errant Limbs

A prosthesis denied its owner, either through another unfortunate injury or simply being replaced. *Most merely twitch occasionally, but some remember the actions they used to take when they were attached... and will do what they know, even if it threatens the ship.*

Orion's Wheels

Who Orion was has been lost to history, but every now and then one of his wheels will spin their way up to the surface - carriage-sized and made of shining metal, the wheels seem to roll through thin air, changing direction abruptly. *Are they a combination of compass and cart-horse, or a mode of personal transport, or an oversized child's toy? Even the wildsea's best minds haven't figured out any more than that they use magnetism to move.*

Ironburst

An ironbound that's had its animating spark ripped out and still somehow managed to keep going. Bereft of sense and mind but haunted by scraps of desire and instinct, their actions are impossible to predict. *Spirits begin to degrade and fragment in the presence of an ironburst, affected by echoes of the spectral violence visited upon its previous occupant.*

Rope-Golems

A bundle of ropes, usually looped and tangled into spiritually potent knots or hemming in a trapped whisper. *Exceedingly useful on a ship's deck or as a cargo-hauler, and sometimes even as part of an engine. There are debates as to the accuracy of calling them golems, and then more debates about the right some have to classify them as constructs at all.*

Specimen Collectors

The product of alchemical necessities and a rattlehand's grand ideas, the specimen collector is a shark-like construct that sails between the tree branches using magnetic repulsion. It lacks any kind of advanced punchcard mind, instead simply following instructions to collect and return a certain type of (usually dangerous) specimen to its owner. *The shark-based design keeps many other predators away, and allows it to defend itself and its collected specimen if necessary. There are reports of these collectors going rogue, but few people put stock in such stories.*

Tatterdam

A collection of small constructs that have self-assembled into a larger semi-conscious being, even to the extent of giving themselves a name and dressing themselves in discarded wildsailor clothing. *While rarely an inherent threat, a tatterdam's disorganized state means that some can be quick to anger, or unpredictably violent. Such individuals are often still able to be reasoned with though, something crews should keep in mind before resorting to violence.*

Thinking Engines

A very loosely applied term, thinking engines are the products of rattlehands trying to emulate true sapience with nothing more than overly elaborate sets of punchcards. *Though the wildsea is full of unusually intelligent plants and insects, a true thinking machine is still far beyond the grasp of post-Verdancy science and resources. Rattlehands that include pre-Verdant technology in their thinking engines are regarded by the majority as frauds taking short-cuts.*

Hekameks

About a hundred years into the new age of treetop sailing, a small group of amberclad engineers attempted to make miniaturized wave-crawling suits, packing as much salvaged technology into them as they could. The resulting machine exoskeletons were a monumental failure, but a few are still piloted by die-hard fanatics. *A mechanized suit rather than an autonomous construct, the biggest problem with running a hekamek is keeping it fuelled... and above the Darkness-Under-Eaves.*

Towerspiders

[Huge] Keepers of Secrets Long-Dead

Not really a spider - it has far too many appendages for that - but close enough in design to earn the nickname. These large constructs are often found performing curious tasks, likely now-useless maintenance, within the ruins of more technologically advanced pre-verdant structures. *Use a towerspider if you want the crew to face a multi-limbed aggressor bent on protecting something likely already looted.*

Drives

Perimeter or Interior Defence: Most towerspiders seem focused on protection, alongside more mundane tasks.

Presence

Sight:	A hunched body of smooth metal. Ancient script, finely embossed. Blinking lights.
Sound:	Spider-like appendages clicking and clashing. Blaring horns and warning tones.
Smell:	Acid and ozone and dust.

Resources

Salvage:	Fading Battery, Pre-Verdant Info Storage
Whispers:	Keeper of Towers, Intruder Alert
Cargo:	Towerspider Limb, Bundles of Wiring

Aspects

Defensive Attachments: Some of a towerspider's many limbs are made for defence - they might deal Volt, Blunt, Blast, Acid, Frost or Flame damage at CQ or LR.

Three Centuries, Still Standing: Towerspider exoskeletons are resistant to all damage except Volt. Their limbs are more fragile, resistant only to Keen, Serrated, and Flame damage, and their internal workings are particularly weak to Flame and Acid.

Made to Move: Some towerspiders work on rails, some electrified wall-tracks, some even use cables for brachiation, but all can scuttle and climb using their many limbs if they need to.

Quirks

Optical Enhancement: Perhaps a mechanism granting ferrosight, infravision, or nightvision.

Bellows-Garl

[Medium] Punchcard Pioneers made for the Wavecutting Age

Wheezing seafaring constructs, built in the earliest days of new sailing to crew ships heading through spore-filled areas. Driven by concertina-like contraptions operating on air throughflow, they keep spores and particulates spiralling around them so as not to gum up their creaking gears. *Use the bellows-garl if you want the crew to face a foe that's humanesque in appearance, but powered entirely by ancient, rough-made machinery.*

Drives

Follow Ancient Programming: Bellows-garl aren't rogue constructs - in fact, they're still following their original punchcard programming (as best they can) to the letter.

Self-Repair: When a certain threshold of damage is reached, a bellows-garl will retreat for maintenance, no matter how close it was to its objective.

Presence

Sight:	Puffs of dirty air. Beautifully carved wood, now scarred and augmented.
Sound:	Wheezing bellows. Creaking joints. Broken Low Sour spoken in hollow voices.

Resources

Salvage:	Broken Garl Limb, Bellows Piping, Concertina Fabric
Charts:	Punchcard Instructions, Outdated Chart

Aspects

Old-Fashioned Sabres: Bellows-garl were kitted out liked the corsairs of old, dealing CQ Keen damage.

Rickety Construction: Bellows-garl are resistant to Toxin, Frost, and Keen damage, but their concertina-like bellows are extremely vulnerable to Spike and Blunt damage.

Failing Logic: Cards sometimes slip and catch in the mechanisms, causing erratic or illogical behaviour.

Quirks

Pistoleer: This garl was given a ranged option by its creators, and can deal LR Blast damage.

"Seen one? I've done more than seen one, I've been on deck."

Pepper raised her eyebrows, looking over her drinking companion's face for any telltale sign that might expose his words as a lie. Unfortunately, most of that face was hidden by an overwhelmingly shaggy beard.

"Get out of here."

"No, really, I have! It was out of fuel, listing, could barely even work its bite. We scavenged some old charts from the nav suite before we got out. Couldn't stay, you know?"

"Too empty?"

"Too hungry. They really are wild, truly feral. Back to their roots, if you want to see it that way."

"I do," she replied, suppressing a shiver. "It's a damn sight better than the alternative."

"Which is?"

"That they learnt that hunger. That they learnt it from us."

Mawships

[Huge] Ships Gone Feral on the Open Waves

Mawships are wildsea vessels gone truly wild; abandoned by their crews but never quite claimed by the waves, would-be wrecks that refused to sink. With nobody to replenish their fuel supplies they get hungry, and without a crew to fill their cabins and swab their decks, they get terrifyingly lonely. They're vessels of want, deep and endless, and they split and change and reform themselves into something that reflects that new and ravenous nature. *Use a mawship if you want the crew to face a dark reflection of the age of treetop sail, a tragic and near-mindless antagonist that's most probably far beyond help.*

Drives

An Endless Want: Mawships hunt for whatever they most need. Some try to abduct crews and press them into service, some destroy and salvage other vessels to keep themselves going, and others simply eat what they can from the waves they sail.

Presence

Sight:	Timbers cracked and peeling paint. A bite become a true mouth, gaping and serrated. Salvage architecture worming its way through the waves like a living thing.
Sound:	A bite that howls like a hungry animal. A guttering engine that growls and coughs, struggling to propel the ship.
Smell:	Oil, mold, moss, and old food. Salt tears from a long-lost crew.

Resources

Specimens:	Cracked Timbers, Parasite Moss, Unfortunate Bones
Salvage:	Mawship Teeth, Old Crew's Mementoes, Stale Fuel
Whispers:	Eventual Fate, A Hungry Vessel
Charts:	An Oil-Stained Map, A Chart of Places Never Reached
Cargo:	A Living Engine

Aspects

The Maw: The defining aspect of a mawship, the mutation of its bite into something that can chew. For some ships this might simply be a scissoring of chainsaw parts, for others something as dramatic as the forward hull splitting open and flexing shut, timbers like teeth. The maw deals massive damage, as you might expect, but can also easily tear holes in the hulls of other ships - Hewing, Serrated, or Spike are the most common types.

Deck Weapons: For dealing LR damage of various types, but these are usually imprecise and scattergun. Many will be low on ammunition too, without a crew to reload them.

Ship's Senses: Lacking sensory organs in the traditional sense, mawships nevertheless seem to be able to hunt other vessels.

Ratings: Instead of the usual tracks, consider giving mawships a set of ratings based on their construction. You could even build them using the ship creation rules for some accuracy, but that isn't technically required.

Quirks

Press-Ganged Crew: The mawship has abducted sailors (or sometimes hapless port-dwellers) and pressed them into service, cleaning and maintaining its structure and loading its weapons. They'll be fearful and most likely starving.

Skyship: Not all mawships are wave-bound - aerial vessels can go wild too under the right circumstances.

Consummate Hunter: The mawship has mastered its hunger and want to a degree, and hunts with patience and stealth rather than howling fury. It may well wait until the crew of its target are docked and ashore before it tries to claim its prize.

The Mad Woodcutter

[Huge] Mindless Mechanical Menace

The mad woodcutter once toiled to beat back the wildsea for a spit that sank long ago. Now, its programming corrupted, it lurches through the canopy on pistoned legs, cutting branches to feed its own boiler. *Use the mad woodcutter if you want the crew to face a mindless threat that betokens a lost past.*

Aspects

Persist: The mad woodcutter performs the same task it did when it was monitored and controlled, though those times are long past – cut paths and fuel itself with the wood.

Presence

Sight: Treetops sliding down into the leafy waves. Trails of thick, black smoke.

Sound: Keening circular saws. Clacking, heavy gears. The screeching of old and untended metal parts.

Smell: Wood smoke and fresh sap.

Resources

Specimens: Corrupted Neural Core, Rusty Metal Spars, Crezzerin-Pocked Blades

Whispers: Unresting Castles Thresh

Charts: Punchcard Star Chart

Aspects

Circular Saw: The mad woodcutter's blade is powerful enough to fell trees, it deals CQ Serrated damage with increased impact.

Built Tough: The mad woodcutter has survived the wildsea's depredations for many long years. It is resistant to Keen and Spike damage and immune to poisons and Toxin damage.

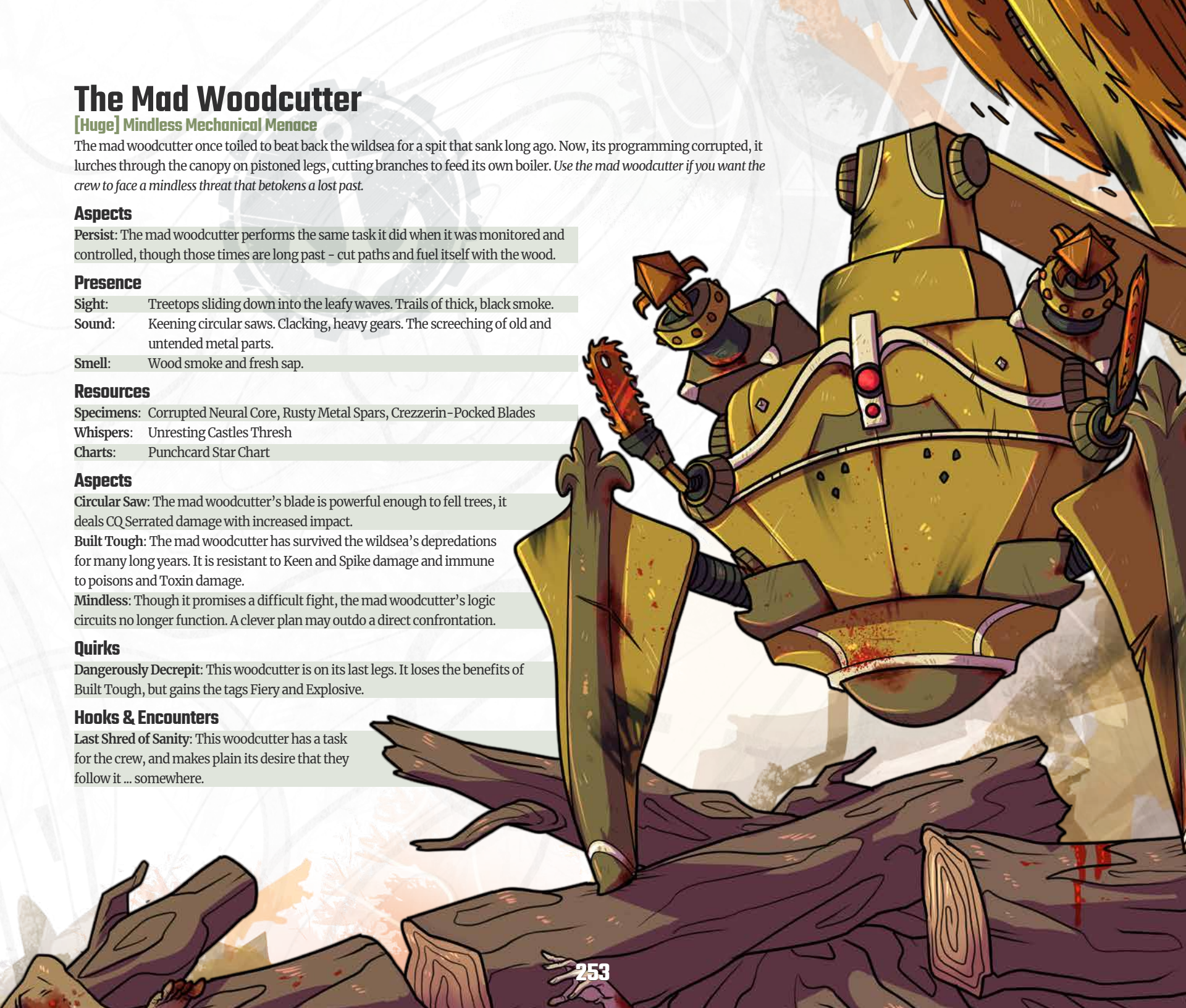
Mindless: Though it promises a difficult fight, the mad woodcutter's logic circuits no longer function. A clever plan may outdo a direct confrontation.

Quirks

Dangerously Decrepit: This woodcutter is on its last legs. It loses the benefits of Built Tough, but gains the tags Fiery and Explosive.

Hooks & Encounters

Last Shred of Sanity: This woodcutter has a task for the crew, and makes plain its desire that they follow it ... somewhere.



Marauders

The waves are not a friendly place, but it's usually as a result of... well, the waves - predators, illnesses, weirdnesses, and hunger. Marauders add a little spice to the mix, intelligent foes with piratical designs and the confidence to tackle wildsailors ship-to-ship.

Marauders in Play

Motive is particularly important when introducing a group of marauders - people don't generally risk death at the end of a blade for paltry gains, so each marauder group should have a reason they aren't simply wreckers or salvagers. **Teamwork** is another thing to take into account, given that marauders usually have their own ships and operate as a crew - in fact, operate much like the crew themselves, in most cases. There'll likely be a hierarchical structure in even the loosest of piratical gangs - a captain, quartermaster, or navigator ordering their undercrew around. **The ship** is the last thing to consider - sometimes a single vessel can be more dangerous than the foes it carries.

The Ripsong

A loose collection of pirate vessels under the banner of a singular dancing lord, Ripsong marauders are in it for the thrill. They announce their arrival with wardrums and blaring horns, wildly strummed trisketars and axes against gongs. They're a cacophony, a menace, and almost entirely without remorse. *Some suspect the Ripsong to have more tragic origins than one might first expect - victims of the drum breeze that have kept their minds just about intact, turning urgent rhythm to piratical intent.*

Silverhand Mercenaries

The word mercenary is something of a misnomer - 'mercantiles' would be closer to the truth, as Silverhands care little for material gain outside of ancient pre-verdant coinage. *Writlings occasionally barter with Silverhand mercenaries for the (to them) worthless paper currency their hunts also tend to uncover.*

The Ravenous Few

Most turn to piracy for the plunder, the scrap and the bloodshed. The Ravenous Few are there for meat, and meat alone. *There's no nice way to say this - the Ravenous Few have raised cannibalism to an art form, devouring or reusing every part of every prisoner they take in their raids. They rarely attack ships, preferring less-defended settlements with larger populations to fill their larders.*

Hollowed

The twilight years of an ektus leave them rotting from the inside out, hollows forming in both mind and body. They're only active during the night or on heavily overcast days, preferring to bask under the calming sun when possible. *Hollowed stumble and crawl their way toward their targets. Despite their sorry state they're still dangerous opponents, dealing high CQ Blunt and Spike damage with their spiny fists.*

Cast-Offs & The Pinned

The Pinned are bodies trapped in the thrash or tangle, speared by a branch or spine. Their souls are gone - slipped out into the Under-Eaves. Are they dead? No, they're too lively for that - but they're not who they were, either. *Cast-Offs are the opposite, spirits trapped above without an anchor, yearning for the bodies they lost, or for something to replace them.*

The Northern Scar

One of the most feared marauder groups operating on the rustling waves, but luckily also one of the rarest to encounter. Ships of the Northern Scar burn coal and naptha in their engines, and equip even the lowliest of their undercrew with jury-rigged flamethrowers or burning torches. *There are few recruits to the Northern Scars - many of their younger members were born into it.*

The Wolves

Their motives are as uncomplicated as their name; the Wolves eschew ships, ignore cargo, spurn valuables - they streak through the waves on seared hands and feet, wordless and hungry, intent on ripping whatever trophies they need from their victims and the leaving as quickly as they arrived. *There are no old wolves. There's probably a good reason for that.*

Tiltwin's Band

At what point does the play-acting of piracy become actual piratical behaviour? The members of Tiltwin's Band are all host to the same unique fungal infection, lodged deep inside their brains or wrapped around whatever soul-skeins they use for sentience. For them, the world is a stage, and the part they play is the band of merry corsairs, laughing as they plunder and bowing as they leave. *Tiltwin's Band are an amenable sort when they're not actively attacking a ship, but are often confused by the lack of applause.*

The Mjatzar Corsairs

Ruthlessly ordered, without time for the nonsense of mercy. The Mjatzar leap into battle without sound, communicating only in Old Hand and signal-flares. *Rumour has it that the corsairs have a tragic past of their own that forced them into extreme measures to survive, though it is rarely ever communicated to anyone outside their small fleet of ships.*

Rind & Rotes

A true mystery of the rustling waves, the only sign of Rind and Rotes ever glimpsed is a beautifully hand-written apology note in Saprekk, left in the middle of an unexpectedly empty cargo-hold. As impossible to predict as they are to track down. *It isn't even really known if Rind and Rotes are two individuals - maybe that's the name of their ship, or of an entire network of elusive thieves, or something stranger still - and how do they manage to clear out an entire cargo space without alerting any of the crew on board?*

The Kjartico

[Medium] Spirit-Obsessed Corsairs

A merciless ardent pirate band that roves across the rustling waves, looking for ships to plunder. They are pirates in the most classical sense, though their spirit-based culture and methods set them apart from common marauders. *Use Kjartico pirates if you want the crew to face a threat on equal terms – intelligent enemies with weapons, goals, and a ship of their own.*

Drives

Loot and Plunder: The Kjartico will take anything they deem valuable if given the opportunity, starting with the resources and cargo that trade best in the area.

Maintain Morale: The pirates will retreat after losing enough of their number, but they'll definitely bear a grudge.

Presence

Sight:	A wooden ship belching sawdust on the horizon. Heavy-coated ardent standing grimly on deck. A flag flying from a makeshift mast, of a red blade on a white background.
Sound:	The buzz of wood being ground down. An oppressive silence. A shouted challenge.
Smell:	Fresh sawdust and hot sap. Tobacco smoke.
Taste:	Pork, apparently.

Resources

Salvage:	Curved Cutlass, Pirate's Longcoat, Flintlock
Specimens:	Pirate's Skull
Charts:	Old Map of the Waves, Pirate Port Journal
Whispers:	Deliver or Die

Aspects

Gang: Kjartico pirates attack as a group, and can deal multiple different damage types depending on the arms they carry (Blunt, Keen, and Blast at CQ or LR).

On Two Fronts: Every Kjartico crew has a number of spirit-callers on their roster, able to swiftly throw together rituals to summon the spirits of marauders long-dead or beasts of the wild. These spirits use the caller, or in some cases the ship, as a temporary anchor to the world, and will deal Salt damage at CQ or LR depending on their form.

Quirks

Grim Challenge: The Kjartico are ordered and stoically traditional in their approach to piracy. Their second-in-command will offer a challenge, a duel of blades to first blood. If they win, their pirates will swarm the ship to loot, and will kill any who resist. If that second-in-command is bested, the pirates will withdraw without another word.

Kjartico Ships: Their ships are armoured with thick broadwood, and driven by a jawbox powering a threshing mulcher at the prow. Broadside cannons are common, dealing massive Blunt or Blast damage at LR.

Phantom Crew: When a Kjartico pirate dies in combat, their crewmates will do the best to recover the body. Whether they do or don't, a spirit will rise from the corpse at nightfall.

Bloodmaw Pirates

[Medium] Hungry Pirate Cultists

Plenty rely on all sources of sustenance the wildsea has to offer. Usually desperation or cultural practices are behind consumption of 'the grim meal'. The Bloodmaw are fueled by ritual - servants of the Mouths Beyond The Veil seeking to spread their sacrament. They will pursue a course of action single-mindedly (bolstered by countless mouths, all speaking louder than you) and with unerring determination.

The Bloodmaw are also known to use small outrider vessels and environmental hazards to create ambushes specifically designed to limit enemy mobility. *Use the Bloodmaw if you want the players to face an intelligent weird force determined to show them fates worse than death.*

Drives

To Sate a Dark Hunger: The Bloodmaw have one primary goal, capture and consume for their patrons. They will seek to disable ships and capture crew, and failing that they will go for all-out slaughter.

Presence

Sight:	A jolly roger dripping and warm, a heralding swell of crimson tide butterflies, razor sharp smiles that don't reach the eyes.
Sound:	Cracking of bones and thunder from their tesslicator cannons, sweet and pleasant invitations undercut by vicious and horrible implications, chanting that twists the mind and gut, the absence of digestion.
Smell:	Hot heavy iron, roasted meals, putridity unnoticed.

Resources

Salvage:	Ceremonial Fork, Thirsting Pitcher
Specimens:	We Shall All Hope You Do Not Take Anything that Is (or Was) Living From Their Ships
Whispers:	Screams
Charts:	Bloodmaw Contracture, Entreating and Enticing Scripture, Stomach Rumbling Recipes

Aspects

Hungering: Bloodmaw ships are equipped with deck weapons that reflect their goals: tesslicator cannons (dealing massive Volt then heavy Salt damage), anchoring harpoons and net launchers to immobilize their targets. The pirates themselves tend to carry weaponry that can cut or rend, dealing Spike, Keen, Hewing or Serrated damage at CQ or LR.

Zealots: Whether by desire for power, twisted honour, or pure fear, the Bloodmaw are driven to their brutalities on the behalf of the being they worship. They're incredibly hard to dissuade or reason with, if not impossible.

Quirks

Crimson Tide's Pulse: If a sailor has spilled blood or other life's liquid, the sounds of Bloodmaw ritual will pool in their hearing organs. Unless they have experience with ordering their mind, their thoughts will become difficult to grasp in their head, flowing past them as they feel a rush of violence and history as the Bloodmaw attempt to forcibly connect the sailor's past acts of bloodshed to the cult's flow.

The Call of The Feast: If a wildsailor has eaten a Grim Meal, even if honourably done, they'll understand even more powerfully and with uncanny rationality the arguments the mouths make between bites. Horrifyingly, they'll need to react to stop from agreeing and finding themselves ravenous for a time too (however long a time it might be).

Sun Seekers

[Medium] Mothryn Zealots

Skyship crews trailing iridescent scales, pirates swooping on ragged wings to rip and tear until they get to the heart of a ship. Sun Seekers are religious zealots, an order of mothryn fanatics obsessed with the idea that some crew out there on the rustling waves has stolen the sun, and is holding it hostage. The presence of the sun in the sky above doesn't seem to dissuade them of this notion. *Use Sun Seeker pirates if you want the crew to face competent, intelligent foes that are nearly impossible to reason with thanks to their cultesque mania.*

Drives

Seek the Stolen Sun: A never-ending quest due to their inability to accept the truth of the sun's location.

Presence

Sight: Gleaming hatchets and sharp-toothed saws. Frayed wings coloured black with charcoal and tar. A ship torn open.

Sound: Cries of theft and worship.

Resources

Salvage: Mothryn Hatchet

Whispers: Ranting and Sun-Mad, Ignoring the Obvious, Hidden Light

Aspects

Ship-Breakers: Sun Seeker weapons are designed to harm crews, yes, but more to tear into their ships. Hewing and Serrated damage at CQ or LR are both common, and Acid or Blast damage a possibility.

Flight: More sun seekers can fly than you might expect from the average mothryn crew, but most are still reduced to gliding thanks to the tears and piercings on their wings (and the extra weight of tar or other darkening agents on some).

Quirks

True Frenzy: Woe betide any ships that run on liquid sunlight or solar sails - the Seekers won't just disable the crew, they'll attempt to slaughter them as an act of faith.

Skin-Thieves

[Variable] Tzelicrae Bandit-Surgeons

The lottery of skin is an ancient and respected tradition in various tzelicrae cultures, but there are those who have a certain level of... impatience. *Use skin-thieves if you want the crew to face an opponent determined to steal their identities without damaging the merchandise.*

Drives

Beat the Lottery: You can't lose if you break the rules.

Blind & Restrain: Skin-thieves will go to great lengths to avoid harming their intended marks, using webs to restrain and poisoned needles to deliver soporific and paralyzing toxins.

Presence

Sight: Spiders crawling over every exposed surface. Arachnid masses wrapped in sack-cloth and rope.

Sound: The rapid clicking of fast-spoken Knock.

Resources

Salvage: Torn Sack-Cloth

Specimens: Solo Spiders

Charts: Web-Smeared Chart

Aspects

Delicate Damage: Skin-thieves attack with LR webbing to restrain targets, then rush in with needles dealing CQ Toxin damage and causing paralyzing injuries. When backed into a corner, the knives come out (CQ Keen and Serrated damage if they can't avoid it).

Tenuous Grasp: When defeated, skin-thieves will fall apart and scuttle away in a swarm of tiny bodies.

Skin-Swap: If a crewmember is isolated and restrained or otherwise incapable of acting, the skin-thieves will steal their outer layer and replace it with their own sack-and-rope covering. Treat this as an injury that can only be healed by the character hunting down their own skin, or somehow crafting themselves a new one.

Quirks

Patchwork: Some skin-thieves are more impatient than others, using edged weapons to sever and steal body parts for wholesale incorporation into their own forms.

Marauder Ships

Most marauders are piratical types, which naturally leads to them having transport of some kind - usually a ship. You don't have to make marauder ships using the same design elements included in the ship creation chapter, but it can be useful to describe them in similar terms - not only will the players likely have a stronger mental image of the ship (having seen those options before whilst making their own), you'll also have a good idea of what the crew might be able to salvage or scavenge from them if given the chance.

Ship-to-Ship Combat

We haven't included separate rules for marauder ships in combat, because most likely they'll be a staging area for a scene rather than anything that needs to be mechanically represented (an element in a chase, or something to fight on the deck of). If you do need decide to use an entire ship as an active hazard and engage in some ship-to-ship combat, you have a couple of options when it comes to handling damage...

All Things Being Equal

A marauder ship has six tracks, each representing one of its ratings. When it manoeuvres in combat you can roll using these tracks (just as the crew do for their own ship), and damage the crew deal to these tracks can disable or even destroy the ship. These tracks work like leviathan damage tracks (more on those in a few pages) in that they treat massive damage as normal and ignore just about anything with less impact than that (see page 43 for details on levels of impact).

Part of the Ship, Part of the Crew

The marauder's ship is assigned tracks just like any other hazard, depending on how the crew choose to engage with it. If this is the case then certain parts of the ship, or certain approaches taken, will mean different weaknesses and resistances (or even immunities) to incoming damage. As a general rule, lower the impact of anything affecting one of these tracks with damage if it's less powerful than a deck weapon.

Illnesses

Not every danger of the waves comes rushing with teeth or a primed pistol in hand. Some are soft at first, subtle until they take hold... then ravaging once they do. Bad air, tainted food, and the exploration of old ruins all come with a risk of infection, and with the wildsea's tendency toward the weird and uncanny, these infections often result in more than just a cough or a fever.

Illnesses in Play

Be careful when making an illness the focus of an arc or storyline - most illnesses come with **deleterious effects** that, for some players, can sap the fun out of the entire experience by making them feel constantly at risk or underpowered. It may be better to inflict long-term illnesses on an important or well-liked NPC, a passenger, or a member of the undercrew instead - that way the players can still have their characters deal with the fallout of the illness without being personally limited by it.

Insulia

An affectation of wrappings, most often found in mothryn but transmittable to anyone. Insulia causes sufferers to compulsively wrap themselves in layer after layer of material, isolating themselves from the outside world as much a possible. *There are no actual risks associated with the disease itself, merely the behaviour it causes - overheating and self-crushing are common deaths for Insulia sufferers.*

The Roving

What could cause a happy, healthy individual to sell everything they own, abandon their family and sign on to the first ship that will have them? The Roving, an illness easily cured by bedrest and manacles if it's caught early enough. *The only symptom is a yearning for the open waves that overcomes all else, shreds logic and sense and responsibility. Most ships won't accept sufferers as crew.*

Unscrewing

Most assume that Unscrewing, a syndrome characterised by uncontrollable displays of intense magnetic force, is arconautic in nature - but they're wrong. It's actually caused by a particular gut bacteria picked up from eating foods tainted with scrapyard rust, and can be cleared out by a replacement of the stomach acids. *Some learn to live with the condition, keeping themselves away from metals as a matter of course. Others, a very rare few, master it - they become screws in their own right, entirely divorced from arconautic power.*

Tarak's Lung

Probably the most common condition on the wildsea, named after the very first sailor of the rustling waves. Breathe in too much of the wildsea's bad air - all the crezzerin, the spores, the molds and the bugs - and you'll end up with Tarak's Lung, no question about it. *There are a huge variety of symptoms, from streaming eyes to belching sporeclouds, but the only one common to all cases is a wracking cough - even, somehow, in creatures that have no lungs to cough from.*

Polypoid Tendrils

A salt-borne contagion, a throwback to the old pre-V seas that causes suckered tentacles to sprout from exposed skin. *The process is slow, excruciating and, as if it couldn't be any worse, begins internally. Luckily the condition is a rare one, only ever contracted by those that spend a lot of time delving in the ruins of pre-verdant ships that once sailed the salt seas.*

Glypher's Curse

Not actually a curse, as far as anyone can tell. A spore-borne illness picked up by dredgers - it grows in the brain, giving its host the ability to read and speak Highvin but robbing them of all other languages. *Glypher's Curse is rarely contracted, and surgeons have noted that the only dredgers who suffer from it are those that never knew how to speak or read Highvin before.*

Battarak

An illness that causes drifts of smoke to issue from the nostrils, but brings no pain or discomfort of any kind. *Very rarely found outside of ridgeback settlements on old mountaintop islands, and suspected to be a byproduct of burning crezzer-tainted wildsea wood.*

Oskatar's Bones

Named for an extremely unfortunate ketra that never stopped growing. Sufferers find themselves getting physically larger over a period of months, their bones strengthening and sometimes even bifurcating to hold their new weight. *Oskatar is said to have cured his disease, though the methods he used wouldn't be suitable for non-ketra without some severe modification.*

Gilli

A particularly cruel infection that needs to be caught early for a sufferer to have any chance of leading a normal life. The lungs of a Gilli-patient labour when drawing in clean air, needing a constant flow of spores and unnatural vapours to work properly. *Those with Gilli sometimes stay on the surface, breathing with the aid of masks and tanks, but many retreat to low-colonies beneath the waves - a harsh sort of existence for those not born to it.*

Amberblight

A localized infection, usually taking root in a scrape or cut. Instead of scabbing over or healing as normal, the host's body begins to produce fast-hardening sap. Within days, the affected area will be encased in amber, which slowly spreads across the body unless periodically chipped away. *The afflicted report vivid dreams, even while waking, and a sense of worrying peace.*

The Pyre

It might be an infection, or a disease, or an arconautic side-effect, or even just bad luck... But sometimes people just burn. Spontaneous combustion, some call it, but most call it the Pyre. *There are rumours of survivors, those who ate their fire and keep it in their hearts or heads or behind their eyes, and always in their thoughts... Pyreminds.*

Woke-Bone Sickness

Arconautic Infection

The result of spending too much time around the unearthed bones of Toothen Grove, sufferers become skeletal golems still clothed in the unwilling flesh of their erstwhile owners. Often found screaming out for help, or food, or water through clenched jaws no longer under their control. *Use Woke-Bone Sickness if you want to impress upon your players the dangers associated with spending too long around the bones of fallen titans.*

Presence

Sight: People moving unnaturally stiffly. Researchers with ragged clothing.
Sound: Hoarse screaming, endless pleading.
Smell: Sweat and fear.
Taste: Though there are few taboos against cannibalism on the wildsea, it would take a truly off-kilter sort to want to eat anything with woken bones.

Resources

Specimens: Animated Bones
Whispers: Pleas for Help, Words that Scar

Aspects

Cacophony: The frenzied begging of a Woke-Bone puppet is extremely unsettling (and definitely causes others nearby to mark mire).

Infection: The true fear of spending too long around these unfortunates is that you'll contract the disease yourself. An injury track for Woke-Bone infection should be long but extremely difficult to clear.

Quirks

Grand Design: Woke-Bone puppets spend every second of their lives enslaved to the titanic bones of Toothen Grove, acting to some unknown master plan. They will fight, poorly, if captured, usually dealing Blunt damage at CQ with whatever objects are at hand.

Ration-Mold

Slow-Moving Fungal Disease

When food is left to rot and spoil, it can accumulate pathogens that cause the mycosis known as Ration-Mold. The onset of Ration-Mold is progressive, as fungal spores infect a host and eventually wholly overtake their faculties, turning them into a prisoner in their own body. *Use Ration-Mold if you want the crew to face the progressive horror of one of their own gradually turning against them.*

Presence

Sight: Grey or white fuzz inside of food.
Smell: Faintly sweet and cloying.
Taste: Chalky, dusty, and dry.

Resources

Specimens: Spoiled Food
Whispers: Creeping Descent, Puppet on a String

Aspects

Warning Signs: In the first stage, an infected crewmember will experience digestive symptoms and tingling in the extremities.

Taking Hold: The infected crewmember begins to experience difficulties with their speech and movement.

Quirks

Hegemony: The final stage of Ration-Mold is not widely known, as few survive coming face-to-face with its onslaught. Ration-Mold will completely take over the body of its host, although the consciousness still remains, unable to act as the fungus pilots their body to indiscriminately slaughter their crewmates.

Whispering Lung

Whisper-Based Affliction

Sometimes a whisper sticks in the throat when it's drawn out from the mind, refuses to be spoken, and takes refuge deeper in the body. Whispering Lung is the result – the inability to speak without changing the world. *Use Whispering Lung if you want to inject a heavy dose of weirdness into a session.*

Presence

Sound: An echo that sounds before words are spoken. The crackling of reality as it shifts in minor ways.
Taste: Like stolen secrets.

Resources

Whispers: Potent Silence, In the Throat

Aspects

Reality Shift: Those afflicted with Whispering Lung can't help but change reality with their words, but only in extremely minor ways – nowhere near as potent as a normal whisper.

Quirks

Compulsive: The whisper thrashes and squalls, begging to be spoken but fearful to leave.

It takes a special kind of hunter to look up at something the size of a mountain and think to themselves, that's it, that's my next mark. Especially if the hunter is clinging to the wreckage of their recently destroyed ship, wrecked at the hands of the very creature they're regarding.

But they exist, and they're a peculiar bunch - driven, some would say obsessed, not just to bring down their target but to understand it in its entirety. Their heads are full of competing truths, their journals sketches and plans... And their crews devoted individuals, just as mired in the chase as they are.

Leviathans

Leviathans are very real, but still sources of myth, mystery, and legend to most of the wildsea's inhabitants. The rustling waves are vast, and leviathans are comparatively few in number - when they surface and feed, these are monumental events that get recorded in local history and remembered for decades to come (if there's anyone around to record what happened, of course).

Despite little being known about most leviathans, stories still spring up around them. If a crew intends to go out leviathan hunting, research is usually the first step - collecting data on where a particular leviathan might surface next based on past events, on what it will do when it does, on how they might begin to tackle it or set a plan in motion for eventual restraint or capture.

It's also probably not the best idea to tackle a leviathan alone. Even if the crew have weapons on their ship that are capable of damaging one of the things, even the weakest leviathan is more than a match for a single vessel and could crush them without a second thought if given the chance and inclination.

What Makes a Leviathan?

Size is a component, but not the only one. Some leviathans are the size of a battleship, others would dwarf an island. They're all big, but size is relative.

A better judge of what is and isn't a leviathan is **singularity** - almost all leviathans are singular, named creatures (or constructs, or events) with centuries of history behind them. Many confine themselves to a particular reach, a territory, or hunting ground that they've become accustomed to over the years.

Protoleviathans

A term reserved for creatures of the wildsea that aren't as singular as a true leviathan, but are still large enough to pose an almost overwhelming threat. A protoleviathan encounter should still be a multi-stage affair, but is a much more manageable obstacle for a competent crew. *Turn any leviathan into a protoleviathan by making it physically smaller, keeping strategy tracks short, and making sure it doesn't heal from damage a crew inflicts on it (thus making the sense of progress on the road to defeating or overcoming it more tangible).*

Additional Elements

Many leviathan entries found in this chapter have unique information relating to the leviathan's habits or special properties. Draw from these when weaving a leviathan into the narrative - they help a scene feel more like an event than a mere encounter, and a leviathan should never feel like something that can be understood or conquered in a single session.

The Orchid Scar

Perpetual Flowering Leviathan

Reputed to be the first leviathan ever conquered... And the second, and the third. The Orchid Scar flourishes like an explosion, half-mile petals unfurling impossibly from a fist-sized bud. Once opened to the world it persists until hacked back into near-nothingness, but as one instance dies, another is already budding somewhere nearby.

Use the Orchid Scar if you want the crew to tackle a 'starter' leviathan, one that can't give chase and offers minimal danger unless actively threatened, or if you want a leviathan where its true death is a puzzle to be solved. The scar's danger is in disruption of trade routes, animal behaviour, and sea traffic rather than the more common outright aggression.

Drives

Exist: The Orchid Scar isn't really sentient, as far as anyone can make out - in fact, it's less aware of its surroundings than many predatory wildsea plants. But its endless cycle of death, relocation, and rebirth points to a dogged pursuit of existence, even if there's no consciousness driving such a charge.

Presence

Sight:	A shudder through the thrash, and the sudden shrivelling of fruit and leaves. Insects dropping dead. Vast, irregular petals spearing toward the clouds before settling.
Sound:	Like the moments after a storm. A thread of insect motion snapped. A crackling whoosh as the orchid's bud splits open, and petals fill a space far larger than one would expect.
Smell:	Different depending on the area it grows in, but always something deeply antithetical to its surroundings. When the scar grows in an area of fresh, verdant woodland, it smells of rot and decay. Growing out of a mountain-side salt mine might have it smell of honey, or vanilla.

Resources

Specimens:	Crezzerin Nectar, Bud Husk, Petal Cutting, Inner Bed Pollen, Drained Insect
Salvage:	Broken Sawblade, Blunted Jagserry
Whispers:	Perpetual Plant, Death then Growth
Cargo:	Smaller Petal (whole), Stamen Bundle

Aspects

End Over End: The Orchid Scar can be killed if damaged enough, or if the central bulb is destroyed, but it will always sprout again somewhere else before long.

Vampiric Growth: Far beyond being able to exist on crezzerin, water, and sunlight, the Orchid Scar sucks the life out of plants and insects near it when it flourishes. While in full bloom, individual petals may 'attack' an aggressor by curling around them and draining them dry, dealing heavy CQ Salt damage (the petals only act this way in response to the plant being damaged).

Oversized Plant: Though the central bud has no resistances, all other parts of the Orchid Scar reduce the impact of all damage types except Flame. Dealing massive damage against it marks single boxes rather than entire tracks.

Quirks

Stunted: If the Orchid Scar sprouts in an area devoid of plant or insect life, such as a mostly-barren mountainside, it will grow smaller than usual (only a couple of hundred feet in diameter) but will be far more aggressive with its draining petal attacks.

Serrated Edges: A mutation that leaves the edges of the flower's petals saw-like and vicious, capable of dealing heavy CQ Serrated damage.

They were a ragged, sorry-looking group. Old wildsailors with grey beards and hair, scars criss-crossing their bodies, limbs missing or replaced with clanking prostheses, faces drawn and scowls bitter.

Leviathaneers.

The junction-house fell silent as they entered, then erupted into whispers as they took their seats.

"That's the crew of the Guilty Hand," an old ektus confirmed to her companions.

***A beast the size of a ship, the size of a city, the size of a mountain*, a tzelicrae signed.**

"Takes a part of them every time they fail, a hundred limbs torn away," an ardent captain mouthed, shaking his head.

The bartender, heedless of the change in atmosphere, hustled over to the new arrivals. She met the remaining eye of their leader with a knowing wink.

"Bloody squirrel, eh?"

Old Ornail

Brutish Leviathan Beast

All leviathaneers know the tales of Old Ornail, the squirrel to end all squirrels. It crawls up from the depths of the drown every autumn, stomach growling as it prepares for the winter. Any sufficiently large food source is a draw – the squirrel is too big, too old to hunt enough food for itself, so it seeks out trading ships and settlements to eat its fill.

Use Old Ornail if you want the crew to face something that might originally feel amusing... before reality sets in.

Presence

Sight:	Birds, insects, and smaller animals fleeing in a single direction, panicked and howling. A furrow moving through the treescape, as something titanic claws its way through the sink. A bristling, curving, claws like a ship's prow. Dark, swift shapes moving through flame-coloured fur. A network of scars, punctuated with the blades and hilts of broken weapons.
Sound:	The calls and yelps of fleeing creatures. The creaking, bending, and snapping of branches and boughs. A throaty chittering that sounds like an engine turning over.
Smell:	Musk and blood, and the sharp tang of pure crezzerin running in rivulets down the creature's fur.
Taste:	Like old wounds and lost sailors.

Resources

Specimens:	Iron-hard Bristles, Matted Fur, Leviathan Meat, Crezzer-Tinged Blood, Squirrel-Louse Chitin
Salvage:	Old Blade Fragment, Jagserry Hilt
Whispers:	An Ancient Foe, Ready for the Winter
Cargo:	Titanic Squirrel Bones, Leviathan Squirrel-Tail

Aspects

Titantail: The squirrel's tail can be whipped at enemies, dealing heavy Blunt damage at an impressive range.

Heavy Scamper: Old Ornail can climb as well as any smaller squirrel, but causes massive damage to surfaces it grips onto. Destroy the environment piece by piece as Old Ornail clambers over it.

Tooth and Claw: Bite attacks from the leviathan deal massive Spike damage, and claw attacks massive Keen damage.

True Leviathan: Old Ornail reduces the impact of all damage types. Dealing massive damage to Old Ornail marks single boxes rather than entire tracks. Sighting Old Ornail for the first time marks at least two marks of mire.

Quirks

Crezzerhide: The matted fur of Old Ornail is sticky with crezzerin – all CQ attacks made against it deal a mark of contact Toxin damage to the attacker, unless they have crezzerin resistance.

Consumer: With a successful bite, Old Ornail can swallow a character whole. Characters swallowed in this way take medium Acid damage every time they perform an action, until they're free.

Squirrel-Lice: Lice the size of dogs crawl amongst Old Ornail's fur, and leap off to find new targets if their host is attacked. Bites from these lice deal low Spike or Toxin damage.

Hooks & Encounters

Special Delivery: A few moments of warning are all the crew gets before a massive bushy tail slams into the ship from below, tearing the hull open to expose their cargo. *Old Ornail doesn't care much for the sailors – it's simply after the foodstuffs they have stored in their ship.*

Hunting Party: A group of leviathaneers have a plan to chain Ornail, a long enough leash to let it run reasonably free but also to keep it away from a nearby settlement already struggling with food shortages. *The leviathaneers need the crew's ship as a distraction – they may or may not make that particular part of their plan clear.*

Winter Festival: The festival is in full swing, a celebration of autumn's end... and that's when the screams begin. *The crew will have to face or flee from Old Ornail without the benefit of their ship, probably in an unfamiliar location. It won't be chasing them specifically though, probably – it'll be aiming for the food.*

"Hold the course!"

The engines screamed, impellers spewing dark smoke and tentaculari slipping wildly from branch to branch. There was no purchase to be found - their leaves shone in the moonlight like sickly rainbows.

"There's no course to hold!" Her hair was plastered across her brow, clothes sopping, blade lost to the eaves hours before.

"Keep your hands on the wheel and hold the damn course!"

She cursed him as she redoubled her efforts, not bothering to hide it. It was his obsession that had brought them here, down this gutter-path of ruined thrash and into an oil-slick hell. His obsession, or his madness.

Over the past few days it had become impossible to tell them apart.

The Oilcrow

Wingless Avian Leviathan

A blight upon the wavetops, a rolling slick of filth and feathers and sickness - the Oilcrow is a perfect example of crezzerin run rampant.

While the Oilcrow is a bird large enough to catch a ship in its jaws, that's not what most sailors are scared of (at least, not until the prospect becomes a likely one). Instead, it's the associated crezzerblight that the crow brings with it, a miasma of concentrated mutation delivered through feather excretions and frequent vomiting.

The Oilcrow is sick, but it refuses to die.

Use the Oilcrow if you want the crew to face a threat that becomes more potent and all-encompassing the close they draw to it, something easy to find but hard to shake off the effects of.

Presence

Sight:	Darkness, feathers, madly staring eyes. Colours shifting on slick surfaces.
Sound:	A grating, stuttering caw. Gagging from the undercrew as they try to catch their breath. The slap of skin on oil, and hisses of pain as they meet.
Smell:	Indescribable.
Taste:	If you start making a meal from parts of the Oilcrow describing its flavour profile will be the least of your problems.

Resources

Specimens:	Crezzerin Oil, Mutative Remnants, Beak-Shards, Unpleasant Feathers, Bile Tract, Unknown Gland
Salvage:	A Broken Shackle
Whispers:	Spreading Sickness, Sometimes There's No Cure, No Way to Hold On
Cargo:	Malformed Limb, Oilcrow Beak

Aspects

Slick Feathers: The beast is named for the miasma it carries with it, emanating from feathers thick and crusted with grease. These feathers deal heavy Keen or Toxin damage if the crew are close enough to be struck by them, and if they stay away the Oilcrow can spew up gouts of acid from its stomach at long range.

Concentrated Crezzerblight: Even being near the Oilcrow begins to inflict searing pain, mutations, and other symptoms of crezzerin exposure on the crew. Direct contact with the oil it leaves behind even begins to ignore the usual resistance to crezzerin some wildsailors have built up.

Wingless: The Oilcrow has no wings - in fact, it barely has any recognisable limbs at all. It moves by crawling slowly through the waves, using its slick feathers to ease its passage.

After-Effects: Crew that come into contact with the Oilcrow will suffer from fevers and infections for weeks afterwards, even if they avoid the worst of its crezzerin corruption.

Quirks

Manticrow Escort: The Oilcrow's feathers are used as perches and nesting-places for its smaller cousins, flocks of oil-drunk manticrows.

Unexpected Aid: From pinwolves to pirates, everything hates the Oilcrow. It's likely the crew won't be the only ones gunning for it when it passes through their territory.

Hooks & Encounters

Plague Season: The Oilcrow has been sighted on a bustling shipping route frequented by fruit traders, and the spits and islands accepting their wares are rife with illnesses. *The focus for this is just as much on helping those communities in the short term as driving away the source of their problem in the long term.*

Obsession: A leviathaneer is determined to sail against the Oilcrow alone, and cannot be dissuaded. *This would be a death sentence, even for an experienced leviathaneer. Is this madness, or is there some secretive plan of action?*

The Spirit of Industry

Spectral Leviathan Phenomenon

The Spirit of Industry is a belief, a remembrance, an ancestral memory given almost-form – the bite of chainsaws and chopping of axes, the sound of sawmills and the smell of fresh sweat. It has no shape or physicality, no limbs to shackle or gears to clog or teeth to blunt, and in some sense it barely exists at all... But it's detectable by the effect it has on the world. In fact, it's impossible to miss.

Use the Spirit of Industry if you want the crew to face something that can't be fought or reasoned with, a true mindless force not of destruction but of supreme order.

Presence

Sight: Wolves carrying freshly chopped wood, their eyes glazed over. Ironroots bisected, their leaves heavy with sawdust. Ships crushed together to make greater machines.

Sound: Sawing, hammering, engines and creaks. Falling trees. An unemotional yet threatening whisper that things *Will Be Better* when the work is done.

Smell: Torn leaves and heartwood. Sweat without bodies, blood without wounds. Oil and engine grease.

Resources

Whispers: The Dream of an Axe

Cargo: Fresh Lumber, Machined Wood

Aspects

Imposing Order: Wood must be cut. Trees must be felled. Machines must be reorganised to make these things happen, or to sham their happenings as the ironroots tear themselves apart. The Spirit of Industry is mindless and directed, and will pull anything nearby into its dream to cut the wild waves back.

Nothing Stops the Work: Crews attempting to interfere with the Spirit of Industry find themselves compelled to step down, to take tea-breaks, to head home after a hard day's work that never happened. If they fight through these feelings the phenomenon will turn hostile, inflicting heavy Hewing and Serrated damage from ancient workplace accidents.

Boundaries: Think of the spirit as a moving pocket of reality, a ripple on the skin of the world in which the chaos of crezzerin and root-growth is outmatched by order (at least for a time).

A Ghost of a Dream: Crews that truly wish to halt or damage the Spirit of Industry will first have to make it tangible, or to make themselves as intangible as it. This may be a leviathan best tackled while hallucinating, or unbodied, or asleep... Details are sketchy, and experimentation will be a must.

Quirks

The Furnace is Lit: A far more dangerous incursion of the Spirit of Industry allows it to drive others into a frenzy of flame – the waves catch fire and nobody seems inclined to put them out. Heavy to massive Flame damage is common, and areas are suffused with choking smoke and intense heat.

Nexus: The spirit, perhaps in some reactive effort to survive, turns parasite – it lodges into one of the crew's brains like a whisper, affecting their behaviour and slowly warping everything around them.

Ordered Waves (Territory)

Regular Shapes in Nature: A sickening, unnatural sight
Waking Dreams: Loud, bustling, incessant

These stretches of branch-stripped canopy are left in the wake of the Spirit of Industry as it moves erratically through the seas. Though the ironroots that would normally hold the canopy still stand they've been savagely cut back, their trunks split, their branches stripped of bark and stacked, lashed together by something intangible.

Hijacked Wildlife (Horror)

Most creatures that survive the arrival of the Spirit of Industry are bent to its mindless will, working against their instincts to chop, carry, organise and clean. Interrupting these new patterns is as likely to cause irrational violence as utter confusion. Beasts, birds, and insects are all affected equally, and many of these creatures will work until they eventually die of exhaustion. Some will work beyond even that.

Hooks & Encounters

Boomtown: The inhabitants of a usually raucous spit have turned to hacking as a profession, regardless of their age and experience. None can quite explain why. *Is this an aftereffect of the spirit's presence, or a warning of things to come?*

Axe to the Head: One of the crew or undercrew has the Spirit stuck in their mind. Travelling with them is dangerous, but letting it develop unchecked is even more dangerous still. *There may be no cure for this, depending on the tone of your narrative.*

Reality Reconfigured: A huge swathe of the waves has been chopped and hewn and stacked, so large that the local ecosystem is failing and the ironroots are starting to falter in their endless cycle of growth. *This could be the birth of a 'dead' area of the wildsea if the crew don't stop it in time, but might also reveal ancient secrets as the canopy is cleared away.*

Living Storms

Leviathan Force of Nature

The weather changes, the seasons roll around, but storms are eternal - some of them, anyway.

Living storms are leviathan-sized weather systems with a volt-bound consciousness, though the extent of their intelligence is very much up for debate. Some of them are worshipped as gods, while others simply avoided at all costs; living storms move with the wind until they choose a target, then drive themselves toward it and hound it until they're satisfied.

Few leviathans are fully understood, but living storms are some of the most inscrutable - the root of their existence, the way they choose their marks, the ways they can communicate and when they choose to do so... These are all mysteries yet to be uncovered. Some long-term port dwellers even refuse to acknowledge their existence, writing them off as the rantings of storm-scarred and superstitious sailors.

Use a living storm if you want the crew to face a threat that gives a lot of warning and ramps up in intensity as time passes, or when you want them to face something elemental and near-unstoppable by conventional means.

Presence

Sight:	A darkening presence on the horizon, drawing closer. Distant flashes of lightning. A port's denizens stacking sacks and reinforcing rooftops.
Sound:	The two-voiced echo of thunder and lightning. The drumming of rain... or, sometimes, something like rain.
Smell:	Petrichor, if you're lucky. Air like burning metal if lightning strikes too close.

Resources

Specimens:	Captured Lightning, Storm-Fragment, Rain in a Jar, Jolt-Laden Air, Pure Rainwater
Whispers:	Tempest-To-Be, Clouded Mind
Cargo:	Rain Barrels, Storm-Tossed Detritus

Aspects

Rolling Darkly: Leviathan storms are persistent, but they're not fast. One might track a crew for days before it finally engulfs them... And it will. This is the perfect time to use an open track to keep the crew aware that they're being hunted.

Electrical Mind: Living storms aren't called 'living' for no reason - somewhere inside the roiling mass of stormclouds is a mind, of a sort. It can be communicated with if the crew manage to find a way to ameliorate the storm's fury.

Storm's Fury: Deluges of rain can be strong enough to deal light Blunt damage to those caught out in them, which can increase to heavy damage with a peal of well-placed thunder. Lightning strikes deal, as you might imagine, massive Volt damage, and are fast enough to hijack focus from a character as they act. Storms can also add cut to rolls made to see, move or communicate.

Leviathan Intangibility: Deck weapons and other forms of massive damage might drive a living storm back temporarily, but most forms of physical assault pass straight through.

Quirks

Whispercore: The storm is wrapped around a whisper, a living word feeding it with uncanny energy. When lightning strikes, the thunder that follows changes the world in small ways.

Flashfire: It's rare, but lightning strikes from a living storm can set the canopy ablaze quickly enough for their torrential downpour not to quench it. These fires spread, but much slower than a common run of flames.

Hooks & Encounters

Storm Chasers: The lure of the tempest is a strong one - a passenger will pay good money for you to take them to a living storm for them to commune with it... somehow. *Luring a storm to attack you shouldn't be too hard. Surviving the encounter might be.*

... And the Inevitable Opposite: Someone on your ship - maybe a passenger, maybe a member of the undercrew, maybe even one of the characters - stole something from a living storm. *It's on the ship's trail, and gaining.*

Roving & Named

There are several roving leviathan-storms that crop up again and again in various areas of the rustling waves. They can be weathered, beaten back, sometimes even communed with... But ending them with finality would take a herculean effort.

The Cassock Squall

A churning mass the colour of bloody leather, its arrival heralded by an explosion of biting, stinging insect life. The Cassock Squall also imposes massive, overwhelming pressure once you're within its confines.

Dismissal

Dismissal doesn't move like most living storms, drifting with the wind until it decides what to destroy. Dismissal hunts, actively, worming its way through the thrash more like a predatory fog.

The Rising Stars

Black as night but twinkling with bright clusters of hanging sparks, the Rising Stars sits at high altitude for months before swooping like a falcon, enveloping a ship and dragging it skyward to toy with at its leisure.

Whisker

So pale as to be almost invisible, bereft of lightning, without the usual lashings of rain... But there's something about Whisker, something that ages and degrades and corrupts whatever it decides to scrutinise.

Seven Winds

A confluence of separate storms, a crushing tornado alive with constant lightning. Seven Winds moves seemingly randomly but lashes out with directness - sail-powered ships are the only thing it seems to hunt.

The Storm-In-Tow

A deluge of rain with near-constant lightning, drawn behind ironjaw rays (found on page 237) as they fly. Accompanied by a smell, like burning tin on rolling waves, like summer turned sour.

Tagra's Clutching Hand

This storm does not exist, and never has... But still its name is known, and feared, and whispered.

The Isogast

Tentacular Insect Leviathan

A snail-like creature the size of a battleship, whorled shell crusted with moss and stalk-like tentacles fanning out ahead of its gelatinous body.

The Isogast's threat comes not from its patterns of behaviour, which are simple and predictable, but from the unexpected nature of those patterns leaving them a mystery to the uninitiated. As the Isogast travels the drown it leaves a network of slime; not from its vast underbelly, but from the tips of certain tendrils spearing up to the canopy-top. This network acts like a spider's web, a sensitive slimy extension of its otherwise-dull perception. When a ship or sufficiently large creature trips these networks, the Isogast senses their presence, then uses thicker tentacles to lever itself up at alarming speed to catch its prey. The last sight for many a wildsailor has been an eruption of tentacles encircling their ship's hull.

Use the Isogast if you want the crew to face something that surfaces only for a very brief time, that's more likely to capture an entire ship for later digestion than it is to eat the crew and that has an unexpected turn of speed for a creature so large.

Presence

Sight:	Mucus-like strands stretching from branch to branch. Leaves dripping with an unknown fluid. A questing tentacle reaching up from below. A sudden surge upwards.
Sound:	Sucking sounds as the hull crosses a slime-trail. The crack and shift of branches breaking.
Smell:	Deep. Rolling. Acrid.

Resources

Specimens:	Isogast Slime, Shell Fragment, Concentrated Darkness, Leviathan Eyestalk
Salvage:	Acid-Scarred Broadwood
Whispers:	Ambush from Below, Acid Tide
Charts:	Ruined Branch-Map
Cargo:	Isogast Plating, Severed Tentacle

Aspects

Tentacles: The Isogast's tentacles serve multiple functions - smaller ones allow it to sense the world around it and leave its slime-trail network, larger ones pull it through the treescape and are used to smash or capture prey. Smaller tentacles deal medium LR Acid or Blunt damage, larger ones deal heavy Blunt damage.

The Slime Network: It isn't known how information passes through the mucus the Isogast leaves in its wake - it could be electrical impulses, tremors, an extended phantom nervous system. Whatever the precise mechanics, the Isogast will ignore most things smaller than a ship unless they start actively interfering with the slime itself.

Surprising Speed: The Isogast moves like a tentaculari-equipped vessel, half-dragging and half-brachiating its way between the trunks of the drown. It can easily keep pace with most ships once roused.

Shelled Leviathan: The Isogast resists all damage, and massive damage dealt against it only marks a single box on its tracks. The creature's body and tentacles are vulnerable (to the extent any part of a leviathan can be vulnerable), especially to Salt, but its shell is impervious to all but the most devastating Blunt and Blast attacks.

Quirks

Open Shell: The Isogast's usual snail-shell has grown into a cauldron-shape, a balancing bowl of digestive juices open to the air.

Surface Traveller: Instead of its usual drown-based habitation, the Isogast pulls itself along the surface of the waves, bearing down on those that disturb its sensory network like a speeding freight-train.

Hooks & Encounters

An Unexplained Absence: A ship carrying famous troubadours has gone missing, leaving a local festival bereft of entertainment. *But is that singing you hear from far beneath the waves, the echoing strains of a poorly tuned ravito?*

Trail-Clearing: The Isogast has been glimpsed below, through the yawning emptiness of a rift. Its slime-trail networks are making it impossible for local trading ships to operate, but the crew might have a way to help. *There are many ways to remove the slime network, but they all require care and scarce resources.*

Mother's Bones: The crew have been hired to retrieve a body from one of the wrecks within the Isogast's shell. *The quickest way in is to have their ship eaten, but it certainly isn't the safest.*

Digestion Chamber (Territory)

Lighting: The dim red of symbiotic gut-flies
Wrecked Ships: The Moritzora, Calimo's Kiln, Eskat

The Isogast has no mouth in the traditional sense. Instead, it feeds by grabbing ships and sufficiently nutritious beasts and drawing them into its shell, trapping them there when its main body re-emerges.

Acid Graveyard (Horror)

The space within the shell is a chitin cavern, cramped with the ruins of previously eaten ships. *There may be survivors hunkered down in the wreckage, scavengers that survive on the food stores (and perhaps the crews) of newly-eaten vessels.*

Enzyme Sluice (Threat)

The floor of the cavern is the leviathan's back, jelly-like flesh and powerful muscles. The entire area is washed constantly with a digestive enzyme that eats through bone, wood and metal alike given enough time. *Acid and Toxin damage slowly build the longer crews stay here.*

The Terrapex

[Leviathan] Ancient Salvage-Shelled Behemoth

Once a decade or so there's a shift in the tangle, a toppling of ironroots and distortion of weather patterns as something truly titanic struggles its way to the surface; the Terrapex, a miles-long beast with a shell of pre-verdant architecture.

Use the Terrapex is you want the crew to face a leviathan that's almost impossible to study because its appearances are so brief, or if you want them to engage with an unknown culture as much as a titanic beast.

Drives

Continuation: The Terrapex surfaces only to lay its eggs near the sun, managing to stay at thrash-level for about a day before its massive size drags it back down to the Under-Eaves, where it can sleep and be hidden again.

Presence

Sight:	An upheaval among the thrash. The cresting of an ancient dome. Rheumy eyes creaking open, their iris dwarfing the ship.
Sound:	Breaking ironroot trunks and snapping branches. The creak of leather, the slap of leaf on old glass.
Taste:	Terrapex eggs are strong and musky, especially when eaten raw.

Resources

Specimens:	Steel Eggshell, Shell Scrapings, Sleep-Stuff, Splintered Trunk
Salvage:	Cast-Off Metal, Merrim Ornament, Dome Glass, Broken Weapon
Whispers:	Decade of Sleep, Shifting Cultures, A Moving Mountain
Cargo:	Small Terrapex Egg, Stack of Shell Plating

Aspects

Invincible: It would take an entire fleet of wildsea ships to even make a dent in the feet-thick plating of the Terrapex which, at any point during such as assault, might decide to crush them into flinders with a sweep of its leg. The Terrapex takes no damage from normal weapons, even deck weapons.

Damage Beyond Damage: The Terrapex doesn't deal damage in any conventional way - a stamp of the foot or snap of its jaw can destroy an entire settlement.

Quirks

Ravenous: The Terrapex surfaces with a seemingly insatiable hunger. It will consume anything in its path - fruit-groves, giant beasts, ships, even whole islands.

Hooks & Encounters

Search for the Nest: Massive eggs wait to hatch once the Terrapex submerges, each the size of a ship. *Leviathaneers and canny traders alike are racing to follow the trail of the Terrapex's emergence to the nest.*

Aid for Merrim: The citizens of Merrim release flares and streaming flags from the top of the Terrapex dome as it emerges - what are they in need of? *This can vary wildly depending on the shell-port's cresting culture feature, as explained in the location entry below.*

First Steps: A newly hatched Terrapex is hungry, breaking its way slowly through the tangle in order to find food. *It has no malice, but will destroy spits and settlements simply due to its size. Can it be sated, or redirected?*

A New Home: A passenger witnesses the emergence, and is overcome with the need to join the Merrimers. *Is this wise, or even possible? Will they be accepted into the shell?*

Merrim (Shell-Port)

Days in the Sun: One every ten years
Cyclical Cultures: Fanatical, Trading, Innocent, Infected

The shell-port of Merrim nestles within the Terrapex's salvaged shell, isolated from the outside world by the roof of the pre-verdant dome. Its inhabitants are castaways, hunters, and traders with schedules determined by the habits and biology of their leviathan home.

Cresting Culture (Feature)

The Terrepex only lays its eggs once every ten years, a process that takes about a day; Merrim society is mostly driven by who they rescue or what they can acquire within that rare golden day. With each cresting, visitors to the port of Merrim find its society has changed in the years below the waves, with different environmental conditions driving social upheaval. *Merrim might crest with...*

- **A Fanatical Culture**, with leadership based on strength or religion to bring its people through a time of high population and low resources.
- **A Trade-Focused Culture**, pleasantly utopian in response to the scales of population, space and resources being balanced in their time below (though this may lead to an unwillingness to interact with outsiders).
- **An Innocent Culture**, made peaceful and content by low population and high amounts of resources, coddled by the safety found within the Terrapex shell.
- **An Infected Culture**, the people of Merrim desperate and plague-ravaged, its shadowed streets silent save the shuffling of feet and the occasional moan. Those that managed to avoid the infection may have become desperate survivalists, half-crazed, waiting for their moment to escape.

The Whitecollar Snare

Mesmeric Leviathan Fox Beast

A leviathan so beautiful that it hurts to hunt... at least, that's how the rumours go. Leviathaneers that take on the Snare come back with wild stories and injuries inflicted by their own crew, subject to confusing and contradicting moods that fade into a general lack of understanding.

The Snare is a creature that naturally mazes its hunters, turning people against each other rather than tackling them itself. Despite the amount of power it can exert, the Whitecollar Snare is utterly ambivalent towards those that have fallen under its control. It prefers to run from a fight, disappearing beneath the waves with a flick of its ship-length tail.

Use the Whitecollar Snare if you want the crew to face something where the danger is from themselves and their reactions rather than from the creature itself, or from the delusions it weaves so expertly.

Presence

Sight:	An impossibly beautiful silhouette against the sunset, tufts of pale summer-smelling fur, dazed onlookers, the remains of leviathaneering ships torn apart from the inside
Sound:	An unnatural calm, ethereal tones, murmurs of appreciation rising unbidden from your own mouth
Smell:	Freshly picked apples and summer sun
Taste:	Unknown, never-known, probably shouldn't be known

Resources

Specimens:	Snare-Fur, A Mazed Friend's Tooth, A Tuft of Beautific Mane
Whispers:	Too Pure, To Be Protected
Cargo:	Whitecollar Pelt, Heaving Mesmeric Gland

Snare Delusions

Home With the Family: The ship is a home, a hovel on a mountainside or dwelling in the high branches of a tallshank. Your family are there to greet you - you've been away on the rustling waves for so long, and they're all there to welcome you back. *The crew might break this delusion by recognizing that some family members couldn't possibly be there, or by trying to leave the 'home' and going over the edge of the ship.*

Success, Predetermined: The Whitecollar Snare is caught and chained, dragged behind your vessel as you head triumphantly back to port - there's no need to stay any longer now that your task is done. *Does your ship have chains strong enough to pull a leviathan? Can you remember the struggle in binding or killing it?*

Overwhelming Jealousy: The Snare gifts favour and respect to another member of the crew, though they've tried to hide it. They'll hoard this gift for themselves, all sly looks and secrets... until you beat the truth out of them. *The Snare offers no favour - all are equally mazed, equally suspicious of each other, equally mired. It takes a strong will or a good bond of friendship to realise that, and a lot of effort to overcome it.*

Aspects

Grand Delusions: The very presence of the Snare causes powerful delusions among the crew and undercrew, flourishing and fuelled by some unknown mesmeric effect. These delusions are incredibly difficult to break free of while still in the area surrounding the Snare, but will fade naturally when crews put enough distance between themselves and the source (if they survive that long, of course).

Last Resort: The Snare may go to great lengths to avoid combat, but it can defend itself against those that manage to break through its haze of delusion and assault the beast itself. It can deal massive Spike damage with bites, Blunt damage with its tail, and Hewing damage with its claws.

Lithe Leviathan: The Whitecollar Snare is leviathan-sized, but far less resistant to damage than most other creatures its size. It's resistant to Blunt, Keen, and Spike damage, and treats massive damage (such as from deck weapons) as high-impact damage instead.

Quirks

Fated Flow: While the Snare is near-impossible to hunt, when it moves through an area the subtle psychic wash of its passage enamours hundreds to that very idea. Amateurs will band together to track and assault the beast, but are far more likely to meet their end at the hands, or jaws, of the sea's more common predators.

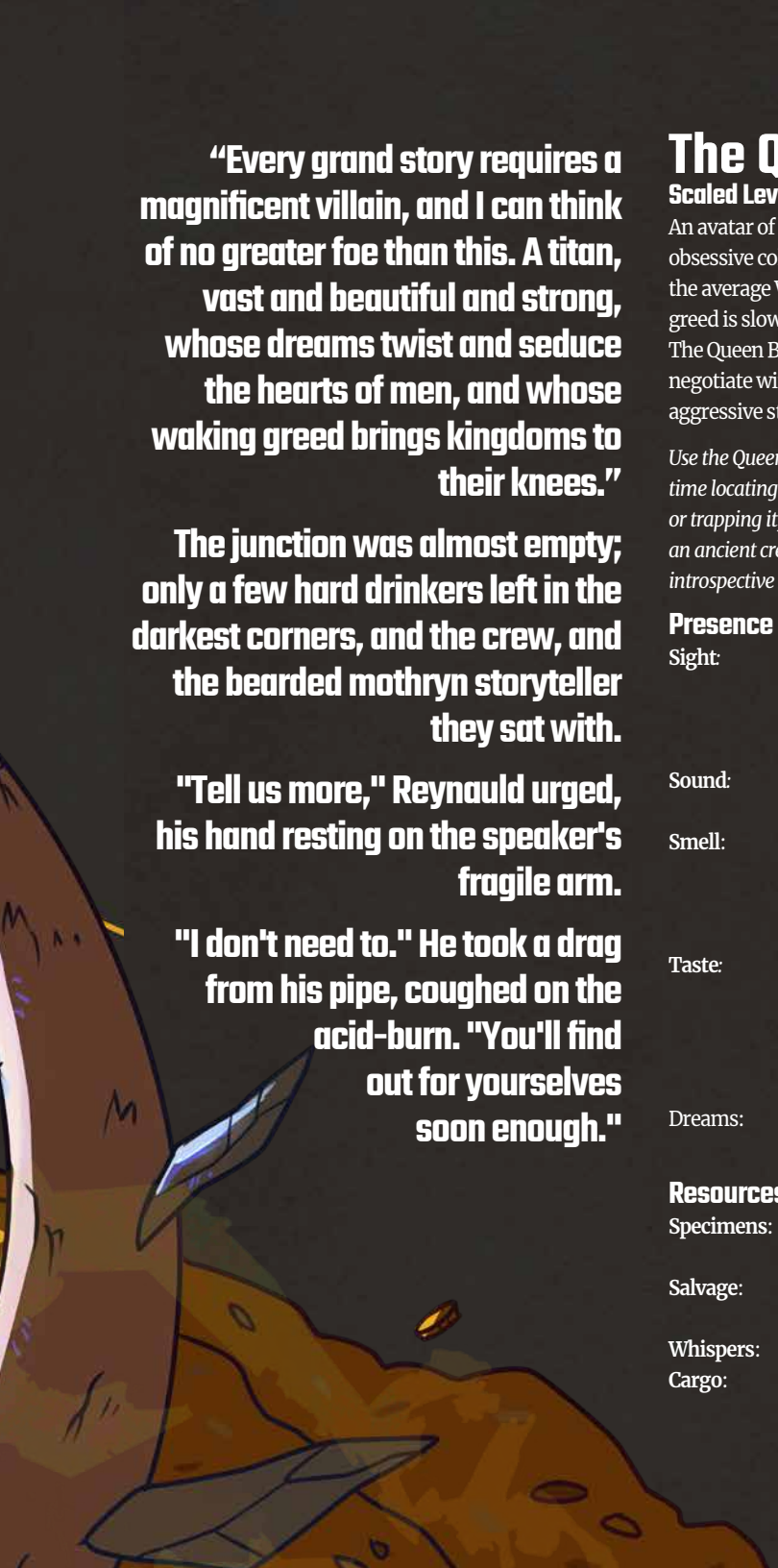
Nightmarish: The Whitecollar Snare is wounded, and its pain radiates through its mesmeric effects. Instead of delusions of home and victory, it plunges those that hunt it into a vulpine nightmare of fur and teeth and reversals of fate.

“Every grand story requires a magnificent villain, and I can think of no greater foe than this. A titan, vast and beautiful and strong, whose dreams twist and seduce the hearts of men, and whose waking greed brings kingdoms to their knees.”

The junction was almost empty; only a few hard drinkers left in the darkest corners, and the crew, and the bearded mothryn storyteller they sat with.

"Tell us more," Reynauld urged, his hand resting on the speaker's fragile arm.

"I don't need to." He took a drag from his pipe, coughed on the acid-burn. "You'll find out for yourselves soon enough."



The Queen Beneath

Scaled Leviathan Beast

An avatar of material greed, the Queen Beneath is an obsessive collector of wealth to such a degree that even the average Writling would be taken aback. But this greed is slow and smouldering, tempered with patience. The Queen Beneath is a shrewd bargainer, and will negotiate with those that find her before taking more aggressive strategies.

Use the Queen Beneath if you want the crew to spend more time locating and understanding a leviathan than fighting or trapping it, or if you want to challenge them to react to an ancient creature that's monstrous in form, but placid and introspective in mind.

Presence

Sight: Brilliant, gleaming, mineral infused scales, an underbelly that ripples with patterns of starlight, an aurora that dances back and forth across the sky.

Sound: Devotions and songs raised in praise, a choir of supplicants.

Smell: The scent of nostalgia, particular to each sailor that inhales it - for some it's bread baking on an ancient mountaintop, for some a father's sporescarf after years at sea.

Taste: Few if any have tasted the meat of the Queen Beneath, but some claim to have supped on a discarded scale; the rumours suggest something bittersweet, metallic, sharp like a freshly shed tear.

Dreams: Of golden scales, of lost pleasures, of a woman in a pale blue dress.

Resources

Specimens: Tears from Stone, Crystalline Claws, Omniscient Eye

Salvage: Pre-Verdant Artefact, Fragments of Wealth, Venerable Tomes

Whispers: All That Glitters, Star-Crossed Dreams

Cargo: Starseed Core, Dreamer's Egg, Pile of Ancient Wealth, Gemstone Hoard

Aspects

Lightbringer: The crystals covering the Queen's scales and skin absorb light from its surroundings (creating areas of unnatural darkness) which she can then focus into devastating focused beams. These beams deal massive LR Blast damage or, if you want to really put pressure on the crew, massive LR Flame damage.

Aurora: When the Queen Beneath sleeps, the sky around her resting-place lights up with brilliant, coruscating colours for miles. This can help crews in tracking her rough location, but gives little precise information.

Peaceful Greed: The Queen Beneath, like the fabled dragons of ancient stories, rests atop a pile of collected wealth. Its purpose is unknown, but her drive to add to it is strong. The hoard is guarded by attendants, half-asleep and clutching weapons hewn from cast-off scales.

Scaled Leviathan: The Queen Beneath reduces the impact of all damage types, but her scales leave her completely immune to Keen, Spike, Hewing, and Serrated damage. Dealing massive damage marks single boxes rather than entire tracks. Sighting the Queen Beneath for the first time marks at least two points of mire.

Quirks

Walks in Dreams: Those hunting or searching for the lair of the Queen Beneath find themselves dreaming of her. These dreams are difficult to remember, but leave an impression of yearning - some find them mildly addictive, others develop an aversion to unmedicated sleep. All who experience them become less able to work against (and more willing to bargain with) the Queen.

Whispering Titan: The Queen Beneath collects whispers, and uses them against those that would harm her.

Hooks & Encounters

Treasure Trove: Rumours of the Queen's hoard prove too much for some to resist. *Most of her collection is useless in a world without wealth, but greed is an old and tenuous thing.*

Something Long Lost: The crew are dreaming, every night. A woman in a blue dress is searching for something - perhaps they can help her find it? *There is no malice in these dreams, no real subterfuge... but there is control, need and obsessiveness in dangerous amounts.*

CHAPTER 11
REACHES

She'd barely noticed the signs at first; purple blossom wild on the wavetops, a slip of sand on changing winds. Gods knew the canopy was full of oddities.

But a few days later she woke early, gut churning, every sense screaming that something had gone terribly wrong. The rustle and clatter of branches on the hull replaced with a constant scraping. Her cabin an oven, her clothes stuck to her skin. What had happened as she slept?

Dawn was breaking as she hauled herself deckside, legs unstable from the ship's new juddering movement. Then... Disbelief.

The trees she'd known her entire life were gone. Instead, they sailed a twisting canopy of cactus and temple-stone, spines thicker than her arm gouging the hull.

The captain's shout shocked her from her reverie, a triumphant call.

"New reach, people! New reach, new rules!"

Places That May or May Not Exist

The Wildsea is vast, almost unimaginably so, and both mechanics and setting are skewed in a way that makes the creation of new areas as easy a task as possible.

But despite its size, the wildsea is not disorganized - or rather, it very much is, but the combined efforts of cartographers, navigators, and explorers have tried with some success to taxonomise and impose order where possible.

Reaches are a natural consequence of this - areas of the sea that are more known, more detailed, more quantifiable.

In-universe, you'll often hear rumours of the far-off reaches; the endless snows of the Interregnum, the hanging relic-cities of Nadir, a spreading red-petaled sickness that threatens to burst the bounds of the Manticor Wedge. The accuracy of these rumours is questionable, but with time and effort you may be able to uncover some truths.

Out-of-universe, a reach is a pre-made area of the Wildsea, usually one that breaks some of the normal rules and conventions of the wider setting.

They're off to the side from the standard Wildsea experience, but can definitely be a part of it if they catch your imagination.

What's In a Reach?

Information, suggestions, and options, mostly, but they can broadly categorised into the following list...

- **Elements**: The important features of this particular area of the sea, the ones that set it apart from others.
- **Territories**: Swathes of the reach with their own characteristics and features, usually containing the...
- **Ports**: Major settlements that are known to everyone living in the reach, and should be easy enough to find in most cases. The perfect place to trade or recuperate.
- **Factions**: Cohesive groups working toward singular, identifiable goals. These come with story hooks and NPC suggestions, and you can gain or lose reputation with them through your crew's actions in the reach.
- **Firefly Resources**: A set of tables made for easy d6 rolling to help new Fireflies get accustomed to the reach during their first few games there.
- **Something Extra**: The last page of each reach is devoted to something unique - it might be a particular creature that only appears there, additional rules concerning local travel, or even a new bloodline rarely seen outside of the area.

Reputation

As you deal with the factions of a reach, their opinions of you will likely change. Your crew sheet has a space to record this - a box to mark if they **respect** you, a box to mark if they **fear** you, and a box to mark if they **favour** you (a faction may well do none, some or all of these things at once).

Mechanically, you can use your reputation to either add 1d6 of advantage or to increase your impact when dealing with the faction in a relevant way. For example, if a crew is in a stand-off with a marauder sent out by a faction that **fears** them, they'd be able to call on that marked box for an advantage when rolling to persuade them to back off.

Your reputation with a faction is down to your actions as a crew, and will likely shift over time. Stealing from a faction that **favours** you will probably clear that box, for example. Sometimes you'll gain or lose reputation with a faction without even interacting with them directly - conquering a leviathan that's been harrying a faction's cargo ships might earn you a mark of **respect**, even if that wasn't your intended goal.

THE FOXLOFT

Partov had always assumed that it wasn't actually the spring-foxes that brought good luck to a crew out on the wild waves, but the surge of confidence that came with their sighting. Placebo effect, perhaps. As a surgeon, she could appreciate that.

She watched as the undercrew redoubled their efforts, sporescarves flailing in the wind as the Redoubt Redoubling barreled along the wavetops of the thrash. It was a good ship, a strong ship, and it had never let them down yet.

It was also a ship accompanied, for the moment. Their fur glowing red against the dull gold of the oak-leaves, an entire brace of spring-foxes danced in their wake. The Double-R was by no means slow yet still they kept up, leaping and snapping at dragonflies and thrash-birds disturbed by the mulcher at their prow.

Maybe not good luck, then, not really. But still a sight to behold.

Main Elements

This page highlights the most important elements of the Foxloft, a reach of hybrid oaks, devoted hunters, and wildly varied fox-like beasts. The rest of this section delves into more detail.

Leaves of Green and Gold

The trees that make up the rustling waves of the Foxloft are a hybrid species, a combination of oak and banyan. They stand on average a mile and a half high, their vibrant green and gold leaves shot through with strands of white-blossomed creeper and studded with fist-sized acorns. Crews might encounter…

- A recent wreck caught up in a thicket of corpse-vines, wood already reclaimed and blossoming
- The scents of sap, chemical fuel and leaf-pulp in the air around a busy port
- The taste of fox-flesh accompanied by a side of sun-cracked acorns

The Vulpine Masses

The Foxloft is (perhaps unsurprisingly) home to a vast number of foxes and fox-like creatures. Many attribute this plethora of wildlife to the natural adaptability of the foxes of old, but those of a more spiritual bent have their own theories. Crews might encounter…

- Spring-foxes dancing like dolphins in the broken-branch wake of wildsea ships
- The yipping of pocket-foxes, stealing across the deck at night to hunt for bugs and crumbs of food
- A pheromone spray of alarm as bugs scatter beneath the shadow of a red-tailed glider

Fur and Fury

The economies of the Foxloft are simple and direct, a constant scramble for pre-verdant wealth (from the Writlings) and impressive hunting trophies (from the Hunting Families). Conflict between cultures is rare, but the waves make up for that with a plethora of ever-changing prey and predator ecosystems. Crews might encounter…

- Hunters defending a Writling salvaging party from a leviathan fox
- The sounds of feasting and festival-drums from a newly risen spit
- The smell of sweat and blood in the air around a now-deserted outpost, and deep scratches on the walls

The Seven Walls

As is common for the wildsea, the precise details of the Foxloft's past are lost to time, eaten by the roots. But the Seven Walls still stand, huge constructions of iron and stone that are sometimes revealed, in part, by rootquakes and canopy-cutting efforts. Tall enough to reach from the hidden ground to the uppermost parts of the tangle, a mysterious monument to whichever civilization once held these lands. Crews might encounter…

- A settlement of tents and shacks built atop a sturdy stone barrier
- The grinding screech of blunted saws as a ship skitters over branch-buried metal
- Carved Highvin sigils, half-covered in moss, that make the eyes itch slightly if stared at for too long

Spits of Bone

Perhaps due to the impressive permanence of the Seven Walls, the ironroots dug particularly deep into the geological layers beneath the Foxloft. Rootquakes often dredge up the fossilized bones of strange and unknown creatures, many of which are lashed, anchored, and colonized despite their bizarre shapes. Do these mark an age before the pre-verdant, a time before the time before? Crews might encounter…

- A port under construction in the eye-socket of an ancient titan's skull
- The rising taste of memories, old even before the world-forest's arrival
- The hollow clack of old bones moving under the influence of restless spirits

The Ribfields (Territory)

Number of Distinct Remains: More with each quake
Bone Shades: White, sallow, icteric yellows, old earth

The colours of the waves are muted here, and branches twine around house-sized teeth and bones that would dwarf battleships. These are the funerary waves, the uprooted graves, the remains of compounded ages brought to light.

Incisor's Run (Festival)

A Hunting Family festival centred around wavewalking races, with checkpoints set up on various ossuary spits. These spits are often unstable, and the festival rarely ends without a few lost to the Under-Eaves. *Outsiders are encouraged to join.*

Woke-Bone Sickness (Horror)

An arconautic infection alive in the very breath of these waves, known for animating skeletons still entrenched within the living. *A true, stark horror that inflicts mire as it worsens. Creatures without bones are immune.*

The Howling Wax (Leviathan)

A serpentine collection of woken bones from a creature (or creatures) built to a scale rarely seen, which moves through the Ribfields on some unknown quest. *Hunters from neighbouring territories periodically attempt to track and scale the beast as it moves, risking Woke-Bone Sickness to claim one of its smaller parts as a prize (details found on page 259).*

Local Rumours

- The Highvin script carved onto the Seven Walls spells out the history of the pre-Verdant world.
- Fox-pelt clothing brings unquestionably good luck... unless the fox was hunted dishonourably.
- Writling treasures actually hold far more value than most give them credit for.
- The bone spits of the Ribfields rearrange themselves each night.
- A trophy was stolen from the Gall-Drop Hunting Family many years ago, and they've been searching for it ever since.
- The foxes here can understand Raka Spit well enough to evade hunters that rely on it to communicate.
- Those afflicted with Woke-Bone Sickness often find their skeletons urging them deeper into the waves, to some unknown destination.
- Hunters that steal a bone from the Howling Wax slowly develop a new sense, a particular knowledge of its location at all times.

Spearing Fens (Territory)

Legendary Beast: The Whitecollar Snare
Mesa-Skull Species: Unknown, but definitely fox-like

Often referred to as the 'home of the hunt', Spearing Fens is a territory bursting with life and inhabited by a large number of Hunting Families. Most live on huge island-like barges of bone and wood, moving slowly to keep up with the migrations and moods of their chosen prey. Worth is measured in blood and horn throughout the fens.

The Spitskill Mesa (Landmark)

A single skull packed with old earth, both impossibly large and impossibly ancient, supporting its own forested ecosystem separate from the sea below. *A proving-ground for the most ambitious of the Hunting Families, beasts slain here never seem to stay dead for long.*

Friendly Rivalries (Feature)

The local families are locked in constant competition over the rights to certain types of prey, trophy acquisition, and watchtower ownership, but these squabbles are oddly friendly. *The perpetual hunt lets them spill all the blood they need to without turning on each other.*

Vulpine Respect (Feature)

Hundreds of years of cohabitation by hunter and springfox have done their work - both parties regard the other with a grudging respect, rarely meddling in the other's business. *Hunters are likely to ignore springfoxes when searching for prey, and the springfoxes sometimes keep smaller, lesser animals from interfering in hunts.*

Highcross (Territory)

Dominant Colour: Oak-leaf gold
Secretive Efforts to Topple the Seventh Wall: Fruitless

Quartered by a confluence of unshakeable walls, many worked and hollowed out to provide secure vaults for Writling treasures that would never be stolen anyway.

The Mazoro Line (Wonder)

A set of well-maintained train tracks connecting multiple Writling settlements atop the Seven Walls, wealth-encrusted carriages pulled by specially trained titanopedes. *A ticket is required to travel, but that really just means 'any kind of old-world paper'.*

Rizen's Garden (Docks)

Multi-tiered platforms built around a joining of walls, acting both as a switchback path for docking ships and good ground for parasite strawberry-fields. *Picking the local strawberries without permission is frowned upon.*

Belltower Crabs (Threat)

Polished brass constructs created by Writling rattlehands, the belltower crabs crawl slowly through the waves in search of potential old-world wealth. *These constructs are mobile and capable of basic decision-making, but are still quite rudimentary and easy to confuse or overload.*

Kitlata's Threads (Market)

A clothing market and general trading post carved into the side of one of the Seven Walls, multi-tiered and gloriously eclectic in the products it offers. Packed with smiths, tailors, and thread-minded arconauts, there's nowhere else in the reach that offers clothes as fine as Kitlata's. *The good-tempered ketra that owns the place has been known to hire wildsailors for secretive errands from time to time, often to retrieve rare ingredients for a new dye.*

It was a feeling near-impossible to shake, a normalcy so normal as to be completely abnormal.

The streets of Tall Mauzer were built on solid stone, none of that usual subtle shift or sway you got from even the most tangled temple-spits.

But they shuddered every now and then, from the tramping of a thousand feet or the rumbling passage of a cargo-train on the Mazoro Line.

Trains. The thought of them was a tickle of dream-clouded memories in the back of her head, but she shook that off. She knew, from long years of trying, that the amber had taken all the certainty away from that period of her past.

Still though, the throng of Writlings and wildsailors and traders, the sound of Low Sour in a hundred different accents.

The wildness of the waves seemed, for the first time, less than all-encompassing.

The Spitskill Tide (Fleet)

Local Beverage of Choice: Foxtail rum
The Highest-Honoured: 16 true leviathaneers

A Hunting Family city-fleet that sails the waves of the Spearing Fens, protecting their territory from poachers, chancers, and ossuary-thieves. Their ships are primarily made of reclaimed bone and tar-worked wood cut straight from the thrash, and most larger ships are wide, low, and barge-like in construction, allowing for tents and shacks on deck. Larger vessels are devoted to singular (and impressive) purposes.

The Endless Feast (Festival)

In between celebrating hunts, births, deaths, and past achievements, it's actually harder to find a day without some kind of celebration. *Crews visiting the Spitskill Tide will likely be asked to contribute meat and alcohol in good faith, but it's not strictly required.*

Every Piece (Ship, Chop-Station)

A legendary chop-station taking up an entire ship, Every Piece isn't a place hunters need to go to render their prizes, it's a place they want to go to admire the artistry. *The workers of Every Piece take only a single trophy from a rendered piece, usually a particularly impressive bone to add to their collection.*

Bakarato (Ship, Junction and Shadow-Spring)

A ship with a lower hull of thick but mostly transparent amber, constantly sluiced with warm salted water. A place for hunters to drink, duel, and stare down at the majesty of the branches below. *Drinking and fighting are both expected within Bakarato, and the spirits they serve there are particularly potent.*

A Different Kind of Hunt (Feature)

Though blood and trophies are the main driving force behind Hunting Family activity, growing numbers (especially younger members) have begun to hunt in order to tame and domesticate beasts rather than eat them. Local foxes are a common target of these efforts. *Elders are generally unhappy with this trend, but progress is hard to stop – the Spitskill Tide now hosts some of the finest animal training and breeding facilities of the wider waves.*

Tall Mauzer (Port)

Local Hobby: Ostentatious bragging
Darkest Secrets: The contents of vault 9036J

A busy network of streets, vaults, and tenements cut painstakingly into the Fourth Wall, Tall Mauzer lives up to its name – it spreads from the canopy-level to walltop, hundreds of feet of densely decorated stone.

As a Writling settlement, the signs of pre-verdant wealth and finery are everywhere, and nothing is truly public – everything from the elevator platforms to the carved faux-cobbles are entered into somebody's ledgers.

The Expeditionary Council (Leader)

A collection of venerable Writling merchant-tzars, directing the city's official dredging efforts. Between them, they own at least 51% of all structures making up Tall Mauzer. *The council members are chosen based on the finery they wear rather than any intrinsic governing merit. Yet the city continues to function...*

Royal Esterken Wells (Station)

A station on the Mazoro Line, the highest point of the city. *The station-yards are heavily guarded thanks to the vault contents often moved through the area.*

The Tale of the Bottom Dollar (Feature)

A local legend concerning a sunken Writling salvaging-ship, said to be carrying the very height of old-world wealth. *Eager goldsighted have combed the waves for many years in search of the Bottom Dollar, and though there have been several false claims, its location remains a mystery.*

The Vaults (Wonder)

A hollowed-out area deep within the Fourth Wall (and far below the canopy-level), Tall Mauzer has far more vaults than it does inhabitants. *Belltower crabs guard passageways leading down to the vaults, but are of much sleeker design than those found out on the waves.*

Tanderich's Picture-House (Cartoika)

A permanent exhibition of snapographied landscapes collected by an eccentric gau, the picture-house's exhibits are surprisingly effective maps of the distant waves. *'Donations' are demanded at the door.*

Marrow (Port)

Tallest Tower: 17 ektus stone-throws
Pyremind Population: [REDACTED]

Completely independent of both the Writlings and the Hunting Families, Marrow is a thriving industrial city built into the alarmingly massive beak of a long-dead leviathan crow. Marrow is renowned across the Foxloft for its gunsmiths, metalwork, and semi-egalitarian societal structure, as well as for the port's distasteful origins.

Long a stronghold of pirates, a bloody rebellion ousted them to meaner dwellings in the nearby waves and secured the city's place as a friendly trade-hub for locals and far-ranging visitors alike.

The Architect King (Leader)

An amberclad ardent, rescued from her dreams and used as a slave-engineer by Marrow's old pirate gangs. She earned her freedom, remade herself, and claimed its post-revolution crown, and is well-regarded by the majority of her citizens (many of whom wear amber affectations in recognition of her reign). *The King's dwellings are actually empty, the ruler herself away from the port on business so secret even her closest advisors don't know her location. This fact is kept from the general population.*

Forge Factories (Feature)

The thick bone of Marrow is appreciably fireproof, allowing for the construction of forge-factories and traditional smithies without fear of spreading fire. *Good relationships with a forge-worker will allow salvaged metals to be reshaped and purified without much cost.*

031 (Workshop)

Owned by an ironbound engineer of considerable skill, specializes in the refurbishment of unusual ships and machinery. Zero-Three, the ironbound in charge of the workshop, has spread pieces of herself around the entire building. *Each acts semi-autonomously, allowing her to work on a variety of projects at once.*

The Colquista (Threat)

The band of pirates ejected from Marrow during the revolution, jealous of its success as a new industrial powerhouse and still furious over the loss of a good staging ground for their raids. Colquista agents often try (and almost as often fail) to slither into positions of power within Marrow. *The general populace are wise to their ways.*

The Hunting Families (Faction)

Home Turf: Spearing Fens
Motivation: Conquer the most dangerous beasts

A powerful presence across the rustling waves of the Foxloft, the Hunting Families are a collection of semi-nomadic groups united in their love of the hunt. Kin from the Families are often found trading pelts, bone and meat at ports, or encountered sailing the canopy in pursuit of whatever quarry has caught their attention. They're regarded by others as a rough but straightforward lot, honest about their intentions and driven to succeed.

The Hunter's Throne (Wonder)

A ragged affair of skins and bones atop the Spitskill Mesa. Each hunter sets a trophy into the throne at some point, but in the absence of recognized leaders, it remains empty by tradition. *The throne is a symbol of what has been conquered, not of who conquered it.*

The First Feast (Festival)

Anyone can become a member of one of the Families if they're driven enough, and those born directly into the Families do not attain the title of kin merely through circumstance. *To become a recognized member you need to provide the meat for your own induction feast, enough for everyone present – a prodigious task.*

Sun-Dives (Festival)

When a member becomes too old or frail to hunt, they often take the sun-dive – a raucous celebration of skill and passion that ends with a fatal leap into the nearest rift. *It's tradition to leap holding something bright - a firefly bulb, for example - as a representation of hunting, and besting, the darkness beneath.*

The Bravest Few (Punishment)

A disgraced hunter can often redeem themselves by walking the path of the Bravest Few - dressing themselves in pelts and horns, then slipping away into the waves to live as a quarry for the other hunters. *Surviving a stint out in the wild wipes the offender's slate clean, and gives a few new scars to show off.*

Principles

The precise laws and customs of the hunting families change from settlement to settlement, but these principles hold true for most.

- Taking a trophy is an act of respect, but only from a fair fight.
- Scars are proof that you're pushing yourself to excel, and should be worn with pride.
- Never intervene in another's hunt.

Quick NPCs

- **Cressa Thorn (Ardent)**: Tasked with watching over a game preserve for training children in their earliest years. Elderly, good-humoured, and a terror with a long-range carbine.
- **Tantaluska Ormenholme (Ektus)**: An ex-pirate with a jagged scar running from brow to knee, pursuing the leviathan squirrel that marked them.
- **Bel & Hortio (Ardent)**: A brother and sister duo who hunt together, Bel with blades and Hortio with a bow. More brave than they are skilled.

Story Hooks

- After defending themselves against a crazed beast, the crew find that they've unwittingly spoiled a hunt.
- The crew come across an injured long-nose mount, pining for its lost rider.
- Arriving at a hunting outpost the crew find that a feast is already underway, welcoming a new initiate.
- An elderly hunter wants transport as a passenger, to see a little of the wider waves before they take the sun-dive.
- A bone-hulled ship sits in a lonely port, with signs of a struggle evident on deck and the crew nowhere to be seen.
- The crew, their ship chased by a titanic beast, are saved by a group of leviathaneers... But the beast is still out there.

The Writlings (Faction)

Home Turf: Highcross
Motivation: Accrue and display pre-verdant wealth

The Writlings are a cult devoted to the unearthing and repurposing of ancient wealth, with a particular focus on coins, paper money, contracts and books. Precious metals don't typically interest them as much unless they're finely worked, but are often incorporated into their ships and settlements for decoration.

Though some regard them as pirates, Writlings are rarely violent to outsiders unless provoked. In truth, they rarely come into conflict with other cultures, as the resources they devote themselves to collecting are all but useless to most wildsea groups.

A Cult of Silk & Paper (Feature)

Writling clothing is made to look as elegant as possible, but this elegance is in service to the cult's own sensibilities. *Lower-order members are draped in gold-trimmed silks, yet still envious of the coin necklaces and haphazard banknote-sashes of their betters.*

The Goldsighted (Feature)

A colloquial term for experienced Writling scavengers, so named due to their habit of replacing their eyes (if they have them) with coins. *Writlings belonging to 'eyeless' bloodlines, such as the ektus, often embed coins into their arms and faces instead.*

Promenossuaries (Horror)

As a successful Writling reaches the end of their life their thoughts turn, naturally, to the protection of their treasures. A promenossuary allows them to hoard their wealth, even in death - a semi-sentient coffin that lurches proudly along the streets and walkways of their homes. *These walking tombs are often glass-fronted, displaying an alchemically preserved corpse and their most valuable finds.*

The Exchange (Festival)

A monthly trading festival for the acquisition of old-world wealth. *Writlings often cultivate vast gardens of heirloom produce, bartering their ship-grown strawberries and slaughtermelons for pre-V gewgaws.*

Principles

There is a written code sitting snug in a Writling vault somewhere that fully categorizes their goals and ambitions. Now, if only someone could remember which vault...

- Valuable acquisitions should be paraded.
- The ideas of the past are worth more than those of the future.
- Theft from another Writling is punishable by death (a cut-throat business manoeuvre is fine).

Quick NPCs

- **Tamen Hold (Gau)**: A young Writling coin collector, eager to show off his accumulated 'wealth'.
- **Big Fja (Ardent)**: A high-ranking member of the Writling cult with a cape made of sealing-wax and multi-coloured banknotes. Respected for her ability to sniff out a bargain on relics.
- **Patakara Kezar (Tzelicrae)**: A goldsighted scavenger whose internal spiders carry numerous coins from various lost currencies. Claims to have visited the Under-Eaves.

Story Hooks

- A high-ranking Writling is holding an auction of to make room for new acquisitions.
- Something owned by one of the crew catches the eye of a gold-sighted scavenger.
- After a distant explosion, faded banknotes rain down from the sky for miles around.
- The crew discover a damaged promenossuary.
- Writling cultists are on the trail of a cunning thief.
- A nearby titanopede has gone wild, pulling the city built into its back on a terrifying ride.

FIREFLY RESOURCES

Watch Results (Peace)

6: A bone-spit daubed with a rudimentary map of the surrounding waves.
5: A distant pack of spring-foxes playing in the thrash.
4: An arconautic swell from somewhere below, allowing the crew to hear perfectly for a short time.
3: Two companions play-fighting on deck.
2: One of the undercrew shares a tale of the salvagers sent out to find the Bottom Dollar, and what they found instead.
1: An excellent view of one of the Seven Walls from a peak of the wavetops.

Watch Results (Order)

6: A Hunting Family vessel pulling up alongside you, with fresh meat and strong drink to share and nothing to ask for in return.
5: A tallshank marked with Raka Spit script, a hunter's poem for prey long-lost.
4: A bone-spit archipelago settled by refugees from a distant reach.
3: A brace of trained foxes pulling a Writling pleasure-barge.
2: An encounter with one of the Bravest Few, atoning for the crime of trophy-theft.
1: A heavily damaged Hunting Family ship fleeing a leviathan.

Watch Results (Nature)

6: A coterie of spring-foxes dancing in the wake of your ship, a decidedly good omen.
5: A vengeful storm, its lightning striking an insulated Writling dredging-vessel again and again.
4: A swarm of tiny pocket-foxes spilling up and over the railings, looking to nab any small items they can.
3: A rain of teeth.
2: The split banyam-branches and scarred trunks that point to a recently surfaced leviathan.
1: A Woke-Bone puppet pulling themselves onto the deck, screaming for help as they are forced to attack.

Trade Goods & Cargo

- **Dredging Equipment (export)**: While some, like the tzelicrae and ketra, are naturally suited for trips down into the sink and drown to dredge up old salvage, most have to invest in serious protective gear to stay safe.
- **Beast Meat (export)**: With their seemingly never-sated drive to hunt, the families usually end up with more meat than they could ever eat or store. Often salted or dried for travel.
- **Finely-Crafted Guns (export)**: Straight from the forges of Marrow. Blackpowder can be used, but it's a rarity - most Marrow-made guns rely on alchemical charges, compressed air or ratchetwork.
- **Coins and Banknotes (import)**: Pre-verdant, of course. Writling traders will usually be thrilled to exchange any kind of specimen for such salvage.
- **Untested Beasts (import)**: The Hunting Families are always looking for a new challenge, and bringing a dangerous beast from a far-off reach is a great way to pique their interest.
- **Ore (import)**: The curse of Marrow, a city of smelters with no local mines. Luckily, folks will travel for weeks to bring them material for their forges, and they pay handsomely too.

Passengers

- A young member of the Hunting Families, a fox-trainer on their way back from a successful and bloodless hunt with a new furred friend.
- A goldsighted dredger with very specific directions as to where she wants to be dropped off.
- An old Marrow revolutionary with a huge spiny beard, full of tales of the bad times before the Architect King took her throne.
- A wordless promenossuary that will leave exactly when it wants to.
- A group of new Writlings, their clothing drab and speckled with only a few coins and book-scraps.
- A train-driver from the Mazoro line, exiled from their post due to the death of a titanopede on their watch.

Endemic Hazards

- A huge and varied amount of foxes (see the next page for details), though they're rarely a direct threat to wildsailing crews.
- Arrow-tongue jikari crawling down from the Spitskill Mesa in search of gourmet prey.
- Red-tailed gliders snapping insects out of the air, but occasionally driven to take on larger prey.
- Sailing stones, parts of the Seven Walls that have gained sentience and drifted free in the long years since the Verdancy.
- Titanopedes, usually well-trained to follow trading channels and Seven Wall rail-lines.
- The Whitecollar Snare, a leviathan fox so starkly beautiful that it mazes the mind and turns friend to foe.

A Vulpine Variety

The Foxloft didn't gain its name by chance - though filled with all manner of beasts, oddities, and insects, an unusual concentration of foxes and fox-like things call the reach their home. The most notable of these are...

Snow-Collars

One of the most distinctive vulpine beasts of the Foxloft, the pure white fur of their heads and necks standing out amid the green and gold foliage. Snow-collars tend to make their dens by burrowing into the stonework of the Seven Walls, and some fear that their accidental efforts may one day bring the entire edifice crashing down.

Pocketfoxes

Unique to the Foxloft, these miniature vulpine scavengers are no bigger than the average locket. Though treated by some as vermin they're actually incredibly useful, especially when trained - a pocketfox is a natural filcher, able to steal small but valuable items from unattended places. Wild pocketfoxes use these things to decorate their dens, but a trained specimen will bring such spoils straight to their owner.

Red-Tailed Gliders

The main aerial predator of the reach, despite being unable to truly fly; red-tailed gliders rely on updraughts and tallshank launching-points to hunt, soaring through the skies on billowing flaps of aerodynamic fur. Much like the snow-collars, these gliders are named for their unusual colouration, their tails lacking the black or white 'tip' common to most of the region's foxes.

Springfoxes

Found all over the wildsea but rarely in such concentration, springfoxes are to ships of the wilds what dolphins were to ships of the old salt. They travel in packs, leaping through the thrash in a ship's wake or alongside its hull to snap at insects disturbed by its passage. Some sailors even feed them, throwing food over the side as a gesture of affection or good luck.

Djagva

Named after the Low Sour word for 'blade', djagva foxes are aggressively territorial denizens of the deeper sink. Though resembling ordinary foxes in every way, every part of their fur is razor sharp. For some hunters, djagva are the only foxes it can be honourable to choose as a quarry - they move in packs of several hundred, leaving swathes of torn leaves and bark-stripped branches behind them.

Luckily for sailors and settlers, djagva rarely make their way up to the surface, though their movements sometimes drive other creatures from the sink upwards (which can be a problem in itself).

Robichek's Follies

Not foxes at all, though they do a passable job of imitating them when luring prey - a good enough job that they fooled the infamous Robichek, a Writling dissident that ran off to join the Hunting Families. His story has become something of a myth in the Foxloft, so the truth of it is questionable, but the tale goes that he set his sights on a 'modest' creature for his inaugural feast. The creature he ended up hunting (which he mistook for a snow-collar) gave little reaction as he crept closer, and he only realized his mistake when the white and russet fur split apart to reveal acid-dripping mandibles, the folly discarding its disguise and revealing itself as a ship-length centipede with an especially effective method of camouflage.

Robichek would probably be less than enthused to know that the creature was named after him.

THE ICTERINE

The Solomach's Rust was a salvage ship, a stocky little vessel with a generous cargo space and an array of cranes ringing the deck. Its crew were experienced, its hull scarred by a hundred journeys, and its bite a powerful mulcher.

It was also currently beached.

It wasn't something the crew has really dealt with before - the great threshing maw of the mulcher half-buried in sand, the hull supported (if that was an appropriate word out here) by fibrous flesh and broken cactus-spines.

"I thought it was a... stream, or something. You know? Or a ridge?"

Their navigator was shame-faced and sweating, maps crumpled in both hands as he gestured at the impossible tree-top dunes.

The Solomach's captain sighed, unwinding her spore-scarf. Now they were still, the sun's heat was fast becoming oppressive.

"No blame, kid. I don't think any of us expected quite this much sand."

Main Elements

This page highlights the most important elements of the Icterine, a reach of temple ruins, blazing sun, and the echoes of a long-eaten desert. The rest of this section delves into more detail.

Waves of Spine & Fibre

There are no ironroots holding up the vast, complex wavescape of the Icterine - instead, the entire sea is dominated by the growth of ironspines, mile-high cacti that branch and flower and tear remorselessly at all but the sturdiest hulls. Ships made to sail other reaches tend to stick to the area's blossom-marked paths, unless they have absolutely no choice. Crews might encounter...

- A trail of pulp and broken needles ending in a decrepit, picked-clean wreck
- Swathes of pink and yellow cactus-blossom that signal a smoother, safer passage
- Local ships picking their way delicately on spindled limbs, or crashing through the waves with thick stone hulls

The Heat Unyielding

Though the weather of the Icterine is predictable, it's no less dangerous for it - long, hot days and freezing nights are the norm, and winter brings only the slightest respite from the blaze. Polished metals are carefully shrouded to avoid accidental fires, and most clothing is made for breathability and skin-coverage. Crews might encounter...

- Ektus working shirtless and carefree among swaddled, sweating ardent and flaking gau
- Taut canvas awnings stretching out through the thrash, affording shade without the dangers of delving deeper
- Ships abandoned, their supplies strewn about the waves, their crews driven mad by the heat

Trapped Water

Fresh, clean water is worth its weight in salvage across the Icterine, in part thanks to the heat and in part to the ironspines and their insatiable appetite. Most water is obtained through cactus-mining, with drilling platforms and purification plants a common sight in the safer areas of the waves (though this industry is strictly controlled and monopolized by a wealthy few). Crews might encounter...

- Water-drilling rigs affixed to the largest of the ironspines like pulpcrete-and-metal blisters
- The sharp scent of crezzerin on the air as their bite cuts through a particularly fleshy wave
- Water traders surrounded by ceramic casks, immaculate hair and bristling beards dyed bright colours

Sand on the Wind

The deserts of the old Icterine are swallowed by the Under-Eaves, but their echoes remain - vast canopy-level sandbanks pierced by spines and ruins and a constant, grating, granular wind. These lost dunes seem to tint the very air a dull yellow, a phenomenon thought to have given the reach its name. Crews might encounter...

- Aurora-like clouds of sand high above, dunes set free from their old-world shackles
- The constant white noise of sand particles scraping the outer hull with each breeze
- The vicious mass of a sandstorm brewing in the distance, thick with unmoored thorns

An Economy of Space

With little in the way of unworked stone or earth for rootquakes to bring to the surface, settlements across the Icterine are a hybrid affair - old temple stone cribbed from sunken cities, dried cactus-pads lashed into flexing streets, and long, low barge-cities rippling with the movement of the spined waves beneath. Crews might encounter...

- Bustling markets on open barge-decks, tents rippling in the wind
- Hordes of ships racing out across the waves after a rootquake, each crew desperate for a new discovery
- Trading ships docking at the end of their livelihoods, swelling a barge-town's borders

Tzoloch Crawling (Territory)

Most Common Fishing Result: A strained arm, a torn line, and an empty basket
Number of Catalogued Lizard Species: 273 and growing

A sprawling jumble of stone, sand-spits, and cactus spines, the precise borders of these dune-fields shift from month to month as they grind their way around the Icterine. Essentially an entire moving ecosystem covering hundreds of miles, Tzoloch Crawling is a curse on navigation and accurate cartography alike. It's also been the subject of many failed colonization efforts by neighbouring territories, and remains severely underpopulated despite ample amounts of solid (if disturbingly mobile) ground.

Dunes that Shift (Feature)

Nobody quite knows why Tzoloch Crawling's borders and location are so fluid. It leaves little in its wake other than destruction, its progression a directed growth of ironspine and a prevailing, sand-filled wind. It may take weeks for the phenomenon to move half a mile, or it might surge over a settlement in minutes. *Once inside the bounds of Tzoloch Crawling it feels like any other stationary territory, save for the tendency of everything native to shift or angle itself in the direction the dunes are travelling in.*

... And the Stones they Drag (Wonder)

The heart of Tzoloch Crawling is something akin to a city - a complex of temples and ruins stretching as far as the eye can see. They're fractured, sun-blasted, wave-eaten, and spat back up time and time again, but they also house the treasures and secrets of the eaten desert below. *The movement of the territory makes locating and exploring a particular temple before it's swallowed by the spiny waves a serious challenge.*

The Tzephyr (Hazard)

A living sandstorm, or chain of them, that travel at the leading edge of the Tzoloch's moving dunes. Sailing through the tzephyr unprepared is likely to tear a normal ship to pieces, so strong and sand-glutted are the stormwinds. *Creatures from territories invaded by the tzephyr tend to flee in panic, acting as an early warning system for those in established ports and other immobile structures.*

A Tongue, Unfurled (Mobile Dock)

The red-spiked ironspines that grow throughout the Crawling's shifting borders are rich in water and surprisingly low in crezzerin corruption (it's theorized by some that the constant movement of the territory is fuelled by excessive toxin consumption, an accidental self-purifying mechanism for the area's vegetation). A Tongue, Unfurled takes advantage of this; a titanic mobile water-drilling rig made to drink from the ironspines, following the dunes wherever they lead. *Part port, part ship, part factory, the vessel was created by a mothryn engineer by the name of Myzovic, who has since reportedly moved onto more electrifying projects.*

Iris Bay (Territory)

Old Stone Colours: White and red, faded but beautiful
The Weight of History: Enough to burden dreams

The lost deserts of the Icterine once belonged to the ektus, their cities and colonies huddled around rivers and stone outcroppings. Iris Bay stands in the shadow of a crescent mesa, half-buried by the waves, above the fabled pre-verdant city of Iris.

The Iris Ruins (Feature)

A mile below the wavetops, the painted stone of Iris sits in eerie silence, sand-choked streets, and ruined temples untouched by the sun for three hundred years. *Salvagers in the bay often try to delve their way down to the city, but the hostility of the Icterine's lower levels makes such attempts almost impossible.*

The Crescent Mesa (Landmark)

Though mostly overgrown with ironspine pads, some areas of the Crescent Mesa now play host to cramped, hive-like cities, and a network of tunnels running down into the stone itself provide a cool respite from the sun. *As many residents of the mesa live inside it as on top of it.*

Bloomfields (Wonder)

Found across the Icterine but most common around Iris Bay, bloomfields are areas of easy sailing where the spikes of the ironspines are vastly outnumbered by their soft-petalled flowers. *Bloomfields are easy to cross, but may instill crews with a false sense of security, a dangerous attitude to take when the spikes inevitably return.*

The Makharet (Territory)

Grisly Reminders: Spine-pierced and everywhere
Parasitic Species: Honey-locust trees, lilac kudzu

A wide expanse of particularly vicious waves, avoided by all but the most experienced or most foolhardy wildsailors. Pains have been taken to tame it over the years, but it resists all attempts at channel-cutting and watchtower maintenance - the Makharet, as the simple but brutally efficient saying goes, is an easy place to die.

Makha's Hands (Feature)

Some of the only old stone in the region, Makha's Hands are a curiously common sight - fragments of statues long lost to the Under-Eaves, perhaps monuments to ancient ektus royalty. Each hand is roughly the size of a battleship, and all are invariably clutching at cactoid extrusions in the thrash and tangle. *Many of the hands are broken off at the wrist, and the marks around their masonry wounds suggest the use of heavy tools and blasting powder.*

Honey-Locust Bounty (Wonder)

Considered by many as the only reason to enter the Makharet, vast fields of parasitic honey-locust trees have taken root among the spines of the ironroots. Though no easier to sail than the cacti upon which they stand, these trees attract nutritious, nectar-drinking insects that closely resemble bees. *Cuttings and specimens of honey-locust taken from the Makharet tend to wither and die within weeks, even with the most assiduous attention.*

Sixfinger (Dock)

A maintenance bay and desperate market located on the southern fringe of the Makharet, the perfect place to pick up recent maps (of which there are few) and dire warnings (of which there are an almost innumerable supply). Built onto one of Makha's Hands, unique for its second thumb and open-palm position. *Merchants and bar-owners in Sixfinger never take credit or put stock in promises, as many of their northern-bearing customers will never be seen again.*

Interlacing (Horror)

A curious ailment that only afflicts sailors travelling through the Makharet. Interlacing starts as nothing more than a distraction, the occasional odd occurrence where sufferers find themselves twisting their fingers together in moments of rest and relaxation. Within days this distraction becomes an obsession, with whole crews struggling to sail with their hands palm to palm, their fingers straining to lace tighter and tighter together. The final stage is a sudden rigidity, the muscles and sinews turning as stone-like as Makha's hands themselves. *Leaving the bounds of the Makharet is enough to dispel the symptoms of interlacing, unless it's reached its final stage. Some alchemists claim to have cured even this with saltwater and crushed honey-locust bark, but the validity of such claims is questionable at best.*

It was almost impossible to hear anything over the sound of the drills, but luckily for Het he'd been signing in Old Hand since before he could walk. He finished his joke with a flick of the fingers (the burly ektus couple he was entertaining riffling their spines in appreciation) and turned back to the job at hand.

First, a few swings of the axe - you find a softer spot on the ironspine's skin and bite in.

Then the drill, a cruel cone of teeth and rivets driven by the constant growl of an oilfruit engine. You wear gloves for this part, and scarf, and goggles; awkward in the blazing sunshine, but necessary to protect against the mist of cactus-fibre and crezzerin that fills the air.

A foot or two of excavation is all it takes before you hit sweet, water-rich pulp. Then it's off with the drill and in with the tube, a worm of leaf-rubber that drinks and drinks.

And as it does you rest, and sweat and joke. Then you do it all again.

Port Baskar (Port)

Usual Pulpcrete Ratio: 1 part cactus-pulp to 3 parts sand
Average Protest Attendance: 20-30 citizens

Reef-iron and pulpcrete, leaf-rubber and polished spines... the towering edifice of Port Baskar is an architectural nightmare, a rat-run of switchback streets in the shadow of water storage vats. Built directly onto the wavetops, Baskar is politically fractious but unquestionably industrious.

The Water Economy (Feature)

As the centre of the Leech Consortium's interests, Port Baskar is an oasis of stored, filtered water in a reach known for drought and scarcity. This water is used as a common currency throughout the port, measured in fingers and traded as much as it is imbibed. *All citizens of and visitors to Baskar are gifted a measure of water at dawn, and another at noon. Anything past that must be earned, to which some citizens take great offence.*

Holgin Oheva (Leader)

An ektus old enough to have joined the Tricenturi, but with character and motives directly in conflict with their aims. Oheva is a powerful figure in the Leech Consortium and the port's high councillor, a strong-shouldered figure with a mind sharper than his years would suggest. *Holgin may be intensely profit-driven, but he's not heartless - he'll drive his drilling rigs as hard as necessary to avoid water-rationing for the people of Baskar.*

Consortium Propaganda (Feature)

Plastered over walls and hanging banners, the Consortium isn't shy of showing its dominance here. *It's not a crime to deface such propaganda, but it's definitely treated like one by the Consortium's supporters.*

The Devilfish (Junction)

Built onto a curving bridge that runs above the main docking area, allowing it to siphon water directly from newly-berthed ships. *Drilling crews that offer up some of their bounty are allowed into the junction's exclusive spaces, where Illium, a scarred mothryn bartender, does incredible things with carbonation and flavouring.*

The Dawnstones (Port)

Apostrophe Inclusion: Anachronistic
Pre-Icterine Godlings: Whispered of, never confirmed

A repository of history for the eaten desert that the ektus once called home, the Dawnstones are a collection of wave-choked temples from the desert's glory days. The inhabitants of the stones treat them as sacred, even in their ruined state, refusing to erect anything more than freestanding wood-and-canvas dwellings for fear of damaging the old temples even more.

The Old Ways (Feature)

Though the port accepts trade and visitors, it's far more insular than most large communities across the waves. The local inhabitants, most of them ektus and mothryn, hew to ancient ways of living. *The city has an air of monastic quiet to it on most days, and it's easy for a visitor not knowledgeable in local customs to cause offence.*

Hagrekk Temple (Wonder)

Home to an order of silent ektus devotees who tend its heirloom flower-beds, never stepping out of the temple grounds. *Entry to the open air temple is forbidden, but visitors can make their way up onto the flat roofs surrounding it and observe the methodical daily lives of the monks below if they wish.*

Track 174 (Landmark)

A recent addition to the Dawnstones, and not one that everyone is happy with. The 174 is a carefully cultivated channel cut through the thrash, packed with sand and wooden joists to create a treacherous race-track. The catekora races held there are sold as a celebration of ancient traditions, but in reality draw more people with the excitement of a good day out (and the associated gambling and celebration). *The historical accuracy of the 174, named for the amount of joists used in its construction, is questionable at best.*

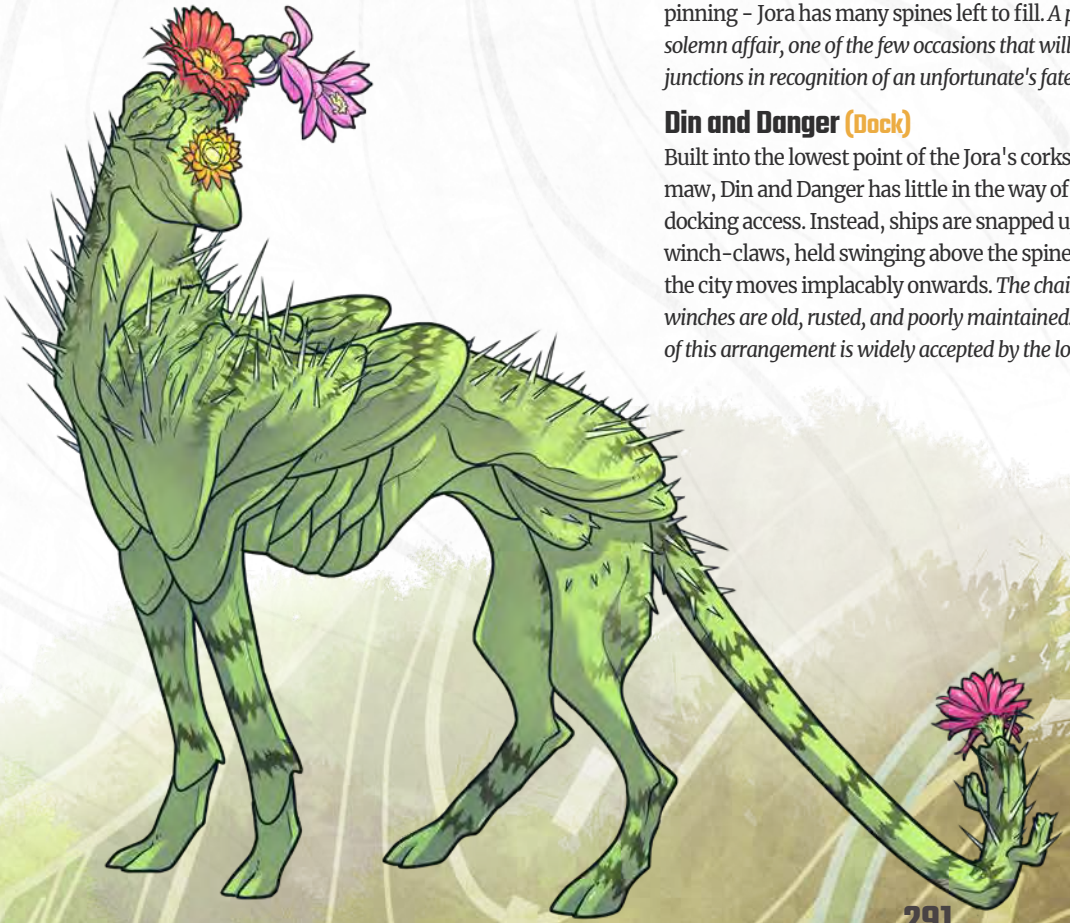
Jora's Beard (Leviathan Port)

Number of Ever-Pinned: 45 above the wave-line
Jora's Hunger: Satiated as long as the sun kisses the sea

Surviving an encounter with a leviathan is beyond the means of most; taming one is a feat deemed impossible by the majority. While Jora's Beard may be a small and ramshackle port, it's one that flies in the face of logic and reason, built as it is around the maw of a two-mile temple-worm.

Pirate Stronghold (Wonder)

The city of Jora's Beard is a mostly lawless place, a collection of flexing junctions and smoke-houses rowdy with shouts and screams. *There are no markets within the city, with most trades made on a secretive, personal basis.*



Unassailable (Feature)

The methods used to coax or control Jora, the cactoid worm that plays host to the city, are a closely kept secret. Even the level of control the inhabitants have is questionable. What is known is that the last force to attempt to attack the city were swallowed whole shortly after the first shot was fired. *The only possible weakness of Jora's Beard is the worm's reluctance to submerge itself below the tangle, as such an action would likely destroy the shanty-city clinging to its jowls.*

Ever-Pinning (Horror)

Poor behaviour within the Beard is punishable by the lash, as befits a piratical meeting-place. But for those that refuse to learn, to operate in good faith even within such lax boundaries, there's always the threat of ever-pinning - Jora has many spines left to fill. *A pinning is a solemn affair, one of the few occasions that will close local junctions in recognition of an unfortunate's fate.*

Din and Danger (Dock)

Built into the lowest point of the Jora's corkscrew maw, Din and Danger has little in the way of traditional docking access. Instead, ships are snapped up by huge winch-claws, held swinging above the spined waves as the city moves implacably onwards. *The chains of these winches are old, rusted, and poorly maintained. The danger of this arrangement is widely accepted by the locals.*

Fragments of Lore

The Icterine locals put little stock in rumour, preferring to decode the ramblings of the region's oldest ektus. Though their minds and bodies are failing, each represents hundreds of years of experience stretching back to the days before the wildsea arrived.

- Tzoloch crawls to find its lost teeth, huge slabs of stone hidden deep in the Under-Eaves.
- The pre-verdant mothryn didn't create the rationing of colour, they merely adopted it.
- Jora may appear to be tamed, but this is little more than an illusion.
- Port Baskar's lack of temple stone is a lie - deep in its recesses, below the gouging waves, something ancient hunkers.
- Track 174 is actually an extremely accurate recreation of a pre-verdant catekora race-circle owned by a young ektus prince at the time of the Verdancy... suspiciously accurate, in fact.
- The Tricenturi inner circle are not who they claim to be, not entirely.
- There was a sound heard before the rushing green wave of the Verdancy hit the old eaten deserts, something like a sigh and something like laughter.
- A mothryn silk-city hangs deep in the drown, still following the old sunless ways.
- The tzephyr is named after a single spider trapped at the core of the largest sandstorm.
- Those pinned in punishment to Jora's fibrous flanks never truly die, and will bake in the sun 'til the worm decides to descend.

The Tricenturi (Faction)

Home Turf: The Dawnstones
Motivation: To maintain pre-verdant history

A loose association made up of ektus, mothryn, and amberclad from various bloodlines, the Tricenturi are historians and record-keepers with first-hand knowledge of the events they teach about. Most of their activities focus on the Icterine and its eaten desert empires, but they're more than willing to accept accurate information from the pre-Verdant days of other reaches when they can.

The Old and the Constantly New (Leader)

All members of the Tricenturi have their own ways of maintaining memory, though none are perfect. Ektus members are often ancient, doing their best to hold onto their faculties long enough to re-establish traditions and pass on stories to their kin. Mothryn repupate endlessly, and amberclad lock themselves away repeatedly for decades of life-prolonging sleep. *Despite the obvious benefits, the tricenturi have no spirits among their number.*

The Weight of History (Feature)

The main goal of the Tricenturi is to preserve the history of the ektus, and the lost land they once called home. Though the Icterine is a wonder in its own right, local wisdom holds that it's nothing compared to the endless dunes of the pre-Verdant era, and the awe-inspiring achievements of those that lived in those times. *There are elements of fable to almost all tales. It's best not to point this out, at least in public.*

Advancing Age (Feature)

As indicated by the name, the Tricenturi are all at least three hundred years old (even if some of those years were spent encased in amber, without really aging). Most of them have a tenuous grasp on their own past, let alone an accurate history of the world, but they're surrounded by fact-checkers and record-keepers trying to make sense of the lore they spill. *The death of one of the Tricenturi is a notable affair, accompanied by expansive funerals and lengthy periods of mourning.*

Principles

Carved in stone, and time, and fibrous hearts:

- Passed-down stories are valuable, but first-hand accounts are priceless.
- Knowledge should be disseminated for free.
- The respect one is due grows as their age advances.

Quick NPCs

- **Dja Hara (Ektus)**: He claims to be four hundred years old, and can be found spinning rambling tales to the youth about the lost desert empires.
- **Christomere (Mothryn)**: A musician intent on discovering the secrets of ancient music, particularly ballads of the old salt sea.
- **Ottening Ost (Ketra)**: A ketra amberclad, or at least that's what they're going with - in reality they're a con artist, trying to pass off wild fantasies as accurate history.

Story Hooks

- The discovery of an unusual relic throws a long-believed historical account into question.
- A funeral for the oldest member of the Tricenturi is being planned, their health finally failing.
- Local amberclad dream repeatedly of the same historical event, despite none of them ever witnessing it first-hand.
- The Consortium are planning to set up a drilling rig above a reputedly important pre-verdant site.
- A mothryn transcriber refuses to repupate, despite his stories remaining unfinished.
- A group of Tricenturi have gone missing while exploring the stones of the Makharet.

Leech Consortium (Faction)

Head Office: Port Baskar
Motivation: To collect and distribute water, for a profit.

More casually referred to as the leeches, the Consortium represents a rebirth of wide-scale corporatism and profit-chasing on the rustling waves. The group is made up of twelve smaller industries, each devoted to different aspects of cactus-drilling and water processing.

The social position of the Consortium is a delicate one. They're widely disliked for their hoarding and aggressive acquisition of valuable resources, but are undeniably essential to the endeavour of setting up and supplying new ports across the reach.

Cactus-Drilling (Feature)

A messy and involved process, but a lucrative one. The Consortium's focus on water extraction ensures their economic power, though that means little outside of the harsh conditions of the Icterine. *Many of the drilling rigs are mobile, mounted on ships or walking-platforms made to follow the growth of the most succulent ironspines.*

Pulpcrete Production (Feature)

Consortium alchemists have unlocked the secrets of pulpcrete, an effective heat-reflecting building material used in most of their settlements. *The pulp is a by-product of cactus-drilling, giving them an almost endless supply.*

Ripgut (Horror)

Though the Consortium's water-purification processes are of a generally high standard, mistakes are occasionally made. Ripgut is an ailment caused by drinking poorly filtered ironspine juices, turning a sufferer's insides fibrous and sharp. *Even ektus aren't immune to this condition which, while not usually fatal, can be extremely painful.*

Principles

Though the hierarchies and interplays of the Consortium's member groups are dizzyingly complex, their mission as a whole is simple:

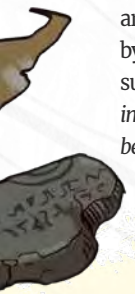
- Drill.
- Purify.
- Profit.

Quick NPCs

- **Favia Tesk (Mothryn)**: A young but driven engineer with a ruthless attitude towards business. She owns one of the Consortium groups dedicated to the creation of drilling rigs.
- **Padred Uncored (Ektus)**: The victim of a drilling accident that left them with a huge hole through their torso. Now leads protests for worker safety and water-ration compensation.
- **Usk (Tzelicrae)**: One of the only tzelicrae rig-workers, a veritable mountain of tarantulas in a dried ironspine-leather suit. Tireless on the job, and quick to admonish slackers.

Story Hooks

- A protest against the recently lowered quality of the water supply turns violent.
- One of the mobile drilling rigs goes missing on the edge of the Tzoloch.
- A leviathan attack has put one of the region's main shipping lines out of action, threatening dozens of communities with water shortages.
- The Consortium is rumoured to be on the verge of splitting after internal arguments about a change in direction and principles.
- A new variant of Ripgut tears through a Consortium settlement, crippling production.
- A batch of pulpcrete begins to show unsettlingly golem-like properties, but most of it has already been shipped to a distant colony for wall-building.



FIREFLY RESOURCES

Watch Results (Peace)

6: A field of deep purple blooms, soft on the hull and smelling of honeysuckle.
5: Tame catekora nose at the hull, their old racing-collars faded and torn.
4: A rousing worker's cry, carrying across the spined waves from a nearby drilling rig.
3: A day of crushing heat, sapping strength and sending the undercrew belowdecks to relax.
2: The skeleton of a pinned sailor, affixed to the ironspine waves even now.
1: The shadow of a stone ship passing over you, far larger than your own vessel.

Watch Results (Order)

6: A cactus-drilling rig in the midst of a shutdown, the workers playing dice and relaxing in the shade.
5: A tent colony staked to the carved walls of a slumping temple, barely above the upper tangle.
4: A silken airship of mothryn marauders, blades-for-hire currently between jobs.
3: A failed rig, skeletal and rusting.
2: Temple-stone traders in a ceramic barge, on the run from the Tricenturi.
1: A rig-defence vessel that's identified you as a potential threat to the Consortium.

Watch Results (Nature)

6: A winding river of sand, defying the accepted laws of nature as drifts past the ship like a golden ribbon.
5: A burst of growth from the ironspines, caging the ship within a spiked, fibrous barrier.
4: Scarabs and rainbow-bodied beetles crawling over an abandoned crate stamped with faded Consortium markings.
3: A sandstorm spinning itself into existence far to the East, but heading your way and changing course to match yours.
2: A scatter of blooms hiding a yawning rift.
1: A temple-worm rears beneath the ship, wounded by the prow and looking for revenge.

Trade Goods & Cargo

- **Cactus Pulp (export)**: Used in the creation of pulpcrete, slowly becoming more popular as a building material in other sun-drenched reaches thanks to its heat-reflecting properties.
- **Old Desert Sand (export)**: Though traditionalists hate that such materials are exported, ektus across the waves tend to yearn for the sand of their lost homeland in their weaker moments.
- **Pre-Verdant Knowledge (export)**: Sometimes inaccurate, but often just accurate enough.
- **Ironroot Leaves (import)**: Curious that something so common outside of the reach should be so valuable, these are used in the creation of leaf-rubber (necessary for flexible piping and sealants used in water drilling).
- **Medicinal Herbs (import)**: The Icterine's climate is a harsh one, especially in terms of botanical research.
- **Fresh Water (import)**: Imported for the benefits of those that refuse to give in to the Leech Consortium's monopoly on extracted cactus-water.

Passengers

- A Tricenturi elder (old even by the measure of their ranks) heading to an ancient temple, newly risen.
- A canny ektus merchant, each of his arms a different colour than his trunk.
- A mothryn researcher and multiple cases of her equipment, clanking, clattering, and occasionally emitting the sound of broken glass as she drags them across the deck to her berth.
- A pair of Leech Consortium recruits, fresh-faced and bulging with driller's muscle.
- A staggeringly tall ardent merchant, spined legs like stilts under her canvas skirts. The ektus around her nod their respect - you don't know what she's done, but it must have earned her some serious local clout.
- An entirely ordinary mothryn in a rough travelling cloak, far too warm for the area. They're definitely not hiding the fact that their jewellery and markings signify their membership of one of the Consortium's component organizations.

Endemic Hazards

- Packs of wild catekora living out among the waves.
- Twisting cactoid temple-worms moving in the wake of larger ships.
- Desert thrummingbirds drilling for water.
- Scarred ektus pirates on stone-hulled vessels.
- The spirits of the Pinned, those unfortunates impaled and left to die on the ironspines.
- Leech lords found in the darkness of sunken temples, thirsting for blood.

Temple-Spine

[Protoleviathan] Plant Beast

Cactoid monstrosities that teeter on the line between commonplace beasts and leviathans, temple-spines of various sizes are found throughout every layer of the Icterine's dune-shot wavescape. *Use a temple-spine if you want the crew to face a massive ambush hunter, a force likely large enough to swallow the ship if it so chooses.*

Presence

Sight: Calcified pink petals on an otherwise unremarkable ironspine cactus. A trembling of flower and fibre that has nothing to do with the wind. A rose-pink maw, gaping.
Sound: The scrape and screech of spines on metal. Hollow creaking.
Touch: Like cactus leather and drawn blood.
Taste: Hearty and vegetative, sour and sweet all at once.

Resources

Specimens: Arm-Length Spine, Calcified Petal, Temple Bile, Processed Water, Cactus Leather
Whispers: Vibrant Slithering, Spines Among Spines
Cargo: Cactus-Worm Flesh

Aspects

Living Weapon: There's very little about a temple-spine that *doesn't* pose some kind of threat- its size allows it to deal heavy Blunt and Spike damage while moving, its maw deals massive Blunt damage, and even the calcified petals of its flowers deal heavy Keen damage.

Perfect Camouflage: As a massive cactus in a sea of massive cacti, the temple-spine is almost impossible to detect while at rest.

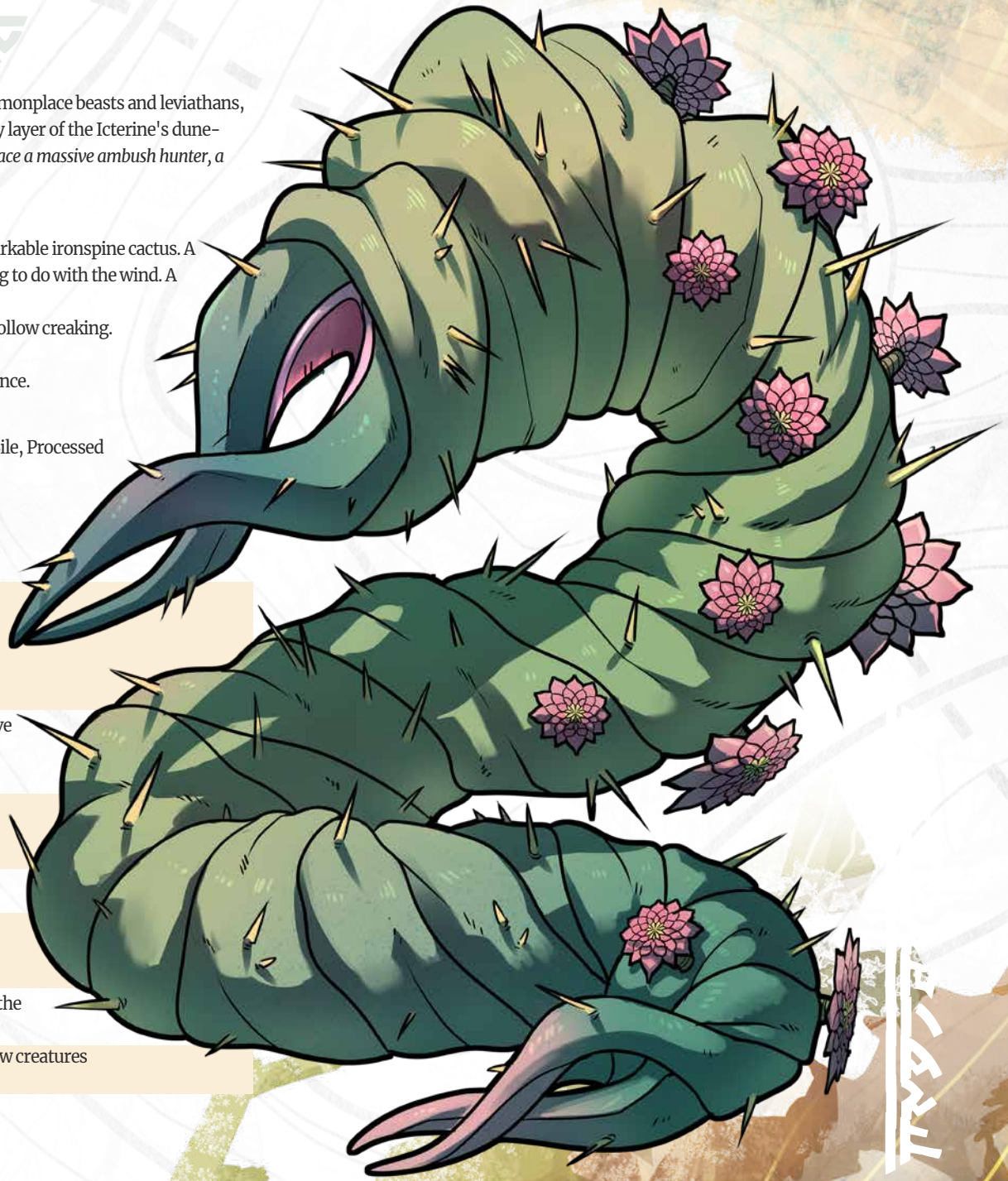
Ship-Eater: If confronted with a vessel that poses a real threat, the temple-spine will grab it in its jaws and plunge deeper into the waves to slowly digest it.

Quirks

True Leviathan: There seems to be no upper limit to the growth of a temple-spine, leading to some becoming true leviathans (the largest recorded being several miles long).

Hollowed: The beast is too old for the world, rotting from the inside out, erratic in its hungers and movements.

Worm-Wise Split: The temple-spine will split into two new creatures when it takes a grievous wound, both able to live on.



THE INTERREGNUM

Jaro's breath caught in his throat as he ran, boots slipping on the snowy cobbles. Every corner he turned, every fur-clad crowd he barged through he hoped he'd have lost his pursuers, and every time he slowed to gasp a lungful of the frozen air he heard those hoof-steps behind him, smelled incense growing closer, saw tall shadows stretching across the nearby rooftops.

He'd been told as a child, back when he believed wholeheartedly in the Twinhorn dogma, that it was impossible to escape a stagger-saint once it caught the stench of heresy on you.

He'd grown up since then, left the Tower behind and seen the world, returned to find that so much of what he'd believed had been lies.

But, he realised (as a horned shape crashed down into the street ahead of him, mechanical lenses shuttering and irising wide), they probably hadn't lied to him about this.

Main Elements

This page highlights the most important elements of the Interregnum, a reach of towering firs, tauric cults, and a bitter, endless winter. The rest of this section delves into more detail.

Obelisk Pines

An evergreen species perfectly suited to the Northern chill, the obelisk pines make up the majority of the Interregnum's wavescape. Their limbs grow up and out to make each great tree an inverted pyramid of needles and interlocking branches, tough to sail, but extremely supportive of even the heaviest hulls. Crews might encounter...

- A spray of arm-length pine needles kicked up by a ship's passage
- A heavy scent that fills the nose and haunts the dreams
- The scrape of branch on branch, the dull clatter of falling pine-cones the size of houses

Winter's Embrace

Though the Interregnum has seasons like every other reach, the ambient temperature barely ever climbs into a comfortable range - snow falls daily even throughout the summer, whipped into frequent storms by the chill wind. And even though sailing is possible all year round (due to the evergreen nature of the pines), the freezing climes of winter mean most stay huddled in ports if they can help it. Crews might encounter...

- Massive snow-drifts piled up against the sides of ports and tallshanks
- The endless howl of a hungry gale
- The rank, warm smell of hibernating beasts

The Twinhorns

A religion with tenets largely unchanged since the pre-verdant times, the Twinhorns (more properly the Devotees of the Twinhorn Eternal) are a bull-worshipping cult awaiting the return of their tauric avatar. With their old-world seat of power still largely intact, they rule the reach with an iron fist. Crews might encounter...

- Horn-crowned enforcers watching their every move as they explore a port-city
- Prayers and chants to the eternal bull, particularly around festival weeks
- Succulent heirloom meats and dark-grown herbs, incense hanging heavy

Mechanical Marvels

Thanks to the survival of the Twinhorn's massive tower, many pre-Verdant relics were preserved without any damage or deterioration at all. As a direct consequence, settlements across the reach got a head start on reclaiming the old-world innovations of punchcard minds and complex machines. Crews might encounter...

- Clanking constructs picking their way across snow-covered rooftops
- The ticks and whirring of a merchant's counting-machine
- The sudden shock of a mechanical grasp around a heretic's wrist

An Economy of Heat

Locals are quick to assure visitors that the Interregnum thrives on the twin currencies of warmth and worship. For the first of these they are being particularly literal; with fire still an overwhelming danger, sustainable alternate heat sources are the most precious trade commodities. Crews might encounter...

- Crowds of fur-wearing citizens clustered around factories and chimney-stacks in port
- Priest-researchers discussing their experiments with various forms of fuel
- The breath of relief exhaled when entering a warmer structure

Avekdi Drift (Territory)

A Sea of Snow: Unwanted
Recommended Equipment: A map pointing you home

A wide-spanning region with very few settlements, the thrash buried almost entirely by a ship's-height of snow. Looking out over the rolling white plain makes most wildsailors sick to their stomachs.

The Endless White (Horror)

Crews looking to cross Avekdi Drift fit their ships with snowploughs, chain-bound wheels, heating elements, and months of extra provisions. The monotony of the landscape hides serious danger. *Becalmed ships are quickly buried, and travel delays should cause heavy mire. This is one of the few areas of the open waves where flame is actually a good idea – the cold, especially at night, is enough to cause serious lasting injuries if not somehow tempered.*

The Endless Black (Feature)

Due to the thick layer of snow covering the thrash, the lower tangle is both entirely lightless and remarkably warm. *Many beasts hibernate beneath Avekdi Drift, from hordes of mink-like predators to night-furred bears. Waking them will not please them.*

Smokefall (Territory)

Last Recorded Eruption: Pre-verdant era
Main Export: Pure snowmelt

The warmest territory within the Interregnum, though perhaps not for particularly comforting reasons. The waves of Smokefall are thick with volcanic stone, spits made uninhabitable by vapours rising from Under-Eaves fault-lines.

Heavy Heart (Horror)

A snow-capped volcano only partially buried by the wildsea, blasted open on its east side by a long-forgotten eruption. Every now and then, Heavy Heart will release a pulse of stifling heat, turning snow to scalding steam almost instantly. *One day it may erupt again, unleashing a tide of hellfire across the entire reach.*

Bamberthatch (Port)

One of the only spit-built settlements in Smokefall, a bustling place of researchers and alchemists attempting to safely harness Heavy Heart's dangerous but beguiling warmth. *They will fail.*

Mara's Stoop (Wonder)

A sedate sailing stone with a small hut and garden atop it, moving at random (seemingly) through the snowy thrash. The home of Mara, an elderly ardent who just wants some peace and quiet. *Grows high-quality, cold-flourishing vegetables, but is pretty stingy when it comes to sharing them.*

The Brass Roads (Territory)

Papers Required: Travel, Tithing & Identification
Deterrent: Watchtowers looming, machines idling

An organised and well-protected region, the Brass Roads are named after a network of channels cut into the obelisk pines throughout the area. These channels mark out trade routes between major ports and settlements, and are monitored by agents of the Twinhorns.

Well-Maintained Routes (Feature, Wonder)

If a crew has the right papers their ship can make use of the pre-cut channels, ensuring a safe and swift journey. *Getting appropriate credentials as an outsider is hard. If crews manage to, channel-running increases impact on all marks made on journey tracks.*

Caspar Alden (Engineer)

An engineer-priest overseeing the never-ending task of maintaining the roads. Caspar is an ardent, and technically a member of the Twinhorns, though he cares for them as little as he cares for anything else with a pulse (or semblance of life). The only things that matter to Caspar are his roads, his machines and having a steaming mug of cinnamon tea on hand. *Some whisper of the maps in his rarely-visited central office, plans of deeper channels cut for reasons unclear.*

No Respect for Endeavour (Threat)

Though the Twinhorn enforcers try their best to prevent it, every now and then a larger beast of the sink or tangle will rampage through the well-maintained channels. *These occasions can slow a ship's progress, turn a channel into a small rift, or even lead to a confrontation with the beast itself.*

The Outrider Tournament (Feature)

The Brass Roads were made with the safe transport of cargo in mind, but it didn't take long for some of the more daredevil denizens of the Interregnum to realise the great potential that the channels offer as a pre-made racing circuit. *The outrider clubs that engage in these competitions always seem to be one step ahead of the Twinhorn enforcers, almost as if they had a friend within the faction with access to patrol routes and shipping schedules.*

Reinventing the Wheel

The conditions of the Avekdi Drift confound most foreign ships - the thick snow gives no purchase for sawprows and longjaws, and the sudden influx of snowmelt drowns engines. Luckily, the locals have their own methods for traversing the drift, options that can be added to a ship for the right price.

Chainwheels 2 Stake Bite

Contraptions of rough leather and sturdy chain, perfect for rolling over snowdrifts.

- **Tilt +1**
- **Can tackle winter snows without cutting**
- **Deals massive CQ Blunt damage**

Steam Exchange 2 Stake Engine

There's little fear of flame out on the endless snow-flats... Just remember to turn it off before you hit true seas again.

- **Keeps the ship's internal temperature livable**
- **Produces a specimen, Clean Water, every time the ship drops anchor**
- **Runs on local coal and snowmelt**

For most ports it was weapons they checked for with new arrivals. Well, actually, most didn't bother, but the more respectable ones sure made a show of it.

But here at Abdicant it wasn't a hidden machete or pistol the burly ektus checked for, fur cloaks hiding their fibrous flesh from the cold - it was scribbled verses, manticore flowers, the twisting tattoos of leviathan-worship.

Harding saw a couple others get turned away as he made his way toward the docker's booth, but he had no worries himself. He'd never held much truck with gods, even in his darkest moments. When his turn came he shrugged off the jacket, turned out his pockets (beetle-shells and amber chips bouncing off the jetty planks) and gave the ektus his best interpretation of a winning smile.

It was not returned, but they waved him through.

God-Gone-Walking (Fleet)

Number of Ships: 18 core, 100+ outer
Offering Accepted: Meat, beer, Wither-writ papers

The mobile home of the Striding Schism, a breakaway (and far friendlier) sect of the Twinhorns. The ships making up the fleet are a display of ornate savagery and technical achievement, all brass iconography and finely crafted machinery - the outer vessels move as they wish, but the central eighteen are bound together with brass chains (sourced from the same ancient links holding Wither up).

The God-Gone-Walking tends to sail lazy circles around Wither, keeping the Taurobol Tower in view at all times.

The Grand Hall (Dock & Ship)

A ship with a brass bull's mouth at the prow, large enough to hold several smaller vessels. Banners of welcome in various languages hang from its horns. *Visitors are asked for offerings as they enter the grand hall, in the form of resources (for a single visit) or cargo (for repeated visiting rights).*

Duty (Ship)

Just one unremarkable ship among the many that swarm the main fleet, Duty is actually the throne-room of the Striding Avatar. *She'll accept an audience with most, but only after leaping from the ship together to talk amongst the snow and the branches.*

Rootless Finding Roots (Feature)

The citizens of the God-Gone-Walking have a particular affinity and love of those who choose to live the rootless lifestyle. *Their own family ties are strong, and they often offer free resources and advice to rootless ships they encounter on their travels.*

Abdicant (Port)

Local Past-Times: Balladry, pinwolf-racing, drinking
Churches, Temples and Places of Worship: Zero(?)

Built onto a chunk of volcanic rock that must have been thrown leagues by one of Heavy Heart's prior eruptions, Abdicant is a raucous city with but a single law - mention religion and you're going to meet the waves headfirst.

Abdicant's locals are shunned by the Twinhorns and the Striding Schism alike, and count themselves extremely lucky for it.

Flourishing Flame (Feature)

Partly due to the lax attitudes of the Abdicants and partly the relatively fireproof nature of their rocky home, flame is entirely acceptable here as long as it's far enough from the rustling waves. *Roast meat and vegetables are traditional dishes, and fires are lit at every street corner throughout the night.*

The Wolf's Knife (Junction)

A popular meeting place for those inclined to gamble, the Wolf's Knife overlooks an impressive wooden racing course built into the thrash. Bets are placed on pinwolf races, and sometimes other, more dangerous sports. *Sore losers are tolerated but also roundly ridiculed.*

Alberry's Haunt (Ship)

A tiny ship moored up just outside of the port, the insides full of religious paraphernalia discarded by new citizens. *A secretive, careful few visit from time to time, for undisclosed reasons.*

Wither (Port)

Popular Local Furs: Pinwolf, branch-rabbit, bear
Horn-Shadow: 232 steps at midday (midsummer)

A rough, snow-choked set of platforms strung up around the canopy-level flanks of the Taurobol Tower. The port of Wither is heavily controlled by Twinhorn cultists, mostly ardent and tzelicrae, and any sign of insurrection or heresy are swiftly and harshly punished.

A vast machine beneath the streets of Wither keeps the city warm and the winter partially at bay, though nobody will admit to knowing what powers it. Dwellings cluster round its sprouting chimneys.

Taurobol Tower (Wonder)

The seat of Twinhorn power, a truly immense tower still rooted in the Under-Eaves and entirely closed off to the outside world. The devotees within (still presumably pre-verdant humans) communicate with the outside world through chimes and bells. *Ardent and tzelicrae of a certain mindset are drawn to the tower, and serve alongside ancient machines as cult-law enforcers.*

The Great Chains (Feature)

Massive brass chains running from the outer edges of each platform to the walls of the tower, holding them steady. *Some have used the chains to attempt entry to the tower, so their bases are heavily guarded.*

Spreading Rebellion (Feature)

Stagger-saints and enforcers patrol the city streets, on guard for heresy, but that's just made the heretics more tenacious. *The Striding Schism are active here, gathering strength for a decisive move that will topple the tower.*

Lickvello's (Junction)

Wildsailors are often treated as spies in Wither, but not at Lickvello's - if you've got resources to trade and a want of steaming mead, you're alright by him. *A grand junction-house left alone by the authorities, a point of seeming calm in the maddened cold... on the surface, at least: Lickvello is secretly a Twinhorn informant.*

The Red Altar (Chop-Station, Shadow Spring)

Full of knife-wielding priests ready to render your kills, and baths to enjoy while you wait. *Bringing a bull for rendering earns you some some serious questions.*

Local Rumours

- Several colonies are flourishing in the warmer climate of the sink and lower tangle, hidden from the wider world.
- Mara hasn't always owned the hut she calls her own.
- The Twinhorns have spread themselves too thin - some of the great Brass Roads are falling into disrepair.
- Makadrills hail from the Interregnum, driven out by the Twinhorns and their staggering constructs.
- The dark stone of Heavy Heart pulses, very gently, when held in your hands.
- One of the Bamberthatch alchemists actually did find a way of harnessing volcanic energy safely, and was promptly killed by a jealous colleague.
- We are living on borrowed time. The heart will beat.

The Twinhorns (Faction)

Home Turf: Wither
Motivation: To protect the old ways and the city

Though the true power of the Twinhorns lies inside the seemingly impenetrable walls of Taurobol Tower, the vast majority of the cult (those that joined post-Verdancy) are actually citizens of Wither, mainly ardent and tzelicrae. It would be reductionist to view the Twinhorns as evil; what they are, though, is desperate. Desperate to cling to vestiges of a lost age, to keep order in a wild world, to appear strong despite their internal schisms. Though the lure of power and petty vengeances drives some members, most simply want to keep their city safe from the soul-clutching cold of the surrounding waves (though their methods are ill-conceived, oppressive and authoritarian).

The Twinhorn Eternal (Leader, Technically)

Many, many years ago, in the first days of the wildsea, Taurobol Tower was open to the world. The Twinhorn Eternal, their living god, decided to walk the root-choked ground alone, and commanded her followers to seal all exits behind her and await her return. The cult did just that, and are waiting to this day. *She is almost certainly long dead – this is the root of the Striding Schism, who have taken to the waves to uncover her corpse and believe the Twinhorns to be a doomed sect wasting their lives on a misinterpretation.*

Enforcers (Threat)

Dressed in furs and elaborate bull-masks, these cult enforcers lay down the law with the help of their stagger-saint companions and multi-draw crossbows. Their highest-ranked, the scrutifex, claim to smell heresy. *Individual enforcers will call on a nearby stagger-saint if they feel outmatched in a fight.*

The Feast of Unfire (Festival)

Once a month, the Twinhorn priests gather and distribute food and heat to the people of Wither... the faithful among them, anyway. Food is prepared by frying it against the exposed metal of the heat-machine's pipes and chimneys where they run through the city.

Principles

Written carefully in a multitude of pre-verdant holy tomes, accessible only to those inside the sealed confines of Taurobol Tower.

- Stamp out heresy.
- Wait for the return of the Eternal.
- Instruct visitors in the ways of tauric devotion.

Quick NPCs

- **Steps-Backward-Smartly (Tzelicrae)**: A scrutifex priest and famous spy-catcher – his arconautics may be a sham, but his bottled whispers aren't.
- **Safir Hesten (Ardent)**: A run-down chop worker just trying to keep the heat on however he can.
- **Ankle (Tzelicrae)**: A member of the Twinhorn enforcers, secretly considering a defection to the Striding Schism.

Story Hooks

- A scrutifex declares that one of the crew is a heretic spy for the Striding Schism (or all of them).
- An unknown individual (or group) has made an attempt to break one of Wither's great chains.
- A stagger-saint, newly risen from the drown, makes its way haltingly toward the Tower.
- Holy texts have been stolen - the crew are asked to help with their return before anyone else notices.
- A high-ranking priest has given up her vows, turning away from the cult and wanting to barter passage to Abdicant.
- Rebellion! Wither is at war with itself, and the Twinhorns are losing ground!

The Hearth (Faction)

Home Turf: The Wither Undercity
Motivation: Keeping the heat on

Wither is already at breaking point, with the Twinhorns and the Schism and the common citizen caught in the middle, but that's nothing compared to the war beneath its streets - the fight to keep the city from freezing over, the struggle against entropy itself.

The Towerside Engine is dying.

The Hearth tend to its death-throes.

We Were Engineers, Once (Feature)

If the original creators of the vast heat-producing machines beneath Wither knew how it worked, that knowledge is long lost now. The Hearth are the descendants of engineers and alchemists, but their expertise is patchy and third-hand. *No-one ever expected the engine to break this quickly.*

By Any Means (Feature)

The Hearth have vowed to keep the heat flowing for as long as possible, at any cost. The Twinhorns keep sending fuel and commands, but they're not enough any more. *Some of their new methods are extremely questionable. All of them are desperate.*

The Towerside Engine (Horror)

A wheezing monstrosity of old-world knowledge and imperfect parts, of leaking seals and scalding steam, of sacrifice and sweat and empty, pleading prayers. *What makes a god on the wildsea? Is it attention, devotion, fear? If so, the Towerside Engine is the true god of Wither, hunkered and decaying beneath its streets.*

(Old) Lamp (Docks)

A port at the lowest point of the tangle, leading to the workings of the engine. Ships rarely arrive, and almost never leave. The port was enclosed once, with brass and panes of amber, but many of them are cracked or missing and the obelisk pines push branches through like questing fingers. *At least animals avoid this place, though that may not be too comforting when considering the implications.*

Principles

More a mantra than a mission statement, words repeated as reassurances and ringing ever more hollow as each day passes.

- The Engine cannot be allowed to die.
- We are on the verge of a solution.
- No risk is too great, no price too large.

Quick NPCs

- **Orric (Ardent)**: A stoker and fuel conveyor, though he isn't quite sure what he's meant to be stoking and the definition of 'fuel' has grown vague of late.
- **Iktaret (Tzelicrae)**: Slim, willowy, their silkskin running like wax after each shift.
- **Hondata Sun-Kisser (Ektus)**: One of the only ektus members of the Hearth, sent to wrestle unruly parts of the engine back into place.

Story Hooks

- The crew hears an echoing sob from one of Wither's chimneys in the dead of night.
- A Hearth contingent are trying to warn the city, but can't find the words to express what they've seen.
- A visit to (Old) Lamp reveals the extent of the impending disaster.
- A mass exodus of exhausted engineers need passage away from the city. The Hearth have given up.
- Unexpected quakes and heat failures throw the city above into chaos.
- A wrenching disaster somewhere in the engine, enough to send a jagged crack up the side of the Taurobol Tower itself.

FIREFLY RESOURCES

Watch Results (Peace)

6: An appreciation of the warmth below decks before you head back out into the cold.
5: A quick joke by one of the undercrew about the Twinhorn prince (who doesn't exist) and the three bulls of the Schism (that similarly don't exist).
4: A break in the snow and a lull in the wind.
3: A sense of overwhelming peace and the sudden realisation that everything in the Interregnum is on the verge of collapse, but that it probably isn't really your problem.
2: A chunk of volcanic stone lodged in a treetop snowdrift, gently steaming.
1: Nothing but crisp white snow.

Watch Results (Order)

6: A ship of the Striding Schism, gleaming and brass and with heat to spare.
5: An obelisk pine-cone hollowed out and used as a resource cache.
4: A chunk of ancient brass from the Taurobol Tower itself, inscribed with text in an ancient Chthonic dialect.
3: The remains of a battle at sea, a story told in snow-furrows and scattered ship parts.
2: A mechanical searchlight swinging back and forth across the waves, though likely not connected to any sort of alarm or warning system. Sounds rusty.
1: A rampaging stagger-saint.

Watch Results (Nature)

6: An untouched, spit-sized chunk of cooling volcanic stone, its insides crusted with glittering diamond.
5: Icicles above, hanging from the bare branches of a lone tallshank that somehow made it above the tree-line.
4: Rare herbs growing in a discarded seed-tray wedged in the branches below you.
3: Hares scamper into branch-burrows as you pass.
2: A writhing mass of serrofly larvae swarming your ship after your passage disturbs their haunt.
1: A gap in the soul - Hundred Horns stirs beneath you.

Trade Goods and Cargo

- **Snowmelt (export)**: One of the benefits of snow is that you can start a journey with a hold full of it, and end that journey with a hold full of water instead. Ice is also a damn valuable export, especially if it can be kept as such.
- **Volcanic Stone (export)**: Not particularly impressive within the Interregnum, but any large piece of stone is potentially livable ground where the weather's kinder.
- **Dogma (export)**: Surprisingly few wildsailors put much stock in religion, trusting instead in machine-maintenance and hunting almanacs. But some want for words, and the Interregnum is happy to provide.
- **Fuel and Heat Sources (import)**: They're not picky - could be tamed salamanders, chemical slurry, ceramic batteries... If it can stave off the snow for a while, it's valuable.
- **Spices (import)**: While the variety of cold-weather herbs that can be cultivated is extensive, spices are in extremely short supply.
- **Masons, Crafters, Engineers, and Researchers (import)**: Not really a cargo commodity but definitely desired like one, the research on better environmental protection is ongoing.

Passengers

- A Twinhorn enforcer just trying to get back home after a disastrous mission to the Avekdi Drift.
- A tzelicrae wrapped in layers of fur, several elaborate bull-masks standing in place of a face.
- A young couple bound for Abdicant, their faces stained with soot.
- A coterie of bare-chested mothryn researchers, their fur surprisingly resilient against the region's bitter cold.
- A maraduer - she's open about her place in life, and about the fact that if she was with the rest of her crew they'd happily try to wreck and rob your vessel. Why is she even telling you this?
- An engineer who wants dropping off in the middle of nowhere - they have precise directions, but there's no nearby port on your maps.

Endemic Hazards

- **Arctic Pinwolves**, less effective in deep snow until they wise up and learn to burrow.
- **Obelisk Mimics**, beasts with pine-like fur and gnashing teeth.
- **Twinhorn Enforcers** and the frightened rabbles they stir up.
- **Serrofly Larvae** clustered on obelisk branches (and sometimes the hides of mimics), ready and waiting with grinding mouthparts.
- **Stagger-Saints** with the Tauric and Rapturelung quirks, huge reclaimed machines from a less forested time.
- **The Towerside Engine**, perhaps, if everything goes as wrong as it looks like it might.

Stagger-Saint

[Huge] Ancient Construct

The technological capabilities of the pre-verdant world are poorly-understood by even the most devoted scholars, but one fact wrenched from the darkness of history stands clear - the worship of ancient gods was often too complex a task for fleshy minds to cope with.

Stagger-Saints are testament to that, huge machines with punchcard minds made to sing praises and observe rituals of forgotten deities. While many are buried among the detritus of the Under-Eaves some have survived, pulling their way up to the new world above to continue their mission of spreading and enforcing the faith.

Presence

Sight:	A looming shape heading your way. Long limbs and glowing glass. A crackling, failing power-source.
Sound:	Deafening songs of praise and worship. The screech and groan of ill-maintained joints.
Smell:	Flaking machine-oil, pre-verdant incense.
Taste:	Like brass and grease and fervour.

Resources

Salvage:	Divine Fuel (various types), Construct Cogs, Pre-Verdant Metals, Ancient Engine
Specimens:	Organic Fuel
Whispers:	Singing the Glory, Old Buried Godling
Charts:	Faded Punchcards, Ritual-Marked Metal

Aspects

Devoted Housing: Even the weakest stagger-saint was built to last. They're resistant to Blunt, Keen, Spike, Serrated, and Hewing damage, and immune to Toxin.

Ritual Punch-Cards: The mind of a saint is a false intelligence, highly motivated but easy to confuse with clever strategies and unexpected actions. Remove the punchcards (or sever whatever mechanism links them to the whole) and the entire stagger-saint may come toppling down.

Tools of the Faith: All stagger-saints can deal CQ Blunt damage with their mechanical limbs, but most have alternate methods of defending themselves as well.

Quirks

Ocular Heaven: Different stagger-saints have various ways of 'seeing' the world. Some use light-sensing apertures, others detect targets based on heat, or movement, or the strength or their spirit.

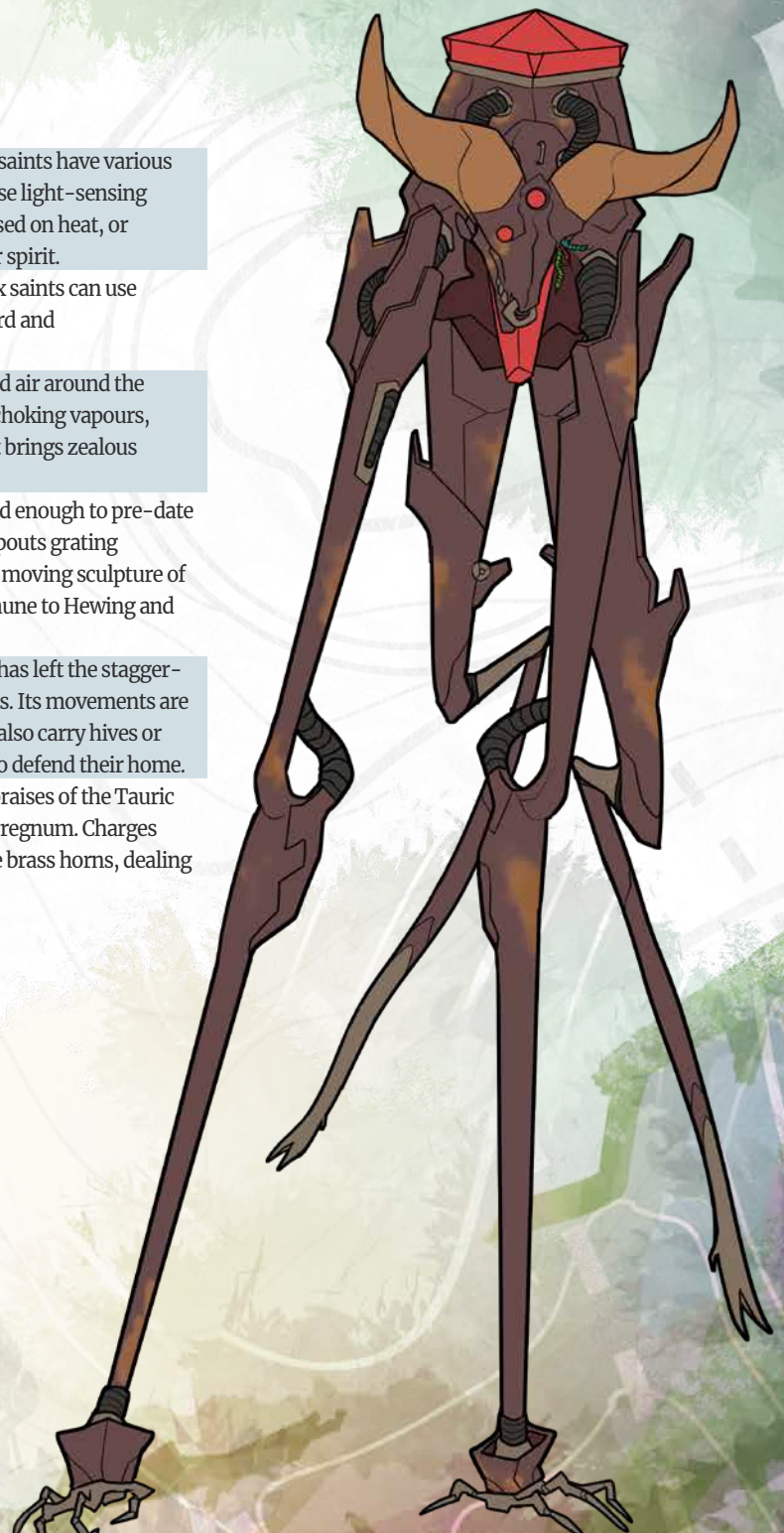
Booming Voice: The most complex saints can use whispers to affect the world in weird and unexpected ways.

Rapturelung: Creates an aura of bad air around the machine, whether that's through choking vapours, hallucinatory clouds or smoke that brings zealous feelings to the fore.

Stone Skin: The stagger-saint is old enough to pre-date the known pre-Verdant world. It spouts grating mantras in a lost language, more a moving sculpture of jointed stone than a machine. Immune to Hewing and Serrated damage.

Sea-Eaten: Time below the waves has left the stagger-saint choked with mosses and vines. Its movements are ponderous and halting, but it may also carry hives or nests of animals that will emerge to defend their home.

Tauric: A machine devoted to the praises of the Tauric Eternal, the absent god of the Interregnum. Charges and gores non-believers with huge brass horns, dealing massive CQ Spike damage.



THE AMBERED IRONS

Created by Mistletoe_Kiss

The boughs and stems above stir and creak, making the bark of the great ironroots sound like a thunderstorm in the darkness of the Drown. The roots and vines seem to reach for you, hungering for your sun-kissed substance as you ride deeper in; the allure of captured ancient sunlight drives you onwards.

Then...you feel it more than see it. The sounds of the thunderstorm are muffled, the falling flakes of foliage muted. The bones of a fallen leviathan, mutated and twisted by the irons themselves, roots anchoring the beast for an eternity.

A soft warmth, like breath, seems to hang about you, comforting, like a mother manticrow soothing her young.

Lantern light shatters across the massive eaves like a kaleidoscoping sun... and you've found it.

The fabled Ambered Irons.

Main Elements

This page highlights the most important elements of Ambered Irons, a Leviathan graveyard expressing the harmony of death and life in microcosm. The rest of this section delves into more detail.

The Golden Heart

Deep within the Ambered Irons lies the revered heart of a great fallen leviathan. The skeletal structure is mostly buried amidst the roots, tangle moss, and ambered bone stalactites. Its heart is encased in a garnet-like amber stalagmite in the center of the holy space. Those blessed by the Mother can feel her heartbeat, pulling them closer to her breast. The rhythm echoes within the soul and penetrates all within the Amber. Silence permeates this space, as if the very air is held and lost to time... Crews may encounter...

- Young ironroots, as old as time, yet appearing as saplings
- The beating of the heart, a rhythmic lure encouraging you to press a hand to her tomb
- A sweet scent on the air, inspiring nostalgia in all who enter

Claved Fjord

The clavicle of a leviathan created a fjord, petrified ribs overhanging a sluggish river of amber below. The stratum faces conceal forgotten species, flora and fauna long since turned to fossils. Massive gems of coagulated amber lie exposed on the crumbling banks, until they are washed slowly away downstream, like blood clots dislodged from between the walls of an artery, allowed to rejoin the living fluid. Crews may encounter...

- A deep and all-encompassing sigh, the sound of the wind as it blows through the fjord
- Droplets of stone dangling in clusters over the fjord, geodes of garnet and gold protecting larvae as they pupate
- Shadows seen past the opaque amber strata, a living zoology or catalog kept by fiends unknown...

Nectar Falls

Hot amber flows like a golden stream, deeper down still into the drown. The air is sickly sweet and filled with bioluminescent steamed pollen of blooming coral fronds. Swift amber falls several hundred feet into a massive, tar-like pit. Bubbling like brews in cauldrons of bone, the rims of amber pools are lined with a kaleidoscope of blooms and saps. Each fighting to feed off the bacteria of the pools while slowly calcifying due to the heat, growing ever upwards on the skeletons of their brethren. Crews may encounter...

- The healing bacterial balms made by the DaWheh-Whe, collected from the inoculated pollen of the bloom
- Colder pools on the outskirts of the pit; some say by bathing and breathing in the youthful air you can remain younger. Sweet words...
- Cauldron-coves of carnivorous saps, the roots around them exuding calcifying amber

The Silent Bloom

Home to the cultivated yet silent blooms of the Wilt. Most do not venture inwards, for it is a holy site, the final resting place of the dead. The DaWheh-Whe come here to offer their dead back to the land - to lie, at last, among the powerful leviathans and blossoms and become the youthful nectar that encases all within this world. A garden filled with luscious hanging vineyards, tiered plots, and rare, exotic foliage. Hollow amber jars of various bioluminescent fungi hang like terrariums from trained vines throughout the gardens, throwing refracted light onto the beds beneath. Pollen drifts on the wind, golden and glowing, like fairy dust. Ivory steps, carved from the spinal bones of a leviathan, snake between spaces. Each vertebra is like a stepping stone for gods long gone. Crews may encounter...

- Corpses tended with care and reverence by the Wilted to cultivate more blooms, each body a garden
- Countless specimens from across the sea
- A serenade from the very blooms themselves, a melodious retelling of their stories to those they deem pure

Amber Dewdrop Caverns (Deep Territory)

Dominant Colour: Shades of garnet and gold
Legendary Beast: Stalactite shale crab

Ambered stalactites shelter in the leviathan skeleton, nestled in the roots of the great Irons above. Bioluminescent fungus, strung across amber stalactites, forms crystalline chandeliers, scattering their warm glow into the underbrush. Shale crabs gather at water pools, like lion's manes, sunbathing in the golden radiating mirrors.

The Winged Sunbeams (Feature)

Cauldrons of flaxen-haired bats call the Amber Dewdrop Caverns home. Their golden brown fur is groomed with saliva and amber fungus, until it gives off a soft light that attracts flying insects. *Sunbeam guano has many features: when mixed with amber fungus and water, it gives off a certain light – the only light that produces blooms in rare orchids.*

Dewed Poison (Horror)

The sweetened waters of the caverns carry dissolved minerals from the ground above, which is drawn up into the blossoms and nectar pots of the local predatory saps. This concentration of minerals, when mixed with digestive nectar, makes prey who ingest it give off a sweet scent, a scent occasionally followed by carnivorous strangle saps. *Some feel a feverish euphoria, followed by sedation. The sugary sweat pools on their skin and then hardens like amber, suffocating them.*

Bridge of Iron (Landmark)

Sacred Rite: Jump of the Warrior
Residents View Site As: An old bridge with sacred symbolism, tied to the gods

A tangled mass of fallen Ironroots spans a dark chasm. The thick and twisted bark is grooved with generational marks of passage. Tales speak of the Iron Bridge as a lock on the door to the center of the world, where a single root is said to have borne all the trees of the sea itself.

Umbral Dreams (Horror)

Occasionally a dark leviathan slithers up from the chasm, made from the shadows of warriors past, bound to wander the drown, tethered by the heartbeat of the Mother. *Sunbeam bats roost on the sheer walls of the pit. When they fly, their wings radiate soft rays of warming light.*

Gate of Rebirth (Feature)

Wheh-Whe come here as a rite of passage: clinging to a rope of vines, they jump from the great height into the sinkhole below. The stronger the braid, the deeper the plunge... the more respect earned. *The rite begins with cleansing the soul of the warrior; the shadow self is left at the bottom, while the bright self returns to walk the seas. Only then is a DaWheh-Whe seen to earn their strata (individual pattern on their skin) and title.*

The Beginning (Territory)

Religious Significance: Paramount to the golden mother
Hidden Secret: The Wilted are aware that the garden is slowly shrinking, for reasons unknown

An edenic haven nestled among the waves of the wildsea. Ironroots as old yet young as time, mere saplings compared to their brothers and sisters outside the garden. Legend says a god thought this to be the most beautiful of the seas, so he spilt his essence across the waves to preserve its beauty for all time.

Leaves of Sacred Youth (Festival)

Those of the Ambered Irons come yearly to christen new hatchlings with the sacred leaves of the Beginning. A leaf must fall naturally into the outstretched palm of the youth, so the iron may grant the child a blessing of long life. *These blessings are carefully burned despite the risk, and the ash is consumed in a tea. Thus, the soul is nurtured by gods and sea.*

The Cradle (Landmark)

A small mountain and ridge, sitting in a meadow of the garden, are said to be the fallen god who died to give everlasting life to the garden. His body is said to be protected and comforted in death by the waves and rooted growth that covers his holy flesh. *Where the chest and arms are said to rest, there lies a dip in the ground; the place is protected from the elements, and there one may find refuge in the arms of a god.*

The Crystal Plateaus (Territory)

Potential Threat: Prismatic arachnids
Number of Plateaus: 67

Crystalline Plateaus consist of petrified amber, pressed upward in spiked and sheeted garnet stratas. They rise out of the foliage, almost like stumps of massive glass irons. Amber sap, still seeping, flows from one of the plateaus, like discharge from an open wound. The region is mined by the Soulful Tigers for precious gems and fossils, though care must be taken to be on the lookout for prismatics.

The Calcic Vent (Landmark)

The largest and most connected plateau string is home to the only active amber volcano. The vents ooze out molten and calcifying amber as pressure rises from the attached plateaus. The sweet steam rises for miles before falling back down as honeyed rain. *'Have you ever been in an amber storm? Everything gets covered with what seems like a varnish of honey.'*

Prism Hunts (Feature)

The Soulful Tigers host an annual hunt of the prismatics, mostly to keep their numbers in check, but also for the challenge. Many Wheh-Whe sign up, for the one who returns with the largest prismatic gets to lay claim to the nest. *Everyone knows a prismatic loves shiny things, and their nests usually hold many gemstones in the silk.*

Local Rumours

- A faction has asked you to locate the fabled 'fountain of youth' of the Ambered Irons and bring it back to them.
- A whisper is heard on the waves - a voice beckoning from the pit of the Iron Bridge... He calls himself the Father, and many have jumped, never to return...
- A heavy rain has washed out part of the Claved Fjord, revealing an ambered prison, which is shattered open from the inside...
- An ironroot has asked someone to write down its story, but which ironroot is it?
- It is said that during a rare lunar eclipse, the Silent Bloom breaks its silence.
- There is a leviathan that walks among the people, expressing its power before it vanishes.
- There are whispers that a mass of Rooted are gathering - climbing towards the waves, bent on destroying the surface.
- A fabled leviathan - made of pure, skeletal gold - is said to have laid to rest in the Ambered Irons.

"I was born in the cradle of the Mother, her stone heart providing me warmth, ironroot saplings, my bedding. My braid grew strong like the roots of the great gods. Nursed on the golden milk and told the many wonders of the sea. The waves of varying emerald foliage and song of its timber.

I learned to call it home."

Cranial Ridge (Port)

Scents: Spices mix with sweet fall air like comforting cider
Buildings: Composed of bone, fungal wood, and amber bricks

A small, comfortable port nestled in the skull cavity of a leviathan overlooking the Nectar Falls. Cranial Ridge is the center of the region's markets and commerce. A healthy tourism industry thrives on the many travelers who come to see the falls and explore the local flora. The Blooming Pits are a favorite spa; they allow visitors to soak in some of the cooler cauldrons and to enjoy the falls while sipping on sap wine.

The Dragon (Leader)

An ektus woman, known for the large dragonfly tattoo on her chest. She rules the port with a sly smile, greased hands heavy with scratch. Simply called, 'the dragon', for she delights in hosting, creating what most consider a warm and inviting space - until she relieves them of their valuables at the gambling dens, or entices away their scratch with high prices and knick knacks at tourist attractions. *Some say she is a shrewd businesswoman, who knows how to run a racket while keeping the populace happy... but that's probably just a rumour.*

Cranial Library (Landmark)

Within the hollowed space where the brain once rested. Ribbed and snaking fungal shelves follow the warped bone floor, giving, when viewed from above, the appearance of brain matter. Many scrolls and leaves fill the shelves, curated by librarian Wilted, who can prolong the longevity of the knowledge for visitors to peruse. *The peach fungal furnishings are carefully cultivated by the Wilted, so they appear as when the leviathan first died. These records and sketches were documented by a famed explorer.*

Zydonatic Labyrinth (Feature)

The raised and twisting cheek bones of the skull have been groomed and carved into fungal hedge gardens that allow for marvelous outlooks onto Nectar Falls. Wilted sculptors raised bone for ornate trellises, on which blooming sponges grow to shade visitors from the elements as they meander and take in the vistas. *Gau breathing in the pollen can feel the trembling skull radiating from the cacophony of the falls, its very bones still whispering of flight.*

The Soulful Tigers (Fleet)

Dress: Rich colours of gold and garnet with black fungus velvet trimmings.
Local Beverage of Choice: Golden tea

The fleet of mining and gem merchants of the Ambered Irons. Balloons of prismatic arachnid silk canvas, and carved bone inlaid with amber baskets, hang beneath. Good-natured and hardworking, they scour the Amber looking for gemstones and precious metals--or bone, which they can carve and craft into jewelry and ornate machines.

The Succinum's Roar (Ship)

The largest airship in the fleet, a leviathan panther skull suspended by four large balloons. The jaw frozen in a perpetual roar as they chisel and machine-mine petrified amber for gems. The eye sockets house amber sheets, which have been polished clear, so the flight crew can admire the vistas as they soar. *Beneath the bone and amber scrimshaw lies the stone brain; a Wilted stands here and controls the Tiger, decay relaying commands along amber woven cords.*

Tooth and Claw (Twin Leaders)

Twin Da Wheh-Whe lead the Soulful Tigers. One called Tooth and the other Claw. It is said that Claw's rope frayed during their rite of passage, so Tooth used their braid to secure her sister's renewal. They have never separated since; the braid between them is a symbol of strength in the face of adversity. Tooth displays machinery craft, while their sister Claw displays the creativity that fuels the trade. *While good natured, they can be ruthless in business dealings... If they are double crossed.*

Blood and Gold (Trade Mastery & Feature)

An amber silk sash is worn by all masters, as a testament to their skill and mastery of their chosen craft. The Soulful Tiger is a conglomeration of jewelers, miners, essence machinery, and miasmic scrimshaw. To earn an apprenticeship with a master, you must first weave a sash of the sunbeam bat's shedded tufts. *Sunbeam shedded tufts are rare and require care when weaving, due to strand and follicles.*

The Dredge (Port)

Scent: Musk and snipped decay
Appearance: Low-lit multi-tiered homes with piers of woven nets falling down into the mist

The Dredge, supported by fallen ironroots, straddles a ravine. The occupants are fishermen, dredging the great depths beneath. The felled irons are held together with cultivated vines and fungal nets, bracing the great timber against the gravity of the trench. Strings of lighted orbs - amber glass filled with glowing lichen - stretch between towers of homes and docks, bathing the wooden boardwalks in their eerie illumination.

The Lichen Curtain (Landmark)

A massive curtain of glowing lichen that engulfed a shipwreck before cascading down over the edge. The curtain acts like baleen, catching creatures and flora that float on the updrafts from below. Fishermen, hanging in single basket seats, are lowered from the piers above on the Dredge to harvest catches and crustaceans. *If you ask around you'll find that some fishermen have gone missing, their ropes cut or torn as if by a massive creature that also feeds from the curtain.*

Salted Winds (Feature)

The warm winds coming up from the trench are laden with minerals and salt, coating the ropes and homes of the Dredge in crystals. Hatchlings and youth collect this salt and dry it on platforms hoisted above the mist, into the light. This salt tastes like the liquid seas of old, hints of algae and smoked driftwood mixing with lichen spores, which vary depending on time of year. *Most of the Dredge use measured pouches of salt for currency.*

Casked Cases (Workshop)

On the outskirts of port lies a ship permanently tied into the mass of wood and homes so as to provide a warehouse. Here, casks of dried eel and fungus cakes are manufactured for export. Mushroom spores are grown in vats and carved into boxes before firing, the sealed food staples curing inside the smoked casks. It is said that these casks can preserve food for months or years at a time without spoilage. *There have been occasions when unsealed casks were inspected and the provisions inside appeared fresh and bloody--as if they had just been harvested, though they were already cooked before sealing.*

The Wilted (Faction)

Home Turf: Ambered Irons
Motivation: Renew the body, release the spirit, cultivate the graveyard gardens

Those gifted with the knowledge of decay display some form of rot or entropy upon their person. The smell of petrichor seems to announce the arrival of the members. Recycling the dead, some display rare aspects of species as examples of their craft. The resulting fungus appears as textile motifs or plumage.

The Wilted will either be the most trusted or most feared you ever come across on the waves. Carapaces and bodies covered in fascinating flora and gardens, the decay of others a token of pedigree, on display for all to see. They usually travel in ships made of Rooted leviathan creatures, undead blooms filling the spaces between bones, helping to create muscles from the rotting flesh.

Many see the comfort and respect given by the Wilted to those in the process of renewal. Some whisper that the curses are given as a form of punishment, to be bound to walk the roots in service - but others see it as a mercy, a form of public service for deeds ill.

Xerophyted Florescence (Wonder)

An arid aspect of the Ambered Irons, so dry that only the strongest and most adaptable can survive. Here lies a rotting corpse of a leviathan, mummified by the winds and the sand-like amber. Only those of high rank in the Wilted may enter, for the practices and rites said in the hollowed cavity are sacred. To enter you must be invited, or marked with rot to begin initiation with a council deemed mentor. Not even Rooted may enter this space.

Renewed Bond of the Mother (Festival)

Annual celebration and ceremony, when all of the Ambered come to see the Mother, the great leviathan that connects everyone and gives life eternal. Wilted lead this renewing ceremony, and many request to be laid as gardens beneath her massive heart - a place of honor. As the final words are spoken and the drums stop playing, the heart of the moment, a miasmic visage of the Mother, can sometimes be seen.

The Rooted Humus (Horror/Feature)

Beneath the roots of a decaying iron stand the Rooted. Those rotting zombies of various species and bloodlines stand bound to serve in the after, for the crimes they committed. They serve the one who progressed their own renewal, assisting with the duties of the gardens or aiding their master during fresh renewals. Once a Rooted has finished service they are taken beneath the Humus and allowed to pass, their fungal blooms providing nutrients to the Ambered Irons above. A Wilted can only have a limited number of Roots, yet there are tales of some numbering as if a sea of trees themselves by powerful Wilt who aim to cause mass renewals.

Mere Gardeners (Feature)

The Wilted can make anything grow and bloom. A mere touch causes tangle moss to create a path, or they use decay to dig a path through the foliage, flowers blooming on the path in their wake. The Wilted tend and care for many gardens, many needing closure for loved ones who renewed. Many villages celebrate a Wilted traveling through as a holy event; providing lodging and amenities for a Wilted will give a sacred prayer over the graveyard/garden, causing it to bloom with renewed memory. There are several ports you will never see a Wilted in, due to the religious beliefs of the residents, who believe them to be evil, stealing the souls and knowledge of those lost for evil doings. This includes territory of the Reclaimers.

Principles

Renew the soul, repurpose the body, maintain the bloom. While many may not understand their ways, they do it for the renewing of the sea as a whole. For all things pass onward, and the cycle continues.

- Will always give rites and prepare the bodies given to them as part of burial.
- Takes their role in society seriously, teaching and healing as they travel between gardens.
- Catalog all blooms, and research what gives the miasmas of decaying spirits unique properties.

Quick NPCs

- **Mutha/Mother (species unknown):** Leader of the Wilted, a decaying rafflesia upon her head. Glowing bacterial mosses in rich motifs cascade down her clothes like a waterfall. Wise, respectful, necromancer.
- **Balfazar (Gau):** Stocky spud who wants to see all others bow to his cravings for chaos.
- **Crab Apple (Ektus):** Rot has addled his mind - he speaks in part-riddles or half-truths.

Story Hooks

- One of the Wilted comes to reclaim a corpse for rebirth in the Silent Bloom, providing last rites.
- A Wilted has escaped to a nearby port and wants passage on your vessel. Willing to pay handsomely, though the bounty on their head causes you to doubt their integrity.
- Mutha has requested your assistance to find the perpetrator of a blight affecting the Silent Bloom.
- A decaying bouquet of tangle moss appears on your doorstep, an invitation to partake in a renewal ceremony to the Mother.
- Gardens of tzelicrae corpses have gone missing, torn flora and decay laid in their stead. Something has awakened them.
- 'Becoming renewed as firefly light' is a saying on the waves. You have a passenger who requests to be taken to the Wilted, for their time has come.

The Bloom (Protofaction)

Home Turf: Ambered Irons and beyond
Motivation: Unknown

Shadowed essences of long gone DaWheh-Whe and shattered spirits. Wisps of leviathans, fleeting ever, only in darkness. A mesmerizing display of bacterial bloom, lulling prey before shadows claim the drown once more.

Myth and miasma surround the Bloom. What causes it? Why does it hunt those traveling upon the waves? Only ever seen at night, and those caught in the radius of glowing pollen soon vanish. Massive holes of shadow seem to feed upon them from beneath, leaving swirls of bioluminescent bacteria in the wakes.

Some say that the distant Bloom is a mesmerizing sight to behold. Plumes of colorful bacteria sprout like silent firework embers, dazzling the intended victims. Witnesses claim a leviathan-sized shadow consumes them, yet the waves are silent and unbroken when searching for survivors - none are ever found. Many refuse to travel the waves after seeing a Bloom, thinking it brings bad luck.

Siren's Bloom (Wonder)

Rarely seen, though legends speak of a Bloom that sang, the glowing bacteria resonate with the petrified dinweevils of the Crystal Plateaus - the resulting song is hauntingly hypnotic. *To those carrying a petrified dinweevil, a firefly may give a whispered warning before the Bloom strikes. The corpse sings beforehand.*

Phantom Bloom (Horror)

Only visible through the miasma, though the vision is reversed. Appears only as monochrome grays and shadowy spirits. Undead umbra leviathans and DaWheh-Whe haunt the bloom, consuming the essence of the living from their husks. *Those of DaWheh-Whe or gau descent can see spectral slivers of this, if they get close enough to breathe in the bacterial spores.*

Principles

The true principles of the Bloom are unknown. However, they do follow a set of patterns.

- The Bloom only occurs at night.
- They target lone ships or stranded travelers.
- The Bloom leaves no survivors.

Quick NPCs

- **Warning (swarm of bioluminescent bacteria with sapience):** Calls themselves Warning and only speaks in Knock. They view themselves as the messengers of those beyond the waves.
- **Silence (umbral leviathan):** Beckoned from the deep by Warning to silence those lost.
- **Blooms (shadowed Wheh-Whe):** Can be represented by many, these Wheh-Whe are the shadows and spiritual aspects of those gone. Hunting the living for essence.

Story Hooks

- The crew comes across a Bloom wake left after a hunt. A stray board bearing the ship's name, Odyssey, is the only thing discovered.
- An umbral leviathan is seen entering the pit beneath the Iron Bridge.
- Warning reveals themselves outside of a Bloom, requesting assistance...
- The crew finds an ancient map that reveals the birthplace of the Bloom...and how to find it.
- Spores of the Bloom are spreading to local gau, causing visions of the shadow sea... and leaving a question for hunger.
- The Fractal request the assistance of your crew in hunting down the Bloom, so they can partake in a ritual bathing in the miasma.

Note to Fireflies

Some of the key features of the faction are also ambiguous; this was intentional, allowing Fireflies flexibility as they tie in table drives and principles, as well as being respectful of table lines and veils. *Use this to your advantage when players use whispers and twists!*

FIREFLY RESOURCES

Watch Results (Peace)

6: A group of Wheh-Whe sit and braid rope for the upcoming rite of passage.
5: A maternal DaWheh-Whe approaches one of the crew and teaches them how to make honey rocks.
4: Some prismatic webbing has gummed up the engine gears, some chrysalises must have hatched.
3: The call of the Golden Mother is heard through your sails and soul making a request.
2: Beams of sunlight are cast from a swarm of sunbeam bats as they hunt bioluminescent moths.
1: The smell of Nectar Falls brings you to the side railings to watch as you fly over its golden thunder.

Watch Results (Order)

6: A Soulful Tigers ship floats by on their way to mine gemstones, prompting a cheerful exchange.
5: A grove of Rooted stand and watch you silently before something gains their attention.
4: You see DaWheh-Whe, painted in bright colors for an upcoming Utaka game (Uo-talk-a, game of sport and endurance against another team).
3: The Silent Bloom overtakes a ship in the darkness, now spots of bloom show up underneath you.
2: The ship is requested to stop by a Wilted, to allow right of way for a burial procession.
1: You watch as a group of Wilted reanimate a large skeleton into a Rooted beast of burden.

Watch Results (Nature)

6: Thermals from the Dredge carry up the salt-laden winds and begin coating the ship.
5: A shadow beyond opaque strata seems to follow the ship before crashing outwards towards you.
4: Amber rain begins to fall; everything is golden glue.
3: The cargo labeled 'in sunlight only' gets some shade, and it begins blooming.
2: Some Sunbeam bats find shelter in the ship eaves, casting a warm glow like lanterns upon the deck.
1: The pollen of the Silent Bloom brings the crew comfort and rest, closure on the warm winds.

Trade Goods & Cargo

- **Dredge Casks (export)**: Smoked dried eel and fungal cakes burn sealed into wooden casks for long-term storage to be delivered to Cranial Ridge. Casks are placed in oiled skins to prevent the glowing fluid from leaking.
- **Dewed Wine (export)**: Few can look at a petrifying poison and think 'I need to drink this', but some in Cranial Ridge have taken to producing just that. Leaves a euphoric hardness lingering - best stored in bladder glass.
- **Soulful Machinery (export)**: The craftsmanship and skill of the Soulful Tigers is renowned on the waves. Beautifully carved and gemstone inlaid devices stand upon your deck before the Tigers house them in metal boxes, glyph markings cataloged and invoice given to you for delivery.
- **Soured Leaves (import)**: The Ambered Irons has an abundance of amber which can make soil sweet and too alkaline. Pallets of 'soured' or acidic mulch are one of the largest imports brought in to help maintain balance in the microcosm. Ektus Sour is highly prized by Wilted as a premium mulch.
- **Salvaged Metal (import)**: Soulful Tigers request a lot of salvage as they repurpose it into mining machinery. Stripping circuits of precious metals they create jeweler tools, some capable of etching gemstones.
- **Saps (import)**: DaWheh-Whe breed and use carnivorous saps as hunting and Utaka companions. The more deadly the sap, the better it can be trained. USE CAUTION around these plants- they will stalk you through the cages.

Passengers

- The Dragon and her entourage want to see the Ambered Irons in an 'above the waves' ship.
- A Wilted DaWheh-Whe and their Rooted ask to be taken to the edge of the Xerophyted Florescence. Seems this is an unexpected meeting and the Golden Mother requested it.
- A Wheh-Whe asks to be taken above the waves and dropped off wherever, the Iron Bridge and sacred jump overwhelming to them and they wish to leave.
- An umbral creature wishes sanctuary within your ship's holds.
- A tzelicrae wants to visit newfound prismatic relatives in the Crystal Plateaus.
- An adventurer asks to go sightseeing and even has a bucket list that needs to be crossed off, being charismatic means saying no is just so difficult.

Endemic Hazards

- 'Snow' or falling dust/foliage from above the drown can cause limited vision
- Dinweevils have a nasty habit, if threatened - they cause a chaotic alarm within their chitin, and many use them as alarm systems
- If startled, sunbeam bats can shed glowing scaled fur, which causes potential predators to glow, and makes their predators aware of their presence
- Prismatics, or prism arachnids, are crystalline creatures that can use their transparency to hide. The silk acts like a prism and can lure prey towards a stalking arachnid
- Shale crabs that use pieces of calcified amber to camouflage themselves as they stalk prey in the Dewdrop Caverns
- Saps are carnivorous plants that secrete nectar or sap, which causes calcification in prey that brushes up against them
- A tumbling mass of tangled moss, it moves with the winds and suffocates prey that crosses its path. An invasive species.

DaWheh-Whe BLOODLINE

The albino'ed bioluminescent hunters of the Drown.

The DaWheh-whe are tall, lanky albino'ed warriors that rival ektus in height, dull in color unless you see them in darkness, in which their individual strata and patterns become visible. A species normally found in the deeper reaches of the Drown - if one is found upon the waves in daylight, they are usually covered in wraps or cloth to prevent skin burns. Thin disks of darkened glass or onyx shade their large, sensitive eyes.

The DaWheh-Whe are a tribal people; those chief among them lead and guide the clan. The chief is chosen not only for their deeds but also the length of their braid, for a DaWheh-Whe only cuts their braid if he lost a hunt, or in sacred mourning of a loved one. The longer and thicker the braid, the more respect a DaWheh-Whe has.

Bonded Harmony

Most DaWheh-Whe work in pairs, their bioluminescent signals communicating across great distances in the darkness of a hunt. They are trained from hatchlings with a partner, learning and evolving until the two can act as one... No matter the distance between them. Most bond with their partners for life, a sacred union.

Honoured Tradition

A Wheh-Whe is not considered a warrior until they have earned their title in the rite of passage. Each must cultivate a vine capable of holding their weight, and then braid it into rope. This rope is woven into their own locks, as an anchor, before placing upon the ring of the Iron Bridge. A jump into the depths below is a symbol of renewal in life - the shadow self is left behind, and only the pure hunter returns to the bridge. If they complete the ritual, they earn the title of Da, which translates to 'sacred'. This always comes before their surname.

Heart of the Beating Sun

The heartbeat of the Mother is heard by all creation in the Amber, her rhythm maintaining a sense of unity among the chaos of the waves. Nectar from the holy pool beneath her heart fortifies the soul in preparation for a hunt, allowing a DaWheh-Whe to sense her connection to the prey.

Aspects

Patterned Signals 3-Track Trait

The bioluminescent bacteria in your skin flash with complex signals/glyphs, allowing many to read them from afar. Note that this is less effective in daylight.

Honour Braid 4-Track Trait

Your tresses woven with amber silk can be many things - some even braid items, like trophies from their travels, into their locks. Lets you make acrobatic leaps or air defying holds among tangled roots.

Harmonious Nature 3-Track Trait

You have seen and lived in places that many think of as mere firefly tales. Use a task to ask a question of the nature around you, and receive an answer.

Pale Shadow 2-Track Trait

Your almost translucent skin appears disadvantageous to many, but when melding into the background is needed, you are nowhere to be found. Increase impact when hunting or scouting.

Sweet Like Honey 4-Track Trait

You can filter sour or toxic fluids to become sweet and palatable. Use a task to give a liquid resource the 'Sweetened' tag.

Petrified Carapace 4-Track Gear

You use a balm from the Nectar Saps to fortify your skin against damage. Protects you for a short period of time from the following: sunlight, lacerations, absorbing.

Soiled Hands 4-Track Gear

You know growth and decay and can utilize both when needed. You carry healing and destructive tangle moss and saps with you from your home in the Ambered Irons. Mark to create a resource, either Medicinal Herbs or Rot.

Same Heartbeat 3-Track Companion

You have a DaWheh-Whe companion who completed the trial same as you. Your bond runs deep and you assist each other in the quest given by the Mother.

THE KREMICH SURGE

Created by Rob Leigh

Main Elements

This page highlights the most important elements of the Kremich Surge, an ominous reach with a grim reputation. The rest of this section delves into more detail.

Crashing Waves of Branch and Limb

The waves of the Kremich are much more unpredictable and dangerous than other areas of the wildsea. The thrash heaves and roils at the best of times, and at its worst it can become a churning wall of green death. Sailors who frequent the reach must learn to weather such unstable conditions or else have their ship smashed to pieces and sucked into the drown. Crews might encounter...

- A sudden rootquake that sends the waves into an unexpected frenzy
- The sonorous groan of ironroots shifting far below
- The sharp scent of sap from recently broken branches deep in the tangle

That Which Hungers

Something dwells beneath the waves of the Kremich Surge; something vast, powerful, and deeply malign. Known as That Which Hungers, it is greatly feared by all who live in the reach and its influence can be felt in every aspect of life here. Crews might encounter...

- A ripple of waves as something colossal travels beneath the ship
- An inarticulate roar of terrifying volume from deep beneath the canopy
- A feeling of dread, as if the ship is suddenly the focus of something huge, unseen, and definitely hostile

Ritual and Superstition

Life in the Kremich is dangerous and grim, and those that call it their home layer their lives with strange rituals and superstitions in the hopes of avoiding the wrath of That Which Hungers. Crews might encounter...

- One of the countless brutal rituals practiced by the locals
- A dirgelike chant drifting over the waves from an unseen ship
- The smell of spilled blood and pungent incense, drifting on the wind

Drifting Reefs

Countless ships have been lost to the hazards of the reach, but their wrecks seldom vanish forever. The strange currents of the Kremich often dredge wreckage of all kinds from the sink, collecting it into reefs that breach the tangle with surprising regularity. Although filled with dangers, these reefs can contain precious treasures for those daring enough to brave them. Crews might encounter...

- An ancient wreck covered in shambling corpseblooms
- The sounds of wrecker-pirates arguing over a newly emerged reef
- The bitter tang of crezzerin-soaked timbers

Wood Breaks, Stone Endures

Ridgeback communities are far more common in the Kremich than those on spits and tallshanks. It is a common belief that only solid stone offers the stability needed to survive the storms and rootquakes of the reach. These settlements are crowded, labyrinthine affairs with narrow streets cast into shadow by the dwellings overhanging them. Crews might encounter...

- A crowded port on a small island, packed with suspicious locals
- The clamour of crowds and busy markets
- The rank smell of closely packed houses and unwashed inhabitants

A Pervasive Air of Savagery and Hunger

The Kremich Surge is an exacting and brutal place, where misfortune, hunger, and cruelty are ever-present threats. Wildsailors who visit the reach find themselves more short-tempered, maudlin, and selfish than they might normally be, and bad luck seems to strike at the worst possible moment.

These rules are suggestions for how to include the oppressive atmosphere of the Kremich Surge in your games. Fireflies are advised that this will make characters' stories much harder.

Recovering from injury, misfortune, and mire is much harder in the Kremich Surge. When a character undertakes a recovery task to try and clear injuries, marked aspects, or mires, the following rules apply:

- Triumphs count as conflicts, meaning characters can usually only remove a single mark at a time from their damaged tracks.
- A twist while undertaking a recovery task still consumes the resource spent. Instead, the character may gain a dark insight in the form of a one-box temporary aspect such as **Prophetic Dream**, **Disturbing Omen**, or **Strange Charm**.

"I don't like the look of this." said Hepel, her scattergun tracking for possible targets.

Keira was inclined to agree. When they'd encountered the drifting wreck it'd seemed a golden opportunity, but now she was beginning to regret coming aboard. The wrecker looked at the long gouges in the ironwood deck and the splintered mess where the cargo crane had torn free of its moorings, shivering in the chill evening breeze as she did.

Dark stains led their way to the forward hatch below decks. Keira fancied she could hear something stirring down there, something leathery and dry.

"Salvage be damned," she whispered to Hepel, "Let's get back to the ship."

Behind them, something hauled its way onto the deck from below.

The Stormyard (Territory)

Popular Insult: Inkless
Average Length of Alliance: Six sunsets

Home to the capricious Bone Picker wrecker clans, the Stormyard is an expansive area of storm-wracked branch and leaf. While That Which Hungers has undeniable influence on the territory, the constant skirmishes of the wrecker-pirates are more of a day-to-day concern for both residents and travellers. The Stormyard sees a significant number of visitors from outside of the reach due to the abundance of interesting salvage for trade.

Gyrecrest (Landmark)

Towering over the waves, this ancient mountain is used as a navigational landmark by many sailors. Sprawling up the side of the mountain is Spiteharbour, one of the largest settlements in the reach, home of the most powerful wrecker clans in the region. *The locals claim that as long as the shadow of Gyrecrest touches your ship, the storms will not. As to whether the pirates will leave you alone is another matter.*

Shifting Loyalties (Feature)

The numerous clans of the wrecker pirates seem to exist in a constant flux of peace and hostility. These rivalries are complex and nuanced, all determined by their elaborate system of honour, rights, and worth. *Outsiders may find themselves suddenly embroiled in a deadly conflict or chaotic party without warning.*

Ghost Ships (Hazard)

Sometimes a ship will appear on the waves; damaged, decrepit, and its deck empty of crew but somehow maintaining a course. Considered ill omens of the highest degree, the locals avoid them at all costs. *Even when a wildsailor can communicate with them, the spirits that crew these foreboding vessels are strangely taciturn about what it is they are searching for.*

Orin's Knell (Territory)

Ill Omen: A hexhawk's shadow passing across a sailor on first watch
Scribbled Warnings Found In: Chthonic, Highvin

A graveyard of old wrecks and empty settlements, Orin's Knell is a place of ominous quiet and strange ruins. There is a chill to the air of this region, something that causes sailors to look over their shoulders and grip their weapons tight. People who settle here often move on surprisingly soon, and it is not unknown for entire communities to vanish overnight. Regardless of the forlorn nature of the region, sailors can often find a wealth of salvage here.

The Bringer of Gifts (Landmark)

The wreck of a huge cargo ship that sprawls across a series of stone reefs and refuses the gnawing attempts of the Kremich to draw it down into the depths. Home to countless horrors and untold amounts of valuable booty, the wreck is a popular source of tales and rumours. *Signs of countless previous expeditions can be found in the wreck. None seem to have made it further than the lower gun deck.*

Sorrow Peak (Wonder)

A small island hollowed out by devout hands long dead, Sorrow Peak moans a sombre dirge when the wind blows through its cunningly-carved tunnels. Some say they can hear words of Highvin in its song. *It is wise not to tarry too long near Sorrow Peak, especially if a storm is brewing. Certainly don't think about climbing up to the small temple rumoured to stand at its apex.*

Weeping Strait (Territory)

Popular Pastime: Scrimshawing
Preferred Charm Material: Thrice-blessed riftstalker ivory

The influence of That Which Hungers is powerful in the Weeping Strait. The waves crash and howl with unusual violence, and even the most resolute wildsailor may find their thoughts turning dark and bitter while navigating the area. The people that call this region home are even more insular and superstitious than usual for the reach, and live in awe and fear of the presence beneath the eaves.

The Hunger (Horror)

Some nebulous quality of the Weeping Strait turns wildsailors to violence and other darker drives if they spend too long out on the waves. The longer a crew spends here, the more likely it is that one or more of their number will succumb. *Mires dealing with hunger, anger, or death are much more likely to increase here.*

The Needle (Landmark)

A great pillar of storm-weathered stone, carved by the Ravenous priests into an intricate totem meant to honour That Which Hungers. The various bas-reliefs depict scenes of bloodshed, feasting, and torment. Macabre offerings to the godling festoon the pillar, swinging in the wind. *Stories tell that stone chipped from the Needle has interesting properties. Pity anyone caught trying to obtain such a blasphemous sample.*

Mather (Port)

A small settlement built atop a jagged piece of dark stone, some wildsailors stop at Mather hoping for respite from the effects of the region only to find a different type of disquiet. The people who live in the cold, dusty houses of Mather are a strange folk given to long pauses and strange, hard stares. *What do the villagers keep in the old sheds on the windward side of the island? Why aren't outsiders allowed over there?*

Lamark's Fate (Landmark)

The motion of the branches in this area are known to regularly bring reefs to the surface of the wildsea. Prime salvage can be found here, for those brave enough to moor alongside one of the shattered wrecks. *Who was Lamark, and why was this his fate?*

Local Rumours

- The Bone Pickers are allying into two opposing blocs - one that supports the Palemask, the other that wishes to see the title dissolved.
- The Bringer of Gifts won't sink because the wildsea rejects something hidden deep in the hold of the ship.
- Riftstalkers are actually parasites that fall from the hide of That Which Hungers.
- An outsider can become the leader of a wrecker clan if they offer the correct tribute and swear the right oaths.
- For every empty village in Orin's Knell a shadow exists in the Sink below, populated by things which wear the skins of those who vanished.
- If you pay the Ravenous priests to carve your name onto the Needle your ship will weather any storm, provided you anoint the hull with your blood each voyage.
- One day, a storm will come that will cause Sorrow Peak to sing its full song, and on that day That Which Hungers will rise.
- When clan Zarhu brutally deposed the previous rulers of Spiteharbour they kept some of them prisoner. If true, someone might pay handsomely for their rescue.

Spiteharbour (Port)

Local Delicacy: Slaughtermelon kimchi
Preferred Weapon: Serrated boot-dagger

Spiteharbour could be seen as the capital of the Kremich Surge. Sprawling across the lower slopes of Gyrecrest, it is a densely populated settlement known for its winding, dangerous streets and bustling markets. With all manner of drinking dens, gambling parlours, and back-street knife-duels, some say more wildsailors lose their lives here than on the waves.

The Salvage Markets (Feature)

At the center of Spiteharbour lie the salvage markets; a series of interconnected plazas covered by swathes of canvas awnings. The markets are raucous and frenetic, with hawkers crying their wares, traders arguing prices, and pickpockets plying their trade. *Anyone can set up a stall in the salvage markets, provided they can find space, and as long as they pay a share of their profits to the bailiffs.*

Edible Things (Eatery)

Edible Things is a tavern popular with wildsailors and locals alike for its strange (but hearty) cuisine. Found overlooking the docks, the tavern is a good place to pick up rumours and jobs. More than one infamous voyage has begun here amid the steam and sounds of eating. *Potzanpans, the tzelicrae char that runs the tavern, is always looking for rare specimens to cook, and is more than willing to trade whispers in return for something particularly interesting.*

Canary Duty (Threat)

Some scavenger crews use slaves called canaries to explore potentially hazardous wrecks, rather than risk their own lives. While some crews purchase these slaves in the salvage markets, an equal number prefer to press-gang hapless sailors and unfortunate citizens instead. On dark or foggy nights, the wise know to keep away from the dock back-alleys in order to avoid 'canary duty'. *Canaries rarely survive more than a few voyages; being press-ganged is nigh-on a death sentence.*

Grind (Port)

Local Custom: Checking for spiders before you sit
Popular Game: Eight-card pickup

There is a mournful quality to the air in Grind. Two in every three houses stand empty and cold, and the people who live here are quiet and watchful. Few remain in the port for long, both visitors and settlers tend to move on with surprising regularity. Despite this, it has remained one of the few continuously inhabited settlements in the region. Although disquieting, the port can provide a welcome respite from the harrowing effects of the territory.

Grind is known for its significant population of tzelicrae, who seem oddly resistant to the strange effects of the region. Many of the empty houses are strung with fine webs, and spiders of various shapes and sizes are a common sight.

The Ghost Coterie (Leader)

The three faceless, robed, and silent tzelicrae known as the Ghost Coterie have ruled Grind for almost as long as anyone can remember. Communicating their orders in Old Hand and written proclamations, they are known to be fair and wise rulers, if a little mysterious. But then, who's to begrudge a good leader a little eccentricity? *Even more enigmatic than regular tzelicrae, the Ghosts seem to know far more about the region's secrets than they let on.*

Songra's Place (Workshop)

A stone's throw from the docks, the simply-named Songra's Place is an extensive workshop owned by the towering ektus that is it's namesake. Songra is a skilled engineer, and also sells the kind of supplies needed to keep a ship running. *Songra is a font of knowledge, if you can get her talking. She has a particular fondness for strong drink.*

The Souk (Market)

A wide stone-flagged plaza hung with faded canvas, the stalls of the souk are quiet, but there is a surprising wealth of goods here. Business is conducted with curious solemnity, bargaining in whispers rather than shouts and with very little haggling. *If you find a bargain in the Souk, it's advisable to buy it. The stall might not be there when you return, and few will remember it ever having been there.*

The Grind (Feature)

Grind is named for the constant background noise the island emits, a low rumble felt in the bones. Something in the vibrations appeals to tzelicrae, and the port attracts more of the spider-kin than any other bloodline. Non-tzelicrae are divided on the sound; some can find it off-putting, whereas others say it is oddly soothing. *What makes this noise? Something deep beneath the island? None of those who have gone looking have ever returned.*

Bitter Massing (Port)

Current Circus Champion: Kari Bladesong
Spice of Choice: Paprika

Perched at the edge of the Weeping Strait, Bitter Massing is a port known for its strange temples and cruel festivals. The majority of those who live here follow the teachings of the Ravenous cult, and so ritual and fear are ever-present in everyday life. While some may choose to avoid Bitter Massing due to its grim reputation, there is no denying that it's a useful port to restock and repair after facing the hazards of the rest of the reach.

Chabris Krin (Leader)

Cruel and devout, Chabris is an anchored ardent who underwent the Walk of Blades, died, and returned. Absolved of her sins by death, Chabris enjoys the support of the Ravenous priests and metes out suffering generously. In her eyes, pain is something everyone must endure in order to fully understand the wildsea. *The tyrant-queen's anchor is one of her own wrist bones, polished to an ivory gleam and etched with a record of the crime which dictated her death.*

The Circus (Feature)

A circular arena of leviathan bone and reef-iron found at the center of the port, the circus hosts all manner of duels, contests, and executions, to the delight of the braying crowds. With betting encouraged, it is a good place to earn some money and dispose of the unwanted. *Fighters place great stock in having a fearsome moniker, to the extent they will pay to possess a particular title.*

Feast of Lebrit (Festival)

Held twice each year, once on the longest day and again on the longest night, the Feast is a decadent celebration of survival in the face of all odds. Streets are hung with scarlet banners and scattered with poppy petals. Communal meals are served in the town plazas, and all are welcome to eat as much as they like. Come night, the streets are lit with red lanterns and music fills their air. *Once you take a seat you must eat everything you put on your plate, and you must never ask where the food comes from.*

Quiet Wound (Horror)

On the far side of the port is a cleft known as the Quiet Wound. This strange ravine cleaves deep into the rust-red rock that Bitter Massing sits on, and exudes a silent, menacing presence that drives away most visitors. On some nights, at the dark of the moon, the Wound bleeds a thick, black ichor that burns like crezzerin and brings dreams of horror and regret. *The local Ravenous priests consider the Wound to be a holy site and guard it with an intense and undeniable fervour.*

The Bone Pickers (Faction)

Home Turf: The Stormyard
Motivation: Profit from the reefs and rocks

A significant influence across the waves of the Stormyard, the Bone Pickers are a large family of wreck-scavenging pirate clans. With an elaborate code of honour based around salvage, the rights to it, and who found it, the pirates can be profitable but dangerous to deal with.

Palemask (Leader)

The leader of the clans is named for the mask of pale bone which accompanies the post. The title and mask may be taken by whoever can defeat the previous owner, by any means. *The current Palemask, a gau, is known for their brutal approach to putting down insurrections, something that has earned them some powerful enemies within the clans.*

Marks of Worth (Feature)

A Bone Picker's honour, salvage, and deeds are recorded on their skins in detailed tattoos written in Lyre-Bite. Young pirates may have only a few lines trailing across their arm or chest, but old timers are covered in years of crawling script. *Asking a Bone Picker to relate their deeds can yield some interesting, or horrifying, stories.*

Ink-Wrights (Feature)

The tattooist-priests of the Bone Pickers are highly respected. They alone may inscribe marks of worth on members of the wrecker clans, or enact the terrible punishment of Crossing Out. *Ink-wrights are renowned for the adherence to the code of the Bone Pickers; they hold significant authority among the clans.*

Crossed-Out (Punishment)

A Bone Picker who breaks their code is Crossed Out. Their tattoos are erased, they are fitted with a collar of reef-iron, and they are cast out. Once so marked, every word they speak becomes a lie, and honour burns them like fire. *Bone Pickers avoid Crossed Out, simultaneously terrified of and disgusted by them.*

Principles

It's doubtful the Bone Pickers would ever write down their code of honour; it changes too often. However, the core principles are constant:

- You are only worth as much as what you can seize with both hands.
- A promise is binding, but words can be cunning.
- Honour your debts, remember your deeds.

Quick NPCs

- **Dachean Brex (Ardent)**: Captain of a small ship, Dachean is garrulous, boisterous, and fond of rum. She's also a devil with a jagserry when push comes to shove.
- **Korkandel Ohmuthan (Ektus)**: An elderly ektus ink-wright, Korkandel's green hide is covered in years of marks of worth. He uses his own needles to ink other's skin.
- **Akaeran Kir (Ardent)**: A young purser charged with selling his ship's cargo of salvage. Quick-witted and sharp-tongued, Akearan isn't the most pleasant of people to deal with.

Story Hooks

- After discovering a wreck, the crew are accused of claim-jumping by a nefarious band of ill-tempered Bone Pickers.
- A survivor pulled from the wildsea begs for shelter from the Bone Pickers that claim she is their legitimate salvage.
- A young Bone Picker offers a split of the profits if the crew help him claim his first salvage.
- Two Bone Picker clans ask the crew to settle a dispute over who found a cache of supplies first.
- An ink-wright charges the crew with the solemn duty of obtaining her some more tattoo needles.
- A ship appears on the horizon: Bone Pickers who have decided that the crew and their ship are their next salvage.

The Ravenous (Faction)

Home Turf: The Weeping Strait
Motivation: To satiate That Which Hungers

Even more isolationist and grim than the usual inhabitants of the Surge, Ravenous are ridgeback worshippers of That Which Hungers. Practitioners of strange traditions, they believe that the dark godling which lurks beneath the waves of the Kremich must be appeased with regular sacrifices. Wildsailors should exercise caution when dealing with the Ravenous for, while they are welcoming of trade, if offended they can become implacable enemies.

The Carmine Harvest (Festival)

Somewhere at the heart of every Ravenous settlement is a small red-painted chapel, the doors of which remain closed until nightfall on holy days. On those days a lottery is held, with every member of the settlement taking part. Whoever is selected enters the chapel alone, never to be seen again. *Where do those chosen to enter the chapels go? The doors do not open again until the next festival.*

The Walk of Blades (Horror)

Ravenous who break their own codes are sentenced to death by the Walk of Blades, a self-inflicted punishment. Such penitents wander the reach, leaving scraps of themselves at each port until nothing remains. *The arrival of one of these bandage-wrapped exiles in port is an ill-omen, yet no one would dare ask them to leave.*

Sharp-Toothed Smiles (Feature)

Despite their strange ways and dark rituals, the Ravenous are welcoming of outsiders. Due to the isolation of their settlements trade is vital to them and they are cautious to avoid upsetting potential traders. However, crews that violate their customs will face their wrath, and sometimes they neglect to inform visitors of exactly which customs they follow. *Never take food from a Ravenous priest without offering them something in return.*

Principles

The Ravenous cleave to their laws, which can be found written in books of curious pale leather.

- The community must endure, despite the cost.
- Some must suffer, so that the rest may live.
- Pain is a sign of life - it should be welcomed.
- Something claimed by the waves must not be taken back.

Quick NPCs

- **Wareck Ozir (Ardent)**: A devout butcher who earnestly follows the teachings of the cult. He is always happy to buy fresh meat from sailors. All his teeth are filed to points.
- **Firfan Bor (Gau)**: A quiet and severe senior priest charged with the leadership of a small community. Firfan dresses in rust-red robes hung with fine barbed chains that jingle musically as she walks.
- **Cratizoa (Tzelicrae)**: A loyal warden charged with ensuring outsiders do not stray too far into their settlement.

Story Hooks

- Bug-flares burst above the ship; looks like you've sailed into an area sacred to the cult and now they're upset.
- The crew arrive at port just in time to witness the bloody climax of a strange festival.
- A bandage-wrapped heretic on the Walk of Blades asks for a ride to the next port.
- The crew are asked to transport food to a settlement for a feast. The boxes whimper.
- The crew arrive in port to find the settlement empty, the cobbles still wet with blood.
- A red-robed priest asks for passage. Each night she throws something into the thrash.

FIREFLY RESOURCES

Watch Results (Peace)

6: The waves surge, but the sound is soothing.
5: Branches rake the hull, insects spiral into the air.
4: Distant chants echo from passing ships, mournful and haunting.
3: A series of poles rise from the thrash hung with scarlet ribbons that trail in the wind.
2: You pass an ancient wreck wreathed in vines and long picked clean.
1: Reefs here are carved with leering faces and ancient prayers.

Watch Results (Order)

6: A skiff of wreckers pulls alongside, offering salvage and stories for trade.
5: A trade ship travelling between colonies with supplies, suspicious of outsiders.
4: A priest stands on a small outcropping of stone, exhorting loudly.
3: Several wrecker clans are bickering over a newly emerged reef.
2: An encounter with a red-bannered ship crewed by voracious cannibals.
1: A ship crewed by Crossed Out marauders howls across the waves.

Watch Results (Nature)

6: A wreck surfaces from the thrash just ahead of the ship, its deck littered with bones.
5: A rootquake drives the waves into chaos.
4: Something vast travels beneath the ship, leaving the waves heaving in its wake.
3: A sudden storm descends on the ship, almost seeming alive in its fury.
2: The crushing scrutiny of That Which Hungers bears down on the ship.
1: A Hungering Rift opens in the waves, sucking down everything it can.

Trade Goods & Cargo

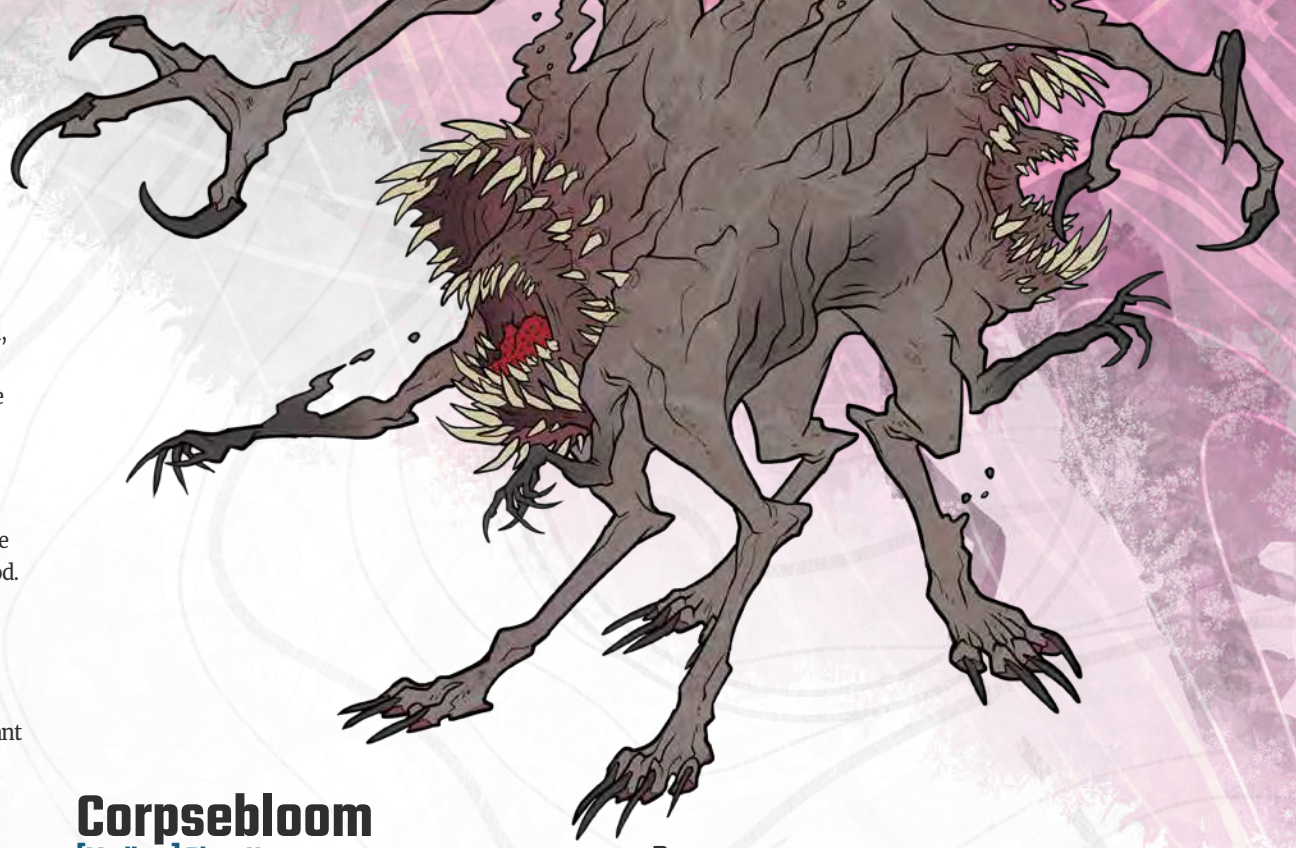
- **Driftwood (export)**: There is no shortage of broken driftwood in the reach.
- **Reef Iron (export)**: The scavenger clans of the Kremich sell an incredible amount of reef iron, harvested from the wrecks.
- **Superstitious Curios (export)**: The strange fetishes and idols crafted by the people of the reach are surprisingly popular with wildsailors as lucky charms.
- **Preserved Food (import)**: The unpredictable waves of the reach make bird-fishing and insect-hunting dangerous, so salted and pickled foods are always popular.
- **Ships (import)**: There are very few shipyards in the reach, so new ships must be brought in from outside. Hard-wearing vessels are especially appreciated.
- **Exotic Ink (import)**: The ink-wrights of the Bone Pickers are always interested in new inks to use in their tattoos.

Passengers

- A devout young couple seeking passage away from Orin's Knell. Both are haunted by strange dreams that leave them patrolling the deck at night.
- An old priest, her eyes dulled with the years of sacrifices she has witnessed. She offers good money to be taken to the Needle.
- A brash and animated wrecker who claims to be looking for his shipmates but spends a lot of time looking over his shoulder. Of course his tattoos are real, why do you ask?
- A tzelicrae weighed down under a backpack filled with sharp knives. They plan to sell them to the Ravenous for their rituals.
- Two red-robed pilgrims that silently offer payment and proffer a note asking to be taken with haste to a distant settlement.
- A masked individual in heavy robes, with charms and amulets hung around their neck. They speak a strange dialect of Chthonic, and keep very much to themselves.

Endemic Hazards

- Corpseblooms, parasitic vines which grow around corpses, turning them into macabre puppets to hunt down yet more victims.
- Crossed-out marauders with nothing left of their honour, seeing everything as potential salvage: ships and crew alike.
- Riftstalkers, eerie predators that prey on anything stranded at the edges of rifts.
- Manticrows with the Storm Herald quirk, baleful heralds of an incoming storm.
- Titanic ironjaw rays, nurtured by some aspect of the Kremich to huge size.
- Hungry rifts, living scars on the wavetops driven by malevolent intelligence.



Riftstalker

[Medium] Dimensional Horror

Eerie predators that drift like mist around the edges of rifts in the canopy. Focus seems to slide off these creatures, leaving sailors at a loss to describe them. Most can agree on an impression of a cadaverous build, long powerful limbs, and far too many teeth. Once encountered, a riftstalker will follow its prey across the reach. *Use a riftstalker if you want your crew to face an implacable, disturbing hunter.*

Presence

Sight: A shadow half-glimpsed at the edge of the deck. A smoky pelt the colour of dead wood.

Sound: Mournful howls at once far away and just behind you.

Smell: The acrid scent of burning hair and thoroughly broken reality.

Taste: Consuming the pale, acerbic flesh can grant prophetic dreams.

Resources

Specimens: Riftstalker Ivory, A Many-edged Tooth

Whispers: Entropic Hunter

Aspects

The Memory of Teeth: Riftstalkers attack in a blur of impossible fangs, dealing CQ Keen damage.

Relentless Hunters: Once one of these creatures has a particular scent, it can track its target unerringly wherever it goes.

Ill Omen: Encountering a riftstalker can leave a sailor ill luck for days afterwards.

Quirks

Many Limbed: This riftstalker seems to possess numerous legs, allowing it to bound incredible distances and even outrun some ships.

Baleful Howl: Throwing back its angular head, the riftstalker unleashes a howl that deals LR Salt damage.

Unstable: Some riftstalkers seem particularly unfastened from reality, flickering from point to point it staccato flashes.

Corpsebloom

[Medium] Plant Horror

Corpseblooms are parasitic vines which grow through and around corpses, turning them into macabre puppets to hunt down yet more victims. A corpsebloom is a mass of fibrous green vines twisted through the ribcage, around the bony limbs, and bursting out of the skull of its host. Bright purple and fuchsia blossoms dot the vines, twisting in the direction of heat and movement like the heads of snakes. *Use corpseblooms if you want your crew to face a horde or macabre opponents.*

Presence

Sight: Scraps of bone wreathed in dead vines.

Sound: The creak of old bones and the rustle of leaves.

Smell: A sweet smell of corruption, undercut with the tang of fresh sap.

Sound: The vines are bitter and foul, but the nectar of the flowers is sweet.

Resources

Specimens: Corpsebloom Petals, Tough Vines

Whispers: Death is not the End

Aspects

Dead and Durable: Thanks to the dead flesh they puppet, corpseblooms are incredibly hard to kill, giving them resistance to Keen, Spike and Blunt damage.

Sense Blossoms: Corpseblooms see heat and movement, making hiding from them very difficult.

Unfeeling Fists: Corpseblooms use their heavy fists to smash their targets, dealing CQ Blunt damage.

Quirks

Burning Nectar: The blossoms of this vine can spit corrosive nectar, dealing LR Acid damage.

Charnel Pile: Rather than a single corpse, this vine inhabits a mass of ancient flesh, allowing it to grow to an incredible size.

Rending Thorns: Long talon-like thorns give this corpsebloom a deadly advantage, allowing it to deal CQ Keen or Spike damage.

PROPHET'S FALL

Created by Martin Nerurkar

Main Elements

This page highlights the most important elements of Prophet's Fall, a reach of dried brown leaves waving lazily in the shimmering, hot air. The rest of this section delves into more detail.

Fall-Coloured Waves

Above the waves, the Fall is overwhelmingly a hot and dry climate, except for the occasional brief periods of excessive rainfall. The people of this land have adapted, wearing loose, colorful robes over their tanned skin. Most walk around in simple sandals or forgo shoes altogether. The uppermost layer of the waves has also changed - colloquially called the Crisp, it is covered in dead and dried leaves. Crews might encounter...

- The unrelenting sun burning down from above, air shimmering
- The crunching and crumpling of dried leaves releasing an earthy scent
- A band of pirates bedecked in blood-red robes and gold jewelry

The Jungle Below

The Crisp is a protective layer, evolved to keep the direct sunlight out and the moisture in. Even when it is destroyed, it is only a matter of minutes before the leaves beneath too turn dried and brown. But once you dive through it you'll find yourself in the hot and humid climate of a jungle teeming with life. Crews might encounter...

- The wake of a ship heavy with treasure leaving shredded Crisp behind
- Water evaporating from a fresh wound in the Crisp as the leaves dry and roll up
- The scratches and markings of a massive territorial jungle cat

A Paradise for Birds

The thin layer between the Crisp and the jungle is home to a wild bounty of birds. Here they sleep and build their nests, fluttering from place to place, only diving down into the jungle to gather nuts, berries, or insects. But the few birds of prey, usually with far less colorful plumage than their smaller cousins, can sometimes be seen circling raptor-like above the wave. Crews might encounter...

- A flock of deep blue nectarfishers hunting for watery, sweet comat fruit
- The call of a large, mischievous red-feathered blackbeak parrot imitating voices
- The smell of that same, annoying blackbeak parrot roasting over a chemical-burner

Signal Traps

These are areas of strong acronautic activity that can disable or twist technology, and have been the bane of many unwitting travellers by confusing their compass needles and navigational arrays. Stay too long in such a trap and you might find yourself seeing strange lights and thinking strange thoughts. Crews might encounter...

- Dreams of distant stars and buried gods, even when awake
- A group of Dreamer monks meditating inside to glean its wisdom
- The smell of ozone and blue lights sparking where the ship touches the waves

Keen Razorteaks

This species of hardy tree is feared for its razor sharp leaves. In the Crisp these often splinter and break, while lush green ones bend and cut like steel. Worse yet, they can be picked up by strong winds, so-called 'shard gales'. At low speeds taking cover is enough, but they are devastating if they pick up a tangle of fresh leaves or gain enough speed to turn even the brittle fragments into shrapnel. Crews might encounter...

- An expert navigator calling out the subtle shine of a patch of razorteak leaves ahead
- The whistling of a quickly approaching high-velocity shard gale
- A well-armored merchant's ship riddled with razorteak leaves, stranded for who knows how long

Drones and Bunkers

The reach of Prophet's Fall features a level of advanced technology that is unusual for the wider wildsea. The Corron bloodline are sentient, ensouled machines and the Tomb, the greatest port in the reach, is an intact pre-V bunker with high-tech underground hydroponics and artificial sunlight. And beyond that, the semi-sentient drone swarms are a constant presence.

Drone Swarms

These strange machines are frequent with erratic behavior, often centering around the reach's signal traps. Some part of their programmable brains reacts with crezzerin in the plant life, leading to symbiotic hybrids with inscrutable but undeniable intelligence. These, usually flying machines, can range from annoying pests collecting pollen and seeds to lethal swarms of razor-sharp murder-bots. Crews might encounter...

- A massive swarm of tiny, dull-grey insects passing overhead, darkening the sky
- The glint of white ceramic in the sun just before a swarm of bladed drones erupts from the Crisp.
- The sinister and unnerving beeping and whirring of large machines beneath the waves.

A Dash of Sparks and Signals

The reach of Prophet's Fall is written to introduce some additional elements of higher technology and science fiction to the waves. It does this, in part, by defining the pre-Verdant world as a place of advanced machinery and long-distance communication, a departure from the piecemeal mysteries served throughout the rest of the book.

It's entirely possible to take elements of, or just inspiration from, this reach without relying on this interpretation of pre-V life with a little extra planning.

"Keep an eye out - they're smarter than you think."

They moved back to back, a three-pointed star of shaking sabres and flickering moth-light. The lantern made the shadows dance.

"Well, they can't be that smart, can they? There's only so much mind a punchcard can hold."

A metallic clanking from one of the cargo-bay corners spun them like a top, weapons at the ready, but there was nothing there.

"Weren't you paying attention to the guys at Vestar? It's not punchcards in these things, there's something else... Lightning and cables, they said. Old stuff, pre-Verdant stuff."

Another sound. Maybe a settling beam, maybe... Well. They moved, cautiously, in that direction.

And above them, in the shadows of the chains and ceiling beams, the drone's mechanical mind clicked and whirred in preparation.

Turtle Ridge (Territory)

Highest Peak: Mount Gortama
Fastest Measured Shard Gale: 211 knots

Turtle Ridge is a large crescent-shaped mountain range that emerges from the waves. The rugged and dangerous terrain is home to the majority of the reach's inhabitants, with the few relatively safe areas pocked with hardy villages, shrines, and temples. Everything else is jagged rock, dangerous gravel fields, or in the path of the unpredictable high-speed shard gales that sweep across the slopes.

Mountain Shrines (Feature)

Spread all across the ridge are a myriad of shrines to saints, prophets and demigods tucked away into ravines and crevices safe from shard gales. Most are colorful wooden constructions, adorned with bright flags, flower wreaths, and ritual offerings. The bigger shrines often double as shelter for travelers. *Travelers staying at a shrine are expected to leave an offering, including a description of their dreams, behind.*

The High Seat (Landmark)

The highest temple in the ridge, covered in snow year round. The air here is so thin that breathing itself becomes dangerous. The few pilgrims that make the trip will need the gods' favor or both guides and guards to brave the snows and the beasts that lurk there. *The bodies of venerated sages and heroes are interred here in their best finery. They lie exposed to the elements so they may return to the winds, far away from the corrupting influence of the waves.*

Pariahs & Bandits (Threat)

Since neither judges nor lawmen want to stain their soul with the sin of murder, the harshest punishment on the ridge is exile (a fate often reserved for dangerous heretics and kinslayers). Branded and banished from the safety of the settlements, these exiles survive in isolated camps, or by fighting with the wildlife over small caves. *Those marked with the black beetle on their forehead are now non-persons: not to be interacted with. They may be mistreated without punishment and even helping or harboring them is forbidden.*

Shelldown (Territory)

Favourite Comfort Food: Filled dumplings served with spicy-sweet comat chutney
Colourful Bird Murals: Everywhere

The waves enclosed within Turtle Ridge are relatively sheltered and safe compared to the rest of Prophet's Fall. The surrounding crags break many of the more dangerous shard gales, and the foothills below mean that in many places the waves aren't too deep.

There are numerous small towns and settlements inside, often anchored on peaks below the waves. Many have learned to cultivate the surrounding plant life, providing food to villages on the ridge.

Fruit Moon (Festival)

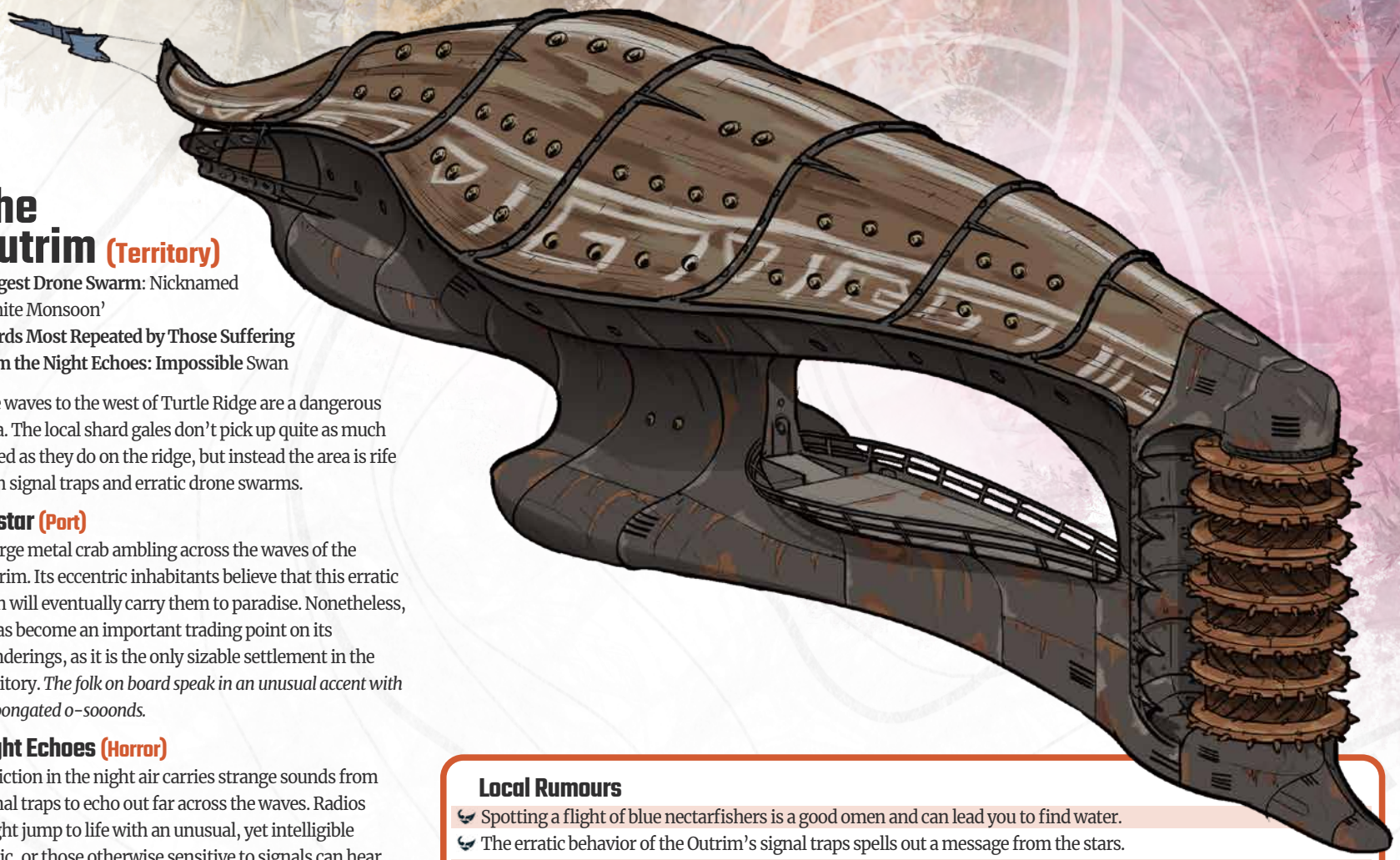
The high temperatures allow the farms of Shelldown multiple harvests throughout the year. Even so, Fruit Moon is the traditional festival to commemorate the first big harvest after the rains. Fruit Moon means public feasts, live music, and most importantly the ritual of splashing one another with brightly colored water. *Getting dyed head-to-toe in green or orange is not unusual, and being a bad sport about it is considered very rude. Especially if one was splashed with the light blue of the Dreamers, an auspicious color.*

Crest Market (Docks)

A sizable town above the waves with multiple marketplaces. Located towards the Tomb, the biggest city in Prophet's Fall, most locals bring their food to sell here. Enterprising merchants then put it on their trade ships that make the trip around the ridge. *Ships with cooling facilities are exceptionally sought after to deliver the more delicate produce safely.*

Cipher Point (Feature)

A perfectly circular and extremely powerful signal trap that slowly moves across the waves. Desperate criminals and exiles that don't want to brave the naked areas of the ridge nor the capricious waves of the Outrim often hide close by. *Strange lights can sometimes be seen flickering beneath the waves at night, illuminating the circular rim and path of Cipher Point.*



The Outrim (Territory)

Largest Drone Swarm: Nicknamed 'White Monsoon'
Words Most Repeated by Those Suffering from the Night Echoes: Impossible Swan

The waves to the west of Turtle Ridge are a dangerous area. The local shard gales don't pick up quite as much speed as they do on the ridge, but instead the area is rife with signal traps and erratic drone swarms.

Vestar (Port)

A large metal crab ambling across the waves of the Outrim. Its eccentric inhabitants believe that this erratic path will eventually carry them to paradise. Nonetheless, it has become an important trading point on its wanderings, as it is the only sizable settlement in the territory. *The folk on board speak in an unusual accent with elooongated o-sooonds.*

Night Echoes (Horror)

A friction in the night air carries strange sounds from signal traps to echo out far across the waves. Radios might jump to life with an unusual, yet intelligible static, or those otherwise sensitive to signals can hear distant voices call out to them. *This affliction can cause the personalities of those affected to change, shift, and splinter as if a new intelligence slowly emerges within.*

Old Bloodleaf (Wonder)

This massive red-leafed tallshank is home to an entire colony of mostly docile, beetle-like drones that scuttle along its many branches, carving strange patterns into its bark. Tracings of fresh patterns are coveted by dreamheads. *Once the rainy season begins the drones grow more lethargic, and daring scavengers race to brave the Bloodleaf, harvesting fruit or finding fresh bark patterns.*

Local Rumours

- Spotting a flight of blue nectarfishers is a good omen and can lead you to find water.
- The erratic behavior of the Outrim's signal traps spells out a message from the stars.
- The priests of the Dreamers are controlled by a machine mind in the depths of the Tomb.
- The Wavecrashers want to gain control over the Tomb to understand the pre-V technology within.
- The echoes some can hear are simply entertainment signals from the past; playing forever, slowly dissolving.
- There is a large cave hidden in the ridge where an entire city of exiles waits for its moment to strike.
- The Corron were the original defenders of the Tomb that the prophet defeated and banished.
- There is a sect that is rumored to have the healing touch. They are said to wander among the exiled, covered in corpse ash and bones.
- Whispers of a secret entrance into the Tomb at the base of the mountain, deep in the jungle.
- Tales of a bird-leviathan's nest, filled with cracked ships and their lost cargo, hidden in the Outrim beneath the Crisp.

The Tomb (Port)

Number of Levels: Forty
Primary Construction Material: Dead iron, a robust metal with a dull-purple shine

The beating heart of the ridge is the Tomb, a bunker that leads deep into the bowels of a mountain. Long ago it, along with the Turtle Ridge, was discovered by the prophet and her loyal followers. It is said that she not only knew the way, but had also mastered the secret words that opened its metal doors.

The bounty of pre-V artifacts found within the Tomb and the safety it provided have made it the seed that led to widespread settlement of the ridge. For this reason, the Tomb is still a spot of pilgrimage for the many believers of the reach. Making the pilgrimage at least once in a lifetime is considered highly spiritually valuable.

The Tomb itself is divided into strictly controlled zones, with access being granted primarily based on spiritual purity. Higher rungs of purity can be achieved through prayer, meditation, payment, or even indenture.

Final Rest (Dock)

A distance below the entrance to the Tomb lies this small but surprisingly busy town. It hugs the slopes, light wooden houses stacked on top of each other, crouched down into a rocky corridor offering safety from the area's shard gales. A number of docks extend onto the waves. *A long stone-hewn stairway leads up to the Tomb from here, worn smooth from countless feet, hooves, and wheels.*

Level 10 - Mausoleum (Feature)

At the heart of level 10 is the Mausoleum. This is the focus of many pilgrims, even if not all may make it this far into the Tomb. The prophet is interred here, among golden statues depicting her exploits. Her dessicated corpse reclines in a meditative pose. *Sensitive pilgrims swear that they're able to hear the prophet's voice in their heads.*

Level 18 - Hydroponics (Feature)

A big part of level 18 is taken up by the garden, an underground hydroponics farm completely uncontaminated by crezzerin. Artificial sunlight is provided through intact pre-V technology, meticulously maintained and cleaned by a cadre of monks. *The food produced here is mostly consumed by the monks of the Tomb, but sometimes impossibly rare delicacies are sold or traded.*

Blackpeak (Port)

Days Since Last Mining Accident: 3
Forges: Too many to count

Blackpeak began its life as a simple iron mine that offered lucrative, if dangerous, employment. Today it has grown into a large city barely crammed into a slim corridor of safety. Houses spill down from the mountain's slope and the soot of its furnaces rises up, while its slag runs down. It houses a wealth of industry all centered around the high quality iron, silver, and gold pulled from the earth. Since fire is openly allowed in Blackpeak, most buildings are made out of stone or metal.

Her Protective Presence (Feature)

This giant metal statue of the prophet, one hand raised as if to greet a traveler, towers on a ridge above Blackpeak. Not only is she widely visible and attracts pilgrims or tourists, but she's been built to block off a frequent shard gale corridor. *The Toilers, a guild of welders and workers, are the only ones allowed to repair and maintain her presence.*

Platehold (Dock)

A mess of metal platforms anchored deep into the rock at the lower end of Blackpeak. Pulleys, sweating workers, and beasts of burden pull people and cargo up from the ships anchored on the waves below. This is the only place in Blackpeak where open fire is expressly forbidden due to its proximity to the waves. *Much of Platehold is made up out of the scavenged hulls of former ships.*

Blood and Bolts (Workshop)

An establishment primarily frequented by travellers. It is owned and operated by Me-And-Me-Alone, a deeply knowledgeable and excessively precise engineer. Unfortunately the Corron is aggressively solipsistic, believing that there are no gods or saints, convinced that nothing beyond him is truly real - that everything is merely the dream of a greater machine. His frequently acerbic outbursts would scare away many of his customers if he wasn't one of the few engineers in Blackport both skilled enough and willing to work on weapons. *The owner has a bright-red quill lodged in his head. He seems unbothered by it, and the edges around the wound have been precisely closed with industrial sealant.*

Moon's Gate (Port)

Most Decorated Unit: Deep-Tiger Fang
Times the War Bell was Rung Thrice: 1

On the southern tip of the crescent mountain range lies a solid monastery-fortress of stone and metal, overlooking the gap in the ridge that allows ships entrance into Shelldown. A small complement of expertly staffed warships are docked here. All soldiers and sailors are considered holy warriors after they are ritually cleansed in preparation for their divine duty. This way, any violence they might commit in service of this higher goal will not leave a stain on their immortal souls. Instead, enforcing the divine will of the Dreamers will be rewarded in their next life.

The War Bell (Wonder)

A massive bell suspended from the highest spire, rung to warn of impending danger and able to be heard for miles around. One ring stands for a significant bandit fleet, two signal an approaching leviathan, and three warn of even worse things. *The War Bell is rung very rarely. Usually a number of smaller bells along the outer wall are used to signal shift changes, visiting dignitaries or other important events.*

Heaven's Javelin (Ship)

The flagship of Moon's Gate, this heavy cruiser only leaves port when its overwhelming firepower or majestic presence is called for. While it may look like a regular, if very ostentatious, warship, it is stuffed to the brim with strange pre-V tech taken from the depths of the Tomb. The knowledge to operate its strange contraptions is rare, and the knowledge to repair any of them (beyond the occasional patch-job by talented Wavecrashers) is utterly lost. *The Javelin is helmed by Admiral-Saint Mewejj, a gau that commands considerable respect, if not adoration. Her glory days are long behind her and her fungal flesh has started to grow grey and brittle.*

Dead Man's Haunt (Junction)

While Moon Gate's holy warriors are owed hospitality throughout the reach and can drink almost anywhere for free, the Dead Man's Haunt has become a favorite hangout for many of them, even if they have to barter for their drink there. The local magistrate only begrudgingly tolerates the establishment, mostly because closing it would probably lead to unrest. It is welcoming to wildsailors, primarily because its current proprietor Laagan, a massive ektus, can - and will - easily squash any disputes (usually by throwing people out the second-story window). *Leaving a seat empty and ordering for a fallen comrade is tradition in the Haunt and many of its walls have the names of lost friends carved into them.*

The Dreamers (Faction)

Home Turf: The Tomb
Motivation: To seek enlightenment and protect the prophet's tomb and legacy

The surviving disciples of the prophet founded a religion venerating her path. Following the holy psalms of their martyr-sage, they pursue enlightenment and release from the earthly cycle of reincarnation. Along with their holy warriors, they jealously guard the pre-V secrets of the Tomb from unawakened eyes.

The holy servants of the Dreamers can be seen all throughout Prophet's Fall, easily spotted wearing their light blue robes and with holy symbols painted onto the center of their forehead. The initiated can tell the many different splinter sects apart by the colors, placement, and shapes of these glyphs.

Sage Agan (Leader)

Regarded by most Dreamers as one of the few living beings closest to enlightenment. While the reclusive sage has no formal authority, many of the different sects bow to his wisdom and teachings when he does appear to speak. *The ektus' interpretations of the psalms have become increasingly ornery in recent years.*

Wavecrasher Sect (Feature)

A pragmatic sect of Dreamers. They believe that the prophet was a wise sage, but insist that her insight was not heaven-sent, but instead gleaned from divine salvage. They aim to do the same, having amassed a fortune in technology along with the knowledge of how to repair and use it. While this is highly valued, many are wary of their reckless practice of delving near signal traps, risking their disruption. *Doing business with them involves offerings, prayer, and elaborate rituals others might consider superstition.*

Principles

Even though there are many contradictory accounts, fables, and myths about the prophet and her life, most teachings contain these core beliefs:

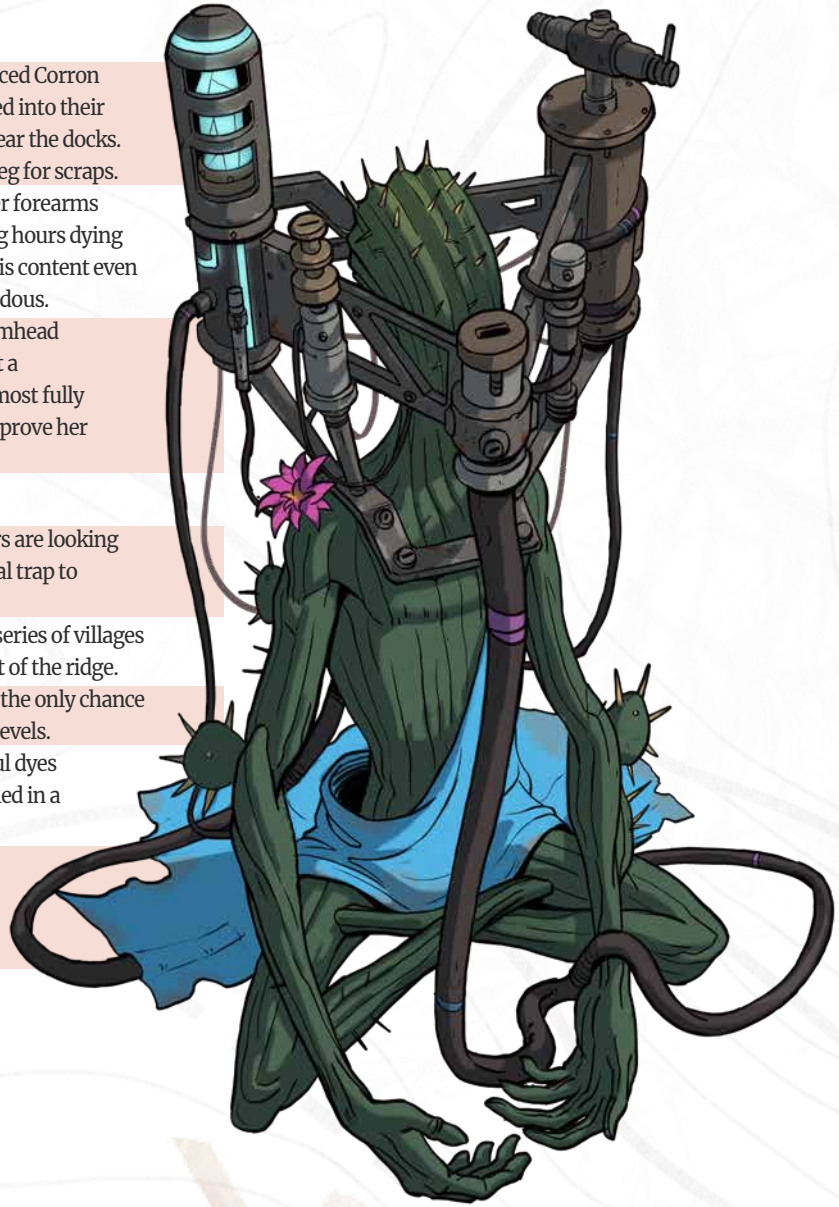
- The cosmos will reward those earthly souls that act righteously and morally, in this life or the next.
- The purpose of life is the pursuit of truth to release one's soul from reincarnation.
- Noise is wisdom. The truth of the cosmos can be found in the static of signal traps, the shape of clouds or the corrupted data of pre-V machines.

Quick NPCs

- **Null (Corron)**: A battered and defaced Corron with the mark of the Exile scratched into their faceplate, often found squatting near the docks. Their eye-lamps only light up to beg for scraps.
- **Winna Azure-Hands (Ardent)**: Her forearms stained a clear blue, she works long hours dying robes for the dreamer monks. She is content even though the work is hard and hazardous.
- **Sadina (Ektus)**: A mendicant dreamhead disregarded by many, she has built a contraption of scrap metal that almost fully encases her head in an effort to improve her reception of the divine signals.

Story Hooks

- A group of Wavecrasher scavengers are looking for a ship to steer them into a signal trap to dive there.
- A terrible shard gale has riddled a series of villages and temples in a formerly safe part of the ridge.
- A schism within the Tomb may be the only chance for outsiders to get into the lower levels.
- A trader exporting a load of colorful dyes has found his ship captain embroiled in a religious dispute.
- Vestar is crawling towards a dangerous signal trap in a slow, but uncharacteristically direct, line. Could this be sabotage?



Mercantile Coalition (Faction)

Home Turf: Blackpeak Mercantile Exchange
Motivation: To have the freedom to pursue profit

The Mercantile Coalition is a loose alliance of merchants and traders of varying size. It was initially founded by a few influential merchants to influence the market, but has recently grown beyond that. After repeated clashes with the Dreamers, the Coalition is deeply frustrated with the many restrictions, levies, and taboos of the clergy. To combat these limits the coalition has reorganized and opened its ranks. All it requires is a membership fee and a recommendation from an existing member. It didn't take long until every trader who could afford it joined the prestigious group. Now the Coalition leverages its claim of representing the population to influence public opinion. Additionally, they have recently tested the waters with some small, collective action. Even though one of their efforts was quickly answered with force by holy warriors, they are not discouraged.

Unarmed Resistance (Feature)

Though most of the action the Coalition takes is peaceful and mercantile in nature, the recent crackdown has led some of them to an attempt to build up a military of sorts... Only to protect its members from retaliatory action, obviously. Although there are few local recruits, their contacts make it easy for them to procure weaponry and hire wildsailors. *There are rumors that the Coalition does not shy away from recruiting bandits or even exiles.*

Coalition Council (Leader)

The Council was originally a very informal group aiming for consensus among equals. Now that it has so rapidly swelled in size, it struggles trying to find a new structure. The original eight members have a permanent seat on the Coalition's steering council, but opposite them are now an equal number of elected representatives from all across its membership. *The council is torn between its goals of deregulation and increased personal freedom. A number of caucuses with different ideologies have formed.*

Principles

Even though the coalition's sudden growth is pushing it towards an identity crisis most members would describe its goals as follows...

- Progress and prosperity requires a free flow of goods.
- Working together multiplies our power and influence.
- Religious restrictions on life and commerce stymie growth.

Quick NPCs

- **Newan (Tzelicrae)**: An almost spherical merchant and original member on the Council clearly enjoying all this new attention.
- **Black-Toe Tam (Ardent)**: A simple street-vendor selling anything from "found" jewelry to rat-on-a-stick. He's new in the Coalition and secretly reporting to the clergy.
- **Westward (Gau)**: An uncomfortably conservative Dreamer nun that has taken it on herself to personally harass and loudly condemn anyone who might be in league with the Coalition.

Story Hooks

- A radical faction within the Coalition is looking to hire some smugglers to deliver instructions and weaponry to a group of bandits.
- The Dreamers need deniable assets to break up faction negotiations within the Coalition.
- A complement of holy warriors break and burn some market stalls in retaliation.
- A trading strike threatens the Tomb. The crew are asked to cross the picket line to deliver essential goods to the Tomb.
- An outspoken Dreamer monk is in need of some protection after some serious threats.

FIREFLY RESOURCES

Watch Results (Peace)

6: A sung prayer to the prophet sounding up from below deck.
5: A small floating shrine of exquisite beauty drifts by.
4: The calming smell of incense wafts over the ship.
3: A fresh tear in the Crisp, the green below steaming and attracting insects and birds.
2: A colorful swarm of birds circles the ship for a while.
1: The lights of a Signal Trap pulsate gently in the distance.

Watch Results (Order)

6: A group of ascetic sages on a ship offering guidance and blessings.
5: A trading ship on its lap around the ridge, eager to sell some of its produce and other goods.
4: A farmer and his farmhands transporting their produce on an improvised raft.
3: A gaggle of children play-acting the prophet's victory over the Leviathan Snake Naghee.
2: A group of young hunters carrying their haul, a large beetle dripping thick indigo-colored blood.
1: A prisoner is ritually tattooed with the black beetle before being chased away with stones.

Watch Results (Nature)

6: A young razorteak with still-supple leaves, perfect for harvesting.
5: An old, ornery blackbeak parrot insults and harasses the crew.
4: A contraption of drones and moss has attached to the ship, slowly growing.
3: A crushing heatwave makes sleep impossible.
2: A shard gale whistles close by, tearing open the canopy of the Crisp.
1: A distress call from beneath the waves. The sender? A newly awakened and very confused Corron.

Trade Goods & Cargo

- **Mineral Pigments (export)**: Won from some of the hardier fruits, barks, and wild critters, these colorful dyes can fetch high prices as paint or decorative material.
- **Metal Ingots (export)**: High quality iron, silver, or gold found within the Turtle Ridge is smelted into ingots with the prophet's mark and exported far and wide.
- **Razorteak Leaves (export)**: Harvested fresh and treated right they remain sharp and flexible, and can be carefully worked into blades or jewelry by skilled artisans.
- **Guns and Weaponry (import)**: Many devout local craftspeople refuse to work on weapons of war for fear that it would taint their soul.
- **Pre-V Data and Signals (import)**: The hunger of the holy sages for the wisdom hidden in the noise of the cosmos is as unending as the sky.
- **Strange Songs (import)**: The people of the Fall enjoy a good song, even more than most. Hauntingly beautiful melodies can fetch a good price.

Passengers

- A polished Corron with a sunflower-yellow parrot perched on one shoulder and a menacing harpoon mounted on the other. He is out looking to sell his mercenary services.
- A band of scatterbrained dreamheads aiming to get closer to a Signal Trap in the hopes of picking up more cosmic data. They gave no specific directions beyond "head out and we'll feel it when we're close".
- A devout Dreamer nun out to visit family, who invariably turns every discussion into a theological argument about the nature of souls.
- A newlywed couple, faces painted and bedecked in flowers, starting their ritual journey around the ridge to deliver the good news to their remote family members in person.
- A scared looking fellow, his head-scarf just poorly covering his exile's mark, hoping to leave the reach behind to start a new life.
- A family of migrant workers, complete with small children, on their way to the Shelldown farms to earn enough to live during harvest season.

Endemic Hazards

- Shard Gales rustling the waves or racing across the ridge's slopes.
- Vineminds, a fungal network using multiple drones as eyes, ears, limbs, and weapons.
- Desperate exiles, armed with improvised weapons and forced to beg and steal for their survival.
- Signal Surges, powerful blasts of acronautics radiating from a signal wave. They can stun or confuse people and wreak havoc on equipment.
- Holy Warriors, who use their divine authority to harass anyone on suspicion of piracy or heresy.
- Yaghra, powerful cat-beasts that aggressively defend their territory.
- Ridgebreaker, a massive bird leviathan of crisp-brown feathers and ship-long talons.

Corron BLOODLINE

Living machines from the heart of the tomb.

Their creation is regarded as one of the prophet's biggest miracles. As beings of technology they are perfectly primed to receive the noise of the cosmos, which is why many regard them as spiritually pure and revere them. Many Corrons are adorned with religious symbology. While most Corrons emerged from the Tomb, a good number were recovered from beneath the waves and successfully rebooted.

The Corron are bipedal people made of metal, ceramics, and wire. Many show some signs of repair or modification. Faceplates with blinking lights and voboxes deep in their chest are typical features.

QUICKSTART KIT

Edge (Choose 1)

Iron, Sharps, Tides

Skills & Languages (Choose 5)

Skills: Brace, Break, Rattle, Study, Vault
Languages: Highvin, Brasstongue

Resources (Choose 2)

Salvage: Ceramic Plating, Processing Substrate
Specimens: Mango, Soft Razorteak Leaves
Whispers: An Ancient Cipher, Intercepted Communications
Charts: A Secret Prayer, Outdated Location Data

Drive (Choose 1)

Find a new body for a lost Corron's mind-data
Discover new signal-noise to better understand the cosmos

Mire (Choose 1)

Pragmatic rationality outweighs everything else
Corrupted code leads creates erratic output

Aspects

Unshakeable 5-Track Trait

Your belief in the cycle of reincarnation and the truth in chaos grant you conviction and resolve in the face of imminent peril.

Technopathic Senses 4-Track Trait

You are tuned to the noises of the cosmos and can listen and speak to advanced machines.

Jump Start 4-Track Trait

Mark to overload your internal batteries, dealing CQ Volt damage to anyone close by.

Symbiomoss 3-Track Trait

You are in symbiosis with a moss that fills and hardens to replace the damaged parts of your body. Use a task and immerse yourself in water to heal a mark of damage on each of your traits.

Arcbeam Lance 4-Track Gear

A salvaged and repaired pre-V rifle that throws a continuous stream of powerful lightning. Unfortunately it eats through batteries. Deals LR Volt damage.

Religious Robes 4-Track Gear

The light blue robes of a sage grant respect and devotion from many in the reach. Increase impact when interacting with the faithful.

Modular Limb 4-Track Gear

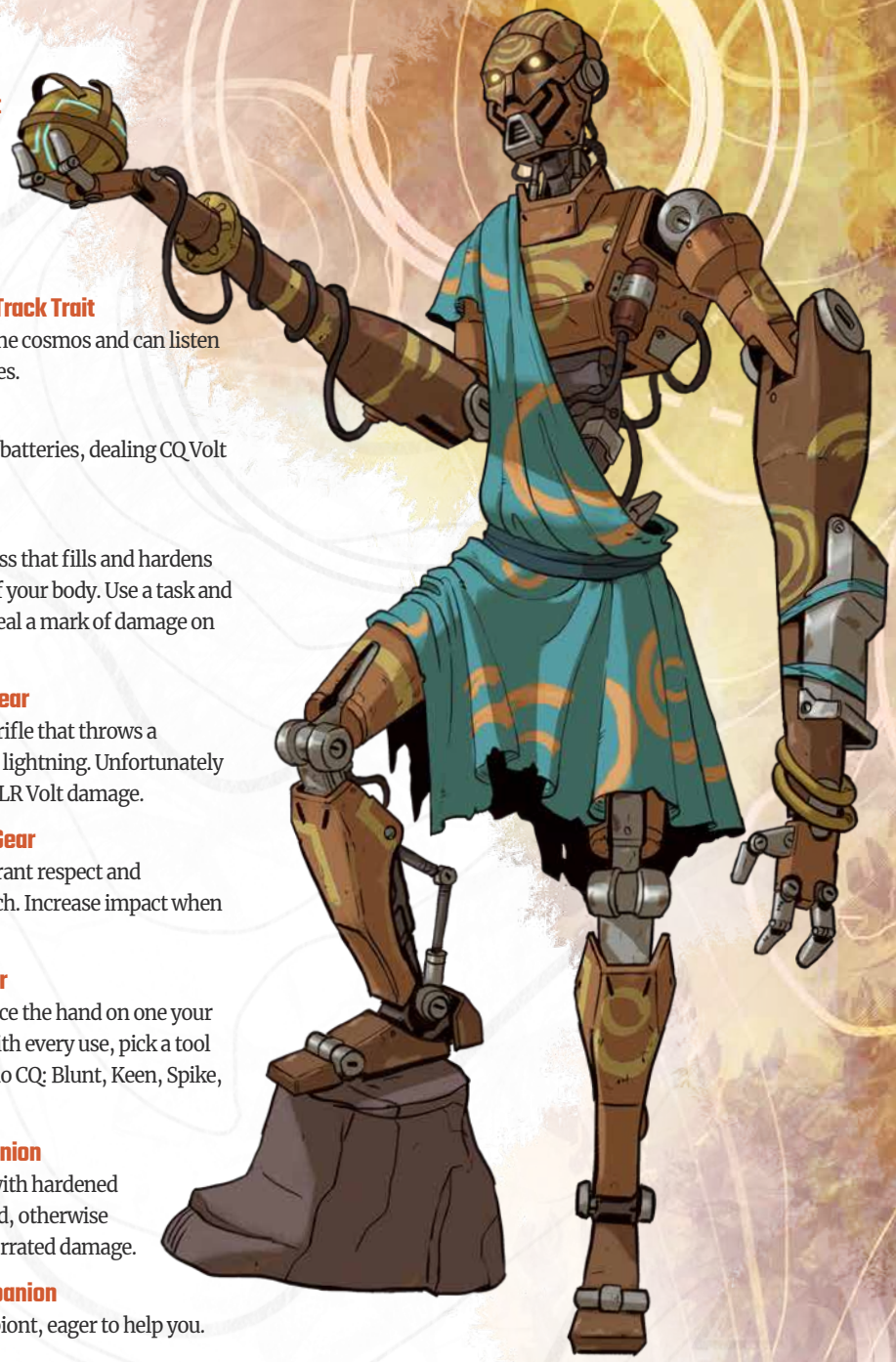
With a bit of time you can replace the hand on one your limbs with a variety of tools. With every use, pick a tool and one damage type you can do CQ: Blunt, Keen, Spike, Hewing, or Serrated.

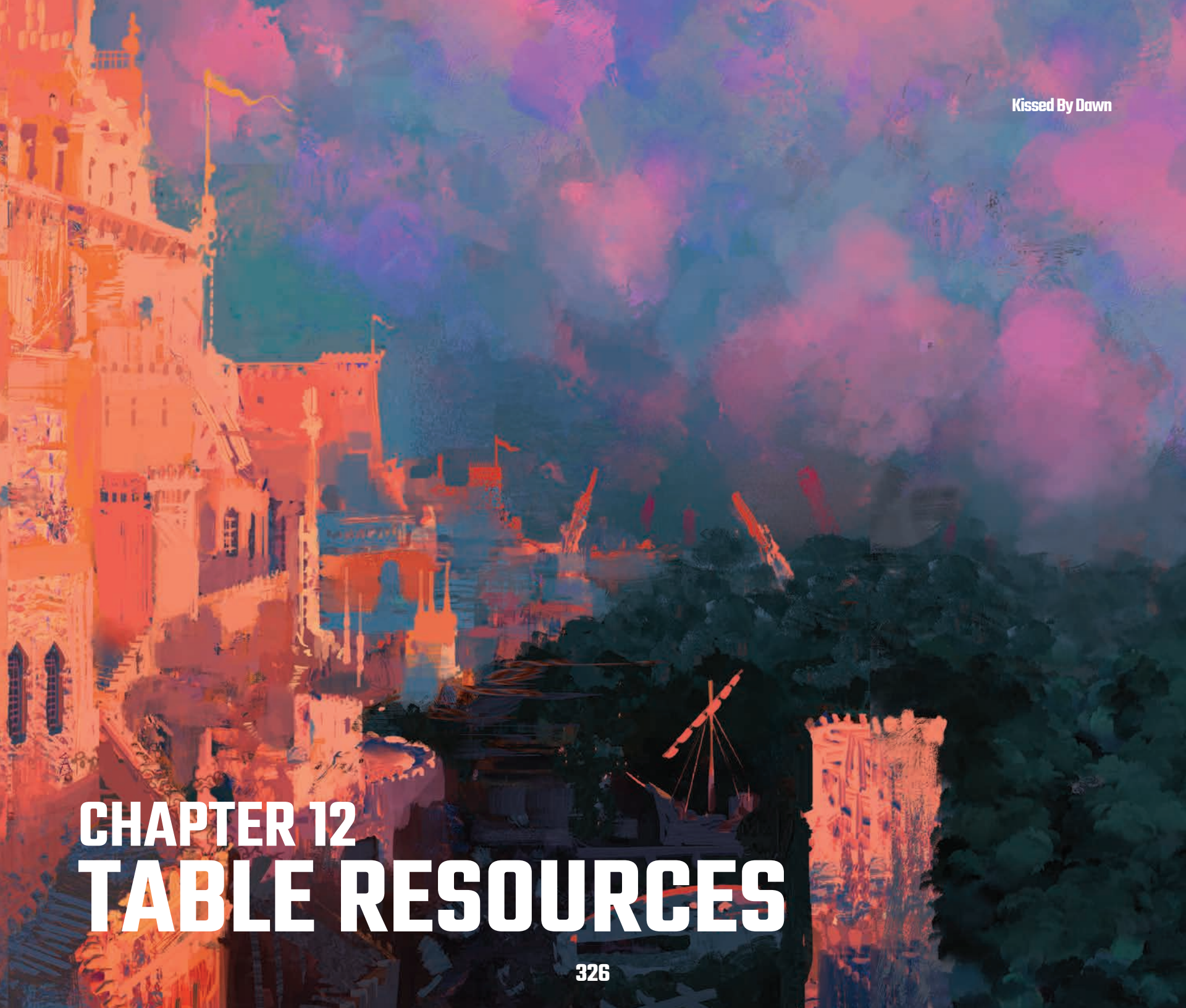
Garam Dog 3-Track Companion

A ferocious dog-like creature with hardened mineral scales. Playful when fed, otherwise more than willing to deal CQ Serrated damage.

Bloomdrone 4-Track Companion

A flying pre-V toy turned symbiont, eager to help you.





Kissed By Dawn

CHAPTER 12
TABLE RESOURCES

The call of the waves is wide and low,
the sound of a million leaves,
and it takes our siblings,
and it takes our souls,
and it pulls us apart at the seams,

From thrash to tangle,
from the sink to the drown,
to the Darkness-Under-Eaves,

Stoke your engines and sing,
let your bite cut in,
to the waves of the wildsea.

- Unknown Tree-Shanty

Common Names

Naming a character is often a deeply personal process. With the wildsea's focus on culture and language, this page is given over to some common names (and some useful linguistic components ready to be bunched together to create new names) taken from the most common languages of the waves. If you want to go the extra mile and give your character a world-appropriate name, choose the language that seems most appropriate and take the following guidelines into account...

Low Sour Names

- Short, with prominent T, R, J, K and Z sounds
- Consonant-vowel pairings are common

Example Low Sour Names: Jakesta, Tekeri, Rokko, Kazera, Zeku, Ozeta, Ravir, Zegra, Motsje, Ito
Low Sour Name Components: Ta, To, Te, Ra, Ro, Re, Ri, Ja, Jo, Je, Ka, Ko, Ke, Ku, Za, Zo, Ze, Tza, Tzi, Gra, Go

Chthonic Names

- Longer, grander, sometimes melding with other old-world nouns
- Ch, L and W sounds are common

Example Chthonic Names: Acheran, Lao, Ollingwood, Dockley, Ippet, Chambersen, Woking, Terin, Charnet, Lee
Chthonic Name Components: Wood, Rise, Char, Shade, Cho, Lake, Wang, Smet, Dole, Rin, Bury, Ness, Ling

Saprekk Names

- N, G, S and O sounds are common
- Names longer than a couple of syllables are rare

Example Saprekk Names: Sagave, Epticret, Nomenso, Gerin, Olens, Seona, Omna, Saorene, Helgin, Innes
Saprekk Name Components: Om, On, Ot, Ol, Ka, Hel, Nor, Sa, So, Si, Ga, Gu, Ge, Sa, So, Ne, Na, Ns, Ms, Gs

Gaudimm Names

- Double-names are common
- A 'soft' palette of sounds in general, with lots of H, B, D, and F

Example Gaudimm Names: Hao Bekara, Cereba Dolen, Fend, Hobel Fao, Odsin Hadar, Lidling Falk, Kiro
Gaudimm Name Components: Ho, Hu, Hara, Hake, Ha, Bo, Be, Basu, Bodi, Do, De, Da, Dura, Disa, Fa, Fe, Fo, Ro

Knock Names

- Of variable length, with heavy usage of Ch, Tz, Cz and T to mimic mandible-sounds
- Often rhythmically satisfying to say

Example Knock Names: Tekoriko, Eksetzi, Czoritatza, Chikatoz, Otzetza, Czentek, Etzaki, Ukitoze
Knock Name Components: Che, Chao, Cze, Cza, Tzi, Tzo, Otz, Za, Ze, To, Te, K

You could feel the whispers in the air, thick like worms in ancient earth. They snuck in through the chemical-smoke, through the gaps in the old ship's rotting seals, through the dripping of the rain on the deck-plating.

Grey had seen his share of nights like this while serving under his last captain, but it had been a while. Long enough that he's almost forgotten how wild the very air could be.

They were singing, the rest of the crew, some shanty they'd picked up in Kyther, or Kynner, or some reef-back spit with a similar name. The words spoke of waves and wildness, as most tree-shanties did, and normally Grey would have joined right in himself.

But not tonight, not on a night like tonight. Tonight there were enough words in the air already without his adding to them.

Alternate Twist Rules

In situations where characters are competent at the actions they're attempting, the presence of twists grows to a near certainty. This is by design - it takes the expected outcomes of these situations and adds a dash of unexpected flavour by passing the narrative to the rest of the table to influence. Essentially, the more likely a roll is to **triumph**, the more likely it is to also have some unexpected effect.

But for some groups, twists can actually get in the way of narrative flow, especially if they come up too often. This tends to happen in groups that come from a gaming background where the sharing of narrative influence (outside of the actions their character takes) is minimal, or where the GM has greater control over the specifics of the story.

If this is the case for your group, don't worry! There are a couple of way you can alter the frequency and scope of twists, detailed below.

Directed Twists

This doesn't reduce the frequency of twists, but does reduce the freedom other players have in determining their effects. When using Directed Twists...

- A double 6 means the twist is **overwhelmingly positive** in nature.
- A double 5 or 4 means the twist is **incidental** - something happens, but it's not particularly in the crew's favour.
- A double 3, 2 or 1 means that the twist is an **overwhelmingly negative** outcome for the crew, an additional complication or unexpected problem.

The effect of twists can still be decided by anybody at the table, but the decisions should be a little easier to make, given the narrower scope of what a twist might mean.

Infrequent Twists

This doesn't reduce the variety of twist effects players can create, but does ensure they turn up with far less regularity. When using Infrequent Twists, **the only roll outcome that triggers the twist is a double on the result**. For example, a roll with a final result of 4 would need a second 4 to trigger a twist - if it had a double 1, double 2 or double 3, no twist would occur.

Authorial Twists

This still takes the narrative burden of twists off of the Firefly, but it doesn't spread it out to the table. When using Authorial Twists, the player that rolled the twist is also the one that supplies and approves its effect. This can help speed play by reducing the amount of back and forth in the conversation, and by ensuring that players have time before or as they roll to come up with some basic ideas of what they might choose if they do indeed roll a twist.

Firefly Twists

A more GM-focused version of Authorial Twists, Firefly Twists don't reduce the scope or frequency of twists, but do cut a little out of the conversation around them. **When a twist is rolled, the Firefly decides the effect** - there's no opening the possibilities to the table, and no checking with the player.

Be cautious when changing the rules associated with twists, especially if you're gaming with players that have run or taken part in a Wildsea story before. While these alternate rules are brief, the effect they can have on the Wildsea's conversation and narrative flow are far-reaching.

Mayfly Rules

The basic mode of the Wildsea is for the Firefly to roll extremely rarely outside of determining random chance and the threat of encounters during a journey. This lack of rolling, in theory, frees them up to keep a closer eye on the evolving narrative of the games, the wants and needs of the other players and how to best present the elements of the world.

But for some players, the clatter of dice and the heightened importance of chance are core elements of tabletop roleplaying. And if you're one of those players, you're not wrong - rolling dice *is* exciting! So for you we've created a separate treatment of one of the Wildsea's core conceits, the **Mayfly** rules: designed specifically to turn the Firefly into an active roller of dice, as reliant on chance and chaos as the rest of the players at the table.

How to Roll

When other players make an action, task, or **ratings roll**, they construct their dice pool based on various elements of the character and crew sheet and the circumstances they're in. As the Firefly you don't have those kinds of cues, but you still need to know how many dice to roll when injecting some uncertainty. We recommend taking cues from **narrative swing**, letting the recent tone of the game suggest the number of dice in your pool.

- If the crew have had an easy time of it recently and you want to potentially shake things up, roll **1d6**
- If the crew have been coasting a little but had their fair share of bruises, roll **2d6**
- If the crew have been kicked around for a while from disaster to disaster, roll **3d6**

*You can also add **cut** to a Mayfly roll just like any other roll. If a situation is unlikely to turn out well for the crew but you still want it as a statistical possibility, **cut one**.*

When to Roll

Players with characters tend to roll when they engage in actions that are **difficult**, **dangerous**, or **dramatic**. As a Mayfly you'll be rolling too, but the circumstances of those rolls are very different. When you want to leave things up to fate, you can choose to make...

Fight Rolls

In normal Wildsea combat the Firefly chooses the actions of any hazard that opposes the crew through narrative means - how would it react given the situation, how much damage has it taken, what makes sense given the flow of the fight? When using Mayfly rules, you roll to see **how lucky the crew are** when it gets to that hazard's appropriate time to act. This might let you know...

- How effective a potential attack will be
- Whether a hazard will do something expected or unexpected to the crew
- Which member of the crew the hazard will focus on in that moment

Fight rolls make encounters far less predictable, but don't take agency away from the other players.

Fight Roll Results

6 — Positive
The hazard might attack tentatively for 1-2 damage, change to a more defensive position, break away from their current target, or flee.

5 4 — Mixed
The hazard will likely use a normal attack dealing 3-4 damage, change position or target, or take advantage of one of its unusual aspects.

3 2 1 — Negative
The hazard will use a devastating attack for 5-6 damage, move to an extremely offensive position, target the weakest member of the crew or use an aspect that sows discord or confusion.

Situation Rolls

When the crew enter a new situation in which some element of the world or narrative is uncertain, leave it up to the dice. You might want to roll when there's uncertainty over...

- How an NPC will react to a member of the crew, or the crew as a whole
- How actively and presently dangerous a particular environmental hazard is, anything from an encounter with a wild creature or pirate gang to the severity of a storm or rootquake
- How likely the crew's existing problems are to play into a new circumstance (such as a character with an injury being forced by circumstance to use the injured body part).

Situation rolls work best to set the tone of a new scene, montage or journey, but they can really be made at any time you want the 'mood' of the game to rely on the dice.

Over-use of situation rolls can make a game feel *too* random. Let the narrative flow and the consequences of the players' actions bear weight when you can.

Situation Roll Results

6 — Positive
The situation is skewed in favour of the crew. NPCs are friendly and open, hazards are mild or unaware, and problems are narratively avoided.

5 4 — Mixed
The situations has a mix of positive and negative elements. NPCs might be cautious but willing to trust, hazards growing steadily or slow to react, and problems involved, but not directly.

3 2 1 — Negative
The situation is set to go badly for the crew from the very beginning. NPCs don't trust them, hazards are actively hostile or sudden and unexpected, and situations will almost always force them to confront existing problems.

Dragonfly Rules

The standard way to play the Wildsea involves one player taking the role of the Firefly, and acts as an arbiter for the game. However, some people may enjoy sharing the Firefly role, and collaborating at the table. The Dragonfly Rules are for those tables who spread the Firefly's various jobs with other players.

Collaboration

As with any game, everybody at the table is there to have fun. When coming up with ideas, ensure that everybody is able to participate as much as they are comfortable. This also means that everybody is welcome to take a step back or allow the other players to fill in details. Nobody is obligated to participate in the same way or to the same degree.

Avoid Contradiction

When introducing a new detail to the world, avoid contradicting things that have already been established. Discuss the idea with the table to find a way to make it work in your game if you think it would make a good addition. Play in good faith, and invite the uncertainty that comes with sharing the Firefly role.

Familiar with Firefly Rules

These rules assume that everybody is familiar with how to run a session of the Wildsea. Or at least one person who is familiar and willing to help the others with the core mechanics.

Think as a Firefly, Think as a Player

When using the Dragonfly Rules, you have to think as both a Firefly and a Player. This means ensuring that the characters encounter things that are dangerous, difficult, or dramatic. This can feel at odds with playing a character. Consider that you are the Firefly for the other people at the table, while they are your Fireflies.

The Dragonfly's Tools

All of these tools build on top of the Firefly tools found starting on page 194. The tools found here help give more structure to various moving parts in order to manage collaboration between several people.

The Setting Sheets

The Setting Sheets are representations of different elements of the world. They have aspects, similar to characters, that can be used to generate more material for the world. These sheets are shared by all players, and are passed around as necessary.

When you have one of these sheets, you control that element of the setting. This is your opportunity to add colour to the scene by making these elements present. The aspects also act as prompts for elements you can introduce. As a part of the conversation, suggest these aspects. Use them as jumping-off points, but feel free to interpret them in the way that adds the most fun to the game.

Dragonfly Example

Todd, Laura, Kyllian, and Freya are exploring a derelict building they spotted on the waves.

Kyllian - We enter this place. What do we see?

Laura picks up the Creatures, Beasts, and Leviathans sheet. - An old place like this has to have something living in it now. There's an aspect called "A Rush of Life", I'm going to mark the aspect to have the rush appear right now.

Todd - Oh! Remember we encountered those pinwolves in our journey here? Maybe this is their lair.

Laura - Perfect. There is a growling coming from the shadows as dozens of tiny, pin-feet come lunging out at you, Todd.

Dragonfly Whispers

In play, everybody at the table is encouraged to contribute ideas to help determine what happens next. If the table is unsure, select one or two whispers from the Dragonfly Whispers (or alternatively, roll to get random whispers). Use the wording as a creative prompt, and discuss the new element with the other players.

After you use the whispers, remove them from the Dragonfly Whispers. In their place, add new whispers based on the events of your current scene.

Tension Track

At the beginning of your session, create a track with about five boxes. Each time you use an aspect from any of the setting sheets, or whenever something big and dramatic happens in the narrative, mark a box. You may also mark a track after someone rolls a conflict or a disaster. Each time you fill five boxes, something big happens in the world. Consider the aspect that was used that filled the fifth box, and the setting sheet it came from. Add a new story element that demands the characters' attention.

Adjusting the length of the Tension track changes the flow of the game. A longer track will turn things into a slower boil, and give you the opportunity to create a show-stopping moment. A shorter track makes for a more intense session as bigger things will happen more often. Adjust the length of your track to fit your table.

Other Tracks

As a Firefly, it is still your prerogative when to use tracks. Many of the aspects on the Setting Sheet ask you to make a track and mark the first box. Use these tracks to help set the pace of your adventure. Mark boxes when people roll conflicts or disasters, or when it feels dramatically appropriate. Use these tracks to create a sense of pressure and urgency.

When in Doubt, use a "Journey"

Journeys can be used to frame smaller moments. Consider making your goal into a journey using the following steps:

1. **Declare a goal** - Decide what the most immediate goal is for the party.
2. **Create a track** for the goal - a longer track represents a more dangerous, difficult, or dramatic goal.
3. **Ask the other players** to contribute one obstacle that must be overcome OR have a player declare what they are going to do to achieve the goal.
4. **Play a scene** to determine how well it goes - Mark a number of boxes on the journey track based on the outcome of the scene.
5. **Repeat** until the track is filled, or the task abandoned.

Dragonfly Example 2

Todd, Laura, Kyllian, and Freya have just arrived in port in search of Rokko - an old trader who has a chart the party needs.

Freya: We said we needed to find Rokko, so I think this is a good time to use a journey.

Todd: Yeah, that makes sense. So what's our goal?

Freya: I think "Finding Rokko" makes a lot of sense.

Kyllian: I agree. And this sounds like a moderately difficult task, so the track should have maybe five boxes.

Laura: Great. I have an idea for our first obstacle. Rokko is known to hangout in a seedy part of town. Walking around there as an outsider is bound to attract some attention.

Todd: In that case, my character is going to ask around the area, doing my best to blend in with the crowd. Let me build a roll... I rolled a 5 with no doubles.

Kyllian: In that case, you found someone who can tell you more info about Rokko if you play your cards right. As your conflict, I think we should mark the Tension track.

Completing Your Journey

The table may decide that a single roll is appropriate for this part of the journey, or it may turn into a longer scene. As this group plays, they are able to get some information, but it comes at a cost. The group decides to mark the Journey track once to represent the fact that they had some difficulties.

Creating and Playing NPCs

Players should create NPCs as they become a part of the world - just as you would with only one Firefly. To help create consistency when making a new NPC, take an index card, write their name, and come up with two personality traits. Anybody may play this character at any time, using the traits as a guideline for how they should be played. Trade off who is playing the NPC as different characters take the spotlight.

Post-Session Wrap Up

Wrapping up the session and checking in with your fellow players will help make the next session run smoothly. Each player will nominate a Seed- something that came up in play during the session. The Seed could be an NPC, a location, a theme, - anything, really. You should choose something you are interested in exploring more through play. Write each Seed on your playsheet. These will become story elements that you will use to help keep your story cohesive.

Between sessions, come up with an Unsetting Question or a Framing Question that relates to your Seed. Use the answers to develop the Seeds and help give direction to what may happen in the upcoming session.

Seed: Rokko the Trader
Question: You've had a run in with Rokko in the past. Why did it leave a sour taste in your mouth?

Seed: Storms
Question: What was the strangest storm you have ever been in?

Seed: The Observatory
Question: How can you tell that this Observatory is inhabited by unusual creatures?

Additional Tips

It's okay for some details to get lost. Through play, lots of different ideas will be generated. It is natural for some of these details to get lost, while others come into the foreground. Keep those details for later and fold them back into the narrative when it's appropriate. It is also okay if those details don't come back at all. Sharing this creative space ensures that there is unlikely to be a shortage of ideas.

You can randomly determine which setting sheet and aspect to use. There are six setting sheets, and each sheet has six aspects. When you're unsure of which setting piece to use, you can roll 2d6 to randomly choose a setting element and an aspect.

Take advantage of other tools in this book. Use all the tools offered to Fireflies. The Hazards section (page 218) and Reaches (starting on page 274) have lots of material that can be used to help create adventure hooks, and fill out the world.

THE DRAGONFLY SHEET

Created By Ryan Khan

Whispers

Use the whispers below to inspire your adventures. After one is used, remove it and replace it with a whisper based on the previous scene.

6	Uncertain Freedom Shown Tide Shrivelled
5 4	In Shadows, Patiently Bloom and Ripple
3 2 1	Light, Bending Colour Sprayed on Walls

Notes

Tracks

Focus

The Weather Of wind and rain, ice and grit

The Setting Sheets

Any wildsailor worth their salt knows that the weather is not to be ignored. It can be your best friend, and a bitter enemy. While the wildsea holds many mysteries, the weather is fundamentally chaotic. Fundamentally unknowable. The Weather represents a force of nature which can both help and hinder.

Use this sheet to: Create atmosphere, impose a threat, make the weather the focal point of a scene.

Winds of Change

On good days the wind is at your back, on bad ones in your face. Change the direction or the strength of the wind.

Storm's a' Brewin'

There are many different kinds of storms, and almost all of them are bad news when you're on the sea. A storm is coming. Start a track. When it is full, a storm arrives. Mark this aspect to have it appear immediately.

Lost to Time

Where time buries things from the past, nature has a way of dredging things back up. Use the Weather to uncover something ancient, or to cover it back up.

Reprieve

There are times when nature creates something beautiful. Mark to create a wondrous weather phenonmenon. Players can remove a mark of mire.

Hidden by Fog

While weather elements are often dangerous on their own, sometimes they also hide something worse. Create a track - when it is full, something hidden due to weather makes itself known. Mark to have it appear immediately.

Spectral Maelstrom

Violent spectral interference has created a vortex-like phenomenon. Create a track. When it is full, something important is drawn into, or expelled from the maelstrom. Mark this track to have it happen immediately.

Hooks

- A weather anomaly threatens something important.
- A storm washes something ashore in an unfamiliar place.

The Sea Itself Rippling tide of leaves

The Setting Sheets

Whether you're a wildsailor or not, everybody contends with the Wildsea in one way or another. Sailors who prefer to remain alive learn to read the lignin waves quickly. A source of food and resources, it is also a dangerous foe.

Use this sheet to: Demonstrate the perils of the Wildsea, show beauty amidst chaos, force people out of comfort.

From the Deep

The depths of the wildsea hide many dangers and many treasures. Something is springing up from the deep. Start a track - When it is full, the thing appears. Mark this aspect to have the thing be beneficial. Mark this aspect to make this thing less dangerous.

Rootquake

The trees of the sea buckle and snap. The canopy roils, as roots left from the ground. A rootquake threatens the area you are in. Start a track - when it is full, the rootquake hits. Mark this aspect to have it hit immediately.

Rift

The sea drops away and in its place there is just empty space lined with trees. There may or may not be something of interest within the rift.

Bloomtide

The trees begin to bloom and blossom. The air is filled with the scent of flowers. Start a track. When the track is full, bloomtide carries away anything sitting on top of it, and threatens anything below the surface. Mark this aspect to have it arrive immediately.

Dangerous Waves

Describe a feature of this part of the sea that makes it difficult to sail. Progress is halted until a solution can be found. Start a track. When it is full, you have found a way to deal with the feature.

Strange Flora

This part of the sea is made of something other than trees (e.g. mushrooms, flowers, etc). Describe this plantlife, and how it affects the area.

Hooks

- A ship is drifting in the currents. There are signs of life, and flames.
- The fireflies of the sea gather in view. Fireflies point the way to something. What that something is remains to be seen.

The Spectral Realm Echoes, spirits, and the unknown

The Setting Sheets

What little is known about the Spectral Realm comes through rumours, fables, and eyewitness accounts of varying reliability. The home of many answers, and even more questions, it is a place that has piqued the curiosity of more than one wildsailor.

Use this sheet to: Create mysteries, reimagine other elements, add more weird to the world.

Revealed Memories ○-○-○

Something from the Spectral Realm remembers what happened here. Introduce what happened, or the thing that remembers.

Spectral Sieve ○-○-○

This is a place that allows the spectral realm to leak into the material realm. Introduce something from the Spectral Realm. Conversely, indicate that something mundane is missing and has entered the Spectral Realm.

Rend Reality ○-○-○

Interference from the spectral realm has had an effect on this place. Take a setting element and turn it on its head.

Messages from Beyond ○-○-○-○

Something from the Spectral Realm is communicating with the Material Realm, through speech, writing, or other means. Describe the message. Optionally: start a track – when the track is full, the source of the message makes itself known.

Smoke and Mirrors ○-○-○-○

Something about this place is not as it seems. Until more is understood, life is going to be more difficult. Start a track. While the track is being filled, add cut to rolls. When the track is filled, the mystery reveals itself.

Did You See That? ○-○-○-○

Somebody sees a subtle spectral phenomenon. Start a track. Mark the track to have the phenomenon happen again. When it is full, the source is revealed. Mark this aspect to reveal the source immediately.

Hooks

- A phenomenon from the spectral realm changes some people's mood or feelings.
- You have detailed memories relating to this place. You have never been here before.

Beasts & Leviathans A world teeming with life

The Setting Sheets

The Verdancy brought with it a host of strange, new creatures. Life in the wildsea means contending with these creatures as threats and sources of essential materials and goods. Docile fireflies to ancient leviathans punctuate life.

Use this sheet to: Find new fauna, add threats, expand the world.

Wounded Danger ○-○-○

A dangerous creature appears, but it is injured.

Imminent Danger ○-○-○-○

A creature poses an imminent danger.

A Rush of Life ○-○-○

An overwhelming number of creatures approach the area. Start a track. When the track is filled, the creatures arrive. Mark to have them arrive immediately.

It Lurks ○-○-○-○-○

A leviathan lurks unseen in the area. Start a track and mark the first box. Each time a box is marked, describe a detail that demonstrates that the leviathan is nearby. When the track is full, it appears. Mark this aspect to have it appear immediately.

Facade ○-○-○-○

An appearance of a creature you are interacting with is a facade. Start a track – When it is full, the creature's true form is revealed. Mark this aspect to reveal it immediately.

From Death Springs New Life ○-○-○-○

Something that ought to be dead, isn't. Start a track. When it is full, this thing makes itself known. Mark this track to have entity act immediately.

Hooks

- Something unusual is growing from a corpse
- On one hand, you are in a warm place with lots of food. On the other hand, that place is in the belly of a leviathan, and you are the food.

People & Cultures Connected at root - ektus proverb

The Setting Sheets

The Wildsea is full of people, all with their own beliefs and customs. Success as a wildsailor means learning how to navigate these differences, whether through charm, subtly, or through more extreme measures. People and Cultures represent what life looks like now, and the manifold ways people have adapted.

Use this sheet to: Fill the world with interesting people, demonstrate cultures and customs, create interpersonal drama.

Peanut Gallery ○-○-○-○

Whatever it is you're trying to do, others keep getting in the way.

A Keeper of Many Things ○-○-○-○

A collector makes their way by finding the interesting, esoteric, and unusual. Mark to declare one useful resource that this person has access to. Mark to declare a mysterious item this person has in their possession.

Cultures and Fractures ○-○-○-○-○

A group of people in this place have customs that are unfamiliar to you. Describe one way this affects day-to-day life here.

Junction House Blues ○-○-○

Rumours fly wild in junction houses. Describe one such rumour. Mark this track to have it be mostly reliable.

A Place to Call Home ○-○-○-○

You come upon a place where people have settled. Each player describes one element of this settlement. Optionally: start a track - when it is full, someone, or something in this place takes particular notice of your presence here.

Old Building, New Purpose ○-○-○-○-○

A nearby building has fallen into disrepair. Someone or something has repurposed it. Mark this track to reveal the new purpose immediately.

Hooks

- A familiar face threatens to make your life miserable... again.
- A dredger has found the score of a lifetime, but has no way to reach it alone.

Ships, Sailors & Pirates Life on the Horizon

The Setting Sheets

There are almost as many reasons to be out on the rustling waves as there are wildsailors. Some of these folk are just hoping to explore, others have more nefarious aims. No excursion into the wildsea is complete without running into other sailors of some variety.

Use this sheet to: Show the culture of the waves, make travel exciting, demonstrate you need not be a creature to be a monster.

Trade Winds ○-○-○

A trade ship passes by with goods they may be willing to barter with.

Foreboding Flags ○-○-○

At least one ship is coming your way. It is flying a flag that gives you reasons to be worried.

Derelict ○-○-○-○-○

A piece of a ship pokes out from somewhere unusual. There are signs of what happened to the ship.

Friend or Foe ○-○-○-○

A mysterious ship passes you. They are not flying a flag, and their motivations are entirely unknown.

Familiar Sails ○-○-○

A ship you have encountered before crosses your path. The crew of the other ship remember your previous encounter vividly.

Signs of a Threat ○-○-○

You can see evidence that a notorious group has eyes in this part of the sea. Describe the group. Start a track. When it is full, the group has taken notice of your presence. Mark this aspect to have them notice you immediately.

Hooks

- A distress flare can be seen in the distance.
- Two opposing groups are fighting one another. The sound has attracted other company as well.

Glossary of Terms

A

Arconautics - Concentrated weirdness attained by harnessing the wildness of the waves

B

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

D

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

G

Grace (edge) - An edge of dexterity and speed

H

Hacker - A specialist in path-clearing and dealing with the sea's most dangerous plants

High-port - 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

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

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

Lookout - A position on the ship, essential for cautious crews

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

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

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

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

S

Saprekk - The ancient language of the ektus, well-maintained

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

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

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

T

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

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

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

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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Doors, on the whole, were simple. They sat in walls, opened and closed with a push, and sometimes they needed a key. They were... Well, doors were doors. Not much complexity to be found in one.

These were the thoughts that flitted waspishly around Rukoto's mind as he watched his crewmates wrestling with the Forboding Storm's cabin door. They'd been there since sundown, working by firefly-light, and seemed no closer to getting it open.

Theovin, the crew's screw, kept talking about unusual magnetic fields in the lock. Sara, their dredger, was trying to work some pep back into her companion, the scorpion despondent after it's skeleton-key stinger failed them. The undercrew stood just inside the lamp's glow, offering suggestions.

Rukoto wondered whether he should tell them there was a side window sitting open, but decided against it. He didn't want to spoil the surprise.

RULES BREAKDOWN

CHARACTER ELEMENTS

Edges

Grace: Elegance, precision, agility
Iron: Force, determination, willpower
Instinct: Sense, intuition, reaction
Sharps: Logic, wit, planning
Teeth: Savagery, passion, destruction
Tides: Exploration, learning, lore
Veils: Shadows, ciphers, secrecy

Skills

Brace: Defend, determination, immobility
Break: Break, smash, demolish
Concoct: Chemical reactions, essence/crezzer extraction
Cook: Spices, sustenance, meats, fruits, heat
Delve: Explore ruins, bypass locks/traps, identify the past
Flourish: Showmanship, performance, art
Hack: Chop, identify unknown plant hazards, spin tales
Harvest: Forage, identify plants, nurture plants/insects
Hunt: Observe, track, shoot, render specimens
Outwit: Sneak, infiltrate, deceive
Rattle: Mend, maintain, invent
Scavenge: Locate, collect, identify properties and value
Sense: Detect, intuit, react
Study: Discover, record, interpret, decipher
Sway: Convince, argue, threaten
Tend: Heal, calm, communicate with beasts
Vault: Climb, leap, dodge, tumble
Wavewalk: Brachiate, swing, navigate the wilds
age often found on pre-verdant ruins.

Aspects

Consist of a name, a type, a track and a special rule. Mark aspect tracks with a / as they get damaged or X if they are subjected to a permanent Burn (other tracks work the same way when marking progress). A character can have seven in total, not couning temporary aspects.

Languages

Language Ranks: 1 (Smattering), 2 (Knowledge), 3 (Fluency). *Languages can be used to make friends, impress others, gain extra information.*

Low Sour: A mongrel 'common tongue'.
Chthonic: Ancient human tongue.
Saprekk: Thick, rolling ektus tongue.
Gaudimm: Gau language of soft clicks, subtle twitches, and pheromone bursts.
Knock: Hissing, chittering tzelicrae language.
Brasstongue: Clipped and precise trader tongue.
Raka Spit: Rapid patter of hunters and levianthaneers.
Lyre-Bite: Lilting tongue of poets and songwriters.
Old Hand: Sign language.
Signalling: Code language delivered with flags, flares, signal lamps.
Highvin: Primarily written language often found on pre-verdant ruins.

Mires & Drives

Mire: Marked in response to an event you're caught in, something you're forced to do against your judgement or as a consequence of discovering or witnessing something truly disturbing.

If you act contrary to a mire, automatically cut a number of dice equal to the marks on its track.

Drive: Advancing or satisfying a drive lets you choose one of...

- Gain a whisper
- Clear a mark of mire
- Gain a minor milestone (once per session only)
- Gain a major milestone, remove and replace it (once per session only)

SCENE RULES

Action Rolls

Edge (1d6)
+ Skill or Language (up to 3d6)
+ Advantage (up to 2d6)
Advantage includes pieces of the environment, resources, aspects, favourable situations, and helpful assistance - usually 1d6 (2d6 for multiple advantages).
Helping Hands: Two crewmembers working together on the same task choose which provides the edges, advantages, or skill ranks. Both are affected by any negatives that result.

Reading the Dice

Use the highest single die and note if you have doubles. Triples or above only count as doubles.

Action Roll Results

6 - Triumph: Complete success, no drawbacks. Mark/clear a box on a track.
5, 4 - Conflict: Success with a drawback. Usually marks/clears a box.
3, 2, 1 - Disaster: Failure and narrative complication or drawback. Usually doesn't mark/clear a box.
Doubles - Twist: Adds a small, potentially useful twist, suggested by any player. Firefly has final say.

Cut

Removes results after the roll, starting with the highest.
Cut for Difficulty: Firefly lets you know if a roll is particularly difficult.
Cut for Precision: Cut 1 result to aim at a location/part. Declare before roll.
Cut for Impact: Cut for extra Impact. Declare intent before rolling.

Impact

Low: Action is weaker/has less effect, marks less boxes, downgrades power.
Normal: Most actions. Marks one box.
High: More effect/power. Marks an extra box.
Massive: Hugely potent, e.g. ship-scale armament. Marks all boxes in a track.

IN-SCENE COMBAT RULES

Tracking Focus

Narrative dictates the order.
Hijacking Focus: If you hijack a Player's focus, they have to agree first. Focus always returns to whatever it was hijacked from when action is done.

Attacking and Damage

Players usually choose if they inflict damage (and on which track) or an effect. Sometimes it's both. Attacks normally mark 1 track box. Increased Impact or a more effective Damage Type marks an extra box.

Damage Types

Blunt: Crushing - stun and break
Keen: Cutting - slice and bleed
Spike: Piercing - penetrate and impale
Hewing: Chopping - split and break
Serrated: Sawing - rip and tear
Toxin: Poison - sicken and confuse
Acid: Corrosive - melt and sear
Blast: Explosive - stun and shatter
Volt: Electrical - shock and paralyze
Frost: Cold - slow and freeze
Salt: Crystalline - dry and banish
Flame: Burning - melt and inspire fear

Range

Close Quarters (CQ) or Long Range (LR)
Using LR in CQ combat (or vice versa) inflicts a Cut.

Attack Roll Results

6 - Triumph
Powerful blow. Deal damage and might inflict an effect.
5, 4 - Conflict
Attack deals damage and maybe associated effect, but you might take some damage, suffer an effect, lose a resource or be put in a less favourable position.
3, 2, 1 - Disaster
Attack misses or does no damage. You definitely take some damage or an effect, and might lose a resource or be put in a less favourable position too.
Doubles - Twist... or Critical
Unexpected narrative effect/critical with increased impact.

Defending

Players roll to defend, opponents do not roll to attack.

Defence Roll Results

6 - Triumph
Completely avoid the threat (though some powerful opponents may have aspects that make even a triumph dangerous).
5, 4 - Conflict
Avoid the worst but take damage, an effect, a negative change in position, or destruction (or temporary denial) of a resource.
3, 2, 1 - Disaster
Take damage, and likely associated effect and loss of resource or position as well.
Doubles - Twist... or Counter
Unexpected narrative effect, or counter with a mark of damage against them (if in range).

Resistance, Immunity, & Weakness

- Resistance reduces damage by one mark, can reduce or eliminate injury.
- Immunity is full protection.
- Weakness increases appropriate damage by one mark. Injuries may be more detrimental or last longer.

Stacking: If you have two resistances to a certain type of damage, count that as an immunity. If you have an immunity and a weakness, treat it as a resistance. If you have a weakness and a resistance, they cancel each other out.

Injuries

Caused by hazards (such as monsters), disease, large amounts of damage, etc. They might:

- Force a Cut on some actions.
- Take away a Skill or sense.
- Add negative effects to actions.

Injuries are represented by temporary tracks.

MONTAGE RULES

Narrative is condensed into **Tasks**.
Required Resources still count as Advantages, including teamwork.

Task Types

Exploration

Tracking down individuals/services, chasing down leads, indulging curiosity, gaining local knowledge, discovering routes and options. Uses various Skills.

Acquisition

Acquires Resources in appropriate areas with three approaches. Use Acquisition Results table.
Scavenging: Salvage.
Hunting: Specimens.
Gathering: Specimens.

Acquisition Results

6 - Triumph
Gain a solid untainted resource.
5, 4 - Conflict
Gain a resource with a negative tag.
3, 2, 1 - Disaster
Resource not found or ruined during collection.
Doubles - Twist
Gain a resource with a unique or positive tag suggested by you or another player.

Sample Resource Tags

(Salvage) Sturdy: Repairs extra damage mark.
(Salvage) Ornate: Has far more worth.
(Salvage) Broken: Almost useless.
(Specimen) Pure/Medicinal: Heals extra mark.
(Specimen) Heirloom: Has far more worth.
(Specimen) Rotten: Makes you sick if you eat it.
(Whisper) Echoing: Use twice before fading.
(Whisper) Hungry: Removes an element of the world, rather than adding one.
(Chart) Faded: Almost impossible to read.
(Any) Pre-Verdant: Ancient.

Creation

Combines Resources to create temporary Aspects for self or others. Each temporary Aspect will have a name, track, useful ability, and is used up forever when the track is filled. Uses the Creation Roll Results table.
Concocting: Requires 2 Resources (any type). Makes a related potion.
Cooking: Requires 2 Specimens. Makes a full meal with related property.
Crafting: Requires 2 Salvage. Makes a piece of useful temporary Gear.

Creation Roll Results

6 - Triumph
Recipient gains temporary benefit related to resources used.
5, 4 - Conflict
Recipient gains temporary 2-track aspect with downsides, or no downside, but it doesn't quite do what was intended.
3, 2, 1 - Disaster
Creation might be a bizarre ornament/culinary curiosity, but gives no benefits.
Doubles - Twist
Creation has small, unexpected benefit in addition to the usual result.

Recovery

Each option requires a Resource or safe, appropriate environment (allowing the Resource to be spent and automatically take the Conflict result if desired). Uses the Recovery table:
Healing: Requires an appropriate Specimen. Clears marks from Traits or animals.
Repairing: Requires appropriate Salvage. Clears marks from Gear or mechanicals.
Relaxing: Requires an appropriate Whisper. Clears marks from Mires.

Recovery Roll Results

6 - Triumph
Heal two marks of damage to an aspect, ship rating, injury track or mire.
5, 4 - Conflict
Heal one mark of damage to an aspect, ship rating, injury track or mire.
3, 2, 1 - Disaster
Add an extra mark of damage to an aspect, ship rating, injury track or mire.
Doubles - Twist
You don't consume the resource used to carry out your recovery.

Projects

Fall outside the timescale of Actions or Tasks and take several or more of the latter. To mark them:

- **Time**: Mark a box for each appropriate span of effort or study.
- **Rolls**: Roll as per normal Actions.
- **Resources**: Might be required and might help the process.
- **Aid**: Others may offer help or expertise.

JOURNEY RULES

Sequence

Departure: Set destination, run a Montage, Scene, or Checklist of preparations.
Progress & Encounters: Crewmembers can choose to take turns At the Helm and On Watch. Boxes are marked on the Firefly's secret Progress, Risk, Pathfinding (if someone is Cartographizing) and Riot (if poor leadership, crew treatment, or excessive danger might bring mutiny) tracks. FIlling a Progress track ends the journey. Filling a Risk track means a powerful foe or threat has found you. Filling a Pathfinding track provides the cartographer with a relevant Chart. Filling a Riot track results in potential mutiny.
Arrival: Arrival at the final destination when the Progress track is complete.

At the Helm [Essential]

Choose an option:

- **Cut a Path**: Travel at decent speed, as safely as possible. Mark a single Progress box. When the Watch Roll is made, you can choose to Encounter or steer clear easily.
- **Forge Ahead**: Swift but rough passage. Mark 2 Progress boxes. When the Watch Roll is made, the ship usually blunders into an encounter or avoids it with some damage.
- **Drop Anchor**: Stop to rest, no Progress, minimum fear of interruption. Undercrew take watch and the crew can take a Montage.
- **Challenging Terrain**: This can force a Ratings Roll to progress.

Ratings Rolls

Used to avoid obstacles, in tricky maneuvers, to progress in a chase, etc.

Ratings Roll Results

6 - Triumph

Bypass the obstacle safely.

5, 4 - Conflict

Bypass the obstacle but mark 1 Rating damage.

3, 2, 1 - Disaster

Fail to bypass the obstacle and mark 1 Rating damage.

Doubles - Twist

An unexpected event in addition to the result.

On Watch [Essential]

Choose an option:

- **Make a Discovery**: Choose a Chart, add a Whisper, interpret. Both are then lost.
- **Watch the Waves**: Make a random roll on Watch Roll Results.

Threat

The Firefly secretly rolls 1d6 (2d6, take the highest result if the crew has a Chart of the area) to determine the Threat level of any Encounters: 6 is a danger-free opportunity; 5 or 4 is a hazardous encounter with a useful pay-off; a 3, 2 or 1 indicates that there's an immediate danger with little pay-off. The Firefly usually gives clues to the level of any threat.

Watch Roll Results

6 - Peace

Montage, Meeting, Tall Tale (gain a Whisper), Tree Shanty, Undercrew Issue, Reflection (heal Mire)

5, 4 - Order

Nearby Ship, Outpost, Survivor Needing Rescue, Wreck or Ruin, Cache of Cargo/Supplies, Conspiracy

3, 2, 1 - Nature

Weather, Natural Feature, Wonder (heal Mire), Horror, Unsettled Landfall, True Wilds

Tending the Engine [Optional]

Choose an option:

- **Tend to the Engine**: Immediately hijack focus if there are any problems relating to the engine to attempt an instant fix/bypass.
- **Overload the Engine**: Uses a resource suitable for fuel. Increase impact on a roll to take advantage of the ship's temporary power/speed, or mark an additional box on the journey track.
- **Muffle the Engine**: Uses a soft, muffling resource. Increase impact on a roll made to take advantage of the ship's quieter profile or stealthily leave an area without making a roll (if you haven't been spotted).

Cartographising [Optional]

Slowly create a chart of the area you're travelling through - every time you find a particularly important landmark the Pathfinding track created by the Firefly gets marked. When the track is fully marked you gain a chart - add it to your resources and name it.

Watching the Weather [Optional]

Roll 1d6 on Weather-Watching Results.

Weather-Watching Results

6 - Clear Skies

Weather clears.

5, 4 - Continuation

Weather continues as it is.

3, 2, 1 - A Change for the Worse

Driving rain/hail (lowers visibility), blazing sunshine (potential heathstroke), living storm or bizarre weather phenomenon.

Encounters

Avoiding an Encounter: May or may not require a Ratings Roll.

Engaging an Encounter

The options are:

- **Choice**: The crew chooses from options provided by the Firefly.
- **Challenge**: A threat to the ship. Player At the Helm may need to make Ratings Rolls.
- **Scene Encounter**: Usually when the players leave the ship.

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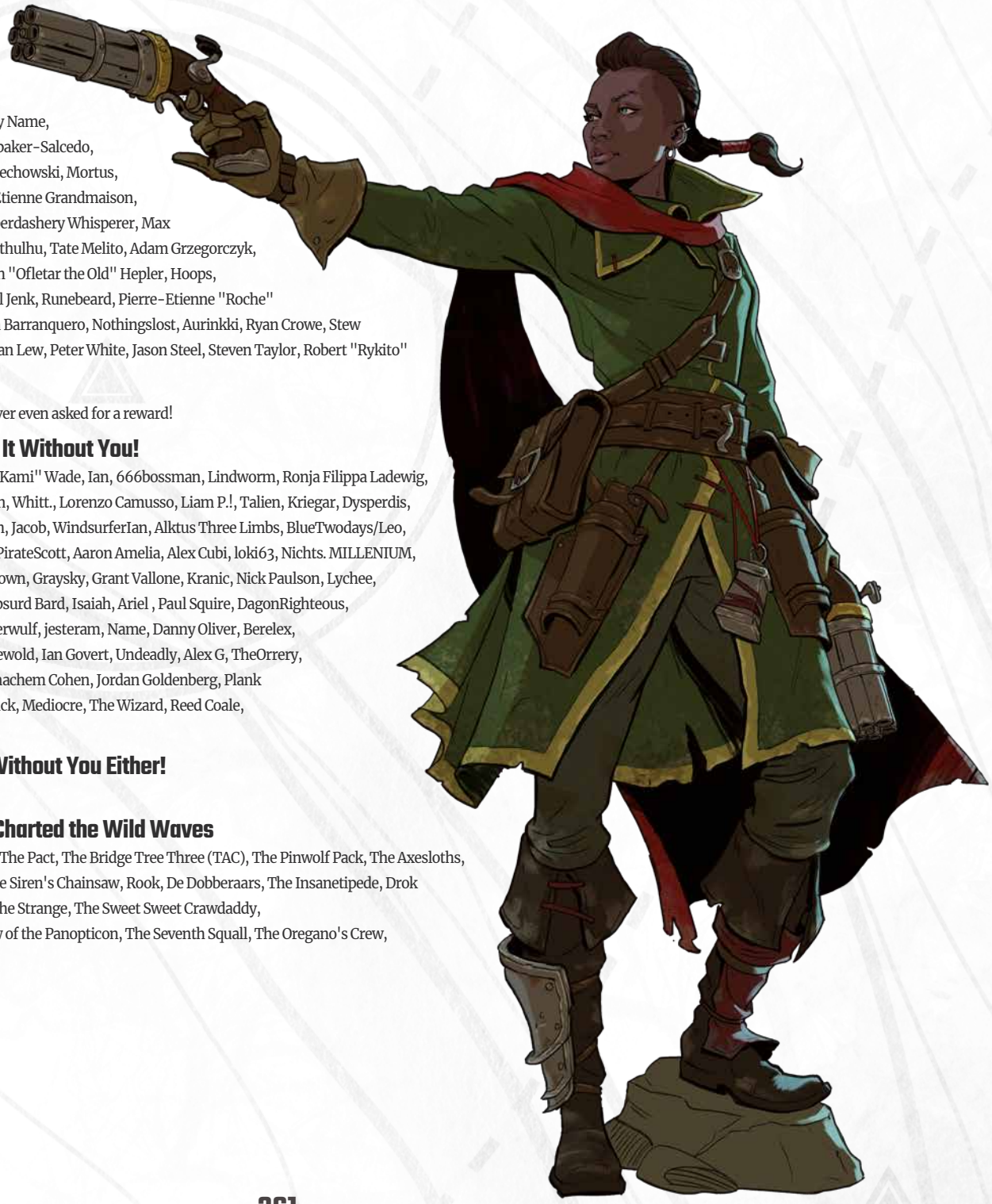

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THE WILDSEA

OFFICIAL CHARACTER SHEET

HOW TO PLAY

TO ROLL

Edge	(1d6)
Skill	(Up to 3d6)
Advantage	(Up to 2d6)

RESULTS

Triumph	[6]
Conflict	[5/4]
Disaster	[3/2/1]
Twist	[Doubles]

BACKGROUND

Name:_____

Player:_____

Bloodline:_____

Origin:_____

Post:_____

Other Notes:

MILESTONES

MAJOR

MINOR

DRIVES

MIRES

EDGES

Grace ○	Iron ○	Instinct ○
Sharps ○	Teeth ○	Tides ○
Veils ○	○	○

SKILLS

Brace ○○○	Hack ○○○	Sense ○○○
Break ○○○	Harvest ○○○	Study ○○○
Concoct ○○○	Hunt ○○○	Sway ○○○
Cook ○○○	Outwit ○○○	Tend ○○○
Delve ○○○	Rattle ○○○	Vault ○○○
Flourish ○○○	Scavenge ○○○	Wavewalk ○○○

LANGUAGES

Low Sour ○○○	Raka Spit ○○○
Chthonic ○○○	Lyre-Bite ○○○
Saprekk ○○○	Old Hand ○○○
Gaudimm ○○○	Signalling ○○○
Knock ○○○	Highvin ○○○
Brasstongue ○○○	○○○

RESOURCES

SALVAGE

SPECIMENS

WHISPERS

CHARTS

ASPECTS

NAME — Trait/Gear/Companion

Details

NAME — Trait/Gear/Companion

Details

NAME — Trait/Gear/Companion

Details

NAME — Trait/Gear/Companion

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TEMPORARY TRACKS

NAME — Benefit/Injury/Track

Details

NAME — Benefit/Injury/Track

Details

NAME — Benefit/Injury/Track

Details

THE WILDSEA

OFFICIAL SHIP SHEET

NAME

RATINGS

- ARMOUR
- SEALS
- SPEED
- SAWS
- STEALTH
- TILT

DESIGN

SIZE

FRAME

HULL

BITE

ENGINE

CONDITIONS

STAKES

USED / TOTAL

REPUTATION

FITTINGS

MOTIFS/ADDITIONS/ROOMS

ARMAMENTS

OUTRIDERS

UNDERCREW

NAME — Officer/Gang/Pack

Details

NAME — Officer/Gang/Pack

Details

NAME — Officer/Gang/Pack

Details

NAME — Officer/Gang/Pack

Details

NAME

Details

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