



The Crow's Nest #0

Contents

Siren Songs	2
Secret Societies	3
Islanders of Kanuba	4
<i>Ngali the Gun</i>	7
in focus	8

Production Manager

Jim Pinto

Infiltrators

**Alexander Black
Robin Lake
Kevin Wilson**

Cover Art

William "the man" O'Connor

Interior Art

**Cris Dornaus
Carl Frank
Val Mayerik**

Publishing

John Zinser

Montaigne Magere

Maureen Yates

Mail Correspondence

**the Crow's Nest/AEG
4045 Guasti Road, 212
Ontario, CA 91761**

copyright 1999

published by

Alderac Entertainment Group

- Siren Songs -

Often the first page of a newsletter is dedicated to a big hearty welcome and words of a great future. Today, I'll spare you from such sentiment and get right to why we're all here. Plunder.

Seriously.

Those of you that are familiar with AEG know we have a great future ahead of us. Like *The Legend of the Five Rings RPG* AEG created stories and involved players like no other game company ever had before. With tournaments that permanently affected the game world, AEG enticed players to fall in love with their favorite Clans. The amount of devotion seen at the Day of Thunder in 1997 is like no other single event in gaming.

7th Sea promises more.

The Pirate angle of *7th Sea* is a key element to the CCG. The stories of the Nations ills are discussed in full color in the GM's Guide to *7th Sea*. But the clandestine actions of the Secret Societies are only available to a few. Members of the 7th Sea Secret Societies will do more than earn free promo cards or tabulate tournament points. Members will have more information than is available in RPG sourcebooks and on the web pages. The Secret Societies of Théah are communal and vital to AEG's storylines. By joining, you can affect more than just card text and faction powers.

Stick around and you'll see what we're talking about.

Enjoy the game.



Sometimes when you read a magazine or newsletter, there are photos of the important people on the project. But not always.

Think for yourself. Join the Rilasciare.



Sophia's Daughters

"The puppet never sees the strings that make it dance."

— Duchess Anne Shallott

Sophia's Daughters are more than just a woman's cult hoping to bring equal rights to Théah's "fairer sex". They are a veiled political machine, maneuvering Théah's men in directions they could never hope to perceive. Using boarding and finishing schools, they test and train young women in matters covert and clandestine, then place them next to men in positions of power — to point them in the proper direction.

They also use the merchant guilds (particularly the Jenny's Guild) to keep women safe and help lower-class women to better themselves through earnest work and diligence. They support Queen Elaine, have powerful allies in Vodacce and placed young Ketheryna in Ussura — after all, the Gaius's control is tenuous at best.

The Daughters have been known to use magical means to further their goals. They use Glamour to fascinate and beguile the weak-willed, while the advantages of Porté allow them to pass secret orders and Sorte to manipulate the strands of fate to their advantage. It is rumor they have youth rejuvenating potions.

Each member of the society is required to keep a detailed journal, sending copies to the nunneries (also controlled by the Daughters), where they are assimilated and organized into their great library. Hundreds of Daughters work to compile and catalog these journals that comprise one of the most accurate recordings of history in the world, completely hidden from the prying eyes of men. The *Rilasciare* make use of these records from time to time in exchange for other secrets.

Vendel League

"We are the single most important force in Théah. Not economic, not military, not political, not national... the single most important force."

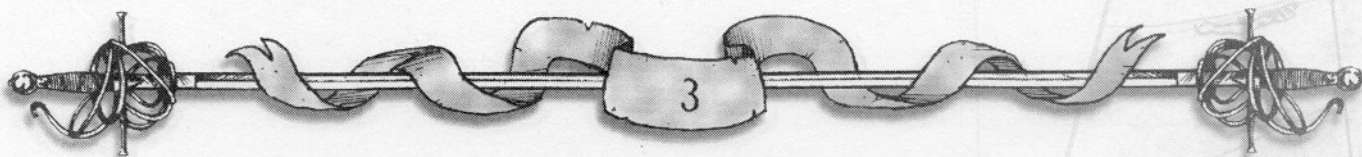
— Master Red

The Vendel League is not a secret. The League does not hide in alleyways, or scuttle around in dark harbors waiting for illegal shipments. It is a vocal, public agency with a very public agenda; the complete and utter control of Théah's economy.

Vendel Leaguers no doubt are aware of the animosity and conflict within their own nation. But the future of a nation, and for that matter all of Théah, is wrapped in the very heart of commerce. Not only are the merchants concerned for the nation's fate, but so are statesmen, nobles, and privateers all around the world. Merely holding a seat or chair on the League is not enough.

Control of the guilds, fluctuation of market prices, influxes or droughts in mercantile wares, and the organization of craftsman and laborers are the results of the machinations of the Vendel League. Val Mokka (the League's present leader) is a strong proponent for doing whatever it takes to secure the future endeavors of the Vendel. Profiteers and mercenaries are all supporters of the Vendel League because of the "freedom" associated with their way of life.

The Vendel League controls 9 Chairs which can never be sold, 16 seats which are never auctioned, but given as gifts and leverage. The remains 75 seats are auctioned in five years intervals and represent an important social stratum that the Vendel adhere to.



Prologue

The world of Théah is more diverse than seven nations, more potent than six warring pirate fleets, and larger than any four prophets. Beyond the boundaries of the sea coasts lie hundreds of islands and uncharted lands that only the bravest of sailors dare seek. The existence of such lands developing independent of the great continent suggests a part of history that even the Explorer's society has trouble explaining. Yet, beyond the mighty walls of the Church and beyond the grasp of the greedy merchants, inhabited islands have scattered themselves across the great seas and oceans of Théah.

Kanuba

Kanuba is a large island far to the southwest of Castille, near the equator, in an area known as the Dead Tropics. The climate is very hot and humid, and the people who live there have dark skins, as well as some very unusual beliefs. Eisen and Avalon settlers first came across Kanuba in 1665, and since then have integrated with the existing society, learning the native language and the ways of the Kanu.

Kanu have dark brown or black skin, short black hair, and wide noses. In addition, they are several inches shorter on average than most Theans. Despite their size, Kanu Heroes receive a +1 Brawn as their Nationality Trait Bonus. In addition, they may purchase the Keen Senses and Small Advantages for 1 point each. Kanu

THE ISLANDERS OF KANUBA

PRIMITIVE ISLANDERS AMIDST A SEA OF BARBARIANS AND THIEVES

learn Théan languages according to the Eisen language chart, adding 1 to the cost of each language. Other Theans may learn the Kanu language as though it were Crescent.

The Kanu have friendly dispositions, with an easygoing manner. They have few taboos — the one major exception being that when

their gods are spoken of, it must be in a respectful whisper, and Nul must always be spoken of first. They are known to form strong friendships, and many of them have left the island to see the world, now that the settlers have given them the opportunity and curiosity to do so. However, no matter how far from home they travel, the island always calls them back — eventually. Besides, for the natives, there is little to compare with the quiet tropical paradise of Kanuba, so returning home is not a chore.

Opah: Lan and Nal

The settlers have gradually learned that the Kanu believe that all objects are bound up with *opah* — either *nal* (curses) or *lan* (blessings). Nothing is neutral as far as they're concerned. This belief extends beyond religious practice and is integrated into every aspect of their lives; even fighting.

Kanu believe that if a sword misses several times in a row, it is cursed and should be discarded. If it consistently hits, it is blessed and should be jealously guarded. Certain members of the tribe get more out of these opah

than others, and anyone who shows a particular talent for coaxing the opah to life is known as a *Opahkung*. Originally, the Eisen misinterpreted this word as “Father King”, but gradually realized that its meaning was closer to “Fetter Man” or “Man of Bindings”. In order to play an Opahkung Hero, you must purchase Opah Sorcery, explained below.

Opah Sorcery (10 points, Kanu only)

The Hero with Opah Sorcery is known as an Opahkung — a shaman able to call upon the *opah* in an object. While curses and blessings affect every item an Opahkung touches, *opah* is most evident in weaponry. GMs may wish to develop rules of their own for mundane items and events in the Opahkung’s life.

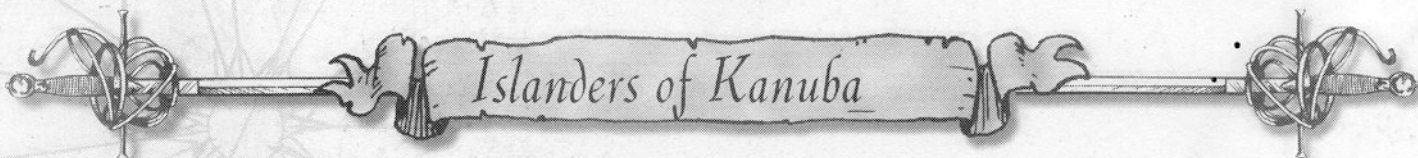
In combat, when an Opahkung (and only an Opahkung) uses a weapon, he must keep track of the number of times it hits and misses. For every 5 hits scored on an enemy, the weapon receives 1 Lan. For every 5 times it misses an enemy, the weapon receives 1 Nal. A curse will cancel out one blessing, and vice versa, so that a sword with 3 Lan drops to 2 Lan instead of receiving a Nal.

New weapons start out with 1 Lan. A weapon with 1 Lan that receives 1 Nal has 1 Nal, and vice versa. A weapon must always have at least 1 Lan or Nal. A missile weapon such as a gun or bow cannot accumulate Lan

or Nal, but a projectile such as an arrow or spear could. Opahkung (and only Opahkung) receive the following modifiers from using a weapon charged with Lan or Nal:

- *A sorcerer (not a shaman, such as other Opahkung) struck by this weapon loses the ability to use any Sorcerous Knacks for one Phase per Lan or Nal, or until the end of the Scene, whichever comes first. This is always counted from the most recent hit, and is not cumulative. Items treated with Lærdom magic are affected as if they were sorcerers when struck by this weapon, and any runes on the object that are currently active, deactivate.*
- *For every 20 Lan or Nal, the Hero adds or subtracts 1 to his Attack Rolls when using this weapon. This modifier may not exceed the Hero’s Resolve.*
- *For every 50 Lan or Nal, the TN to break this weapon is increased by 5.*
- *When affected by sorcery while holding the weapon, the Hero may spend 1 Drama die to resist that magic. The Rank of the Sorcerous Knack affecting you must be less than or equal to the Lan or Nal invested in this weapon, divided by 50.*
- *For every 100 Lan, the Hero begins each Story with 1 additional Drama die. For every 100 Nal, the GM begins each Story with 1 additional Drama die. This Drama die is only usable if the Hero is touching*





the weapon. This cannot more than double the Hero's or GM's starting Drama dice.

In addition, while holding a weapon invested with Nal or Lan, the Opahkung has crackling streams of energy run up and down the weapon and the arm he's holding it in, and glowing in his eyes. The energy is white if the weapon has Lan, and black if it has Nal.

The Kanu Creation Myth

The old man began to speak of days long past as his people gathered around him in the moonlight. "At first, there was only the child-god Lah, the Earth. He was frightened, because he was all by himself, so he began to cry. He cried for a long time, and his tears became Nul, the Waters. Nul was born old and cranky, and Lah's howls kept him awake. Finally, he cried out to Lah, 'Why won't you be quiet, little boy?' and Lah said to him, 'It is dark, and I am frightened, old man.'

"Nul looked up, and there was only darkness, so he created Mata, the sky. He gave to her the sun, the moon, and the stars. They sparkled so brightly above Lah that he was finally able to go to sleep. 'At last, the boy is silent,' thought Nul to himself, and he closed his eyes to go to sleep as well.

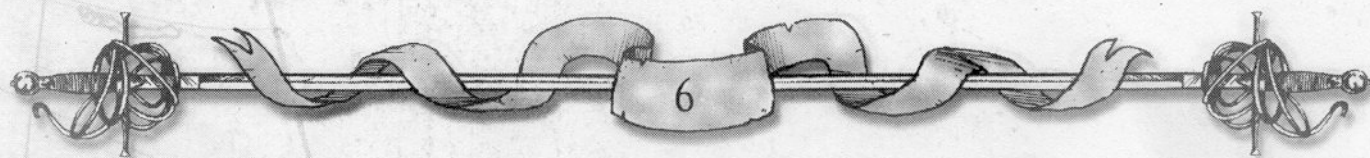
"Mata looked down at Nul and Lah, and saw that everyone else was going to sleep. She did not want to be alone, so she shined the moon and the sun in Nul's eyes and shouted, 'Old man! Wake up. Keep me company!' With a snarl, Nul awoke once more and Mata was glad for his presence. So glad, that she never let him go to sleep again. That is why the Earth sleeps and is still, while the Sky and Waters move about. And that it is why Nul is so angry with everyone. For you see, Mata never lets him sleep."

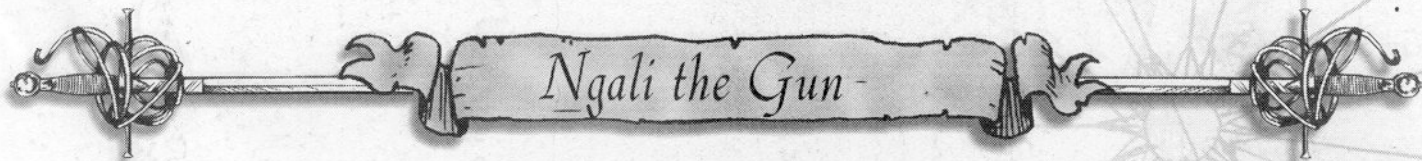
Geography

The Island of Kanuba is some 20 miles east and west, by 18 miles north and south, forming a near circle (there are no bays on Kanuba). The island's outer edge is some 50 to 100 yards of sand. The gentle slop insures that large ships cannot get too close as even one mile from the island, the shelf of sand is just 40 feet below the water line. Visitors to the island can only reach the island by row boats, anchoring larger ships about one to two miles from the coast. Stone jetties are being built by Eisen and Avalon architects to improve docking to the island, but nothing to date seems to make the situation better.

The island slopes gently up from the water to a lush tropical forest and series of natural springs. The interior of the island houses most of the Islanders, with most families respectful enough to keep a large distance from the other homes, giving the look that the island is not heavily populated. However, a recent estimate by a Eisen scientist puts the population of Kanuba near 5000, a rather large number for a society dedicated to fishing, gathering, and slash and burn agriculture.

"They are doing something right," quotes Warren Abbotsford of the Explorer's society. "Kanu enjoy a very primitive, relaxed life-style by Théan standards. Work is a necessity and does not dominate their lives. Many see this as lazy, but most of the Islanders just smile when they hear this. In fact, they have no word for 'lazy' in Kanuba, as well as other words we take for granted. I find it taxing to talk to them at times. They seem willing to share as well, but never take from our food stores. I've concluded that they do not have much of a taste for anything other than fish, vegetables, and fruit. Odd little savages." 





Ngali the Gun

by Kevin Wilson

The seafront tavern was dim and stank of alcohol and other, less pleasant smells, but there were voices in it this night filled with the wonder of a child who has seen his first rainbow. A crowd of fishermen and sailors, typically gruff, unfriendly folk, were gathered around the feet of a man with long unkempt hair and dark, rich skin, like the bitter chocolate occasionally imported from the tropics.

A fisherman sitting at the stranger's knee pressed a cup of cider into his hand, and he drank from it gratefully. The man looked around at his fidgeting audience, cleared his throat, and took another sip before speaking in the strange, musical accent that, along with his remarkable skin, had convinced them to hear his tale.

"My name is Ngali the Gun. I am the third child of Kabata and Manu, both catchers of fish. I hail from the island of Kanuba, which I doubt any of you have ever heard of. It was not so long ago that I was terrified of the sea, who we of my island know as the god Nul. Only with the coming of your enormous ships and the tales of the many places far over Nul's back convinced me to go on a sea voyage, so here I am today in front of you."

He paused and took another sip of cider here, looking thoughtful. "Ah, but I have promised you the story of how I got my name, and not the history of my home, have I not?" Murmurs of agreement rustled through the room, and Ngali smiled. Some fish had two legs, but he could catch them in his nets as easily as the rest. "Of course, it would be much easier to tell the story if only

that delicious smelling stew were not distracting my empty belly." Quickly, a bowl of stew, and a piece of bread were set before him. Unlike his brethren, Ngali liked the Théan meats. He was sure he would miss it when he returned home. "My thanks. Now, to the story."

His eyes, black as midnight, glittered as he leaned over them, extending his arms. "My name was once simply Ngali, but three days after your ships landed on Kanuba, my life was changed. I was walking with one of your people along the beach – a man named Tom, when he showed me a strange stick. I asked him what it was, and he smiled at my innocence, and told me it was a gun. I then asked him what it did, and he pointed at a bird, saying 'Watch the bird, Ngali. I will show you.' Then he raised the stick to his shoulder, looked down its length, and pulled back on part of the stick."

Ngali once again took a sip of the stew. He smiled knowing that the men liked his story enough to wait.

"There was a clap of thunder, and I looked up at Mata the sky, certain that she was about to kill us with her spears. When I looked back down, the bird was dead. It had a hole in it, and I was confused, but Tom said that the gun had thrown a tiny spear at the bird so quickly that I could not see it.

"I gave him no peace then, asking him always about the gun, until he finally gave it to me, saying that I must ask no more questions. Now, because I was the first Kanu with a gun, I became known as Ngali the Gun. That is my story, and it is true." He smiled at them. "Now, let me eat my stew, and I will tell you the tale of the time Nul drank my father and only gave him back after I shot his waters with my gun." Smiling at the enthralled men, and how simple it was to amuse them, Ngali ate his stew.

