
A PERILOUS VOYAGE



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Rumours & Hooks

Word about the docks is *Maddie Croke*, Captain of the privateer ship *Gale Cutter*, is seeking hardened mercenaries for a trade voyage across *Lake Argos*.

Bad Blood

A Perilous Voyage is a water based side trek that occurs whilst the party is sailing to reach another adventure location.

When the side trek begins, the party has booked several days passage aboard the *Gale Cutter*, a carrack (large, pirate like vessel, with 2d6+20 crew) operated by privateer *Captain Croke* and her quartermaster *Barnabus*. The party departs *Port Brax* on the western side of *Lake Argos*, headed for eastern shores, a voyage of 2-3 days (weather depending), where some lost ruin or other unrelated adventure hook awaits.

Unfortunately for all concerned, a terrible storm almost sinks the vessel 24 hours from port. When the storm ends (ideally at night or pre-dawn), the crew emerge from battened down hatches to discover the body of a bizarre sea monstrosity tangled in damaged rigging.

Seemingly dead, the abomination's presence has tainted the ship, contaminating it with a horrific parasite; a quasi-sentient virus of the *First Age* that spreads mutation and madness.

The adventure then proceeds on a timer, with certain events triggering until the party either destroys the virus and its infected hosts, or they succumb in the attempt.

Weathering the Storm

After twelve hours of darkening skies, fierce winds and flashing lightning, a terrible storm is unleashed across the vast lake. Ten metre waves relentlessly hammer the *Gale Cutter*, forcing all hands below deck and the hatches sealed.

Efforts to safeguard the ship, whilst being tossed around in the hull, require a *Luck* (Con) save to avoid 1d2 Con loss due to exhaustion or injury. The check is made at advantage if the PCs take precautions to minimise their risk of injury.



As the storm subsides, when the waves no longer crash onto the deck, characters in the mess (Area 4) notice a black fluid dripping through the boards above. The fluid is similar to oil (does not mix with water), but is warm. Some NPCs in the mess (and any PCs that took shelter there) are exposed to the airborne virus at this time.

There are 1d6+1 crew in the area who become infected with the virus. Any PCs require a *Luck* (Con) save to avoid contamination.

The Body

After a few hours, the storm abates, allowing the crew and passengers to return topside. The deck is in disarray, but more concerning is the limp body of a bizarre looking lifeform, tangled in torn rigging on the port side of the forecastle.

The creature is approximately 11 ft long, bulbous, rubbery white flesh spotted with hard nodules. The body is covered with smooth (suckerless) tentacles, the head reminiscent of a giant catfish. Black blood oozes from the monster's mouth, forming a large pool (and dripping into the Mess in Area 4).

The monster is almost, but not completely, dead. Any attempt to move it causes it to latch onto nearby humans with its tentacles (3 attacks, +8 to hit), before pulling them in close (Str contest vs Str 19), and vomiting black blood over them (automatic infection). The abomination then shudders and dies.

Closer inspection of the corpse suggests it died due to air exposure, or perhaps some form of internal injury (most of the blood comes from the mouth/throat, other open wounds are minor cuts). The curious nature of the blood is also revealed (black, oil like quality). If the blood is kept in a jar or vial, after an hour it manifests a strange bubbling quality, as if trying to escape its confines. In another 1d4 hours, the blood turns ashen grey and "dies".

Cutting the beast open autopsy style reveals the creature is almost drained of blood, despite no obvious cause (Int (Apothecary) check). On a great success, the PC also locates three tiny eggs

in what appears to be a redundant bowel. The eggs contain embryos in the form of (i) a similar monstrosity, (ii) a gilled bird with tentacles instead of legs, and (iii) a starfish like mass bearing five eel headed appendages.

Virus Events

After the body is discovered, the following timeline unfolds, subject to the PCs' actions and random encounters. A *Virus Event* occurs every few hours (GM discretion).

VIRUS EVENTS	
+2 hrs	A nest of rats mutates and attacks a random PC (see Random Encounter 6).
+1d3 hrs	1d3+1 of the crew, <i>Womat, Eisen, Lo Mai</i> and <i>Juggers</i> (who were in Area 4 during the storm, or moved the corpse/scrubbed the deck) are infected, and begin exhibiting madness (see Madness table). One of them destroys the rowboats in the forecastle with an oil fire (whispering "into the flames" over and over).
+1d3 hrs	Infection spreads to 50% of the crew, all of whom exhibit madness. If the original 1d4+1 infected are still alive, they suffer a mutation (see Mutation table).
+1d4 hrs	A mutiny occurs. The infected, now composing 75% of the crew, attempt to seize control of the ship. If <i>Captain Croke</i> or any officers live, they barricade themselves in Area 8, barring the door.
+2 hrs	All infected are mutating and take control of the ship. The entire crew is infected unless the PCs somehow stem the tide.
+1d3 hrs	The infected are now more virus than man, incapable of sailing the ship. The <i>Gale Cutter</i> careens off course (see End Game).
+1d3 hrs	The virus achieves its final iteration and merges into a single abomination. The monster tears the boat apart before sinking beneath the waves.

Guarding against Infection

PCs might come up with various ways of protecting against infection, including quarantining themselves, cleansing the infected with fire, wearing face masks, etc.

The virus is spread by contact and air vectors, but PCs taking precautions gain advantage on any saves. A PC that successfully resists need not make another save until re-exposed to the virus after 4 hours has passed (or other period determined by the GM).

A PC forced to swallow any part of an infected (blood, saliva, severed finger, etc) automatically contracts the disease.

Madness

NPCs suffer a Pervasive madness after the first few hours. A PC may make a Will check to postpone lunacy until the next Virus Event. Each check after the first suffers a cumulative -1 penalty. If madness occurs, roll 1d10:

MADNESS	
1	<i>"I hear my blood coursing inside my veins. Do you hear it too? Hmm, now that I listen closer, I sense the squeezing and squelching of your organs. You have a loud liver, landlubber."</i>
2	<i>"The wood of this ship is utterly delicious. Particularly this patch where the sea creature's blood split. I must consume it. Who has taken my whittling blade, you pack of dogs?"</i>
3	<i>"Why should I bother conversing with any of you lumpy fleshsacks? The change is upon me, I ascend to a higher form!"</i>
4	<i>"The mists are the ghosts of sailors past, don't ye know? We must know this, here on this boat. We will be joining them soon enough."</i>

5	<i>"One of us. One of us. One of us" (whispering to self, nodding).</i>
6	<i>"Ye know, I cut off part of the beast before they burnt it/threw it overboard/etc. It is most pleasant when roasted. You should try some. You must try some. I insist."</i>
7	<i>"The sun burns my eyes, the wind grates my skin. How can you stand it here above deck? I must get below. As low, and as deep, as I can."</i>
8	<i>"Know ye this: our skin is alive. So too our hearts, our lungs; every part of us. Yea especially that part. They have their own thoughts, of a kind. Desires, hates. They have been sleeping, aye, for the longest time. But they are waking, and I fear we will not like what they have to say."</i>
9	<i>"There is something very wrong with Barnabus. Look it! See how he skitters across deck. Like a crab? His hands: pinchy. Like a crab. Is Barnabus a crab? He looks a crab to me. Hard shelled, is he not? Aye, a crab, a crab, Barnabus is a crab!"</i>
10	<i>"The water, she calls to me. Do you hear it also? The playful beckoning of the waves; see how they frolic! Why do we linger here on this wretched boat? This wooden cage. This coffin."</i>

Mutations

Characters suffering a mutation roll 2d6 on the following table. Mutations are permanent barring excision or a *Cure Malady* spell. A special herbal medicine (correct herbs and Int (Apoth) check) grants PCs (only) a *Luck* (Con) save to shake off the virus. Mutations occur painfully over 1d4 hours (or as the GM determines).

All mutants suffer an ongoing compulsion to spread the virus by biting or mating with other living creatures (excluding *Barnacle Forms*). A Will check suppresses the urge for 1d6 x 10 minutes. Each check suffers a cumulative -1 penalty until triggered (resets to zero).

MUTATION	
2-3	Character mutates into a <i>Fleshpod</i> (see below).
4-5	Character mutates in a <i>Vomitor</i> (see below).
6-8	The character becomes a <i>Hybrid</i> . A body part is transformed or sprouted, roll 1d10: (i) arm change, (ii) leg change, (iii) genitals change, (iv) grow tail, (v) grow arm, (vi) grow leg, (vii) grow head, (viii) hybrid head change, (ix) torso change, (x) eyes & mouth change. Roll 1d8 for form: (i) fish, (ii) shark, (iii) octopus, (iv) crab (v) eel, (vi) coral (vii) starfish, (viii) ooze.
9-10	Character mutates into a <i>Spinehost</i> (see below).
11-12	Character mutates into <i>Barnacle Form</i> (see below).

Hybrids use the same stats as *Crew*, but 2+1 HD, and some other change related to their mutation (not all beneficial, but for example, an extra arm might allow an extra attack, a head change might gain gills, a leg change might halve movement rate, tentacle might gain adv on grabs, etc).

Vomitor, AC 11, HD 3, Vomit 2d4+2 (20 ft range, *Luck* (Con) save or infected), 19: spews on target's face, disad on infection save, S13 D8 C13 I7 P11 W14 Ch1, L6, Mv 30 ft. When reduced to zero hp, explodes in a 10 ft radius (as Vomit).

Vomitores might be mistaken as humans from a distance or in half light, but up close their sunken eyes, sagging skin and gurgling breath gives them away. Human skeletons surrounded by virus slough, encased in skin, the walking virus spews acidic contagion on its targets.

Fleshpod, AC 12, HD 6, Bite 3d6 (*Luck* (Con) save or infected), 19: *Psychic scream*; *Luck* (Will) save or cannot regain hp from short rests for 24 hours, S15 D15 C14 I4 P10 W17 Ch1, L8, Mv 30 ft inc up walls etc. *Fleshpods* are 4ft horrific gestalts of quivering flesh, eyes and claws, with boundless hunger. They are immune to surprise and piercing damage, but suffer double damage from fire.

Barnacle Form, AC 19, HD 5, Slashing Arm 3d6, 19: Bear hug for an extra 3d6 damage and lose 1 Con, S18 D10 C17 I3 P10 W17 Ch1, L8, Mv 20 ft (inc swimming). *Barnacle Forms* are 6ft humanoids encased in iron like barnacles with sharp edges, brought into being to protect other virus forms. They move slowly but purposefully, attacking threats to the virus until they or the threat are destroyed. Breathes water and air, *Off Turn Attacks*.



Spinehost, AC 14, HD 3, Spines 2d6, 19: Poison spine, *Luck* (Con) save or *Slowed*, S14 D6 C15 I3 P9 W14 Ch1, L6, Mv 30 ft inc swimming. Spinehosts are 4 ft blobs of urchin like spines, crawling about on human arms. They display supercharged echinoderm regenerative ability, healing all damage at the start of their turn (unless reduced to zero hp, in which case they decompose into a foul smelling, pulpy puddle). Fire suspends their regeneration for 1 round.

Random Encounters

In between each *Virus Event*, roll 1d8 (+2 after the first crew are infected) or choose from the random encounters below.

1. A small, mysterious island is found, recently risen from the depths on the back of a brief volcanic eruption. In the centre of maze like coral is a giant clam, worshipped by a tribe of toadmen (Midlands p.105). Within the clam lies an orb sized pearl (2d6 x 500 gp).
2. 2d6 *Argosan Stranglers* (Midlands p.96) latch onto the hull (ideally during the night), and clamber aboard. They attack non-infected in preference to infected. After 1d4 rounds of combat with infected, they instinctively flee.
3. The ship is *becalmed*, with nary a gust of wind for 2d6 hours. After this period, the party may make a group *Luck* save to determine whether the winds return.
4. A thick fog rolls in, enveloping the ship overnight and persisting until mid morning. Visibility is reduced to 30 ft. Stealth checks above deck gain a +2 bonus.

5. A half mile line of water is releasing large pockets of deep water gas (huge bubbles burst on the surface), causing light headedness. Crew must make a *Luck* (Con) save or suffer 1d2 Dex loss.
6. A nest of infected rats (and/or Mr Rumples) on the lower deck mutate into *Leech Vermin*, dropping onto an unsuspecting PC from the rafters at an opportune moment (eg: when asleep).



Leech Vermin, AC 13, HD 3, Bite 1d8+2, 19: a nearby light source is smothered by the swarm, S5 D14 C6 I3 P10 W8 Ch4, L6, Mv 15 ft inc up walls etc.

Leech Vermin are treated as a single swarm entity. Half damage from weapons, double damage from AoE attacks. The swarm splits in two when *staggered* (once only, 2 HD each half). The virus makes them fearless, and they see as well in darkness as in light.

7. The decaying remains of a half sunken wreck is spotted on the horizon, washed onto a shallow reef. Searching the wreck scavenges 1 x Carry Loot in and a locked box with 1 x Valuables (LFG p.136, 147) within. There is a 50% chance of a *Giant Octopus* (LFG p.120) lurking within the deeper corridors of the reef.
8. An enormous *Sea Serpent* (LFG p.122, but 12 HD, Bite 3d6, Swim 90 ft, water breathing) can be seen undulating across the waves towards the ship, before disappearing below. It attempts to eat 1d4 crew before departing, its hunger satiated.
9. An infected crew member mutates and attacks a PC, ideally when they are alone (in their cabin, somewhere below deck, etc).
10. A *Hybrid* mutates into a *Vomitor*, *Fleshpod*, *Spinehost* or *Barnacle Form*, either in a PC's presence, or ambushes them from hiding (ideally when the PC is alone, or the party is split).

Crew & Politics

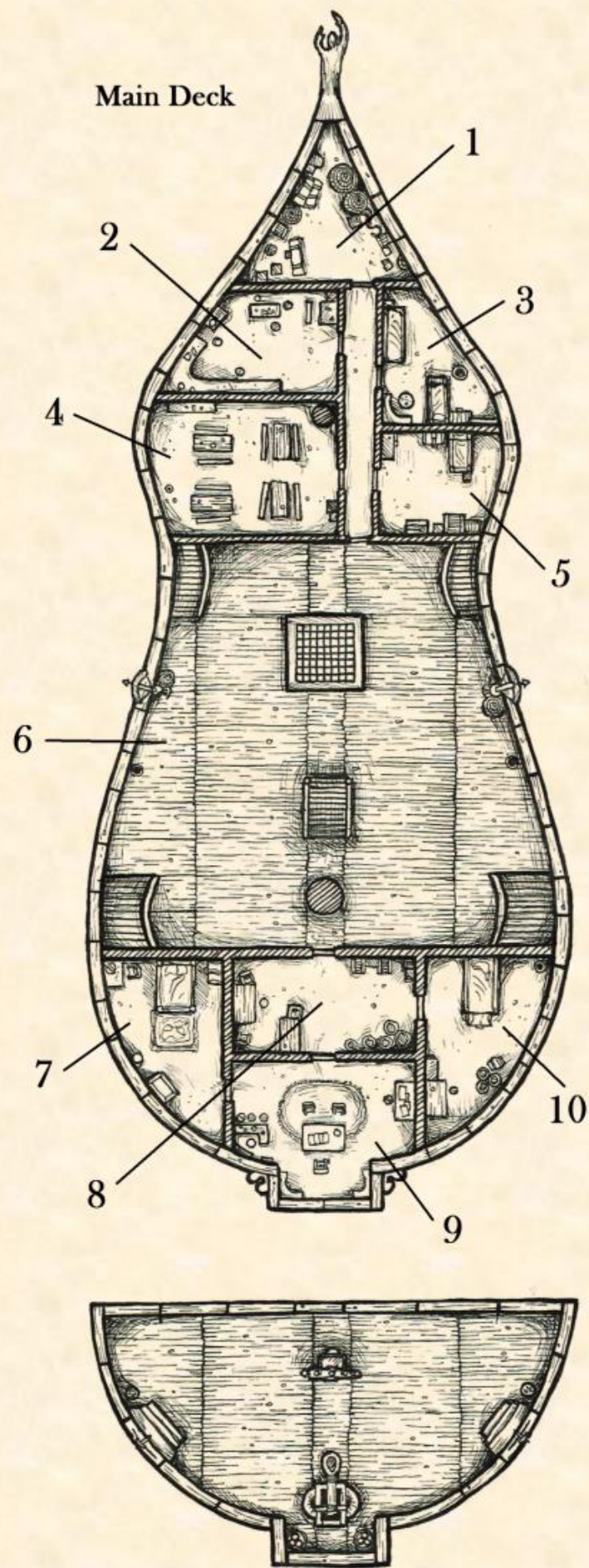
When the adventure begins, the crew are slowly splitting into two camps: the Captain's men (supported by Navigator Thorne), and a mutinous faction led by Quartermaster Barnabus.

Recent smuggling trips (on the side of the Gale Cutter's legitimate cargo business) went astray, causing a number of deaths, and half the men think Barney could do a better job. Barney agrees, and is biding his time to seize control.

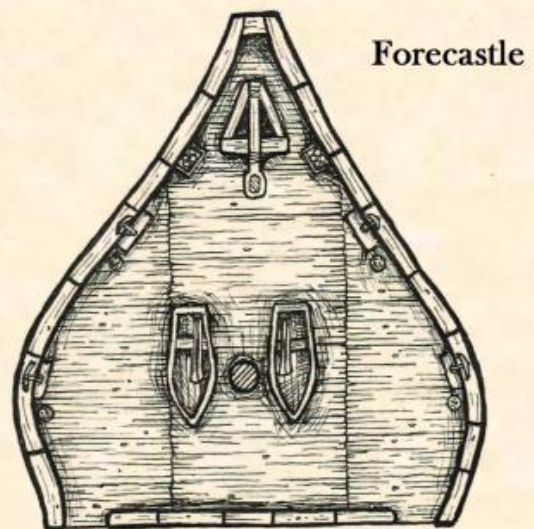
Crew stats and a handful of brief NPC descriptions appear below, for easier GM improv. The vast majority of the crew are *Midlanders* or *Varnori*.

Crew, AC 12, HD 1, Cutlass/Axe 1d8, 19: as weapon, S12 D13 C11 I10 P10 W10 Ch10 L4, Mv 30 ft. Also armed with knives, 20% chance of a light crossbow and 10 bolts.

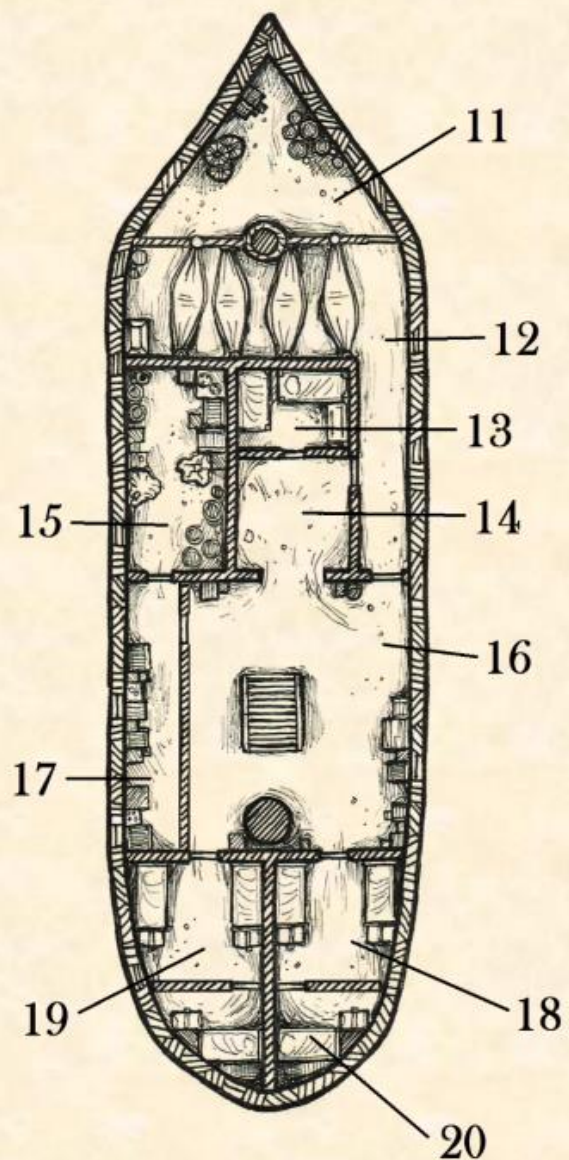
- *Rumbelly* (5' 4", sunburnt Midlander, rotund, booming voice. Amiable alcoholic).
- *Hilders* (6', Varnori, hook hand. Mute; had his tongue cut out. Mysterious).
- *Alsun* (Midlander, slim and wiry, with grey-brown hair pulled back in a ponytail. Whimsical, ladies man).
- *Cadence* (5' 6", Midlander, stocky, raven haired, a short gaff hook on her belt. Impulsive and fiery).
- *Seigfinna* (6' 4", Varnori, blazing red hair, missing some teeth. Gambler in both love and cards).
- *Roper* (5' 9", Midlander, brawny and tireless, stern gaze. Practical and non-plussed).
- *Hughes* (Midlander, medium build, 50's, grey haired, peg leg with hidden blade compartment. Fearless).
- *Mr Rumples* (a rusty brown rat with long whiskers; the ship's "lucky" mascot. Greedy and inquisitive).



Sterncastle



Forecastle



Lower Deck

The Gale Cutter

The *Gale Cutter* is a large Carrack, approx 105 ft long and 55 ft wide at her broadest point, armed with twin ballistae (port and starboard) and twin onagers (bow and stern), manned by 2d6+20 crew (excluding *Captain Croke*, *Quartermaster Barnabus*, *Surgeon Mariata* and *Navigator Thorne*).

The boat is old, creaky, and smells like the lake (or sea). She is made of solid oak and in fine condition. In rough waters, staying upright might require a Dex check (at advantage unless in combat). Con checks might also be required to suppress sea sickness for land lubbers.

Area 1 – Nautical Gear

This 15 ft triangle storage area contains shipping equipment such as nets, rigging, lines, hooks, belaying pins, and so on. The door is unlocked.

Area 2 – Galley

The ship's kitchen is run by *Briccus* the cook (dark skinned Nydissian, short and lean, goatee, always in his black apron, belt festooned with various cooking knives, stats as crew but Cha 15). No-one makes a bitier fish guts stew. The galley has enough food, water, wood and oil to last one day, further provisions are kept in Area 15. *Briccus* generally keeps the galley free of rats and bugs (occasionally serving up "*Squeak onna stick*" and "*Fried crunch pie*").

Area 3 – Infirmary

This approx 15ft by 12 ft cabin usually houses ship surgeon/apothecary *Mariata* (overweight albino Karok with darting eyes, stats as crew but Int 14, knife with *Ghoulshen* poison, LFG p.33), with an extra bunk for any current patient. The surgeon knows of the crew's unrest, and *Barnabus'* plot, but has yet to choose a side.

With the party on board, *Navigator Thorne* (tall, black haired Midlander, usually at the helm steering the ship, stats as crew but 2HD and Int 14) is also sleeping here. The bunks are hard but functional. Chests of personal items contain 1 x Carry Loot each. *Mariata's* herbs, tinctures, healer's kit, scalpels, etc are here. The door has a lock, *Mariata* has the key.

Area 4 – Mess Hall

The 20 ft by 12 ft mess hall contains a number of small bench tables and liquor barrels. A serving window is set into the northern wall. Mugs, plates and utensils are generally scattered about. 1d6 crew will generally be in here eating, socialising or scheming. If the PCs are in here during the storm, black, bubbling blood drips through the beams above, contaminating the room (airborne vector, check for infection) until scrubbed clean with alcohol and vinegar.

Area 5 – Guest Quarters

These 20 ft quarters are usually occupied by *Navigator Thorne*, but have been vacated for the party. *Captain Croke* arranges for bunks, blankets, pillows and a low table to be set up. The door may be locked and the party are given a key. If the PCs have any valuables they want specially secured, the Captain is willing to store them in her strongbox in Area 7, or the Valuables Store in Area 15.

Area 6 – Main Deck

The main deck is approx 90 ft by 55 ft at its widest point, with stairs up to the forecastle and sterncastle in each corner. The enormous main mast, sails and rigging stretch overhead, up to the Crow's nest 80ft high (enough room for two people).

Near the main mast, stairs descend to the hold, and a large 8 ft grate covers the Small Hold below (Area 14). Twin ballistae on 180 degree swivel mounts are positioned port and starboard (750 ft range, vs humanoids *Luck* (Dex) save or reduced to zero hp (for giant creatures, 6d8). 2 actions to reload, ineffective against enemy hulls).

Area 7 – Captain’s Quarters

Captain Croke (5’ 10”, long black hair, athletic, eyepatch, left hander) sleeps in this 12 ft by 15 ft bedchamber, containing a wide bunk, table and 3 chairs, shelving (ledgers, quills), and wardrobe.

The single door is heavily reinforced, with a quality lock (-3 penalty to pick, or requires a Str (Ath) great success to break down). A locked strongbox in the wardrobe contains 1 x Carry Loot, 1 x Valuables and 1 x Trinkets & Curios (LFG p.136, 141, 147).

Croke is shrewd, with more than enough gumption to put down a mutiny, if only she sees it coming. Preoccupied with guilt over recent crew deaths during a smuggling operation gone wrong (including *Jakob*, whom she had a brief fling with), she might be blindsided.

Captain Croke, AC 14, HD 4 (18 hp), Cutlass 1d8+1, 19: *Disarm*, S14 D15 C12 I14 P12 W16 Ch15 L10, Mv 30 ft. Croke has *Off Turn Attacks*. *Backstab*, *Skirmisher* and *Finisher* abilities like a 4th level Rogue, may choose from the following tricks three times per combat: *Choking Dust*, *Hidden Blade*, *Quick Reflexes*.

Area 8 – Officers’ Hall

This 20 ft by 10 ft chamber has a handful of tables and chairs, along with some barrels of wine, rum and water. Ordinarily, only the officers are allowed here (Captain, quartermaster, navigator, surgeon), or crew by invitation. The door is

lockable, banded with steel, and has a barring beam (requires significant time to break down, ideally with an axe/hammer and 3 x Str (Ath) great successes). In case of mutiny, officers use the stern as a panic room.

Area 9 – Captain’s Study

The Captain’s 30 ft by 20 ft study contains a desk, chairs, small bar, as well as a cupboard. Charts, maps and nautical instruments are spread about. The door has a lock (Croke has the key).

Area 10 – Quartermaster’s Cabin

Quartermaster Barnabus (6’3”, muscular, dark green bandana, knife bandolier, gruff, respected) resides in this 12 ft x 15 ft chamber (well appointed, with an extra stash of small rum barrels, lockable door). He is the second highest ranking officer on deck, managing provisions, arms, sleeping arrangements and discipline. Like the Captain, Barnabus receives a double share of any profits.



Barnabus and half the crew are plotting to seize control of the *Gale Cutter* in the near future. Indeed a mutiny is imminent (per the Virus Event table), but not in the way Barnabus expects!

Barnabus, AC 12, HD 4 (24 hp), Axe 1d8+3, 19: as weapon, S17 D10 C16 I12 P13 W14 Ch14 L9, Mv 30 ft. Barnabus has *Minor Exploit Protection*. Fighter *Adaptable* ability, with the *Charger* style (may swap styles three times per combat). When staggered, Barnabus gains a free melee attack against everyone in range.

Area 11 – Smuggling Hold

This 15 ft triangular space stores incidental supplies and gear such as crates of dry clothes, barrels of bait, blankets, hooks, lines, etc. A hidden compartment in the floor (removable panel, expertly fitted and concealed, Perc check great success to notice) serves as the smuggling hold.

At the GM's option, a chest of 2,000 counterfeit gold coins (Karak *Orots*) are stashed within (only known to *Croke*, *Barnabus*, and deckhand *Rico* (blonde haired Varnori, tattoo of the Deep One, addicted to cards and dice)).

Area 12 – Crew Hammocks

Oversized double hammocks hang here in parallel rows (one beneath the other), capable of sleeping 16 men. Bedrolls, a small card table and sitting barrels are also present. Crew effects are generally bundled up under pillows or stored under removable floorboards (1 x Carry Loot, LFG p.136).

Hidden beneath one floorboard is a handkerchief (hummingbird motif – belongs to *Croke*), wrapped around a red mahogany ring (2d6+30 gp). The ring was Jakob's (see Area 7, he stole it), who was planning on gifting it to the Captain as

a sign of affection. Jakob was unaware the ring is enchanted. If attuned to, the user may gain the benefit of a *Vampiric Touch* potion (LFG p.151) once per week (during which time, his/her eyes glow red and issue brimstone like smoke).

Area 13 - Brig

The brig has two bunks and a latrine, with a quality lock (-2 penalty to pick). There is a 50% chance one of the crew, *Morton* (scabby rough nut, Str 15, with a long moustache, rage issues) is serving two days for insubordination. He is sullen but might be befriended if engaged with.

Area 14 – Small Hold

This 20 ft square storage is mainly used for fresh fish or sealed goods that don't mind a bit of water splashing on them from the main deck's large grate. At the time of the adventure, the small hold is stacked with sealed barrels of charcoal (50%) or raisins (50%), tied down with water resistant oilskin tarps.

Area 15 – Valuables Store

This 20 ft by 10 ft storeroom holds the ship's more important commodities, including water, dried beef, hardtack, salt, spices, spare charts, rum barrels, brandy bottles, oil (2 drums), textiles, and other trade goods (glassware, pottery, etc).

An assortment of weapons are also stacked here, including 20 x swords/cutlasses/axes, 1 x shield, 5 x light crossbows, 1 x heavy crossbow, 30 bolts, 5 daggers, and 1d6 fire pots.

A locked chest includes 1 x 3 HD Lair Treasure (LFG p.150). The storeroom is locked (good quality lock, -2 penalty on attempts to pick, the officers and the Cook have keys).

Area 16 – Main Hold

At the GM's option, the 20 ft by 18 ft main hold is either mostly vacant (but for a few empty barrels/crates, with the intention of picking up goods at a destination port), or stacked with trade goods (forming a tight knit "maze" of heavy boxes, barrels and baskets, holding a mix of bound fabrics, jars of foodstuffs and spices, pottery, woodwork, fancy metal utensils, intricate tiles, etc, total value 500+ 2d4 x 100 gp).

Area 17 – Steerage

This partitioned off 25 ft corridor is stacked with crates, barrels and shelves of common goods (smoked fish, blankets, spare clothes, oars, tools and timber for temporary ship repairs, lines, gaff hooks, etc). The door is unlocked.



Areas 18, 19, 20 – Crew Cabins

These 20 ft or 15 ft crew cabins contain small bunks, bedrolls, and chests of personal effects. 1d4 crew are in each compartment if not on duty. Emptying the chests (poor quality locks, pick with Adv) garners 1 x Carry Loot.

Forecastle

The forecastle area is approximately 45 feet wide at its broadest point, and 50 ft long. Two 12 ft rowboats are lashed to the deck and foremast. An onager (small catapult) on a 270 degree swivel occupies the nose (shoots flaming pitch

up to 750 ft, Captains (or other relevant crew) make opposing Int checks to determine whether the target ship's sails/deck catch alight).

Sterncastle

The sterncastle is 55 ft wide at its broadest point, and approx 30 ft long. 75% of the time, Thorne will be here at the helm, otherwise Croke is steering. An onager (similar to the forecastle) is located at the rear.

End Game

If the virus hosts are not killed and burnt, or removed from the ship, the infected eventually gather in the main hold, merging into a single, terrifying gestalt of slapping, slurping flesh. The incalculable horror of the virus' final form burns a hole into the human psyche, requiring a *Luck* (Will) save to avoid turning catatonic (helpless) for 1d4 rounds. On a successful save, the PC gains a madness instead (1d6: 1-3 minor, 4-5: moderate, 6: serious).

Final Form, AC 15, HD 20+4, Slap 15 ft reach 2d10+5 and Bite 4d6, 19: the target is absorbed and instantly slain (*Luck* (Dex) save negates), S20 D5 C22 I4 P10 W19 Ch1 L14, Mv 30 ft. The Final Form has *Major Exploit Protection* and *Off Turn Attacks*.

Once joined, the Final Form grows larger and larger, tearing the boat apart within 4d6 rounds. The vessel sinks to the darkest trenches of the lake, and the abomination with it.

Aftermath

If the PCs survive the wreck, a group *Luck* save results in a merchant caravel passing by within hours, retrieving any survivors from the flotsam. Whether the virus survives, or is ever seen again, is a matter for the GM.

CREDITS

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