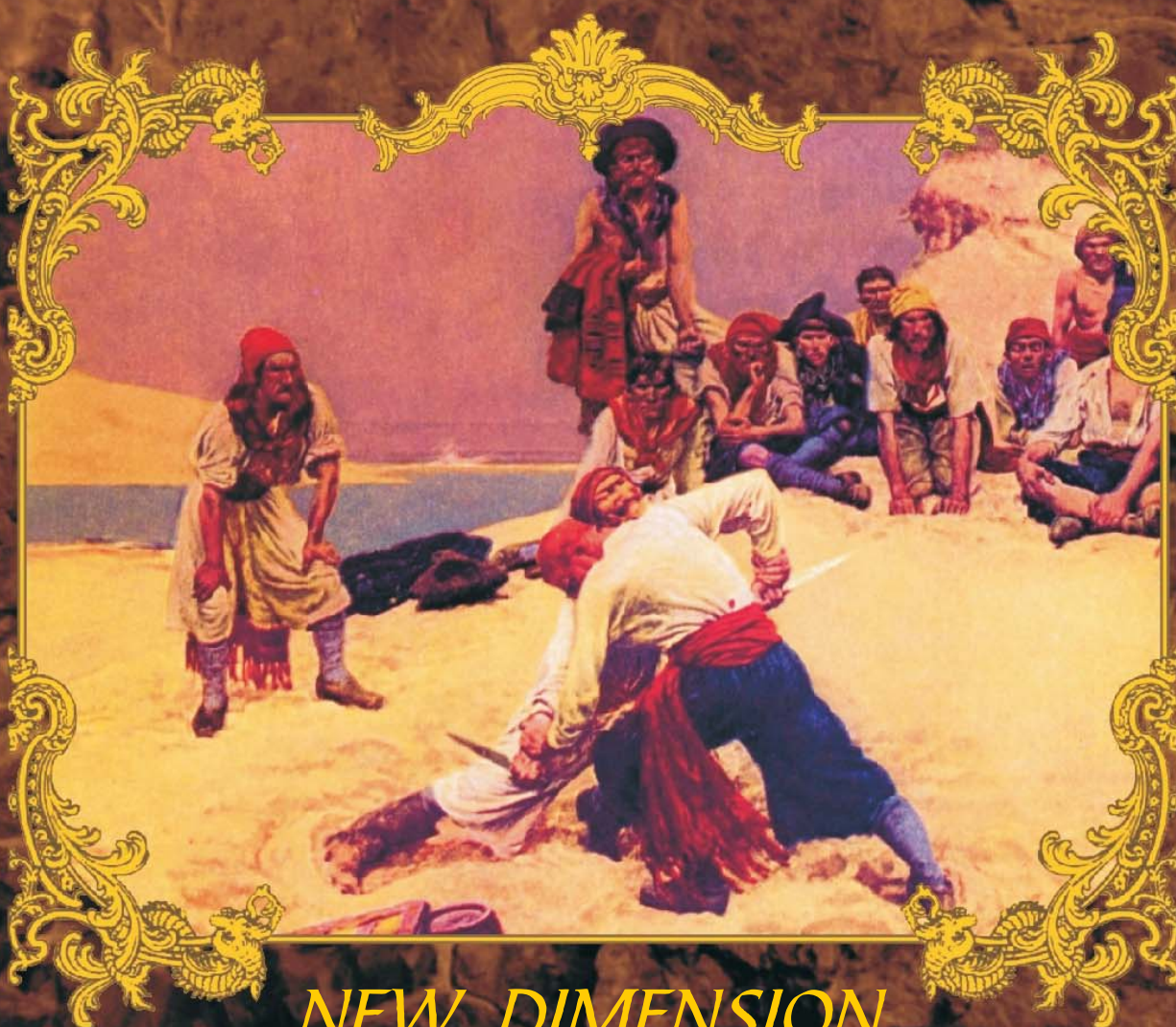


# PIRATES

OF THE  
FABLED TREASURES

BY: MATT DEMILLE



NEW DIMENSION  
GAMES

FOR Howard Pyle,  
for his taletelling . . .

## Credits

**Designer:** Matthew deMille

**Cover:** Howard Pyle (historical picture)

**Editing, Graphic Design, Typography:** Matthew deMille

**Producer:** James deMille



# PLANNING THE ADVENTURE

Pssst! Over here, matey. Listen to what I be tellin' ya. There be a whole new world full of treasure! Ya just need to believe in it, I says. The Spanish Main! Ships full of silver! Mountains of gold! Ahh, a pirate's life for me! Let's get aboard our ship, matey, and we'll be off a plunderin' and become legends!

**PRONOUN NOTE:** The male pronouns ('he', 'him', 'his') are used throughout this 'ere book. Though women may be bad luck at sea, they're right fine for this 'ere game, and we're not be tryin' to exclude 'em, nor even imply their exclusion. Centuries of use have made these 'ere pronouns neutral, and they're use provides for clear and concise written next—nothing else does.

**ABOUT THIS BOOK:** About this book in particular, indeed this gamebook—what **is** a gamebook for a role-playing game?

What is in this book: Contained within these pages are three individual, open-ended Adventures that will take the Characters on thrilling journeys across the Caribbean! These can be played individually, or used in chronological order, building the basis for the careers of the Player Characters. Or, they may even be played in non-chronological order, assuming that the Encounters keyed to specific years are omitted.

Using this book: These Adventures are relatively short, requiring on an average one full game session (roughly 10 hours) to play through to their end. However, you may increase the length of any Adventure by adding Encounters from other game gazetteers. One must select such additions carefully however, for each of the Adventures in this book are carefully constructed and their own Encounters are carefully chosen to lead the Characters to a certain conclusion, and even one sidetrack can throw the Players' thinking off enough to change the course of the entire Adventure. Additional Encounters are welcome and even encouraged, but you should read through the new material and the entire Adventure itself before choosing what to add and where to add it.

It is important to note that, as these Adventures are not 'full-length', that they should not be played back-to-back, as Players may tend to believe them to be one entire Adventure. This would lead to problems, in that Players would associate Encounters in one Adventure with situations they face in another, and this can throw them way off track in their decision making. These Adventures should only be played one-after-another if the Players are **fully** aware when one Adventure ends and that a **new** Adventure is beginning.

Indeed, if you play these Adventures one after another, have a little 'shore leave' time in-between them, perhaps breaking the game session at that point, or in some other way clearly establishing the time elapsed between adventures.

**PREPARING TO PLAY:** Before you and your friends sit down to play this game, you should consider the basic elements of the Adventure, as explained throughout the following pages.

Tales to be told: The Adventures in this book are presented in their chronological order. The first Adventure, "The Golden Helmet" takes place in 1562. The second Adventure, "The Silver Empire", takes place in 1565. Finally, the third Adventure, "The Golden Heavens", takes place in 1568.

Telling these tales: Each of these Adventures is about treasure, and everything revolves around that goal, for both the Player Characters and all the NPCs as well. Thus, when telling these stories, maintain greed, avarice and 'gold fever' as the driving force behind most (if not all) themes and actions. Certainly other motives and ideals such as love, patriotism and revenge can come into play, but they should never take precedence over wealth.

**SIDE ADVENTURES:** In order to add greater interest and fun for the Player Characters, there are provided below several 'side adventures'. These are simple, open-ended Encounters that may be used in any of the three Adventures found in this booklet. Use them sparingly, for they do not last long, and moreover, use them wisely, placing them in the story when they will be most effective.

# PLANNING THE ADVENTURE

## 1) De Jean

Taking your ease in a quiet tavern, you happen to look up just as a scruffy little man picks the innkeeper's pocket!

If the party gives chase, the thief will run like mad! He has DS 6, G 7, MOVE 180'. If caught, he will either (if there is only one enemy) fight with his dagger (with +1 to his rolls), or (if he is outnumbered), introduce himself as "De Jean" and pretend to surrender and try to buy off the party with 40 doubloons while at the same time making a Pilfering Check to lift their leader's own purse!

## 2) Scraps of hope

If the party has been set adrift, perhaps by having lost their ship to a storm, or having it stolen or even blown out from under them, they may now find some hope.

Drifting endlessly for what seems like a lifetime, you have now come across a foundered ship, floating half sunken in the rolling waves. Scraps of sails still catch the dying breath of the wind.

The only thing of value to the party here are the sails, which can be rigged to allow the party's own longboat, raft, or whatever else they have been castaway in to achieve a much better speed, indeed speed enough to reach a harbor (friendly or otherwise) before they perish.

## 3) Storm

Run this Encounter when the party is close to victory and they know it.

The wind picks up, and sleet begins to whip across the deck. "We're in for a blow!" says one of the crew. Indeed, it is not long before the sea unleashes huge waves and the wind strains at your sails!

This storm is of Magnitude 8, thus challenging the party's resolve for finding their treasure. If they are not in command of the ship, the captain

will ask their opinion none-the-less, himself already spooked by the fury of the storm.

## 4) The Queen's pirate

This opportunity is reserved for a Sea Hawk or someone of English blood who pays amnesty.

In the office of the Governor, the air is thick with gloom. News has reached the Colonies of the many attempts on the Queen's life, escalating the already high tensions with Spain, and war is inevitable. The Governor informs you that the Queen herself has personally selected you for an important mission. Looking at the sealed envelope in his hand, you know this test of faith and duty, but not the dangers involved should you open it.

If the Character does indeed accept, the mission will turn out to be one of blood—to find the Spanish prince who is working incognito in the Caribbean, and to kill him. Who the Spanish prince actually turns out to be is up to you to decide, for it can be any of the Spanish NPCs encountered in the three Adventures provided in this booklet. If this deed is done, the Character will gain 60 Notoriety Points, and the unofficial title of 'The Queen's Pirate'.

## 5) The Seven Deaths

The lookout's call is somewhat soft, and is repeated twice before the crew takes alarm, the voice from the crow's nest gathering strength like the ill winds that have blown another ship your way—a ship whose black flag depicts a blood-red Christian Cross...

The other ship is 'The Seven Deaths', a frigate running 23 guns whose captain intends pain enough to equal dying seven times to all heretics he encounters—all those who do not share his particular religious ideals. And, he has 165 2<sup>nd</sup> Level pirates to back him up, fully armed with both weapons and with scripture. The captain himself will not engage in battle, but hide in his cabin, praying for the souls of his victims.

# THE GOLDEN HELMET

Avast there! The New World be awaitin' ye, ya poor ol' swabbie! 'Tis true, says I! The Spanish Main be but the gateway ter a paradise that has no law, and no king. Many a man's blood has been spilled seekin' a way to conquer it all, but he who'll be a layin' claim ta this world is the one who follers the blood on the waves...

**BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE:** Before running this Adventure, it is a good idea to read through it just to be familiar with the storyline and key elements. However, reading the entire Adventure beforehand is not necessary for play.

**Timeline:** This adventure is set in the Caribbean in the year 1562. Those Encounters that are marked with an "\*" require the game to be played in this era. If your game does not adhere to timelines, do not use these Encounters.

**Background:** When everyone is ready to play, begin the adventure by reading the narrative below.

The New World beckons! Too long have you remained behind while others have ventured forth to seek fame and fortune. All the tales of the sea, of nameless terrors and countless riches, of hell and paradise—they are more enticing than the old life you have dwelled in for so long. You need only an opportunity.

At last, that prayer has been answered. You have been signed upon a fine, modern ship bound for the Colonies. The crew have come from all walks of life; seasoned sailors share the same deck with criminals earning an honest day's pay, while pious men stand watch alongside horse thieves. A man who stole bread to feed his starving mother lost his hand but still scrubs the deck under the shadow of three brothers who have recently left the Tower of London—they only intended to stay one night, to leave with the Crown Jewels rather than their royal pardons and secretive missions years later.

One night, the glimmering lights of the tiny hamlet of Isabella beckon your vessel into the harbor. As the anchor sinks to the shallow bottom, you overhear that same trio whispering about all the treasure of the New World...

**PART 1: THE NEW WORLD:** Isabella marks the gateway to the New World. Here is where the Great Navigator—Christopher Columbus—ended his journey, and where shall begin the journey of the Player Characters—perhaps greater men yet...

## 1) Introduction

This Introduction is critical to the Adventure's plot. Select the Character who, in order of priority, is a Coasta Guarda, a Spaniard, or the one who had the highest starting total of gold, and then run this Encounter.

It has been a long voyage, but at last you put ashore in Isabella, a tiny hamlet established by Columbus himself. The 'Great Navigator' the crew names him, fearing to utter his name aloud, fearful indeed of the legendary curse that shadows his memory. But you need not fear such things. Indeed, while the rest of the crew busies themselves in brothels and taverns, you visit the tomb of your great grandfather, deep under the town's only church. There, alone in the darkness, you pray before the stone coffin of your great ancestor. Time passes without a care, without notice. Suddenly you look up—are you dreaming? Are you... dead? The great man stands before you, aglow with angelic light! "Cursed am I," says the spirit, "cursed with knowledge, the burden of secrets. The new world is but an illusion, even as I. The true world awaits you, if you dare to seek it. Immortality awaits you! Faith, the world is yours..."

The Character will be found some hours later, apparently having fallen unconscious. What caused this is uncertain—fear, shock, weariness—it could be anything. Moreover, it is impossible to tell exactly what **did** happen. However, the Character will remember something, words coming to him, as if from a dream. Using the following chart, the Character will remember everything equal to and below the number he rolls on a single dice. This roll will gain a bonus of +1 if the Character is Spanish, if he has the Skill of Navigation, and if he is Royalty (to a maximum bonus of +2).

# THE GOLDEN HELMET



## Cumulative Memories

Roll	What the Character remembers
11-12	<i>"Only when brave men challenge a god will they find faith"</i>
8-10	<i>"The crown of those who live forever drowns in the blood of the grave"</i>
3-7	<i>"The path to eternal life is known only to a blind wraith"</i>
1-3	<i>"The new world begins beyond the Cliffs of Blood"</i>

If the tomb is successfully searched, one will find that the body of Columbus is missing! No trace of it can be found, and nobody in town knows anything, not even in rumor. Indeed, inquiries will only meet with fear and superstition about the 'curse of the great Navigator'.

## 2) The Golden Gull

You drown away your worries with the fine brews at the 'Golden Gull'. The tavern is spacious and comfortable, unlike the cramped, seedy pubs of the Old World. As you raise another mug, you overhear some sailors telling an interesting tale, something about being shipwrecked on the 'Cliffs of Blood'. The barkeep listens with interest as well, as the men go on about the rocky headlands of Colombia, stained with the blood of countless men. "My best brew doesn't wash tales like that up to my counter," says the barkeep. "I'd wager it's true, the claw of a curse trying to draw more men to their doom. I wouldn't listen if I were you."

If the Character does indeed approach the loose-lipped men, they will not say anything more of substance, except that they were seeking ill-gotten gold when they were wrecked, and now they are converted, honest Christian men who intend to stay in Isabella and earn honest trade. However, if a Character offers to attend Sunday services with them and there make a donation, every 10 gold he offers (rounded down) is the chance in 12 that they will tell him something else, misquoting an old Bible by saying that the "Cliffs of Blood are the entrance to a new world, where devils are the guides to Heaven's secrets."

## 3) Introduction

At this point, any non-Spanish Characters may be introduced to the game, though not in a way they may expect or accept. Before running this Encounter, ask the Players of such Characters if they are 'daring'. This is the same sort of question the Characters themselves were asked when revolution was uprising in their country, and all who said "Yes" ended up here . . .

Framed for crimes in your homeland, you have zigzagged across the seas as slave property, from Europe to Africa, and now to the Indies. Last night, after what has seemed a lifetime of suffering, the winds of fortune began to blow your way. Your slave ship was taken by pirates, and now you have put ashore in the outpost of Isabella, a small haven for outlaws and outcasts of all sorts. You are free!

These new Characters have all their equipment and money, given to them by the pirates for reasons only the Players can tell us.

## 4) Celebration

This night is a magical night! The citizens of the town and the sailors who are anchored here seemed to have forgotten their national and even their religious differences all day, buzzing with anticipation for the night's celebration. As the sun sets, in the town square is raised a statue of the 'Great Navigator', crowned with a winged helmet paved with goldleaf! In several different languages at once the people sing a disjointed song in honor of Columbus freeing them from the tyranny of Europe. As you watch their passion for the legendary man, you cannot help but feel their devotion to carve out a new world for themselves here.

If the party makes inquiries, they may learn 3 of the following rumors. If a roll duplicates a rumor they have already heard, they will instead hear either (if there are Spaniard PCs) the next highest rumor not yet rolled, or (if there are no Spanish PCs) the next lowest rumor not yet rolled.



# THE GOLDEN HELMET



## Rumors

Roll	Rumor about the Golden Helmet
10-12	The Golden Helmet is the personal seal of 'Erik the Red', a Viking who found the Americas centuries before Columbus
8-9	The 'Great Navigator' found this land by following the heathen ways of the Vikings, who came here centuries ago
5-7	And old song of seaman says that "He who learns the secret of the Golden Helmet will be king of the world"
3-4	He who learns the secret of the 'Great Navigator' will become immortal
1-2	The Golden Helmet is from the legendary city of 'El Dorado', the 'city of gold'

## 5) The Blind Wraith

When at last the party is ready to set sail, fate will find them down at the docks whether they already have a ship or not, and in the dead calm of night they will have a strange meeting indeed.

The night is calm, the sea glistening under the moon, glowing like the skull of a ghost from the depths of the harbor—no, it is shining behind a lonely flag flying from the mainmast of a ship newly arrived. The Jolly Roger's eyes have been burnt out, and so the moon shines as brightly as ever, the grinning skull of Fate bearing crossed swords that slash the ship below with shadows of silver light, revealing its counterpart of the ship's prow. Sculpted like a wooden wraith wielding twin swords, its own, grinning skull wears a blindfold, as if it doesn't care who it kills as it cuts through the Caribbean waters.

If anyone goes aboard, they will quickly meet the captain, a salty Scottish sea-dog with an eyepatch, one 'Carl 'Jamason' Barks'. He will openly discuss his plans with the party, that he is seeking the legendary city of gold, 'El Dorado', and believes he knows where it lies—he knows where to find the fabled 'Cliffs of Blood', and he is bound for them with the morning tide. If the party signs on to his ship, 'The Blind Wraith', its statistics are provided on Handout 1, and those of Captain Barks on Handout 2.

**PART 2: IN SEARCH OF A LEGEND:** Sailing in search of the 'Cliffs of Blood', the Characters will face a 186 league voyage southwest to the Colombian Highlands, the Cliffs rising somewhere between the Spanish cities of Rio de la Hacha and Santa Marta. Along the way, they will have many adventures, as accounted for in the following Encounters, which you may use at your leisure.

## 6) Introduction

Any stragglers who wish to join the game may now do so, as part of the crew aboard the party's main vessel. If this ship is anything other than the 'Blind Wraith', when reading the following narrative, substitute '**BLIND WRAITH**' with their ship's right name.

It is a fine day, the crimson sun casting a blood-red glow upon the Caribbean waters as the captain of the '**BLIND WRAITH**' gathers all hands on deck to review the ship's Articles.

All new Player Characters are present and accounted for. If the captain is a PC himself, the Articles are his to specify, if needs be. If the captain is an NPC, the Articles will not be specified, and this moment will instead turn towards the party's destination—the legendary Cliffs of Blood. The captain will say "We are bound for the gate to Heaven, my hearties! Somewhere between the twin ports of Rio and Marta is the entrance to a glorious world, known only to the history books of scholars. The Cliffs of Blood are the **beginning** of our journey, so be at ease now."

## 7) The Undertaker\*

The sighting of a sail is usually call for great excitement, but as the crew gathers amidships, a wave of despair seems to wash over one and all. For there, out on the calm waves, is a merchant ship the lookout identifies as 'The Undertaker'. "It's an English ship," someone says, "carrying coffins. I know. I used to be a choir-boy. There isn't Royal oak in the Indies, and there have been plagues aplenty further south. I'd wager my very soul it's the black magyk of cannibals."

# THE GOLDEN HELMET



The Undertaker is indeed carrying a cargo of oak coffins, due to fetch high prices at Royal funerals. If attacked, the merchantman will surrender no matter what, as they are afraid of the evil plagues in the south and so they do not really wish to finish their voyage.

## 8) Pirate hunters

Use this Encounter sometime during the last 2 days of the party's voyage to Colombia.

The gloomy light of pre-dawn breathes a thin mist over the deck. As the sun climbs over the crest of the horizon away to the east, it rises like the bloody flag of a large galleon, the silhouette of the giant gunrunner appearing like a demon that stalked you through the night, not at all deterred by the dawn, its iron teeth of countless cannon ready to close down upon you.

The galleon is a Spanish pirate hunter, patrolling the waters near the twin ports on the Colombian coast. If the party's vessel has been flying a Spanish flag that night, the galleon will leave them be. However, it will be too late to fool their crafty captain otherwise, who will round on the party and demand surrender. If the party chooses to fight, whether by their command or by their decision inspiring their crew beyond the command of any NPC captain, the enemy Spanish galleon is running 18 cannon, and is manned by 240 well armed Spaniards, a good 200 1<sup>st</sup> Level men led on by the 40 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Coasta Guarda aboard. However, the Spanish captain will not fight, but remain secure in his cabin, and will surrender at once if found, or, if the party is defeated and captured, he will rise from his desk and instruct them that they will be sold as slaves in the port of Rio de la Hacha, a fate that will bring them straight to Encounter 10. Given the warning of this pirate hunter's presence, if the party willingly goes to any Colombian city, continue normally and play Part 3 of this Adventure, but if they decide to avoid the twin ports and sail straight for the Cliffs of Blood, move ahead to Part 4.

**PART 3: THE BARON'S GAME:** Assuming that the party both desires and manages to enter one of the large Colombian cities (Rio de la Hacha or Santa Marta), two different events may occur, as detailed in the following Encounters.

Guard patrols: If the party ever causes trouble in town, guards patrol in groups of 4 and 6 (the latter only in wealthy areas such as merchant streets, storehouses and Royal villas), always with DS 8, G 8, MOVE 100', they each have a cutlass and a pistol, and +2 to use them both. They are all Level 1 save for an offer who is Level 2.

Acquiring crew: If the party actually snuck into town but still wish to acquire crew members, a successful Searching Check is required to find a seedy enough taverne where there are men willing to defy the Spanish crown by signing on with a pirate crew.

## 9) Audience with the Baron

Each Character stands a chance in 12 equal to his Notoriety Level (increased by 2 if he is Spanish) of being heard of, noticed or sought by the guards, to be brought before the governor. This chance is reduced by 3 for every Level to one's Skill of Disguise (if any).

The Governor, the bulbous Baron Domingo, sits upon a plush throne atop a raised dais, overlooking four scribes who work at desks for him. He leans forward on his plump thighs, and his fat fingers melt together as his chin sharpens with a grin of devilish delight. "Since the year of our Lord Fifteen Forty-Five," he begins smoothly, "when silver was discovered in heathen Peru, we have been mining in earnest, however, this business has discouraged many a good man from maintaining a captaincy, and good reports to send to the king of Spain are harder to come by." He leans back, content with his short speech and the apparent notion that you will accept it without question. "If you pledge your service to me, you will be well rewarded. We need good captains. **God** needs good captains."



# THE GOLDEN HELMET



If the Player Characters seem at all reluctant to accept this offer, the Baron will add as a teaser “Even the sixty ships of the Treasure Fleet is a small number compared to the armada that used to come through our great city.” Anyone who declines the Baron’s offer will be sent on his way, while anyone who accepts it will receive a ‘letter of marque’ authorizing attacks on enemies of the Spanish crown, a ship of a Value equal to his Notoriety Level (+2 if he is Spanish), 1100-2200 pieces of eight to provision it with, and 10-60 additional men to man the vessel. However, the Baron has done all this for a reason, and that is that he is setting the party up . . .

## 10) Judgment of the Baron

If anyone is ever captured by the guards (or by the pirate hunter off the coast), they will be brought before the city’s governor for trial.

The trial is presided over by the Governor himself, the bulbous Baron Domingo, sitting upon a plush throne atop a raised dais, overlooking four scribes who work at desks for him. He leans forward on his plump thighs, and his fat fingers melt together as his chin sharpens with a grin of devilish delight. “Since the year of our Lord Fifteen Forty-Five,” he begins smoothly, “when silver was discovered in heathen Peru, we have been mining in earnest, however, this business has discouraged many a good man from maintaining a captaincy, allowing cutthroats like you to roam freely, but not in my city.” He leans back, content with his short speech and the apparent notion that you will accept his judgment without question. “Are you guilty or not guilty?”

Each individual will take the stand for himself, though the verdict will quickly degenerate into ‘guilty’ unless his defense includes his search for the ‘Cliffs of Blood’, the ‘Golden Helmet’, or ‘El Dorado’. Any such story will encourage the Baron to say “You go willingly to a greater judge and a more terrible sentence than my noble heart could ever invent”, and he will indeed let that person go free. However, he does this for a reason, and that secretly he will be sending men to follow them . . .

**PART 4: SEA OF BLOOD:** Following the northern coast of Colombia, stretching from the twin ports of Rio de la Hacha and Santa Marta, the party will, by sea or by land, at last come to the Cliffs of Blood after 1-12 days of searching.

## 11) The Gate of Blood

The waves crash against the headlands for hundreds of miles, and when defeated by the coral and crags, the waters gently slide in amongst the rocks, filling countless small coves and lagoons. After many days, you come upon perhaps the most beautiful harbor you have ever seen, a tranquil lagoon surrounded by sheer clefts of sun-baked, reddish stone, broken only by a narrow ravine that is filled with the jungle spilling down from above. You have no doubt that you have found the Cliffs of Blood at last.

A successful Searching Check will discover an inscription upon one low cliff, just below the tide-line, requiring the party to wait 1-6 hours for the tide to go out so they can read it. The writing is old and worn, requiring a Wits Check to make out in full. If this Check fails, they may still read the inscription, minus those letters that are in **bold**; *‘The Golden Helmet is **not** of this world. He who wears **the** gilded wings is king of the **New** World. One man’s fortune is the doom of all’*. If the Players wish to try and make out the vague writing themselves, it is duplicated on Handout 3.

## 12) The Cove of Blood

If the party decides to camp in the cove surrounded by the Cliffs of Blood, that night . . .

Tonight, the moon is blood-red, or perhaps that’s just the light reflecting off the surrounding cliffs, an illusion, nothing more. Still, the smell of fresh blood is thick in the warm, muggy air.

An Intuition Check is required to follow this smell, which will lead one back to a random party member (PC or NPC)—he is bleeding from his ears, a wound of -2 effect, the victim of a curse!

# THE GOLDEN HELMET



**PART 5: THE FORBIDDEN PATH:** From the Cliffs of Blood, the party will face a grueling journey on foot, making their way 30 leagues into the Colombian highlands. There are only vague footpaths to follow, so no matter which way they go at any given time, the party's speed will remain constant and the following Encounters will inevitably occur in their present order.

## 13) Lord of the flies

The sweltering jungle is Heaven and Hell combined, as if the refuse of both had been dumped into the world; golden sunlight streams through the lush treetops, only to reveal clouds of buzzing mosquitoes. The narrow path runs alongside an old wall, the last remnant of long abandoned farms, the jungle having pushed the Spanish settlers back towards the sea and consumed their houses. At the end of the wall is a boar's head stuck atop a crude pike, flies buzzing in and out of its eyes and mouth, a warning symbol of the native people.

If anyone touches or disturbs this symbol in any way, he will be cursed (Magnitude of 3), penalizing all his Ability Checks by -1 until he leaves these hills (enters a town or the sea itself).

## 14) Hermit\*

By the shore of a small lake you see a tiny hut. The lower half of the wall is built with cobblestone and the roof is of a steep slope, indicating a European design. As you approach, a rickety old man, more fragile than his own hut, staggers into the light, though the eave of the roof yet hides his face in shadow. He trembles to even stand still, so old and frail, as if you were Death in person come to take him away.

If the party is friendly, a successful Charisma Check will earn the old man's trust, and he will invite the party inside his dingy, filthy hut, where by an empty hearth and the carefully constructed skeleton of a sleeping dog he will tell them quite a tale. The old man will name himself 'William', once upon a time the cabin boy for the Great

Navigator, Columbus himself! However, the title of 'Great Navigator' he will scoff at, claiming Columbus instead to be the 'Great Legend', for when they sailed to the New World, they followed the clues left by the Vikings of centuries earlier, nor was Columbus honest about his true goal—he ever sought the legendary Golden Helmet, knowing that by the Council of Rome in 792, the symbol of Erik the Red, who truly discovered the Americas, would make whoever owned it the king of the New World, regardless of what laws have been passed in Europe since!

## 15) Blood and greed

The endless days and relentless heat of the highlands are broken by the sweet song of a nearby waterfall—your sweaty, sticky flesh can feel the cool, refreshing air already.

Have each Character make an Intuition Check. Those who are successful will hear a drumbeat beneath the roar of the nearby waterfall. This is the beat of native wardrums—they will be on the party in 2 Rounds! When they arrive, these savage men will be wearing masks of white clay with red stripes—blood from their own fingertips. These wild men will outnumber the party by 4, and each has DS 7, G 7, MOVE 160', they are effectively Level 4, and they wield spears with +3 to their Attack Rolls for 2 Base Damage. These natives will fight to the death. If the party flees to the waterfall (300' away), the natives will not follow, as that area is sacred to them, however, the party's defiling it will cause them to beat their drums to draw an additional 20 spearmen who will arrive after 5 Rounds and surround the area, intent on never letting the party leave that area alive.

The Spaniards that are following the party by Baron Domingo's orders will wait until the party's fight with the natives has finished and then attack, seeking to capture rather than kill. These men outnumber the party by 2, and each has a DS 9, G 8, MOVE 100', they each wear Spanish armor and a helmet, and have a cutlass and a pistol with +2 to use them both. They are all Level 1. If the party defeats these Spaniards, any left alive will offer to serve the party in any manner.

# THE GOLDEN HELMET



**PART 6: THE TEMPLE OF DOOM:** Only the natives know where to find any treasure, much less the Golden Helmet itself. The party may gain such information from the natives in Encounter 15, or, they may simply look behind the waterfall . . . and find the following Encounters, to be played one and all and in their presented order.

## 16) Foyer

The moist cave leads deep back into the hills, opening at last in a large cavern, filled with mystery. The rough, natural walls have for hundreds of years been carved into a surrounding army of grotesque idols, demons and gods. The tall, sharp stalagmites are each stacked with several human skulls. At the far end, a large cave opens in the center of the cavern's only smooth wall, which is covered with a bizarre mural depicting men falling off cliffs into a sea of blood, while one alone walks through the air above the cave itself, aloft with golden wings.

A successful search of the cave will discover an old Bible under some rocks, which contains a folded piece of parchment just inside the cover. The paper has several lines written in Spanish. If translated, the writing reads as thus:

*Three cats! Three cats! Three cats!  
As you make your bed, so you must lie in it  
A rolling stone gathers no moss  
The bigger they are, the harder they fall*

If nobody can read Spanish, the Players may attempt to translate this writing for themselves by studying Handout 4. In either event, the translation of these verses is provided as Handout 5.

## 17) The first challenge

The tunnel comes to a dead end. In the center of this cave rests a large, oaken coffin, clearly of European design, though it appears it has been here for centuries. The wood is carved with countless demonic cats. The ceiling arches thirty feet overhead, reaching its height above the coffin, where a narrow shaft leads straight up.

It is all but impossible to reach the shaft, as the inclined cave walls are very slippery, and it is too narrow to throw a grappling hook up into. The coffin is fixed to the floor and cannot be moved. If opened, one will find that the coffin is empty. If someone lays down inside of it and closes the lid, his body upon its counter-weighted bottom and the closing lid will complete the trigger of a trap—the cave will sealed with a heavy stone door and quickly begin to flood! The coffin is air-tight, and soon the person inside may open the lid into the submerged cave and swim up the otherwise unclimbable shaft, coming at last to Encounter 18.

## 18) The second challenge

At the top of the shaft, you find yourself at one end of a wide, rounded tunnel, running back into utter darkness. To either side of the tunnel is the statue of a cat poised atop a large sphere.

About 40' down the tunnel, there are several pressure plates, and a passing Character stands a 10 in 12 chance of tripping one, which will release a 10' diameter spherical boulder from the ceiling above and behind him! This boulder will fill the tunnel and cannot be avoided, save for outrunning it, the mere attempt of anything else resulting in the Character being crushed to death! If the Character can move a total of 300' in 3 Rounds' time, where at last the tunnel will narrow and pass through an arch which will block the boulder, he will come to Encounter 19.

## 19) The third challenge

Passing through an archway, you enter what appears to be some sort of ancient temple. The rough hewn walls are cloven with deep alcoves filled with candles and granite statues of cats poised behind deep basins. Smooth, rounded pillars support the weary, stone ceiling, and in the center of all the floor rises up circular, tiered steps to a limestone altar. Set upon the altar is a ceremonial bowl of simple clay, fixed to what looks like a primitive scale or counter-weight. The ceiling is pierced by a narrow shaft of light that lands directly on the bowl itself.



# THE GOLDEN HELMET



A successful search will discover some strange writing around the rim of the bowl. If one can translate any native writing (as the people who made this temple gave rise to the other native civilizations that are more well known, and thus their language is similar to all others), it reads *'Give to the gods that which gives life and they shall offer eternal life in return'*. If one fills the bowl with water or any other liquid, it will cause the entire floor of the chamber to open, revealing a gaping pit—everyone in the room must make an Agility Check or fall 40' onto sharp spikes! However, during the 2 Rounds it takes for the floor to re-set itself, a successful Searching Check will discover a cave below the level of the pit-trap floor, the beginning of a tunnel which leads to the otherwise unfindable Encounter 20.

## 20) Altar of Eternity

You enter into a grand, ceremonial chamber where no man has been for centuries. Thick moss covers most everything in the room, though it cannot age the stone skin of a huge idol rising against the far wall. This granite giant has four arms and four eyes, and resting in its lap is a huge cauldron, once the basin of a fountain fed by his gaping mouth. Now, however, he merely drools vines and filth, and the cauldron is filled with mud, spilling over onto the floor, which is swimming with snakes of all kinds!

Inside the cauldron, submerged in the mud, is the Golden Helmet! However, in order to reach it, one must fend off 1-12 vipers each Round! The Golden Helmet is worth 35000 for its gold alone, but its Viking design and winged fins represent the old gods, the seal of Erik the Red, and the rightful ownership of the Americas!

**CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE:** Once the party has found the Golden Helmet or given up in the search, there are some things to consider.

King of the New World?: If the party decides to employ the law of 792, and so become the hopeful New World King, things will not be as easy as legend makes them. As no current government is

going to want to relinquish any power, all claims for the law established by the Council of Rome will meet only with politics and paper, resulting in total denial of the Golden Helmet's legitimacy, the Helmet's curse causing nothing but turmoil within the establishment. However, if someone claims the Helmet for himself, he will endure both great success and great misfortune...

Curse of the Golden Helmet: Even though all governments will deny the legitimacy of the Golden Helmet, its curse will be as strong as ever—many will seek to claim it for themselves, and authority will always fear it, the Helmet becoming the eye of a storm of blood and war that will forever surround the party unless they get rid of it. The Helmet's legend will increase the Notoriety of the captain whose ship carries it by +20, but those who attack the party will gain +1 to their crew's rolls, and storms shall increase in magnitude by +1 by day and +4 by night.

Native languages: If someone has the potential for an additional language more than they already speak (as per their Wits Score), and drank of the ceremonial bowl in Encounter 19, he will forever after possess the magical ability to **read** (but not necessarily speak) all languages of the native peoples of the Caribbean.

Governor Domingo: If the party met with Baron Domingo, he may have sent the Blood Fleet after them, no matter how friendly or unfriendly he seemed to them, as he wanted to use them to further his status in the eyes of the king of Spain, and promote his favorite captains along the way. Thus, if the party survived this Adventure, they will always find Baron Domingo's city hostile towards them, unless they pay him off with either 12000 gold or the Golden Helmet itself.

Carrying on: This story can immediately continue on into Adventure #2 in this booklet, in 1565, whether the party continues fighting the Spanish crown or not. If this is done, have there be a 'lull' in the action, as Spain feigns peace with other nations long enough for that Adventure to take place.

# THE SILVER EMPIRE

Sssst! Don't be tellin' anyone I told ya this, but truth be told, the Spanish Empire in the New World has a heart, a heart and a weakness, and after a few ter many years, lifetimes says I, that heart is about to stop beatin'. Faith, that you and yer mates can make it happen, and all fer yer own reward, of fame, fortune, and the blessin' o' the Lord Himself! Can ya bring down an empire? They be flyin' in the face a God, and so yer must! Now, let me tell ya how...

**BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE:** Before running this Adventure, it is a good idea to read through it just to be familiar with the storyline and key elements. However, reading the entire Adventure beforehand is not necessary for play.

**Timeline:** This adventure is set in the Caribbean in the year 1565. Those Encounters that are marked with an '\*' require the game to be played in this era. If your game does not adhere to timelines, do not use these Encounters.

**Background:** When everyone is ready to play, begin the adventure by reading the narrative below.

Since King Philip II took the Spanish throne almost ten years ago, Spain has become the strongest power in Europe, girt with the gold and silver mined from the New World. Their greatest strength is in Peruvian silver, and so has the New World earned a new name, the 'Silver Empire'. Flying in the face of God, another ten years and they'll be as strong as they claim.

While other nations squabble amongst themselves and fight foolish religious factions, the Spaniards have quietly built an empire by conquering savages, bleeding with sweat and hard work, and fighting for a new world rather than the old—a world ruled by the Silver Empire.

Finally has the rest of the world begun to realize and accept just how powerful and blasphemous the Spanish have become, and many are scrambling to plunder this new wealth. And why not? Endless tales tell of treasure-laden ships bound for Europe, which are ripe for the taking, the blood-stained silver belonging to you just as much as the Spanish who killed for it...

**PART 1: THE HEART OF AN EMPIRE:** This voyage will begin with political intrigue, deception and reception by both deceivers and retrievers of fame and fortune alike. Play the following Encounters in the order that they are presented.

## 1) Introduction

This Introduction is critical to the Adventure's plot. Select the Character of the most devoted and determined Player, and run this Encounter.

Damn them treacherous crews and cowardly captains—you have been captured by the Coasta Guarda! Left for dead in the hold, everyone else has indeed died, but you remain awake amongst the damned, your heart refusing to quit. Yet you wish you were dead. The days and nights drift by with little light of sun or moon reaching you in your wet, wooden prison.

At last you hear words of hope—a way to strike back at the empire, if you ever get the chance. Overhead on the deck, you can hear several officers engaged in a heated debate. You can't hear all, but you can pick out enough words to surmise that they represent the 'Council of the Indies', and cannot decide how to best use the unmatched power of their unassailable armada—the legendary Treasure Fleet! It seems that they are deeply concerned about how to protect the 'Panama Trail' northwest of Nombre de Dios. From the way they talk, there is little if any protection that can be offered to their silver trains in those dense jungles. They never reach a decision, and soon they leave, perhaps to feast while you starve in the darkness.

Later, much later, days, perhaps a month, you and the rest of the bodies are hoisted into the sunlight and dumped into a shallow lagoon, your own flesh to be the feast of the fish...but your heart will not quit...

The Character can easily find his wandering way to the nearby Spanish city of Santa Marta. If he successfully searches the other bodies, he will find a total of 3-36 pieces of eight on them. He will begin the game with no other money or equipment of any kind.

# THE SILVER EMPIRE

## 2) Introduction

Anyone who does not have their own ship may begin the game here, in Santa Marta.

The lovely seaside town of Santa Marta is bustling with activity. In the tavern of the 'Plata Espada', the Spanish gleefully talk about the vast wealth of the Treasure Fleet that recently departed, leaving much business in its wake. They banter on about how Spain's empire will last forever, that their fleets are too strong to defeat, their ports too heavily fortified, all for God's favor for the silver they bring Him. They drink a toast to the 'Council of the Indies' for their wisdom in war and trade. The non-Spanish patrons argue that "All it takes is one little leak to sink any ship" but most of the locals pretend not to understand their foreign language, and so easily ignore such comments. But suddenly, there is something they cannot ignore, as a famished stranger bursts into the tavern and collapses on the floor, nearly dead with the Fever, babbling incoherent words. The patrons look to you, as if you alone can understand these mad ramblings.

The stranger is the Player Character introduced in Encounter 1. If any PC present is Skilled in 'medicine' or 'poisons', he may make an Intuition Check to discover that the ailing stranger has actually had his life prolonged by a subtle antidote—he should be dead, but he is not. His tale should begin their journey.

## 3) Introduction\*

Any Player Character with his own ship now has his chance to join the game.

You and several other men—captains all—share a late-night drink down at the wharfs. The Spanish liquor is foul, and the candlelight barely enough to read by, yet you would rather talk business here than in the inhuman courts back in Europe. And from there comes this mission by the Queen's spies. The cloaked figure slides an envelope across the table to you, sealed with the Queen's personal crest!

If the envelope is opened, it is a gesture of accepting the mission, detailed on Handout 6. From this point, the Players are free to discuss terms amongst themselves. However, this may be the last chance for a long time for anyone to join the game, so they might wish to accept whatever terms that the decided captain offers...

## 4) The Star Sapphire

If the party has no ship of their own, there is one that is bound for the Spanish waters near Honduras; the 'Star Sapphire', an English barque under the command of 'Major Randolph Longston'. Captain Longston is willing to take on the PCs according to any Skills they have, to receive as many shares of treasure as their highest applicable Skill Level. The Star Sapphire is bound for Nombre de Dios, though only to take advantage of the small ships roaming those tradewaters—nothing could be farther from Major Longston's mind than trying to capture a silver train, so the party will have to acquire the men to attempt any such plan on their own (and without Longston's knowledge). The statistics for Major Longston's ship and crew are provided on Handout 7, and his own on Handout 8. As the Players will now roll for the Star Sapphire when battle occurs, give them Handouts 7 and 8 to study.

## 5) Words of wisdom

If the party seems uncertain of just where or how to ambush the silver train, they will be approached by an English priest, who will invite them to his sermon, where he'll work in one of the following stories about the Godless jungles of Panama.

### Rumors

Roll	Rumor about the jungles near Panama
10-12	The silver trail runs beside a lake where the dead sing at night and sometimes set free the slaves of the train
4-9	A stone that shines like the sun marks the center of a sacred ground where the Spanish guards do not venture
1-3	From the stone of the sun to the depths of the dead world does God not watch



# THE SILVER EMPIRE

**PART 2: SPANISH WATERS:** When the party sets sail for the jungles of Panama, they will face a journey of 93 leagues west by southwest through heavily traveled Spanish waters, until at last they come to the struggling port town of Nombre de Dios, the only gateway to the jungles where the silver train follows secret trails. During their voyage, they may have a few adventures. Use the following two Encounters at your option.

## 6) The El Buscador

Light winds have lifted the Spanish sail of a large galleon above the horizon. More than likely a warship the crew decides quickly, and they await orders, fearing what new laws the Spanish empire may have made since any of them were last in these waters.

The ship is the 'El Buscador', whose name will strike instant fear into the party's crew, for, as its name implies, this Spanish square-rigger is hunting pirates! Running a full 20 cannons to a broadside, the 110 well armed Spaniards aboard are all trained, 3<sup>rd</sup> Level men, and their captain, 'Count Rugan', is a notorious, bloodthirsty friend of King Phillip II, and he will attack the party if they do not flee at once! If it comes to broadside battle, Count Rugan will proudly lead his men, himself of Level 7 with DS 13, G 8, MOVE 110', he wears Spanish armor and uses a cutlass at +4, but also has a pistol that he keeps as a backup weapon in case he is dealing with Godless foreigners that do not fight with honor (one-on-one). If captured, Count Rugan is worth a ransom of 16000 gold!

## 7) Silver dreams

Tonight, the crew gathers amidships to sing and drink, and to offer a toast to the moon. Many of them believe more than ever that the Spanish silver empire can fall—right into their pockets!

If the party is not in command, this is their chance to persuade the entire crew to help them take the silver train—if only they can make a successful Charisma Check! And, the crew will manage keep this secret well enough.

**PART 3: THE JUNGLES OF PANAMA:** The jungles of Panama are a vast, uncharted region, but somewhere out there the Spanish have secret paths that flow with silver. Landing far from the Spanish forts, the party may venture into the unknown, but will they find treasure, or death? Every 1-12 days the party will experience one of the following Encounters, to be played in their presented order until they have played them one and all.

## 8) Ghost town

Run this Encounter immediately if the party goes to the town of Nombre de Dios.

You have come at last to the lonely town of Nombre de Dios. The empty harbor leads into wide streets that are abandoned most of the year, the mud pueblos but echoing the clamor of the Treasure Fleet's yearly arrival and quick departure, seemingly taking all life with them. No more than a hundred people live year-round here, somehow able to endure the terrible heat and savage winds. You are among the few who are not unsettled by this, that such a major port is all but abandoned, a ghost town when but six months ago the largest fleet in the world was moored here. One of the crew comments how uncanny it is that your course blew you here of all places, a notion that gets an instant and almost unanimous support from the rest of the crew. You lean on the railing and look into the empty streets, wondering what darkness you'll have to walk through to find the secret to seizing the legendary silver train.

Most of the crew will be unwilling to go ashore because of superstitions, that Nombre de Dios is a 'ghost town' most of the year is because of unlivable conditions brought on by the black magic of the natives in the jungle. As a result, the Player Characters can only encourage a maximum number of NPCs to go ashore with them equal to the highest PC's Charisma Score. In town, the party will find little of value. However, the locals will be able to direct them towards the Spanish silver trails, reducing the number of days elapsed between the Encounters ahead from 1-12 to 1-6.

# THE SILVER EMPIRE

## 9) Lagoon

Use this Encounter only if the party is relying heavily on the clues of a haunted lagoon to narrow their search for the silver trail.

It is nearing twilight, and an eerie calm fills the jungles, and early shadows slither through the dense palms. The first stars pierce vibrant red and orange sky as you stumble upon a lagoon, its tranquil waters shining like a sable mirror. All is quiet. Too quiet.

A successful search of this area will find signs of an old campsite, about a year old, including a Spanish Conquistador's helmet.

## 10) Escaped slave

As you continue to hack your way through the endless jungle, you hear—or think you hear—the moan of a dying man, not far away . . .

A successful Searching Check will discover a native, bruised and famished, laying in the bushes nearby. He has escaped from the silver mines of Peru, and is afraid of all white men. If the party aids him, he will be able to tell them his tale either in his native tongue or in Spanish. He will describe the place he was enslaved as “A mouth of Hell, into which a great mass of people enter every year and are sacrificed by the greed of the White Men to their ‘god’.”

If anyone can speak this native's own tongue and is friendly towards him, he will promise them the aid of his people. If the party helps him back to his village (4 leagues away), move on to Part 4 of this Adventure. However, if this does not occur, move on to Part 5 instead.

If this native is attacked, he will die, even if that is not the party's intention, as he is so weak. However, his dying breath will release a blood-curdling cry, and that same night, the jungle will be filled with the unearthly sounds of unknown beasts and ghosts, terrifying the party's crew—each group of NPCs (by Level) will only stand a chance in 6 equal to their Level of staying, otherwise they will flee back to the ship.

**PART 4: GREATER THAN GOLD?:** The native camp will be able to supply the party with all the food and water they need. However, in addition to these offerings, the natives will invite the party to stay the night, engaging the following Encounters. If the party passes these ‘tests’ well enough, they may gain more than they could have hoped for . . .

## 11) The wild hunt

The natives will invite the party to join a boar hunt, which all NPCs will refuse, leaving only the Player Characters to accept, if they will. Anyone who does will be given a spear and not allowed anything else, as this is a magical ritual. During the hunt, the boar will be ‘found’ by and so attack a random PC. If he kills it, he will be rewarded later that night. However, if he is ‘killed’ by the boar, he will not die but instead have been saved at the last moment by the other natives. All wounds gained in this hunt will be cured by nightfall due to the village shaman's magic.

## 12) Ritual dance

If no white man succeeded in killing the boar during the hunt earlier, do not read the second paragraph of the following narrative. However, if a Player Character did indeed dispatch the boar, read the following narrative in its entirety, replacing ‘**CHARACTER**’ with the name of the hunt's victor.

The jungle comes to life at night. The natives have created a bonfire and are dancing around it with the fervor of madmen, yet the smiles on their faces and the life in their limber movements is all too real. They are beginning a high ceremony, one where they offer the ‘most valuable treasure’ in the world to one person. You wonder what it could be.

Once the dance is complete, you are brought before the village elder, an ageless man with deeply-set eyes. He has ‘**CHARACTER**’ stripped down to his loins, and the natives proceed to smear him with ritual paint—blood and chalk mixed with the elder's own sweat of the last three days, signifying that he alone may vie for the treasure they have so long spoken of.

# THE SILVER EMPIRE

If there is no designated champion amongst the party, the first to volunteer will be allowed this honor. In any event, the chosen Character must wrestle the largest native in the village for the unknown prize, a 'kill' effectively becoming a knockout. This large native's statistics are: DS 8, B 9, G 10, and gaining +1 to his melee attacks. If the Player Character wins, he will be promised his prize in three moons, when the only true silver, that of the moon, is full.

## 13) Full union

If a Player Character defeated the village champion and so was promised their greatest treasure, in three nights' time he will receive his reward...

You lay awake tonight, thinking about galleons full of silver. The rest of the village is quiet, held under the spell of the full moon, which is brimming with silver light, and it's hard to think about anything else. But soon you are brought before the elder once more. Standing beside him is his daughter, her own eyes seductive, her smile joyous only now that you have come. She takes your hand and bows before you.

The Player Character has been offered the elder's beautiful daughter in marriage. If he declines, he must make a Charisma Check, with success indicating that the village elder understands the division of their worlds and wishes the party long life, but with failure indicating that the elder is insulted and orders the entire village, all 35 men, to kill the party! Each has DS 6, B 5, G 10, MOVE 150', and they each wear wooden armor (masks) and use their spears (pikes) at +2. They are all Level 1. However, if the Character accepts the elder's daughter, the 35 natives will offer to help the party in their ambush on the silver train! What's more, they will know exactly where the 'Sunstone' and haunted lagoon are, and thus where the best place is to ambush the Spanish. They have not done this in the past only because they were afraid of the white men returning with magical weapons, but since the party are Europeans themselves, they realize that this is war between the tribes of white men, and will remain that way.

**PART 5: THE SILVER TRAIN:** The party may make a Searching Check twice a day to find the Spanish road that the silver train uses. The long-awaited battle can occur anywhere along a good hundred miles of winding, jungle paths. If they specifically sought any landmarks that could be a 'sunstone' or a lagoon that echoes with the songs of the dead during the night, they will gain a bonus of +2 to their Searching Checks. Once they have found the road, the following two Encounters provide opportunities for either an ambush or a direct attack—whichever the party prefers. In either event however, once attacked, the Spaniards will surrender immediately. This is because they have known of the party's plan for some time, this unguarded road thought to be the 'weak-link in the silver chain' purposefully leaked in Encounter 1! There are 100 Spanish guards waiting in an ambush just up the road! They all have scores of DS 9, G 8, MOVE 100', they each have a cutlass and a pistol, and +2 to use them both. They are all Level 1. In this hopeless battle, any Player Characters put down will not be killed but merely knocked out, to be taken to the silver mines, as detailed in Part 6. However, if the party actually wins, they may take as many of the 9000 silver ingots (each worth 1000 gold and weighing 10) they can carry and immediately go on to Part 7!

## 14) Ambush!

The steaming, sweltering jungle hides many secrets, but a keen eye has led you past sunlit standing stones and haunted lagoons until at last the dense foliage is cut by a ray of sunlight, which guides you to a narrow road winding through the endless palm trees. All is quiet. But soon this well-trodden path will be turned to mud with the blood of the Silver Empire!

## 15) Attack!

A sharp ear guides you through the steaming, sweltering jungle, past sunlit standing stones and haunted lagoons that hasten your steps until at last the dense foliage is cut by a ray of sunlight, landing upon the laden chests and polished armor of the Spanish silver train!



# THE SILVER EMPIRE

**PART 6: HELL OF SILVER:** More than likely the party will be captured by the guards of the silver train, which will land them in the silver mines themselves! At this point, the following Encounters will tell the tale of their fate. Play them in the order they are presented.

Guards: Each of the Encounters may involve a fight with mine guards. In all such instances, the guards have the following statistics: DS 8, G 5, MOVE 90', they each wear Spanish armor and a helmet, and carry a cutlass and two pistols, with +2 to use them both. They are all Level 1.

Time: There is an inapplicable passage of time between each of the following Encounters, so do not attempt to count it and do not appoint consequences for it.

Escape!: If at any time the party escapes the silver mines, the Spaniards will learn about it soon enough, and 30 guards will give chase. Even if the party can outrun them or somehow overpower them, they will still face a 36 league journey back to their ship (or 20 leagues back to the native camp found in Part 4).

## 16) Francisco's judgment\*

You are at last brought before the seat of the famous Spaniard 'Francisco de Toledo', a former Conquistador, his throne set atop the rubble that was once the altar in the center of this native temple. "One day I will leave this place," he sneers, "yet that day is often delayed by setbacks and raids such as yours. I have an generous offer to be viceroy of all Peru, the richest land in New Spain, cornerstone of the Empire! It pains me to sit on this throne, here at the mines, when I could be in a palace miles away. You heathens shall learn an honest lesson in God's plan for Spain in the Hell of your prison. Is there anything you have to say in your shame?"

If there are any Spanish Characters present, they may be pardoned for a fee equal to their Notoriety Level multiplied by 100-1200 (100-600 for Coasta Guarda). If the party tries to fight or

flee, there are only 10 guards present, but that will be enough to stand between them and de Toledo long enough to ensure his quick escape.

## 17) Into the mouth of Hell

The party will be led in leg-chains down into the dark mines, with the guards' first and final words "You can forget about the sun. God has forsaken you. Heaven shines with the Silver Empire." Thus begins an indefinite period of slavery. The other enemies of Spain imprisoned here will tell the party quickly that there is no hope, for since the natives began pouring molten silver into the mouths of captive Spaniards, slavery has become damnation by the words of their priests, and they enforce it. How long the party remains here is up to them. At any given time there are 1-6 guards present (seen or unseen), and the party's leg-chains reduce Movement to 10' and penalize Stealth Checks by -3. Every time anything they attempt fails, the beating a Character receives from the guards will result in the permanent loss of one of his first four Ability Scores, rolled at random.

## 18) Old Roy

Once the party has exhausted all sensible attempts at an escape, the winds of their fortune shall shift, and if they are not yet drowned in defeat, they might indeed breathe the free air again.

You are moved you down to a new tunnel. You are alone here, save for a seemingly dead man slumped in the corner. He stirs at your approach.

The strange man is an old pirate who simply calls himself 'Roy'. Long ago he found a natural tunnel, but he was caught trying to undo the shackles of his shipmates, now long dead, and had his eyes put out for it. He may be blind, but knows where the tunnel is, and will offer it to the party, with a warning: "When they took my eyes, they filled my ears with poison, that anyone I lead there will have his heart taken out." Getting to the tunnel requires a Stealth Check on the part of each Character, and anyone who is caught will indeed be put to death! The tunnel opens miles away...

# THE SILVER EMPIRE

**PART 7: WAR ON SPAIN:** By now, the party will either have good reason to want to spill the blood of all the Empire, or the Spanish will have good reason to spill theirs! One way or another, once the party gets back to sea, they had better be ready for war! Play the following Encounters in the order that they are presented.

## 19) Returning to the ship

Run this Encounter if the party returns to the their ship in the harbor of Nombre de Dios.

All is quiet aboard. The ship sways gently in the harbor current, the normal groan of the rigging reduced to a whisper, as if the very ship is afraid to be heard. You look back at the lonely harbor of Nombre de Dios, and not a soul can be seen in its windswept streets. What curse has this place cast upon you? Your sturdy vessel is more like a ghost ship...

The party may find many things amiss back at their ship. Firstly, supplies will be low, as most of the food will either have been eaten or simply become rotten, reducing the crew's days of food to a mere 2-7. But much more ominous, if the crew fled in fear back in Encounter 10, they will be hiding below decks, and will not let the party come down until they prove they are not possessed with evil spirits—there is a dagger pinning a parchment to the mainmast, with a message:

*A lock of hair for the Devil's due  
Or he will be coming for you  
Unless in faith you're pious and pure  
But honest men cannot be sure  
Until one drinks the Devil's ale  
Keeps his hair and doesn't go pale*

This note is reproduced on Handout 9. If one willingly drinks poison and survives, these seamen will see it as a sign that the Character stands in favor with God, the sea, or whatever other faith they may have, and they will accept him again. If the party needs poison, the dagger that pinned the note to the mainmast is envenomed with poison made at Skill Level 1. However, if one indeed

cuts off some hair and offers it to the sea, the crew will see this as daring the Devil himself, and so calls for a Charisma Check, with failure indicating that the entire crew seeks to kill that individual, but with success gaining greater respect from them than ever before, winning them over one and all and with +10 to their Morale!

## 20) The Silver Scow\*

If you believe that the party's ship does not have the firepower to be victorious in the upcoming battle (Encounter 21), then they will find some unlikely allies, though they will drive a hard bargain...

As you are preparing to get underway, half of the crew stop their duties and look towards the harbor entrance, and one-by-one the others are ensnared by their curiosity as well—even yourself. For there is arriving into this ghost harbor a sizable ship, flying no flag at all...

The ship is the 'Silver Scow', captained by the well known Welsh pirate 'Steven Williams'. His mariner is fit and well provisioned, runs 12 cannon, and is manned by 120 well armed men (90 1<sup>st</sup> Level and 30 3<sup>rd</sup> Level). If the party treats with him, he will suggest an alliance. He is well aware that several Spanish warships have broken from the Treasure Fleet and are coming their way. If the party agrees to an alliance, Williams will be agreeable to the party's own articles and division of treasure. If the party is not in command, their captain will refuse these terms, and, once rejected, Williams will sail away with hardly a word. However, if the party is in command but refuses Williams anyway, the surrounding crews of both ships with began to get restless, and then someone will shout "Fight it out!", giving rise a chant of "Fight! Fight!", demanding that the two captains brawl to see who gets to make this decision that could mean a great deal of wealth for them! For current and future reference, the statistics for Captain Williams are provided here. He is a Buccaneer of Level 5, with DS 11, B 5, G 9, MOVE 140', uses a longsword at +4, pistols at +2, and is Skilled in Leadership at Level 2.

# THE SILVER EMPIRE

## 21) The empire strikes back

Once at sea, the party will find themselves flanked by the Spanish—who is hunting who?

Passing carefully through the reefs, you find your ship suddenly flanked by several large galleons! The Spanish flag flies all around you, staining the silver clouds red with the blood of King Phillip's crest! There are five ships in all—three large warships rounding on you, and the other two—you can almost count the massive treasure chests piled on their decks from here...

This a portion of the 'New Spain' Treasure Fleet, commanded by 'Pedro Menendez de Aviles', a naval hero and officer in the Council of the Indies, captain of the Treasure Fleet for many years, and now the judge and jury for the party, unless they choose to fight! If they do not fight, they will be allowed to go if they pay a 50% tribute of their entire cargo hold (and treasure) to Spain. de Aviles will tell them that the empire shall never fall, and make a momentous speech about how the Spanish first claimed this world, and by God's law all the New World belongs to King Phillip II. However, his words may be turned against him if someone produces the Golden Helmet from Adventure #1 in this booklet—this treasure will cause one of Captain de Aviles' ships to see the party as the rightful owners of the New World and turn against Spain! In any event, when the inevitable first shot is fired, the three Spanish galleons armed for war each run 15 cannon and are manned by 250 armed and armored 1<sup>st</sup> Level Spaniards! de Aviles himself will command the battle from the aft-deck of his flagship, which cannot be reached by the party without going through the other two warships first, and even then the Player Characters must kill 2-24 Spaniards aboard his ship before they can reach the captain. If cornered at last, de Aviles will surrender.

The remaining two Spanish galleons will not fight if their warships are defeated. While most of the silver train was loaded onto dozens of other ships of the Treasure Fleet, now far, far away, each of these five Spanish vessels carry 100-1200 silver ingots (each valuing 1000).

Once this battle is over, if the surviving crew of Steven Williams outnumbers that of the party, he will turn on them! If the party refused an alliance with Steven Williams in Encounter 20, he will return, having waited for the victor to emerge and attack while the ships are disoriented! In either event, Williams is only following orders—the Queen of England sent him to capture the party whom she can blame for 'trying to start a war', making them into political pawns. However, unlike the Spanish Court, the English won't pay a single shilling for Williams should he be captured—his failure will earn him his own fate.

**CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE:** Once the battle is over, there are some things to consider.

Pedro Menendez de Aviles: If this Spanish hero is not killed, he will be worth a ransom of 11000 pieces of eight. However, this will only prove to be a respite, as de Aviles will eventually return to capture the French settlements in Florida, thus founding St. Augustine and becoming governor of Florida, so he can protect the Treasure Fleets as they exit the Caribbean. If de Aviles is indeed killed, St. Augustine will never come to be.

Political puppets: If the party was sent on this journey by the Queen of England and was later ambushed by Steven Williams, they will, if they return to England, be imprisoned on fabricated charges of heresy and be sold into slavery.

The white chief: If a Player Character married the native princess, he will never be allowed to live in any town of Level 5 or higher, as the hierarchy will label him a heretic. If the Player retires that Character, he will gain 4 additional Creation Points to make his next one.

Carrying on: This story can immediately continue on into Adventure #3 in this booklet, in 1568, whether the party continues waging war on the Spanish crown or not. If this is done, have there be a 'lull' in the action, as Spain feigns peace with other nations long enough for that Adventure to take place (they may even go back to war **because** of the Player Characters' actions).



# THE GOLDEN HEAVENS

Aye matey, 'tis true! What they be sayin' o' the silver trains and Treasure Fleets, 'bout buildin' an empire only second ta the one already 'ere, well, there be many a man gone searchin' fer the fabled city o' gold at the heart o' it all! Ye think ye can find what others turned away from? We'll see...

**BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE:** Before running this Adventure, it is a good idea to read through it just to be familiar with the storyline and key elements. However, reading the entire Adventure beforehand is not necessary for play.

**Timeline:** This adventure is set in the Caribbean in the year 1568. Those Encounters that are marked with an "\*" require the game to be played in this era. If your game does not adhere to timelines, do not use these Encounters.

**Background:** When everyone is ready to play, begin the adventure by reading the narrative below.

The Spanish Empire has ruled the New World for almost a hundred years, but now at last it is beginning to crumble, its faith in gold and silver turning paradise into Hell, the molten metals mixing with blood in the seas of sin.

Strange are the turns of fortune. But God moves in mysterious ways, it is said, and so you do your best to accept where your voyage has ended; avoiding privateers, storms and corals, your ship has at last dropped its anchor in a new harbor, the struggling port of Santiago Vega. The Spanish flag flies over the meager settlement, staining the sky with the fading symbols of the Empire.

The people of this strange place are desperate, not to serve their king or even their homeland, but simply to survive. The town is built on a narrow spit that reaches around the side of the harbor, the bulk of the island unexplored by all Christian men. This is a cursed place—you can almost feel Heaven's scorn in the biting wind. Yet in this city of sin you hear countless stories of treasure to be had in all directions, as if this fledging town were the heart of a newly growing empire, one day perhaps ruled by a city of gold...

**PART 1: THE BLOOD OF AN EMPIRE:** The party shall begin their adventure in the newly established port of Santiago Vega. It will not matter how wealthy or how poor they were before, for the fortunes of the sea have brought them here for a higher purpose. But what is that purpose? The following Encounters will begin the tale...

**Lawlessness:** Santiago Vega has few laws and fewer means to enforce them. Indeed, in the eyes of the Spanish, it is a heathen city, left to fend for itself under the judgment of God. There is not even a governor. As a result, the people fend for themselves and survive only through mutual cooperation and trade with any vessels that come to their island—especially pirates.

**Hostility:** If in the rare event that the party makes the town of Santiago Vega hostile to their flag, the outraged citizens will fight to the last man.

**Rumors:** Not knowing quite where to go or what to do, the party will find tales of treasure in unlikely places. Throughout the following four Encounters, they will hear different rumors of lost riches. Use the following chart whenever such a story is related to the party.

## Rumors

Roll	Rumor about treasure to be had
10-12	God moves in mysterious ways. He gave the Spanish their empire, and now He is taking it away. But He will tempt all others as well. The city of gold can be found only in your heart
8-9	Countless men have lost their lives on this very island—the jungles to the north grow with the blood of those seeking an idol carved from a single, giant emerald
5-7	God has passed judgment on the Empire. Last year, six gold ships were lost off Hispaniola—three million ducats worth!
3-4	God is bringing down the Empire. Five years ago, countless ships were lost to storms, seven off Nombre de Dios alone
1-2	Countless ships are being lost to storms, God's judgment on their greed, and the devils of the jungles take what survives

# THE GOLDEN HEAVENS



## 1) Introduction

Select the most Notorious Character and run this Encounter. If no Character speaks Spanish, do not read the second paragraph of the following narrative.

You are suddenly accosted by the guards and taken to the block to be sold into slavery! A crowd of all kinds of people are gathered.

“You vagabonds can help redeem the empire with sweat!” the guard snarls as he ties your hands. “African beasts curse our crops.”

The other Player Characters will be amongst the crowd. If any of them bid on the poor PC, they will win, and the auctioneer will proclaim this a test of faith by the church, and they will have their gold returned to them, and the captured PC may go free. If a woman bids on him, they will keep the money. If nobody bids on him, they will offer the lonely man their blessings, and 1-12 gold.

## 2) Heaven is Hell

If the party seeks information from the church, run this Encounter.

The only church in town is an ominous building to be sure. With little room or gold for graves, the locals simply etch a simple epitaph on the forehead of a skull, hundreds of which are sunk into the dried mud that make up the outer walls of this house of God. As you pass the threshold and step into the dank darkness of the chapel, you wonder if there are any treasures left in life at all. The Priest does little to ease your concerns, as he says that God has forsaken the empire because it was built with silver rather than with faith. He looks at you darkly, as if he is already judging the greed in your heart.

Despite the Priest’s obvious misgivings, he will indeed tell the party a tale of treasure, if only to test them. If there are clearly religious people present in the party they will gain +2 to this roll. If they offer anything to the poor box, they will gain an additional rumor (re-roll duplicate results).

## 3) Madwoman

If the party seeks rumors directly from citizens or without discretion, run this Encounter.

The locals shun your inquiries, and those few who will speak to you simply direct you to a small house on the outskirts of town. The rotting carcass of a dead slave lays in the tall grass, and wild geese have overtaken the ill-tended yard. All in silent.

If the party knocks or simply enters, they will be greeted by an old midwife. She’s obviously mad, as instanced by the three cribs beside her fireplace filled with the bones of infants. She says she speaks to them from ‘the other side’, which will provide the party with one rumor. If someone is African, they will gain +3 to this roll.

## 4) Long live the queen\*

If the party seeks anything from the captain of a ship, run this Encounter.

Your inquiries have led you to The Queen’s Pirates, the only non-Spanish tavern in town, where motley, weary sailors gather to drown their woes in ale. It is impossible to tell the difference between crews and their captains. However, there is one man that stands out from the rest, a clean, sober man with the look of youth and intelligence.

If the party approaches the man, he will introduce himself as ‘Francis Drake’, a proud Englishman. He has two ships, and is currently dividing his forces, as his crew is too many to manage. If the party is all British or speaks at all with disdain for the Spanish, Captain Drake will make them an offer, that if they can pry out of the cowardly Spanish villagers (who refuse to talk to **him**) the separate tales of **two** treasures, he will give them his extra ship and crew to seek one fortune while he seeks the other. If the party can indeed acquire two different rumors, Captain Drake will make good on his offer, giving them ‘The Crucifix’, her statistics provided on Handout 10.

# THE GOLDEN HEAVENS

**PART 2: THE WILD CHASE:** Once the party sets out in search of treasure, they will find only blood and maybe a little reward, but no great fortune, no matter in what direction they travel. However, strange turns of fortune will offer them opportunities to chase a legend, as each dead-end turns them towards the 'golden Heavens'. Play the following Encounters when applicable.

## 5) Pirate hunter

If the party seeks treasure on the open sea, the first ship they meet...

The crimson sunset glows like hellfire behind the silhouetted sails of a large ship, headed straight for you! She flies the Spanish flag.

This Spanish galleon is running 20 cannon against the party, with 350 fully equipped Spanish sailors aboard (200 1<sup>st</sup> Level and 150 3<sup>rd</sup> Level), and they fully intend to take everything the party has—except their lives. Males will be taken back to Santiago Vega to be sold as slaves, one and all. Females will be given a choice, that of being sold or becoming the Spanish captain's concubine. If the latter is chosen, there is a 1 in 12 chance each night of becoming pregnant. In any event, any Characters can attempt to escape their predicament with a Stealth Check at any time, with failure indicating certain and unavoidable capture and such brutal punishment as rolled on the following chart. Note that if the same person rolls a '1' or '4' a third time, it should be re-rolled (a person has only two eyes and two hands to lose, after all). Similarly, a '2' or '3' can only occur once, and should thereafter be re-rolled.

### Punishment

Roll	Punishment for attempting to escape
10-12	Tied to a post and whipped; wound of -2
5-9	1-12 days on the 'Wheel'; wound of -3, not to begin healing until off the Wheel
4	One hand cut off; loss of -2 to Brawn
2-3	Hobbled; loss of -4 to Agility
1	One eye put out with hot irons; loss of -4 to Defense Score and all Attack Rolls

## 6) Ol' Creole

If the party seeks treasure inland from Santiago Vega, they will encounter...

Endless sugar cane fields rise up into the jungles of the island. Forcing your way through the dense palms, you soon see something shining in the distance. A little farther on, you see a low cleft, atop of which is the life-sized statue of an emerald-green man, sitting cross-legged as if in contemplation, overlooking a small village below.

The village is of escaped slaves, mostly African, but they are led by a scornful Frenchman, named in prison 'Ol' Creole'. However, Ol' Creole is not in the village at present—he **is** the statue atop the cleft, his body smeared with green ceremonial paint. If either he or 'his people' are disturbed, they will feign friendliness long enough to escort the party to the center of the village, where 20 men will surround them with spears, and then Ol' Creole will proceed to judge them for their bloodthirsty, European ways! Each European Character must make a Charisma Check, this roll modified by +2 if one says they are seeking freedom, enlightenment or anything virtuous, but suffers a penalty of -2 if they say they are seeking treasure of any kind. If successful, one will be allowed to go free. If this Check fails, one will be impaled on the spot (automatic spear strike)! If all the party's checks succeed, Ol' Creole will see them as different than other white-skins, and will join them, his statistics provided on Handout 11.

## 7) Hell is Heaven

If the party seeks treasure within Santiago Vega itself, a Searching Check may find...

Not far from the church you find a dark, dank tunnel descending into forgotten tunnels. You haven't gone far when you come to a dead-end, a chamber whose walls are built with clustered skulls, grinning at you with devilish delight. As your light flickers in their deep, empty eyes, it is difficult to think about treasure at all.



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If the party takes the time to study the skulls (no roll necessary) they will see old, worn epitaphs scratched on their brows. Mostly consisting of simple names and dates, one skull has a message, written in Spanish. If one can read the writing, it says 'Man proposes, God disposes'. If nobody can read Spanish, the Players may attempt to decipher the words themselves by studying Handout 12. If this particular skull is touched, an Intuition Check will notice that it is actually made of gold and merely coated with the same grime as the countless other skulls here (this roll made with a +2 bonus if one is Skilled in Appraising). This skull is worth 9000 gold coins, whether melted down or sold outright, though a Brawn Check is required to pry it free (this roll made with a bonus of +3 if a dagger is used).

## 8) Words of warning

If the party does not seek treasure at all, or have fled or 'failed', the next character they talk to, whether it be the town priest, Ol' Creole or anyone else, will tell a strange tale...

In the dim, flickering light, the words that others may have once brushed aside sound like the conviction of the Great Judge Himself. "You are wise to turn aside from all that petty gold..." the tale begins. "Only eight years ago, a large party sought the legendary 'city of gold', which they named 'El Dorado'. Yet seeking this gold curses one to match their greed; the expedition turned into a rebellion. The jungle, their fear, and the devil defeated them. Their porter, 'Lope de Aguirre' seized command, but after months of roaming the jungle, madness claimed him at last. He forced his men to renounce their king, and declared that all of Peru belonged to him, and their cabin boy became 'prince'. They eventually killed each other, the jungle turning them into animals, hunting one another. Such is the fate of false kings and false faiths. Turn back now." Then he adds "The greatest treasure in the world can be found only with the compass of the heart. The golden gates of the heavenly city! The son of the sun will tell you..."

**PART 3: FAITH IN GOLD:** Before setting out, the party may need to find financial means to search for the fabled 'city of gold'. The following Encounters will provide plenty of opportunities for just such backing. Use them where applicable.

## 9) Winds of fortune

If the party still has a ship in some capacity, while at sea, they may find some financing.

"It's a sloop," says the lookout, "nothing to be afraid of." As the small vessel draws near, its captain heaves-to and hails you, anxious for a parley, it seems.

The sloop is captained by a proud Englishman, middle-aged and somewhat cracked, but one who believes in legends and lost treasures! If during their talk the party makes any mention of their search for a 'city of gold', he will immediately agree to join them, saying "It is God's will that we met. Nothing to chance about it—the winds of fortune are shifting throughout the New World. The Spanish Empire will fall, and God's chosen will come here. But to do God's will we need gold, so let us seek it together!" If the party is not in command, their captain, not believing in this legend, will give them the choice to leave and join this Englishman, 'Ensign Smith'. In any event, he will give the party full reign of his sloop, the 'Holy Grail', even captaincy, so long as they fly the English flag. He has but 7 cannon, an anchor, and 30 unruly Englishmen (all 1<sup>st</sup> Level) aboard, with but 20 days of food each.

## 10) Visiting the governor

If the party seeks a governor for financing, they will stand a 3 in 12 chance of gaining an audience, +2 for every rank one has in that nation's navy. Once they have stated their case, one amongst the party must make a Charisma Check, modified by the factors provided on the following page. If this Check fails, they will be ordered out. If successful, the governor will give the party 4000-15000 gold to finance their expedition, with the understanding that 50% of

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whatever treasure is found is given to his king, and that the one who impressed him (the one who made the Charisma Check) is officially in command for the entire voyage.

## Audience With The Governor

Modifier	Party's proposal includes...
+3	Speaking to a non-Spanish governor, and they completed Adventure #2
+2	Speaking to a non-Spanish governor, and they are not Spanish either
+1	Offering 30% or more of the treasure to the governor, his nation or king
+1	Offering to attack any Spanish they may meet along the way
-2	Speaking to a Spanish governor, with a majority of the party non-Spanish

## 11) Modern Major-general

If the party outright seeks a financier, there will only be one in town who will agree to see them, given what they are asking for.

His offices closed, the financier's clerk agrees to see you at his plantation for tea. Once there, you find him standing on a sparkling beach, taking his ease under a large palm-umbrella and gently fanned by several smiling slaves. He is dressed in the finest white to match his mustache. He turns to greet you, speaking as if singing in such an onslaught of articulate words that it leaves you breathless. From his barrage of boastful titles and tales of his own adventures, you gather that he is as wealthy in experience as he is in gold. He is the very model of a modern Major-general.

Major 'Stanley' will listen to the party's own tale, and then will make his offer: For every Level and/or English rank of their leader, Major Stanley will give them 1000 gold. He will expect no return at all. Instead, the party must agree to three requests: They must voyage under the English flag, they must agree to destroy any Spanish they encounter, and most importantly, all (male) Player Characters must pledge their troth to one of his many beautiful daughters, to wed upon their return exactly one year to the day.

**PART 4: TO FIND HEAVEN:** If the party sets out to sea in search of treasure, they will ever be entering into more battles as tensions increase between Spain and the other nations of Europe. Use the following Encounters at your discretion.

## 12) The blood of greed

The sparkling blue waters are stained with the fresh blood of a body floating in the waves.

As the body has not yet been touched by sharks or other sea predators, it is very fresh indeed—there is trouble nearby. A simple search of the body (no roll necessary) will discover a note instead his hat. When a Character reads it, replace 'SHIP' with the name of the party's ship (or flagship); 'We've got you, *SHIP*'. Indeed, there is a small band of Spaniards nearby, their own ship a rickety old sloop, and they will demand that the party surrender. However, if the party chooses to fight, these cowardly cutthroats will be so surprised and fearful that they will surrender in turn, and beg for their lives.

## 13) The Royal Warrior

"Sail ho!" The call is all too familiar in these waters, where the setting sun ignites the sky like the mouth of an enemy cannon, and the water is stained with the crimson red of Spanish blood. Indeed, the sail sighted is of a Spanish warship, and they are closing on you.

The Spanish ship is the 'Regio Guerrero', a new design being put to the test for the Spanish king's fleet, a man-o-war running 24 guns with a crew of 145 Spaniards (of a total 260 Levels). If the party does not flee, the Spaniards will act in the following order of priority:

If the party is flying the flag of any nation (even Spain itself), they will demand tribute for sailing through these Spanish waters, a levy of 30% of all treasure and cargo aboard the party's vessel (as Spain claims that all treasures of the New World are rightfully theirs, by God's favor).

If the party's vessel is smaller than the Spanish man-o-war, they will attack.

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If the party's vessel is larger than the Spanish man-o-war, they will themselves turn and flee.

If it comes to battle, this incident will happen to be the final straw in far-reaching politics, causing Spain to go to war with whatever nation's flag that the party was flying during the battle (if any). Such an incident will increase the captain's Notoriety by 50.

If it does not come to come to battle, or if the party is victorious, they may try to gain information concerning the 'city of gold' from the Spaniards. If there was no battle, a simple Charisma Check will glean all that they know. Otherwise, the Spanish will not reveal anything without being tortured first. In either event, all they know is that the fabled 'city of gold' is called 'El Dorado', and that it lies in one of three places—Honduras, Cuba, or Louisiana.

## 14) An Angel's guidance

When the search for a golden city is desperate...

This night, as the stars shine upon the dark waves, suddenly there appears upon the sails above the silvery silhouette of a woman. You glance down at your bottle. Almost hoping you are drunk, you hear a voice; "You will never find the city of gold at sea..." These words still echo in your mind come the morning's light—it is morning! Perhaps you did drink too much.

Let the party make of this what they will. If they continue to search for treasure, they will only find it on the other side of the storm of war.

**PART 5: TO ENTER HEAVEN:** If the party sets out in search of treasure anywhere on land, they will ever enter into one peril after another. Use the following Encounters at your discretion.

## 15) The blood of madness

Your trek through the sweltering jungle is halted before a body laying face down in a small pool of shallow mud.

As the body has not yet been touched by boars or other jungle predators, it is very fresh indeed—there is trouble nearby. If the party does anything but look up, they will give the first Round of combat to the 5 ragged men who are waiting above in ambush! These men all went mad looking for 'El Dorado', and will fight to the death, so the party will not learn their fate unless they make an effort to capture them alive. Their statistics are DS 5, B 2, G 6, MOVE 110', and they each use makeshift, rusted blades (an average Base Damage of 4). They are all Level 1.

## 16) Savages

The jungle is mysteriously quiet—the chirping of unknown birds, the occasional rustle in the undergrowth, the echo of distant drumbeats...

In 3 Rounds the party will be attacked by 16 cannibals! When battle begins, have everyone make an Intuition Check in order to notice that the natives point at any gold trinkets or jewelry each Character may be wearing. If the party offers them any gold, the natives will take it and leave. These savage men have DS 7, G 7, MOVE 140', they are effectively 3<sup>rd</sup> Level, and they wield spears with +2 to their Attack Rolls for 2 Base Damage.

## 17) An Angel's warning

When the search for a golden city is desperate...

This night, as the stars shine above the tops of the tall palms, suddenly the clouds drift apart, as if the moon were removing its hood, and in its silvery light you see the fair face of a woman. You wipe your brow, distrusting of the heat and diseases in these jungles. Almost hoping you are mad, you hear a voice; "You will never find the city of gold on land..." These words still echo in your mind as the clouds obscure the moon and cast the jungle deep into the blind darkness wherein all men go mad.

Let the party make of this what they will. If they continue to search for treasure, they will only find it in their dreams, delirium, and nightmares.



# THE GOLDEN HEAVENS



**PART 6: EVIL BEGETS EVIL:** Long and fruitless the party's search for a city of gold may have proven, if they see only gold indeed. There are many in the world that see just that, and only that, and having been robbed of it by the party, they now wish to see only blood. Use the following Encounters wherever they are applicable.

## 18) The curse of gold

If any of the current party members were involved in Adventure #1 of this booklet, even by ties of blood or bond, their old enemies want revenge...

"Sail ho!" The call is all too familiar now, with the setting sun setting fire to the sky as if all the world were the furnace of fate, and you have at last been trapped inside of it. Indeed, the sail sighted is of a Spanish ship, its bowsprit carved like a king wearing a winged, golden helmet, matching that worn by the captain himself.

Whether or not the party found the Golden Helmet years ago, the Spanish, unable to find it themselves have made a forgery, and now seek to silence the only witnesses to the contrary. If the party did indeed find the true Golden Helmet, this will give their attackers all the more reason to kill them—to capture the genuine article! In any event, the Spanish galleon that is closing on them is the 'Domingo's Vengar', manned by 220 1<sup>st</sup> Level Spaniards, 60 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Spaniards, and 30 4<sup>th</sup> Level Spaniards, armed to the teeth and running a full 20 cannon. The captain is the famous 'Colonel Juan Rivera', a Spanish Buccaneer of 5<sup>th</sup> Level, 80 Notoriety, DS 11, G 8, MOVE 130', who fights like a devil with his gilded cutlass at +4.

If the party still possesses the Golden Helmet of legend, openly displaying it will cause a large number of Spaniards to turn against Colonel Rivera, a total of 10-120 plus an additional 10 for every Notoriety Level the wearer has.

If the party is defeated, nobody will ever find their bodies, making inheritance all the more difficult, thus if one extends his lost Character's family with his new one, the cost of his **first** roll on Table 62 will be increased from 1 to 3 Creation Points (regardless of age).

## 19) Deals with devils

If any of the current party members were involved in Adventure #2 of this booklet, whatever their successes, their old enemies have not forgotten...

"Ahoy the deck! Spanish ship off the port bow!"  
A Spanish ship indeed, an obvious pirate hunter.

Regardless of what may have happened before, the Spanish are using the party as scapegoats for the wars beginning between Spain and England. The lone pirate hunter they have dispatched to follow the party will be of the same type of ship the party now has, and with the same number of cannon, but with only half the total Levels of men (all the Spaniards will be 1<sup>st</sup> Level). Indeed, the Spanish nobility wants the party to be victorious here, so that the wars escalate. The Spanish captain knows this, and will not reveal himself in battle, but he cannot dissuade his crew. If the party captures rather than kills him, he will reveal this plot, which will earn the party's captain 150 points for Table 77 from any governor at war with Spain.

## 20) The Blood Fleet

If the party has attacked (not defended against) any Spanish ships or towns during this Adventure, their targets happened to be important enough for the main Treasure Fleet to have dispatched their 'Blood Fleet' to hunt the party down...

Ill winds have blown three war galleons your way. The lookout can barely make out their names, but they all appear to be from the Tierra Firme Treasure Fleet. "The Blood Fleet!" one of the crew exclaims. "We are all dead men!"

Collectively, these three Spanish galleons are known as 'The Blood Fleet'. If the party's vessel is currently in the service of the Spanish crown, they will be content to only take 40% of the treasure aboard as tribute to the king. If they have the Golden Helmet aboard, the Blood Fleet will take that prize alone and let the party live to spread the message that King Phillip II is now the rightful king of all the New World. In any other

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event, the Spanish will take **all** of the party's treasure. Each of these warships is manned by 310 Spaniards totaling 750 Levels, running a full 20 cannon. If the party manages to defeat them, they will find much treasure aboard, and as a good 95% of the bulk treasure on the fleets is Peruvian silver, any rolls of '2-6' on Table 81 will be considered coins ('gold') instead of other valuables. Moreover, they can learn from the Spanish that "The city of gold does not exist. Natives guided our men only to mud pueblos. The gold of Heaven is mined in the earth and claimed at sea. The Treasure Fleet that sails towards the rising sun is where you should seek the golden heavens—home."

**PART 7: THE GOLD OF HEAVEN:** The voyage is almost over . . . almost. Will the party truly see the gold of Heaven? Play the following Encounters one and all and in the order they are presented.

## 21) An Angel's message

This night, as the stars shine upon the dark waves, you banter back and forth with your friends in a friendly manner, your words seemingly not your own, the truth about the Heavens coming out of each of you. But suddenly, the night is lost and replaced by day! There, rising above the stern of the ship is a blinding light—an Angel! Beckoning to you with her slender arms, the spirit speaks to you in your own voice. You cannot remember the exact words, only the message—not to be deceived by the words of men, for you are closer to the city of gold than ever, but also do not be deceived by gold itself . . . these words still echo in your mind after the Angel vanishes.

Whether or not the Characters heed this warning, the party's course is set—to the true Golden Heavens, or to their doom. If there are any Characters who are clearly religious or faithful, as determined by one's Character Sheet or his role-playing, those individuals have been rewarded by the Angel's blessing, so that if they fall overboard in the approaching storm (Encounter 22) they will be spared, awakening on a nearby beach just outside of a friendly town.

## 22) Judgment

"We're in for a blow!" one of the crewmen says. As the others begin tying things down in the rising wind, one of them comes up to you, toting his Bible. He shouts above the gusts of harrowing wind, which howl like the hounds of Hell. He says he's been listening to all you have heard, and it all makes sense—in his Bible, he found the directions to the city of gold! He turns and points due north, into the mouth of the storm. "There!" he cries. "The choice lies before us! We are less than a day from—" but a sudden wave blasts over the deck, and you see the young sailor no more. Indeed, you wonder if the city of gold is worth it.

The choice is now before the party, to find the unfindable, or to turn away from the hellish fury of the storm before them. If the party sails into the storm, they will be caught in a ferocious storm the likes of which none of the crew have seen before, one from which they cannot escape, and their ship will be lost, as will every one aboard! However, any Player Character who shows his virtue in this crisis may be spared—those who leave all monetary wealth behind when they swim, those who try and help others, or those who pray—they will awaken later, either on a beach near a friendly port or on the deck of a friendly vessel that fished them out of the sea. However, if the party chose to turn away from the storm, indeed to place greater value on lives rather than gold, if only for a little while, their voyage will not be over quite yet . . .

## 23) Dawn's light

Avoiding the storm, you soon meet a fleet of merchant vessels from Europe, bound for the New World. The ships are filled with goods made with the honest gold of good Christian men. As the light of dawn breaks over the eastern horizon, the faith of the Old World washes the western sky in vibrant, golden light.

These ships are bound for so many ports that they offer safe passage to any Caribbean harbor.

# THE GOLDEN HEAVENS

**CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE:** Once the party has left the bloody waters of the Spanish Main behind, there are some things to consider.

**Marriage:** If the party acquired finances from Major Stanley, he will look forward to their return for marriage to his daughters. The party may look forward to this as well, and then they may not. If they do indeed return and take Holy Matrimony, the Major will give each of his new sons-in-law a title deed to land in England. Roll on Table 92 to determine the type of property given, and then when rolling its value one may have several bonus' according to the following chart. If ever his roll exceeds '12', he should roll again, adding the new value to his previous total, but with one less bonus from the chart. Note that these circumstances that carry favor with Major Stanley should not be suggested to the Players—they are rewards for any who go 'above and beyond the call of duty' by their own initiative and imagination.

**Major Stanley's Generosity**

Bonus	Circumstances
+3	Renounces piracy (but not privateering)
+2	Role-plays the wedding at least a little
+2	Remained chaste his entire time away
+1	Has a child in his first year
+1	Names his ship after his new wife

However, if any Character breaks his pledge to marry one of Major Stanley's daughters, the Major-general will use his wealth to hire no end of pirates and privateers to hunt down the heartbreaker—if ever the Character is defeated by an English vessel, he will be sold to Major Stanley for a fair price, and the Major-general will use him as slave labor on the lands in England that could have been his, under the watchful eye of his once-upon-a-time-wife-to-be.

**War or peace?:** Throughout the Adventures in this booklet, if any one Player Character gained 700 or more promotional points for any single nation at war with Spain, his rise through the ranks on Table 77 will carry an additional reward, that of his testimony being crucial to peace talks between the great nations, where he may or may not even

reveal deliberate deceptions he was a part of that brought nations to war. In any event, ask the Player if his Character testifies in the interests of peace, or of war. Urging peace will be one reason that the wars cease while England, France and Holland more prominently colonize the Caribbean, earning the Character 3 bonus rolls on Table 78. However, promoting war will earn the Character 100 points for Table 77 from the chief opposing nation (Spain or England) and the secret offer of a 'letter of marque' and amnesty for his crew.

**Enslaved:** If the party was defeated by someone who wouldn't have good reason to kill them outright, they will be sold into slavery. This will end the Adventure for the Character, but not necessarily his career, as he may escape or be purchased by pirates sometime later (perhaps the party themselves). Depending on one's national affiliation, the following chart will determine where they finally end up, stripped of all their wealth and possessions, putting them in a relatively bad position to begin their next adventure.

**Sold Into Slavery**

Roll	Pirates	Spanish	Others
10-12	Eleuthera	Margarita	Eleuthera
7-9	Grand Bahama	Santiago	Nassau
4-6	Santiago Vega	Gibraltar	Santiago Vega
2-3	Trinidad	Borburata	Coro
1	Isabella	Panama	Madagascar

**Faith:** If someone took the moral of this tale to heart, that of faith above greed, expressed either through role-playing, acquisition of statistics or modified character design of any kind, they will be well rewarded, according to their faith.

**Role-playing** one's renewed faith will have earned the Character a reputation for being a very holy man, and as a result will give him the chance to make a Charisma Check to talk himself out of any and all future fights with Europeans (penalized by -2 against national enemies), until the day when he wantonly commits an unholy act.

**Statistical religion** reflecting one's renewed faith will increase his 'Luck' Score by +1.

**Other devotion** of renewed faith will have earned one a governor's gift; 1000-12000 gold!



# The Blind Wraith

Captain: Carl	Design: Mariner	Crew: 80
‘Jamason’	Hull Points: 260	Levels: 240
Barks	Mounted cannon: 18	Morale: 26
Flag: Pirate	Reserve cannon: 12	Hold: 9000
Speed: 10	Men per cannon: 4	Cargo: 3850
Notes and Changes: _____		

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*The Blind Wraith began as a simple exploration ship, flying the English flag in the Americas when Spain was at the height of its power, thus never needing to fear a foreign vessel. However, when fortune favored this ship, a Spanish galleon attacked her and took her to Cartagena, where the crew was imprisoned. Only her captain, Ensign Barks, was left free. Yet his pleas to the court all fell on deaf ears. So, he freed his men, and they stole back the ship that they renamed for their blind loyalty to lordship and became wraiths of the seas!*

*The Blind Wraith is a home for 80 men without any safe harbor (60 1st Level and 20 3rd Level). They fire a deadly barrage of cannon at +1, and would rather fight to the death than be fodder for any nation's laws.*

*The Blind Wraith is provisioned to remain independent as long as possible, with 30 cannon, 40 salvos for them, 100 days of food for it's 80 men, 2 anchors, 3 longboats, and several hidden compartments that penalize all rolls on Table 81 by -2. All weapons aboard are kept by the crew.*

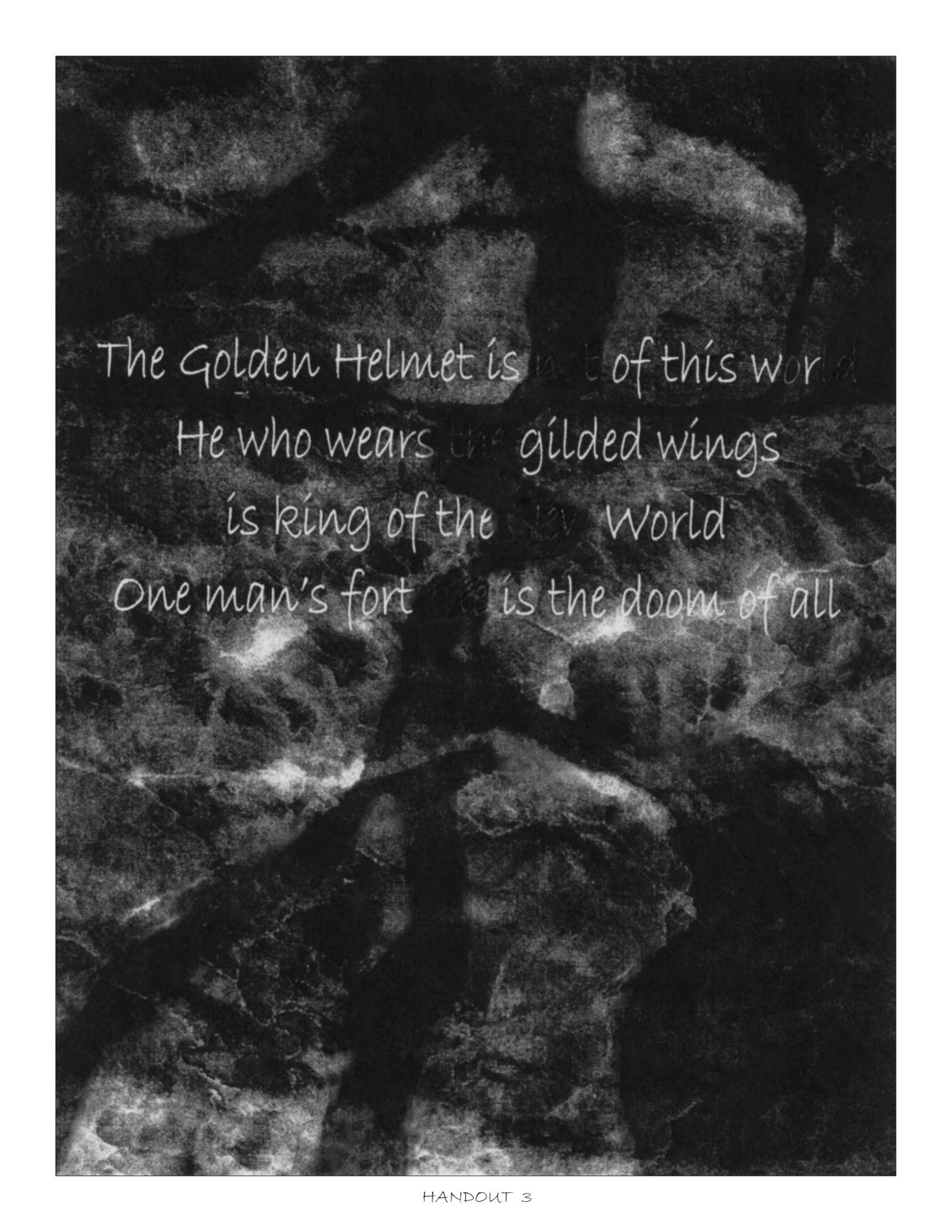
# Carl 'Jamason' Barks

Brawn:	05	Nationality:	Scottish	Age:	38
Agility:	06	Class:	Buccaneer	Born:	1524
Endurance:	09	Experience Level:	8	Height:	5'8"
Girth:	07	Notoriety Level:	3	Weight:	130
Wits:	10	Defense Score:	11	Handed:	R
Intuition:	10	Carried Weight:	047	Move:	120'
Charisma:	07	Notes and Changes:	_____		
Luck:	07	_____			

*B*orn to poor laborers in the highlands of Scotland, a young Carl only dreamed of having a real bed, and real food after a hard day's work. However, his self-developed skills only earned him a place in a local rebellion and in time a captaincy in the New World, daring waters that few sane men would. Yet, blessed with a lucky charm, a simple coin, the first he ever earned, he led his crew into many dark places where they earned great wealth, if only until the Spanish seized it from them. Unaided by all of the British courts, he now detests government, trusts only legends, superstitions and faith, and seeks to amass only the greatest fortune of any one man in the world.

Barks is a rugged adventurer, able to read and write English, French, Dutch and Spanish, and is skilled in all swords (level 2), guns (level 2), and forecasting (level 1).

Barks is well armed with a cutlass, 4 flint-locks, and a dagger hidden in his boot. He always carries with him a spyglass to seek for treasure. His eye-patch he does not need, but it fools his enemies (+1 to his Defense Score).



The Golden Helmet is not of this world  
He who wears the gilded wings  
is king of the new world  
One man's fortune is the doom of all



*The Spaniard had the Fever. There was nothing even Mr. Crisp could do for him. Faith! it is an uncertain world at best. Through blood and cough he left us only with words as unknown to us as his cure. I have made note of them should we meet another who speaks the Spanish way and not the crude Latinish we rely on.*

*¡Tres gato! ¡Tres gato! ¡Tres gato!  
Cada quien se pone la corona que se labra  
Piedra que rueda no cria mohe  
De la subida mas alta es la caída mas lastimosa*

*It is a strange fate that common men build the world of the royals, and yet only royalty lives forever, their blood their legacy, and yet not without penance, for immortality is a curse, so says Father Scandan.*

*John Steele,  
1536*

Three cats! Three cats! Three cats!

As you make your bed, so you must lie in it

A rolling stone gathers no moss

The bigger they are, the harder they fall

*To my trusted subjects in the Colonies, I write on behalf of the Queen herself. These are times of war, and we must trust in God and those of faith who serve Him under the Queen.*

*To those who serve, know that war comes from the soul and most foreign people of Spain. We maintain the illusion of peace while we must, but several attempts on the Queen's life have left the Royal Court with no other choice than to strike first, but with cunning.*

*The Queen will do anything to keep control of our beloved and right realm of England, for the better of all the world. If you would serve her and God's will then you will with speed to Panama. Our advisors are certain that the Spanish silver train that unloads into the Treasure Fleet may be intercepted on a small and particularly vulnerable jungle road, known by the locals to run for five miles between the Sunstone and a lagoon where the dead sing at night.*

*Lord William Norton*  
*1565*

# The Star Sapphire

Captain: Major	Design: Square-rigger	Crew: 130
Randolph	Hull Points: 300	Levels: 390
Longston	Mounted cannon: 20	Morale: 23
Flag: English	Reserve cannon: 10	Hold: 15000
Speed: 10	Men per cannon: 5	Cargo: 7200
Notes and Changes: _____		

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*The Star Sapphire was one of the first English vessels to come to the Americas. In 1498, it was the pride of a merchant fleet, bringing rare and exotic spices back to an all-too-eager-to-buy England. However, when peaceful trade failed to establish a foothold in the colonies, and Spanish power tipped all scales, many English ships were refitted for war. The Star Sapphire earned its name by its first Spanish prize, for among the treasure of a large galleon was a Mayan crown inset with the largest star sapphire ever found. The jewel still adorns the ship's compass.*

*The Star Sapphire is manned mostly by English men, with a few refugees from other nations. There are (as a rule) 100 trained English sailors aboard (all level 3), with an additional 30 of other persuasions (average level of 3) who are all well armed and fire cannon at +2.*

*The Star Sapphire is commissioned as a warship, set to sea with 30 cannon, 100 salvos for them, 4 longboats for prize crews, 3 anchors, flags for fooling all nations, and provisions to last its crew of 130 up to 200 days.*



# Major Randolph Longston

Brawn:	04	Nationality:	English	Age:	26
Agility:	03	Class:	Rogue	Born:	1539
Endurance:	07	Experience Level:	4	Height:	5'6"
Girth:	05	Notoriety Level:	1	Weight:	130
Wits:	08	Defense Score:	07	Handed:	R
Intuition:	08	Carried Weight:	040	Move:	110'
Charisma:	07	Notes and Changes:	_____		
Luck:	06	_____			

*Trained for merchantine captains in his younger years, the winds of war began to blow in the Caribbean, thus causing this proud rebel to seek fame in the New World, where he quickly earned and learned respect and duty.*

*Major Longston was trained for war. He is a skilled gunner (level 3), talented in navigation (level 2), and he is also an accomplished shipwright (level 2). He will not admit it (for fear of interrogation), but he can read and write English and Spanish (level 3) and understand some French (level 1) and Dutch (level 1).*

*Major Longston makes his way carefully through life, his rank and wealth not gained by being a fool; he has on him at all times 2 double-barreled pistols, and girt at his side is a ceremonial rapier which enemies have a bad habit of underestimating. He also keeps a pocketwatch, a compass, and a spyglass. His purse is hidden in a false whiskey flask, but with real liquor in it to disguise the sound and weight, and also to help drink down his 120 tiny gems if he is close to being captured.*

A lock of hair for the Devil's due,  
or he will be coming for you,  
unless in faith you're pious and pure  
But honest men cannot be sure  
until one drinks the Devil's ale,  
keeps his hair and doesn't go pale



# The Crucifix

Captain:	Design: Navy snow	Crew: 70
	Hull Points: 120	Levels: 150
	Mounted cannon: 07	Morale: 34
Flag:	Reserve cannon: 00	Hold: 2000
Speed: 14	Men per cannon: 5	Cargo: 1760
Notes and Changes: _____		

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*The Crucifix was commissioned by the wealthy Count Mason in 1500 as a symbol of both his faith in Christ, and in the New World and all its promise for mankind. The mainmast and yardarm are built to resemble a huge crucifix, with a life-sized wooden carving of Jesus Christ set upon it. No European would dare scuttle such a ship, and will always show mercy on its crew and captain by offering them the chance to join their own ranks, or risk God's judgment by being set adrift in a longboat.*

*The Crucifix is manned by 70 strong, God-fearing men of various nations; there are 30 Englishmen (80 levels), 10 Dutchmen (20 levels), and 30 Frenchmen (50 levels). They insist on regular Sunday services, held amidships.*

*The Crucifix is well provisioned, with a sturdy anchor, spare sails, a longboat, and weapons and food (50 days worth) for it's 70-man crew. The cannons are fed with a good 30 salvos of balls, grapeshot and coals. There is an old Spanish flag used as a dartboard in the hold, yet if raised on the mast it could fool most any naval officer.*

# Ol' CREOLE

Brawn:	09	Nationality:	Creole	Age:	28
Agility:	08	Class:	Buccaneer	Born:	1537
Endurance:	10	Experience Level:	2	Height:	6'2"
Girth:	10	Notoriety Level:	0	Weight:	180
Wits:	04	Defense Score:	11	Handed:	L
Intuition:	06	Carried Weight:	019	Move:	110'
Charisma:	04	Notes and Changes:	<hr/>		
Luck:	04	<hr/>			

**B**orn the child of a union between an escaped African slave and a Frenchman, this man grew into an exotic, if not altogether mystical leader of refugees from all tyranny of Europe. He lives recluse with other escaped slaves, free and without a ruler. He distrusts all laws and doctrine.

Ol' Creole has led a rugged life, and learned the hard trade of survival. He can speak fluent French but only a little Spanish, and combines the knowledge of both white-man's medicine and tribal magic, giving him the abilities to concoct liquors both for healing (level 2) and poisons (level 2). He is also very skilled with a dagger (level 2). However, it is his combination of all these skills that he is feared for, able to work ritual magic (from Table 108), though he only uses this against tyrants.

Ol' Creole keeps a strange assortment of gear. His only visible weapons are a cutlass and a dagger. However, on his crocodile-skin belt he keeps two small pouches of 'true medicine' (Table 97). Around his neck he wears a 'charm' against other magics, the small skull of an ape.



El hombre propone, Dios  
dispone y la mujer descompone