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J I D

Journal of Interactive Drama

**A Multi-Discipline Peer-Reviewed Journal of
Scenario-Based Theatre-Style Interactive Drama
Freeform Live Action Roleplaying Games**

**Volume Two, Issue Two
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Freeform Live Action Roleplaying Games**

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The Journal of Interactive Drama is an international journal dedicated to the publication of critical discussion and scenarios related to Scenario-Based Theatre-Style Interactive Drama Freeform Live Action Roleplaying Games and welcomes contributions in all areas of the study, design, and creation of stand-alone scenario-based LARPS as well as Scenario-Based Learning related to interactive dramas of this type. Review articles of books related to interactive drama and informal book announcements are also welcome. Critical pieces on scenarios or convention events are welcome. Stand-alone scenarios are encouraged for submission with designer notes and running commentary. Submissions are peer-reviewed. Contributions may be submitted from all countries and are accepted all year round. The language of publication is English. There are no restrictions on

regular submission; however, manuscripts simultaneously submitted to other publications cannot be accepted without express notice and permissions for simultaneous publication. Submissions by regular mail and electronic mail are both accepted.

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THE ILLUSION OF FREEWILL

Stephen R. Balzac

Organizational Consultant and Business Coach

7 Steps Ahead

ABSTRACT

An key aspect of live roleplaying scenarios is creating the perception that the player's actions matter to the outcome of the game. Different styles of game accomplish this in different ways. Three major styles are examined: choreographed games, where the outcome is fixed; hands-off games, where the GMs appear to give the players total freedom; and open-ended games, where the GMs create the illusion of freewill through maximizing player choices. The advantages and disadvantages of each style are discussed.

GAME DESIGN: THE ILLUSION OF FREEWILL

You've spent the weekend deep into character, working hard to accomplish the goals for your faction. As the end of the game draws nigh, you begin to relax with the sure knowledge that there's no way you could possibly fail: you and your allies have done everything necessary to ensure victory. Then, at the very last second, the GMs announce a slight change in the way things work; suddenly, all your hard work is for naught, your faction ends up exposed for the villainous scum that you are, and everyone else lives happily ever after. You, of course, die horribly.

A slightly exaggerated situation perhaps, but one that has occurred in some fashion more than once. It's called choreography, or, to put it another way, the GMs are determined to see to it that one side "wins" the game, and that there is going to be a happy ending, no matter what. Of course, not all games are choreographed, which can lead to the following scenario:

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The high-tech item you've been hunting for started out the game in the hands of the people who most needed it (well, after you, perhaps) and those players are lying low; most of the rest of the characters are hiding because a couple of people with overly high combat factors managed to pick up a pile of weapons at the beginning of the game and are terrorizing everyone. The GMs are just sitting there saying, "Hey, we just resolve rules disputes; it's up to the players to deal with player problems." Sadly, there seems to be nothing available in the game to allow you do this...

Unfortunately, this situation is not only unexaggerated, it has actually been toned down from the reality. It represents the exact opposite situation from choreography: once the game starts, the GMs refuse to take any action whatsoever. Whether or not the game is balanced, whether or not something unreasonable has occurred, whether or not someone critical has disappeared from the game, whether or not only a handful of people are actually having fun, the GMs remain uninvolved. In short, the GMs have turned the game loose and they fully intend to do nothing but arbitrate rules and run complex game mechanics. There's a name for this too: it's called chaos, however, for the sake of argument, it will be referred to as the "Hands off" approach to GMing.

A third scenario, which does not appear choreographed, but where the GMs are very much involved, might look somewhat like the following:

You've been playing at a fairly relaxed pace, gaming for a while, going to the local con for a while. Along the way, you've managed to pick up a few titles and some interesting items, things you may do something with if you aren't otherwise occupied. After all, it's only a game. Much to your surprise, suddenly half the game is hunting you! This isn't what you'd asked for when you signed up. You were never planning to put much time into the game, and you told that to the GMs up front. So why are you now so important?

The answer is that this game is open-ended: this is a game where even a minor character can become important, perhaps without evening realizing it. In the open-ended game, the outcome is completely undetermined; anyone can change the way events turn out, at any point until the very end. In a choreographed game, on the other hand, the fix

is in, and the game will end a certain way no matter how hard the GMs have to work to guarantee that will happen. In a hands-off game, if the outcome becomes set at 9am on Saturday, the GMs will take no action to alter that, even if it means that most of the game does nothing for the rest of the weekend. Each of these styles of game have their attractions and their drawbacks; each can be fun in its own way.

In a choreographed game, the players can relax in the safe and sure knowledge that the end is basically fixed. They are just providing the action and the dialogue, but the outcome is never in doubt. The game is played for the fun of getting to the end of the story. This means that you can just relax into your character, and really work on the roleplaying. While bad things may happen to individuals, factions and the fate of the world are pretty secure. If you don't quite accomplish your goals, that's fine, since that's not really the point; the point is the acting you can do along the way. If you're the villains (e.g. the people doomed to fail), you don't have to worry about doing the right thing, only about being dramatic. You know the GMs won't let you succeed, so you may as well ham it up as much as possible, and have a good time doing it. This is a roleplaying game, after all.

If you just want to play a minor character, you can be pretty certain that if you start out fairly minor, you'll always be fairly minor. You don't have to worry that if you decide to do something else, you'll have an irate GM asking you to play your character because the rest of the players need you for something. From the GMs' perspective, life's a lot easier, since tough rulings can be made in such a way as to continue the game along its predetermined course. The climax, of course, comes nicely on schedule, because the GMs don't let the players get to the climax until the schedule says so.

The GMs, of course, do have to make sure that the game goes according to plan. Some will do this better than others; the best often don't let the players ever realize that the action was all predetermined. Unfortunately, sometimes this laudable goal is impossible because the designated losers have done just a little too well... still, a well-done choreographed game can be lots of fun for the players and GMs alike.

On the flip side, there are certain disadvantages to playing in a choreographed game. One obvious point is that a lot of people don't enjoy being the designated losers, even when they're warned of it ahead

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of time. When they're not warned ahead of time, and discover at the end of the game that all their hard work has been negated by the Fist of the GMs, they might even be a little disgruntled. Even the winners often feel cheated when they discover that all their hard work was largely irrelevant: their faction would have succeeded even if they hadn't stayed up all night solving the puzzles. Some feeling of accomplishment, to realize that everything you worked for would have been handed to you on a silver platter. Finally, that minor character who wants to get more involved may find him or herself locked into an unimportant role no matter what actions are taken.

In a hands-off game, there is a great deal of freedom for the characters. In fact, there may be too much freedom. If the game is perfectly balanced and the plots work out exactly as the GMs imagined they would, the game could be great fun. It's essentially the ideal open-ended game, where all the plots are fun, everyone can influence the outcome, and nothing is decided until the very last second.

Unfortunately, our old friend Murphy has a special fondness for live roleplaying games, as almost any GM will attest, and things rarely work out as planned. Thus, if one player or group of players is a little too powerful, they can dominate the game early and shut everyone else out. And since no one can predict with perfect accuracy just how well a given player will do with a given part, this happens far more easily than if the characters had behaved exactly as the GMs had imagined they would. The game then plays out much like a choreographed game: only a few people can do anything, they know what they want to do, and they do it.

In an open-ended game, on the other hand, all your hard work really means something. If you don't do it, someone else will, and they'll claim the prize. In an open-ended game, even a minor character can suddenly achieve major importance. For some, this is a big plus of open-ended games; for others, it is a minus. Not everyone wants to become important, and for some, having greatness thrust upon them is exactly what they do not want to have happen. While roleplaying is still an important part of the game, the roleplaying is inextricably bound up with the accomplishing of character goals; your character is not just a physicist, but a physicist who has things to get done. In fact, it could reasonably be argued that what makes a character are the things that he does, how he does them, and why he does them, as much as the things

that he is: someone is not roleplaying a master thief just because he steals from everyone in sight; that's a kleptomaniac. From the GMs' perspective, in an open-ended game, every character must have goals that are appropriate to the character, rather than just arbitrary make-work to keep the player busy.

By definition, the end of the game is not fixed. Any of the multiple factions could conceivably succeed in their goals, and the GMs need to be prepared for any, all, or none of them to succeed. Here, the actions of each character suddenly taken on a great deal more importance. Suddenly, the decisions of a single person can alter the outcome of the game, possibly spinning the action off on a tangent the GMs never imagined. They must be ready to deal with this. The GMs cannot simply ignore the action; instead, they must rule in such a way as to keep the possibility space as wide as is practical, while at the same time being reasonable and fair to the players involved. Given a choice between a set of equally fair rulings, the GMs should try to choose the one which will keep the outcome as open-ended as possible.

The disadvantages of the open-ended game are, in many ways, the same as its advantages. The fact is any person can change the outcome, so if a critical character disappears (perhaps because he didn't realize that he had become critical), whole groups of players could be screwed over. And should the players end up on a wild goose chase, the GMs have the problems of keeping them from getting so lost that they're no longer enjoying the game. The potential for player frustration is also very high: if a group has worked all night to solve its problems, a last-minute double-cross has a much greater emotional impact for all concerned. Not accomplishing goals, for many people, has much more impact when you believe that you could have succeeded if you had only worked just a little harder. Finally, that poor person who had greatness thrust upon him might be very angry. He didn't realize those items he had collected, or those apparently pointless titles he had obtained, really mattered to the game. He didn't want to have the game take up all his time, and now he's been screwed over.

That's where the GMs come in, and their involvement is what distinguishes an open-ended game from a hands-off game. Every game has a certain amount of GM control over the action. In the simplest sense, this might be nothing more than the plot: the design of the game

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will force the action along a certain path; if the game is a spy-thriller, the action will revolve around spy-type things. Players will take those actions and have those goals which fit the genre of the game. They are not truly free to go off and do anything; they are only free to do anything within a certain narrowly restricted range.

Should the players end up totally lost or confused, it is the job of the GMs to bring them back on track. After all, the point of the game is still to have fun. This is much more complex in an open-ended game than a choreographed one since the GMs don't have a simple touchstone to guide their rulings. On the one hand, the GMs should not leave the players to be bored, frustrated, lost, and generally miserable; then the GMs are not doing their jobs keeping the game balanced; what they are doing is allowing their game to become a hands-off game. On the other hand, the GMs should not give the players all the answers; that's not fair to everyone else. The GMs must do something, and that imposes some control over the action; however this control, perhaps paradoxically, should be oriented toward maximizing the ability of the players to influence the outcome. A total lack of control is as bad as total control: in most purely hands-off circumstances, only a handful of players will be able to determine the outcome of the game.

Consciously or unconsciously, every GM will have some vision of where the game is headed. Preferably, they all have approximately the same vision. In fact, this is almost a necessity for consistent rulings. If every GM has a different vision, or no vision at all, an open-ended game will effectively become a hands-off game: the GMs will cancel each other out. In a choreographed game, the GMs never need to revise their opinions; in an open-ended game, they may have to revise their vision several times as the game progresses; in a hands-off game, either they don't have a vision, or they have so many visions that they become a part of the problem instead of providing a solution. Communication between the different GMs is vital.

So is there really such a thing as an open-ended game? The answer is yes. Paradoxically, a game is open-ended only when there is just enough control for the players to be free to choose their actions. Too much control, and the game becomes an improvisational drama, with the outcome fixed in stone; too little control and the game dissolves into chaos, every player going his own way and the plot getting lost in the

confusion.

As for what kind of game is most fun, hands-off, open-ended or choreographed, that really depends on what you like. They all have their places, and their adherents. Ultimately, the one that's most fun is the one you enjoy most.

CORRESPONDENCE

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ASSESSMENT OF TASK-BASED ACTIVITIES IN UNIVERSITY EFL CLASSES

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ABSTRACT

Simulations have proved to be valuable EFL class activities that can foster communicative and strategic competence and metacognitive awareness by providing favorable conditions for language acquisition. However, there has been disagreement on the best ways to evaluate the effectiveness of simulations. Most simulations are evaluated orally in a debriefing session at the end of the activity. While this is important and valuable, it may not satisfy the language teacher who needs to measure learning and competence in order to assign grades. Rating scales, checklists, and guided self-assessment are also ways to assess learning in simulations. These provide a battery of assessment that can provide useful feedback to both instructor and learner.

Keywords: assessment; EFL; simulations; task-based activities

INTRODUCTION

Testing student achievement and giving grades are a necessary part of teaching in language classrooms. While it is fairly easy and direct to test content, vocabulary and grammar through written tests, it is often seen as difficult and subjective to test oral language skills (Underhill, 1987). Written tests of vocabulary, grammar, reading and listening

sometimes take the place of time-consuming oral interviews or other forms of oral testing. However, competence on a written language test does not necessarily equal the ability to perform tasks using the language (Underhill, 1987). As a result, the testing of oral production has become an integral part of the evaluation process (Heaton, 1988). Simulations are one technique that can combine the measurement and acquisition of both communicative and language skills by using real world settings as a framework. In addition, achievement decisions are important in order to not only gauge how much students have learned but also to measure ways to improve a course or a language program (Brown, 1996). Moreover, evaluation through simulations can supply feedback about classroom practices that can enhance teaching and confirm existing practices (Rea-Dickins & Germaine, 1992).

Simulations provide various advantages over the usual oral testing of interviewing that involves the teacher as an integral part of the communication process. The teacher becomes an observer and facilitator and is better able to note strengths and weaknesses as the students interact throughout the simulation. Simulations allow students to practice language they can use in real world situations and provide a learning-teaching paradigm that allows students to become autonomous learners (Salies, 2002a). Through this process they concentrate on communicating, teamwork, and problem solving and become less conscious of making errors. Dixon found that unrehearsed roles produced a high level of authenticity (2003). Simulations provide a high level of motivation and metacognitive awareness that produce a positive result for second language learners (Salies, 2002b) and opportunities for collaborative learning increase motivation (Halleck et al. 2002). In addition they can expose students to a variety of language experiences that, in this case, include self-introduction, introducing others, making small talk, chairing and participating in meetings, and using appropriate expressions correctly in various situations. Jung & Levitin (2002) found that in simulations, students used vocabulary appropriately, responded extemporaneously with much enthusiasm, and even though there were students of varying levels of ability in English participating, the students still became immersed in the activity and enthusiastic about their roles. The change in focus from performing for the teacher to interacting with others during a simulation allows students to build confidence in their

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abilities to use English to communicate and is highly motivating (Rockler 1988). As a result the teacher can observe whether students are actually able to use the language and communication strategies that have been taught during the course to solve problems and exchange information in a realistic setting.

SIMULATION AS TASK-BASED ACTIVITY

Tasks elicit samples of language learning that can be used to study language acquisition and provide students and teachers with various kinds of feedback on both language and behavior. The simulation reported here has all of the six dimensions of a task as discussed by Rod Ellis (2003).

1. Scope (non-language/learner; types of instructional activities)

Students have been briefed on and have previously practiced various kinds of appropriate social and meeting behaviors. In international settings, participants must be aware of cultural aspects of interaction, such as bowing or shaking hands, maintaining a certain distance from one another when talking, and so on. Integration of linguistic and behavioral aspects of communication in various situations in the simulation provides a range of teaching and learning opportunities.

2. Perspective (teacher/student point of view; task as process or task as work plan)

Students are responsible for completing the goals of the simulation and ultimately control the direction and success of the activity. They must constantly be making choices and decisions that affect the outcome, and this is a task as process, rather than task as work plan that involves mere completion.

3. Authenticity (situational, interactional)

This activity has situational authenticity in that it is a simulation of an international conference where students must register, socialize, attend meetings, and make presentations. These are all real-world activities. It has interactional authenticity because students are exchanging information about cultural customs and behavior that might be of use to others who want to do business in that country. These are also activities that might be likely to occur in the real world.

4. Language Skills (speaking/listening; receptive/productive)

Students are both speakers and listeners in this activity. They not only present information about the culture of their assigned countries, they also have to make notes of what the others in their group meetings are saying in order to present summaries at the meeting that follows.

While the main focus is on oral skills, it can also include the prepared notes they have made in advance, the notes they are making during the meetings, and the notes they make for the final debriefing and discussion of the simulation.

5. Cognitive Processes (selecting, classifying, sequencing, transforming and reasoning)

Students have to organize their cultural information and be able to answer and redirect questions during the meeting interaction. Depending on input from others in their group, they must rearrange and decide how to present their own data.

6. Outcomes (behavior and language)

Two general purposes of simulations in language teaching are to give students opportunities to expand their communicative skills and to

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provide the teacher with data for the diagnosis and analysis of language errors (Gredler 1992, p. 119). In addition, errors in communication strategies or behavior can also be noted. Feedback and analysis of the outcomes form the behavior and language debriefings (Jones 1982).

PROCEDURE

1. Preparation and Briefing

During the first day of class students were informed that they would participate in a simulation as part of their evaluation in an oral training and writing course for university sophomores. Simulations and role plays were defined and students were given a description of how they would be used as the final oral assessment of communication strategies, social skills, and cultural content. Throughout the course, students were reminded that certain role plays and other simulation relevant activities would be part of the final evaluation. The assessment tools were also shown to the students with specific information about how to behave or which language expressions to use to gain the highest scores. Examples of past student performance were given in order to engage their imagination and enhance their preparation.

Students were involved in role-plays throughout the semester that allowed them to practice skills such as chairing a meeting, participating in a meeting, making small talk, making introductions, asking for clarification, using communication strategies to deflect personal questions, showing cultural sensitivity, being polite, etc. Assessment of role plays was provided by the teacher during and after the role play. Students who exhibit the target behavior and/or language are commended. Suggestions are made to others on how to improve, and sometimes the activity is repeated several times with different partners or in different situations in order to reinforce the teaching objectives.

2. Simulation: Cultural Diversity in Business

A three-hour simulation of an international conference on cultural diversity in business was held as a final evaluation activity. Country “representatives” gathered to exchange cultural information and advice about the possibility of doing business in their respective countries. Students were to become experts on pre-assigned countries, with representatives equally divided among four or five geographical areas: The Americas, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and/or Africa. They were instructed not to pretend that they were natives of their country; they were experts because they had lived in that country for a period of time. Students made up their own background stories, with some saying their families had emigrated or had business connections; others said they had attended exchange programs or had lived with relatives overseas. In this capacity they were able to exchange information with others on various topics of interest to people who wanted to do business in their countries.

The different geographical regions were chosen to give students the opportunity to understand that regional differences can be quite striking. In exchanging information during the first meetings, students were held asked to not only share their information, but also to take notes in order to remember what others in their group has said. The purpose for this was so that they could summarize their regions during the second round of meetings; each person during the second round of meetings would summarize a geographical area, e.g., Asia. While we tend to think that regions have much in common, the reality is that there is considerable diversity. This is readily apparent in the cultural exchanges throughout the activity.

3. Cultural Component

Students were asked to prepare to become an “expert” on an assigned country and were directed to the www.executiveplanet.com website. The advantage of this website is that it offers well-organized material on a variety of topics such as “proper forms of address,” “welcome topics of conversation,” “topics to avoid,” “acceptable public conduct,” “gifts to avoid,” “appreciated gifts,” “entertaining,” and so on.

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Early in the semester, students had participated in a role play that required them to prepare two or three of the topics from this website to be used in an information-exchange activity. Thus they were familiar with the website and the information to be found there.

Students registered, received nametags and the agenda and then helped themselves to refreshments. During this time they were instructed to introduce themselves, make small talk, and join and leave groups using previously taught appropriate expressions and behavior.

4. Teacher's Role

The teacher acts as the conference coordinator and employee of the hotel/conference center. She greets the attendants formally as they enter, registers them, gives them an agenda, and directs them to the refreshment area. After registration is completed, the teacher circulates throughout the room, using a checklist to record student language and behavior. For example, students have practiced introductions and making small talk and are supposed to talk to as many of the other participants as possible during the 20-minute refreshment period. Marks are made on whether they join and leave a group politely, whether they are able to keep the conversation going, and so on.

ASSESSMENT

Traditional assessment of simulations is usually an oral debriefing held at the end of the simulation (Bullard 1992) and can include both language and behavior debriefings. Language classes in formal educational settings require that achievement be measured and students be graded on their performance. The use of simulations for this measurement “gives a more direct insight into how the learner actually reforms in the target situation and allows us to view not only the language product by also the process by which that language emerged” (Littlejohn 1990, p.125). Although simulations did not replace testing and other written forms of skills measurement, they did provide an additional means of evaluation of student ability to operate in the target

language setting. Checklists, rating scales, and self-assessment were used as tools to evaluate a three-hour simulation used as a final examination of oral and behavioral skills learned throughout a one-semester course of a sophomore university English course for business majors.

1. Checklists

Linguistic and behavioral competencies were evaluated by using a checklist of content-specific vocabulary and a variety of language functions that had been previously taught and practiced. For example, the chairperson had specific responsibilities in opening and closing the discussion, such as greeting the participants and stating the reason for the meeting. The checklist of student names and the specific skills made it simple to check which guidelines had been followed and well (see Appendix 1 for Guidelines for the Chairperson). Another checklist included lists of gambits (see Appendix 2) that had been previously introduced and practiced. For example, one category was Rejecting a Suggestion. Students had previously practiced using a variety of expressions and so were graded on whether they used them and whether they used them appropriately.

2. Rating Scales

Rubrics that measured both holistic and specific criterion levels of performance were also used in conjunction with the checklists (see Appendix 3). In this way, both conceptual and empirical ratings could be made.

3. Guided Self-Assessment

A debriefing questionnaire asked learners to use a Likert scale to rate their own use of language functions and that of the other participants (see Appendix 4). In addition, they were asked to write down what they had learned from the simulation and also to reflect on using simulations

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as a means of language learning. In the process of self-assessment, they learned how to analyze and evaluate their own performance by seeing their weak areas and becoming aware of how to strengthen them. The teacher also provided an oral assessment of the activity and learner performance, pointing out successful interactions and behavior and reviewing areas to improve. Student responses to the open-ended question were overwhelmingly positive. Finally each learner spoke to the class about what they had learned about other cultures and about their ability to take part in such an activity. The teacher also gave positive feedback and suggestions for improvement at this time.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Through the above checklists, rating scales, and self-assessment measures, the activity and the learner performance were evaluated. Overall learners felt that it was a positive personal and learning experience and that it was fun. In addition, they measured their own progress and successful language use against the other students in the class, not the perfect model of English used in a textbook. They were surprised and pleased that they were able to use English to actually accomplish real-world tasks, thus boosting their confidence and willingness to participate actively. The feedback the teacher gave reinforced their positive behavior but also drew attention to areas that could be improved. The instructor was able to see that learners were indeed able to use appropriate sociocultural patterns of interaction in a realistic learning environment. In addition, the rubric scores and checklists could be used to differentiate levels of performance and assign grades. Using these assessment tools provides valuable linguistic, strategic, and communicative feedback for both the teacher and the learners. This can reinforce the scaffolding that leads to and supports communicative competence.

APPENDIX 1. GUIDELINES FOR THE CHAIRPERSON

Opening the Discussion

- Greeting
"Good afternoon. Thank you for all coming."
- General statement of the subject
"We're here today to talk about _____."
- Introduction of the participants
"At our meeting today we have Janice Chen and Ivan Lee who represent. . ."
- Statement of the specific purpose or goal of the discussion
"The purpose (goal) of this discussion is to . . ."
- Opening the subject for discussion
"Janice, would you like to begin?" or "Who would like to begin?"

Closing the Discussion

- A statement that the meeting time is over
"I'm afraid we'll have to end here. Unfortunately, we've run out of time."
"Excuse me, it looks like our time is up."
"I'm afraid that our time has run out."
- A final summary of the discussion
"To summarize, we agreed (decided, etc.) that . . ."
"In conclusion . . ."
"Well, we weren't able to come to an agreement, but I think that we accomplished a lot today."
"We haven't made a final decision yet, but we've made progress in exploring the issue."
- A plan for a future meeting if the problem is not solved.
"We can discuss this further at our next meeting."
"Could we have a meeting soon to continue discussion of this subject?"
- A statement to thank members for their participation
"Thank you all for coming."
"I'd like to thank you all for your cooperation."

APPENDIX 2. CONVERSATION GAMBITS

Giving an opinion

In my opinion, _____
As far as I'm concerned, _____
As I see it, _____
Personally, I think _____
It seems to me _____
I think _____
I believe _____

Asking About Agreement

Do you agree?
Don't you agree?
Wouldn't you agree?
Don't you think so?

Agreeing

Yes, that's true.
That's right.
You're right.
I think so, too.
That's a good idea.
I agree with you.
I definitely agree with you.
I completely agree.
That's a very good point.

Disagreeing

I don't really agree with you.
I don't think so.
I'm afraid I can't agree with you.
I'm not sure I agree with you.
That's not how I see it.
Yes, that may be true, but _____
Well, you have a point there, but _____
I can see your point, but _____
I see what you mean, but _____

Suggesting Action

Let's _____
Perhaps we could _____
We might _____
Why don't we _____
Why not _____
What about _____
How about _____
I suggest _____

Accepting a Suggestion

Yes, of course.
Certainly.
By all means.
Yes, that's a good idea.
Yes, why don't we try that?

Rejecting a Suggestion

Unfortunately, _____
I'm sorry, but _____
Well, the problem is _____
I'm not sure that will be possible.
I'm not sure that will work.

Advising (someone else to do something)

Perhaps you could _____
Maybe you should _____
You might _____
Why don't you _____?
Why not _____?
I think you should (shouldn't) _____
You'd better (better not) _____

Accepting advice

Yes, that's a good idea.
Yes, I'll do that.
Okay, I'll try that.
Of course.

Assessment of Task-Based Activities

Refusing Advice

Well, the problem is _____
I'm not sure that is such a good idea.
 will work.
 will help.
 will be necessary
I'm afraid that might not work
 help.
 be possible.
I'm afraid I can't _____
I don't know how I can.
I don't know if I can.

Showing Doubt

Well, . . . ummm . . . maybe . . .
Well, . . . possibly . . .
Yes, . . . perhaps . . .
Well, I'm just not sure.
I don't know.

APPENDIX 3. DESCRIPTIONS AND SCORING RUBRIC

CATEGORY	A (100-90)	B (89-80)	C (79-70)	D (69-60)
Preparedness	has obviously read and prepared assigned material; has highlighted or marked downloaded material	has downloaded and is somewhat familiar with material, but often has to check notes	has downloaded material, but has not read it thoroughly; reads sections out loud or constantly has to look something up	brings no material to class, or has downloaded the wrong material; is unable to participate in a meaningful way
Uses Target Language: Socializing	introduces self and others; joins and leaves group politely; makes small talk; circulates	sometimes forgets to introduce self or others; sometimes leaves or joins a group without speaking; stays too long in a group; doesn't make much small talk	seldom introduces self or others; seldom says anything with joining or leaving a group; neglects small talk; stays too long in a group; talks too much to the same people	doesn't introduce self or others; says nothing on joining or leaving a group; makes no small talk; stays in same group or talks to the same people throughout the activity
Uses Target Language: Chairing a meeting	opens, leads, and closes the discussion according to the chairperson guidelines; is polite; shares time well among participants	uses most of chairperson guidelines; keeps to the topic most of the time; usually controls time; somewhat unequal time among participants	seldom uses chairperson guidelines or has to refer to handout; doesn't summarize or control the discussion; lets one or more persons dominate the discussion	uses no chairperson guidelines; chats rather than holds a meeting; conversations are off topic; others are forced to take charge

Assessment of Task-Based Activities

CATEGORY	A (100-90)	B (89-80)	C (79-70)	D (69-60)
Uses Target Language: participating in a meeting	supports the efforts of others; shares time; shows interest; uses meeting gambits; keeps discussion going; encourages others to participate; asks questions; listens attentively; uses appropriate vocabulary (from website materials); integrates own material with that of other participants;	usually uses meeting gambits, though tends to use a few rather than a variety; sometimes encourages others; often waits for others to begin or continue; uses some of website vocabulary; adds to others information rather than displays the ability to integrate	shows little interest in others; seldom uses meeting gambits; seldom initiates discussion; limited participation; seldom uses activity specific vocabulary (from website);has little to add during his/her turn	shows little or no interest in activity; does not encourage or support others; doesn't use meeting gambits; responds only when asked a question; answers are short and discourage discussion; uses no vocabulary from website
Uses Target Language: individual reports	uses presentation guidelines, keeps to time limit; good eye contact; has good rapport with audience	uses most presentation guidelines; is slightly overtime or under time; some eye contact	uses few presentation guidelines; presentation too short or too long; very little eye contact	uses no presentation guidelines; ignores time limit; has to be asked to stop; no eye contact

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**AND THE MOON . . .
. . . A CROOKED GRIN
An Interactive Drama Scenario
for twelve players**

Scott Beattie

Victoria University Law School

EDITOR'S NOTE

This complex and delightful scenario of fantasy, dark passion, pirates, magick, vampires, and ancient forbidden religions by Scott Beattie is a critical experiment in structure and character, it is also a fascinating piece to play. I have used this particular piece as part of my own university courses with much success as an educational experiment in critical thinking (as part of university courses in critical theory) as well as in communication. This and other scenarios by Beattie are available for download from the Interactive Drama Archive at <http://www.interactivedramas.info> along with scenarios by others. You may see photographs of university students playing these and other scenarios in the online photo galleries at http://public.fotki.com/briandavidphillips/interactive_drama/ (note that some classroom scenarios are with costume but many are not). – Brian David Phillips (Taipei, Taiwan)

*The night is a grave, that steals thy love from thee,
And the moon a crooked grin, cast adrift upon the sea.*

from *The Ballad of Dog Hatchet Jack* (trad.)

NEW FILMS THIS WEEK AT THE BALTIMORE
REGAL:

***Elise and the Pirates* – G** (Family, Anim.)

A delightful romp for the entire family. When the young Duchess Elise, daughter of the Governor of St Cruse, is kidnapped by a misfit band of pirates, everything goes hilariously wrong. Ultimately, the crew of the Scarlet Nightmare must join forces with the resourceful Elise to prevent a band of seriously bad pirate choirboys from sacking the town. The love interest, in Captain Dog Hatchet Jack, is lightweight but satisfying.

This film, a production of a brand new studio, reminds one of classic Disney, with a witty heart-warming story and toe-tapping tunes. Like Disney's classic *Robin Hood*, *Elise and the Pirates* uses animals for the pirate characters, including some rather bizarre choices such as the worm pirate accountant and the possum first mate. However this all comes together in a thrilling finale – treachery, betrayal and courage aboard a burning galleon, at least equal to anything Uncle Walt has to serve up.. Highly recommended for the young and the young at heart. Starts Thursday. *Libby Gulls*

The Prelate of Baltimore closed a set of manicured talons around the page, crushing it slowly. This was more than a mere joke, this was a threat. There were details alluded to here, details that only someone who was there that night could have known. That means that one of the other survivors of that inferno was playing with more than just fire. A nervous, askance glance. The cellphone lay on the table, the Ollpheanna assassins were within arms reach – but who would be selected as their target?

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Setting

Two hundred years earlier. It is the night of 15 October 1687, the seas of the Carribean, just offshore the island of St Cruz. This is the night of the inferno. The night that the Governor of St Cruz and his party boarded the infamous Glaistig pirate ship, to confront its captain over breaches of The Covenant. A night of duplicity and deceit under the sliver of a moon.

The ship is called *The Scarlet Nightmare*, a galleon painted blood red bearing black sails. It is a pirate ship, uniquely a pirate ship crewed by the vampiric Glaistig, and their mortal Thralls. This is remarkable not only because of most Glaistig dwell in civilised comfort, but also because of their intolerance of salt water and the dangers of the sea (including the risk of exposure to the sun). In an age when most sailors could not swim, this presents less of a problem than one might think.

What is more unlikely is the alliance of a group of rogues, operating outside of the control of The Covenant. This group of strays are held together by the leadership of the fearsome buccaneer captain, Dog Hatchet Jack, a fragile syndicate of fractious and disagreeable characters. There are those who have a strong interest in proving that such a cohort is doomed to failure.

Locations on the Scarlet Nightmare

- ◆ The main deck
- ◆ Below decks, includes the crew bunks
- ◆ The captain's cabin
- ◆ The galley
- ◆ The Hold

Background: The Tribes of the Moon

The night belongs to hungry eyes, ancient souls walk among the ignorant crowd, preying on the lifeblood, the vitality of humanity.

And the Moon a Crooked Grin

They are vampires or, to the Celts the *Glaistig*, though they call themselves “The Tribes of the Moon”, a primeval race of creatures who share the world with mortals. The throngs of humanity may claim the day for themselves but the night has its own feeding hierarchy.

While not actually immortal, the *Glaistig* are extremely long lived (aging one year for every mortal hundred) and are resistant to most forms of injury or misadventure. These night-dwellers are blood drinkers, who survive by using mortals as cattle. Fear of exposure, combined with Man’s greater numbers and sovereignty over the sunlit hours, requires the *Glaistig* to dwell in the shadows both literally and figuratively.

Glaistig need not kill a mortal in order to feed, but may do succumb to blood lust if starved or succumb to the frenzy of the hunt. While it is certainly possible to hunt humans like animals in their own streets, the *Glaistig* prefer to enter into civilised arrangements, obtaining their blood supply through negotiation of hunting territories from their hidden positions of power. Nevertheless, many yearn for the thrill of the chase, the freedom of the mythic past.

Now there are nine Tribes of the Moon, the tenth is extinct. While all *Glaistig* share common heritage abilities and banes, the tribes each bear unique bloodlines and their own heritage gifts. Under the cultured veneer, the *Glaistig* are bestial creatures and each Tribe holds a totemic relationship with a different kind of night beast, including the power to assume animal shape.

Glaistig powers (and vulnerabilities) surface at adulthood. The *Glaistig* have a similar length childhood to mortals and, indeed, may easily be mistaken for human children. Once they reach maturity, the change comes upon them and the beast within makes its presence known. From that point on they assume their place in *Glaistig* society, hidden among the mortal crowds.

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The Covenant & The Moonlit Choir

The uneasy peace between Glaistig and mortal is maintained by The Covenant, an ancient secret agreement between the rulers of the daylight world and the denizens of the night. The Covenant is the name both of the agreement and the secret society of powerful mortals who bind themselves to it in Faustian compacts.

By the terms of the Covenant, hunting grounds are allocated to the Glaistig and protection from the mortal authorities is proffered. In exchange the Glaistig assist their mortal allies, and agree not to compromise their interests. The Covenant has been in place since before antiquity, across the civilised world. There have been antagonism at times, but by large the rulers, be they monarch or senate, are keen to benefit from these arrangements. With the expansion of the civilised world, The Covenant has begun to spread to the wild places and the colonies of the new world.

The Church has been instrumental in the maintenance of The Covenant. From its very beginnings, it has been infiltrated by a cabal of Glaistig known as *The Moonlit Choir*. This group not only controls the Church but also enforces peace among the Tribes of the Moon. While they profess submission to their interests of Glaistig society at large, it is clear that this Sun Cult are pursuing their own interests and have been blamed for undermining the traditionally matriarchal basis of Glaistig society.

Cosmology of Moon Tribes

One of the great paradoxes of the Moon Tribes is the ascendancy of the Sun Cult, which forms religious orthodoxy of Glaistig society and the backbone of the Moonlit Choir's beliefs. They revere the Sun, their most terrible Bane. Their beliefs encompass aspects of gnosticism, worship of a creator God who acted through the agency of the two Angellus Magni, Lord Sun (*An Tiarna Grian*) and Lady Moon (*A Bhean Gealach*), the servants who filled the creator's world with life. Lord Sun created the men of the earth, Lady Moon created the wild things, the beasts and the plants. Lord Sun created ten princes, superior beings created to rule all men.

Lady Moon grew jealous of Lord Sun's creations and stole the Princes away, devouring them. The most favoured son, Prince Bahamut, escaped from the pit of her stomach and fled into the light, where she could not reach him. Later he returned to free his siblings but found that they had been changed by their imprisonment in the belly of the moon, and bore aspects of the creatures which she favoured – the things that creep and slither in the night. Prince Bahamut had been deformed by his brief incarceration, but was not as afflicted as the others, and only he could live beneath the light of his father. The others had to find refuge in the dark places of the world, licking their wounds and enduring the Banes heaped upon them by their time of fermentation in the gut of Lady Moon.

The Sun Cult revere the first tribe, the extinct *Nathair*, as divine Kings of the Glaistig. They claim that many great figures of mortal history and antiquity were secretly of that tribe, including the White Christ who founded the mortal Church. They promise that one day the *Nathair* will arise once more and lead their people out of the exile of the night.

Common Heritage Gifts

1. Immortality

The Glaistig are long lived creatures and are immune to most the injuries or harms which plague mortal men. Swords or musket balls make holes, but these are rapidly healed. Limbs once removed can be re-attached or simply grow back over time. The exception to this are the Banes, the set of substances which weaken a Glaistig, causing grievous injuries and excruciating pain. These are listed below.

2. Blood Dominion

The Glaistig hold an uncanny power over the blood, including the ability to so stir the blood as to compel obedience from any mortal. This power can be used to seduce, to inspire, to command. Glaistig are forbidden to use this power on representatives of The Covenant.

3. Blood Feed

While Glaistig may certainly eat ordinary food, they can only draw sustenance from blood, draughted from living creatures. The blood

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replenishes strength and feeds the power of the Glaistig, it is more than mere food, it is life. Only Glaistig blood retains its vitality outside of the body.

4. Totemism

All Glaistig bear the taint of beast blood which allows them to take beast form or even partial transformations which monstrously combine aspects of human and animal anatomy and countenance. Even their human guise, the older Glaistig's features are inflected by their corrupted blood, bearing an inhuman cast. This bestial nature gives Glaistig enhanced senses, particularly scenting and night vision.

5. Blood Mastery

While the Glaistig feed upon mortals, they can invert the relationship and allow humans a taste of immortality. A human, partially drained of blood and replenished with the blood of ancients has their lifespan extended and is known as a Thrall. This exchange of blood makes Blood Dominion much more effective, whether imposing the will on the Thrall, or seeking to inspire them to greatness, filled with the vitality of the night. Mortal members of The Covenant frequently yearn for the gift of Thralldom. Most are ignorant of the true nature of the Glaistig and, sadly, believe that they will be transformed into a Moon Child by this process.

Caution must be exercised in the creation of Thralls. The more blood exchanged, the slower the ravages of age (up to a tenth as slow), but also the higher the chances of accidental death. A Thrall created in this way become an Abomination, an unliving creature of pure hunger with the power to spread its condition to anything that it kills like a plague. The Glaistig are quick to hunt down these monsters who, tragically, were once the most beloved of the Children of the Sun.

6. Reproduction

The power of reproduction is a gift shared by the mortals and Glaistig alike, but it is utilised much more rarely among the Moon Tribes. They are longer lived and fewer in number. Their bloodlines hold greater mysteries and the process is treated very seriously. Glaistig

usually mate out of respect for bloodline rather than romantic love. Sometimes the parents are companions, but often they are strangers, following the directions of the Cuiteog Tribe, the keepers of the Books of Genealogy.

Common Banes

While insensible to most harms, all Glaistig share vulnerability to various Banes, which cause severe pain and injury if used as a weapon against them. These banes tend to reflect purity, to be pure or purifying agents. Injuries inflicted by Banes cannot be readily healed like other harms, it takes much time and consumption of blood to restore maimed flesh.

- ◆ Sunlight
- ◆ Fire
- ◆ Pure water (burns to the touch, fortunately comparatively rare. It does include rain which stings)
- ◆ Herbs of Virtue (garlic, wolfsbane and some others)
- ◆ Silver
- ◆ Salt (including salt water)
- ◆ Pure tones (certain musical notes, usually if chimed on bells or sung by a skilled singer)

The Glaistig are also vulnerable to certain forms of injury in common with their mortal fellows, to decapitation, staking through the heart or wounds caused by the attacks of animals (known as Beast Nemesis).

Most normal animals will be afraid of Glaistig and attack them given opportunity. A Glaistig's totem creature is not effected by this, nor are Thrall animals, raised on Glaistig blood and trained to obey their masters.

Each of the tribes bears an immunity to one of these Banes, although all nine tribes are vulnerable to sunlight. The extinct tenth tribe is said to have had immunity to the harmful rays of sun but this cannot be verified.

Contrary to the myths, Glaistig are not weakened or harmed by religious

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icons and blessed relics, although sometimes they coincidentally are made of other banes such as silver crosses, pure spring holy water or the tolling of church bells which are specially (or coincidentally) manufactured to chime the right tones.

A Brief Note on Languages

Being long-lived creatures, the Glaistig are quite well versed in languages. All speak a form of archaic Gaelic, the language of their people, and most are conversant in French, Spanish, English, Dutch and other tongues, depending on their age and experiences. Unless specified otherwise it is presumed that everyone is speaking Spanish during this freeform.

The Situation in Port Cruz

The new world, draw riff raff like flies to a bloated corpse. St Cruz is a thriving port in the Caribbean, a hub of new world commerce. One can no longer rely on tradition and the observance of custom to provide stability. Tonight's meeting, an unprecedented confrontation between The Covenant and Glaistig rogues Breaches of the covenant, some pirates have been attacking protected ships, the Scarlet Nightmare is believed to be among the offenders. In the most infamous instance was the sacking and sinking of *The Clover*, a ship which seemed to have great value to The Covenant.

More disturbing is the series of murders which have taken place in Port Cruz, mostly around the Hurly Burly Tavern. Five women have been savagely murdered in the last month including the wife of the owner, a raconteur, the brothel madam and a serving girl. The death of a local widow seems unrelated except in the bloodiness of the deed. If this is the action of some Glaistig miscreant, it is clearly in breach of hunting territories.

Tonight the air is heavy, filled with a sullen tension and cloying humidity. A storm may be coming, one which may bring the relief of rain and sweet breezes, or one which may bring all the fury of hell in its wake.

The Crew of the Scarlet Nightmare

Dog Hatchet Jack	The Captain of The Scarlet Nightmare. A Glaistig of mysterious origins, Captain Jack dresses in man's clothes and affects a masculine demeanour. She is respected by her crew of strays and rogues, but subject to dark moods and brooding. She keeps two fearsome black hell hound thralls.
Sergei Guntel	The First Mate, Mister Guntel to the mortal crew. A Glaistig possessed of practical seafaring knowledge. He is the one who deals primarily with the mortal crew, many of whom are enthralled to him.
Milkweed	Jack's Secretary. Little is known about this quiet, enigmatic woman. She has been Jack's companion for many years and, like her captain, dresses in man's attire but appears more like a stern book-keeper than a pirate.
Gunny Sack Meg	A Pirate, sister of Big Prudence While certainly not demure, the Salamander Sisters (Meg and Prudence) do not hide their femininity like their captain. They wear practical seafaring clothes but seek to accentuate rather than downplay their womanly assets. Coarse, rowdy and violent, the Salamander Sisters have been notorious, at least since the Crusades, waylaying pilgrims and Saracens alike. It has been a long time since they were welcome in polite Glaistig society.
Big Prudence	A pirate, sister of Gunny Sack Meg The other half of the Salamander Sister team. While they are always bickering and fighting, woe betide anyone who stands between these siblings. A note: siblings are extremely rare in Glaistig society where breeding is a matter of bloodline, not conducted between lifemates.

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Black Cait	A pirate who dresses entirely in ebon hue, she is nevertheless of sanguine demeanour, if a little acerbic of wit.
Guillarme the Rake	A foppish Pirate, vain and ineffectual. He prefers preening to plunder and never transforms into beast shape, even in a fight. He might be dangerous were he not more concerned about the state of his beard of couture than his fighting prowess.
Tonantzín Ortez	A native witch and another of Jack's strays. She is a mortal with powers to command the weather, to wreath the ship in fog or to call on the winds. She is also a magnificent cook.

The Governor's Contingent

Don Diego Corazon y Santos	The Governor of St Cruz, a mortal and member of The Covenant. Diego is the highest mortal authority in this part of the Caribbean. He is a proud man and a shrewd negotiator.
Charlotte	The Governor's <i>Knightshade</i> , a Glaistig bodyguard and adviser of the kind ordinarily in service to Covenant leaders. Charlotte appears to be a polite young English woman, posing as a maid to the Governor's daughter, at least whenever Elise appears at night.
Elise	The Governor's daughter, a mortal. Why would the Governor risk bringing one so beautiful and innocent to a place of iniquity like this? Such is the faith that mortals hold in the security of The Covenant.
His Grace, Bishop Dougal Rankin	A mortal member of The Covenant and Bishop of St Cruz. He has the bearing of a soldier rather than a man of the cloth, perhaps the result of an earlier, secular, career. He represents the Moonlit Choir's interests.

Dog Hatchet Jack

Brooding Captain of the Scarlet Nightmare

Age: 283, appears early 20s, born 1404

Tribe: Jack was born into Filiméala Tribe (pr. fill-eh-mawl-a, Nightingale Tribe) but does not tell people about this. Because she has manifested their powers, most people assume that she is Faolchú (pr. feel-koo or fayle-koo, Wolf Tribe), and she does not mind adopting this Tribe.

Bane Immunity: Beast Nemesis (Faolchú), Music (Filiméala)

Heritage Gift: Beast Tongue (Faolchú), Voice (Filiméala)

History:

Long before she was reviled as Jezebel the Accursed, Captain Jack was Jezebel the beautiful, most favoured daughter of the Filiméala Tribe. As a child she was a diligent student, gifted with a great voice, all her tutors agreed that a great destiny lay in wait once she manifested her immortal Glaistig voice.

On her sixteenth birthday, the long-awaited change came upon her. To the dismay of her family, she emerged not a beautiful nightingale, but a wretched hound of the Faolchú Tribe. Instead of transcendent voice, she proved to have a gift for Beast Tongue. Something had gone terribly wrong.

She was supposed to have been born from the purest of bloodlines, into the elite of the Filiméala. Genealogists of the Cuiteog Tribe oversaw every stage, her parental selection, the conception, her childhood – they seemed certain that she possessed unique potential.

The Filiméala are the most prestigious and status conscious of all the

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Tribes, it is the men of this tribe who form the inner circle of the Moonlit Choir. To have a wolf born into the fold was too much.

Jezebel's father claimed that he had been cuckolded, in return her mother lay great slanders on the purity of his bloodline. The Cuiteog, caught between, were vilified and abused. This was a conflict which threatened a rift in the entire tribe.

Jezebel fled, hoping to find solace in loneliness, wishing that peace would come in her absence. She was not quite careful enough in her flight, her tutor Milkweed of the Cuiteog discovered her creeping out of the Night Palace of Madrid. Instead of foiling the scheme, Milkweed insisted on also seeking escape from the madness and accusations.

Since that night have been many adventures. Realising the nature of the mortal world, Jezebel adopted the dress, demeanour and the name Jack, an adventurer and rogue. Avoiding scandal, Milkweed likewise affected masculine identity and presented herself as Jack's loyal secretary, adviser.

Jack has discovered a sentimental side, a fondness for the underdog. She has gathered around her a coterie of strays and misfits, who eventually became the crew of the Scarlet Nightmare.

Sergei was born to the Taibshe, who leave their children with mortal families as changelings. When the change came upon him, he crewed on a ship that Jack had booked passage on – it was only her swift blade, that saved him from his shipmates' fear and hatred.

The others were similarly alone and in need of a home. The Salamander Sisters had been run out of every town in the civilised world and were well on the way to doing the same in the new world. Guillarme was in flight from Ollpheanna assassins. The mortal witch Tonantzin was a victim of Christian persecution. Black Cait simply moved in one night, as though she had always been there.

Once the Scarlet Nightmare had been won in a game of chance, it was a simple matter to gather a crew of mortals given Sergei's nautical experience and the power of Blood Domination. The crew are now accustomed to the Glaistig, but are still uneasy around the women of the crew due to their petty superstitions, it is probably just as well they believe Jack to be a man.

Jack's affinity with animals has often been useful. She has adopted and enthralled two enormous black dogs, her Hellhounds – Slaughter and Plunder. They are fine companions and they report back to Jack on many of the comings and goings on the ship

Over the last few years, Jack has felt new powers emerging. What began as a whisper has evolved into the full Voice of the Filiméala. Ofttimes Jack seeks solitude to practice this power, to regain the joy of song which she felt as a child. What this means, is uncertain – she seems to have the heritage gifts and bane immunities of both Wolf and Nightingale Tribes. Destiny is a great trickster.

Relationships:

Jack seeks the fellowship denied by her tribe in the collection of strays which she has gathered under her care. She is fully cognisant of their foibles and flaws, but seeks to protect them nevertheless as her substitute family, replacing the one that betrayed her so cruelly.

Milkweed's is Jack's oldest friend, who has remained loyal through the worst events. Jack is especially fond of Milkweed, who treated her as herself, not as the mere vessel of bloodlines.

Jack is uncomfortable around most humans. As a member of the arrogant Filiméala tribe, she was brought up to see humans as mere cattle, and finds it difficult to shake this prejudice, even in the company of the delightful Tonantzín.

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Plots & Objectives:

Infamy and Betrayal

The night bears a grim foreboding, the hazy shadows of moonlight conceals the viper in your midst. The omens indicate a turning point, this night, a plot that once hatched will change the fragile order of St Cruz. The mortals of The Covenant know all too much about the Nightmare and her movements, the Choir are perched like vultures. You must find out who has been selling out the Scarlet Nightmare and stop them before it is too late.

The Abomination in the Attic

In love, the deepest mistakes are made. Sergei was possessed of a great love for the mortal girl Katerine, a seamstress of St Cruz. He made her his thrall so that time could be kept at bay, at least for a while. Then the unspeakable happened, she became an abomination. Sergei, confided his error in the Captain who, along with Gunny Sack Meg, organised to have Katerine confined to her tiny chamber, an attic in the township. Now all three look for a solution. There are legends of magic rituals or artefacts which can turn an abomination back into a thrall, but this may be false hope. The only solution may be a merciful one, before the Moonlit Choir learn of her existence...

Jack was greatly fond of Sable, the brothel madam killed recently. While Katerine does not seem to have left the attic, Jack has the feeling that the abomination is responsible. She now feels torn, between seeking revenge for her friend and protecting poor little Sergei.

Hunting The Sea Fiend

In the deep, dark places of the Caribbean waters, an ancient creature called "Old Lurkey" by sailors is said to make her home. She is blamed for many shipwrecks and seaborne catastrophes. A hundred years ago Old Lurkey took a ship called The Silke Carbuncle, among its cargo treasures, doubloons and a set of cutlasses made by the great Glaistig alchemist Drache. These are silver blades, which keep a fine edge through enchantment or secret metallurgical processes. A fine treasure indeed.

To plan an expedition to recover the Silke Carbuncle you need to arrange the following:

- ◆ a method of finding the location of Old Lurkey's Den
- ◆ a ship to reach it
- ◆ a diver to go hunting for the treasure
- ◆ a plan to defeat Old Lurkey, should she take offence at your presence.

Gossip & Information:

Captain Jack has long sought to mix piracy with legitimate business. An irresistible opportunity arose when Sergei began romancing the young seamstress Katerine. Her dissolute and indigent father Anders is actually a gifted horse trainer fallen on hard times. Pooling their resources, Jack and Meg bought a horse farm on St Cruz which was showing great potential once they managed to get Anders sober. This has been compromised by the disappearance of Katerine (see the plot "The Abomination in the Attic") which is driving her father back to the bottle and the business to ruin. Recently Jack and Meg have had urgent secret meetings to try and decide the fate of their farm – should they cut their losses and sell up now? One thing is clear, Sergei already feels bad enough about what he is done to Katerine, he does not need this burden placed upon him as well.

Jack knows with certainty that The Clover did NOT bear the flags which designate it a Covenant ship. Jack cares little for the Covenant but probably would not have enraged them quite this blatantly. However she needs to keep face in front of her crew and not admit any error. There is some kind of deceit at play here.

Jack had a close friendship with Sable, the murdered madam at the Hurley Burley Tavern. It is unusual for Jack to be so close to a mortal. Jack knew Sable a decade ago when she was Jorge, a rent boy in Prague and has made a good drinking companion in St Cruz. Jack grieves her death but knows that this is the lot of mortals, a flickering candle and no

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more.

Jack has recently obtained a second ship, a small sloop which she won in a game of cards. It's name is the Rabbit in the Moon and it is anchored at the St Cruz docks.

Jack trusts the little witch Tonantzín, but knows that she is up to something (yes, just like every other soul on this ship). The hounds have seen her messing around with the water barrels below decks – but it is unclear what she is up to.

Jack is unsure about the girl Elise. She is certainly a mortal, and conducts herself in the day with impunity. Yet, two weeks ago, she saw her leading an orphan girl into a darkened alley. That flower girl was not seen again.

The Order of Adam, fanatical priests who hunt down Glaistig like animals, have made their presence known in the Caribbean. Jack has heard whispers from other captains, of murders and torture. Apparently they worship a “white goddess” who gives them gifts of holy blood – this sounds very suspicious.

Personal Goals:

- ◆ Protect the strays which have found their way into your charge.
- ◆ Find some kind of land base, a cove or secret island
- ◆ Keep your gentle nature hidden deep inside, a fearsome reputation is a great mask to protect you from the derision of your family and the world at large.

Sergei Guntel

The First Mate, “Mister Guntel” to the Crew

Age: 40, appears early 20s, born 1647

Tribe: Taibhse (meaning ‘ghost’, pr. tavee-seh, The Lemur Tribe)

Bane Immunity: Herbs of Virtue

Heritage Gift: Steal Face

History:

Sergei was always a sincere and earnest boy, perhaps too serious to ever be beloved by his family, a fishing clan of mortals living in the Ukraine. He did not know that one solemn truth set him aside from his kin, the inhuman nature which would not manifest itself until he was a young man.

Sergei always loved the water and revealed an aptitude for sailing. He worked as a fisherman before the call of the sea took him further from home. It was on a long voyage that the change came upon him and his true nature emerged. If Captain Jack had not been a passenger on that vessel, Sergei would surely have perished.

The crew, fearful of this strange malady which caused the sun to burn the skin, sought to cast Sergei off the ship. The swift blade and formidable presence of Jack sent the sullen louts back to their posts and Sergei spend the rest of the voyage sequestered in the private cabin.

In this time he learnt of his true heritage, that his tribe are known to exchange their children for human babes. In this manner, the Taibhse changelings learn much about the mortal world, under the gaze of nearby guardians. Of course, Sergei’s journey took him out of the reach of

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this guardian and this protection. Nevertheless, he cannot but feel a little betrayed by his true parents and guardian. Because of this he is doubly loyal to Jack and his new 'family'.

Sergei accompanied Jack (and her adviser, Milkweed) for many years, learning about Glaistig powers and society. He learnt to master his beast form which bestows acrobatic affinity and a flexible strength. Without tribal guidance, he is less certain of his heritage gift, and can only make approximations of the appearance of others.

When Jack acquired the Scarlet Nightmare, she invited Sergei to become first mate, and manage crew who do not know the captain's gender (or that of Milkweed for that matter). This is a good thing, they are uneasy enough about Black Cait and the Salamander Sisters being aboard, they are superstitious about women on ships. Indeed, this superstition also troubles Sergei, but, being a vampire, he does not see that he is in any position to complain about a few women being bad luck.

A year ago Sergei fell in love with a mortal girl named Katerine. She worked as a seamstress for the nasty widow Spatfock, to provide for her drunken and indigent father, Anders - a horse trainer fallen on hard times. Sergei romanced Katerine, frequenting the Hurley Burley Tavern near the tiny attic where she lived. Eventually he made her his thrall, to extend her fragile mortal life.

Just over a month ago, just after the Clover fiasco, a terrible thing happened. While feeding upon Katerine, her heart stopped and death seized her. Worse, Sergei had only begun to appreciate the horror of his deed when she rose again, a mad abomination.

Sergei knows that abominations are to be destroyed, with no exceptions, but could not bring himself to do this. He locked her in her attic and went in search of Captain Jack. Jack (who involved Meg, much to Sergei's disgruntlement) advised him to keep her locked away and fed while they considered their options.

Sergei was worried when he heard about the murders and rushed to the

attic, but Katerine was safely locked away, not a drop of blood upon her. He is worried that if her state becomes public knowledge, that she will most certainly be blamed. He has been feeding her on his own blood, weakening his body and sprit. No options have yet arisen, but Katerine does seem to be getting better, seemingly more serene and more like her old self.

Days ago, Sergei accidentally overheard plotting of the Captain and Gunny Sack Meg:

Jack: I don't like it, after all we have built here, but I think under the circumstances...

Meg: We can sell them, their blood is good, they work hard. I will regret it but we must move on.

Jack: If only that girl...

Meg: Sergei is a fool, but a young fool. His guilt will punish him enough. The rest of us can't get dragged down by it.

Jack: He musn't find out until the deal has been sealed.

Guillarme came upon Sergei while he was eavesdropping. Hearing this exchange, he began to make excuses, out of loyalty for the captain. He claimed that they could not be sure that the conspirators were talking about slavery and insisted on some more benign interpretation .

Nevertheless, Guillarme does also seem concerned about the fate of the crew. He recently presented Sergei with several barrels of fine quality rum, as 'security' to buy the crew's freedom if it becomes necessary. Guillarme nevertheless insists that there is some innocent explanation for the discussion, but it seems that even that dandy peacock, has a heart hidden somewhere inside.

Sergei has labelled the barrels "water" to protect them from pilfering by the Glaistig rogues (Sergei trusts in the loyalty of his mortal crew) and placed them below decks with all the other supplies.

Sergei is torn by this conflict. He is loyal to Captain Jack and indebted to her for saving his life, but his crew must come first. Jack is hardly

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outgoing and seldom shares her thoughts, she is capable of any ruthlessness.

Relationships:

Sergei does not form friendships easily. While he is outgoing and sincere, he bears a terrible fear of betrayal and abandonment. He feels close to the thrall crew, and feels responsible for their wellbeing and destiny. While he has accepted his vampiric nature, he is still more comfortable among 'normal' folk.

Sergei owes a great debt to Captain Jack and does not want to see a situation where he must choose between this and his loyalty to his crew. Unfortunately, this seems to be a choice which he may have to make.

Plots & Objectives:

The Abomination in the Attic

In love, the deepest mistakes are made. Sergei was possessed of a great love for the mortal girl Katerine, a seamstress of St Cruz. He made her his thrall so that time could be kept at bay, at least for a while. Then the unspeakable happened, she became an abomination. Sergei, confided his error in the Captain who, along with Gunny Sack Meg, organised to have Katerine confined to her tiny chamber, an attic in the township. Now all three look for a solution. There are legends of magic rituals or artefacts which can turn an abomination back into a thrall, but this may be false hope. The only solution may be a merciful one, before the Moonlit Choir learn of her existence...

Slavery & Betrayal

The Scarlet Nightmare's brief blaze of glory has almost burnt out. Plans are afoot to sell her crew into slavery. You are involved in a small conspiracy, organised by Guillaume, to save the crew from this ignoble end, even at the cost of the ship herself. Several barrels of good quality rum have been secured below decks, to bargain for the crew's freedom should this become necessary. One hopes that tact and artful debate will prevent this dreadful betrayal from occurring.

The Treasure of Varese

On an island, surrounded by treacherous reefs, protected by a cornucopia of monsters, is rumoured to be a great treasure, the Rubies of Varese.

It is said that the conquistador Varese found a great treasure, of such beauty that it deprived him of his mind. Others claim that his comrades fell into bickering over the treasure, a conflict of such savagery that only Varese survived and that he was mad from starvation by the time he found civilization.

Wherever the truth lies, he was the only survivor of his expedition, found ranting about a cave of rubies and insensible to further inquiry, a decade after they went missing. He was taken to a monastery where he eventually died, producing a vast output of quaint and naïve paintings which chill the soul with their large hollow eyes.

Two special paintings, he claimed to be his secret children, born the likenesses of a small boy and a small girl. These are said to be the key to his treasure, although they have been missing for years. Somehow, they have found their way into the possession of the dreadful Salamander Sisters. You must recover these paintings and unlock the secrets of Varese's treasure.

This is certainly not the time for treasure hunting, but if Sergei is to procure a remedy for Katerine, he may need to provide liquid funds.

Gossip & Information:

Sergei has heard stories about "Old Lurkey" a local sea monster that fills his mariner's heart with dread. Ancient things should be left alone, and not provoked by treasure finders or big game hunters.

Sergei is not yet familiar with all the flags and indicia of The Covenant, the Captain insisted that the Clover bore no such sign of affiliation. While Sergei cannot be sure, and his faith in the Captain has been shaken, he still does not think she was lying then.

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Sergei has only recently learned of how rare boy children are to the Glaistig. His sex alone gives him a good chance of joining the Moonlit Choir, the patriarchal body which governs the Tribes of the Moon. He is not convinced that this would be a good thing, and distrusts those who have the unpleasant scent of power upon them.

The crew is concerned with the build-up of naval forces in the Caribbean. The British and the Spanish seem keen to bring their petty feud to the new world.

Prudence has been crowing about her new chamber pot recently. Frankly, Sergei does not dare ask what the significance of this is...

The Captain has some history with Sable, the madam of the Hurley Burley brothel and one of the victims of the recent terrible murders. It is unclear what past bound them together, but they used to enjoy drinks and tales at the tavern. Sable was one of the few mortals who Captain Jack seems at ease around.

Sergei has heard rumours about the Cuiteog Tribe whose beast is the worm. They seem to run some kind of breeding plan among the Glaistig, which oddly enough, seems uncontroversial. Sergei is certainly not going to "breed" with anyone he does not love, shortage of male Glaistig or not. Since he learnt of this, he has kept one eye on Milkweed, who hails from this strange and disturbing tribe.

Personal Goals:

- ◆ Protect the crew at all costs. This is the one link Sergei has to his mortal life, and he will not betray them.
- ◆ Keep the Scarlet Nightmare out of trouble, Sergei does not trust the Covenant at all.
- ◆ Especially with the current situation, the Nightmare needs a base of operations, some hidden cove or island where it can rest, replenish stocks and flee from danger.

Tonantzín

Mortal Witch, Practitioner of Santería

Age: 22, born 1665

Tribe: Mortal

Gifts: Control weather (control storms and winds, call fog)
Speak to the Deep (fishes, creatures, drowned men's souls)
Talk to ancestors and spirits
Mystic cooking
Seduction of mortals (like Blood Dominion)
Each of these gifts requires that she ingests the blood of her god
She has a supply of blood rubies hidden in the kitchen

History:

Tonantzín spent her childhood on the Island of Flowers and Blood, an idyllic community sheltered from the outside world by treacherous reefs and sea monsters. The people were a mixture of natives, escaped slaves and the stock of the old world. Their beliefs, a form of Santería, a fusion of African, Mayan and Catholic beliefs. The island is protected by the blood goddess, Oyá, mother of storms. She lives in a sacred cave beneath the waves, among the creatures of the deep dark places of the oceans. These beasts are her children and network of informants, telling tales of the outside world, called the World of Coarse Shadows.

Oyá is also the great mother to the islanders, they adore her and she protects them. She anoints priestesses to serve her in her cave, to bring sacrifices and, on occasion, to enter the World of Coarse Shadows and bring knowledge of the deeds of the faithless. Tonantzín is such a priestess.

A few months ago, Oya summoned her priestess to the sacred cave. The goddess is terrifying of appearance, encrusted with stones, barnacles and the detritus of the deep, but her eyes are kindly. She charged Tonantzín and her sister priestess Manuela with the task of infiltrated the

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port of St Cruz, discovering the business of the faithless. To assist her daughters, she insisted they take a supply of the sacred blood rubies which grow on the cavern wall. When dissolved in pure spring water, they dissolve into sacred blood – blood which gives the imbiber magical powers including superhuman strength and the secret of breathing water like a fish. The latter gift is necessary to reach the holy cave, separated from the mainland by long underwater passages. The priestess strictly control access to the caves through their custody of the sacred blood.

Manuela obtained employment at the Hurley Burley Tavern, a den of iniquity and source of all kinds of gossip and scandal. Tonantzín worked there as a cook, eventually securing her current position on the Scarlet Nightmare.

On this vessel Tonantzín discovered creatures akin to the Blood Goddess, but certainly more profane in nature. While passing for human, these Glaistig are vampires who feed on the blood of mortals. On her goddess' insistence, Tonantzín has remained to study these creatures, their nature and their society. In spite of herself, she has grown fond of the monsters.

She heard enough about the patriarchal Glaistig leaders (the Moonlit Choir) to be very concerned for her home. While the crew of the Scarlet Nightmare are renegades, of small threat, the Choir represents an organization of great power, a conspiracy which controls the faithless Church. From what Tonantzín has heard, they are intolerant of dissent within their own ranks, let alone competition from other creatures. An unholy crusade would be declared and the Island of Flowers and Blood would eventually be overwhelmed. Tonantzín hopes to find allies in the Glaistig, those who also chafe at the rule of the Choir.

In the meantime, she is merely Tonantzín, cook and weather witch. The Scarlet Nightmare crew treat her well, certainly with more humanity than mortals ever offered to a simple girl (and one of mixed race, at that). Perhaps it is just as well the Glaistig exist, to keep the mortal herd in check. Just so long as a way can be found to co-exist with the

children of Oyá.

Relationships:

Tonantzín is treated well by all the crew members, particularly the Salamander Sisters who enjoy her hearty and spicy cooking. The captain is a little distant and perhaps has difficulty speaking to Tonantzín for some reason, perhaps labouring under some prejudice. Grandmama was right, food will win over anyone, except perhaps that sneaky Guillarme...

Plots & Objectives:

Bloody Deeds in St Cruz

Barely two weeks ago, murders of terrible savagery cast a cloud over vibrant, prosperous St Cruz. Five women, with little in common except for the grotesque brutality of their demise upon a single night.

The grim manner of their death bears recounting. Each was beheaded, their arms torn from their bodies with terrible strength. Finally each was slit up their side by something rough and sharp, a talon or rude blade. It is unknown if this is the work of Glaistig or some other creature and it unsure if blood was drunk, so much was spilled. Local constables suspect an ourang-outang or some other brutal animal. Whatever creature, it has broken the fragile peace of St Cruz and must be stopped.

The victims:

- ◆ **Mrs Camille Stallman** – The wife of Richard Stallman, an importer of haberdashery and the owner of the Hurley Burley Tavern.
- ◆ **Mme Chloe Manteur** – A noblewoman in exile, lamenting her youth in the Salons, she is a great raconteur and favourite at the Hurley Burley.

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- ◆ **Mrs Ruchella Spatfock** – Widow Spatfock, who organises several indigent girls of the town into a small army of seamstresses.
- ◆ **Manuela**, surname unknown, a serving girl who worked at the Hurley Burley of native ancestry. She also acted as servant to Mrs Stallman.
- ◆ **Sable**, real name unknown, madam of the brothel which operates out of the Hurley Burley. On her death it was discovered that she possessed a curious inversion.

Tonantzín's good friend and sister priestess Manuela was killed by this foul monstrosity. Manuela worked as a serving girl for the decadent rich at the Hurley Burley Tavern. She was about to return to the Isle to be married, her neighbour, the seamstress Katerine, was sewing a beautiful dress as a special gift – now wasted. Even if one of these Glaistig are responsible, Tonantzín wants justice.

Relics of the White Lady

From the antiquarian origins of the Church, the instrument through which the Glaistig control the mortal world, there have been those who want to put mankind first, to throw off the shackles of the Glaistig masters. In the late Roman Empire, the first Shadow Cardinal of Adam was visited by a manifestation of Mary ("the White Lady of Provence") who came with advice and a blessing.

Thus the Cardinal formed a secret order, the Order of Adam, which sought to destabilise and topple the Moonlit Choir from their secret throne. This order's activities range from political manoeuvring to outright monster hunting. Guided by appearances of the White Lady and her gifts, vials of holy blood which fills the faithful with divine strength. Members of the Order identify each other through complex codes, phrased in the Creed of the White Lady.

The plundering of The Clover came at the worst time for the Order of Adam. Several holy relics as well as secret papers and books were smuggled aboard this Covenant ship, right under the noses of the enemy.

Unfortunately these have been sacked and claimed by members of the Scarlet Nightmare crew. You must recover or destroy these items, to prevent them from falling into the clutches of the Choir.

Tonantzín has heard of the Order of Adam and, while they may be loose cannons, may be allies against the Moonlit Choir.

Hunting The Sea Fiend

In the deep, dark places of the Caribbean waters, an ancient creature called “Old Lurkey” by sailors is said to make her home. She is blamed for many shipwrecks and seaborne catastrophes. A hundred years ago Old Lurkey took a ship called The Silke Carbuncle, among its cargo treasures, doubloons and a set of cutlasses made by the great Glaistig alchemist Drache. These are silver blades, which keep a fine edge through enchantment or secret metallurgical processes. A fine treasure indeed.

To plan an expedition to recover the Silke Carbuncle you need to arrange the following:

- ◆ a method of finding the location of Old Lurkey’s Den
- ◆ a ship to reach it
- ◆ a diver to go hunting for the treasure
- ◆ a plan to defeat Old Lurkey, should she take offence at your presence.

Gossip & Information:

The goddess Oyá and her acolytes feast on blood during great festivals. At first these sacrifices could be drawn from prisoners, seized in inter-island warfare. With the coming of the Europeans, could lure sailors, treasure hunters and conquistadors. Now may be forced to deal with the World of Coarse Shadows to buy slaves. This may eventually come to the attention of the Moonlit Choir and conflict will be inevitable.

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While the Island of Flowers and Blood is well protected, it has been invaded in the past. Invaders are ultimately either repelled, sacrificed to the goddess or (as in the case of Tonantzín's grandfather) they simply go native and forsake the World of Coarse Shadows.

In the *Clover* haul, Big Prudence grabbed for herself an expensive looking (if hideous) cow creamer jug which she has been disdainfully using as a chamber pot. Knowing that the time may soon come when flight becomes inevitable, Tonantzín has purloined this object and hidden it (and some other choice objects) among the water barrels below decks. Oddly enough, there seems to be a great many of these barrels, especially since Glaistig are harmed by pure water...

Tonantzín has an heirloom, from her European grandfather. It is a ring, in the form of a snake, with two blood red gemstones for eyes. These gems resemble the bloodstones of Oyá, but they don't dissolve in water. A few times, when in St Cruz, Tonantzín has felt the ring hum and resonate softly. Tonight it began to shake disturbingly, as soon as the Governor's party boarded the ship. Because of this, Tonantzín has hidden it with the purloined cow creamer.

There is a storm coming tonight, a big one. This is the will of Oyá, and Tonantzín dares not interfere. It will strike about midnight, until then the cloying heat will make things unpleasant and add a degree of tension to negotiations.

After she learnt of poor Manuela's death, Tonantzín went to her quarters to dispose of any evidence which might point back to the Island. Someone had stolen all of Manuela's blood rubies.

Black Cait has mentioned a book of secret Glaistig recipes, these would certainly be a prize to add to grandmama's secrets.

Tonantzín has heard terrible stories about the Salamander Sisters, they are said to be guilty of every atrocity and evil deed known to man (and many new ones, of their own invention). While fierce, they do not seem to match their legend. Perhaps age has mellowed them

somewhat?

Personal Goals:

- ◆ Serve Oyá, protect her from the evils of the World of Coarse Shadows.
- ◆ Seek reconciliation between her people and her new comrades
- ◆ Find out as much as possible about the Moonlit Choir, and their mortal lapdogs in The Covenant. They are the greatest threat to the Island of Flowers and Blood.

Guillarme the Rake

Suave Gentleman Corsair

Age: 135, appears early, born 1552, pretends to be much older

Tribe: Pretends to be Faolchú (pr. feel-koo or fayle-koo, Wolf Tribe), but is actually Filiméala Tribe (pr. fill-eh-mawl-a, Nightingale Tribe). He never transforms or uses his gifts, for fear of revealing his true tribe.

Bane Immunity: Music. Since he is not the Faolchú he claims to be, he is not immune to Beast Nemesis, so avoids animals, claiming that they are unclean, hiding behind foppery.

Heritage Gift: The Voice

History:

The notoriety of Jezebel the Accursed figures strongly in the life of Guillarme. Born a century before him, she was the most beloved daughter of the Filiméala Tribe, a gifted songstress and recipient of the purest of bloodlines. As a child she exceeded all her peers and the elders predicted that once she bloomed into full Glaistig nature, greatness awaited her. But this fate was thwarted. When she became an adult, and her bestial nature came to the fore, it was the Faolchú (Wolf) Tribe whose heritage she displayed.

Accusations and condemnations abounded. Her father claimed to be cuckolded, her mother claimed an impure paternal bloodline, everyone blamed the Cuiteog (Worm Tribe) genealogists – the conflict was terrible and tore at the heart of the family. At the end of the day Jezebel was driven out of her tribe by . Ordinarily a Glaistig of uncertain blood would be tolerated but her promise, and the betrayal of this, was too much for her kin to bear.

The clan still bears mixed feeling toward the exiled Jezebel, she is mourned, reviled, feared and yearned after . Guillarme grew up in the shadow of Jezebel the accursed. An indifferent scholar, a barely

adequate singer, his tutors frequently compared him to the pariah, suggesting his pure blood was wasted on someone such as he, that if one his and Jezebel's fates could be exchanged. He learnt to live with disapproval by cultivating a flippant and shallow demeanour. Meanwhile, beneath the surface a thirst for vengeance broiled.

Guillarme drifted around for several years after leaving the College Nocturne, where the fools and pettifoggers failed to recognise either his innate brilliance nor the authority of his bloodline. He prided himself on being a gentleman, no matter how low a calling he embraced in these years – a gentlemen in a base world, unsullied by the filth through which he waded. He came to the new world, far from the scenes of his awkward youth, wherein he could live by whatever reputation he claimed for himself.

The largest outpost of the Moonlit Choir is in a large monastery in Havana, where night gardens embrace the lush sensuousness of the tropical jungle. Here Guillarme put his charm to good use, to offer his services for the Choir, with an eye to eventual initiation into its ranks. After all, he is not only of impeccable pedigree, but also a male, the main criteria for eligibility to the Choir.

It came as a surprise to find that Jezebel was living in the Caribbean, dressed as a man and going under the name of Dog Hatchet Jack, a pirate. Guillarme knew that he could draw himself close to her, join her crew of harpies, and inveigle his way into a position of confidence from where he could tear out her dark heart.

From this position of trust, Guillarme devised and sought to implement his great scheme, a symphony of torment for Jezebel the Accursed. Through this scheme he could not only strike a blow against his tormentor, but he could also win the favour of Choir, by ridding them of a rather nasty thorn. He just needed to be patient.

When the Nightmare attacked the *Clover*, Guillarme knew her to be a Covenant ship, but for some reason she was sailing without the proper flags, which would have marked her out for protection. It was a

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mighty haul.

The choicest plunder was an unremarkable chest, filled with books, documents and all manner of religious paraphernalia belonging to the Order of Adam, a pro-mortal conspiracy within the Church of Glaistig hunters. There was even a relic statue of their 'patron' Mary, who looks fiercer than most statues of the virgin. Anyway, the chest was marked to be delivered to, none other than Bishop Dougal Rankin.

Guillarme has used this information to blackmail the Bishop who has been all too compliant in assisting with the great plan. In particular, the Bishop's network of spies have been most convenient.

Wary of the presence of his eminence aboard the ship tonight, Guillarme has locked the documents and relics in a watertight box (he has the key to its elaborate lock) and convinced the gullible Gunny Sack Meg to secrete the chest in the reefs under the boat. As a member of the newt tribe, she can breathe water and is immune to the sting of salt water.

Guillarme has agreed to sell the contents and split the profits with Meg, which he may do if it is convenient for him. For the moment he enjoys dangling the Bishop on a chain.

Plan Part 1: The Abomination

One of the reasons the Scarlet Nightmare has been so successful, is the close trust between its captain and first mate. Guillarme knew that this must end. From Rankin's spies he learnt that Sergei had a beloved thrall, a seamstress called Katerine living in a humble attic in St Cruz. A tragedy of operatic proportions seemed very appropriate....

One evening, about a month ago, Guillarme found the girl in the street, blood dominated her and led her to her attic. He drank her blood, so low that she was nearing death, then used domination to make her forget. The fool Sergei fed off her (too young and inexperienced to realise her condition), and killed her. The Glaistig blood he had put in her veins brought her back to life as a hideous abomination.

It seems likely that she has been responsible for the murders in St Cruz. Guillaume has taken it onto himself to befriend Sergei, to use every opportunity to insist that, surely, the captain does not blame Sergei for his mistake and, by doing so, to undermine their trust. A favourite tactic is to allude to knowledge of gossip, and then to quickly cover up, pretending to protect the captain, to be embarrassed and caught out in a slip of the tongue.

This is a dangerous and subtle game, but it has had the assistance of fate. Sergei and Guillaume had the good fortune to overhear this conversation:

Jack: I don't like it, after all we have built here, but I think under the circumstances...

Meg: We can sell them, their blood is good, they work hard. I will regret it but we must move on.

Jack: If only that girl...

Meg: Sergei is a fool, but a young fool. His guilt will punish him enough. The rest of us can't get dragged down by it.

Jack: He mustn't find out until the deal has been sealed.

The captain and Meg seem to be discussing some kind of business venture, but Sergei seemed to think that they were going to sell his crew into slavery. Of course Guillaume insisted that this could not be true, again making it seem that he was protecting the captain, yet was transparently filled with doubts himself.

In what he quite humbly estimates to be a master stroke, Guillaume has convinced Sergei to smuggle the barrels of rum aboard (see Plan 2), and told him that they are insurance, a way of buying the crews freedom if (and of course it is a remote 'if') the slavery plan comes into effect.

Plan Part 2: The Inferno

Plan one of course is merely the overture to the grand plan, to reap vengeance upon Jezebel the Accursed. Guillaume plans to blow the ship out of the water and has brought a bomb on board for this very purpose, set to explode at midnight.

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Those who do not die in the fire, will surely be consumed by the salt water. This will leave Guillaume free to concoct whatever tale of treachery and evil he desires, to forever blacken the reputation of Jezebel and to curry favour with the Moonlit Choir, so that he may finally assume his rightful place as a ruler of the Glaistig and their mortal herd.

The bomb has been made from several sources. The explosive material is a special alchemical brew, many times the efficacy of gunpowder. This was purchased, at no small expense from Jorni, alchemist of the rat tribe.

The timing mechanism comes from a mysterious miniature clock, made by another Glaistig, an inventor and dealer in scientific curios called Felsenstein. Guillaume was fortunate enough to have bought a pair of these pocket watches and he keeps the spare about his person to keep track of the time.

These elements were combined and hidden in a barrel of rum. Bishop Rankin was kind enough to provide several barrels of rum, and needed only a mild speculation and suggestion to induce his compliance.

Guillaume has convinced Sergei to smuggle the barrels of rum aboard the Scarlet Nightmare where they now sit, in the hold, waiting...

Of course Guillaume has made provision for his own escape. The Salamander Sisters belong to the newt tribe, who are not only immune to the acidic effect of salt water, but can also breathe water as though it was air. Guillaume has purchased a phial of blood from Prudence and he secreted it among his perfumery. Once he drinks it, he will temporarily assume the gifts, and bane immunities of the newt tribe, allowing him to swim for shore.

These preparations are infallible, but have cost Guillaume all his funds. It will be worth it, when the Choir make him Prelate of some thriving port or city.

Relationships:

Everyone adores Guillarme, he is the ship fool – an innocent and vain individual, so affected that he could not possibly be up to no good. He despises them all for their ignorance and exploits every weakness, through carefully cultivated plans.

Plots & Objectives:

Slavery & Betrayal

The Scarlet Nightmare's brief blaze of glory has almost burnt out. Plans are afoot to sell her crew into slavery. You are involved in a small conspiracy, organised by Guillarme, to save the crew from this ignoble end, even at the cost of the ship herself. Several barrels of good quality rum have been secured below decks, to bargain for the crew's freedom should this become necessary. One hopes that tact and artful debate will prevent this dreadful betrayal from occurring.

Guillarme is the engineer of this plot and, of course, does not believe a word of it. Sergei and the Bishop are malleable fools, pawns in this great scheme.

Save The Cow Creamer!

The sack of The Clover by the Scarlet Nightmare was a great indignity and a flagrant breach of The Covenant. Worse than that, the ship bore a special gift from the Governor of St Cruz to his lovely daughter, an elegant argentine cow creamer made by a master artisan. Someone managed to secure this valuable item and you must have it, by hook or by crook. If only you have more funds to hand – you are going to have to barter for it. It is best to locate its erstwhile owner, sneer at its quality and attempt to swap it for some favour, to take it off their hands...

The Bloodline of the Serpent

The blood of the extinct Nathair Tribe lies dormant in the bloodlines of the Glaistig. This is the holy grail, the blood of kings, the greatest treasure of the night.

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The genealogists of the Cuiteog have as their ultimate aim breeding out true serpents. They differ as to how this is to be done, all but the heretics believe in keeping the purity of the Tribes intact. Over the years fewer and fewer male children have been born, making this task more difficult. This scarcity has also seen the ascendancy of the male Moonlit Choir to power.

This is an immense genealogical puzzle, but there are clues, scattered here and there by the ancients. An encoded text, a puzzle box, a breeding formula – all these fragments must be gathered so that one day the true king may rise again.

Guillarme is vain enough to believe that the blood of kings flows through his veins.

Gossip & Information:

That weird mortal witch can apparently talk to fish. Her only redeeming feature is that she is such a fine cook – a wonder what her finny friends have to say about that!

The Moonlit Choir are concerned about the rise of heresy in St Cruz, in particular the Lillim, foul female supremacists who seek to overthrow the male dominated choir, and some kind of primitive, native blood god whose influence seems to be on the rise. They would not doubt look favourably on any titbits of information.

Jack can talk to those damned hell hounds she keeps, so Guillarme is especially careful to conduct his business away from their sour glares.

Guillarme does not trust that Milkweed. She alone may see through his charade. Her demeanour reminds one all too much of the tutors at the College, disapproving and afflicted by the mustiness of age. He intends to avoid the gaze of those penetrating eyes.

The Salamander Sisters are something of a disappointment. They certainly seem capable of carnage and bloodshed, but their reputations build

them into monsters of mythical capacity for depravity and evil. Reputation is indeed a volatile commodity.

If Guillarme has one passing regret over the whole abomination scheme, it is the death of Mme Chloe, who was murdered by the creature. She was a raconteur at the Hurley Burley Tavern and Guillarme adored her. Still, she was consumption of syphilitic or suffering one of those maladies which snuff out the brief lives of mortals. She was a sacrifice worth making.

Intelligence from Bishop Rankin's network of spies:

- ◆ It was from the spies that Guillarme learned First Mate Sergei was romantically entangled with the seamstress Katerine. It was from this seed that the clever abomination scheme was grown.
- ◆ There is some native blood cult active on the islands. They are reputed to offer up blood sacrifices to their dark and primitive gods.
- ◆ Jorni, the Glaistig Alchemist is certainly involved with the seamier side of life in St Cruz. He provides services for practically every lowlife with a jingle of coin in their purse. Certainly a useful fellow to know
- ◆ The Scarlet Nightmare is perceived as a great threat among the Covenant members, they fear that they are merely a front for revolutionaries and rebels, little do they know that it is merely a hostel for pathetic misfits and reprobates.

There are rumours of the Ollpheanna cult of assassins coming to St Cruz, possibly at the behest of the governor. Little is known about this group except that they are always successful in their contracts and that they are feared by all Glaistig.

Stories of the Governor's deeds in the old world do not mention a wife. Somehow between leaving the old and arriving in the new, he managed to obtain and then lose a woman – how unfortunate! His daughter is lovely, so her mother must have been some beauty.

The gossip around town is that one of the Salamander Sisters, it is not clear which one, has finally felt the march of years on her shoulders and

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wants to bear a child, before all the vitality and juices are gone from her sinewy body. What a scream, one of those monsters a mother! Just who might they have in mind for a father? Guillaume shudders at the thought, but he is the most likely candidate, having the best bloodline of any male in the Caribbean, let alone in this mouldy ship (and they would be unlikely to respect tribal purity).

If that Charlotte is a knightshade, Guillaume is a sack of dried prunes! She is clearly an impostor, of little fighting ability. Her gait, her demeanour, shows nothing of the warrior's soul. Who is she, and what is her business here?

Personal Goals:

- ◆ Protect your own hide. Do this, primarily, by charm – be everyone's friend. This is enhanced by cultivating a demeanour of foppish ineffectuality, to let everyone under-estimate you and the depths to which you will sink.
- ◆ Inflict misery on Jezebel, turning her bosom allies against her.
- ◆ Feather your own nest. You have been destined for power in the Moonlit Choir and you will use all your guile and ruthless cunning to curry favour with them.

Milkweed

Captain Jack's Secretary & Adviser

Age: 1283, appears mids 30s, born 404

Tribe: Cuiteog (pr. kitorg, Worm Tribe)

Bane Immunity: Beheading

Heritage Gift: Earth Meld & Burrow

History:

Milkweed has led a life of meticulous correction, every action, every deed according to the books of genealogy and the laws of the night – except for one. When Milkweed followed Captain Jack on the path of the pariah, she turned her back on a life of careful service to the Cuiteog, the keepers of the bloodlines from ancient times.

Originally Jack was called Jezebel, the most favoured daughter of the Filiméala (nightingale) tribe. By all the genealogical calculations Jezebel was supposed to be a boy and born a high likelihood of being the father of a serpent. This was of such importance that Milkweed was appointed by her clan as guardian and tutor to the child. No-one outside the Cuiteog knew of the infant's importance, although her kin clearly thought her to be special.

Jezebel was a special child, but not in the manner predicted. When the change came upon her and her heritage manifested, it was a wolf, not a nightingale the Filiméala found in their midst.

There was a terrible to-do and accusations were flung with acrimony. Jezebel's father claimed that he had been cuckolded, her mother impugned the purity of the sire's bloodline, both turned their venom on the Cuiteog clan with accusations of negligence. A rift began to form in their clan and the other clans began to meddle, ancient rivalries and

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jealousies coming to the surface.

Jezebel made a brave decision – she turned her back on her family and fled, choosing to draw their anger away from the destructive conflict and onto the pariah outcast. Milkweed deduced her intent and joined her pupil in flight, into the wild places of the world. Eventually their journeys brought them to the Caribbean and this pirate crew was built from the strays that Jack collected along the way. The Captain has a fondness for misfits, unruly outcasts – mooncalfs and the insane – those abandoned by the rigid society of the night.

Milkweed has been establishing operations in St Cruz with typical efficiency and thoroughness. The Hurley Burley Tavern, is the favourite haunt of the disreputable in the township. Milkweed has made its owner, the haberdashery importer Stallman, her thrall. Under the Covenant she is recognised as the owner of the tavern. It is a prime source of intelligence as every underhand deal in St Cruz is conducted in its vicinity. A brothel operates out of the Tavern which has also proven useful in keeping current with events and political machinations.

Recently, Jack seems to be changing. Milkweed has always closely scrutinised the sound of her voice, for signs of her Filiméala heritage gift emerging. It has slowly happened, and Jack seems to be inheriting the gifts of both wolf and nightingale. This indicates that Milkweed has been correct all along, that her importance to the bloodlines is significant. It is vital that Milkweed keep careful records, the book should not be closed on Jezebel the Accursed, just yet.

Relationships:

Milkweed is completely loyal to Captain Jack, as a pupil, as a nexus of the bloodlines, an agent of destiny, and as beloved friend. Milkweed is also fond of the crew of misfits, although she usually affects a stern and disapproving disposition in response to their antics.

Plots & Objectives:

Patching the Breaches of The Covenant

The captain of the Scarlet Nightmare and her crew are mavericks who must be brought to heel by The Covenant. You are to use any means necessary – threats, inducements, appeals to higher powers, deceit – to make her toe the line and agree to protect Covenant interests.

Milkweed has been tolerant, indulgent even of Jack's activities. But a time comes when a line must be drawn between youthful exuberance and downright anarchy.

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Bloody Deeds in St Cruz

Barely two weeks ago, murders of terrible savagery cast a cloud over vibrant, prosperous St Cruz. Five women, with little in common except for the grotesque brutality of their demise upon a single night.

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The grim manner of their death bears recounting. Each was beheaded, their arms torn from their bodies with terrible strength. Finally each was slit up their side by something rough and sharp, a talon or rude blade. It is unknown if this is the work of Glaistig or some other creature and it unsure if blood was drunk, so much was spilled. Local constables suspect an ourang-outang or some other brutal animal. Whatever creature, it has broken the fragile peace of St Cruz and must be stopped.

The victims:

- ◆ **Mrs Camille Stallman** – The wife of Richard Stallman, an importer of haberdashery and the owner of the Hurley Burley Tavern.
- ◆ **Mme Chloe Manteur** – A noblewoman in exile, lamenting her youth in the Salons, she is a great raconteur and favourite at the Hurley Burley.
- ◆ **Mrs Ruchella Spatfock** – Widow Spatfock, who organises several indigent girls of the town into a small army of seamstresses.
- ◆ **Manuela**, surname unknown, a serving girl who worked at the Hurley Burley of native ancestry. She also acted as servant to Mrs Stallman.
- ◆ **Sable**, real name unknown, madam of the brothel which operates out of the Hurley Burley. On her death it was discovered that she possessed a curious inversion.

Gossip & Information:

It has been rumoured that the governor has consulted with the Ollpheanna assassins to have Jack removed. Little is known about this mysterious sect, outside of the Cuiteog Tribe anyway. One of the secret traditions of tribal initiation to the can involves the supplicant being ritually beheaded. When the Cuiteog awakens, months later, their body has grown back from the neck down, pale and new. The beheaded body grows another head and is a tabula rasa to be trained by the Ollpheanna assassins in their mountain stronghold. Through this process the Cuiteog double their numbers and also control the most

fearsome sect of killers known to the Glaistig – and no one suspects that the staid book-keepers and genealogists could hold such power. If the rumour is true, Jack could be in great trouble.

Milkweed keeps in regular contact with Felsenstein, another member of her tribe living in the Caribbean. Felsenstein is an inventor and a dealer in scientific curios. Apparently that dandy Guillarme has bought for himself a pair of miniaturised clocks, which may be carried in the pocket. He has kept one for himself – perhaps the other was a gift for someone he admires? This cannot be, he surely cannot admire any other than his vain self!

Although conservative and very sensible, Milkweed does carry a secret shame. A thousand years ago she bore a son who was to be trained in the ways of the tribe, but who rebelled and turned his back on his heritage. He now calls himself “The Fabulous Machio” and is in business as a kind of Glaistig gigolo. Male Glaistig are rare, and becoming rarer as the centuries pass. Using forged charts of genealogy (which he learnt all about from his tribe), he passes himself off as a father of impeccable pedigree, then sells his services as a stud for hire for potential mothers. He has recently set up shop in St Cruz, in the Hurley Burley no less! So far, they have avoided confrontation, but the time will come when he must be coerced to be on his way. The deep, abiding shame of it all.

Milkweed is fond of the little witch, Tonantzín. She is a fine cook and is very protective of her galley, which is her prerogative. She does have a secret stash of rubies concealed there. She probably should be more careful around this disreputable bunch, but this is not really any of Milkweed’s business.

Young Cait has a talent for alchemy, Milkweed once met her master Drache, who lamented of his apprentice’s squandered potential. She prefers immature posturing and thievery to a life of patient hard work and diligence. Drache hoped that she would run this fire out of her nature and settle down to respectability, but this has not happened yet. It must have been at least five hundred years ago that this conversation

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took place, “young” Cait does not have the lustre of youth that she claims.

St Cruz is being over-run by some strange blood cult among the mortals. Perhaps they are to blame for the dreadful murders?

Guillarme is certainly not of the Faolchú bloodline. Milkweed is not sure from where he hails, or why he denies it, but suspects that there more than mere vanity at play in this deceit.

Personal Goals:

- ◆ Protect Captain Jack. While she is not as the books of genealogy predicted, she is nevertheless an important part of the Glaistig bloodlines and may yet be involved in the production of a Nathair. Aside from this, Milkweed holds the captain in great affection.
- ◆ Keep scrupulous records of Jack and her crew, these may be of great historical consequence. One of the problems of the new world, is the haphazard manner of record keeping, years of tradition wasted and neglected.
- ◆ While Milkweed maintains her demeanour of austere disapproval at all the antics of her crewmates, the truth is that she is having fun for the first time in her life. She is not ready to see this lifestyle be destroyed.

In true bookkeeperish fervour, Milkweed has prepared careful tables and charts to manage the information she has gathered.

TABLE: Details of the tribes

TRIBE	TOTEM	POWER	IMMUNITY
Nathair (pr. na-hir) An extinct tribe	Serpent	Unknown	Reputed to be Sunlight
Faolchú (pr. feel-koo or fayle-koo)	Wolf	Beast tongue	Beast Nemesis
Pantar (pr. pan-tare)	Panther	Smoke	Fire
Damhán-alla (pr. damorn-alla)	Spider	Climbing	Heart Strike
Cuiteog (pr. kitorg)	Worm	Tunnelling	Decapitation
Taibhse (meaning 'ghost', pr. tavee-seh)	Lemur	Steal Face, impersonate	Plants
Earc Luachra (pr. ack luckra)	Newt	Swim	Salt, including salt water
Luchóg Mhor (pr. luckorg vorr)	Rat	Shadow power	Silver

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TRIBE	TOTEM	POWER	IMMUNITY
Filiméala (pr. fill-eh-mawl-a)	Nightingal e	Song & voice	Music
Sciathán Lethair (pr. skeeathorn leth-ahh)	Bat	Flight	Pure water, spring water, rain

Milkweed's notes on the likely Tribal affiliations of the crew of The Scarlet Nightmare. It is impossible to tell for sure without Bloodstones – gemstones made by the Luchóg Mhor alchemists which resonate in the presence of a member of the appropriate bloodline. These are rare relics kept by senior genealogists.

Crew Member	Tribe
Dog Hatchet Jack	Born into the Filiméala (Nightingale) Tribe, she has manifested powers of the Faolchú (Wolf) Tribe. Why this is so, is a matter of conjecture. Jack does not mention her family, and prefers to be known as one of the Faolchú.
Sergei Guntel	Unsure, possibly Taibhse (Lemur) or Earc Luachra (Newt). Sergei does not transform very far into bestial shape or demonstrate other aspects of his heritage. He is young, his powers will develop with time.
Milkweed	Cuiteog (worm) Tribe. This much at least is certain
Gunny Sack Meg	Supposedly Earc Luachra (Newt) tribe, but both sisters show little concern around fire. This could mean that they are actually Pantar (Panther) or just very brave (or stupid). Actually, they show little concern around any form of danger.
Big Prudence	See Gunny Sack Meg.

And the Moon a Crooked Grin

Crew Member	Tribe
Black Cait	Luchóg Mhor (Rat) Tribe, she is somewhat embarrassed of the eccentricities of her tribe of alchemists, inventors and crazy hoarders, but certainly shares their acquisitiveness.
Guillarme the Rake	Boasts of being Faolchú (Wolf) but never transforms or uses his powers. Milkweed thinks that he may be some other Tribe, and is trying to curry favour with the captain.
Tonantzín Ortez	A mortal woman, but possessed of unusual power.

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Black Cait

Bold Acrobatic Buccaneer in Ebon Attire

Age: 801, appears late teens, born 886, pretends to be a new initiate.

Tribe: Luchóg Mhor (pr. luckorg vorr, Rat Tribe)

Bane Immunity: Silver

Heritage Gift: Shadow Meld

History:

In firm denial about her age after her disastrous 800th birthday last year, Black Cait is a perpetual delinquent. An inveterate thief, she acquires baubles and trinkets without conscience or regret, then just as quickly loses them in games of chance or gifts of whim. Thievery is not the pursuit of an end, but an end in itself.

Cait was brought up to be a proper, hardworking member of Glaistig society, but she never took to hard toil, always preferring pilfer to industry. Gifted, yet indolent, she was apprenticed to the famous Drache a metallurgist and weapon smith whose legend extends back into the bronze age when he made invincible silver weapons.

Cait was keen to forge blade of mystical power, well she was not adverse to it, as long as it did not require too much sweat. More to the point, working with silver would give ample opportunity to gather cast offs, scraps and surplus material. Instead she was consigned to the crystallising vats, growing bloodstones for the genealogists of the Cuiteog tribe.

Bloodstones are like gemstones, but made from blood. They hum and resonate in the presence of a member of the tribe corresponding to their constituent components. All very worthy and a useful tool for genealogists and so on – but very time consuming and tiresome to grow.

While she waited Cait was supposed to read the tractatus “The Sanguine Codex” yet she never got past the first chapter of gibberish, symbols and elliptical nonsense. She still has that book somewhere, a reminder of a past to which she never wants to return.

Since abandoning her apprenticeship, her life has been a giddy whirlwind taking her from one exotic locale to another, always in pursuit of the brightest of lovelies. Eventually this path took her to the new world and an invitation to join the Scarlet Nightmare. She could not resist the opportunity to be one of this scurvy band of scoundrels and cut-throats.

Relationships:

While Cait affects the demeanor of a sardonic loner, she is fond of all the crew, even prissy, fussy Guillarme, sour milkweed and the trolls. Cait is specially loyal to Jack who, disregarding sex and imbalance in ages, is like the father she never had but always wanted.

Plots & Objectives:

The Treasure of Varese

On an island, surrounded by treacherous reefs, protected by a cornucopia of monsters, is rumoured to be a great treasure, the Rubies of Varese.

It is said that the conquistador Varese found a great treasure, of such beauty that it deprived him of his mind. Others claim that his comrades fell into bickering over the treasure, a conflict of such savagery that only Varese survived and that he was mad from starvation by the time he found civilisation.

Wherever the truth lies, he was the only survivor of his expedition, found ranting about a cave of rubies and insensible to further inquiry, a decade after they went missing. He was taken to a monastery where he eventually died, producing a vast output of quaint and naïve paintings which chill the soul with their large hollow eyes.

Two special paintings, he claimed to be his secret children, born the

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likenesses of a small boy and a small girl. These are said to be the key to his treasure, although they have been missing for years. Somehow, they have found their way into the possession of the dreadful Salamander Sisters. You must recover these paintings and unlock the secrets of Varese's treasure.

Save The Cow Creamer!

The sack of The Clover by the Scarlet Nightmare was a great indignity and a flagrant breach of The Covenant. Worse than that, the ship bore a special gift from the Governor of St Cruz to his lovely daughter, an elegant argentine cow creamer made by a master artisan. Someone managed to secure this valuable item and you must have it, by hook or by crook. If only you have more funds to hand – you are going to have to barter for it. It is best to locate its erstwhile owner, sneer at it's quality and attempt to swap it for some favour, to take it off their hands...

The Dance of the Lillim

The Lillim are a secret sisterhood of Glaistig who remember with joy and sorrow the days of yore when women were the leaders of both the immortal and mortal world. A heretic cult, they worship Lilith as a form of the Morrigan, the bloody goddess of passion and the night.

These beliefs have been deemed untrue and heretical by the Moonlit Choir, a bold assertion considering a few Glaistig are old enough to have lived in the matriarchal societies of old. They devote their considerable resources to stamping out the Lillim, who must remain in secret until they can overthrow this over-inflated chorus of peacocks and cockerels.

The Lillim are also opposed to the worms of the Cuiteog and their books of genealogy. Sex and birth should be a matter of desire, of darkness and the night – not a keeping of accounts in fussy ledgers. The bloodlines of the Glaistig are a strong vine, not a fragile construction of mortal architecture and conceit. One day the Lillim will lead the daughters of the moon back into darkness where they belong.

The time draws near for the Feast of Morrigan, an annual celebration of

the Lillim. You are uncertain what foothold the cult has gained in the new world, but if there is a bacchanale in planning, you want to be involved. Most importantly, a secluded venue needs to be obtained. Perhaps Captain Dog Hatchet Jack may be a member of the cult, or at least sympathetic to its renegade cause?

Lillim recognise each other by a ritual exchange, traditionally conducted in Glaistig Gaelic. The structure is flexible, to allow the “Dance of the Lillim” to be seamlessly integrated into discourse, not intrusive like clumsy code phrases. Only the last initiative and response must be recited verbatim.

Initiative: Discuss the beauty of the moon

Response: Curse the sun

Initiative: Praise the music of the night

Response: Lament the coming of the dawn chorus

Initiative: A Question: Are you a sister of the abundant vine?

Response: By the Crows of the Morrigan and the Horses of Epona, Yes

Gossip & Information:

While seeking to escape her apprenticeship and never wanting to mix smelly chemical again, Cait does keep her hand in, and has good contacts in St Cruz and the Caribbean generally. Jorni the Rat is the best local alchemist and is a frequent drinking companion. He can be a source of great gossip – although he would not disclose what Guillaume was doing sniffing around the shop. Perhaps he was buying more scents for his elaborate perfumery.

As a side note, Cait was ‘exploring’ Guillaume’s perfume collection yesterday and found a bottle of blood. It was clearly of Glaistig stock (it did not clot or spoil). What is our boy up to?

Another customer of Jorni’s is that sweet innocent young thing Elise. About a month ago she purchased a solution of silver, for what purpose is unknown. Perhaps a weapon? Perhaps she is a monster hunter, one

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of the tiresome Order of Adam fanatics?

That Tonantzín, charming girl if a bit too serious for her own good. She talks to fish, so she probably has not been afforded opportunity to hone her wit and repartee.

Cait was good chums with Sergei's thrall girl Katerine. A keen seamstress, she was filled with vitality and joy, and could drink like a drain, back when the Hurley Burley was the place to be. She has not been around for a while and Sergei seems unusually dour. Perhaps there has been some falling out? Most Glaistig would use Blood Dominion to force their will on their thralls, Sergei is the kind of sweet boy who would not do such a thing. Cait hopes that immortal life does not erode his virtue.

That Bishop chap, Dougal. Cait is certain she has met him before, as a young soldier in Donegal about a century ago. He has aged a little, but nowhere near enough. Either she is mistaken, or he is someone's thrall. It is just typical of men of the cloth to get themselves a master at the first opportunity.

Recently, Cait has had to avoid her favourite haunt the Hurley Burley Tavern. The gigolo who calls himself 'the Fabulous Machio' has set up shop there. He sells his services as a sire, providing impeccable and undoubtedly forged genealogical charts. Cait used his services in the twelfth century, a period of indiscretion when she thought a child would give her a way out of the dank laboratories. Her son, Massen, was an idealist and disappeared in the "Blood Rush" of the crusades, presumed dead at the hands of a zealot (on one side or the other, it matters little). A great loss, especially as boy children are increasingly thin on the ground in Glaistig society – perhaps there is something wrong with the blood supply?

The Hurley Burley must be a grim place anyway, after the murders. Even gloomy Captain Jack used to lurk there, drinking with the brothel madam Sable. Now she is dead, the Captain has been especially saturnine.

The Governor was recently slumming it in the night market, he had a strange bounty to show Jorni the Alchemist. Swearing the little rat to secrecy (such a silly naïve man...) he revealed a cluster of strange, lustrous rubies. It seems that these were half formed blood rubies that dissolved in water. The blood was not quite Glaistig, but seemed to resemble aspects of the newt tribe's properties. Now where did the forthright, respectable governor acquire such treasures?

Cait is actually a fine cook, but like most things the effort outweighs the transient pleasures which may be reaped. She admires the little witch Tonantzín for her cooking prowess, which borders on the mystical. This has piqued Cait's ample curiosity. She has a book somewhere of Glaistig culinary secrets and arcane recipes – perhaps a mutually profitable friendship might be worth cultivating?

Personal Goals:

- ◆ Find more baubles & pretties
- ◆ Protect your adopted family, especially Jack
- ◆ Find some way to restore the life and joy to St Cruz. Since the murders, the town has been grim and forbidding. This business with the Covenant is simply one more woe heaped upon a mound of festering troubles. Either something has to be done, or Cait may be looking for another home, somewhere more festive and gay.

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Gunny Sack Meg

Fierce Pirate, one half of the infamous Salamander Sisters

Age: 2618, appears late 30s, born 931 BC

Tribe: Earc Luachra (pr. ack luckra, Newt Tribe)

Bane Immunity: Salt, Pure Water, Fire

Heritage Gift: Breathe water

History:

The Salamander Sisters are something of a legend among the Glaistig, a pair of vile, distempered hellbeasts, whose shadows have been cast across every major bloodbath in history. Great warriors, implacable foes and carousers of mythic capacity for indulgence and wickedness. They have left a bloody trail across history, from the massacre of Roman legions, to raiding with the Norse, the crusades and every revolution, war and conquest along the way.

Their origins are of surprising domestic simplicity. They are siblings, something which is unusual among Glaistig to the degree of almost being a perversion. The Tribes of the Moon breed according to the charts and dictates of the genealogists. Prudence and Meg's parents were lifemates and bred out of love, against the dictates of blood. Even the sisters themselves know little of this couple, except that they effected the life of humble Celtic farmers in ancient Eire.

They had the unusual experience of being raised together, close in age. There is but four years difference between the sisters, Meg being the older sibling. They were beloved of their parents, Glaistig of mild disposition who rarely killed and tended their herd of human cattle with kindness. They must have been disappointed to have produced such

uncontrollable offspring, yet the deeds of the Romans (backed by the early Choir) must bear some responsibility for creating these monsters.

As children of the Earc Luachra tribe, swimming and lurking among the fens was second nature (unlike the rest of the clan, they are even protected from pure spring water). Meg is a much better swimmer, Prudence has difficulty seeing under water which makes her a little vulnerable to attack. They have both acquired an unusual immunity to fire, from which the sobriquet stems. In truth, most Glaistig are unsure if the pair are unharmed by fire or whether they are so savage that they do not care.

As they age, Glaistig are expected to mature. Many are hell raisers in their youth, but once a thousand years or two thousand are reached, they are expected to have purged this fire from their veins. The Salamander Sisters steadfastly refuse such expectations. If they capitulated, they would be accorded great status as respected elders, but they choose to remain on the outer of polite society, living life subject only to whim, not the shackles of polite discourse and manners. The Salamander Sisters have never been skilled in manners...

The sisters have seen a dramatic change in Glaistig society. In their youth the Glaistig were a loose-knit matriarchal tribal society, organised around recognition of hunting grounds. Taking advantage of their breeding commodity, the men slowly organised themselves into the Moonlit Choir, first a conspiracy then a fully fledged government enforcing their will through violence, and the use of their lackeys in the mortal Church and the Covenant. History, it seems to the sisters, brings little progress.

The Salamander Sisters resolutely refuse to act with dignity or decorum of age. Most Glaistig, even those of rebellious bent, will assume a position of respectability after a couple of thousand years of rampage. This is as death to Meg who refuses to give an inch to the march of years. Secretly she is worried that she is beginning to lose her edge and has been dabbling in other options. She would never submit to becoming a breeder for the Tribes, yet perhaps she yearns for a home, some sense of

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stability. Although angry for this weakness, she has been wondering if she might be able to channel her aggression into business and become a merchant trader.

Relationships:

Meg is completely loyal to her captain. The bond with her sister is such that can never be broken, although bones might be. She quarrels constantly with Prudence and would fight to the death to protect her 'little sister'.

Meg likes Sergei, perhaps as one adores a pet. He is trusting and naïve and requires protection from the wickedness of the world.

Plots & Objectives:

The Abomination in the Attic

In love, the deepest mistakes are made. Sergei was possessed of a great love for the mortal girl Katerine, a seamstress of St Cruz. He made her his thrall so that time could be kept at bay, at least for a while. Then the unspeakable happened, she became an abomination. Sergei, confided his error in the Captain who, along with Gunny Sack Meg, organised to have Katerine confined to her tiny chamber, an attic in the township. Now all three look for a solution. There are legends of magic rituals or artifacts which can turn an abomination back into a thrall, but this may be false hope. The only solution may be a merciful one, before the Moonlit Choir learn of her existence...

Hunting The Sea Fiend

In the deep, dark places of the Carribean waters, an ancient creature called "Old Lurkey" by sailors is said to make her home. She is blamed for many shipwrecks and seaborne catastrophes. A hundred years ago Old Lurkey took a ship called The Silke Carbuncle, among its cargo treasures, doubloons and a set of cutlasses made by the great Glaistig alchemist Drache. These are silver blades, which keep a fine edge through enchantment or secret metallurgical processes. A fine treasure indeed.

To plan an expedition to recover the Silke Carbuncle you need to arrange the following:

- ◆ a method of finding the location of Old Lurkey's Den
- ◆ a ship to reach it
- ◆ a diver to go hunting for the treasure
- ◆ a plan to defeat Old Lurkey, should she take offence at your presence.

The Dragon Heresy

The orthodoxy holds that the Nathair, the serpent tribe, were a distinct and pure bloodline of their own, the blood of kings. A scattering of heretics believe otherwise, that the Nathair were the dragon tribe, chimirae of mixed blood. It is true that most inter-tribe breeding results in weaker offspring but sometimes, in the right combinations, a powerful creature can be produced. The obsession with purity, the Cuiteog tribe control over the bloodlines has led to the lamentable condition of Glaistig society today. You have searched the corners of the earth for any clues, rituals, relics which might give better information about the mysterious Nathair.

Gossip & Information:

Captain Jack has long sought to mix piracy with legitimate business. An irresistible opportunity arose when Sergei began romancing the young seamstress Katerine. Her dissolute and indigent father Anders is actually a gifted horse trainer fallen on hard times. Pooling their resources, Jack and Meg bought a horse farm on St Cruz which was showing great potential once they managed to get Anders sober. This has been compromised by the disappearance of Katerine (see the plot "The Abomination in the Attic") which is driving her father back to the bottle and the business to ruin. Recently Jack and Meg have had urgent secret meetings to try and decide the fate of their farm – should they cut their losses and sell up now? One thing is clear, Sergei already feels bad enough about what he is done to Katerine, he does not need this burden placed upon him as well.

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Meg knew that The Clover was a covenant ship. However, she was not running the proper flags which should have marked her out as protected. If they are not going to adopt the simplest of precautions, they deserve to be plundered.

Guillarme took a small chest from The Clover as part of his share of the plunder. Earlier this evening, knowing that she was of the newt tribe, he asked her to secrete the waterproof chest in the reef under the ship. He offered to split the takings with her, and he clearly cannot recover it. Meg does not know what is inside of it (it was locked) but looks forward to splitting the profits of what is obviously of great value. She could always claim it for herself, but opening the chest without the key might well damage what is inside.

Prudence has been crowing about her new chamber pot, some treasure or another which she took from The Clover. She has been wanting to intrigue Meg, to get her to ask what it is. Up until now, she has managed to let her pride crush her curiosity.

Meg possesses one of a pair of god-awful paintings of children which are supposed to be the maps to some great treasure. They were part of a haul the Salamander Sisters made decades ago. They quarrelled over the paintings, each seizing one and refusing to cooperate. In truth, Meg is sick and tired of this fight and will sell the painting if given sufficient incentive, (even favours will do) though she will bargain aggressively. *(You will receive a handout which describes the painting and will act in the painting's place during the freeform.)*

Meg is concerned about the abomination Katerine. When the Salamander Sister were young, a favourite thrall of Prudence's called Oifa became abominated. She was beautiful and wise, a gifted storm witch like Tonantzín, beloved by both sisters. She seemed to be regaining her former self, so they sought to hide her, protect her from the other Glaistig. Eventually she was discovered and their vengeance was terrible – they locked her in a stone casket and threw her into the sea to eternal torment. Today the Moonlit Choir control Glaistig society and they are no less cruel in their purges. Why are they so terrified of

And the Moon a Crooked Grin

abominations?

Personal Goals:

- ◆ Get the better of Prudence
- ◆ Protect Prudence
- ◆ Look out for Sergei, he is young and vulnerable. He needs to grow up a lot, yet Meg remembers what the loss of Oifa did to Prudence.

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Big Prudence

Ferocious Pirate, one half of the infamous Salamander Sisters

Age: 2614, appears early 40s, born 927BC

Tribe: Earc Luachra (pr. ack luckra, Newt Tribe)

Bane Immunity: Salt, Pure Water, Fire

Heritage Gift: Breathe Water

History:

The Salamander Sisters are something of a legend among the Glaistig, a pair of vile, distempered hellbeasts, whose shadows have been cast across every major bloodbath in history. Great warriors, implacable foes and carousers of mythic capacity for indulgence and wickedness. They have left a bloody trail across history, from the massacre of Roman legions, to raiding with the Norse, the crusades and every revolution, war and conquest along the way.

Their origins are of surprising domestic simplicity. They are siblings, something which is unusual among Glaistig to the degree of almost being a perversion. The Tribes of the Moon breed according to the charts and dictates of the genealogists. Prudence and Meg's parents were lifemates and bred out of love, against the dictates of blood. Even the sisters themselves know little of this couple, except that they effected the life of humble Celtic farmers in ancient Eire.

They had the unusual experience of being raised together, close in age. There is but four years difference between the sisters, Meg being the older sibling. They were beloved of their parents, Glaistig of mild disposition who rarely killed and tended their herd of human cattle with kindness. They must have been disappointed to have produced such

uncontrollable offspring, yet the deeds of the Romans (backed by the early Choir) must bear some responsibility for creating these monsters.

As children of the Earc Luachra tribe, swimming and lurking among the fens was second nature (unlike the rest of the clan, they are even protected from pure spring water). Meg is a much better swimmer, Prudence has difficulty seeing under water which makes her a little vulnerable to attack. They have both acquired an unusual immunity to fire, from which the sobriquet stems. In truth, most Glaistig are unsure if the pair are unharmed by fire or whether they are so savage that they do not care.

As they age, Glaistig are expected to mature. Many are hell raisers in their youth, but once a thousand years or two thousand are reached, they are expected to have purged this fire from their veins. The Salamander Sisters steadfastly refuse such expectations. If they capitulated, they would be accorded great status as respected elders, but they choose to remain on the outer of polite society, living life subject only to whim, not the shackles of polite discourse and manners. The Salamander Sisters have never been skilled in manners...

The sisters have seen a dramatic change in Glaistig society. In their youth the Glaistig were a loose-knit matriarchal tribal society, organised around recognition of hunting grounds. Taking advantage of their breeding commodity, the men slowly organised themselves into the Moonlit Choir, first a conspiracy then a fully fledged government enforcing their will through violence, and the use of their lackeys in the mortal Church and the Covenant. History, it seems to the sisters, brings little progress.

It is unclear from where Prudence's dislike of the male sex arose. Certainly it has much to do with the rarity of male Glaistig, and the position of privilege which such scarcity affords. Ever minded to conspiracies and plots, Prudence sees the ever declining rate of male births as a plot of the Moonlit Choir, to enhance their dubious value as seed bearers.

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Prudence enjoys bullying men, mortal and Glaistig alike, expressing the great strength which comes from her age and potent blood. Temporary amusements are the best that men may hope to be in her eyes.

Prudence is patron to The Order of Adam, a group of monster hunters who operate in secrecy within the Church and are dedicated to the elimination of the Glaistig. It started as a drunken lark, appearing to a priest as “the White Lady of Provence” but she has found the Order to be a valuable weapon, to strike out at the Moonlit Choir. She provides them with advice, information about their targets and even portions of her blood (“holy blood”, of course) which they can imbibe to gain supernatural strength, to even the odds a little.

It is a dangerous game, playing with these mortals, but Prudence is confident of her abilities. The Order is widespread today and is even active in the Caribbean. The ‘Creed of the White Lady’ dictates a series of codes and phrases by which the members may identify each other.

Relationships:

Prudence is fiercely loyal to her captain and her sister (in a competitive and sullen way). She distrusts all men, sees them as weaklings, including members of the crew and especially the representatives of the Covenant. It does mean that she also tends to underestimate their abilities.

Plots & Objectives:

Relics of the White Lady

From the antiquarian origins of the Church, the instrument through which the Glaistig control the mortal world, there have been those who want to put mankind first, to throw off the shackles of the Glaistig masters. In the late Roman Empire, the first Shadow Cardinal of Adam was visited by a manifestation of Mary (“the White Lady of Provence”) who came with advice and a blessing.

Thus the Cardinal formed a secret order, the Order of Adam, which sought to destabilise and topple the Moonlit Choir from their secret throne. This order's activities range from political manoeuvring to outright monster hunting. Guided by appearances of the White Lady and her gifts, vials of holy blood which fills the faithful with divine strength. Members of the Order identify each other through complex codes, phrased in the Creed of the White Lady.

The plundering of The Clover came at the worst time for the Order of Adam. Several holy relics as well as secret papers and books were smuggled aboard this Covenant ship, right under the noses of the enemy. Unfortunately these have been sacked and claimed by members of the Scarlet Nightmare crew. You must recover or destroy these items, to prevent them from falling into the clutches of the Choir.

The Dance of the Lillim

The Lillim are a secret sisterhood of Glaistig who remember with joy and sorrow the days of yore when women were the leaders of both the immortal and mortal world. A heretic cult, they worship Lilith as a form of the Morrigan, the bloody goddess of passion and the night.

These beliefs have been deemed untrue and heretical by the Moonlit Choir, a bold assertion considering a few Glaistig are old enough to have lived in the matriarchal societies of old. They devote their considerable resources to stamping out the Lillim, who must remain in secret until they can overthrow this over-inflated chorus of peacocks and cockerels.

The Lillim are also opposed to the worms of the Cuiteog and their books of genealogy. Sex and birth should be a matter of desire, of darkness and the night – not a keeping of accounts in fussy ledgers. The bloodlines of the Glaistig are a strong vine, not a fragile construction of mortal architecture and conceit. One day the Lillim will lead the daughters of the moon back into darkness where they belong.

The time draws near for the Feast of Morrigan, an annual celebration of the Lillim. You are uncertain what foothold the cult has gained in the

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new world, but if there is a bacchanale in planning, you want to be involved. Most importantly, a secluded venue needs to be obtained. Perhaps Captain Dog Hatchet Jack may be a member of the cult, or at least sympathetic to its renegade cause?

Lillim recognise each other by a ritual exchange, traditionally conducted in Glaistig Gaelic. The structure is flexible, to allow the “Dance of the Lillim” to be seamlessly integrated into discourse, not intrusive like clumsy code phrases. Only the last initiative and response must be recited verbatim.

Initiative: Discuss the beauty of the moon

Response: Curse the sun

Initiative: Praise the music of the night

Response: Lament the coming of the dawn chorus

Initiative: A Question: Are you a sister of the abundant vine?

Response: By the Crows of the Morrigan and the Horses of Epona, Yes

The Bloodline of the Serpent

The blood of the extinct Nathair Tribe lies dormant in the bloodlines of the Glaistig. This is the holy grail, the blood of kings, the greatest treasure of the night.

The genealogists of the Cuiteog have as their ultimate aim breeding out true serpents. They differ as to how this is to be done, all but the heretics believe in keeping the purity of the Tribes intact. Over the years fewer and fewer male children have been born, making this task more difficult. This scarcity has also seen the ascendancy of the male Moonlit Choir to power.

This is an immense genealogical puzzle, but there are clues, scattered here and there by the ancients. An encoded text, a puzzle box, a breeding formula – all these fragments must be gathered so that one day the true king may rise again.

Note that some of these plots draw Prudence in inconsistent directions, such is her nature. Especially the conflict between the Lillim and the Bloodline Purists – however this can be reconciled. Their motives are different, but both seek a way out of the orthodoxy and ascendancy of the males of the Choir. Prudence believes not a true king of the Nathair, but a true *Queen*. She believes that this queen would bear secrets which could permit conception of children without a father being involved, restoring conception to the mysteries of the night not the books and logic of the genealogists who are, for now, a necessary evil.

Gossip & Information:

Prudence possesses one of a pair of god-awful paintings of children which are supposed to be the maps to some great treasure. They were part of a haul the Salamander Sisters made decades ago. They quarrelled over the paintings, each seizing one and refusing to cooperate. In truth, Prudence is sick and tired of this fight and will sell the painting if given sufficient incentive, (even favours will do) though she will bargain aggressively. (*You will receive a handout which describes the painting and will act in the painting's place during the freeform.*)

Prudence fears that the murders may be the work of an abomination. When the Salamander Sister were young, a favourite thrall of Prudence's called Oifa became abominated. She was beautiful and wise, a gifted storm witch like Tonantzín, beloved by both sisters. She seemed to be regaining her former self, so they sought to hide her, protect her from the other Glaistig. Eventually she was discovered and their vengeance was terrible – they locked her in a stone casket and threw her into the sea to eternal torment. Today the Moonlit Choir control Glaistig society and they are no less cruel in their purges. Why are they so terrified of abominations?

Last week that flimsy fool Guillarme had the effrontery to offer her coin, in exchange for a small phial of her blood. She roared at him, threatened to crush him like the insect he is, but was short of drinking money so she agreed. She does not like the thought of him skulking

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around in the water, but his money is as good as anyone else's.

She does not trust that popinjay. A month ago she saw him slip away from the Hurley Burley with Sergei's thrall, the little seamstress. While Prudence is no friend of Sergei's, taking liberties with someone else's thrall is a fairly low deed.

With the sack of The Clover, Prudence seized herself a great treasure. Packed with great care, she found a hideous cow creamer jug, obviously worth a lot of money but displeasing to the artistic eye. She has delighted in using this as her chamber pot, pretending to know little of its value. For some reason the Clover, which Prudence knew to be a Covenant ship, was sailing without the proper identifying flags. Perhaps they were hiding something – probably ashamed of the damned ugly cow creamer!

Prudence has been gloating about her new chamber pot – trying to get Meg to ask about it. So far, her curiosity has not been piqued. Its time will come.

Black Cait is not as young as she pretends. One evening she drunkenly recalled a son, who had died in the crusades. She was ranting about zealots and hypocritical fools, obviously no great supporter of the Church.

Personal Goals:

- ◆ Get the better of Meg
- ◆ Protect Meg
- ◆ Bring down the Moonlit Choir and use any opportunity to humiliate men and prove your superior strength

Don Diego Corazon y Santos

Conniving Governor of St Cruz, Representative of The Covenant

Age: 41, born 1646

Tribe: Mortal

History:

All the folk of St Cruz know their bold and ostentatious governor, a brazen peacock who loves to mix with the common folk, bestowing the generosity of nobility upon the rabble. Little do they know that he was once one of them. As a child he was a mathematical prodigy, taken to be educated by a secretive order of monks in the mountains of Spain. He is still gifted in this regard, but he has learnt to hide this, does not want to seem too bookish or clever.

When he came of age, he was sent to be codemaster to the duke of Orinisthese and learnt of the Covenant which controlled the world from the shadows, and their Glaistig masters. Eventually he rose through the ranks, and became a skilled spymaster, striking out against the Covenant's enemies such as the Order of Adam, a mad sect of monster hunters and the sinister Lillim. As reward for sterling service, he was appointed governor St Cruz, a thriving port in the New World. With this post came a noble title.

With him came Elise, his cherished daughter. He cannot really remember his wife, Diego married young and she died in childbirth. The move to St Cruz has enabled both of them to leave the past behind, in the crumbling ruins of the Old World. The Americas are truly the place to be for a man of ambition and cunning.

The Moonlit Choir does not have a Glaistig representative in St Cruz, it is too far from civilisation and has only a handful of legitimate Glaistig citizens (not counting those pirates). The nearest Choir enclave is in

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Havana. They have appointed a Bishop to the small cathedral in St Cruz, His Grace Dougal Rankin. It seems a little cavalier to appoint a Celt to a Spanish town, but they holy fathers know best.

Things were progressing steadily until the Scarlet Nightmare began to darken the waters of the Caribbean. There has been great pressure from the Choir to deal with these renegades, through force, negotiation or even bribery.

Diego has arranged this meeting tonight, in order to win Captain Jack over, with the possibility of using his ship against the English. The Moonlit Choir has recently laid claim to a remote island called "The Isle of Rosy Blooms" which is surrounded by treacherous reefs. This would make an ideal pirate base and has been given to Diego to use as an incentive. It has a sparse population of savages which could be turned to service or sold as slaves.

Of course Diego would prefer to reach agreement without using this, and to keep the island for himself, to make some profit from its eventual disposition.

Through long involvement with Glaistig he has learned to balance arrogance with obsequiousness. One must not appear incompetent or weak, but also must never challenge the authority of the masters of the night. Dealing with these creatures is a stratagem, at its heart a mathematical puzzle to apply one's gifts to.

Relationships:

Diego is ambitious above all other things and sees other people (mortal or immortal) as mere instruments. It has taken Diego a while to treat women on equal footing, but as a member of the Covenant he has grown used to submitting to Glaistig of whatever sex. While the Glaistig leaders are all men, there seems to be many more women in the Tribes. Diego finds it easier to deal with Captain Jack and Milkweed because they, at least affect make attire and he can pretend that they are men.

Diego does not like Rankin and believes that he is up to no good. He is too skilful to let his suspicions show, but nevertheless keeps close watch

on the Irishman who has already built his own spy network in competition with the Governor.

Plots & Objectives:

Patching the Breaches of The Covenant

The captain of the Scarlet Nightmare and her crew are mavericks who must be brought to heel by The Covenant. You are to use any means necessary – threats, inducements, appeals to higher powers, deceit – to make him toe the line and agree to protect Covenant interests.

Save The Cow Creamer!

The sack of The Clover by the Scarlet Nightmare was a great indignity and a flagrant breach of The Covenant. Worse than that, the ship bore a special gift from the Governor of St Cruz to his lovely daughter, an elegant argentine cow creamer made by a master artisan. Someone managed to secure this valuable item and you must have it, by hook or by crook. If only you have more funds to hand – you are going to have to barter for it. It is best to locate its erstwhile owner, sneer at it's quality and attempt to swap it for some favour, to take it off their hands...

Bloody Deeds in St Cruz

Barely two weeks ago, murders of terrible savagery cast a cloud over vibrant, prosperous St Cruz. Five women, with little in common except for the grotesque brutality of their demise upon a single night.

The grim manner of their death bears recounting. Each was beheaded, their arms torn from their bodies with terrible strength. Finally each was slit up their side by something rough and sharp, a talon or rude blade. It is unknown if this is the work of Glaistig or some other creature and it is unsure if blood was drunk, so much was spilled. Local constables suspect an ourang-outang or some other brutal animal. Whatever creature, it has broken the fragile peace of St Cruz and must be stopped.

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The victims:

- ◆ **Mrs Camille Stallman** – The wife of Richard Stallman, an importer of haberdashery and the owner of the Hurley Burley Tavern.
- ◆ **Mme Chloe Manteur** – A noblewoman in exile, lamenting her youth in the Salons, she is a great raconteur and favourite at the Hurley Burley.
- ◆ **Mrs Ruchella Spatfock** – Widow Spatfock, who organises several indigent girls of the town into a small army of seamstresses.
- ◆ **Manuela**, surname unknown, a serving girl who worked at the Hurley Burley of native ancestry. She also acted as servant to Mrs Stallman.
- ◆ **Sable**, real name unknown, madam of the brothel which operates out of the Hurley Burley. On her death it was discovered that she possessed a curious inversion.

Everyone else in St Cruz plays by the rules. One of these renegades are almost certainly responsible.

Gossip & Information:

Diego has been subjected to a lot of pressure, especially over the pirate attacks. He has been suffering memory blackouts, he will suddenly wake up somewhere with little knowledge of how he got there. He has kept these events secret, but is concerned that he has befallen some tropical illness.

While she may look like a dull book-keeper, Milkweed owns the Hurley Burley Tavern, the most notorious and glamorous hangout for cut-throats and the wicked in St Cruz. Under the terms of The Covenant she has enthralled the owner (Mr Stallman) and registered her proprietary interest with Diego as Covenant representative. Diego has even seen her talking to the sleazy Glaistieg gigolo who calls himself “The Fabulous Machio” – she clearly lets her hair down sometimes.

The Moonlit Choir is concerned about the rise of cult activity in St Cruz. They have issued this warning: “The Order of Adam is much feared,

secret society of mortal Glaistig Hunters that has infiltrated Mother Church and is a serious threat to the Covenant. Even more dangerous is the Lillim, a sect of Glaistig harpies, blood mad witches who are capable of any iniquity for their perverted pleasures and rituals. Be ever vigilant!". These zealots and fishwives will be forced to regret their intrusion into the near paradise of St Cruz.

Almost inevitably, St Cruz attracts treasure hunters. Not only are these disreputable characters, bad for the town's reputation, but their greed makes them foolhardy in the face of danger. Many of the local legends tell of sea serpents and other monsters of the deep who jealously guard these treasures. These creatures should not be angered by idiots prying where they have no business.

The constables found weird glossy rubies in the private effects of the murdered girl Manuela. They appeared to start dissolving when wet, leaving a bloody residue. Swearing him to secrecy, Diego consulted the Glaistig alchemist. Jorni the Rat, who has yet to make any definite findings. Very odd.

Elise wants a pony. All girls want ponies. As a proud and doting father Diego will do anything for her. He has heard of a horse farm which has begun business on St Cruz but apparently the head trainer is a drunkard. It has been bought by secret monied parties, perhaps someone here?

Diego is suspicious of the cooking of Tonantzín, native girls are all poisoners. He will never be the first to take from a plate.

Personal Goals:

- ◆ Protect your interests in St Cruz
- ◆ Get made into a vampire. [NB having read the background notes, you will know that the best Diego can hope for is thralldom, one has to be *born* a Glaistig. He does not know this, however.]
- ◆ Catch Rankin up to no good and have him replaced.

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Elise

Demure Daughter to the Governor of St Cruz

Age: 31778, appears 16, born 30091 BC

Tribe: Nathair (pr. na-hir, Serpent Tribe), pretending to be human

Bane Immunity: Sunlight

Heritage Gift: Rebirth

History:

Forgetfulness is the only balm to the afflictions of time. To live to be ancient is to carry a burden larger than just bones, the weight of years can be terrible indeed. Glaistig succumb to age not because of creaky limbs, but rather this transformation comes about in consequence of the weight of memory. The Nathair tribe have a solution, a ritual of rebirth which replenishes the soul and restores the body, transforming an ancient to an infant once more.

The newly reborn loses all of its powers, its memories are nothing more than dreams, often elusive. They must wait until they come of age, before their Glaistig nature manifests itself once more. Because of this, the ritual of rebirth is usually conducted in the presence of a trusted accomplice, a guardian to protect the newborn through the vulnerabilities of childhood.

Elise is just now beginning to recall her immortal nature. The dreamy visions of her youth are coalescing into coherent lives, each remote and unable to be touched, dimly recalled through gauzy veils. She knows that in her last life she lived to be very decrepit before she found a guardian she could hold in faith, the fallen knightshade Charlotte.

She also knows that Charlotte has performed her duties well, enthralling the governor of St Cruz, making him believe that the child was actually his own through the gentle application of blood domination. The time will soon come that her immortal strength will be restored, and then she must decide what becomes of this shadow life which she has been living.

The Nathair of myth were the kings of the Glaistig. In truth, they were the vampires' greatest victims. As long lived as the Glaistig are, many could not bear any limitations on their lifespan and looked jealously at those who could thwart old age through rebirth. At first they believed that the Nathair deliberately kept their secret, refusing to share it with the other tribes. Many of the serpent tribe died under torture denying this theory.

Then the alchemists were brought in, seeking to refine some element out of the blood. One common myth was that if a Glaistig drank a Nathair dry, unto death, than the power would transfer to the murderer. This was never proven, but there are tales that the Shadow Pontiff of the Moonlit Choir managed such a feat.

Between the extinction of her tribe and the sight of many wars, Elise has learnt to keep hidden. The crusades, for instance, drew Glaistig to the great "Blood Rush", like moths to a flame. Between territorial squabbles, the deeds of mortals and the harsh sun, only half the number returned. Elise was drawn to the new world, but is careful that history does not begin to repeat itself on this strange and exotic shore.

Elise and Charlotte have tried to control the Covenant through their domination of the governor, to keep the Choir appeased and out of St Cruz business. The sack of the Clover has made continued neutrality impossible. Elise is fond of Captain Jack and her unruly bunch of cut-throats. The Glaistig have grown fat and complacent on the crumbs tossed to them by the Choir and the Covenant. Hard times are coming, the wheel will turn again. Who knows what side the last daughter of the Nathair will take – she surely does not.

Relationships:

Elise owes much to the devotion of Charlotte, who seems a fine and

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honourable woman. She takes her duty very seriously, with an intensity that Elise often finds uncomfortable. Diego is an inferior creature, but is useful and has served well. Bishop Rankin is made of sterner fabric, but bears some kind of shadow across his soul – just what torments him is not yet clear. He seems to be a faithful servant of the Covenant, but has the demeanour of a soldier readying himself for war.

Plots & Objectives:

Infamy and Betrayal

The night bears a grim foreboding, the hazy shadows of moonlight conceals the viper in your midst. The omens indicate a turning point, this night, a plot that once hatched will change the fragile order of St Cruz. The mortals of The Covenant know all too much about the Nightmare and her movements, the Choir are perched like vultures. You must find out who has been selling out the Scarlet Nightmare and stop them before it is too late.

The Dragon Heresy

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Elise may be of the Nathair, but she knows little of how she came to be conceived. Even given the memories she has of her youth, they are thirty thousand years distant and blurred by many rebirths. Her ample curiosity extends to her own origins and how this leads her destiny.

The Treasure of Varese

On an island, surrounded by treacherous reefs, protected by a cornucopia of monsters, is rumoured to be a great treasure, the Rubies of Varese.

It is said that the conquistador Varese found a great treasure, of such beauty that it deprived him of his mind. Others claim that his comrades fell into bickering over the treasure, a conflict of such savagery that only Varese survived and that he was mad from starvation by the time he found civilisation.

Wherever the truth lies, he was the only survivor of his expedition, found ranting about a cave of rubies and insensible to further inquiry, a decade after they went missing. He was taken to a monastery where he eventually died, producing a vast output of quaint and naïve paintings which chill the soul with their large hollow eyes.

Two special paintings, he claimed to be his secret children, born the likenesses of a small boy and a small girl. These are said to be the key to his treasure, although they have been missing for years. Somehow, they have found their way into the possession of the dreadful Salamander Sisters. You must recover these paintings and unlock the secrets of Varese's treasure.

Gossip & Information:

Elise is fascinated with Abominations. While all begin as blood crazed monsters, it is not fair to dismiss them this simply. The insanity is simply part of the change, a response to the overwhelming power of Glaistig blood and the touch of death. In past lives, Elise has known Abominations to overcome this, to settle the beast within and regain their former selves. But in the last ten thousand years or so, the Glaistig have always hunted down Abominations, killed them, or worse, condemned them to unending torment by live burial. The Moonlit Choir, those tools of the Filiméala Tribe, have been particularly sadistic in this regard.

Scott Beattie

Abominations are curious creatures – neither dead nor alive. They do not age at all making them potentially truly immortal. They possess a fraction of Glaistig power but they can create more abominations. Much of the justification for persecuting abominations is derived from fear of a plague spreading, yet in truth it seems more derived from fear, misunderstanding and not a little jealousy. Even the long lived regard the undying with envy.

The Nathair, as healers, often dealt with Abominations. They saved those they could and delivered mercy to those in the grip of permanent dementia. Glaistig blood is the source of the madness, it must be purged from the system before you can continue. The Abomination must be starved, fed only small portions of mortal blood, and forced to imbibe salt water and silver solutions. The pain from this, along with the torment of hunger is quite terrible and often too much to bear. Once they are purged, they can be nursed back to health on mortal blood.

The recent string of murders were performed by an abomination, a pretty young woman who Elise captured. Elise found her in the middle of the day, cowering naked away from the sun in a pile of refuse behind the Hurley Burley Tavern. Under the hypnotic effect of Blood Domination, Elise restored a semblance of calm and discovered her home – an attic which had been inadequately secured against escape.

Asking the Bishop for assistance, Elise obtained the services of a carpenter to properly fortify the room. She purchased a solution of silver from an alchemist (called Jorni, an expert in combustives Elise knew two lifetimes ago) who lives in St Cruz, and attempted a preliminary purge of the girl's blood. A beggar girl sufficed as an erstwhile source of blood. Elise has not felt the call of blood for seventeen years, but knows the change will come upon her soon enough when she will need to hunt for herself once again.

Elise does not know to whom the thrall belongs and is reluctant to get any further involved, for fear of revealing her nature prematurely.

Elise has had ample opportunity to dabble in the occult arts. Recently

she has become fascinated with science and has re-examined some of these practices, in the hope of determining how much ritual is essential practice, how much mere mystification.

The rite of sirehood was performed in ancient times but is all but lost today. It allowed a pregnant mother to alter the fatherhood of her child. A complex ritual is involved, as well as the sharing of blood between mother and the Glaistig whose blood the child is to share. Male Glaistig have always been rare and, while they are still necessary to achieve pregnancy, this ritual was used in old times to revitalise moribund bloodlines with new vigour.

Elise can remember performing this rite, but cannot remember the specific details from several lifetimes ago. The ritual is said to be described in a book called the Sanguine Codex, but it is supposed to be encoded by some mathematical formula.

Elise's investigation of the sciences have lead her to befriend a local Glaistig dealer in antiquities called Felsenstein. She is a master of clockwork creatures and has created miniature creatures to amuse and fascinate.

Elise remembers the Salamander Sisters from long, long ago. Their father was the warlord Cromm, a child of Nathair and Pantar tribes, their mother was Eione, Earc Luachra witch. Together they defied Glaistig society by sharing a bond of love, not breeding. They practically invented the romantic ideal of love, creating two children out of this passion, against the wishes of the Cuiteog genealogists. They also set about to create reforms in their domain, to treat the mortals ethically, with care rather than terror. This was their downfall. The conspiracy which was to become the Moonlit Choir had seized control of the Roman Empire. They sent legions against Cromm and Eione, despoiling their land and people, and eventually the Ollpheanna assassins were successful where armies could not be. Their girls had been sent out of Eire by that time, and were saved the horrors which befell their parents. A tragic tale indeed.

Scott Beattie

The memory is indeed hazy, but the girls may be Elise's ancient great great great great granddaughters....

Personal Goals:

- ◆ Protect your secrets
- ◆ Satisfy your curiosity, you are particularly interested in the borderline between science and magic.
- ◆ Protect Charlotte

Charlotte

Knightshade to the Governor of St Cruz

Age: 110, appears 17, born 1577

Tribe: Pantar (pr. pan-tare, Panther Tribe)

Bane Immunity: Fire

Heritage Gift: Body of Smoke

History:

The children of the Pantar tribe have few choices in life. From early infancy, Charlotte (her real name, Tatania) was schooled in the ways of war, etiquette and intrigue. The best of the Pantar become Knightshades, the bodyguard/advisor/keeper to the mortal pawns in the Covenant. They are to believe that the knightshade is provided as a service to them but indeed they are placed to keep the mortals under control.

Charlotte trained for sixty years to harden her body to battle, to become inured to the agony of banes, to walk the path of fire and blood. At the same time, she was cultivated as a mannered lady, to create a convincing façade to strike from behind. She also developed her skills of mentalism, learning to use Blood Domination in subtle and sophisticated ways, to erase memories or create false ones.

One aspect of Knightshade business, not widely spoken of, is assassination. Sect members sometimes use their skills to inveigle themselves in a situation, get close to a victim, then strike without mercy. Charlotte had only been a knightshade a few years when she was called upon to perform such a task.

Her target was Dame Elise, an elderly Glaistig who lived a life of retreat

Scott Beattie

on a Mediterranean island. Charlotte pleaded for sanctuary, won the old woman's confidence and prepared to deal the deadly blow – this would surely be no challenge. She had not foreseen the crisis of faith that this would bring on.

Spending her nights with the recluse, she learnt of the wisdom and kindness which Dame Elise had to offer. Becoming genuinely affectionate for the old woman, she felt torn between duty and ... some emotion she had never experienced before.

One day she received a message from the Knightshade masters, its contents were encoded but clear – she was to proceed at once. The next day, she seized her sword and went to the chamber where Dame Elise slept. A crushing paralysis seized her and, unable to complete her mission, she flung her sword (her honour) into the sea.

Just then Dame Elise entered the room, in from the sunny balcony. She had been observing Charlotte all the time, long aware of her true nature. She held the poor girl, wracked with emotion, and made the re-assuring noises that no parent or teacher had ever made.

Dame Elise revealed her secrets – she was a member of the mythical Nathair (serpent) Tribe, perhaps the last. Besides an immunity to the bane of the sun, the Nathair possessed the secrets of rebirth. When age became too great a burden they could no longer bear, they enter a state of transformation, regressing to infancy – their Glaitig nature once again dormant until they come of age.

This rebirth leaves the Nathair vulnerable for at least a decade. In addition, their memories fade to little more than dreams, in this way many lives can be contained within one body. Dame Elise was nearing the time when this rebirth would become necessary and she asked Charlotte if she would become her guardian, to protect her during this perilous phase.

Charlotte was overwhelmed by the trust of this woman, who she had come to kill and now offered herself vulnerable. From that moment on,

her dedication to Dame Elise has been absolute, fanatical.

Charlotte fled the island with the baby Elise, and all the valuables which could be transported. They travelled Europe as vagabonds, until Charlotte learned of a certain Diego Corazon, spymaster to the Covenant in Spain, who had been appointed governor of port in the New World.

Charlotte stole aboard the governor's vessel and killed his Knightshade – the real Charlotte – and took her place. She enthralled the governor and made him forget the act of enthrallment. This process is repeated, every time he is re-enthralled. Blood Domination makes this process simple. She also created memories of a family, of a daughter called Elise.

That is how Charlotte and Dame Elise came to St Cruz. Over time, Elise's memories have returned but, as she warned, they are remote and intangible. Charlotte and Elise have been managing St Cruz through their thrall, keeping the dogs of the Covenant and the Moonlit Choir at bay for as long as possible. The misdeeds of the Scarlet Nightmare crew have drawn unwanted attention from the Choir haven in Havana – while Elise seems fond of the ruffians, it is important that they agree to submit to the will of the St Cruz government. Otherwise, a storm could engulf everyone.

Relationships:

Dame Elise is not yet a full Glaistig, when the change comes upon her she will need her guardian. Charlotte is fanatically protective of her charge and will utterly destroy and threat or semblance of threat. This is partly a matter of professional pride as a Knightshade (albeit a fallen one) but also a measure of her deep, unexpressed, love.

Charlotte maintains the pretence of the faithful Knightshade, all the time using the governor as her thrall. She acts deferentially around the Bishop, he is a complete wild card – it is unclear whose interests he serves.

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Plots & Objectives:

Infamy and Betrayal

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The Dance of the Lillim

The Lillim are a secret sisterhood of Glaistig who remember with joy and sorrow the days of yore when women were the leaders of both the immortal and mortal world. A heretic cult, they worship Lilith as a form of the Morrigan, the bloody goddess of passion and the night.

These beliefs have been deemed untrue and heretical by the Moonlit Choir, a bold assertion considering a few Glaistig are old enough to have lived in the matriarchal societies of old. They devote their considerable resources to stamping out the Lillim, who must remain in secret until they can overthrow this over-inflated chorus of peacocks and cockerels.

The Lillim are also opposed to the worms of the Cuiteog and their books of genealogy. Sex and birth should be a matter of desire, of darkness

and the night – not a keeping of accounts in fussy ledgers. The bloodlines of the Glaistig are a strong vine, not a fragile construction of mortal architecture and conceit. One day the Lillim will lead the daughters of the moon back into darkness where they belong.

The time draws near for the Feast of Morrigan, an annual celebration of the Lillim. You are uncertain what foothold the cult has gained in the new world, but if there is a bacchanale in planning, you want to be involved. Most importantly, a secluded venue needs to be obtained. Perhaps Captain Dog Hatchet Jack may be a member of the cult, or at least sympathetic to its renegade cause?

Lillim recognise each other by a ritual exchange, traditionally conducted in Glaistig Gaelic. The structure is flexible, to allow the “Dance of the Lillim” to be seamlessly integrated into discourse, not intrusive like clumsy code phrases. Only the last initiative and response must be recited verbatim.

Initiative: Discuss the beauty of the moon

Response: Curse the sun

Initiative: Praise the music of the night

Response: Lament the coming of the dawn chorus

Initiative: A Question: Are you a sister of the abundant vine?

Response: By the Crows of the Morrigan and the Horses of Epona, Yes

Gossip & Information:

As Charlotte is, ostensibly, the Governor’s Nightshade, she is feigning an interest in protecting the Covenant, only to maintain the charade and protect Dame Elise. As part of her duties, she does hear scraps of gossip from the officials and, more often, from their lackeys.

For instance, Bishop Rankin had The Clover remove all flags and other indications which marked it as a Covenant ship. This was done secretly and without the consent of other Covenant members.

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The Moonlit Choir is concerned about the rise of cult activity in St Cruz. They have issued this warning: “The Order of Adam is much feared, secret society of mortal Glaistig Hunters that has infiltrated Mother Church and is a serious threat to the Covenant. Even more dangerous is the Lillim, a sect of Glaistig harpies, blood mad witches who are capable of any iniquity for their perverted pleasures and rituals. Be ever vigilant!”

Of course they are afraid of the Lillim, so they should be. This Order of Adam are a concern however – are they just crazy monster hunters or does someone else pull the strings?

Charlotte is concerned that Elise gets herself into trouble when out and about without her protector, especially during the day. Just recently she told Charlotte of a thrall she found, lost and confused which she had to escort home. Dame Elise is too kind hearted.

Strangely enough, the quiet bookish Milkweed is the owner of the Hurley Burley tavern - she has registered her rights with the Covenant as well as her enthrallment of Stallman, the mortal owner of the premises.

A sleazy Glaistig gigolo calling himself “The Fabulous Machio” has set up business in the tavern – offering his breeding talents and supposedly superior bloodline for a fee. This has been tolerated for the moment but he may need to be sent on his way. The Covenant frown upon such entrepreneurs. Besides, the lecherous fellow has been making improper advances to Charlotte – offering a “free example” of his services.

Charlotte has always been fascinated by myths and legends. Discovering a real life legend like Elise, has done nothing to dampen her enthusiasm. Charlotte keeps a small library of mythological works and gathers what scraps of gossip and rumour she can from around the port.

There is much talk about a ‘Blood God’ that some of the natives worship, a kind of Mayan deity which has been subsumed into Santería worship (which mixes Mayan, African and Catholic Beliefs, like Vodoun). They

speaking of this god as though he was a real, tangible presence – perhaps he is a rogue Glaistig who set himself up here years ago?

Another notorious legend is the sea monster whom sailors call “Old Lurkey”. He sounds similar to a creature of the deep from Glaistig legend called “The Gatekeeper of Home”, a fearsome beast which protected a legendary ship, in the submerged ruins of old Hy Breasil. By all accounts a terrifying monster – none of the expeditions have ever returned. A creature of similar distemper could be real trouble if treasure hunters awoke it.

Personal Goals:

- ◆ Protect Dame Elise, especially from her own curiosity. Charlotte has never managed to discover who wanted her assassinated in the first place, she must have powerful enemies somewhere.
- ◆ Maintain the façade, at least until Elise undergoes the change, make sure the Governor remains dominated and under control
- ◆ While her duty is paramount, Charlotte is immensely curious about the unknown and the uncanny. So long as investigations are conducted prudently, there is no harm done.

Scott Beattie

His Grace, Bishop Dougal Rankin

Bishop of St Cruz

Age: 114, appears mid 40s, born 1573

Tribe: Mortal

Heritage Gift: Consumption of holy blood of the White Lady gives enhanced physical powers as well as the power to breathe under water. This has also slowed Dougal's aging.

History:

Almost one hundred years ago a young soldier faced the gallows in Donnegal. A drunken fight had ended with a dagger in his brother's breast and an unfinished squabble regarding the virtue of a barmaid, her name already forgotten. It was in the deep of night, in the darkest of despair that Dougal first saw the White Lady, a manifestation of the Holy Virgin.

She appeared to him, offering a chance of redemption. She freed him from the shadow of the noose and recruited him into the Order of Adam, a sect devoted to hunting monsters, including the vampiric Glaistig who infiltrated mortal society and controlled mother Church.

He has never seen the Lady again, but has yearned for her return. Instead he has been contacted by her agents in the Order, a conspiracy stretching throughout the Church (both the authentic church and the protestant cults) and dedicated to eliminating this threat to mankind. They taught him of the Glaistig, their weaknesses, how to kill the fiends. The order is also the source of 'holy blood' a potent concoction which gives the imbiber great strength and allows the monster hunter to remain young and vital for longer than naturally possible. In this way the beast can be put to death.

While he once accepted this power without question, Dougal has of late begun to question the identity of the White Lady and the nature of her gift...

As the years have passed, Dougal has risen in power within the Order, authority built on foundations of blood – both Glaistig and their mortal pawns. Through the Order's manipulation of the Covenant he was appointed Bishop of St Cruz, to help take the fight to the New World where the Glaistig swarm like carrion beasts.

The nearest outpost of the Moonlit Choir is in Havana, the cathedral being both Dougal's mortal superior and ostensible Covenant superior. There are not many of the Order of Adam in the Caribbean and Dougal relies on messages from the Old World to give orders and renew his supply of Holy Blood.

Dougal shares responsibility for St Cruz business with his Covenant superior Don Diego. The bishop maintains a network of spies and shares information with the Covenant, the Church and the Order of Adam. There were only a few Glaistig in St Cruz, who cause little trouble – until the Scarlet Nightmare made its appearance.

Ordinarily Dougal would be quite happy to let the vampires fight each other, but the Scarlet Nightmare has committed a personal offence. *The Clover*, a Covenant ship, was sacked by the Nightmare. Among the booty was a small chest containing Dougal's instructions from the Order, a number of (incriminating) relics and statues of the White Lady, and Dougal's re-supply of Holy Blood. His current stocks of the elixir are almost expired and he dreads to think of how vulnerable he would become without it.

He does bear some blame for the attack. Under his instructions, *The Clover* sailed without the proper flags which would have identified it as a protected ship. He was wary of drawing Covenant attention to a ship containing such important relics. This fiasco has been complicated by the loss of other Covenant goods, including an Argentine Cow

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Creamer that the Governor had purchased at great expense as a gift for his daughter.

That scoundrel Guillarme proved his involvement in the sacking of *The Clover*, by coming to Dougal with a proposition of blackmail and details of the secret papers. He has regularly pressured Dougal for intelligence from the Bishop's network of spies (he is particularly interested in some seamstress – the lecher) and has extracted several barrels of high quality rum, the price of which have had to be concealed in the church accounts.

Guillarme's threats to involve the Moonlit Choir seem to be genuine. He has been seen in Havana several times and is clearly trying to ingratiate himself with the Choir. They have recently laid claim to an island called The Isle of Rosy Blooms which they are offering around to all and sundry as an incentive for superior performance of duties. What a poor prize it would be, it is all but inaccessible and is stocked with belligerent natives. They must think this a fine jest.

After many years of careful service, Dougal has realised that matters are spiralling dangerously out of control. If he is to be exposed, he will take as many of the vampire and Covenant scum with him as he can...

Relationships:

Rankin is extremely paranoid and distrusts his Covenant fellows. So far he has managed to juggle his different duties and lives, but the cracks are beginning to show.

Rankin is still a man of the Old World and does have difficulty dealing with women and monsters in a social setting. He is polite in a precise and exacting manner, but is uncomfortable around such creatures.

Plots & Objectives: *Relics of the White Lady*

From the antiquarian origins of the Church, the instrument through

which the Glaistig control the mortal world, there have been those who want to put mankind first, to throw off the shackles of the Glaistig masters. In the late Roman Empire, the first Shadow Cardinal of Adam was visited by a manifestation of Mary (“the White Lady of Provence”) who came with advice and a blessing.

Thus the Cardinal formed a secret order, the Order of Adam, which sought to destabilise and topple the Moonlit Choir from their secret throne. This order’s activities range from political manoeuvring to outright monster hunting. Guided by appearances of the White Lady and her gifts, vials of holy blood which fills the faithful with divine strength. Members of the Order identify each other through complex codes, phrased in the Creed of the White Lady.

The plundering of *The Clover* came at the worst time for the Order of Adam. Several holy relics as well as secret papers and books were smuggled aboard this Covenant ship, right under the noses of the enemy. Unfortunately these have been sacked and claimed by members of the Scarlet Nightmare crew. You must recover or destroy these items, to prevent them from falling into the clutches of the Choir.

Dougal possesses a draught of Holy Blood, the gift of the White Lady. This is the last of his stock, a new supply was coming aboard *The Clover*, secreted in a statue of the White Lady. This blood never clots or spoils, when imbibed it greatly enhances his physical strength and allows him to breathe under water. It also seems to slow the aging process considerably. Dougal is concerned that, without a regular supply, the years will rapidly catch up on him.

The fact that Guillarme has been using knowledge of the documents for blackmail purposes proves that he has had these in his possession, at least for a short period. Perhaps he has been careless enough to secrete them somewhere on this vessel?

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Slavery & Betrayal

The Scarlet Nightmare's brief blaze of glory has almost burnt out. Plans are afoot to sell her crew into slavery. You are involved in a small conspiracy, organised by Guillaume, to save the crew from this ignoble end, even at the cost of the ship herself. Several barrels of good quality rum have been secured below decks, to bargain for the crew's freedom should this become necessary. One hopes that tact and artful debate will prevent this dreadful betrayal from occurring.

Rankin is wary of Guillaume and his plots, but nevertheless even the serpent may sometimes speak truth. The Captain of the Scarlet Nightmare may indeed be preparing to sell off the crew and flee from St Cruz.

Patching the Breaches of The Covenant

The captain of the Scarlet Nightmare and her crew are mavericks who must be brought to heel by The Covenant. You are to use any means necessary – threats, inducements, appeals to higher powers, deceit – to make her toe the line and agree to protect Covenant interests.

Gossip & Information:

Dougal is unsure what the Governor's daughter is doing here tonight. A few weeks ago she came to him and asked for a favour – she required the services of a carpenter for a day. Just what that was all about, is for anyone to speculate.

The Moonlit Choir is concerned about the rise of cult activity in St Cruz. They have issued this warning: “The Order of Adam is much feared, secret society of mortal Glaistig Hunters that has infiltrated Mother Church and is a serious threat to the Covenant. Even more dangerous is the Lillim, a sect of Glaistig harpies, blood mad witches who are capable of any iniquity for their perverted pleasures and rituals. Be ever vigilant!”

Perhaps the string of murders were human sacrifices performed by the monstrous Lillim cult? Dougal has heard terrible rumours of their

blood orgies and sadistic rituals. Dougal knows the following about the murders:

Barely two weeks ago, murders of terrible savagery cast a cloud over vibrant, prosperous St Cruz. Five women, with little in common except for the grotesque brutality of their demise upon a single night.

The grim manner of their death bears recounting. Each was beheaded, their arms torn from their bodies with terrible strength. Finally each was slit up their side by something rough and sharp, a talon or rude blade. It is unknown if this is the work of Glaitig or some other creature and it is unsure if blood was drunk, so much was spilled. Local constables suspect an ourang-outang or some other brutal animal. Whatever creature, it has broken the fragile peace of St Cruz and must be stopped.

The victims:

- ◆ **Mrs Camille Stallman** – The wife of Richard Stallman, an importer of haberdashery and the owner of the Hurley Burley Tavern.
- ◆ **Mme Chloe Manteur** – A noblewoman in exile, lamenting her youth in the Salons, she is a great raconteur and favourite at the Hurley Burley.
- ◆ **Mrs Ruchella Spatfock** – Widow Spatfock, who organises several indigent girls of the town into a small army of seamstresses.
- ◆ **Manuela**, surname unknown, a serving girl who worked at the Hurley Burley of native ancestry. She also acted as servant to Mrs Stallman. The constables found weird lustrous rubies in her room, that seemed to dissolve in water. The Governor has seized these.
- ◆ **Sable**, real name unknown, madam of the brothel which operates out of the Hurley Burley. On her death it was discovered that she possessed a curious inversion.

The Moonlit Choir is also concerned about another sect, a native cult which worships a “Blood God”. Little is known about it, but it seems to be linked to the blasphemous Santería creed, key suspects for the recent murders. Adherents speak of this creature as a real, embodied

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presence rather than a spirit. If this can be established, the Choir will undoubtedly declare a Holy War on this creature. They would be grateful for any snippets of knowledge about this Blood God and this may deflect any suspicions they have about the Bishop's loyalties.

Dougal has asked the Order to do some digging into the past of Don Diego. So far no one has found any evidence of a daughter (or a wife) as recent as ten years ago. It was hoped that more information would be arriving aboard *The Clover*.

Personal Goals:

- ◆ To be free of that blackmailing Guillarme one way or another
- ◆ Dougal's faith in the White lady is wavering, he has begun to doubt the sanctity of his visions. Perhaps there is some way out of this life of bloodshed and duplicity?
- ◆ The Order of Adam has always operated in secret, to protect its foot soldiers and its agents. Ignorance does humanity little good, they need to know about the monsters who live in their midst. If only there was a way to let people know...

Plots

Infamy and Betrayal

The night bears a grim foreboding, the hazy shadows of moonlight conceals the viper in your midst. The omens indicate a turning point, this night, a plot that once hatched will change the fragile order of St Cruz. The mortals of The Covenant know all too much about the Nightmare and her movements, the Choir are perched like vultures. You must find out who has been selling out the Scarlet Nightmare and stop them before it is too late.

(Jack, Elise, Charlotte)

Sergei is the writer of the film in the prologue, he intends it to be an apology to his long lost captain, someone who he believes survived the fire, but has not seen in the last two hundred years. He has been wracked by guilt and intends the story to be a confession, to find Jack and tell her what really occurred..

The prelate in the prologue is Guillarme, who has finessed his way to a position of power. He is paranoid and believes the film to be a threat. He is the real traitor behind events.

This plot involves uncovering the web of deceit woven by Guillarme. The plot "Slavery and Betrayal" reflects Guillarme's attempt to implement his plan. In order to curry favour with the Moonlit Choir, and to gain admittance, Guillarme has cooked up a scheme to bring down the Nightmare and profit from its demise. He has been stirring up trouble on board and with The Covenant, and tonight he has set a bomb to explode at midnight. He has procured a bottle of Newt Blood from Prudence to enable him to resist the salt in the water and swim to shore. He will then fabricate a story to tell to the Choir, one which puts him in a heroic light and blackens the name of his adopted nemesis, Jack.

The Bomb: A combination of an ornate clock, and a special accelerated

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gunpowder developed by the Saint Cruz alchemist, Jorni of the Rat Tribe who plies his trade at the night market (Cait knows something is happening). This is hidden in a barrel of rum, not even Guillaume knows which one. The clock is set to detonate at midnight, or when tampered with. Guillaume also bought a high-tech pocket watch which is set to the same time, from Felsenstein a collector of scientific marvels (Milkweed knows about this).

Guillaume & Sergei: Guillaume has convinced Sergei that Jack intends to sell the crew into slavery. This has left him with severely divided loyalties. Sergei overheard a conversation between Jack and Meg - he misconstrued the intent. Guillaume capitalised on this and “tried to cover up” crudely, convincing Sergei that there must be something afoot and that Guillaume was trying to protect Jack.

The conversation:

Jack: I don't like it, after all we have built here, but I think under the circumstances...

Meg: We can sell them, their blood is good, they work hard. I will regret it but we must move on.

Jack: If only that girl...

Meg: Sergei is a fool, but a young fool. His guilt will punish him enough. The rest of us can't get dragged down by it.

Jack: He musn't find out until the deal has been sealed.

Further, Guillaume has shipped gunpowder on board the ship in rum barrels. He has convinced Sergei that it is rum and can be used to bargain for the crew's freedom. Sergei has secreted it deep in the hold. It has been set with a trap, which will ignite the fuse at midnight. Sergei has changed the labels on the barrels to water, knowing that Glastig won't be poking around in what is probably spring water.

Guillaume & Rankin:

Bishop Rankin provided the rum, knows Guillaume has connections in the Moonlit Choir. Guillaume knows that Rankin is from the order of Adam because of the relics and papers seized off the clover. He is blackmailing Rankin to get a good reference with the Moonlit Choir.

The choir have told Rankin to offer Guillaume an Island if he can rid them of Jack, called the Island of the Rosy Blooms (acutally the island of Flowers and Blood).

Slavery & Betrayal

The Scarlet Nightmare's brief blaze of glory has almost burnt out. Plans are afoot to sell her crew into slavery. You are involved in a small conspiracy, organised by Guillaume, to save the crew from this ignoble end, even at the cost of the ship herself. Several barrels of good quality rum have been secured below decks, to bargain for the crew's freedom should this become necessary. One hopes that tact and artful debate will prevent this dreadful betrayal from occurring.

(Sergei, Guillaume, Bishop Rankin)

This is the flip side of plot "Infamy & Betrayal", and involves the conspirators attempting to implement their plan. Guillaume and Rankin know the conspiracy to be insincere.

Patching the Breaches of The Covenant

The captain of the Scarlet Nightmare and her crew are mavericks who must be brought to heel by The Covenant. You are to use any means necessary – threats, inducements, appeals to higher powers, deceit – to make her toe the line and agree to protect Covenant interests.

(Don Diego, Bishop Rankin, Milkweed)

The Scarlet Nightmare attacked and sunk The Clover, a ship chartered by The Covenant of St Cruz. Rankin knows that it also contained relics of the Order of Adam (see plot "Relics of the White Lady") and the Cow Creamer, which was to be a gift from Don Diego to his daughter (see plot "Save the Cow Creamer").

The Bloodline of the Serpent

The blood of the extinct Nathair Tribe lies dormant in the bloodlines of the Glaistig. This is the holy grail, the blood of kings, the greatest treasure of the night.

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The genealogists of the Cuiteog have as their ultimate aim breeding out true serpents. They differ as to how this is to be done, all but the heretics believe in keeping the purity of the Tribes intact. Over the years fewer and fewer male children have been born, making this task more difficult. This scarcity has also seen the ascendancy of the male Moonlit Choir to power.

This is an immense genealogical puzzle, but there are clues, scattered here and there by the ancients. An encoded text, a puzzle box, a breeding formula – all these fragments must be gathered so that one day the true king may rise again.

(Milkweed, Prudence, Guillarme)

Over the years there have been fewer men born to the Glaistig. This may be the result of inbreeding. The Choir have used this to solidify their power as they see themselves as a rare commodity. Is there a way to increase the health of the bloodlines while remaining pure? Prudence wants to eliminate men entirely, as far as possible so her involvement with breeding lines has this aim.

There is a ritual to change the father of an unborn child, see plot “Dragon Heresy”, this is known of by Elise. This would technically allow women to become fathers of unborn Glaistig, allowing the breeding program much more freedom. Elise belongs to the Dragon heresy so she may not spread the information with purists willingly.

To find a serpent (such as Elise), there is a relic, a ring of a snake with bloodstones for eyes, that will resonate in the presence of a serpent. It is owned by Tonantzin (who does not know its properties), and it is resonating tonight. Tonantzin hid it in the cow creamer (which they stole from under Prudence’s bunk) and have concealed it among the water barrels which seem especially plentiful.

Cait knows about bloodstones, as does Milkweed. These are gems formed from Glaistig blood which resonate in the presence of a certain

tribe. These are made by the alchemists of the Luchog Mhor and are used by the Cuiteog genealogists to verify bloodline of breeders.

The Dragon Heresy

The orthodoxy holds that the Nathair, the serpent tribe, were a distinct and pure bloodline of their own, the blood of kings. A scattering of heretics believe otherwise, that the Nathair were the dragon tribe, chimirae of mixed blood. It is true that most inter-tribe breeding results in weaker offspring but sometimes, in the right combinations, a powerful creature can be produced. The obsession with purity, the Cuiteog tribe control over the bloodlines has led to the lamentable condition of Glaistig society today. You have searched the corners of the earth for any clues, rituals, relics which might give better information about the mysterious Nathair.

(Elise, Charlotte, Meg)

This is the rival to the grail conspiracy to breed a true serpent, believes in diversity, that the fragments of the serpent clan are spread throughout the tribes.

The Salamander Sisters both have fire immunity and water immunity, along with their tribe's immunity to salt and salt water. This seems to be derived from Pantar and Sciathan Lethair blood somewhere in their family tree.

Because of the scarcity of males, anyone planning to breed outside of the rules may have difficulty finding a sire "no questions asked". Diego knows about the fabulous Machio who lives at the Hurley Burley, a stud for hire, of dubious bloodline but willing to sire for gold, no questions asked. He is actually Milkweed's son and a source of great shame. He fathered a child to Cait in the 13th century, but that child died in the crusades.

Milkweed knows that genealogical scrolls are often forged.

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Elise knows of a ritual whereby the father's bloodline can be altered which is contained in an encoded volume called the Sanguine Codex (if the mother, while pregnant, regularly imbibes blood from another). Eventually the child will take on the traits of the blood, not the seed. There is an elaborate ritual that goes with the process, but it is unknown if this is magical or whether the blood sharing is all that is necessary.

Cait owns the codex but cannot read it. Diego was a code master in his youth and may be persuaded to discover the key to the text.

The Abomination in the Attic

In love, the deepest mistakes are made. Sergei was possessed of a great love for the mortal girl Katerine, a seamstress of St Cruz. He made her his thrall so that time could be kept at bay, at least for a while. Then the unspeakable happened, she became an abomination. Sergei, confided his error in the Captain who, along with Gunny Sack Meg, organised to have Katerine confined to her tiny chamber, an attic in the township. Now all three look for a solution. There are legends of magic rituals or artifacts which can turn an abomination back into a thrall, but this may be false hope. The only solution may be a merciful one, before the Moonlit Choir learn of her existence...

(Sergei, Jack, Meg)

Sergei's true love is a mortal Thrall called Katerine, of Spanish/native blood and the daughter of horse trainer Anders. A humble seamstress of St Cruz, he visited her often and eventually enthralled her. He was careful with how much blood he took from her, but one day a disaster occurred. While he was taking her blood she died and became an abomination.

Katerine escaped, murdered five women(see plot "Bloody Deeds") and was returned to her attic by Elise who nursed her back to the semblance of sanity and organised to have the room fortified. The others do not know that she has left her room.

There are rumours of a rite of resurrection. The serpent tribe were said

to be great healers and it is possible that some record of their rituals and practices survives. This is not true, but a course in starvation and slow replacement of blood may give an abomination a more balanced form of unlife, more like a traditional vampire. If they survive, and regain their sanity, they are still hunted down by the Moonlit Choir, who fear the spread of this vampirism as a threat to their blood supply.

Sergei thinks that Jack wants to get rid of him because of this.

Guillarme is responsible. He followed Sergei then deliberately drank her blood so that Sergei would kill her. He has suggested that Jack thinks that Sergei is now a liability

Elise knows that Abominated Thralls need to be purged, they can be purified with a solution of silver and salt, kept on a starvation diet until dead, then brought back with human, not Glaistig blood, only a few survive, and the pain may drive them permanently insane. The Serpent Tribe have experience as healers. The serpent ring (see the serpent oriented plots) will reveal her true heritage.

Bloody Deeds in St Cruz

Barely two weeks ago, murders of terrible savagery cast a cloud over vibrant, prosperous St Cruz. Five women, with little in common except for the grotesque brutality of their demise upon a single night.

The grim manner of their death bears recounting. Each was beheaded, their arms torn from their bodies with terrible strength. Finally each was slit up their side by something rough and sharp, a talon or rude blade. It is unknown if this is the work of Glaistig or some other creature and it unsure if blood was drunk, so much was spilled. Local constables suspect an ourang-outang or some other brutal animal. Whatever creature, it has broken the fragile peace of St Cruz and must be stopped.

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The victims:

- ◆ **Mrs Camille Stallman** – The wife of Richard Stallman, an importer of haberdashery and the owner of the Hurley Burley Tavern.
- ◆ **Mme Chloe Manteur** – A noblewoman in exile, lamenting her youth in the Salons, she is a great raconteur and favourite at the Hurley Burley.
- ◆ **Mrs Ruchella Spatfock** – Widow Spatfock, who organises several indigent girls of the town into a small army of seamstresses.
- ◆ **Manuela**, surname unknown, a serving girl who worked at the Hurley Burley of native ancestry. She also acted as servant to Mrs Stallman.
- ◆ **Sable**, real name unknown, madam of the brothel which operates out of the Hurley Burley. On her death it was discovered that she possessed a curious inversion.

(Don Diego, Milkwood, Tonantzin)

The murderer is Sergei's love and abominated thrall, Katerine (see the plot "The Abomination in the Attic"). She has been made into an abomination through the manipulation of Guillaume. As an abomination, she is crazed by blood and is hunting by instinct and madness. During her period of escape, she committed these murders before Elise found her and took care of the wretched creature. Part of this involved the use of a solution of silver (which Cait knows she purchased).

Katerine's madness has focussed on her past life as a seamstress, she knew the victims through her trade and tore each apart as though they were discarded frocks. This may be the clue through which she may be identified (yes it is very *Silence of the Lambs*, hopefully this will help the players).

Tonantzin's friend Manuela was killed by a blood thirsty monster, a Glaistieg or one of their Thralls. She was about to be married in a dress her neighbour and friend was sewing as a gift.

Milkweed hates abominations, especially since Stallman is her thrall and she owns the Hurley Burley

Don Diego knows that the string of murders are Glaistig related and blames the crew of The Scarlet Nightmare.

Rumours that Lillim cult is responsible, the Order of Adam hear only legends of their terror.

Cait knows that Sergei's thrall was a seamstress, and Prudence has seen Guillaume seducing her (using Blood Domination, actually).

The Treasure of Varese

On an island, surrounded by treacherous reefs, protected by a cornucopia of monsters, is rumoured to be a great treasure, the Rubies of Varese.

It is said that the conquistador Varese found a great treasure, of such beauty that it deprived him of his mind. Others claim that his comrades fell into bickering over the treasure, a conflict of such savagery that only Varese survived and that he was mad from starvation by the time he found civilisation.

Wherever the truth lies, he was the only survivor of his expedition, found ranting about a cave of rubies and insensible to further inquiry, a decade after they went missing. He was taken to a monastery where he eventually died, producing a vast output of quaint and naïve paintings which chill the soul with their large hollow eyes.

Two special paintings, he claimed to be his secret children, born the likenesses of a small boy and a small girl. These are said to be the key to his treasure, although they have been missing for years. Somehow, they have found their way into the possession of the dreadful Salamander Sisters. You must recover these paintings and unlock the secrets of Varese's treasure.

(Cait, Sergei, Elise)

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Two paintings, owned by the Salamander Sisters hold the key to the map. They are painted on silk and are semi-transparent. The shadows of the people on the paintings, when combined and held to the light, form a map of the islands and indicate the treasure island, surrounded by reefs. Extra detail is added by opaque white designs on the back of the fabric, this will not be apparent unless they are removed from their frames.

The maps do not line up properly, unless the hands of the children are made to intersect (at which point the drop of blood from the puppy and the flower also meet – indicating the Island of Flowers and Blood). There is a clue to this in the awful verse, which is split between the inscriptions on the two paintings. The two must be combined to read:

*Behold strange siblings, sinister girl of foreign land
The agile boy, regard the reach of his hand
Family blood, they must attempt to touch
The hands, of kin, although they try very much
The Rubies are in reach, there is need for fright
Secrets, to be found at the dark banishing light
Twain they are the key
Seek not the treasure of Varese.*

The images and inscriptions are detailed in the appendix handouts for Meg and Prudence.

The Island of Flowers and Blood, is the residence of the Blood Goddess Oya, the mistress of Tonantzin and the sire of a family of abominations, made by Oifa, a long lost thrall of Prudence who has cast into the sea when abominated. It is not coincidence which draws them back to together but the web of fate that comes from the blood.

While not really sane, Oya has managed to become stable and powerful, she may be an ally to some of the groups such as the Lillim. The Moonlit choir will certainly want to destroy her. The only way to reach her underwater cave is through a maze of reefs off the Island, the map pointing the way. The red flower is the island, the candle the cave of rubies, bloodstones made by Oya and given to her children.

Relics of the White Lady

From the antiquarian origins of the Church, the instrument through which the Glaistig control the mortal world, there have been those who want to put mankind first, to throw off the shackles of the Glaistig masters. In the late Roman Empire, the first Shadow Cardinal of Adam was visited by a manifestation of Mary (“the White Lady of Provence”) who came with advice and a blessing.

Thus the Cardinal formed a secret order, the Order of Adam, which sought to destabilise and topple the Moonlit Choir from their secret throne. This order’s activities range from political manoeuvring to outright monster hunting. Guided by appearances of the White Lady and her gifts, vials of holy blood which fills the faithful with divine strength. Members of the Order identify each other through complex codes, phrased in the Creed of the White Lady.

The plundering of The Clover came at the worst time for the Order of Adam. Several holy relics as well as secret papers and books were smuggled aboard this Covenant ship, right under the noses of the enemy. Unfortunately these have been sacked and claimed by members of the Scarlet Nightmare crew. You must recover or destroy these items, to prevent them from falling into the clutches of the Choir.

(Bishop Rankin, Tonantzin, Prudence)

Prudence is the White Lady of Provence, sponsor of the order and using it to fight the Moonlit Choir. She has provided them with wealth, information, and blood.

The relics contain a statue of the lady, which bears a close resemblance to a certain Salamander... Not enough for proof, but disquieting enough.

Tonantzin heard rumours of the cult, told by conquistadors who sought out Oya and passed on through the folk of her village. She wants to

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know more about this enemy and whether it can be turned against their common foe.

The chest contains documents which may incriminate Bishop Rankin.

Who has the relics? Guillaume has these in a watertight chest which he convinced Meg to hid in the reef under the ship's mooring. He has the key to chest and promises to split the proceeds.

Since he has seen the relics, Guillaume has evidence that Rankin is Order of Adam and used blackmail to get rum. This is a good start as at Guillaume is the last person known to have seen them. It would be a shame if anything happened to Guillaume...

The Dance of the Lillim

The Lillim are a secret sisterhood of Glaistig who remember with joy and sorrow the days of yore when women were the leaders of both the immortal and mortal world. A heretic cult, they worship Lilith as a form of the Morrigan, the bloody goddess of passion and the night.

These beliefs have been deemed untrue and heretical by the Moonlit Choir, a bold assertion considering a few Glaistig are old enough to have lived in the matriarchal societies of old. They devote their considerable resources to stamping out the Lillim, who must remain in secret until they can overthrow this over-inflated chorus of peacocks and cockerels.

The Lillim are also opposed to the worms of the Cuiteog and their books of genealogy. Sex and birth should be a matter of desire, of darkness and the night – not a keeping of accounts in fussy ledgers. The bloodlines of the Glaistig are a strong vine, not a fragile construction of mortal architecture and conceit. One day the Lillim will lead the daughters of the moon back into darkness where they belong.

The time draws near for the Feast of Morrigan, an annual celebration of the Lillim. You are uncertain what foothold the cult has gained in the new world, but if there is a bacchanale in planning, you want to be involved. Most importantly, a secluded venue needs to be obtained.

And the Moon a Crooked Grin

Perhaps Captain Dog Hatchet Jack may be a member of the cult, or at least sympathetic to its renegade cause?

Lillim recognise each other by a ritual exchange, traditionally conducted in Glaisig Gaelic. The structure is flexible, to allow the “Dance of the Lillim” to be seamlessly integrated into discourse, not intrusive like clumsy code phrases. Only the last initiative and response must be recited verbatim.

Initiative: Discuss the beauty of the moon

Response: Curse the sun

Initiative: Praise the music of the night

Response: Lament the coming of the dawn chorus

Initiative: A Question: Are you a sister of the abundant vine?

Response: By the Crows of the Morrigan and the Horses of Epona, Yes

(Cait, Prudence, Charlotte)

The island of flowers and blood may be an option for the feast. It can be secured several ways, through Diego, through promises to Jack or Guillaume or, preferably, with consent of its residents through Tonantzin.

Save The Cow Creamer!

The sack of The Clover by the Scarlet Nightmare was a great indignity and a flagrant breach of The Covenant. Worse than that, the ship bore a special gift from the Governor of St Cruz to his lovely daughter, an elegant argentine cow creamer made by a master artisan. Someone managed to secure this valuable item and you must have it, by hook or by crook. If only you have more funds to hand – you are going to have to barter for it. It is best to locate its erstwhile owner, sneer at it’s quality and attempt to swap it for some favour, to take it off their hands...

(Don Diego, Guillaume, Cait)

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This expensive, but hideous artifact was taken from The Clover and is in the possession of Prudence who is using it as a chamber pot. She knows of its value, but pretends to be ignorant.

All three want the relic, but are strapped for funds. They need to sneer at it, pretending it to be of little value, and seek to drive a good bargain with the Salamander.

It has been stolen from under her bunk by Tonantzin who is keeping it Among the Water Barrels. Jack Knows T is lurking among the barrels Hidden in is the Serpent Ring.

Hunting The Sea Fiend

In the deep, dark places of the Carribean waters, an ancient creature called “Old Lurkey” by sailors is said to make her home. She is blamed for many shipwrecks and seaborne catastrophes. A hundred years ago Old Lurkey took a ship called The Silke Carbuncle, among its cargo treasures, doubloons and a set of cutlasses made by the great Glaistig alchemist Drache. These are silver blades, which keep a fine edge through enchantment or secret metallurgical processes. A fine treasure indeed.

To plan an expedition to recover the Silke Carbuncle you need to arrange the following:

- ◆ a method of finding the location of Old Lurkey’s Den
- ◆ a ship to reach it
- ◆ a diver to go hunting for the treasure
- ◆ a plan to defeat Old Lurkey, should she take offence at your presence.

(Jack, Meg, Tonantzin)

The Silke Cabruncle is said to have sunk a shipload of silver cutlasses, manufactured by Drache of the Rat Tribe famous metallurgist using arcane secrets to keep the blades sharp. Cait knows of Drache to whom

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she was apprenticed.

In terms of the criteria above:

- ◆ can be discovered by Tonantzin through conversation with the creatures of the sea
- ◆ is within Jack's control, even if the Nightmare is sunk
- ◆ is Meg's speciality, and
- ◆ is up to the group to plan for contingencies, they can be creative here as they only need to form a plan.

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Appendix: Painting Handouts

Give to Gunny Sack Meg

PICTURE: The Boy and the Puppy

A painting in a naïve and rudimentary style. It is painted on silk, much like an oriental picture. It is presented in a baroque frame which seems to have been purloined from another source. A metal plaque has been fixed onto the frame, into which has been scratched a mysterious verse.

The painting depicts a boy who faces to the left, reaching belligerently for a puppy which shies away from him, from its wounded paw a drop of blood.

*The agile boy, regard the reach of his hand
The hands, of kin, although they try very much
Secrets, to be found at the dark banishing light
Seek not the treasure of Varese.*

Give to Big Prudence

PICTURE: The Girl and the Flower

A painting in a naïve and rudimentary style. It is painted on silk, much like an oriental picture. It is presented in a baroque frame which seems to have been purloined from another source. A metal plaque has been fixed onto the frame, into which has been scratched a mysterious verse.

The painting depicts a girl, dressed in her first communion dress, gently touches a white flower. A candle hangs above her.

*Behold strange siblings, sinister girl of foreign land
Family blood, they must attempt to touch
The Rubies are in reach, there is need for fright
Twain they are the key*

Appendix: The Tribes of the Moon

Tribe	Totem	Power	Immunity	Politics
Nathair (pr. na-hir)	Serpent	Rebirth	Sunlight	Secret tribe, believed to be extinct, went into hiding
Faolchú (pr. feel-koo or fayle-koo)	Wolf	Beast tongue	Beast Nemesis	Generally seen as belligerent, often take solitary occupations. Some are valuable animal trainers.
Pantar (pr. pan-tare)	Panther	Smoke	Fire	Warriors Most Knightshades are drawn from this tribe, trained at central creche
Damhán-alla (pr. damorn-alla)	Spider	Climbing	Heart Strike	Merchants and keen investors
Cuiteog (pr. kitorg)	Worm	Tunnelling	Decapitation	Scholars, keepers of the histories and bloodlines

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Tribe	Totem	Power	Immunity	Politics
Taibhse (meaning 'ghost', pr. tavee-seh)	Lemur	Steal Face, impersonate	Plants	Herbalists, changelings (place babes in mortal communities in order to learn about them
Earc Luachra (pr. ack luckra)	Newt	Swim	Salt, including salt water	A very diverse tribe, from swamp hermits, to sailors to gregarious hosts, a whole range of eccentrics and characters.
Luchóg Mhor (pr. luckorg vorr)	Rat	Shadow power	Silver	Metalworkers, alchemists, inventors
Filiméala (pr. fill-eh-mawl-a)	Nightingale	Song & voice	Music	Art and culture, mask, heavily involved in the Moonlit Choir
Sciathán Lethair (pr. skeepathorn leth-ahh)	Bat	Flight	Pure water, spring water (incl. sometimes holy water), Rain	Merchants, Messengers and couriers, have special immunities

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Journal of Interactive Drama

**A Multi-Discipline Peer-Reviewed Journal of
Scenario-Based Theatre-Style Interactive Drama
Freeform Live Action Roleplaying Games**

Call for Papers

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