
Sharkbait's Revenge

A game book by Stuart Lloyd for the 2010 Windhammer competition

Arr.

Sharkbait's Revenge

You are a pirate, the navigator of *The Retribution*, the flagship of the feared Edward Thatcher, also known as Blackbeard. Normally, this would command authority amongst your peers, but your adventure starts with the ship sinking after it has hit a reef. Saying that this would be a bit of a black mark against you would be an understatement. Your adventure will take you from a dangerous tropical island to the intrigue of the government of Guatam. Let's prepare for your journey...

Health points

Your general state of health is measured in health points. Your initial health points score is 100. You will lose health points through hunger, exertion, combat and injury. If your health point's score reaches 0, then you have shuffled off to Davy Jones' Locker and your adventure has ended. You can restore health points through resting, eating, drinking and receiving medical aid but your health points cannot go above their initial value of 100.

Combat

Guatam is a dangerous place and you could end up fighting pretty much anyone you meet. When you come across a combat, you will be told to lose a certain amount of health points, which are injuries that your enemy has inflicted upon you. You will see the phrase '*in this combat lose x health points.*' If your health points are not reduced to 0 through this, then you have defeated your opponent and can proceed as instructed. If your health points are reduced to 0 or less, then your opponent has bested you and you have died.

During your adventure, you may be able to pick up items which you can use in combat, making you a more formidable opponent. These items are usually weapons, armour or shields. When you find them, they will tell you that you can reduce the damage in combat you receive by a certain amount.

You may only use one hand to hand weapon in combat. However, you may also be able to find armour. If you have a hand to hand weapon and armour, you can add together the amount of damage they reduce and reduce the amount of damage you sustain in combat by that much. If you find a shield, you can also add the amount of damage it reduces to the amounts that weapons and armour reduce.

There are sections on your adventure sheet for you to note down the weapon, armour, shield and any other miscellaneous items you are using which will reduce the damage you take in combat. You can also write down how much damage they will reduce.

Examples:

Cap'n Barabus is locked in a brutal unarmed combat with a burly thug at a bar. In this combat, he loses 20 health points. Since he is on 60 health points, he is reduced to 40 health points but triumphs over the thug whose body is left sprawled on the tavern floor.

Later, after Barabus has visited a healer to deal with his most grievous wounds (he is now on 85 health points), his ship is attacked by the navy. With his trusty cutlass, he battles the navy captain. In this combat, he should lose 50 health points, but his cutlass reduces his damage by 10, so he loses 40 health points and wins his battle.

Barabus finds a suit of leather armour which reduces damage sustained in combat by 5 on the navy ship and goes to a sawbones. He is now on 100 health points. When he is exploring a tropical island, he is attacked by a polar bear. He defends himself with his cutlass. In this combat, he should lose 60 health points, but his cutlass reduces the damage by 10 and the armour reduces the damage by 5, so he only loses 45 health points.

Fate points

Your life is affected greatly by the tides of fortune, but having survived many dangers, you have learnt that you can also make your own luck in this game. Fate points are a way of turning the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune to your favour.

You begin the game with 1 fate point. There may be times in the text where you will be asked if you want to 'spend' it in order to change a situation towards your favour. If you do, deduct 1 fate point from your total and turn to that new paragraph. You may also spend 1 fate point if you are in combat (where it says '*in this combat lose x health points*') to reduce the amount of damage dealt against you by 10.

Whenever you 'spend' a fate point, deduct 1 fate point from your total and go to the paragraph instructed or reduce the amount of damage you have sustained.

You can gain fate points by triumphing over great odds or completing an arduous task. Such events are a few and far between, however, so use your fate points wisely! There is no upper limit to the number of fate points you can have.

Examples

Crewman Staines manages to stumble off a cliff in the dark. However, he is given the option of spending a fate point. He does so and lands in a pool of water.

Bo'sun Roger is fighting a soldier guarding a merchant ship. The bo'sun wields his cutlass with great skill. He needs to lose 20 health points in this combat. However, he spends a fate point and only loses 10.

Inventory

You start your adventure with no equipment, but you may find other items on your travels. If you do, put them in the inventory box on your adventure sheet.

There is also a box for the weapon, armour, shield and any other miscellaneous items or abilities that you may have which you will use in combat. Beside them is the amount of damage that they will reduce in combat. The total of all these values is the amount of health points that you can deduct from the damage you sustain in combat.

The box for your weapon is for the weapon you wield in combat. You may carry extra weapons in addition to the one in your weapons box. If you have more than one weapon, put the weapon(s) you won't use in combat in your equipment list instead.

Money

The main currency in the archipelago of Guatam is the piece of eight, a silver coin.

Notes

Your actions will have consequences for good or for ill. This area is for putting down codewords and other notes that will affect the outcome of your adventure.

Adventure Sheet

Health points

Initial: 100 Current: _____/100

Fate points

Initial: 1 Current: _____

Equipment

Notes

Weapon

Damage reduction

Money

_____ Pieces of Eight

Armour

Damage reduction

Shield

Damage reduction

Misc combat modifier

Damage reduction

Total damage reduction in combat = _____

Background

Blackbeard. A name that sends shivers of terror down the spines of all the inhabitants of the Archipelago of Guatam. Unless of course, you work for the East Sea Trading Company, in which case it is the name Blackbird that sends shivers of terror down your spine. This all started when a dozy clerk wrote 'Blackberd' on a wanted poster. His supervisor, who just wanted to go for some rum, did not bother to check the original letter and changed the name on the poster to 'Blackbird'. This caused a lot of confusion, not least for the people who met the man himself as he had a multicoloured macaw on his shoulder, prompting a barrage of questions.

The skulls of that clerk and his supervisor now hang from the crow's nest of Blackbeard's flagship, the *Retribution*; the thought of which always raises an ironic smile with your captain.

This sort of thing is characteristic of the sadistic and despotic man. His real name is Edward Thatcher, born in the distant country of Amero. He is a giant of a man with a long black beard, plaited into many tails and tied with colourful ribbons – hence the name. His body bears many scars from the daring attacks he has made on heavily armed ships. His long black leather coat, sling holding six pistols and his habit of putting lit flaming matches in his beard and hat added to his reputation of being bloodthirsty, deadly and boundless in his cruelty.

The man was not without humour. Sometimes, during meals, he would blow out the candle on the table and then fire his pistols under the table. He kneecapped his first mate one time. 'He won't forget who's in charge now!' Laughed the captain.

Another time, he gathered the crew of the *Retribution* into the hold, and set fire to a pile of brimstone there. 'Let us see who can bear a hell of our own making me hearties!' He cackled. While most of the crew ran for the deck, Blackbeard stayed in the sulphurous hold for over an hour, something he would boast about from then on.

Although his family had made a fortune in the spice trade, he did not want to make an honest living. At first, he proved himself to be an able sailor and a strong leader; however, he was just biding his time. When he was given his first commission, a sloop full of saffron, he took off with it and sailed the small ship across the treacherous ocean to the distant isles of Guatam. Many thought that he would sink on such a long journey, but his daring and courage shone through. He arrived, triumphant, his sloop also laden with rum he had stolen from a merchant ship. He promptly sold the sloop, the spices and the rum to buy a bigger ship, brimming with cannons. His only problem was finding a bigger crew.

He strolled into the first inn he saw and declared who he was and what he wanted. He got howls of laughter in response. A pirate walked up to him and spat in his face. That pirate's skull now resides in Thatcher's quarters as a wineglass. He killed six men that night with his bare hands, including the infamous Calico Jack, the most wanted man in Guatam at the time. He never had any recruitment problems after that.

Over the years, He became the most feared man of the seas. Murder, extortion, and kidnap – nothing was too low for the arch pirate if there was enough loot. Now, Blackbeard is in command of three ships full of gold, silver, gems and other treasures stolen from just about everyone in Guatam.

You are the navigator of Blackbeard's flagship, the *Retribution*. You have barely slept in the last week as you have been trying to flee half a dozen heavily armed and well manned ships from

the Guatam government and the East Sea Trading Company. Admiral Brandon, governor of Port Leyland seems doggedly determined to put an end to Blackbeard's exploits.

Even Blackbeard is not daring to attack this formidable fleet. However, he is relaxed enough to hold a dinner with his officers on the *Skull and Crossbow*. He has left you in charge with specific instructions which he gave you in his gruff, clipped pirates' accent.

'In about an hour, we'll come across an island with a little known reef nearby. We need to go west around the island to avoid it, otherwise, we'll be sunk. Our pursuers won't know about it and we'll send them to Davy Jones' Locker.'

The lookout in the crow's nest shouts that he can see the isle and you command the helmsman to take a hard port.

You are flung forward as the ship lurches to a sharp halt. You pick yourself up.

'What the hell happened?'

'We hit a reef, sir!' Shouts a cabin boy looking over the bow. The ship lurches again, throwing you all off your feet. 'We're sinking!' Shouts the bo'sun. 'Abandon ship!' You order. The pirates rush about in panic, running for the lifeboats. You look around you. You notice that the *Pan and Crocodile* is in a similar predicament and is going down fast, but the *Skull and Crossbow* is heading off in the opposite direction. It must have swerved at the last minute to avoid the reef. At least the captain is fine, but that doesn't help you.

You're sharkbait. The ship is now sinking fast. The rest of the crew are on the lifeboats heading to the island. You notice that they haven't left you one. You know why. They see you as responsible for causing this disaster and if they catch you on the island they will probably skin you alive. However, the island is the only escape you've got. You need to think fast in order to survive this predicament...

NOW TURN OVER

1

There is another lurch and the ship starts to sink faster. Lifeboats are heading to the island from both your ship and the *Pan and Crocodile*. *The Skull and Crossbow* is quickly sailing off over the horizon. The tropical island is your only hope. You hate being marooned. You have to hunt for food, water and shelter. You can never sleep properly as you are in constant fear of being attacked by a wild animal and, in the worst case scenario, your so called mateys could start to think that you look tasty. You know most of this through a personal experience you have which you do not talk about but merely refer to as 'The Incident.'

You are standing in front of the stairs to the lower decks, holding onto the door frame to stay stable and think about how you could make this situation a little more bearable. You could go to your quarters to pick up useful equipment (turn to 75), raid the treasure hold (turn to 25) or if you want to abandon ship straight away, you can dive into the sea and make a swim for the shore (turn to 50).

2

You spend the night paddling and then rest under the blazing sun. *Unless you have a waterskin, lose 2 health points.* Eventually, through exhaustion, you slip into a fitful sleep.

You dream that you are back on the island, trying to force your way through the jungle to get to the beach, but no matter where you go, you always seem to be trapped in the dense undergrowth of the tropical rainforest. You start to get nervous.

Then you hear a rustle and a huge dog appears from under a bush. It looks at you and you know that you should follow it. It turns and runs off.

You run after the dog and quickly arrive on the beach where there is a magnificent boat moored. You walk up the gangplank which promptly vanishes. The boat then sets off along calm, clear waters. You stand on the poop deck and feel exhilarated with the fresh sea breeze on your face.

A figure starts to appear before you.

Blackbeard swims into your vision. He leers at you.

'I thought you were sharkbait. Why aren't you at the bottom of the sea where I wanted you? I got sick of having three ships and all the moaning crew. I just want to sail the seas with me mateys.'

A giant eagle flies down and rips his head off. It then picks you up in its beak and carries you over the sea. You look down to see the scene of three ships, two stuck on a reef and a third one sailing away. Behind them are half a dozen other ships. You see the minute lifeboats sailing towards an island.

'There must be more to this.' You hear a voice in your head say. The eagle then opens its beak and lets you go.

You are falling towards the sea. You feel a sense of fear and feel the air whistling past you. The sea rushes up to you and you hit the water with a huge splash and panic as you start to drown.

You wake up drenched in sweat. The sun is high in the sky.

You spend another day and a half on the raft. If you had any, your fresh water has run out and you endure more of the Sun. Hunger also sets in. *Lose 5 health points.* Eventually, you drift into the port of Port Leyland. You are exhilarated to be back in civilisation (*gain 1 fate point*). You think about what you will do with yourself now. Turn to **47**.

3

It is black. Wherever you are stinks of stale urine. Your head hurts and something warm is crawling over your chest. You open your eyes to find yourself staring into the eyes of a large rat. It squeaks frantically and runs away. You are in a grim cell with a barred door. There is nothing in the cell besides some old straw to lie on. You do not even have a window. You check your possessions to find that you have been robbed of all your money and disarmed (*cross all pieces of eight from your adventure sheet. Cross off any treasure you had. Cross off any weapon you had*). How are you going to get out of this one? *If you have the codeword Maze on your adventure sheet turn to 61. If not but if you have 1 or more fate point, you must spend it now (turn to 76).* If not, you spend a week starving in the cell before you are taken out and executed.

4

How will you get on the ship? If you walk up to the guards, turn to **17**. If you dive into the sea and try to swim on board without them noticing, turn to **60**. If you wish to give up and go somewhere else, you think about where in town you could go next. If you wish to go to the market place, turn to **58**. If you wish to go to the tavern, turn to **86**. If you want to find a ship to leave here on, turn to **94**. If you want to go to the docks, turn to **27**.

5

'It's the Secret Merchant Elite. They've set up a puppet governor so that they can use this city to make them rich!' You hear the man preach to his throng as you approach. They all go silent and look at you when they see you. 'Yes?' Asks the man. You tell him that you want to hear more. He is only too glad to offer you his opinions on economics, politics, the military and many other topics, which usually culminate in polemics against Governor Brandon and the 'Secret Merchant Elite' whoever they are. *If you want to help him and have the codewords Letter and/or Monday on your adventure sheet, turn to 35. If you want to help him, but have neither of those codewords, turn to 77. If you want no part in his schemes, there is no one else that you want to talk to. The burly sailor has left now. You leave the tavern and go somewhere else. You may not return to the tavern. You think about where in town you could go next. If you decide to go to the market square, turn to 58. If you decide to go to the docks, turn to 27.*

6

If you took two or three items, turn to **23**. If not, you hastily leave the clearing and continue your search for food. Turn to **55**.

7

'Come back to see your old captain have you?' Taunts Blackbeard.

'You scumbag!' You shout. 'You sold us down the reef!'

'You can't blame a man with all that treasure in his hold can you? If there are more of you, then I get less. Do the math!'

'That I can forgive! But then you've joined forces with that Landlubber!' You point accusingly at Brandon. Your men jeer at them both.

'Ah well. The man saw sense,' replies the governor smugly while twirling his moustache. He speaks with the upper class accent of a man who mixes with royalty regularly 'Why share your treasure with a band of worthless cut throats when all they do is stab you in the back? Enjoy it with class and distinction instead.'

'You saying that I would stab you in the back, Brandon?' Asks Blackbeard threateningly.

'Certainly not!' Retracts Brandon, indignant.

'Well, you're a fool then!' Roars Blackbeard in triumph.

With that, a dozen pirates rush into the dining room, armed with muskets. Blackbeard pulls out a pistol and points it at Brandon's head.

'It's a trap!' Shouts the Governor. The cat yowls in alarm and fear. It jumps off the governor's lap and runs off down the corridor.

A dozen soldiers rush into the room, each of them also brandishing a musket. Blackbeard looks around for a moment, but that gives Brandon enough time to pull out his own pistol. Blackbeard looks back only to find the pistol pointed at his head.

'You don't think I would make such an underhand deal without insurance would you? If you live long enough, I may even have to set my own anti-pirate secret weapon on you! It is a pirate's most dangerous enemy and the deadliest thing in the world!'

Soldiers have muskets trained on pirates. Pirates have muskets trained on soldiers. Both sides have muskets trained on you. It's a moment of unbearable tension. Then someone fires...

If you have the codeword bang on your adventure sheet, turn to 42. If not, turn to 70.

8

You show them the log that you took from Blackbeard's desk and give it to Blutz, the only man there who can read. 'He's backstabbed us' shouts Blutz, after reading the entry. 'He's made a pact with Brandon and thrown us aside!' The rest of the prisoners shout for revenge. You grab the keys and open the cells. 'We want to kill Blackbeard, skipper. Take us to him so we can keelhaul the bilge sucker!' says Blutz. All the pirates look to you for leadership. You have men to help you kill the captain, but can you get them weapons? You consider your options. If you have the codeword *dealer* in your notes, turn to 39. If you do not have the codeword *dealer* in your notes, but you do have the codeword *larceny*, turn to 22. If you have neither of these, the pirates' bravado and machismo disappears and they turn their thoughts to escape, so they all dash down the corridor, including Maze if he is with you. You explore the building alone (turn to 56).

9

Alone in the dining hall, you stand triumphant amongst the bodies. Brandon and Blackbeard have both been killed by greed, lust for power, and most of all, by being shot. With a grin on your face, you walk out of the hall. You have avenged yourself on the injustice wrought against you. If you were with your crew, turn to 16. If you were with rebels, turn to 24.

10

There is no one left on the beach. The beach is littered with flotsam and other debris. You pick through it and manage to find a clay statuette lying on the sand. *You may add the clay statuette to your equipment list.* Then you notice a ship on the horizon. If you have a tinderbox, you can try to start a signal fire. Turn to **81**. If not, you watch the ship sail by. You decide that the only way that you are going to get off this island is by building your own raft. Ripping down vines and carrying wood is hard going. *Lose 10 health points. However, if you have a dagger, you can cut the vines down, making your job easier. Lose 5 health points instead.* Eventually, you have made a small raft. You know that the island of Carab is just north of here, so you drag your raft through the jungle. You set off. You several hours on the raft with the sun beating down on you. Turn to **2**.

11

Desperate to escape the soldiers of Governor Brandon, you jump overboard and hit the water with a cold, hard splash (*Lose 3 health points*). You swim away from the jetty. After a few minutes of hard swimming, you notice that the soldiers have given up on you. You head for the beach and stagger onto land. You and your possessions are sopping wet. *If you own them, cross off the captain's log, the nautical chart and the forgery which have all been ruined by the water as the ink has run. Cross them off your equipment list.* You have managed to evade the authorities though, so you are smug as you head back into town. *Make a note that you may not return to the docks again as you have caused too much havoc there.* You think about where in town you could go next. If you wish to go to the market, turn to **58**. If you wish to find a tavern to relax in, turn to **86**. If you want to find a ship to leave here on, turn to 94.

12

The sailors pull you aboard and the captain asks you where you've come from. You tell him that you've been marooned on an island for years. The captain is suspicious, but lets you stay.

You spend a day on the ship, where you are given lots of biscuits and grog. You relax and partake of these delights. *Restore 5 health points.*

You also have dinner with the captain where he tells you about current affairs on the sea. Many of them are quite boring. The south wind has been quiet this year. The biggest ship ever built hit an iceberg and sunk, which is quite fantastic considering it was in tropical waters. He then says something quite interesting.

'A week ago, I came across the *Bachelor's Delight*, a pirate ship led by one of the biggest scoundrels the world has ever known, Captain Bloodaxe. Her mast was down and she seemed dead in the water. Maybe she had attacked a heavily armed ship. Anyway, I wanted to attack her while she was a sitting duck and rid the world of those scumbags, but only a few days before, Governor Brandon had made an edict that no captains are to attack pirate ships. They should be left to his special fleet. I was seething. I had to sail on by.'

'That's a shame.' You reply as you help yourself to more octopus tentacles. You ask the captain about the reef that you ran aground on. 'Oh that reef is well known. Any sailor in this area would know to avoid it. My navigator has spare nautical charts to sell to you if you want to have a look for yourself.' You then go back to making smalltalk. The next day, you may find the navigator of the ship and ask him about buying a nautical chart of the area. You do not have any money, but he will give it to you for a doubloon if you have one. If you want to do this, turn to **45**. If not, you go back to strolling around the deck. You then go back to making

smalltalk. Within a few hours, you are back in Port Leyland. You are exhilarated to be back to civilisation (*gain 1 fate point*). You think about what you will do next. Turn to **47**.

13

You explore the corridors. At first there is no sound until you hear laughter. You head towards this sound. As you do, you hear two voices talking. There is another sound of laughter. This time you can identify who made it. You step into a hall. Turn to **64**.

14

You know where you can buy some weapons, but do you have the means to buy them? If you have treasure on your equipment list, you may turn to **48**. If you have no treasure but you do have a clay statuette and wish to spend a fate point, you may turn to **74**. If these do not apply to you or if you do not want to buy weapons, but you have the codeword *larceny* in your notes, turn to **22**. If none of these apply, you have to face the Governor as you are. Turn to **26**.

15

The forest is dark and your foraging does not go well. In fact, you spend most of the time stumbling and blindly feeling around. After an hour, you trip over a tree's roots yet again. You get up frustrated, but then stop as you see moonlight coming from a clearing in the jungle. Excited, you rush through the undergrowth to find a clearing only to gasp at the sight in front of you. Scattered around the bare ground are the bones of men and animals picked clean of flesh. They rest upon what looks like giant threads of spider silk which sparkle in the moonlight. Webs have been drawn between trees. One of them holds the half devoured corpse of a boar. If you search this macabre lair, turn to **88**. If you decide to flee this place, you can continue your search for food (turn to **55**).

16

You have killed two of the biggest scumbags in Guatam. You walk out to see the familiar faces of your crewmates, grinning back at you. 'Where shall we go skipper? The *Skull and Crossbow* is still in the harbour and I think it needs a worthy captain.' Says Blutz.

You all rush down to the harbour where the ship is moored; your men throw two soldiers off the jetty and run on board. Upon exploring the ship, you see that its treasure is still all here!

You have some loyal followers and a huge fortune. What will you do with it? Share it out? Buy a warship? Hire an army? The sky is the limit. However, tonight, you buy lots of grog, fine food and hire lots of scantily clad wenches to have the biggest pirate party in history. This is only the beginning...

Turn to the "Now you have finished section" on the last page.

17

The two guards, one big and one small are rough fellows dressed in leather armour and carrying swords. They eye you suspiciously as you approach them. 'Get off here, *sir*!' Growls the large one.

'Yeah!' Jeers the small one, standing behind him.

If you have a forgery, turn to **52**. If you wish to spend a fate point to bluff your way in, turn to **92**. If you try to force your way in, turn to **37**. If you pretend to leave and then swim onto the boat under cover, turn to **60**. If you give up and leave, you may turn to **27** to pick another option in the docks or you may go to another part of town. You think about where in town you could go next. If you wish to go to the market, turn to **58**. If you wish to go to a tavern, turn to **86**. If you want to find a ship to leave here on, turn to **94**.

18

The bath house offers a massage followed by a relaxing spell in the steam room for a bit. This costs five pieces of eight. If you cannot afford it, or do not want to partake, you head back to the market. Turn to **58**. If you pay to enter the bath house (*Deduct 5 pieces of eight from your adventure sheet. You can only make use of the bath house's facilities once*), turn to **54**.

19

Add the codeword Monday to your adventure sheet.

The man thanks you and giggles. 'Let's get some rest and then we'll build a vessel.' You sleep well. At dawn, you both wake up and you start to tell Ben what he needs to collect to make a stable raft. He manages to bring you some rope he's salvaged and cuts down some wood with an axe. In no time at all, you have built a huge raft. Ben also brings a pile of fruit which he puts into a crate and ties the crate onto the raft. He also has a huge piece of canvas which you can use to make a sail. You know that Guatam is due north of here so you set sail from the northern shore of the island near sunset.

On the raft, you tell Ben about Blackbeard.

'Aye, he sounds like a scurvy dog. It sounds like something Governor Brandon did. When we were resisting the rule of Brandon, he would pay people to cause riots in the city. It was because of them that he was able to level accusations against the Baron. However, when he got what he wanted, he didn't want mercenaries in his city as some other rich man may hire them to oppose him. So he hunted them down and killed them. Maybe Blackbeard had no further use for you and the ships.'

Towards dawn, you notice a ship on the horizon. Ben lights a branch with a tinderbox as a signal, but will it rescue you? If you wish to spend a fate point, turn to **30**. If not, turn to **63**.

20

Barrin, the armourer sells a wide range of weapons and armour from a spacious shop where all the goods are hung up neatly and labelled. You may buy the following things. You may only buy one of each item.

A fine cutlass with an all improved design. *This reduces the damage you receive in combat by 10 and costs 10 pieces of eight.*

A steel dagger. *This reduces damage you receive in combat by 5 and costs 2 pieces of eight.*

A suit of leather armour. *This reduces damage you receive in combat by 5 and costs 10 pieces of eight.*

Small wooden shield. *This reduces damage you receive in combat by 5 and costs 10 pieces of eight.*

If you decide to buy something, turn to **46**. If you do not buy anything, you head back to the market square. If you get more money, you may return to this paragraph to buy more items. Turn to **58**.

21

The sailors pull you aboard and the captain asks you where you've come from. You tell him that you've been marooned on an island for years. The captain is suspicious, but lets you stay.

You spend a day on the ship, where you are given lots of biscuits and grog. You relax and partake of these delights. *Restore 5 health points.*

You also have dinner with the captain where he tells you about current affairs on the sea. Many of them are quite boring. The south wind has been quiet this year. The biggest ship ever built hit an iceberg and sunk, which is quite fantastic considering it was in tropical waters. He then says something quite interesting.

'A week ago, I came across the *Bachelor's Delight*, a pirate ship led by one of the biggest scoundrels the world has ever known, Captain Bloodaxe. Her mast was down and she seemed dead in the water. Maybe she had attacked a heavily armed ship. Anyway, I wanted to attack her while she was a sitting duck and rid the world of those scumbags, but only a few days before, Governor Brandon had made an edict that no captains are to attack pirate ships. They should be left to his special fleet. I was seething. I had to sail on by.'

'That's a shame.' You reply as you help yourself to more octopus tentacles.

You ask the captain about the reef that you ran aground on. 'Oh that reef is well known. Any sailor in this area would know to avoid it. My navigator has spare nautical charts to sell to you if you want to have a look for yourself.' You then go back to making smalltalk. The next day, you may find the navigator of the ship and ask him about buying a nautical chart of the area. You do not have any money, but he will give it to you for a doubloon if you have one. If you want to do this, turn to **45**. If not, you go back to strolling around the deck. Within a few hours, you are back in Port Leyland. *If you have the codeword Maze on your adventure sheet turn to 96. If not, you are exhilarated by your return to civilisation (gain 1 fate point)* You think about what you will do with yourself now. Turn to **47**.

22

You lead your men to the warehouse by the docks and open the window to let them in. You tell one of them to stay outside and keep watch while you are raiding the warehouse. One of your men lights a lamp and you start to help yourself to swords, muskets, pistols and daggers. If you do not have one, you may grab a sword (*put it in your weapon section. It reduces damage dealt to you in combat by 10.*) Then you hear a knock at the window. It is your lookout. Someone is coming. The lamp goes out and you all go still. A door opens at the front of the warehouse. You peek over a crate to see two armed guards holding a lantern and looking around. They start to walk along the warehouse and walk towards you. If you are with pirates, turn to **93**. If you are with rebels, turn to **28**.

23

You pick up your last item and start to walk out of this clearing. Then you see eight large bulbous eyes, looking at you from the forest. You freeze and stare back. Then, with a rustle of leaves, it jumps out of the undergrowth and charges at you.

The beast is the largest, hairiest spider you have ever seen. The monster stands as tall as you on its thick hairy legs and smells of rotting meat. It squeals as it opens its mouth, baring its teeth. *You may spend a fate point if you took two items.* If you spend a fate point here, the spider trips up over a human skeleton, leaving to enough time to flee from the clearing. The giant spider loses interest in you and goes back to chewing on the boar. Turn to **55**.

If you cannot or will not spend the fate point, you try to dodge the spider's charge, but it crashes into you, sending you flying into a web. You manage to get up and untangle yourself just in time to meet the spider in combat. You try to hurt it enough to stop it attacking you. You flail at it while it tries to bite you with its huge poisonous teeth. *In this combat, lose 30 health points.* Unable to endure more pain, the spider falls back, realising that you are not worth it. You take advantage of this and flee the clearing. Once you have put enough distance between you and the monstrous spider, you continue your quest for food. Turn to **55**.

24

You walk out to see the rebels waiting for you and you announce that Governor Brandon is dead. A huge cheer goes up from your companions. The next few weeks are a blur. You find the *Skull and Crossbow* in the harbour, its hold full of treasure and, after helping yourself to most of it, you use the rest to hire an army to clean up Port Leyland. The Queen is sent a message explaining everything and sends one of her nephews to govern the port. Soon, corrupt merchants and officials are ousted and the city becomes a place for everyone rather than just a few rich criminals. However, the rebels believe that the Secret Merchant Elite are not beaten yet. They will turn their attention to something else.

You have done a fantastic service for the people of Port Leyland in freeing them from oppression. However, after a month of being part of its benevolent rule, your feet start to itch. This kind of thing isn't really for you. Where's the excitement and danger? How are you going to become a legendary pirate if you go around freeing people? That's not what pirates do. You go to where you buried the treasure from the *Skull and Crossbow*, regretting that you gave any of it away and use it to buy a ship and hire a crew. You bid your rebel friends farewell and sail off to fight the Secret Merchant Elite in the only way you know best – by robbing them blind.

Turn now to the "Now you are finished section" on the last page.

25

A true pirate never passes up an opportunity to grab some booty. You dash below deck and run through the creaking ship. When you get to the hold, you see water is pouring into it through a massive hole in the hull and many more small holes are letting water spout into the hold. A treasure chest is sitting at your feet. You pick the lock and eagerly open it, only to find that it is empty! You grab another one and open it to find that it is also empty. Someone has got there before you! *Add the codeword booty to your adventure sheet.* The hold is quickly filling up with water now. If you feel the need to abandon this sinking ship, you run up to the deck and dive overboard (if you have a doubloon, turn to **33**. If you do not, turn to **50**). If you feel that you need equipment to help you survive, you run to your quarters if you have not already been there (turn to **75**).

26

You and your men head to the governor's residence. The building reeks of decadence. At the top of the white marble staircase is a large façade held up by white ionic pillars. The front door is made from heavy oak which must have been imported from hundreds of miles away. Statues

of lions and gargoyles stand on the roof, warning intruders not to enter. There are two guards standing at the top of marble stairs in front of the door, but your men overcome them quickly and enter the building. If you do not have one, you may take a guard's sword (*put it in your weapons section. It will reduce damage dealt to you in combat by 10.*) Turn to **13**.

27

There are several ships of all shapes and sizes at the docks. You stroll up and down them and then gasp. The *Skull and Crossbow* is moored here. Why on earth is it in a city where Blackbeard is wanted? You can break in to it to see if you can get any clues (turn to **4**), look for work at the docks (turn to **79**) find a boat to leave on (turn to **94**) or head to another part of town. You think about where in town you could go next. If you decide to head to the market, turn to **58**. If you want to find a tavern to relax in, turn to **86**.

28

The rebels have a deep hatred for the soldiers. You watch silently and helplessly as one of them sneaks up behind the pair and plunges his sword in one of the soldier's neck. The soldier crumples to the ground, gurgling. You rush towards the other one and slam into him sending you both tumbling to the ground. Before he can attack or shout for help, the rest of the rebels are on top of him, pummelling him to death. You hear the angry bark of a dog from outside the warehouse and the sound of more voices heading towards the entrance. *If you would like to spend a fate point, turn to 57. If you do not want to or cannot spend a fate point, turn to 91.*

29

You go about gathering branches and ripping down vines to lash them together. It is hard going, making a raft all by yourself. *Lose 10 health points. However, if you have a dagger, you can cut the vines down, making your job easier. Lose 5 health points instead.* Eventually, you have made a small raft. You know that the island of Carab is just north of here, so you drag your raft through the jungle. You set off. You several hours on the raft with the sun beating down on you. Then, you notice a ship on the horizon. *If you spend a fate point and lose 3 health points you can paddle like the devil is chasing you to catch up with the ship and shout to attract the crew's attention. Fortunately, someone is standing just within earshot of where you are.* Turn to **12**. If you do not, the ship sails on by and you spend more time lying on the raft. Turn to **2**.

30

Someone on the ship must be curious or concerned or both, as the ship turns towards your direction. Men haul you on board and bring you food and water.

You spend a day on the ship, where you are given lots of biscuits and grog. You relax and partake of these delights. *Restore 5 health points.*

You also have dinner with the captain where he tells you about current affairs on the sea. Many of them are quite boring. The south wind has been quiet this year. The biggest ship ever built hit an iceberg and sunk, which is quite fantastic considering it was in tropical waters. He then says something quite interesting.

'A week ago, I came across the *Bachelor's Delight*, a pirate ship led by one of the biggest scoundrels the world has ever known, Captain Bloodaxe. Her mast was down and she seemed dead in the water. Maybe she had attacked a heavily armed ship. Anyway, I wanted to attack her while she was a sitting duck and rid the world of those scumbags, but only a few days

before, Governor Brandon had made an edict that no captains are to attack pirate ships. They should be left to his special fleet. I was seething. I had to sail on by.'

'That's a shame.' You reply as you help yourself to more octopus tentacles.

You ask the captain about the reef that you ran aground on. 'Oh that reef is well known. Any sailor in this area would know to avoid it. My navigator has spare nautical charts to sell to you if you want to have a look for yourself'

The captain asks you where you have been, and Ben tells him that you were both together on the *Furtuskewys* and you have been stranded ever since. The captain is suspicious, but the story checks out, so he lets you stay. The next day, you may find the navigator of the ship and ask him about buying a nautical chart of the area. You do not have any money, but he will give it to you for a doubloon if you have one. If you want to do this, turn to **45**. If not, turn to **98**.

31

The *Skull and Crossbow* is the smallest of Blackbeard's former fleet of three. You can think of two places in which you might find items of value to you. You could search the captain's quarters for Blackbeard's journal to find out what the hell he was thinking. Or you could search the hold to see if you can get yourself some nice treasure. If you search the Captain's quarters turn to **53**. If you search the hold turn to **87**.

32

You go through the square with Corbett and half a dozen men. There is a cry from Corbett. You look at him and see an arrow sticking through his neck. A hail of arrows rains down upon you and you are hit in the chest. *Lose 10 health points. If you spend a fate point, the arrow whistles past your head, missing you narrowly.* The rest of you run for it, only to stop before a heavily scarred man wearing chainmail armour. He is flanked by two large guards. Other soldiers pour in as you fight the captain of the militia. He wields his sword with great skill parrying and thrusting with precision and speed. *In this combat, lose 60 health points.* If you win, you look around to find that a dozen of your companions have survived and all of the soldiers are dead. Corbett, however, did not survive. The rebels look to you. Falling back on your pirate training, you order them to raid the place. You may pick up a sword if you do not have one (*put it in your weapons section. It reduces damage dealt to you in combat by 10.*) Your thorough search takes you to a study where you find the captain's log book. In it, you find an interesting entry for today:

More soldiers sent to the Governor's house. He is selling the arch-pirate Blackbeard immunity from the law in return for a large pile of dirty gold. I don't trust him. He's a pirate and wanted for dozens of crimes in Port Leyland alone but I have been ordered not to touch him or even his men. This situation is disgusting. Ever since Brandon's been in charge, I've been ordered to turn a blind eye to so much criminal activity, it makes me sick. The only thing I'm supposed to do now is track down this heavily armed force of rebels, but it's rubbish. From what I can see, it's a few dozen unarmed and poor dissidents. However, the Governor's rule is making people more sympathetic towards them. I don't know how long I can keep order in this way.

After reading this, you gather your rebels and tell them what you have found. They gather round you and tell you that you have to lead the attack on the governor's mansion tonight. 'Our leader is dead,' says one rebel 'And you killed the captain of the guard. Without you, our cause would have been lost. You will lead us to slay that corrupt puppet of the secret merchant

elite!' The rebels cheer. The look in their eyes makes you think that refusing would be very dangerous. You have become embroiled in a rebellion you had nothing to do with. However, it seems that your treacherous ex captain is in league with this governor so it could benefit you quite a lot. You now have men to help you break into the mansion, but are you well armed enough? If you have the codeword *dealer* on your adventure sheet, you may turn to **14**. If you do not have the codeword *dealer* or if you do not want to turn to **14**, but you do have the codeword *larceny* on your adventure sheet, turn to **22**. If you have neither of these, you chance an attack on the governor as you are. Turn to **26**.

33

You have tarried too long. Water is now swirling around your knees, dragging your feet back with every step you take. The ship lurches again, sending you crashing into the water with a splash. The water is around your waist now. You try to swim your way out, but the current is against you and it sends you down further into the bowels of the ship. The water is up to your chin now. You desperately try to escape. The ship lurches again and with a huge creak, water forces its way through the hull, drenching you. As the ship sinks, you notice that the water has just made a hole that you can swim through. Today is your lucky day (*lose 1 fate point.*) Not wishing to tempt fate further, you swim through the hole and burst through the surface of the water.

You swim frantically for the shore of the island, following the lights on the lifeboats. You manage to make it to the shore while the pirates are pulling lifeboats on to the sandy beach. 'There he is,' you hear a voice growl. 'The scurvy landlubber that got us sunk!' You see Kain, a burly deck swabber pointing at you, a murderous look in his one good eye. The rest of the survivors start to jeer and shout at you as they close in, murder their intent. The angry pirates are out for a scapegoat and they're not going to listen to reason. You run as fast as you can across the beach with a mob of angry pirates on your heels. You head towards a tropical forest and run through the trees. The pirates do not follow you into the forest, but growl and yowl at you from the beach. You have no choice but to go deeper into the dark forbidding jungle. The darkness surrounds you as the trees block out the moonlight. You force your way through the undergrowth, thinking about what you should do. If you look for food and water, turn to **15**. If you climb a tree and go to sleep, turn to **68**. If you go back to the beach and spy on your ex mateys, turn to **90**.

34

You go around the back of the house where you find a grate coming out of the wall at the back. The smell of sewage coming from the grate is disgusting, but it is a way in. *You can force the grate open if you have 80 or more health points. If you have a dagger, you can use it to prise the grate open. This will destroy the dagger but you can open the grate if you have 70 or more health points.* If you get past the grate, you search the place. Turn to **80**. If not, you can try to get in another way. Turn to **78**.

35

'I know you!' Says the man. 'Our friends have been talking about how you've helped us. My name is Corbett and I am the leader of the rebels in Port Leyland. We all used to work for the government until a group of rich merchants replaced us with their puppets that do nothing but stamp on the face of the people and make their greedy, disgusting puppet masters richer. Governor Brandon is one such puppet. If you want a good reward, you can help us again. Tonight, we plan on killing the captain of the militia as he is such a puppet. We have to get

through a heavily guarded building and an extra warrior will be of great help. If you want to help us, meet us in the burned down church on Fishpool Street'

You may wait for Corbett by turning to paragraph 67 whenever you see the phrase 'You think about where in town you could go next'. The burly sailor has left the tavern now. You leave the tavern and go somewhere else. You may not return to the tavern. You think about where in town you could go next. If you decide to go to the market square, turn to 58. If you decide to go to the docks, turn to 27. If you want to find a ship to leave here on, turn to 94.

36

You face a pirate's most dangerous enemy. The deadliest thing in the world. You gasp in awe and terror as you realise that the robed figure is a ninja! Your next thought is cut down as the ninja jumps through the air towards you with gravity defying agility. Midair, it pulls out a star shaped piece of metal and throws it at you. You have no time to dodge it. *If you do not have a shield, lose 5 health points. If you spend a fate point, the ninja star just lands short of you and misses.* The ninja lands before you, pulls out some nunchaku and performs stunts, flinging the nunchaku around his head, legs and body in a dazzling and deadly blur. If you have a bamboo stick, turn to 49. If not, turn to 72.

37

The two guards are not expecting a lone maniac pirate to take them on and you manage to take them by surprise, slamming into the large one and then pushing the small one off the jetty into the sea. The large one recovers and draws his sword, slashing at you. The small one tries to climb up the jetty to join in the combat. He eventually does so and you have to fight both the guards to the death. *In this combat, lose 50 health points. If you win, you may take a sword (put it in your weapon section. It reduces damage dealt to you in combat by 10)* then you tip the bodies off the jetty and get on the boat. Turn to 31.

38

Cross the bottle from your equipment list and add the codeword Letter to your adventure sheet.

You approach the man with the scar. 'Galron?' You ask. He nods. With a grin, you pull out the bottle and hand it to him. He reads it. As he does, a smile comes across his face. His smile gets broader as he leafs through the documents. 'Thankyou!' He exclaims and hugs you. 'Come with me!' You follow him to a large house on a hill. He bursts in. There is a fat man reclining on a couch. 'These documents proclaim me the rightful owner of this house and all its possessions. Get out!'

The fat man reads the documents and goes pale. He starts to cry.

'Come on Fatso. Get out and roll on back to your puppet masters!' Shouts the man.

The fat man waddles out of the house, Galron giving him a kick up the bum for good measure.

'Now - welcome to my house. Would you like some food and a bath?'

After a refreshing bath and a hot meal (*restore 5 health points*), you and Galron talk.

'I have tried to get this place back for years, but since I was a follower of Baron Caldoss, the previous ruler of this city, I am out of favour. You see Governor Brandon took this city by

subterfuge and force. There are some of us who have stayed and resisted him, but we are poor and the governor plants agents amongst us to sow dissent and distrust. However, I think we will have a turn in our fortunes!’

Galron pulls a candle holder on the wall. He pulls a section of the wall away to reveal a safe. He turns the dial to open it and reveal a box. He takes the box out to reveal it full of coins, gems and jewellery.

‘You can have some of this for restoring it to me.’ Says Galron. He gives you a bag of coins (*Add 25 pieces of eight to your adventure sheet*) and a few necklaces, jewelled rings and medallions (*Add the treasure to your equipment list*).

You then go back to the market. Turn to 58.

39

You know where you can buy muskets and other weapons but can you pay for them? If you have treasure on your equipment list, turn to 48. If you no treasure, but you do have a clay statuette, turn to 95. If you have neither, but you have the codeword *larceny* in your notes, turn to 22. If you have none of these, the pirates’ bravado and machismo disappears and they turn their thoughts to escape, so they all dash down the corridor, including Maze if he is with you. You explore the building alone (turn to 56).

40

Add the codeword Maze to the notes section of your adventure sheet.

‘Maze!’ You whisper. At first the man approaches cautiously but then he notices that you are not a soldier. ‘Thank the sea goddess, it’s you.’ He breathes a sigh of relief. ‘I know it wasn’t you who ordered us to sail into the reef. It was Blackbeard.’

‘I know. I don’t know what I’ll do if I see him again.’

‘He’s a scurvy dog. How are we going to get off this island?’

You decide that the both of you could make a raft and sail to Guatam. You search the forest and find a clearing where Maze makes a fire with his tinderbox and you share water from his waterskin. Over the fire, you talk about your situation.

‘I don’t know how he made two of his ships run aground. Blackbeard may seem mad, but he isn’t a landlubber.’

‘You see the *Pan and Crocodile*? That was going the other way. Maybe Blackbeard wanted us gone.’

‘He did have all his cronies on that boat. But why would he want to sink two of his ships?’

‘Maybe he’s tired of it all.’

‘Him? He’ll steal the scythe from the reaper when he goes. He’s pirate through and through.’

It goes quiet for a while as you both try to fathom Blackbeard’s intentions. Then you start talking about various other important topics such as your plans to build an escape raft and who would win in a fight between a kraken and a sea dragon.

In the morning, you go to the shore to build your raft. You search the beach first and find a few items. You cast lots over your booty and you win a clay statuette (*add the clay statuette to your adventure sheet*). Maze then spots a ship on the horizon. He gets a tinderbox out and starts to pile up wood to make a signal. *If you wish to spend a fate point, the ship sails towards you and you both climb aboard.* Turn to **21**. If not, you watch it sail by and build your own raft. Turn to **71**.

41

You push one soldier off the jetty then struggle to break through the gang. You manage to force your way through, but someone grabs your shirt. *If you spend a fate point, your shirt tears and you run off, leaving the soldier holding a part of your shirt.* You sprint away from the scene and then think about where you can go next. If you decide to go to the market, turn to **58**. If you decide to go to a tavern, turn to **86**. If you want to find a ship to leave here on, turn to **94**. If not, you are pushed to the ground, knocked out (*lose 3 health points and turn to 3*).

42

Then everyone fires. A cacophony of bangs goes up. Soldiers fall. Pirates fall. Your men fall. A bullet rips into your leg. The pain is excruciating. *Lose 10 health points. However, if you choose to spend a fate point, the bullet whistles past your head, missing you narrowly.* A cloud of smoke engulfs the room. You see Blackbeard lunge and knock the pistol from the governor's hand. Instead of firing on him, though, he reaches into his pocket. You have a clear shot to both of them but which one will you shoot? Brandon is a corrupt ruler who has ruined hundreds of lives, but Blackbeard tried to kill you and take his crew's booty. If you shoot the Governor, turn to **100**. If you shoot Blackbeard, turn to **85**.

43

The sailor is reciting the tales he has heard from the last week with great enthusiasm. '...And you know what I heard from a soldier in the gaols today. Two of the feared pirate Blackbeard's ships were sunk on a reef! Of all the things! And they have his men in the gaol now!' This is an important titbit. *If you want to break your mateys out of jail, you may do so by turning to 78 when you see the phrase 'You think about where in town you could go next'.*

The burly man then talks about Governor Brandon 'I heard that all pirates should fear Brandon. He has found a secret weapon – he says it's a pirate's most dangerous enemy!' I wouldn't like to be a pirate now.

You leave the large man to his rambling and look for someone else to talk to. The earnest looking man has left now. There is no one else that you would want to talk to so you leave. *You may not return to the tavern.* You think about where in town you could go next. If you go to the docks, turn to **27**. If you want to find a ship to leave here on, turn to **94**. If you go to the market, turn to **58**.

44

'What kind of work?' You ask.

'Listen,' replies the small man 'All you need to do is stand near a warehouse and give a signal to me and my friend if someone goes inside. You don't need to know no more. Good money for half an hour's work.'

You agree, partly because you need the money and partly because burglaries remind you of the fun times you had as a child, which involved climbing through small windows so that you could open doors to let the other burglars in. It was like a game. You both leave the bath house at different times to avoid arousing suspicion and later meet the man round the back of a large warehouse. He is accompanied by a very thin man. They give you the instructions.

‘All you have to do is stand outside the warehouse at the front. If someone goes in, go down the alleyway at the side and knock on this window.’

You acknowledge the instructions and go to the front of the warehouse. You see the two men climb in through the window.

Five minutes go by. Two labourers walk up to the door, and then stop. One of them seems to berate the other one and then storms off angrily. The other one follows him. Nothing else happens. After fifteen minutes, the thieves come out carrying pistols, daggers and bags of gunpowder and shot. The warehouse is actually a secret armoury! Without saying a word, one of the thieves hands you a clinking bag and then they both slink off down the alleyway. *Add the codeword larceny to your adventure sheet. Add 10 pieces of eight to your adventure sheet.* You head back to the market square. Turn to **58**.

45

Grudgingly, you hand over your lucky doubloon for the chart. *Cross the lucky doubloon from your equipment list. Add the nautical chart to your equipment list.* You look at the chart. The island is marked on this chart with the reef clearly shown. There is no way that Blackbeard could have not known about it. You remember a week ago he was in the chart room and took one away. You thought nothing of it at the time, but now it's looking suspicious.

The navigator seems quite willing to chat so you ask him about Port Leyland, your destination.

‘It's good for a trade.’ He says. ‘But it's starting to fall apart since Brandon became the boss. People are getting sick of him, so he's got more troops in. The captain of the guard is a skilled and determined man, some would say zealous in his wish to enforce the law. Not someone you want to cross as he can wield a sword with a lot of ease. Mind you, saying that, I heard that he's a bit lame in one leg so it's easier to trip him up.’ You now know a weakness of the captain of the guard. *If you face the captain of the guard in combat, you may reduce the damage he does against you by 20.*

You thank the navigator for his help and head back to the deck. If you have the codeword *Maze* on your adventure sheet, turn to **96**. If you have the codeword *Monday* on your adventure sheet, turn to **98**. If you have neither codeword, you return to the deck where you stroll around. Within a few hours, you reach Port Leyland. You are exhilarated to return to civilisation (*gain 1 fate point*). You head to the city centre to think about what you want to do next. Turn to **47**.

46

As you pay the bill, the armourer leans closer to you and whispers. ‘Listen pal. If you or your shipmates need anything a little more, erm, *effective*, in your line of work, I've got plenty of muskets and pistols going with shot and gunpowder. I'll give you a good price to get them off my hands. They're a bit hot at the moment, if you catch my drift. If you want them, turn up by the abandoned watchtower tonight.’

Barrin must think that you are scouting for weapons for a crew on a pirate ship. His instincts are partially right. He tells you the location of the run down watchtower and you tell him that you will inform your captain about it. *Add the codeword Dealer to your adventure sheet.* Turn to 58.

47

You are in the city of Port Leyland. The once gorgeous white buildings are now crumbling and well worn. The people who go by look overworked and underfed. You have heard that the port is a good place for trading. A lot of merchants make their way here and therefore a lot of pirates plague the waters in this area. This also means that the city has a large garrison and is heavily fortified. Six soldiers, dressed in leather armour and carrying spears march by, eyeing you suspiciously. You stare back defiantly as they go by.

You think about your aims. Do you want to save your crew? Has Blackbeard betrayed you or is he in danger? Do you want to track him down? If you do will you want to help him or kill him? Do you still want to be a pirate or do you want to escape your old life?

You also have more pressing goals such as finding food and accommodation. You may also want to recover from your trials. You may be able to find what you need in the taverns and the market place.

If you want to go to the docks, turn to 27. If you want to go to the market and shops, turn to 58. If you want to go and relax in the inn, turn to 86. If you want to find a ship to leave here on, turn to 94.

48

You take your men to the abandoned watchtower on the edge of the city and bang on the door. 'Who's that?' You hear Barrin's voice say from behind the door. You say that you are the pirate he saw earlier today. A panel slides across and you see the armour smith's eyes. 'Show us your money, then.'

You see the eyes widen as you reveal the treasure you have bought with you. You hear bolts slide across the door and it swings open to reveal the grinning armourer. In no time at all, he is pleased to be kitting your men out with muskets, shot, gunpowder and swords. *You may add a sword to your adventure sheet. It reduces damage done in combat by 10.* You hand over the treasure (*cross it from your adventure sheet and add the codeword bang to your notes*). Ready to face the Governor's men, you head to his residence. Turn to 26.

49

The ninja stops the dazzling display and looks hard at your bamboo stick. You pull it out and the ninja steps back. Surprisingly, you sense fear in the ninja. There's no time to think about why. You wave the stick around screaming death threats at the ninja. The robed figure runs off, climbs up the ceiling and jumps out of the window. You shrug your shoulders and stroll out smugly. Turn to 9.

50

Wasting no time, you jump overboard and land in the water with a painful splash (*lose 3 health points*.) You swim frantically for the shore of the island, following the lights on the lifeboats. You manage to make the shore while the pirates are pulling them upon the sandy beach. 'There

he is!' You hear a voice growl. 'The scurvy dog that got us sunk!' You see Kain, a burly deck swabber pointing at you, a murderous look in his one good eye. The rest of the survivors start to jeer and shout at you and close in. The angry pirates are out for a scapegoat and they're not going to listen to reason. You run as fast as you can across the beach with a mob of angry pirates on your heels. You head towards a tropical forest and run through the trees. The pirates do not follow you into the forest, but growl and yowl at you from the beach. You have no choice but to go deeper into the dark forbidding jungle. The darkness surrounds you as the trees block out the moonlight. You force your way through the undergrowth, thinking about what you should do. If you look for food and water, turn to **15**. If you look for a tree to climb and go to sleep in, turn to **68**. If you go back to the beach and spy on your ex shipmates, turn to **90**.

51

You and your men are now armed to the teeth. *Note the codeword bang on your adventure sheet.* You also have a bag of exotic and strange weapons which you share out. You have no idea how to use most of them but your men keep them as curiosities. There are two things that interest you and you may take one of them.

The first is a piece of metal cut into the shape of a four pointed star. It has extremely sharp edges. It is a throwing star. If you take it, you may throw it at an opponent before a combat. *If you take the star, you may reduce the damage you receive in combat by 5. This is in addition to any other weapons or armour you may have.*

The other item looks merely like a bamboo stick, strange glyphs are carved along one side.

Decide whether to take the throwing star or bamboo stick, and then lead your men to the governor's mansion. Turn to **26**.

52

The guard's eyes widen as they see the seal at the bottom of the parchment. The big one grabs it and pretends to read it. He hands it back to you and salutes. The small one copies the guard and salutes you straight after. They let you on the ship. Turn to **31**.

53

You get to the captain's quarters and head for the desk. Rummaging through the drawers, you find a purse containing 10 pieces of eight (*add 10 pieces of eight to your adventure sheet.*) You also find Blackbeard's log and you turn to the day when your ships hit the reef. It reads:

The plan is all in place now. I have sneaked all the treasure on board the *Skull and Crossbow* and told the idiot navigators on the other two ships to sail them into a reef while me and me true mateys will be celebrating our massive haul. In a day, we will present ourselves to Brandon and offer him half the treasure for complete immunity. Most of me men are too familiar with me to be scared of me and I don't want to have to share such a fine haul with such scurvy dogs. Best to kill them off and start afresh with a crew that really fears my reputation and then become the scourge of the seas without having to worry about the law.

This is fantastic. Blackbeard scuttled two of his ships to take the treasure for himself! He's also in league with the very man he claims to hate. You take this as proof of his treachery. *Add Blackbeard's log to your adventure sheet.*

A harsh voice snaps you out of your train of thought. 'I don't care what the Governor said; I'm helping myself to some gold. After all, he's not going to notice if a little bit goes missing. Hang on. I didn't leave this door ajar...'

The door opens and you see two soldiers standing before you. Before they can react, you push past them and run onto the deck. The jetty has half a dozen soldiers on it, all eager to help themselves to Blackbeard's treasure. They all look at you and yell at you to stop.

If you run across the gang plank and try to force your way through the soldiers turn to **41**. If you jump overboard to escape them turn to **11**, or if you try to escape in a lifeboat turn to **62**.

54

You enjoy a nice relaxing massage before you kick back and take a seat in the invigorating steam room. *Restore 3 health points*. The steam room is empty apart from you and a small man whose eyes dart nervously around. He looks at you, then at the door, then back at you again. He moves so that he is sitting next to you. He then leans in closely so that no one else can hear, even though there is no one else in the room. 'Want some work? Ten pieces of eight for half an hour of keeping your eyes peeled?' He whispers.' If you agree, turn to **44**. If you leave, turn to **58**.

55

After more wandering through the dark forest, you hear the welcome sound of rushing water. Eagerly, you run towards the sound to find a stream. You drink deep of the refreshing clear waters. You also notice a banana tree nearby and have your fill of fruit. *Gain 3 health points*. Satiated and contented, you climb a tree and then, safe from the beasts below, you curl up and go to sleep on a branch. Turn to **97**.

56

Enron, the small, snake like man at the pawn shop will buy things from you. He will also rip you off but if you are desperate, you have no other choice. He will buy the following items:

Tinderbox	1 piece of eight
Waterskin	1 piece of eight
Nautical chart	1 piece of eight
Lucky doubloon	3 pieces of eight
Dagger	1 piece of eight
Cutlass, sword or axe	3 pieces of eight
Clay statuette	2 pieces of eight
Leather armour	3 pieces of eight
Shield	3 pieces of eight
Treasure	25 pieces of eight

The treasure is worth at least twenty times as much as what Enron the pawnbroker is offering. The man is really taking the mick.

When you have finished, you go back to the market square. Turn to **58**.

57

'Shut up Rex.' You hear a man say.

'Where are Geoff and Boris?' Says someone else, another soldier you presume.

'They've gone to help themselves to what they're guarding again. Just let them do it and forget it.'

You hear the men walk away and breathe a sigh of relief.

Turn to **51**.

58

The market square in Port Leyland is a large noisy place full of stalls selling fruit, grain and fish. Many stalls sell wares from all corners of the world – gold and silver jewellery, gems, silk, cloth, exotic clothes and spices. It is also full of many beggars who hassle you and demand money as you try to force your way through the crowds. The beggars are ragged and smelly. Some have deformities which may or may not have been self inflicted to invoke more pity and so get more money. You know that some beggars can give themselves wounds which look like the signs of horrible skin diseases. One beggar has only one eye, another one leg. One beggar has a scar going from his mouth to his eye.

After an hour of exploring this place, you find a few shops and stalls which may be of help to you.

One of them is a fishmonger, the owner of which is a large jolly man who wears a white apron. His warm, friendly, outgoing personality must his antidote to smelling of fish the whole time. He is selling cooked battered fish with small pieces of potato cooked in oil. It is surprisingly tasty. *You can buy a portion of it for 1 piece of eight and sit on the sandy beach eating it. If you do, restore 3 health points. You may only do this once.*

Another shop that catches your eye is the barbers. As well as giving you a pretty nifty haircut, Caralos the barber can perform some basic surgery. He will sew up wounds and set bones for a reasonable price. *You may make use of his services for 3 pieces of eight. If you do, restore 4 health points. You may do this any number of times.*

There are three other places which may be interesting.

If you want to go to the bathhouse, turn to **18**. To visit the armourer, turn to **20**. To visit the pawn shop, turn to **56**. You may make repeat visits to the market. If you have finished shopping, you think about where you can go next. If you go to the docks, turn to **27**. If you find a tavern to relax in, turn to **86**. If you want to find a ship to leave here on, turn to **94**.

59

You give the nautical chart to Blutz, the only pirate in the cell who can read and show him that the reef was on the chart and that Blackbeard ordered you to pick a course to hit the reef.

'I saw ye give the order though, ye landlubber.' Growls Blutz.

'Now that ye mention it,' says a cabin boy 'I did hear the captain telling the navigator on the *Skull and Crossbow* not to do what he was telling you two to do. I thought it was a bit weird at the time.'

This revelation convinces the other pirates of your innocence.

'He's backstabbed us,' shouts Blutz, after looking at the chart. 'He's made a pact with Brandon and thrown us aside!' The rest of the prisoners shout for revenge. You grab the keys and open the cells. You have men to help you kill the captain, but can you get them weapons? You consider your options. If you have the codeword *dealer* in your notes, turn to **39**. If you do not have the codeword *dealer* in your notes, but you do have the codeword *larceny*, turn to **22**. If you have neither of these, the pirates' bravado and machismo disappears and they turn their thoughts to escape, so they all dash down the corridor, including Maze if he is with you. You explore the building alone (turn to **56**).

60

You jump into the cold waters and try to swim around the boat so that you can climb on without the guards seeing you. It is hard going and you and your possessions get wet. *If you have a nautical chart or a forgery, the ink runs and they become ruined. Cross them off your equipment list.* If you have 80 or more health points, you manage to climb on without any trouble. Turn to **31**. Otherwise, you try to climb on but fall in the water, exhausted. You manage to swim back to the docks. Turn to **27**.

61

You are resigned to your fate. Then you are surprised to see the familiar face of Maze. He is standing before you outside the cell, dressed as a guard. 'I couldn't leave my shipmates after all. They owe me too much money and they won't pay up if they're in jail will they? I got a job as a guard with the aim of breaking them out. But guess who else is here? Blackbeard. He's a guest of the governor. I knew he sold us out.' He says. He takes a key out of his pocket and unlocks the door. You search the place and Maze accompanies you (*make a note that he is with you*). Turn to **80**.

62

The guards run after you as you jump into the lifeboat. It is being held up by some rope. The soldiers are closing in with their vicious weapons and more vicious grins. If you have a dagger, axe, sword or cutlass, you cut the rope on the lifeboat and drop into the water with a thud. You row away, giving the odd hand signal to the soldiers on the ship. Eventually, you land some distance up the shore. You head back into town. You have caused a lot of havoc here. *Make a note that you may not return to the docks again.* You think about where in town you could go next. If you go to the market, turn to **58**. If you find a tavern to relax in, turn to **86**. If you want to find a ship to leave here on, turn to **94**.

If you do not have a sharp weapon, the guards jump in with you. You struggle, but there are too many of them. They pin you to the ground. Then you feel a sharp pain in your head. *Lose 3 health points and turn to 3.*

63

Dammit! The ship sails by. You float on. After one day, you have run out of water and the sun is beating down on you. However, you see an island in the distance. After a night of fitful sleep on the raft, you start to paddle as fast as you can towards the island. It is not too strenuous with two people and the supply of food and water to keep you going so you make it to the shore quite soon. You then walk along the coast until you come to the port of Leyland. You must be on the isle of Carab.

When you get to Port Leyland, Ben shakes your hand and bids you farewell.

'I'm going to find some people still Loyal to Baron Caldoss and offer my services again. Five years has not dulled my desire for revenge.' With that, he walks off into the crowd.

You are exhilarated by your return to civilisation (*gain 1 fate point.*) You think about what you are going to do with yourself. Turn to **47**.

64

The whole place reeks of corruption. You are standing on a marble floor and looking into a huge hall, held up with marble pillars. The walls are also made of marble and on them hang several portraits and silver mirrors. There are plinths dotted around the room on which rest busts, golden chalices and crowns. There is a long highly polished mahogany table in the centre of the room with several chairs laid around it. Upon the table are foods of all descriptions resting on aluminium platters. At one end of the table, you see two figures. One of them, you do not recognise. He is a man in his forties wearing a naval uniform. He carries himself with an air of command and dignity. You see that there is a large furry white cat sitting on his lap which he strokes leisurely. The other figure is Blackbeard! That son of a biscuit eater! He has pink candles in his beard instead of matches which means that he must be celebrating something. He and the other man are talking about the state of the weather. Blackbeard then sees you.

'Me hearty! You must have had some trials and tribulations. I thought you would be sharkbait. Let me introduce Governor Brandon.' He points at the other man. If you are with pirates, turn to **7**. If you are with rebels, turn to **89**. If you are alone, Blackbeard continues 'However, it's time you died like you should have done on the island.' He says, matter of factly. He pulls out a pistol and shoots you in the head.

65

You descend upon the startled sailor thirsty for his blood. He desperately tries to defend himself by pummelling you with his fists. *In this combat, lose 30 health points.* When he is lying motionless and dead on the floor, you search the body to find a tinderbox and a waterskin. *Add the tinderbox and waterskin to your adventure sheet.* You decide that you are not hungry enough to eat him, so you find a tree, climb up it and fall into an exhausted slumber. The next day, you get up and think about how you are going to get off the island. If you go back to the beach to see what's going on, turn to **10**. If you start to collect materials to make a raft, turn to **29**.

66

You try to convince the pirates that Blackbeard ordered you all to sail into the reef and that it was him that they should be blaming, but they just carry on their jeers. Then Maze pipes up.

'He ordered me to do it as well. He knew there was a reef there but he stole the chart and sent us to crash into the reef. He's the one that got you in this mess!'

'Now that ye mention it,' says a cabin boy 'I did hear the captain telling the navigator on the *Skull and Crossbow* not to do what he was telling you two to do. I thought it was a bit weird at the time.'

This revelation convinces the other pirates of your innocence.

'He's backstabbed us! He's made a pact with Brandon and thrown us aside!'" Shouts Blutz, the second mate on the *Pan and Crocodile*. The rest of the prisoners shout for revenge. You grab the keys and open the cells. You have men to help you kill the captain, but can you get them weapons? You consider your options. If you have the codeword *dealer* in your notes, turn to **39**. If you do not have the codeword *dealer* in your notes, but you do have the codeword *larceny*, turn to **22**. If you have neither of these, the pirates' bravado and machismo disappears and they turn their thoughts to escape, so they all dash down the corridor, including Maze if he is with you. You explore the building alone (turn to **56**).

67

You wait at the burnt out husk of a church. Eventually, Corbett appears with a score of men, all armed with swords. You walk through the streets under cover of darkness before you come to a government building held up by pillars. One man gets a key from his pocket and opens the main door. A soldier comes to the door and before he can make a sound, he is knocked out by a sword pommel. You enter the anteroom. Through the open door before you is a small quad. You could go left and go through a corridor. If you want to go through the quad, turn to **32**. If you go through the corridors, turn to **82**.

68

You stumble through the jungle, searching for a safe and suitable tree for your rest. You come to a small shack. Outside it is a plaque that says the *Furtuskewys*. You remember that this ship was wrecked about five years ago. You search the area, but do not find any sign of living creatures. Maybe it was built by the crew who were then rescued. You go inside the hut. Searching around, you find nothing so you go to sleep.

You are awoken a few minutes later by something touching your face. You open your eyes to find yourself looking into the eyes of a monkey. Seeing you awake, it squeals in fright and runs away to the leg that you can now see. You look up to see that the leg belongs to a man in ragged clothing. He smiles at you. 'Ben Monday's the name. What are you doing here?'

You tell him that you were being pursued by Governor Brandon's men and ran aground. When he hears the name Brandon, he spits.

'Brandon's a dog,' he shouts. 'He's the reason why I'm here! Five years ago, Port Leyland was governed by Baron Caldoss, a member of the royal family, the rightful rulers of Guatam. However, the East Sea Company wanted more power and paid people to cause havoc and disquiet in the city and make the baron look like an incompetent ruler. Those dogs are in the militia now. They should've been keelhauled. The people demanded that the baron be deposed for a better ruler, and Brandon kindly offered his services. We resisted, but the baron was exiled. As soon as Brandon became ruler, the disorder stopped because he was the dog in charge of the people who had started it. He put his cronies in charge of the city and the sent his men through the streets, arresting and executing so called followers of Caldoss. Most of us had

left at the time, so dozens of innocents were killed in a public show to spread fear amongst the people. He now holds the city under an iron fist and its people are virtual slaves to the East Sea Trading Company. I was on a ship of people loyal to the baron and we got caught in a storm and marooned. My companions were either killed or captured when one of Brandon's ships landed here a year ago but I still want to get back and wrangle the neck of the scurvy dog.'

'Why didn't you just build a raft and escape?' You ask.

'I tried to build a raft, but I am not a sailor or a shipwright. I am a hunter. My raft fell apart in the sea and I had to swim three miles back. I almost died and had no heart to build another raft after that. A sailor type like you should have no trouble, through.'

He's right. You have been marooned before and had to build a raft to get off that island after 'the incident'. Another pair of hands will be a great help in getting a raft built. If you agree to help him get off the island, turn to **19**. If you refuse, turn to **99**.

69

You walk up the guards and bid them a pleasant day before you head butt one in the face. You turn to fight the other one, but he rings a bell and half a dozen men beat you to the ground and drag you to gaol. *Lose 10 health points.* Turn to **3**.

70

Bullets fly through the air and soldiers and pirates fall, but you and your group come off the worst as you have no muskets of your own. Blackbeard pulls out a metal ball with a piece of string on it. He lights the string and throws it towards you. There is an explosion, a blinding light and searing heat. Then nothing.

71

You manage to find some rope and tie together the bits of wood to make a raft. After half a day of hard work, you manage to finish it and set out. You spend the day paddling and then rest under the stars. The next sunrise, you drink some water from the waterskin and then notice land on the horizon. You both need to paddle frantically to get there (*lose 2 health points.*) You reach it by midday. You walk along the coast before reaching the city of Port Leyland.

Once you are inside the city, Maze shakes you by the hand.

'I'll be looking for an honest ship that wants a navigator.' He tells you. 'It seems that even when you're a pirate, you're still at the mercy of pirates!'

You ask him what he means.

'I think Blackbeard sunk us deliberately. He's no landlubber and it's too much of a coincidence that he and his cronies escaped. A wise man once said to me "Never ascribe to incompetence what can be ascribed to malice."'

'You think that's true?'

'I've got no idea what it means. It just sounds good.'

And with that, Maze disappears into the streets.

You are exhilarated by your return to civilisation (*gain 1 fate point.*) You think about what you will do with yourself now. Turn to **47**.

72

The nunchaku hit you with dazzling speed, sending you flying back. The ninja jumps towards you. You do your best to defend yourself against this trained assassin, a pirate's most dangerous enemy and one of the deadliest things in the world. *In this combat lose 95 health points.* Turn to **9**.

73

You give the nautical chart to Blutz, the only pirate in the cell who can read and show him that the reef was on the chart and that Blackbeard ordered you to pick a course to hit the reef.

'I saw ye give the order though, ye landlubber.' Says Blutz. Maze pipes up.

'He ordered me to do it as well. He knew there was a reef there but he stole the chart and sent us to crash into the reef. He's the one that got you in this mess!' Maze's testimony seems to work.

'He's backstabbed us,' shouts Blutz, after looking at the chart. 'He's made a pact with Brandon and thrown us aside!' The rest of the prisoners shout for revenge. You grab the keys and open the cells. You have men to help you kill the captain, but can you get them weapons? You consider your options. If you have the codeword *dealer* in your notes, you may turn to **39**. If you do not have the codeword *dealer* in your notes or you do not wish to turn to **39**, but you do have the codeword *larceny*, turn to **22**. If you have neither of these, the pirates' bravado and machismo disappears and they turn their thoughts to escape, so they all dash down the corridor, including Maze if he is with you. You explore the building alone (turn to **56**).

74

You have no means to buy more weapons. You curse and shake your fist to the gods. As you do, the clay statuette falls out of your pouch and smashes all over the floor. As well as bits of clay, you find rings and gems. Someone must have hidden them inside the clay statuette. *Cross the clay statuette off your equipment list. Do not add the treasure to your equipment list as you are just about to spend it.* Turn to **48**.

75

Your quarters are below the deck. You run through the lurching, creaking ship and burst into your room. It is in chaos. You have to force the door as your wardrobe has fallen over and is blocking the door. Your chest has tipped over and scattered your possessions all over the place. You frantically toss aside your bandanas, tall black boots and frilly shirts to find a gold coin lying on the floor. It is your lucky doubloon. *Add the lucky doubloon to your equipment list.* The ship lurches again. You can now see the sea in your porthole so you decide that it is best to quit this place. You can run to the deck and jump overboard (turn to **33** if you have the codeword *booty* on your adventure sheet. Turn to **50** if you do not.) Or you can try to grab some treasure from the treasure hold if you have not already done so (turn **25**.)

76

You resign yourself to your fate. After one hour, the jailor, a hunchback comes into your cell with a jug. You think it is water and hold your hand out for it. An evil grin crosses the hunchback's face and instead, he flings the contents into your face. It is urine and excrement from other prisoners. It stinks. Howling in laughter, he leaves, only to forget to take the key out of the lock! When he is gone, you open the door and plan your next move. You search the place, turn to **80**.

77

You tell the man that you want to help him, but he is not buying it 'How do I know that you're not one of them?' He asks. You have no way of answering him, especially since you have no idea what 'one of them' is so you give up and leave him to his paranoid proselytising. The burly sailor has left now. You leave the tavern and go somewhere else. *You may not return to the tavern.* You think about where in town you could go next. If you decide to go to the market square, turn to **58**. If you decide to go to the docks, turn to **27**. If you want to find a ship to leave here on, turn to **94**.

78

You and your crew have shared many dangers and celebrations for you to leave them now. They also owe you a lot of money. Determined to save your shipmates, you set out to the governor's large decadent residence. The gaol is beneath it. You and your men head to the governor's residence. The building reeks of decadence. At the top of the white marble staircase is a large façade held up by white ion pillars. The front door is made from heavy oak which must have been imported from hundreds of miles away. Statues of lions and gargoyles stand on the roof, warning intruders not to enter. In front of the door are two guards. If you have a forgery, turn to **83**. If you try to sneak in another way, turn to **34**. If you attack the guards, turn to **69**. If you give up, you think about where in town you could go next. If you want to go to the docks to find a ship to set sail on, turn to **27**. If you want to go to the market and shops, turn to **58**. If you want to go and relax in the inn, turn to **86**. If you want to find a ship to leave here on, turn to **94**.

79

You spend three hours performing back-breaking work involving lugging crates and other items onto a ship. After this time, the skipper gives you some coins. *Lose 3 health points and add 3 pieces of eight to your adventure sheet.* You then think about what else you can do. There is no more work today. *You may not turn to this paragraph again.* If you try to break into the *Skull and Crossbow* turn to **4**. If you want to find a boat and sail off to new lands, turn to **94**. If you go to another part of town, you think about where in town you could go next. If you go to the marketplace, turn to **58**. If you go to a tavern to relax, turn to **86**. If you want to find a ship to leave here on, turn to **94**.

80

You sneak through the labyrinthine corridors. They all seem empty and silent. Then you hear several loud, angry and familiar voices. Following the sound takes you to a flight of stairs leading down. There is a disgusting smell coming from down there. You go down the stairs to find yourself in a prison. Cells line the corridor. The ones along this corridor are empty, but you can hear voices a little further down and to the left. You go down and turn left to come face to face with your crewmates arguing loudly over who got them into this mess. They see you

and start to jeer and spit at you as they think that they got marooned and caught because of your terrible navigation. You see the key for the cell hanging on a nearby wall, but you are in no mood to free them unless you can get them on side. If you have the captain's log, turn to **8**. If you do not have the log, but if Maze is with you and you have a nautical chart, turn to **73**. If you do not have the chart, but if Maze is with you and you wish to spend a fate point, turn to **66**. If Maze is not with you, but you have a nautical chart and you wish to spend a fate point, turn to **59**. If none of these apply to you, you can't convince them and, after giving them a few hand gestures, you leave them to their fate. Turn to **13**.

81

You manage to get the signal fire burning, but will someone come to get you? If you spend a fate point, you see the ship sail closer to the island then drop anchor. Turn to **21**. If you cannot or will not spend a fate point, the ship sails on by. Return to **10** to build your own raft.

82

You lead ten men through the corridors. You walk straight into a group of soldiers led by a heavily scarred man. Before they see you, they run out of a door into the square and attack the rebels there. You and your men surprise the soldiers and cut them down. You fight the scarred captain of the militia. He wields his sword with great skill. *In this combat, lose 50 health points.* If you win, you look around to find that a dozen of your companions have survived and all of the soldiers are dead. Corbett, however, did not survive. The rebels look to you. You fall back on your pirate training and order them to raid the place. You may pick up a sword if you do not have one (*put it in your weapons section. It reduces damage dealt to you in combat by 10*). Your thorough search takes you to a study where you find the captain's log book. In it, you find an interesting entry for today:

More soldiers sent to the Governor's house. He is selling the arch-pirate Blackbeard immunity from the law in return for a large pile of dirty gold. I don't trust him. He's a pirate and wanted for dozens of crimes in Port Leyland alone but I have been ordered not to touch him or even his men. This situation is disgusting. Ever since Brandon's been in charge, I've been ordered to turn a blind eye to so much criminal activity, it makes me sick. The only thing I'm supposed to do now is track down this heavily armed force of rebels, but it's rubbish. From what I can see, it's a few dozen unarmed and poor dissidents. However, the Governor's rule is making people more sympathetic towards them. I don't know how long I can keep order in this way.

After reading this, you gather your rebels and tell them what you have found. They gather round you and tell you that you have to lead the attack on the governor's mansion tonight. 'Our leader is dead.' Says one rebel 'And you killed the captain of the guard. Without you, our cause would have been lost. You will lead us to slay that corrupt puppet of the Secret Merchant Elite!' The rebels cheer. The look in their eyes makes you think that refusing would be very dangerous. You have become embroiled in a rebellion you had nothing to do with. However, it seems that your treacherous ex captain is in league with this governor so it could benefit you quite a lot. You have men to help you break into the mansion, but are you well armed enough? If you have the codeword *dealer* on your adventure sheet, turn to **14**. If you do not have the codeword *dealer*, but you do have the codeword *larceny* on your adventure sheet, turn to **22**. If you have neither of these, you chance an attack on the governor as you are. Turn to **26**.

83

You show the guards the document as you walk past them. They notice the seal and snap to attention. Turn to **80**.

84

You open the bottle. There are several sheets of paper. Most of them have legal gibberish written on them, but you also find a letter. You read it.

Dear Galron,

If you are reading this, I am dead. I have given up hope on ever leaving this island. Food is scarce and there are many dangers here. However, I want you to carry on the fight against Governor Brandon. That dog needs to be taught a lesson. In my last act of defiance, I have left you my house and my fortune. I'm sure Brandon will find some legal loophole to get it and the thought of that riles me. I'm sure will you need it as I expect that Brandon has found a way of seizing your house and money. I'm sure you will not go down without a fight, though. We have been comrades in arms for many years and have shared many a peril. I remember how you got that scar from your mouth to your eye when we battled Brandon's soldiers to break out our comrades. We almost had the Secret Merchant Elite, but they turned the people against us. I'm sure that public opinion will be turned in our favour when the people are bled dry by the greed of the corrupt puppet masters.

All the best,

Baron Caldoss

You put the documents back in the bottle. The spider must have killed the baron before he had a chance to cast off the bottle. You have no idea who the Secret Merchant Elite are, but this Baron Caldoss, God rest his soul, sounded like just the man you would have liked to rob. Maybe if you can find Galron and give him the letters, you can have a share of the booty. You put the scrolls back into the bottle and stow it away in your pouch.

If you come across someone you think is Galron, deduct 20 from the paragraph you are on and turn to that new paragraph. The correct paragraph will instruct you to cross the bottle off your equipment list.

You think about how you are going to get off the island. If you go back to the beach to see what's going on, turn to **10**. If you start to collect materials to make a raft, turn to **29**.

85

Blackbeard pulls out a metal ball with a string protruding from it. He lights the string with one of the pink candles in his beard, then you fire. Blackbeard is sent flying across the room, still holding the ball. He crashes to the floor. He looks at you and then the ball in his hand explodes with a blinding flash of light. You can feel the heat from where you stand. Once the smoke and light has cleared, you see that a mêlée has erupted. The surviving pirates and soldiers are locked in combat. You and your men charge into the fray. Governor Brandon shouts for help but is cut down quickly. You launch yourself at a soldier. A quick blow to the head sends him crashing to the floor.

Then the battle stops. A pirate turns around and stares at the figure in the doorway gaping. One by one, the combatants follow him. When they see the figure at the doorway, their jaws

drop. You wonder what all the fuss is about and turn around. You see the robed figure and a shiver runs down your spine.

'Run!' Shouts a soldier and every soul, no matter what his alignment, forgets the battle and rushes for the exit. Before you can follow them, you feel a rough hand grab your leg. The one armed, half dead Blackbeard is determined for revenge.

'I might be sharkbait, but if I go down to Davy Jones' locker, so will you!' He gasps, before collapsing dead to the floor, still holding your leg in an iron grip.

It is too late to flee now. The figure has its eyes solely on you. You just have time to wriggle free of Blackbeard's hand before facing Governor Brandon's secret weapon.

Turn to 36.

86

You have a nose for a good grog fest and eventually find yourself standing outside the 'Cow and Anchor' tavern. You can hear the sounds of revelry inside. Outside the tavern, you see three pirates passed out on the ground. Another man is standing by the door. His face is partially obscured by the hood of a black cloak. He seems very shady and is therefore your kind of person. The man looks at you from under his hood. 'You look like someone who wants to go places. You want to make that easier?' The shady man offers you a forgery of an official document stating that you are under the direct orders of the Queen. You can buy it for 30 pieces of eight. *If you do, add the forgery to your equipment list and subtract 30 pieces of eight from your adventure sheet.*

You enter the tavern and you are greeted by a crowd of all kinds of people. In the corner stands a large man who sullenly stares at the various guests. You notice him slip what looks like mustard into someone's flagon. A man drinks from the flagon and then spits out the contents in disgust. The large man laughs heartily. Two pirates in the corner are having a competition to see who can say 'Arr' in the most pirate like way. Several people are lying face down on the floor in pools of their own sick and excrement. Just a normal day in a Port Leyland tavern. *If you wish, you can buy a flagon of grog and a fish stew for 1 piece of eight. If you do, you can restore 3 health points. You may only do this once.* Two people in the tavern catch your attention. One is an earnest young man who is talking passionately to a throng of other young people. The second is a burley sailor, swilling grog and talking loudly to his shipmates. Do you want to talk to the earnest man (turn to 5), the burley sailor (turn to 43) or do you want to leave the tavern (you may not return here). You think about where in town you could go next. If you go to the marketplace, turn to 58. If you go to the docks, turn to 27. If you want to find a ship to leave here on, turn to 94.

87

The sight before your eyes in the hold is wondrous. It is full to bursting with piles of gold and silver coins, jewelled rings, gold necklaces, aluminium plates and cutlery on a marble table, paintings, rolls of silk, antique books and ornaments, gems and many other treasures. This is all the booty that Blackbeard had collected and stored in his three ships. Except that it is all in one ship now and it must have been moved here before the other two sank. That's a big coincidence, you think, sarcastically. However, you don't think for too long as there is booty to be had. You start to fill your pockets with a nice collection of treasure. You pick up several pouches of coins as well as a few nice rings and gems that you can fit into your pockets. *Add 25 pieces of eight to your adventure sheet and add treasure to your equipment list.*

A harsh voice snaps you out of your looting spree. 'I don't care what the Governor said; I'm helping myself to some gold. After all, he's not going to notice if a little bit goes missing.' The door opens and you see two soldiers standing before you. Before they can react, you push past them and run onto the deck. The jetty has half a dozen soldiers on it, all eager to help themselves to Blackbeard's treasure. They all look at you. 'Stop!' They say as one.

If you run across the gang plank and try to force your way through the soldiers turn to **41**. If you jump overboard to escape them turn to **11**, or if you try to escape in a lifeboat turn to **62**.

88

Grimacing, you gently tip toe through the webs and bones. You kick them away in the hope of finding anything that might be useful. You notice that there are several human bones and skulls. Maybe they were a party of explorers. You notice that their bags and backpacks are lying around too. You realise that whatever lives here has left these items untouched. You can look for items, but how long dare you stay? *Add at least one of the following items to your adventure sheet, but you may add as many as you like. However, the more items you pick up, the longer you have to stay in this place of death. The items are: a dagger (put it in your weapon section. It reduces damage dealt to you in combat by 5), a bottle containing several scrolls of paper, and a waterskin.* Write down the items you take on your adventure sheet and turn to **6**.

89

'Come back to see your old captain have you?' Taunts Blackbeard.

'You scumbag!' You shout. 'You sold us down the reef!'

'You can't blame a man with all that treasure in the hold can you? If there are more of you, then I get less. Do the math!'

'That I can forgive! But then you joined forces with that Landlubber!' You point accusingly at Brandon. Your men jeer at them both. One of the rebels pipes up.

'You're a scumbag, Brandon! You sold this city to a bunch of fat, money grabbing merchants!'

'But they are so much classier than stinky rebels. All you people do is look for someone to blame. It doesn't matter who's at the top, you'll want them dead. If your own leader becomes Governor, you'll go from cheers to jeers in an instant. You'll stab him in the back a second later.'

'You don't like backstabbing, governor?' Asks Blackbeard.

'Not when it's on me, no.' Replies the Governor.

'Then you won't like this then!'

With that, a dozen pirates rush into the dining room, brandishing muskets. Blackbeard pulls out a pistol and points it at Brandon's head. The cat yowls in alarm and fear. It jumps off the governor's lap and runs off down the corridor.

'It's a trap!' Shouts the Governor.

A dozen soldiers rush into the room, each of them also brandishing a musket. Blackbeard looks around for a moment, but that gives Brandon enough time to pull out his own pistol. Blackbeard looks back only to find the pistol pointed at his head.

'You don't think I would make such an underhand deal without insurance would you? If you live long enough, I may even have to set my own anti-pirate secret weapon on you!'

Soldiers have muskets trained on pirates. Pirates have muskets trained on soldiers. Both sides have muskets trained on you. It's a moment of unbearable tension. Then someone fires...

If you have the codeword bang on your adventure sheet, turn to 42. If not, turn to 70.

90

Cautiously, you pick your way through the jungle and back to the beach only to see all of the crew being rounded up into jollyboats by several Guatam soldiers all dressed in leather armour and armed with spears, swords and bows. One of their ships has weighed anchor just outside the reef. Relieved that several people who want to kill you are being shipped off the island, you stay and look a little longer to see if they will send out search parties. It's no gain if the people who want to kill you are replaced by other people who want to kill you for other reasons. However, once the soldiers have herded the pirates into the boats, they waste no time in getting on themselves and pushing out towards their ships which have dropped anchor near the reef. Even if your ex shipmates did tell them about you, they don't seem eager to tarry here. At first you feel relieved but then you feel disconcerted. You thought that the soldiers did not know about the reef. Mindful that someone with a good telescope may see you, you duck back into the jungle and walk deeper into the dark tropical forest so that no one will spot you. You then notice the navigator of the *Pan and Crocodile*, Maze. He is a small man, wearing a leather jacket and a red bandana. He is looking bewildered and lost. He is unarmed. If you ambush him, turn to 65. If you talk to him, turn to 40. Otherwise, you can leave him alone and look for food and shelter (turn to 55).

91

Another soldier appears in the doorway and immediately sees the scene. He calls out for backup and a score of soldiers descend upon you and your rebels. You fight valiantly, slaying dozens of soldiers with your muskets and desperate resistance, but the soldiers don't stop coming. Eventually, one of them slices your head off and your body collapses to the floor.

92

It's a long shot, but you try the 'Jim trick.' The idea of this trick works on the idea that everyone alive knows someone called Jim and you will pretend to be mutual friends by making generic descriptions of this Jim. It usually gets you off the hook with most militia types.

You look at the men as if you have seen them before.

'Hang on, you say. Do you know Jim?' The guards stop and think.

'Yeah, Jim Hawkins down in the Anchor tavern?'

'Yeah, the big funny guy. Likes sticking mustard in the ale.'

'That's Jim.'

'I'm the guy he got stuck on the island with.'

'Really?' Asked the guards in unison. They shake you by the hand. 'Nice to meet you at last, sir. Jim speaks highly of you. Did he send you on board?'

'That's it.' You say. 'The guards make way for you. You go up the gangplank then stop and turn back.'

'And if you see Jim, tell him ooogityboogityboo. He'll know what it means.'

You leave the guards and walk on board. Turn to **31**.

93

Your crew are well versed in burglaries and other underhand tricks. You hear a voice outside shout 'Stop! Thief! He's got my money!' The soldiers immediately dash outside the warehouse. As soon as they go, you and your men head towards the window and all climb out. Your lookout has gone, but he returns a couple of minutes later and explains that he caused the alarm and ran off, giving the soldiers something to chase. He managed to get away from them and left them looking for the nonexistent thief. You congratulate him and examine your haul. Turn to **51**.

94

You find a merchantman captain who is looking for hands and you offer your services. The next day, you set out on a trip to get some salt to bring back and sell. Apart from getting off the island, you haven't achieved much. Blackbeard is still out there and you dread the chance that you may have to face him. You didn't get masses of treasure here either. Your adventure here has ended as you put your old life of piracy and excitement behind and start the dull monotonous life of an honest sailor, regretting what you never did... (In case it's not clear, this is not a successful ending, you QUITTER!)

95

You do not have any treasure, but the cabin boy notices that you have a clay statuette. 'Hey that's mine,' he exclaims. 'Smash it!' You are a bit sceptical at first, but throw it to the floor. The statuette smashes sending bits of clay all over the floor, but amongst the clay slide gems and rings. 'I helped myself to some booty from that merchantman we raided a month back,' explains the cabin boy. 'When we landed, I paid a potter to put the treasure in the statuette.'

'That's reprehensible, sneaky and brilliant!' You reply, ruffling the cabin boy's hair.

Do not bother to add the treasure to your adventure sheet as you are about to spend it. Turn to **48**.

96

You and Maze go back to the deck where some of the sailors are playing a game with a wooden ball and wooden pins. You join in. Within a few hours, you get to Port Leyland.

Once you are inside the city, Maze shakes you by the hand.

'I'll be looking for an honest ship that wants a navigator.' He tells you. 'It seems that even when you're a pirate, you're still at the mercy of pirates!'

You ask him what he means.

'I think Blackbeard sunk us deliberately. He's no landlubber and it's too much of a coincidence that he and his cronies escaped. A wise man once said to me "Never ascribe to incompetence what can be ascribed to malice."'

'You think that's true?'

'I've got no idea what it means. It just sounds good.'

And with that, Maze disappears into the streets.

You are exhilarated by your return to civilisation (*gain 1 fate point*.) You think about what you will do with yourself now. Turn to **47**.

97

You wake with the dawn. The Sun is already high up in the sky. You are sweating in the humid tropical heat as you take your first good look at the rainforest you are trapped in. Tall thin trunks rise upwards, supporting the canopy above you. The undergrowth is thick with bushes and ferns. You can hear the chorus of the animals in the forest – the squawk of the birds, the croak of the frogs and the chirp of the insects. It paints a beautiful picture but actually being here makes you feel sweaty, scared and sick. You want to get off this island as fast as you can. If you have some scrolls in a bottle, turn to **84**. If not, you get up and think about how you are going to get off the island. If you go back to the beach to see what's going on, turn to **10**. If you start to collect materials to make a raft, turn to **29**.

98

You go back to the deck where some of the sailors are playing a game with a wooden ball and wooden pins. You join in. Ben spends a lot of time washing and shaving, enjoying the simple luxuries of civilisation. When this clean shaven man in brand new clothes steps before you, you can barely recognise him. Within a few hours, you get to Port Leyland.

When you are in the city, Ben shakes you by the hand.

'I'm going to find some people still loyal to Baron Caldoss and offer my services again. Five years has not dulled my desire for revenge.' With that, he walks off into the crowd.

You are exhilarated to be back to civilisation (*gain 1 fate point*). You think about what you will do next. Turn to **47**.

99

The man screams in rage and frustration. He pulls out an axe and swings it in your direction. You must fight him. *In this combat, lose 35 health points*. You search the body and find a tinderbox, a waterskin and an axe. *You may add the tinderbox, waterskin and/or axe to your adventure sheet. The axe reduces damage dealt to you in combat by 10*. You sleep in the hut. You wake up just before the dawn and you think about what to do next. If you go back to the beach to see what's going on, turn to **10**. If you start to collect materials to make a raft, turn to **29**.

You shoot the governor and hear a scream of pain over the battle. However, your feeling of triumph is stifled when you see what your old captain is holding. In his hand is a metal ball. Protruding from the ball is a length of string that Blackbeard has just lit with one of the candles in his beard. He hurls it in your direction. There is a flash of light and the last thing you feel is an unbearable heat as you and your men are engulfed in the flame of the explosion. The last thing you hear is Blackbeard's manic cackle.

Now that you have finished...

If you have got to one of the two successful endings (94 is not a successful ending), you can try the game again, looking for the other successful ending. However, if you have found both of them, why don't you set yourself the following challenges?

The 'Ghandi' Challenge

Finish the game without a single combat (wherever it says *in this combat, lose x health points*.)

The 'you make your own luck in this game' challenge

Finish the game without spending a single fate point.

The 'skin of your teeth' challenge

Finish the game with 10 or fewer health points and 0 fate points.

The 'rich' challenge

Finish the game with at least 50 pieces of eight and two lots of treasure.

The 'Warrior' challenge

Win at least 3 combats (wherever it says *in this combat, lose x health points*).

The reference quiz

I have planted some references to TV shows, films and other media in this book. See if you can answer the following questions on them. They are in reference order, starting with the introduction. You can try them while playing through the book or just look through all the references. Do what you want; I'm not looking over your shoulder. Or am I? Made you look. If you feel like wasting even more time, email me the answers on sl1605@gmail.com. There is no prize, but I might send you a congratulatory email. Enjoy!

- 1) The combat examples include an encounter where a character has to fight an animal that seems out of place on a tropical island. What animal is it and what TV show set mainly on an island does this refer to?
- 2) In the background, there is a ship called *The Pan and Crocodile*. Which fictional pirate captain was the enemy of someone called Pan and a crocodile?
- 3) Name a paragraph (there are 2) that contains a famous three word line from *Return of the Jedi*? Which character from that film said that exact line?

2010 Windhammer Prize for Short Gamebook Fiction

- 4) Name a paragraph where someone called Blutz is mentioned. Which game book contains a character called Blutz?
- 5) Name a paragraph that mentions a character called Ben Monday. This name is based on two fictional characters who have been marooned on islands. One is called Ben and the other one is named after another day of the week. Which two characters are they?
- 6) Which paragraph has the 'Jim trick'? In which Canadian TV show does one of the characters try the 'Jim trick' on some cops?