

The Treasure of Captain Albatross

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BACKGROUND

This one shot was made for Dungeons and Dragons 5th edition and was run for a level 5 party.

Length: 1 session

Content Warnings: Execution, Drowning, Manipulation, Possession

BACKSTORY

Water covers the face of the world. Land is a rare sight, and what land exists is spread out between island archipelagoes. Death is shared between two jealous sisters. Lanme Lanmo, the death of the sea, and Peyi Lanmo, death of the land. All those who die at sea belong to Lanme, and all those who die on land belong to Peyi. In a world of water, it is much more common to die at sea; the majority of souls end up going to Lanme. Over the aeons, this has made Peyi very jealous of her sister. This jealousy overflows into rage when Lanme takes the human Sorra, a mortal, as a lover, protecting her soul from death altogether. With hate in her heart, Peyi plots to steal the soul of her sister's lover by tricking or threatening Sorra's former crew into helping her find and steal Sorra's soul, thus depriving Lanme of not only another soul but the soul of a beloved partner.

PLAYER INFO

The players were all once a part of the crew of the Horizon, a legendary pirate ship under the command of Captain Sorra Albatross. For many years, the crew sailed together, and their exploits made them all very rich. But Captain Albatross found a treasure of another kind. One night, as the Horizon lay at harbor near Fjell Island, Captain Albatross had her crew lock her with a stone Sanctum, using their blood to seal the heavy stone door. With their captain's mysterious departure, the crew of the Horizon soon disbanded, and all went their own ways in life. Each year, they come together to celebrate their adventure together and reminisce about old times. During one such reunion, things take a dark turn as Death herself appears, seeking the location of Captain Albatross's treasure.

CHARACTERS

Captain Sorra Albatross

- A human with platinum hair and a red leather cloak.

- Former Captain of the Horizon.
- The party members sailed with Sorra for many years, and she made them all very rich.
- During her travels, she fell in love with Lanme, the sea death. A being that embodies death at sea. In time, Lanme came to know her and fell for her as well.
- A bargain was struck between Sorra and Lanme. Sorra's soul would belong to Lanme, and in exchange, Sorra would take command of a ghost ship so she could sail the seas forever and be with the one she loved for eternity.
- With the help of the first mate, she sealed the bargain within a shrine to Lanme built within Fjell Island.
- Her soul is locked away on Fjell Island. Her form aboard the ghost ship is unkillable and eternal so long as her soul remains safe.

First mate Gason Uladen

- First mate of Sorra Albatross.
- She was the only one whom Sorra trusted with the truth of her fate.
- He was entrusted with the map to Fjell Island in case he ever needed to make contact with Sorra.
- He was killed by Peyi Lanmo, who stole the map to Fjell Island.
- He has a ship called the Emperor's Scourge docked near his bungalow, where he was murdered.

Peyi Lanmo

- The Death of the Land
- A tall, bald woman with dark skin and piercing golden eyes.
- Peyi is the jealous sister of Lanme. Together, these two sisters are the two deaths of this world. Peyi takes the souls of all who die on land.
- This is largely a water world, so more souls depart at sea than on land, so Peyi is much weaker than her sister Lanme.
- She is jealous of Lanme and enraged that Lanme would give a mortal (Sorra) a form of eternal life. She seeks to find the souls that Sorra locked away on Fjell Island and kill her, thus depriving her sister of the one she loves.

Lanme Lanmo

- The Death of the Sea
- Takes the form of an immense kraken, protecting Fjell and the soul of her lover.
- Sister to Peyi

Dhal

- A siren that acts as a guardian for Sorra's soul.
- Her home is Fjell Island, and she agreed to protect the soul as long as the kraken of Lanme protected Fjell.

EVENTS

The Drowning Fish, Taverna and Sleeping Rope

The sun is setting as the party gathers at a taverna on the beach to celebrate their reunion. The party has been invited to this specific Taverna by their former first mate, Gason. When the party arrives, their host is nowhere to be found. Jenna, the mermaid barkeep, greets them all warmly from a raised pool of water behind the bar and offers them a selection of drinks on the house, telling them Gason be along shortly. *This is a good time for the players to get to know each other's characters and form dynamics among the former crew. Encourage the telling of tall tales from their time together.* As the evening wanes on, Gason never arrives. As the sun sets into the sea, a mysterious figure enters the taverna.

The Arrival of Peyi Lanmo

Peyi presents herself as an enterprising pirate in search of treasure. She claims to have a blood-stained map to an Island with riches beyond the party's wildest dreams. Gems of everlasting life, gold beyond measure, pearls the size of coconuts, the sort of tall tales that might get a pirate crew interested. If the crew is willing to buy this lie, then plans are made to sail on the morrow.

If the crew does not buy this lie and presses Peyi for more information, she holds onto the facade until she is certain the party has lost complete faith in her story. At this point, she reveals her true nature as the Death of the Land and demands passage aboard their ship to Fjell Island or threatens to kill all of them just as she killed their first mate. She does not reveal her intention to kill Sorra and maintains that there is some power or treasure on Fjell she desires. Peyi is an unkillable goddess, and to prove her power, she threatens to kill Jenna with the snap of her fingers. If the party doubts or spends too long not agreeing to help her, she makes good on her threat. She demands they leave at once with the rising moon.

The Emperor's Scourge by Daylight

If the party leaves on the morrow on good terms with Peyi, they set sail on a clear morning aboard the Emperor's Scourge, a ship belonging to Gason that Peyi says she rented from him for this voyage. Throughout the journey, Peyi takes special care to avoid the water, sheltering even from the sea spray. Three successful DC 15 navigation tool checks are required to find a safe course to Fjell. A failed check results in a delay. 1D6 to determine the delay. These checks are spaced out across the day. Once three successful checks have been made, the party arrives safely at Fjell just as the sun is setting.

The Emperor's Scourge by Moonlight

If Peyi restores to force, the party departs that very night aboard the Emperor's Scourge. A ship Peyi stole from the now deceased Gason. Throughout the journey, Peyi takes special care to avoid the water, sheltering even from the sea spray. Two successful DC 20 navigation tool checks are required to find a safe course to Fjell. A failed check results in a delay. 1D6 to determine the delay. After two successful checks, the party is near Fjell, but a patch of the gloom bars their way. Peyi, suffering no delays, pushes them onward through the gloom. Once on the other side, they have reached Fjell just as the sun is rising.

Delay Table:

- 1 Roving Pirate Ship (Red Flag)
- 2 Roving Pirate Ship (White Flag)
- 3 The Gloom
- 4 Azure Forest
- 5 Sentient Storm
- 6 Off Course

Roving Pirate Ship (Red Flag)

The party comes across a roving pirate ship in search of blood. The pirate's ship is already burning from a last encounter, and the desperate pirates try to commandeer the party's ship. The pirate ship has half the HP of the Emperor's Scourge and is crewed by 4 swashbucklers. The roving pirate ship tries to use grappling and grapeshot to board the party ship and kill its crew.

Roving Pirate Ship (White Flag)

The party comes across a heavily damaged pirate ship, half-sunk. Its remaining crew waves down the party and pleads with them for safe passage. The party can choose to help, exploit, or ignore the crew. If the party agrees to give the crew passage, they gain three NPC allies during ship combat. If the party attacks the crew, they can loot them for 3 +1 scimitars.

The Gloom

The Gloom is a haunted patch of sea where the dead try to possess the living in order to escape. The Gloom appears as a greenish fog that cloaks the horizon. It can appear without warning, engulfing a ship in a matter of minutes. While in the gloom, ghosts attack the party. If any party member is possessed, the ghost tries to force the possessed member overboard. Falling overboard in the gloom is immediately fatal. It takes 6 turns for the crew to escape the Gloom.

Azure Forest

The Azure Forest is a forest of immense trees made of flowing water. The forest is stalked by long striders, creatures similar to Portuguese man o'war. They are attracted to sound, and if they hover over a ship, the crew can become entangled in their poisonous tendrils.

- DC 18 Stealth checks to remain unnoticed by the striders.
- DC 16 Survival check to navigate the forest.
- DC 20 Dexterity save to avoid the strider's tendrils if a strider is alerted to them.

- If a creature fails the dexterity save, it must make a DC 22 Constitution save or take 8D8 poison damage, half as much on a success.

Sentient Storm

A sentient hurricane that pulls in ships and leaves them stranded in its eye as it roams the world. The hurricane demands payment from those trapped in its eye in exchange for safe passage out of the storm. The party can either trade a life to the storm to escape or they must succeed a DC 20 navigation check to escape the eye. On a successful save, the ship takes 6 rounds to escape. At the end of each round, the crew on deck must make DC 14 Dexterity saves or take 3D8 Lightning damage. The ship takes 1D4 lightning damage per round. On a failed navigation check, the ship takes 2D8 lightning damage, and the check must be remade.

Off Course

The party finds they have misread the map and are off course. The total number of successes they need to reach the island increases by one to a max of 5.

Arrival at Fjell Island

Fjell Island is a sandy strip of land with a jumble of rocks near the center rising to a promontory of 50 feet. On the western face is an entrance carved in the rocks and sealed with a great stone door. When the party arrives at Fjell Island, they find it being defended by a kraken. Peyi urges them on and starts a fight with the kraken. The kraken turns hostile and begins attacking the ship. Each time one of the party members deals damage to the kraken, the kraken makes a DC 21 Insight check. On a success, the kraken recognizes the party as Sorra's former crew. If the kraken recognizes the party, it retreats, allowing the party access to the shore of Fjell Island. Otherwise, it retreats when it reaches half health. Once the kraken retreats, the party is free to go ashore.

The Doorstep of the Sanctum

The Sanctum is entered through the large stone door carved into the western side of the rocky face of Fjell Island. Above the door is written the following.

*Here, I give the last of my blackened soul to the sea
Let it be that only those who have bound may unbind*

The blood of each of the party members is required to unseal the door. If the party went along with Peyi's lie, it is here that they fully realize that Peyi is going after Sorra. If the party gets to the door and refuses to enter, Peyi grows enraged and threatens to kill them. It is at this point that Peyi reveals her true motivation to kill the soul of Sorra in jealousy.

Holding the Line

If the party stands firm and refuses to unseal the doors of the sanctum for Peyi, in rage, she attempts to cast a spell to kill the party. As she does so, the waters around Fjell suddenly swell, rising to the foot of the doorway. Peyi's killing spell fails as water washes around the party, protecting them from her magic. The death of the land may not take what is in the domain of

the sea, while in the water, the party is safe from Peyi's killing magic, but she can still damage them normally.

Here, the party can fight Peyi on equal footing. Peyi retreats to the rocks, hoping to draw the party out of the water. The kraken re-emerges, this time fighting with the party. The kraken's main goal is to get Peyi into the water. If the party can get Peyi into the water, she takes 5d8 irreducible necrotic damage at the start of each of her turns while she remains in the water.

Entering the Sanctum

Alternatively, the party can acquiesce to Peyi's threats and unseal the door to Sorra's Sanctum. Within the Sanctum, the party finds Dhal protecting a small silver chest at the center of a shallow pool of water. Peyi demands the party kills Dhal and retrieves the chest for her. Dhal informs the party that Peyi loses her power if they are in the water. Here, the party can either give in to Death and kill Dhal, thus allowing Peyi to kill Sorra's soul, or they can enter the water and fight back against Peyi on equal footing.

If they fight, the party must remain in the water. If they are standing on solid ground when it reaches Peyi's turn, she can cast Power Word Kill on them. If they can get Peyi into the water, she takes 2d8 irreducible necrotic damage at the start of her turns while she remains in the water. Dhal does not join the fight and instead takes her action to avoid damage. Peyi targets her attacks at Dhal if no party member blocks her line of sight to Dhal.

Conclusion

If the party defeats Peyi without entering the Sanctum, the kraken transform into Lanme, the death of the sea, and thank them personally for protecting Sorra's soul. She gifts each party member with a blue pearl as a promise that none of them will perish while travelling the seas.

If the party defeats Peyi in the Sanctum, Dhal thanks them for protecting herself and Sorra. Upon leaving the Sanctum, Sorra's ghost ship has docked just offshore. Sorra thanks the party for what they have done and offers them a place aboard her ghost vessel.

If the party lets Peyi kill Sorra, Peyi leaves them on the Island. As the party tries to leave, the kraken attack them once more and fight to the death to kill the party. If the party survives, Peyi appears to them, telling them the sea is no longer safe, but promises them safety on the land, giving them a black pearl as a sign of this promise.

SHIP COMBAT

Player Turn Actions (movement and bonus actions can be used like normal)

Load Shot

- The player must have the movement to make it from a supply crate (or brazier) to a cannon.

- The player must choose which of the four types of shots they are loading into the cannon.

Fire Cannons (1D6 on ships, 8D6 on creatures). Used the character's dexterity modifiers as the attack bonus.

- Cannon Ball (1D6 /8D6).
- Heated Cannon Ball (1D6 / 12D6).
 - Heated cannon balls have a 25% chance of lighting a ship on fire. Burning ships take 1D4 damage on initiative count 0.
- Grape Shot (crits on a 15 or higher, 1 damage to a ship, 4D6 to creatures).
- Grapple Shot (if within 50 feet on a hit, it binds the two ships together so they can board each other).

Resupply Stores

- requires movement to hold and return to the supply crate.

Load Brazier

- All shots loaded in the brazier are heated on initiative count 0.

Repair Ship

- Adds 1D4 health back to the ship. The spell mending heals 1D8.

Help Aim

- Gives advantage to someone firing the cannons.

Captain Actions (The captain can move the ship 50ft as a free action.)

Dodge

- Disadvantage to attackers but also to their own crew.

Aim

- Advantage to the crew, but also to any attackers.

Dash

- Doubles the ship's movement speed.

Rally

- All Repair actions heal double dice.