

Summary afterwardwolf

Beowolf, Jennish, Kasskar sail to Hilde on the Hedgepeth, with captains Burns and Krill. They meet Mikal, a young stowaway. Off Pitcairn on Hilde, the Hedgepeth takes the Blackwells ship Durst as a prize. Scoping out a greencake facility they plan to plunder on Lake Annika, the characters are attacked by guard wolves and defeat them.

Questions

Kasskar

- I'd like to change the name of the Mooncalf, it has a meaning I didn't understand before. Would Keith want to suggest a name? If not, how about The Graybeard? Also, I moved to market, it's closer the action there.
- What is Kasskar's two handed fighting ability? Is it a power?

Beowolf

- Where is Beowolf's parent's shop? What is it called? What are their names?

Jennish

- Would Jeff be willing to sign up on meetup.com?
- Jennish lives at a boarding house. Do we know where in the city it is? Do we know the name of the person who runs it?
- I think that Beowolf and Kasskar are both 18. What about Jennish?
- Jennish is interested in gadgets. Can he fix gadgets, build them, deduce what a strange gadget does? What skill or power would that be? I think it's not a specific power or skill from looking over the artificer class?

All

- Let's abandon the "penny standard", it's more trouble than it's worth.
- We forgot to resolve the nautilus horn that you guys found in the first game. Is it okay if that goes to Gregor?
- I added short descriptions of the characters to the web page. If you guys want to substitute your own descriptions I'll swap them in.
- Do we want to end no later than midnight, or no sooner than midnight?
- Would the players rather work for organized crime (e.g., smugglers, assassins) or infiltrate them for the authorities?

For future games

At the Graybeard, someone has left a message for Kasskar with the bartender. It says: "I'd like to meet you up close at the shambles. -- An imp." Kasskar and the other characters can make an easy intelligence test to deduce that "an imp" refers to a Masquerade costume. The Masquerade is in the beginning of November, a few months from now.

The Hedgepeth

During the last game a friend came into Beowolf's parents' shop and told him an Admiralty ship was leaving for Highpyre on Hilde, that it might be a good way to see Highpyre. That ship has been readied faster than expected, and they'd like to sail and return before Hilde's harsh winter sets in. So, they're actually planning to set out tonight.

Do Beowolf, Jennish, and Kasskar still want to go?

Keith had asked what's on Hilde if it's such a wasteland? Precious metals; coal, guano for making saltpeter for making gunpowder is found here. Whaling in Hilde's waters. Quinine also comes from there, which is the main defense against malaria.

The ship is called the Hedgepeth. It's in cove away from the city, having some last minute fixes done. If they go to the ship, they find that a captain, Burns, is organizing the last minute things for the trip: last minute repairs, bringing on and checklisting barrels of food, water, and supplies. He tells them they can come along as skilled men or sailors, for a small stipend (1 gp a month) plus a very small fraction (1/333) of anything the expedition salvages.

If they ask more about the Hedgepeths' mission, Burns tells them they're looking for a lost explorer, named Ammiral. Ammiral's left the summer before last and was expected back in the fall, so now he's almost two years overdue. Last anyone heard he was heading to Highpyre, so they'll go there first and see what information they can find.

Before, Beowolf's friend had told them that there were two captains missing; if they ask Burns about the second captain, he'll tell them that if they want to come along, they'll have to accept orders onboard and not ask questions about the mission.

As way of introduction to the ship, Burns tells them that the Hedgepeth is about 150 feet long. It was a former two-deck gun ship, but the second deck has been modified "razied" to convert the ship into a more stable one-deck gun ship. They'll sleep below deck with the cannons. When they get there, one thing they see is a furnace for heating shot before firing it into an enemy ship.

At sea

The Hedthpeth sails out of the cove at night. There are some experienced officers getting the ship underway, and there are some unexperienced sailors helping by doing as told. You deduce that the unexperienced sailors have been pressed into service: sailing and having orders barked

at them is new to them and some seem flustered.

Because of the constant orders, the impressed men already know the complete routine onboard by the end of the first full day. They wake, eat, and go to bed at specific times. They sleep in hammocks below deck, with the cannons. The sailors scrub their own sheets, clothes, and dishes every morning and hang them to dry below deck, at specific times. There's bread, soup, and water for each meal. The sailors get a rum ration with dinner, but can't get drunk, so they need to restrain themselves. They do get about an hour of free time to play cards after dinner and before bed. And then on Sunday afternoon, they also have off after lunch.

Much of the rest of the day is spent doing hard labor, like tarring the deck. Some of the work is dangerous, like climbing the masts to make repairs. The impressed men are trained in working the cannons from the first day.

Discipline is severe on board. If the sailors aren't doing a task at the appointed time, they're whipped. If they get drunk or fight in the evening, they're whipped. If they make a willing mistake or they're insubordinate, they're whipped.

Besides Burns, the officers are:

- Mates: first mate Copeland, second mate Browning, third mate Emil
 - These are the commanders except for the captain, and they stand the three watches.
- Lookouts: Diregale, Owen, Milch
 - These do the watch for the three mates, respectively.
- Soldiers/cannoneers:
 - Wineheart, Pembec, Landis

Some of the impressed men are:

- Fishkin, Walker, Wardell

Non-officers make up the rest of the ship's complement, which is about 40 men total.

After a few days some sailors start to say there's a second captain, who was onboard in the cabin before the ship left Hollin. Then, you do see him a few times for a few minutes, coming out of the cabin to get some air and check the ship's position for himself with navigation instruments. That captain's name is Krill.

As they sail north, the weather gets noticeably colder. The days get longer, and soon the sun is up 24 hours a day. Some of the men find that disorienting.

After you've been on board for about two weeks, you get up one morning, go up to the deck, and you can see blinding white cliffs nearby. Some of the other sailors are murmuring that it's Hilde,

the land of the dead. Krill appears on deck at this point, rallying the men, telling that Hilde *is* the land of the dead, and that they'll brave it together. It's also a lawless land, where they can be attacked by Blackwells, etc. But, if the opportunity arises, they'll also privateer enemies' ships and settlements if the opportunity arises. If so, maybe the men can take some money back to their families.

Hilde

That night, Krill wakes Beowulf in the middle of the night and pulls him up to deck. He says they're sailing past Pitcarn, the great fortress at the end of the peninsula, now ruined. Now they'll be entering X Bay following the coast to Highpyre at the far end of the bay. What does he know of it? Is he prepared for what he'll see there?

The Durst

As they round the bend, the Durst, a Blackwells ship, comes into sight. Surprisingly, Krill allows the Durst to come aside the Hedgepeth, which is done in a friendly manner. Krill explains they think the Hedgepeth is a friendly ship, since Krill captured it from them a couple years ago and never let out that the ship was captured.

Krill unloads the cannons on them as they come aside. There's a fight between the two ships, which presumably the Hedgepeth wins because Krill unloaded first and then a few more rounds of fire.

The Durst is 180 feet long. Looks like a historical sloop-of-war would have complement of something like > 100 people. We're going to have many less than that, I'm thinking more like the crew size of the Pequod -- like 20 people or so.

So, let's assume the PCs + the captains + mates + one lookout fights + one lookout in the crow's nest...that would give us 11 on a side. They'll go up against 4 human watchmen, 4 human archers, and 2 human duelists. After a few turns folks from the Durst bottom deck bring up a cannon to level at the PC's.

They take the Durst as a prize if they can.

Bromwich Dale

The city of Portsmouth blocks the way to Bromwich Dale and is held by Blackwells. Krill proposes to take the ship through Portsmouth, up the river through Bromwich Dale, where they can score some serious loot, sorcerers' stone and centrifuges. There, they meet up with the renegade captain's army that's gone native to defeat the facility that has the sorcerer's stone. It's dangerous to do so because you don't know if the renegade captain is going to turn on you or not.

At the end of the valley they'll reach a serene lake, Lake Annika. The shores are rocky but a thick forest comes almost up to the edge of the water. Looking out over the lake they can see a plume of deep green in the water coming from the shore on the far side -- Krill says that's what they're looking for. Nearby people are distilling a valuable powder out of a green salt that's unique to Hilde. The plume is where they're dumping the left over waste salt into the water. He says there's a compound there but he doesn't know anything else about it. How should they best approach it? Sail there? Leave the ships/boats here and walk around the lake?

Closer to the compound it looks like there's a bluff overlooking the camp -- should they go up there and see what they can see looking down? Else, they can approach the camp directly.

If they go to the high point, some wolves will trap there whichever members of the party went. There will be as many gray wolves as there are party members there, except for 1 dire wolf.

If they go to the compound, they'll be ambushed by wolves and their human masters on the trail. I guess a few of these humans will be high level and will need names.

In the compound, there's a high wall that surrounds it, with two guarded gates where the tracks come in and out. There are some barracks and a long flat building that's the centrifuge room, and a real stone tower. If they search the tower on the top floor there's a vault with locks they've never seen before -- dials with numbers, three of them. Kasskar and Jennish can collaborate to understand how it works and break it open. If they do, there's a good stash of the greencake in there, two boxes about the size of my router -- Krill can tell them it's worth more than the ship they captured. If they don't they can go to the factory and skim some themselves, but it will be less and not as pure. However, Jennish could maybe build a centrige back in Hollin to further purify some. This will come to about 1/10th of what they could have had from the safe, still very valuable.

Possible encounters here: They can attack or explore a settlement; attack an enemy ship; be attacked by an enemy ship; find Ammiral's crew on the ice; witchcraft accusation;

Then sailing further into the ice, when things seem really desolate -- the navigator says he doesn't know where they are, it must be in the middle of a whiteout -- this is when the meltdown happens.

The Hedgepeth is the ship that will be sailing in search of the two expeditions; Schelde and Wurther are the two co-captains. Schelde has a hidden/withered arm, which he believes/claims to be caused by witches. Once the ship is at sea and vulnerable, at night he'll come out of the

cabin accusing Wurther of witchcraft and demanding that the crew hang him. The crew will split about 50/50 in favor of Schelde and Wurther, forcing the characters to take sides (knowing my players, I'd guess 80-20 they'll side with Wurther). Whichever side wins, the dead will include the ships navigator, putting that duty onto Jennish, even if the losers are put ashore. So, that's the first major battle of the game.

After this fight some of the sailors are so appalled that they start to conspire to kill press gangs when they get back to Hollin, and they try to get the players into this.

If the players get dumped on Hilde, they can be led back to minimal civilization by a flashing signal light from some kind of desolate folks. To survive, stranded characters could

The Shackleton character was looking for...Balibana...the witch can describe it to the characters as a "confused place" She can say that it's a place of legend among the Hilde aborigeness...because the fairies have protected it from them...but actually she knows that its real. She won't tell the characters if it's real or not, but she will say if its real Shackleton has no chance of finding it because the interior is a place of confusion, nonreality, waking dream. Or another Apogee-like place high in the mountains? Maybe that wasn't the original intent or that wasn't what he told anyone...maybe he just told people he was looking for minerals or the north pole? So, Shackleton's ship gets caught in the ice and crushed. On the ice they could maybe hunt seals or polar bears to survive, or maybe the ship has a lot of provisions. Despite the desperate situation he decides to continue to his goal, thinking that when the ice cleared they could maybe try to take the lifeboats back to civilization. But, the ice never cleared, they ended up making some shelters out of the lifeboats or burning them for fuel (they had to clear them from the ship because the ship was on unstable ice flows). The guys living in lifeboats are now crazy -- they haven't left their sad camp because now it the whole sum of their existance. Or they say they're waiting for Shackleton to come back. So, I think Shackleton saw Balibana but couldn't get the star because of the squid. He needs a powerful Hero to drive off the squid.

The captains of the ship that leaves can be friends with Shackleton, so doesn't want to abandon him even though it may be dangerous to continue.

So, the Kurtz character can have come into Hilde to start fighting blackwells and had some initial suprising victories with that, but soon started attacking all of the settlements on Hilde, friendly or enemy...not clear why but he was doing an insane amount of damage. Some folks could rumor who Kurtz considers Hilde a land of the dead or a hell of lost souls.

How long does it take to sail to Hilde?

Highpyre

Once at the burned city they could follow some wild animals -- ravens or wolves -- to some adventure in the city.

Need to give a lot more attention to Highpyre because it's potentially Beowulf's future capital. I think it Pompeii should be the model for this because it's completely destroyed.

Other images of burned cities: charred masonry; buildings that remain standing have no roofs; a few buildings are reduced to just basically spires at the corners. Occasionally there's a building with just a frame around a doorway left.

Highpyre got large because of timber, mining, whaling, fishing grounds nearby.

Umm, maybe Highpyre wasn't burned because of war...a great drake burned it. This would actually be a great classic story line for Beowulf.

The fire that destroyed it included a firestorm, so some of the folks died from suffocation. Ghosts left from that? Ghosts of Beowulf's parents there? Maybe given the critical mass of ghosts there this is now a destination for ghosts? I guess Kasskar feels the same "lost soul" feeling that he felt in the hospital morgue. So, is the place really run by a ghost that would be the grand boss of Beowulf taking this city back? Where would it be running the ghost city from? The keep? Oh yeah, the place had a keep, right? Or some high tower?

Highpyre is still destroyed. There's one innocent-seeming woman, Ansa, living there in a burned-out house that has never been repaired. She can tell them that Ammiral was there last fall, but hasn't seen him since. There are a few more isolated (hermit-like) settlements further along the coast, before the ice begins. They could sail up there or take sleds up there and talk with those people. I need to add more stuff about Highpyre since it's Beowulf's town.

They can be attacked on the sleds by wolves/bears/trolls/yetis.

Suvi

When they go further up the coast the grinding ice is off the coast. They come to another destroyed village where Suvi, an ancient Agnes Zick type who's living there. She knows where Ammiral is, possibly the only one, they've talked many times before. She tells them she thinks his crew is out on the ice within a few miles, which has come south since winter.

When they go out onto the ice to get Ammiral's crew, they refuse to come with them and try to surround and attack them.

When they finally see Ammiral, his beard is all encrusted with snow and ice, as are their own faces, beards, hoods. Frostbite, hypothermia, their water is freezing unless they put it next to their body -- extreme of weather is one of the things that makes it a hellhole. Snowblindness. They can come to the end of a road and suddenly there's no visual refernece going forward -- it's just all white over the entire view sphere. They can hear a horn and it's Ammiral, maybe he's fighting trolls or the emotionless masked figures in the whiteout. After they beat the masked figures Ammiral tells them the Angel of Death is there and they have to leave. Maybe some dogs die.

Falling through the ice can be like the demoralizing quicksand in lawrence of arabia; it could also happen during a battle.

For example travelling across crevassed glaciers where you risk falling into some very large holes should a snow bridge collapse as cross over it.

In my first winter we broke the wind speed record for Rothera with a gust of 89.1 knots or 102.4 miles per hour. It was officially a hurricane and was pretty impressive. This winter we have just had a two week period of fairly wild weather with strong winds and blowing snow. True blizzard conditions, often you could not see one building from another when they are less than 100 m apart.

At Rothera temperatures can reach plus 4°C during the day in summer, but fall to minus 30°C at times in the winter. The strongest wind recorded at Rothera was 89.1 knots. Snowfall is large during the winter when no melt takes place with snow drifts big enough to reach the roof of the buildings.

The interior of Hilde would be dark 24 hours a day during the winter, and light 24 hours a day during the summer...I guess so.

Ice caverns.

Blinding sun

At the onset of hypothermia, a person will lose speech and physical coordination—mumble, fumble, and stumble. We are taught to always work in teams so that we can watch each other for signs of hypothermia. We also learn how to take action if we think a team member has the umbles—the first step is to take him/her to a warmer shelter or add layers of clothing.

Our group built a snow block wall as a windbreak for a tent before learning how to set up a Scott tent.

A whiteout is kind of like a blizzard—the strong winds cause so much snow to fill the air that you cannot see ahead of you. You often can't even hear because of the roar of the wind. Imagine trying to find someone in those conditions!