OVER AND UNDER THE OCEAN FREE

30/09/14

INTRODUCTION

Earlier this month Jason Lutes released *Funnel World* and, like a lot of you, I've been loving what I've read. Jason's ideas on layout and content for a Dungeon World adventure have really inspired me here - I love the way he's managed to keep things really concise, yet informative.

USING THIS BOOK

The four locations presented here are designed to be played in whichever order you like. Pick one to start your players in, read the intro (in the grey box) aloud and ask the questions.

It's possible (likely, I hope!) the other three locations will be useful, but given the improvised nature of Dungeon World it's entirely possible your game will go in a very different direction. If so, not to worry! You can always use one of the other introductions to kick off a future game instead.

ABOUT THE TYRANEAN SEA

Between the shores of Chalcedon and Mirkasa lies the Tyranean, a green-blue gulf of ocean many leagues across. Travel by sea is dangerous, but for those that can't afford an airship ticket or magical means, what choice is there?

Dozens of islands lie scattered across the ocean, many inhabited by isolated natives or spurned outlaws. As you might expect, piracy is a frequent problem; but the secrets of the shattered islands may reveal an even greater threat. For they say there was another continent here, once - and whatever shattered it does not sleep easily.

THE TOWN OF DIOS VIA, MORNING

You're in the town square of a tiny fishing village, half-hidden amongst the islands of the Tyranean atoll. A group of locals are frowning at you; the big one in front has fresh blood on his knuckles. An old man sobs behind you, clutching his raw cheek. The big one shifts slightly - he's sizing you up.

QUESTIONS

* This place isn't your final destination . Why did you have to stop here, and where are you ultimately headed?
* How did you get to this ocean island?
* Why did the big one attack the old man?
* The old man's shown you something, accidentally or otherwise, that makes him worth saving to you. What is it?

STAKES

* Will the townsfolk leave without a fight?
* Will the old man survive?
* Why are the villagers so paranoid?

RUMOURS

* The tides are coming in more than they're going out.
* Daily baptisms in saltwater will keep the demons away.
* This land is sacred to the elements.

WHO IS THE BIG VILLAGER?

1. Carlos Gillespe, a farmhand
2. Jens Adrison, a known liar
3. Christof Cockles, a fisherman
4. Whalos Adams, a travelling merchant
5. Dickard Roose, a clever academic
6. Matthias Van Hamilfast, a man with a secret job

Solitary, Intelligent

Tools of the trade (b[1d6] damage)   6 HP 1 Armour

Close

THE TOWN

Dios Via is a semi-waterborne town comprising most of an island in the Tyranean sea. It's people are descended from the island's original inhabitants and generations of roving sailors who by chance made landfall here. The town is always under threat of discovery, whether by pirates or worse.

By default, Dios Via is prosperity: moderate, population: steady, defences: watch, trade: fish and salt, personality: the wise man. In addition, pick two complications:

✱ The island is well-hidden, but isolated: +safe, -trade

✱ Pirates know of the island: +blight (piracy)

✱ The corruption from the temple has already spread to this town: -population, +blight (Oceanic corruption)

✱ The island folk's magic is powerful, but no substitute for a town watch: -defences, +arcane

✱ The island lacks arable land: +need (grain), +trade (passing merchant vessels)

A DESECRATED TEMPLE, SUNSET

The temple is miles from the coast, yet the walls are covered with seaweed and coral. The sigil lies untouched on the altar, just like the old man said, at the far end of the temple. Between you and it, the floor is flooded ankle-deep with seawater. In places, the water is somehow flowing upwards - it's already formed a swirling whirlpool on the ceiling.

QUESTIONS

* Which of you knows the old man, and why do you owe him a favour?
* Which god is the sigil dedicated to? (Perhaps Saint Bellomere, Cuccino the harvest spirit, or Death Unrefined.)
* How might the sigil be used to cleanse the temple?
* Where have the "coral demons" struck before?

STAKES

* What will come out of the portal?
* What happens when the sigil is used?
* What influence does the sigil's god still hold, and will it help or hinder the players?
* Who or what has corrupted the temple, and why?
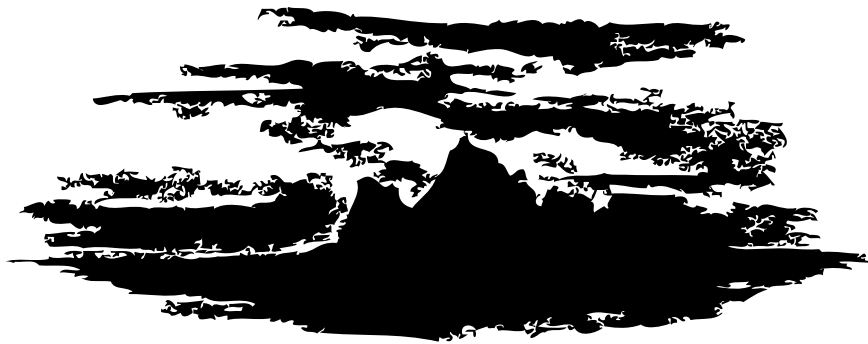
CORAL DEMONS

Dessicated water elementals. Their existence on this plane is difficult, but not impossible. Instinct: to maintain a foothold in the drylander's world

Group, Intelligent, Organised

Salt-stained trident (d8 damage)   8 HP 1 Armour

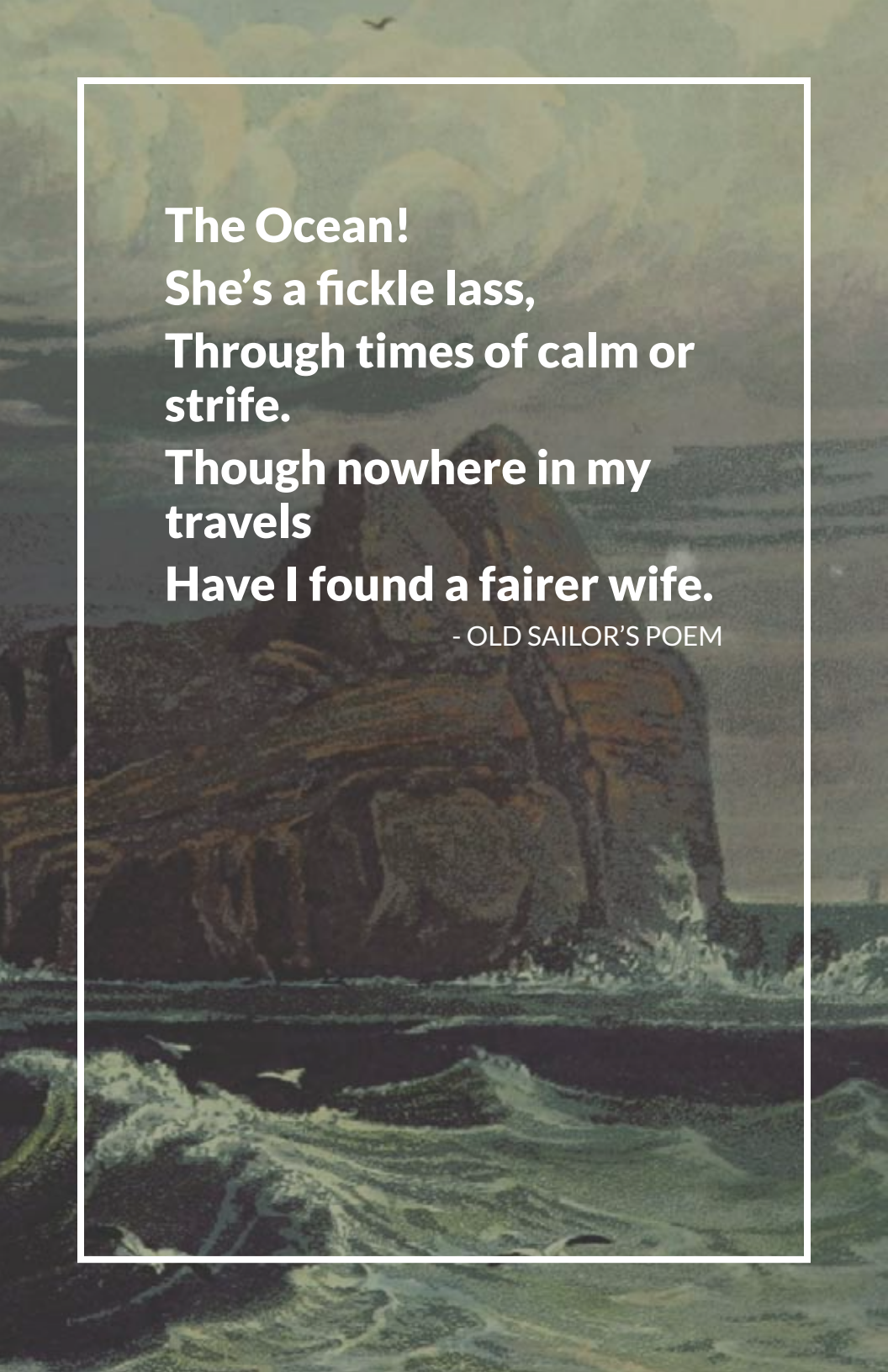Close

* Reform from a water source
* Drag someone into the portal
* Launch a chunk of shrapnel-like coral

TREASURES OF THE TEMPLE

1. A rusted spear that once pierced the cheek of a demon.
2. The drowned remains of the temple's chief priest.
3. A book of holy sacraments, written in blood.
4. The peasant's last offerings for a mild winter - clay pottery, simple tokens, rotten fish and coin.
5. The tomb of the temple's founder, long since dead.
6. An urn of fresh spring water, somehow free of corruption.

The Ocean!

She's a fickle lass,
Through times of calm or strife.
Though nowhere in my travels
Have I found a fairer wife.

- OLD SAILOR'S POEM

A BATTLEFIELD, LATE EVENING

You stand on this former battlefield, an eerie disquiet in the air in the aftermath of the old man's abduction. His final words still echo in your ears: "remember the rites!" For now you're in no danger, but there's no telling what his abductor is capable of. What do you do?

QUESTIONS

✱ What denizen of the Oceanic plane abducted the old man?

✱ Why are you compelled to get him back?

✱ Other than the old man, what did you lose in the fight against the elemental's allies? (If it was something significant or irreplaceable - GM's call - mark experience.)

✱ Who's still conscious enough for you to get some answers out of, maybe?

✱ Which of you has been to the Oceanic plane before? Why aren't you looking forward to the prospect of returning?

STAKES

✱ Will the old man be returned safely?

✱ What is the abductors plan? Will the PCs foil it?

✱ Will somewhere be consumed by the Oceanic plane?

CREATING A RIFT BETWEEN PLANES

Anyone who knows the appropriate rites (symbols, phrases and gestures) can attempt to create a portal from one plane of existence to another. In order to do so, you'll need at least one of the following (for each of the below, hold 1:)

✱ The willing aid of another with knowledge in these matters

✱ The blood (or ichor, or whatever) from a denizen of the plane you're going to

✱ The blessing of a god whose domain overlaps with both where you are now and wherever you're going

✱ (If your current plane has a sun and moon) The right time - cold planes are best travelled to at midnight; warm planes are best travelled to at midday

When you attempt to create a rift, roll+hold. Take -1 if you're trying to make a portal stable enough for yourself and others. On a 10+, the rift is pretty stable - it will harmlessly dissipate in about 10 minutes. On a 7-9, it'll require someone on this side to keep it open; to dive through a rapidly closing portal is to defy danger. On a 6-, the portal is wildly unstable - not everyone gets through without leaving something behind, or something unexpected gets in or out.

THE OCEANIC PLANE, TIME UNKNOWN

You lie soaking wet on a bulwark of wet sand and coral. All around you is water - the horizon, the walls, almost everything but where you stand.

You remember the roar of the ocean, a hunt of some kind... your quarry! You chased something down here.

QUESTIONS

* What do you remember of the chase?
* Have you travelled across the elemental planes before?
* What evidence of your quarry do you see around you?
* There's another 'bubble' of dry land a short swim away. What do you see in there that might cause trouble?

IMPRESSIONS

* Fragments of wherever you came from
* Bubbles of dry land, some within swimming distance
* The aquatic denizens of this plane
* Walls of translucent water
* Coral buildings
* Bio-luminescent seaweed
* Most of Finding Nemo, especially the bit near the start with the singing manta ray guy

CUSTOM MOVES

When you swim from one bubble of land to another, roll +CON. On a 10+, you get across no problem. On a 7-9, you're wheezing for breath when you get there. On a miss, if you don't leave something of the GM's choice floating free, you're drowning.

WHAT LORE DO YOU KNOW OF THE OCEANIC PLANE?

(When they spout lore, on a 7+ they know at least one.)

✱ It's elemental people are no more 'demons' than we are, though they may look as such.

✱ Natives of the planes might see our world and it's peoples as a curiosity, a threat, or a resource.

✱ The ecosystem of our world and the planes are intertwined.

WANDERING MONSTERS OF THE OCEANIC PLANE

(For when the players roll a 6-)

Krakenson: half squid, half elemental (don't ask where they came from.) Usually has 6 to 8 arms, depending on the father.

Solitary, Intelligent, Organised, Arcane

Psuedopods (b[1d8] damage) 12 HP 1 Armour

Reach

✱ Wrap someone up

✱ Drag someone into the depths

✱ Vomit forth inky water

✱ Squeeze through tiny gaps