



About the Adventure

Spectral Tides: The Goblin-Thing is a 1980s *GURPS Horror* adventure, although it can easily be adapted to other periods and game systems (a *Call of Cthulhu* version is also available on www.1shotadventures.com). The adventure is set in the Pacific Northwest, with teenage PCs setting off to rescue one of their friends on a creepy, cursed island.

Spectral Tides is suitable for three-to-five 100-point characters. The end of the adventure includes five pregenerated teenage characters so you can get started right away, along with a backup character in case someone meets a terrible end!

Characters introduced for the first time in the adventure are noted in ALL-CAPS. Skill rolls are in SMALL-CAPS. Sections marked with a map 🗺️ are side-quests and adventure hooks, and not important to the overall plot of the adventure. Sections marked with a person 👤 are opportunities for specific PCs, notably the pregenerated characters from the end of this adventure.

Adventure Background

Oak Harbor is small Pacific Northwest town about a hundred miles north of Seattle. The teenagers there spend their summers swimming, fishing, and boating out to one of the hundreds of tiny islands that litter the coast.

Although Oak Harbor is a quiet, peaceful town, one of its residents is certainly not. A few years ago, Conroy Biggins was

arrested in town after a violent series of drug-fueled crimes in Seattle and Portland, which culminated in the grisly murder of two rivals. Conroy's own father, Zacharias Biggins, was said to have turned in his own son to the authorities... and testified against him. Conroy was furious, swearing revenge on his father. Not wanting to deal with the attention and press, Zacharias became a hermit and fled Oak Harbor, though is occasionally seen in town buying supplies.

Adventure Summary

The adventure begins at the tail end of a Pacific Northwest squall. A group of teenagers huddle in their cozy Oak Island hangout. Suddenly, their CB radio crackles to life. Their eccentric and adventurous friend, Jake Samson, his voice bursting with excitement and fear, claims to have unearthed the lair of the legendary Goblin-Thing on nearby Sitka Island. But before he can reveal more, the radio goes dead with a horrible scream.

To save their friend, the PCs must sail to the island. There they stumble upon Jake's deserted boat. A trail into the forest leads to the home of Zacharias Biggins, the elusive hermit who is the father of Conroy Biggins, the notorious murderer. In a desperate bid to protect his home from his own son's malevolent return, Zacharias had conjured ancient magic from a tome he salvaged from a nearby shipwreck, the *Dix*. While he thought the ritual would simply protect him, it did far more – it summoned the drowned dead from the *Dix* to act as his guardians. But these horrible, zombie-like revenants hate all life, and cannot tell the difference between friend or foe.

The plot thickens when Conroy sets foot on Sitka Island to get revenge on his father. A horde of undead *Stifflegs*, bound to the will of the spell, surges forth, threatening to follow him back to the PCs' home in Oak Harbor.

The PCs learn that their only hope to vanquish this curse is to destroy the *Dix*, a shipwreck from whence the curse originated. While most of the *Dix* is rotting away on Sitka Island, its helm sits comfortably in the town library, found years ago by Jake Samson, the PCs' treasure-hunting friend.

With time running out, the PCs must race back to Oak Harbor, fend off the growing hordes of *Stifflegs*, and set the ship's wheel ablaze to let the dead rest once more. If they fail, Oak Harbor will fall into doom, and the night will echo with the gnashing of the dead!

Act I: Oak Harbor

The teenage PCs begin the adventure on a stormy Saturday morning, hanging out in the attic of one of their houses. The "Attic House," as it's become known, is a place that has been transformed over years into the perfect underachiever hangout. A record player blares Billy Ocean, duelling with the polyphonic music of *Pitfall II* on a 15" television. Posters

of *Knight Rider*, *Red Sonja*, and *American Ninja* are taped crookedly to the walls.

Suddenly, the attic's short-range CB radio comes to life, and the voice of the PCs' friend, JAKE SAMSON crackles in.

"Guys! Can you hear me? I found it! The Goblin-Thing's lair, it's totally real! And there's like a million dollars worth of Liberty Head nickels here, just like we thought! I can't haul this stuff back by myself, bring a dinghy to Sitka Island and we can bring it all back. Hang on, I just heard something... Hello? Oh, it's YOU again. Wait, what is that behind you. Why is it walking like that...? Wait, no, no, no, oh god! Ahhhhhh! Get back! Aghh!"

There's no response from Jake after this. The CB is dead.
GM's Note: You can download a professionally voiced version of this transmission on 1shotadventures.com!

Kickoff

Once this introduction happens, hand out the Banter Cards (see [Handout A](#)) to each player. Players should go around and take turns reading or paraphrasing any one of the bullet points from their card. Encourage the players to be organic, and rattle their dialogue off quickly and excitedly! This technique creates a fun little cinematic scene which organically conveys the following information:



- Jake Samson is a trustworthy older friend who has actually found a real treasure before – the ship’s wheel from the *Dix*, a steamer that sunk in 1906. He made five hundred dollars from that discovery, and he’s been searching for more historical treasures from the doomed Mosquito Fleet ever since.
- The Goblin-Thing is a local legend, a cryptid that supposedly swims in nearby waters, eats seals, and collects treasure from sunken ships. Every kid growing up in Oak Harbor wanted to find the Goblin-Thing’s treasure.
- Sitka Island is a small, uninhabited wooded island a little south of Oak Harbor. It’s located about a mile from the mainland. Local fishermen claim it’s a fantastic place to catch largemouth bass, and also where a fisherman named Mordecai Anchorage had his hand bitten off – supposedly by an aggressive orca whale!

The PCs automatically know that the best way to get to Sitka Island is to boat there from Windjammers, the local fish and chips stand. They can either hitch a ride on one of the fishing boats there or rent a dinghy. Two of the pregenerated PCs own their own dinghies tied up there.

As they leave the Attic House, all the PCs should make IQ rolls. On a success, the PC smartly left their trusty bike at the library the night before as the storm picked up. Otherwise, they biked home in the storm and the chains got a little wonky (-1 to all Bicycling rolls until fixed). At least one PC should have forgotten their bike at the library.

The Library

The old Oak Harbor library is a squat, one-story wooden building. Its forgetful old librarian, GRETA CORNBURG, is outside, oddly watering the flowers despite the light rain that is still coming down. A bike rack outside the library holds several bikes, including the PCs’ if they left them there the night before.

Greta calls the kids by the wrong names, wonders aloud when it’s going to rain, and then scolds any PCs for leaving their bikes overnight, saying that she saw a girl’s bike stolen three years ago. Then, she only wants to talk about how they just received comfortable new leather arm chairs for the library’s reading room.

As the PCs claim their bikes, a PERCEPTION (VISION) roll spots a **wanted poster** for escaped convict Conroy Biggins on the bulletin board outside the library door (see **Handout B**). Conroy Biggins is a violent drug dealer and fugitive, and has been spotted not too far from Oak Harbor in the last week.

The Legend of the Goblin-Thing



A legend among the teenagers is that of the Goblin-Thing, a bug-eyed, worm-faced humanoid that swims from island to island, feasting on old or wounded seals. Many fishermen claim to have seen the creature loping through the woods, and some say they’ve seen him holding a meat-covered skull that look decidedly *un-seal* like.

The Goblin-Thing is said to collect valuable artifacts from the bottom of the sound – including a crate of rare 1896 Liberty Head nickels said to have been lost from the cursed Mosquito Fleet, an armada of jerry-rigged steamships that frequently ran into disasters while transporting goods. If someone found the Goblin-Thing’s island lair – described as a cave, or a hovel, or even a hollow tree – they would surely come back to the mainland rich.

If asked about the poster, Greta will shake her head and say that Conroy gives Oak Harbor a bad name. *“I heard on the news that his own father turned him in. You know someone like that is bad news when your own father hates you that much.”*

The PCs may want to spend some time at the library to do some research. The library’s reading room is warm and inviting, and a shaggy-haired local antique store owner, CHARLES KHUA lightly dozes in one of the new plush arm chairs, a *National Geographic* magazine on his lap.

The centerpiece of the room is a magnificent antique, wooden ship’s wheel, mounted prominently on the wall above a disused fireplace. A nearby plaque labels it as from the sunken ship *Dix*, which was lost in 1906. On the plaque it says “Discovered by Jake Samson.” PCs will recall that their friend found the *Dix*’s wheel a few years ago, and sold it to the town for \$500!

If the PCs are not quiet, Charles Khua awakens embarrassed, but then enthusiastically tells the wheel’s history: *“The Dix was lost back in ‘06 when it turned right into the path of an iron ore steamer. At least forty souls were lost that night. Awful tragedy. But credit to that adventurous young man Jake for finding the ship’s wheel washed up on the beach a few years back!”*

An hour at the library and a RESEARCH+3 (or IQ-2) roll finds some additional information on the Goblin-Thing or the *Dix* (see **Handouts C** and **D**).

The Police Station

The PCs may think to inform the police what's going on with Jake's disappearance. The nearby police station is a plain white building in the middle of being repainted. A middle-aged, big bearded painter, JIM MEWLES, stands on a rickety ladder outside the station. As the PCs approach, he addresses them:

"Ain't no one here today, kids. Sheriff Benton is out on the boat today, and the deputy's off doing training. But you better be careful. I can tell when there's mischief in your eyes and there sure is today. Just stay at home and play your video games, what with crazy Conroy Biggins loose and everything."

With that, Jim points to a wanted poster on the outside of the police department (see **Handout B**), which shows that Conroy Biggins has recently escaped custody.

Windjammers Restaurant and Pier

Windjammers is a local fish and chips restaurant famous for its fresh fish, greasy fries, and oyster shooters. A public telephone booth is outside the restaurant, but the phone cord was cut by some unruly teenagers a few nights ago. An old harpoon is mounted over Windjammers' serving window, which later in the adventure the PCs might want to pull off the wall and use (treat as a heavy spear, thr+5 imp, 6 lbs., can get stuck!).

A small pier is located a little ways from the restaurant. Several small fishing boats, rowboats, and dinghies are moored here during the summer.

 **Two of the pregenerated PCs keep boats here. If the players are playing without those particular characters, GMs should give at least one of the PCs a small boat outside of the restaurant.**

As the PCs approach the stand, they are accosted by old HARRIET BRIMBLE, the PCs' strict, aggravating, and highly annoyed English teacher. She hits the PCs – especially the boys – with a positively professional level of scholarly aggressive-

CONROY BIGGINS

DANGEROUS FUGITIVE

ST	12	HP:	12
DX	12	Will:	13
IQ	12	Per:	12
HT	12	FP:	12

Basic Speed: 6.0

Move: 6

Dodge: 9

Punch: 1d-1 cr, reach C



Traits: Bad Temper; Enemy (FBI); Loner; Luck; Social Stigma (Criminal Record). Facial scar; Always seems on edge - like a coiled spring; Vengeful; Hates his dad.

Skills: Boating-11; Brawling-14; Climbing-11; Driving-11; Escape-12; Fishing-12; Guns-13; Holdout-13; Intimidation-14; Knife-12; Mechanic-11; Slip Handcuffs-9; Stealth-12; Street-wise-12; Survival-11; Swimming-12.

Gear: Walther P38 pistol (2d+2 pi, Acc 2, Range 160/1800, RoF 3, Shots 9+1(3); Bulk -2; Rcl 2, 2.5 lbs); homemade shiv (1d-2 imp, Parry 8, Reach C).

ness. She demands to know what books they've read over the summer, and whatever the answer, scoffs at it. Eventually, the PCs can dodge her, but not without her yelling at them that they'll be good-for-nothings if they don't up the game on their summer reading.

If the PCs have spotted a wanted poster at the police station or the library, a PERCEPTION roll spots someone who looks a lot like Conroy Biggins eating outside the restaurant! Dressed in a dark fisherman's jacket and wearing a trucker's hat, the man silently eats his meal. He'll make eye contact with any of the PCs who see him, instantly intimidating them with hardened, bloodshot eyes.

If the PCs' PERCEPTION roll is made by 3 or more, they'll also spot the butt of a pistol hidden underneath Conroy Biggins' coat!

If the PCs try to make conversation with Conroy, he's irritated, curses at them, and tell them to get lost. If they threaten him or call him out, he'll casually draw attention to his gun and threaten them back, saying he's got no problem killing nosy kids, their siblings and parents... *especially* their parents. "Got no business with you... just my dad," he growls.

If the PCs call attention to Conroy, he'll glare ruefully, gobble down his food, and walk briskly into the nearby woods. The other locals at the restaurant are mostly teens and young



couples – few people there have heard of the escaped convict, and the ones that have are not brave enough to interfere.

GM's Note: If the PCs do something outright foolish, like try to physically stop Conroy, he'll pull his gun and threaten them. He won't actually shoot at a PC, but will fire into the crowd, maybe hitting a diner in the shoulder. The commotion will likely give him the chance to escape. If the PCs somehow find a way to capture him here, as unlikely as that is to work, let them, and have a burly cook from Windjammers agree to tie Conroy up until the police arrive. But remind the players that the police are hours away, and they have a friend to save!

Windjammers' Pier

The PCs can get to Sitka Island in one of two ways. First, they can boat out to the island themselves. This is pretty straightforward as the island is only a mile offshore. An IQ or AREA KNOWLEDGE roll can find it; failure indicates it takes an extra hour or so to get there, which isn't material to the adventure unless the PCs left late enough that it is nighttime by the time they arrive.

Or, the PCs can rent a boat for a few dollars, or ask a local fisherman for a ride. The fishermen who fish off Windjammers are generally friendly and up for helping out polite kids. If the PCs get a drop off, most fishermen will insist on picking the PCs up about an hour before dark (8 pm at the latest). Anything later will require great roleplaying or social skill use (e.g., a FAST-TALK, DIPLOMACY, or SEX APPEAL roll).

 *If the players are using the pregenerated Kiana character, the mayor's son and angsty ex-cook WILB ATKINS is one of the men here. He sulks and pretends to be angry at her firing him during the storm last night... but ultimately really respects Kiana, and so will go out of his way to help her, lending her his boat or taking her to Sitka himself.*

Brad Hogan the Bully

About twenty minutes into the journey, a 16' Balboa racing sailboat sweeps near to the PCs, purposely cutting across the front of the PCs' boat to make the waters choppy and rough.



The Balboa is captained by BRAD HOGAN, popular high school quarterback, and arrogant son of a rich timber tycoon. His one crewmate is his pretty girlfriend MARNIE LI. Nobody can keep track of how many times the two seniors have broken up and gotten back together this year.

As Hogan shows off his expert sailing skills, he calls out to the PCs, asking them where they are going in their sad and pathetic boat. He'll pry for information, but only to mock the PCs for whatever they say they're doing. If the Goblin-Thing comes up, he laughs hysterically and say that if he ever saw it, he'd kill it and "mount its squidy little head over the fireplace at my winter cabin." He pulls out a flare gun for show.

If the PCs show backbone or otherwise irritate Hogan, he'll pull out a football and aggressively chuck it at one of them, trying to hit them so hard they grunt or even fall off the boat. GMs can allow a Dodge roll to avoid 1 hp damage, or a DX-2 roll to catch the football and embarrass Hogan. Marnie is clearly fatigued from the whole exchange.

Eventually, Hogan announces that he's taking Marnie on a romantic picnic on one of the other nearby islands, and zips off. Later in the adventure, Brad Hogan may show up to help or harass the PCs further.

Act 2 - Sitka Island

Sitka Island itself is a small, rugged island typical of the Pacific Northwest. Its jagged, rocky cliffs plunge into the churning, slate-gray sea, requiring a BOATING roll to land anywhere but one of the beaches near Area 1 and 5. Unusually, mist shrouds its shores today, lending an air of mystique to the island.

It takes about thirty minutes to boat out to Sitka Island. The waters in the harbor are choppiest than normal.

1 The Beach - The Upturned Boat

The PCs can land anywhere on the island they want, but if they circle the island and make a PERCEPTION (VISION) roll they'll spot Jake Samson's recognizable red dinghy lying overturned on the western shore.

The rowboat is flipped upside down and clearly damaged with a fist-sized hole in its bottom. The boat is surrounded by a dozen shiny, near-pristine nickels. When inspected, the nickels are incredibly-rare 1896 Liberty Head nickels! A HISTORY roll recalls that they were lost during the sinking of the Mosquito fleet decades ago, and they are each potentially worth hundreds of dollars!

Underneath the rowboat is an **emaciated rotting corpse**, dressed in dirty rags, sharp branch embedded in its chest. Seeing the dead thing – a dead *Stiffleg* – requires a FRIGHT CHECK-1!

At first, the corpse seems human, but then looking more closely, it has inhuman qualities. The thing has no hair and has eyes made of milky glass. An old sailor's anchor tattoo is visible on one wrist, and around one finger is a simple gold buckle ring. Anyone who carefully examines the corpse or makes a PERCEPTION-2 roll notices that it has no joints in its knees!

Anyone searching the area also finds a several yards of rope wrapped around a tree, with no apparent explanation. Also nearby are several barefoot tracks lead into the evergreen and fern forest in the center of the island. A TRACKING roll identifies some as weirdly spaced and weighted, like someone was walking stiffly.

As the PCs finish investigating the beach, they will be interrupted by a man's **startled cry** coming from the interior of the island (area 2). A PERCEPTION (HEARING) roll specifically hears "Get back, ya shabbaroon!"

GM's Note: Once the PCs leave their boat, it will soon get sabotaged by the Stifflegs. Even if the PCs hide it, it will still get destroyed – the devious Stifflegs are watching the PCs as they arrive, and take note.

Other Landing Spots

If the PCs land on any other beaches or rockier landing areas, they'll find a few nickels and a similar trail of stiff-legged footprints in the sand, which will eventually lead them to Jake's upside-down boat.

2 Mordecai Anchorage

Following the shout into the woods, the PCs find a white-bearded, grizzled old man, MORDECAI ANCHORAGE, standing atop a huge fallen tree. He has a harpoon in his left hand and a old book tucked under his right arm. He's brandishing the harpoon wildly, but there is nothing else nearby.

When he sees the PCs, he angrily tells them to take cover, else the Stifflegs get them:

"Don't come any closer! There's one of them stiff-legged shabbaroons right here under the log, and that means there's more! Take to the high ground, ya fools!"

Despite Mordecai's warnings, nothing happens. After a few uneventful minutes, it's clear there is no immediate danger

around, although the PCs will have to talk Mordecai out of his fearful state for him to let them come closer:

- There is a hole in the ground under the log – it looks like it is the entrance to a tight, claustrophobic tunnel. The ground is soft and torn up, confirming something was in here a few minutes ago, but there’s no sign of anything now (see the Log Tunnel below for more information).
- Mordecai tells the PCs he came to the island shortly after he saw a teenager land here. He knew the boy – Jake Samson – was in danger and rowed here to convince him to leave, but he was “too hardheaded to listen.” He hasn’t seen him since he landed, however.
- If asked about the Goblin-Thing, he scoffs and says that it doesn’t exist. *“Just an old legend Zacharias spreads to keep people away from this island.”*
- If asked about Zacharias, he says that he lives in a cabin not far from here, but *“the man’s scared and has gotten himself into bad things – avoid the man.”* He only reveals that Zacharias is Conroy’s son if asked specifically about it, as he respects his friend’s privacy.
- Mordecai tells the PCs they should leave the island immediately, because by nightfall it will be “overrun by Zacharias’ hungry stiff-legged friends.” If asked, he goes on to describe the Stifflegs as *“un-living, blasphemous things – probably drowned sailors – whose joints have fused together because of an old sea curse!”*
- If asked about the Stiffleg back at Jake’s boat, he doesn’t know any more. He reckons the boy tried returning to his boat and was attacked. *“Those things hate all of us living folks...”*
- If asked about the old book he is carrying under his arm, he says it is something he found thrown on the ground near not too far from here. He refuses to let the PCs see it on account it’s not for “young folks’ eyes,” but a PERCEPTION (VISION) roll spots the title – *Witchcraft of the Tides - 1903 Edition*.
- If the PCs somehow trick Mordecai into showing them a bit of the book, they’ll see its pages are filled with sigils and occult drawings!

Eventually, Mordecai grows tired of bantering with the teenage PCs, and say that he’s leaving them on their own and heading back to Oak Harbor. If, through good roleplaying or social skills, the PCs have endeared themselves to Mordecai, he’ll give them his hatchet and some contents from his supply bag – some granola bars and a few flares.

The Log Tunnel

A dank, shadowy tunnel snakes its way beneath the rotting log, teeming with squirming insects and pungent with the stench of decaying organic matter. The tunnel is only big enough for a single person to crawl through on their belly.

MORDECAI ANCHORAGE

CRAZY OLD MARINER

ST	13	HP: 13
DX	11	Will: 12
IQ	11	Per: 11
HT	10	FP: 10



Basic Speed: 5.25 Punch: 1d-1 cr
Move: 5
Dodge: 8

Traits: Bad Temper; Loner; One Hand; Reputation -2 (Crazy Old Man); Soft spot for kids; Grumpy; Hair is always wild and unkempt; uses odd phrases leftover from the 1950s, especially “shabbaroon” (someone he doesn’t like), “word-grubber” (an intellectual), and “unlicked cub” (someone with bad manners); Soft spot for kids.

Skills: Area Knowledge (Puget Sound)-13; Axe/Mace-11; Boating-12; Brawling-12; Climbing-11; Fishing-14; Occultism-11; Spear-10; Swimming-10; Thrown Weapon (Harpoon)-12).

Gear: Hatchet (2d-1 cut, Parry 8, Reach 1); large knife.

The Mermaid Pendant



A hundred years ago, this old pendant was blessed by a long-dead Swinomish medicine man. Anyone wearing the pendant has sway over unholy creations like the Stifflegs... and knows it. By spending a turn and concentrating, the owner may make a Will roll, dealing 2

points of crushing damage per point by which the roll was made, or 20 points of damage automatically on a critical success. DR does not protect. Finally Stifflegs fear the amulet, and attack the wearer at -3.

A dozen or so yards down the tunnel is a writhing mass of fat yellow worms. They are swarming over a lump... of something. As a PC approaches it, the worms wriggle away, revealing the recently severed head of a seal. This disgusting sight causes gagging and a FRIGHT CHECK-1!

If a PC is brave enough to pass through the worms, several minutes later they’ll find that the tunnel ends. Nearby, there’s an old chestnut box placed here. If the box is opened and examined, there is a wad of old bills (about \$100), a silver pendant with an crude mermaid carved into it, and an old

photo that shows a younger Conroy Biggins fishing with his father, Zacharias Biggins (see [Handout E](#)). A wooden floorboard lies above the chest.

GM's Note: The Mermaid Pendant was found by Zacharias Biggins when he was exploring the nearby wreck of the Dix. He kept it and stashed it away here. See the text box for its unusual, occult effects.

Anyone making a ST roll can push up the floor board... and find themselves underneath Zacharias' Tanning Cabin. As they push up the floorboard, however, they'll hear a sudden banging noise as a lone Stiffleg exits through the door of the cabin and runs into the woods.

Ⓔ Zacharias' Tanning Cabin

In a clearing is an old tanning cabin. Its weathered timbers and dimly lit windows exude a disquieting aura. Racks of drying seal skin surround the cabin, a bucket of leather glue is sealed nearby, and several barrels hold soapy water.

The cabin belongs to Zacharias Biggins, the father of the escaped felon, Conroy Biggins. A loner who has wanted to escape any connection with his criminal son, he's lived here for many years, making his living fishing, skinning seals, and recovering pieces from old ship wrecks to sell back in Oak Harbor.

The interior of the cabin smells like old wood and pungent curing leather. A messy cot is in the corner and a wood stove is still warm to the touch. A table is covered in dried blood and scraps of sealskin leather, and a wicked looking **fleshing knife** is stabbed into it (treat as a fine small knife). A **metal flashlight** is nearby on a side table. Stashed under the cot is a **backpack** – Jake Samson's! Inside is a blank journal, a compass, Polaroid camera, and a photo of the *Dix* (see [Handout F](#)). An IQ or NAVIGATION+5 roll can tell, from the position of the sun, the shipwreck is on the island's east side.

A CB radio is in the corner of the cabin, which the PCs may guess is the same one Jake Samson used to communicate with them earlier. An ELECTRONICS OPERATION (COMMUNICATIONS)+3 roll notices that it's set to the same channel as the one's the PCs normally use back in the Attic House.

On the cot is an unlocked metal lockbox. Inside is a letter from Conroy, which threatens Zacharias for turning him in years ago (see [Handout G](#)), a crumpled copy of Conroy's wanted poster, and a torn page from *Witchcraft of the Tides*, which contains the original spell Zacharias used to summon the Stifflegs to protect himself from Conroy (see [Handout H](#)).

STIFFLEG

CURSED MARINERS

ST	12	HP: 12
DX	11	Will: 8
IQ	8	Per: 9
HT	9	FP: 9



Basic Speed: 4.0 Claw: 1d cut
Move: 4 (a rare few are faster ones, with Move 5)
Dodge: 7

Traits: Amphibious; Bestial; Cannot Speak; Decreased Basic Speed 1; Doesn't Breathe (Gills); Doesn't Eat or Drink; Doesn't Sleep; High Pain Threshold; Incompetence (Climbing); Injury Tolerance (No Blood); Sharp Claws. Walk underwater at regular move. Hate Conroy Biggins. Will never attack Zacharias Biggins.

Skills: Brawling-13; Broadsword-11; Knife-11; Swimming-11.

Gear: Most do not carry any gear, but some of the particularly *smart ones* (IQ 9) carry rotten boards (1d+2 cr, Parry 8, Reach 1) or sharp sticks (1d-2 imp, Parry 7, Reach C), which they wield with skill 11. Many carry a single 1896 Liberty Head nickel somewhere on their bodies, a treasure lost during the sinking of the *Dix*.

④ The Wreck of the Dix

The *Dix*, an old passenger steamboat, lies in rotting shambles in a hidden inlet. The ship was wrecked almost a hundred years ago when it was rammed by a heavier cargo vessel containing iron ore. An examination of the boat finds a massive hole in its port side from the collision. Also, a PER-based BOATING roll notices that the ship's wheel is clearly missing from the boat, a testament that Jake Samson found it all those years ago.

The boat itself is covered in rotten-smelling barnacles and an IQ roll finds that it was likely underwater for a long time before it was dragged to the shore here.

There are several footprints in the sand near the boat. An IQ rolls finds a collection of unusual prints. A TRACKING roll discovers more detail:

- Two different sets of men's boot prints (Zacharias Biggins and Mordecai Anchorage)
- Sneaker prints (Jake Samson)
- Awkwardly-spaced bare footprints (at least two Stifflegs)
- Four-toed animal prints. A NATURALIST+3 or IQ-2 roll identifies them as bobcat prints.

The superstructure of the boat is badly damaged, though the dark entryway in its fore looks big enough to enter. The first

PC who climbs up will hear a **creaking noise** from the interior of the boat. A further PERCEPTION (HEARING) roll will hear a faint thumping sound, like an old rocking chair inside.

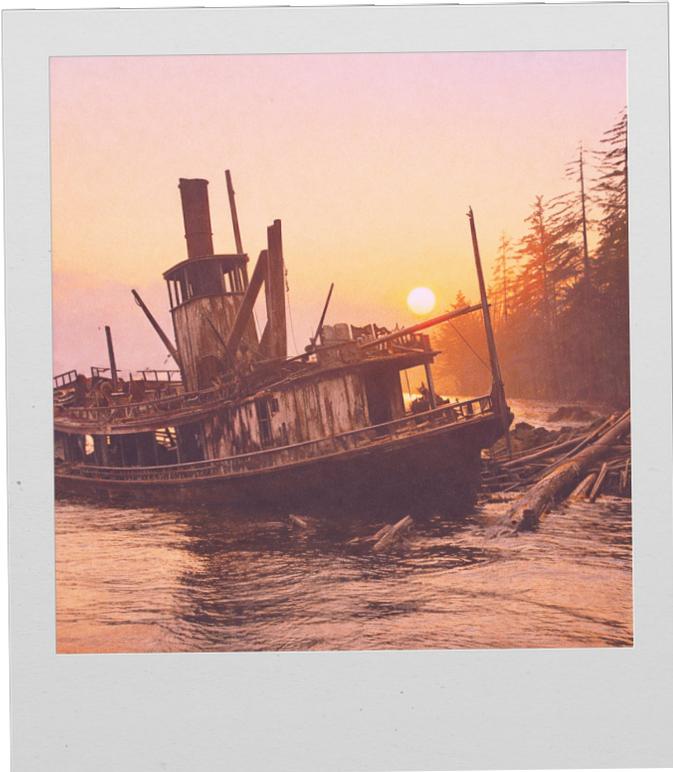
The interior of the wreck is sour-smelling and dark – only a dim oil lamp hangs in the back of the boat (all vision-based rolls are at -3). Passenger benches lie twisted and rotting in the interior, which was once large enough to hold at least sixty passengers.

Jake Samson and the Conflagration

Jake Samson is tied up in the back of the ship, half-hidden behind a dozen or so seawater-filled metal drums. He's bound to an old rocking chair with worn rope, and a bandana has been tied tightly around his mouth. He groans for help when he sees the PCs.

As soon as the PCs move forward, part of the ceiling collapses in. Crashing down from the level above are two Stifflegs, who move forward ferociously to attack the PCs. Seeing these creatures alive and up close requires a FRIGHT CHECK-2!

At the same time, the creatures' sudden drop causes the oil lamp to fall and set the old boat on fire! Now, the PCs must fend off the Stifflegs, rescue Jake, and escape before the entire boat catches on fire. The GM should roll 2d6 – this is how many turns the PCs have before virtually every spot on the boat is on fire (moving through the fire deals 1d-3 burn damage per turn); 1d6 turns after that, the *Dix* is a burning conflagration, dealing 1d-1 damage per turn.



PCs who think to dump out the metal seawater drums can stop the fire. A ST roll can knock over a heavy drum. Each drum knocked over has a 2 in 6 chance of putting out the fire (but no chance if it's already a conflagration).

Once the PCs fend off the Stifflegs, free Jake, and escape the burning ship, he will tell his story. Jake explains that shortly after arriving on the island, he was attacked by what he thought was the Goblin-Thing. He stabbed it with an improvised spear, ventured further inward and he found the tanners' cabin. In the cabin, he discovered the secret tunnel underneath, which he thought led to the Goblin-Thing's lair, since he found many rare 1896 nickels under the floorboards of the tunnel.

Before fully exploring the tunnel, Jake used the CB in the cabin to call the PCs. But in the middle of the message, he was grabbed by a "really scary guy," knocked out, and awakened in the *Dix*. He said that the man was grumbling something about him being "a friend of his son's" and that he "deserved what he got." He was left here, and has no idea what happened to the man. If shown the wanted poster or the fishing photo found in lockbox, Jake confirms it was Zacharias who grabbed him, not Conroy.

Regardless of whether the *Dix* is burned, or merely just a wreck, Jake looks at it fondly. "When I found that ship wheel on the beach all those years ago, I never thought I would have found the whole ship one day."

Despite all that has happened to him, Jake still feverishly believes that he has found the Goblin-Thing's lair. If the PCs have not yet visited the Tanning Cabin, Jake refuses to leave the island until he has returned to explore the tunnel, insisting there is treasure under the floor. "I saw Zacharias bury something there!"

If the PCs have already visited the cabin, Jake will eventually listen to reason and agree to escape the island. (See *Escape from Sitka*, p.10).

🕒 Zacharias' Hidden Boat

A small dinghy is hidden here, hoisted up a large pine tree with a pulley and thick, hemp rope. Anyone wandering in the area can make a PERCEPTION (VISION)-3 roll to spot the boat (unmodified roll if they know there's one hidden here).

Wandering near the tree is a Stiffleg. With an uncanny knack for destroying boats, the Stiffleg stares up at the boat with hatred... but seems unable to figure out how to reach it, or how to release the pulley that keeps it in the tree. To get the boat down, the PCs have to kill the Stiffleg, lure it away, or figure out how to drop the boat on top of him...

Key Event - The Standoff

After the PCs have rescued Jake and are deciding what to do next, they hear a gunshot ring out from a clearing in the woods (area 6).

If the PCs rush to the sound, they'll find a standoff in progress. Furious fugitive Conroy Biggins aims a gun at his father Zacharias from only a few yards away. Zacharias already seems to be wounded, as he's clutching a bloody shoulder. The two are arguing fiercely. Conroy angrily accuses his father of turning him in years ago... and testifying against him. Zacharias does not deny it, and only says that his son is an evil man, and that he's arranged for a "greater evil to take him back to the abyss."

The PCs only have a few moments to react, otherwise Conroy will shoot his father several times again and flee to the north to escape the island on his boat.

To save Zacharias, the PCs need to either do amazing roleplaying to stall him, get lucky with a surprise attack on Conroy, or leap in the way of Conroy's aim. These heroic outcomes, while difficult, will cause Conroy to fire a warning shot at the PCs and then flee angrily towards his boat, hoping to return another time to exact revenge on his father.

GM's Note: If the PCs stall, or entirely avoid approaching this scene, they'll soon see Zacharias Biggins stumbling out of the woods in front of them, blood streaked down his chest. He'll sputter out his last words before expiring.

Poor Zacharias

Even if shot, Zacharias lives long enough to impart some critical information to the PCs:

- Zacharias truly despises his son Conroy, who he says is godless and evil. *"Ever since the boy fell into a hole that New Years Day as a boy, and we didn't find him for three days, he came back different. Have no pity for him left now."*
- He was so afraid of his son, he resorted to using dark magic from a book he found on the *Dix* to protect himself. He left the book in the woods when he saw the first Stiffleg appear.
- He's confused why the magic didn't work (he didn't understand that the spell builds in power over time), and wishes that he could see the page one last time. *"I found a book on the Dix. Read it and knew it would protect me... thought it was gonna work good, but look at me chest... didn't work at all. Fetch me the page I tore out so I can see what went wrong..."*
- If asked about a way off the island, Zacharias mutters that he has hidden a small boat on the western shore.

What If Conroy is Caught?

During Conroy's confrontation with his father, the PCs may decide to gang up and attack Conroy. While this is dangerous (he has a gun), it's possible that with luck or quick action they can take him down. Once Conroy realizes that he can't escape, he surrenders to the PCs and convincingly pleads for mercy. He begs that the PCs take him back to Oak Harbor so that he can surrender to the authorities. Of course, he has no intent to actually do so. Instead, as the PCs near the town, he'll leap into the water and try to make his getaway. Regardless of whether his escape attempt is successful, his proximity to the town will summon the horde of Stifflegs upon it, which sets up the third act of the adventure.

Escaping Sitka

Building a Raft

The PCs may think to build a raft. While this might take a few days in real-life, kids from the 1980s were crafty. With tools like Mordecai's hatchet, rope, and the empty barrels from the cabin or drums from the *Dix*, a successful CARPENTRY roll can build a raft in a few hours. All through out this time, the PCs will see and hear more and more Stifflegs roaming the island. They seem to be multiplying fast...

Zacharias' Hidden Boat

Zacharias has a small boat hidden in Area 6. If the PCs find it, they can easily carry it to the water.

Repairing Jake's Boat

While Jake's boat was damaged by a Stiffleg, it can be repaired. There's seal-skin leather and glue in the tanning cabin. A LEATHERWORKING roll can patch the boat up. Or, some extra wood and a CARPENTRY roll can repair the hole as well.

Brad Hogan's Balboa

If the PCs have encountered Brad Hogan, they'll soon see him a hundred or so yards from Sitka Island, cruising around the island with his girlfriend. While a jerk and a bully, Brad can be convinced to land and rescue the PCs, although he's going to make them pay for the trip, forcing the PCs to promise him all kinds of expensive favors when they return.

Suddenly, as Zacharias expires (or falls unconscious from his initial wound, if saved from a second gunshot), a crash is heard from the nearby brush. A Stiffleg emerges, hot on the trail of Conroy. However, upon seeing the PCs, it turns on them and attacks. In the distance, the PCs will hear more and more sounds of the awkward, stiff dead walking through the brush; a PERCEPTION (VISION) roll sees shadowy figures lurching towards them in the distance.

Escape from Sitka!

Once the PCs have rescued Jake Samson, they'll no doubt be anxious to leave the island. Unfortunately, their boat has been smashed to smithereens by the Stifflegs, and Jake's boat has been damaged as well. Escaping the island will take a little more ingenuity (see p.10).

Just as the PCs have secured their means of escape, a horde of forty Stifflegs strut out of the forest and angrily head towards the PCs! A few may be faster ones who get to the PCs and try grabbing their watercraft as they escape.

Just as the PCs think that they have fully escaped death at the hands of the undead, the Stifflegs turn their glowing red eyes towards Oak Harbor. Sensing that their true target is there – Conroy Biggins – they splash into the water and begin padding, slowly, towards the town.

Act 3 - The Siege of Oak Harbor

The PCs will land in Oak Harbor about twenty minutes before the horde of Stifflegs arrives (or about forty-five minutes if they somehow hitched a ride on Brad Hogan's racing sailboat).

To stop the Stifflegs from rampaging through the town, the PCs need the instructions on how to dispel the curse. These instructions are in the tome that Mordecai Anchorage was last seen holding, *Witchcraft of the Tides - 1903 Edition*. The book contains the critical information that the Stifflegs' burial ground – aka the *Dix* – must be completely destroyed, and the "Sovereign of the Dead" must be then parleyed with.

Recovering the Book

The old book of rituals is likely still with Mordecai, who took it from the island, believing it would be helpful in the future. His house is just off Fort Nugent Avenue, just less than a mile from the pier at Windjammers. PCs may recall his address with an

AREA KNOWLEDGE-2 roll, or look up his address in the phone book outside the Windjammers telephone booth *GM's Note: Remember its phone is out of order!*

When Mordecai hears the story of what happened, the old mariner is terrified but willing to help. He fills in the gaps in the PCs story, telling them that Zacharias was a fool to try to summon the dead from the sinking of the *Dix* to protect him from his son, Conroy. He tells the PCs that the Stifflegs are insatiable, and seeking vengeance on Conroy Biggins, and that they'll kill everyone in the town while they're looking to find him. Without the authorities around, only the PCs have a chance of saving Oak Harbor.

Inside the book, the PCs find the counter-ritual to Zacharias' spell, "Maanul's Peace," which states that the burial ground – aka the *Dix* – needs to be utterly destroyed before the Stifflegs can be sent back to the abyss (see [Handout I](#)).

If the PCs let the flames do their work on the *Dix*, then they are mostly there! However, there is one last part of the *Dix* remaining, the ship's wheel, which Jake Samson found years ago, and is mounted inside the library.

If the PCs did *not* destroy the *Dix*, for example, putting out the fires, then they have an additional complication. Some of them must return to Sitka Island to do the job... or convince Mordecai or Jake Samson to do it for them. This will take at least thirty minutes to row back out to the island, less if the PCs have a faster way of getting there (such as Brad Hogan's racing boat).



Countdown and Disaster

During the third and final act, the PCs must deal with a few encounters, as the town slowly gets overwhelmed by Stifflegs. Unless the PCs can halt Zacharias' curse, the town will inevitably fall. The GM should trigger these events to increase the danger and accelerate the endgame:

1. Stifflegs in the Kitchen

The PCs hear a cry from a familiar NPC's nearby house – a good candidate is Greta Cornburg, the librarian, or Harriet Brimble, the PCs' hated English teacher. Through the window, the PCs see the woman brandishing a cast iron pan, cornered by two hostile Stifflegs.

If the PCs don't do anything, the Stifflegs take down their victim, search the house for Conroy, and then hobble off in anger. However, if the PCs save the woman, she'll thank them profusely, tell them to wait for a moment, and then bring down a tin of candies and a loaded shotgun from her bedroom for them!

The shotgun is an antique Winchester 12G (1d+1 pi, Acc 3, Range 40/800, RoF 2x9, Shots 5+1 (2i), ST 11, Bulk -6, Rcl 1/5, 9 lbs.) Within 4 yards, each barrel does does 4d+4 damage, with any DR multiplied by 4.

2. Conroy is Spotted

The body of the town's antique store owner, Charles Khua, lies in the street ahead. A Stiffleg looms over him, throttling his seemingly lifeless body. Suddenly, the loud engine of a Ford Pinto is heard. A car comes careening around the bed, hits the Stiffleg, and races down the road. A PERCEPTION (VISION)-3 roll spots that a fearful Conroy Biggins is driving the car. He races down the road, turns the corner tight, and just as he disappears out of view, there's a loud honking and crash. Then, emerging from between the nearby houses is a pack of six more Stifflegs, who hurry in his direction, hatred

glowing in their orange eyes. The PCs can hide from the Stifflegs, lure them away, or face them down.

If the PCs check the body of Charles Khua, they'll find he's alive, barely. A FIRST AID roll can stop the bleeding and stabilize him.

If the PCs investigate the crash, they'll find the Ford Pinto spun out on the road. The car door is open and there's no sign of Conroy Biggins.

3. The Town is Overrun!

Dozens of Stifflegs have now made their way into the town. Many houses have caught on fire, and pedestrians run screaming through the streets. Bodies are starting to pile up.

The PCs see Brad Hogan on top of his red Porsche 944, baseball bat in hand, defending his girlfriend Marnie inside the car from at least five of the creatures... but his situation looks hopeless.

Not too far away, the PCs catch a glimpse of Conroy Biggins, limping from his recent car accident. He approaches a nearby car, throws out the driver, and then races towards the center of town, more and more Stifflegs following him. Double the number of Stifflegs at the library now (from four to eight)!

Disaster: The Fall of Oak Harbor

If the PCs have not stopped the Stifflegs within two hours of their arrival, the town collapses into chaos. Soon, the military is called in and the town is evacuated. The PCs and their surviving family members are homeless, Conroy Biggins is not seen again, and there are annual reports of Stifflegs attacks up and down the Puget Sound for years to come.

Return to the Library

By the time the PCs return back to Oak Harbor, the library is closed and locked up. To get in, the PCs will have to either pick the locks, smash a window, or go convince the librarian Greta Cornburg to open it up.

Dramatically, as the PCs converge on the library, at least four Stifflegs chase after them, seemingly knowing that the PCs are planning their demise. The Stifflegs crash through windows, push through any open doors, and otherwise try to stop the PCs from destroying the wheel.

Once inside the reading room, the PCs can rip the ship's wheel off of its display – requiring tools or a ST-3 roll – throw it in the fireplace, and light it on fire. Or, the PCs can use a hatchet or axe to chop it to pieces, but this will take a few minutes before it is destroyed enough for the spell to work.

Destroying the *Dix*

If the PCs have had to head back to Sitka Island to destroy the *Dix*, they find the island quiet. The Stifflegs have all left the island to kill Conroy Biggins in Oak Harbor. It doesn't take more than a few matches to ignite the *Dix* and burn it to ashes.

If the PCs sent a reliable NPC to destroy the boat, and did so in a timely manner, they'll do so without incident. However, the GM should play up the tension! Once the ship's wheel is destroyed, the Stifflegs should pause a moment... then suddenly resume their attack! But after a few more moments, suddenly the Stifflegs stop moving and stare ruefully as the Sovereign of the Dead arrives.

If one of the players went back to the island, and the GM wants to increase the tension, they'll hear noise inside the boat as they approach. Suddenly, lurching out of the boat is Zacharias Biggins, not dead after all! He spits out blood and says that he's looking for his old book, to try to put a stop to the curse. With that, he collapses, too weak to help.

Finale - The Sovereign of the Dead

With the *Dix* entirely destroyed, the Stifflegs cease moving. It is as if rigor mortis has suddenly affected them. In low, wet guttural voices, they groan "Conroy... Biggins..." again and again. Then the PCs feel a cold breeze swirl around them.

Emerging from the shadows is the Sovereign of the Dead, a figure draped in rags with a bone-colored face that looks like a fish-eyed skull with tentacles surrounding it – to any resident of Oak Harbor, the thing must clearly be the Goblin-Thing!

"It appears we must parley," the creature says in a casual, stoic voice, eyeing the Stifflegs around him with a measure of disgust. This calls for a FRIGHT CHECK-1!

Conroy Arrives

Suddenly, Conroy Biggins erupts on to the scene. If he was last seen in his car, it smashes through the Stifflegs and crashes into the library. Otherwise, he simply stumbles into view, his shirt stained with blood, a vicious scrape across his face.

A gunshot rings out and a Stiffleg goes down. He points his gun at the PCs, then at the mysterious Sovereign, then back at the PCs.

"What did my dad do?!" he screams. "No... you all did this! It was ever since I saw you at the fish stand... you've cursed me with these... these...things! You and my kook father cooked up all of this together! You have ten seconds to tell them to back off and quit following me!"

The Sovereign looks curiously at Conroy Biggins, and then to the PCs. He waits for them to act.

GM's Note: If Conroy Biggins has already been stopped, or has completely fled, then you can ignore this part of the scene. While it's fun to have a final confrontation with Conroy at the end of the adventure, it's certainly not required if your players have already done their best to be rid of him by now!

Conroy is wounded and only has 4 HP at this point. The PCs have a few options to defeat Conroy:

- First, they may have the element of surprise – if the PCs are still in the library, some of them may have the chance to duck behind a desk or bookcase, so Conroy isn't aware of their presence.
- The Sovereign doesn't appreciate being interrupted by Conroy, but does not take any action on his own. If the PCs ask him for help, he flicks a bony finger and Conroy's gun flies from his hand into a pile of nearby debris.
- The Mermaid Medallion actually works on the evil, hateful Conroy, but not the same way it affects Stifflegs. If the wearer uses it on him, roll a Contest of Will. If successful, the wearer mentally stuns Conroy.
- The PCs may think to throw a chair or topple a bookcase on top of him. Any action that startles him might cause Conroy to make a DX roll to hold on to his gun.
- The PCs can distract Conroy long enough for them to parley with the Sovereign (see below). This may cause Conroy to become scared as the Stifflegs dissolve away.
- Deus Ex Machina. If the PCs are *really* in trouble here, one of the friendly NPCs can crash on to the scene, giving them PCs some time to tackle Conroy or grab his gun.

With Conroy defeated, the PCs only action left is to destroy the Stifflegs by parleying with the Sovereign.

Parleying with the Sovereign

As soon as the PCs begin talking in earnest with the Sovereign, he interrupts them to remove his face – actually an ancient mask. Underneath the mask are the chiseled features of an ancient man. Whether he is some eldritch lord, the spirit of the Swinomish medicine man who created the mermaid medallion, or ritualist Maanul himself, the PCs will never know.

If asked about the Stifflegs, the Sovereign first politely asks each of the PCs their names. Names, he says, are important in such matters. Then, he asks for the name of the man that spoke the curse that brought the Stifflegs to life. As long as the PCs respond honestly – Zacharias Biggins did it – he will tsk, put his mask back on, and utter a few old words.

Then, the Stifflegs to all dissolve away. First, the stiff joints on their legs shatter. Then screaming “Conrooyy” they melt into greasy piles of sea foam. This sight causes a FRIGHT CHECK-2 for all who see it!

Once his ritual is done, the Sovereign smiles gently and walks off, disappearing into the shadows forever

Conclusion

With some careful tactics and teamwork, the adventure concludes with the PCs banishing the Stifflegs and defeating Conroy Biggins. Soon, Oak Harbor DEPUTY FILMORE, crashes on to the scene, accompanied by adults wielding baseball bats, flare guns, and other improvised weapons. With Conroy Biggins dead or in custody, and the curse lifted, Oak Harbor is saved. While the town will soon dismiss the Stifflegs as nothing more than Canadian hooligans, they won't ever forget the brave teenagers who apprehended the notorious Conroy Biggins.

And if the PCs have recovered enough of those rare Liberty Head nickels, they'll be able to sell them off for quite a bit of money – at least enough to help with college, take their families on vacation, or even buy a cool new bike.

For completing the adventure, surviving PCs should receive 2 character points. They should receive an additional character points for good roleplaying, and another point or two for excellent performance (e.g., saving key NPCs, or apprehending Conroy Biggins).

Extending the Adventure: Antiquities

The NPC Charles Khua is the owner of Harbor Antiquities, an antique store, which is located a few blocks from the library. He's been collecting interesting items from wreckage of the Mosquito Fleet for years, not to mention artifacts from other famous shipwrecks. His most precious artifact is a



Greek bronze shortsword recovered from an ancient Roman wreck. He playfully claims it is the sword of Perseus, since the sword has weird rusty streaks across the blade, “from the head of medusa herself.”

If the PCs befriend Charles Khua, or save him during the finale, he may offer to take them back to his antique store to find something to help them. First, he has an identical copy of the Mermaid Medallion, which works in the same way, found in the wreckage of the *Fairy*, another doomed vessel of the Mosquito Fleet. Second, he has several old WWII helmets (DR 8, 3 lbs). Finally, he has the Perseus sword, which is treated as a shortsword (thr imp, sw cut, 2 lbs), though GMs can tweak this and make it particularly effective against the Stifflegs (+2 damage).

Special Thanks

Special thanks to @voicemillennial on Fiverr.com for the professional voice over introduction. The art in this adventure was created through a blend of original art, source photography, and Midjourney.

For more one-shot adventures, visit www.1shotadventures.com. If you enjoyed this adventure, or ran it for a group, all the author asks is that you give a shout out and let me know how it went. Post a note on www.1shotadventures.com or tweet @SageThalcos.

Disclaimer

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VTT Notes

Visit www.1shotadventures.com for additional VTT assets for this adventure, including tokens, handouts, and maps. Also, good maps for this adventure include the small town maps from [Cthulhu Architect](#).

Version History

1.0 - Original *GURPS* version

1.1 - Editing pass. Adjusted the photo of the *Dix* to better reveal its location.

Additional NPCs

JAKE SAMSON

ADVENTUROUS TEEN

ST	11	HP: 11
DX	12	Will: 12
IQ	12	Per: 12
HT	12	FP: 12

Basic Speed: 6.0 Punch: 1d-2 cr
Move: 6
Dodge: 9



Traits: Appearance (Attractive); Curious; Reputation 1 (Finds cool historical artifacts); Stubbornness.

Skills: Area Knowledge (Oak Harbor)-14; Bicycling-12; Boating-11; Fishing-12; History-11; Research-13; Scrounging-13; Search-12; Stealth-11; Survival-12.

Gear: He has a pocket knife in his pocket when he's found, but he also typically carries a backpack with a journal, camera, and compass.

Personality: Adventurous and charismatic Jake Samson is practically friends with everyone in town. However, his stubborn determination has gotten him into trouble on more than a few occasions.

GRETA CORNBURG

FORGETFUL LIBRARIAN

ST	10	HP: 10
DX	10	Will: 12
IQ	12	Per: 12
HT	10	FP: 10

Basic Speed: 5.0 Punch: 1d-3 cr
Move: 5
Dodge: 8



Traits: Absent-Mindedness; Code of Honor (Professional); Misremembers names a lot. Loves to water her flowers.

Skills: Administration-11; Animal Handling (Cats)-11; Area Knowledge (Oak Harbor)-12; Guns-10; Professional Skill (Librarian)-13; Research-13.

Gear: None. In her house, however, she has her ex-husband's antique 12-gauge Winchester shotgun.

Personality: Greta Cornburg has been the Oak Harbor librarian for over twenty years. Lately, however, she's been getting a little forgetful, misremembering names and forgetting where she left her watering can. But she's always there to help.

BRAD HOGAN

HIGH SCHOOL STAR

ST	12	HP: 12
DX	12	Will: 11
IQ	11	Per: 11
HT	12	FP: 12

Basic Speed: 6.0 Punch: 1d-2 cr
Move: 6
Dodge: 9



Traits: Appearance (Handsome); Bully; Fit; Reputation 2 (Star Quarterback); Overconfidence; Wealthy. Total showoff. Arrogant.

Skills: Area Knowledge (Oak Harbor)-11; Axe/Mace-11; Boating-13; Driving-11; Guns-8; Intimidation-11; Sex Appeal-12; Swimming-12; Throwing-13.

Gear: Football, flare gun (1d burn per second for 10 seconds, but only if fired 10 yards away or more, Acc 1, Range 10/330, RoF 1, Shots 1(3), Bulk -2, Rcl 2, 2 lbs.).

Personality: Brad's father owns a coal mine in West Virginia, but retired out to Oak Harbor a few years ago. Brad's family money, combined with his athleticism and good looks, instantly made him the high school star of Oak Harbor.

MARNIE LI

POPULAR GIRL

ST	11	HP: 11
DX	12	Will: 11
IQ	11	Per: 11
HT	12	FP: 12

Basic Speed: 6.0 Punch: 1d-2 cr
Move: 6
Dodge: 9



Traits: Appearance (Beautiful); Fit; Soft spot for dweebs.

Skills: Area Knowledge (Oak Harbor)-11; Boating-11; Connoisseur (Music)-11; Dancing-12; Driving-11; Musical Instrument (Drums)-11; Sex Appeal-11; Swimming-13; Swimming: Lifesaving-9.

Gear: None.

Personality: A native of Oak Harbor, Marnie's regularly spent her summers camping, hunting, and swimming. But recently, she discovered how much she loves playing drums, and dreams to move to Seattle and join a band.

Handouts

SAM MARRONE

- If it was anyone other than Jake Samson saying he found the Goblin-Thing's treasure... you wouldn't believe it.
- Can the radio like... hone in on Jake's location? That's possible, right?
- We NEED to help Jake.
- Why does the Goblin-Thing have nickels in his lair? This doesn't make any sense.

ALI BERRIGAN

- Jake Samson is a true American hero.
- Sitka Island isn't too far from here... about a mile offshore.
- Good thing you brought snacks. No one else ever brings snacks. It's ridiculous.
- Where is everyone's bike? A bunch of kids left the library in a rush last night when the storm started. Lots of bikes were left there.

GERARD THOMAS

- Why is everyone talking over each other? Everyone needs to shut up and listen to you.
- The Goblin-Thing is definitely real. You once talked to old Mordecai Anchorage, the guy who got his hand bitten off by a whale, and he said he saw it once.
- Those nickels Jake is talking about are worth a fortune. There were barely any made.
- This is CRAZY. You're so excited.

SAM MARRONE

- Am I supposed to be babysitting you guys or not?
- That Jake guy on the radio sounded like he was in serious trouble.
- You're new to town... does anyone know exactly where that guy is? Maybe call the police?
- Everyone needs to slow down and breathe.

MIGUEL ABARCA

- Jake Samson is always discovering cool things on the beaches. Remember he found that ship's wheel and sold it for \$500!?
- There's sunken ships from the Mosquito Fleet all along the Puget Sound. Maybe they are all loaded with treasure!
- We gotta go tell the Deputy about this.
- I heard the Goblin-Thing eats seal heads by slurping out the brains [make a slurping sound].

MOTHERBOARD KYLE KIRBY

- Where is Sitka Island? Does anyone know? Is that near here?
- Jake is so reliable. There's no way this is a trick.
- You have a bad feeling about this.
- If anyone needs a boat, you just finished modifying the engine on yours, and adding a new compound to the fuel. You think you can get it up past 60 miles per hour, but haven't tested it yet.

Handout A - Banter Cards to kick off the adventure.

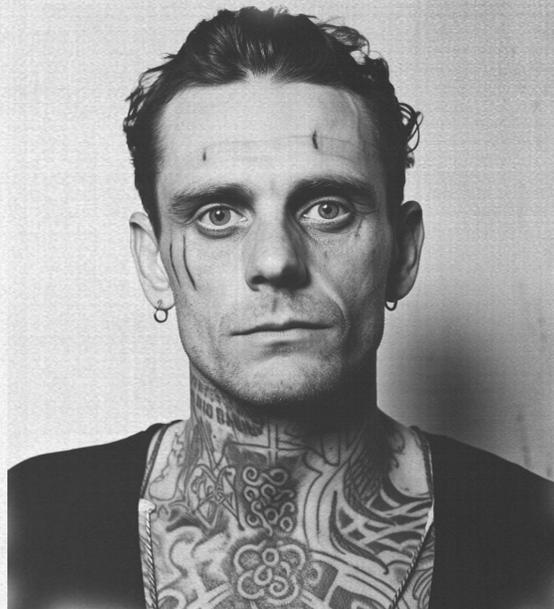
**SEATTLE
Police Bulletin**

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF POLICE DEPARTMENT, CITY OF SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
Patrick Fitzsimmons, Chief of Police

THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 1986

**WANTED FUGITIVE - ARMED AND DANGEROUS
CONROY F. BIGGINS**

Biggins, recognized in criminal circuits as "The Viper," has a well-documented history of felonious activities, commencing with drug trafficking and escalating to violent crimes, specifically the homicide of two individuals affiliated with opposing criminal factions. Biggins is classified as a high-risk fugitive. He is considered extremely dangerous due to his lack of hesitation in committing violent acts, a high degree of resourcefulness, and known associations with criminal elements providing aid and concealment. Direct engagement is strongly discouraged. Individuals should instead maintain a safe distance if a sighting occurs.



DESCRIPTION: male Caucasian, 38 years old, 5'8", 130 lbs. Distinguishing physical features include a network of tattoos across his body, a dragon motif on his left forearm, and a significant scar present on his right cheek. Yellow metal earrings in both ears.

REFER TO DR # 86-1861

Information for City of Oak Harbor, Washington Sheriff Bill Benton, phone, (206) 555-2531. Between 1700 and 0800 hours and on weekends and holidays, phone, (206)-555-4854



KINDLY NOTIFY CHIEF OF POLICE, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Handout B - Wanted Poster found outside the police station

Handouts

THE TRAGIC HISTORY OF THE MOSQUITO FLEET

The sinking of the steamer *Dix*, one of the most tragic events in the history of the Mosquito Fleet, remains a somber chapter in maritime history. The Mosquito Fleet, a term affectionately used to describe the large number of small steamboats that navigated the waters of Puget Sound, Washington, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, was crucial for transportation in this region. The *Dix*, an integral part of this fleet, met a disastrous fate on November 18, 1906.

Built in 1904, the *Dix* was a modest but significant vessel, typically carrying passengers and cargo between Seattle and Port Blakely. Its usual route was bustling, serving a growing number of commuters and workers in the thriving lumber industry. However, the fateful day of November 18 changed everything. The *Dix* collided with the schooner *Jeanie*, a much larger vessel, near Seattle.

The impact of the collision was devastating. The *Dix*, unable to withstand the force, capsized quickly. Tragically, it became one of the deadliest maritime disasters in Puget

Sound history. Official records reported that 39 people lost their lives, but the actual number might have been higher due to inconsistent passenger logs. The swift sinking left little time for escape, and many passengers and crew were trapped inside or pulled down with the sinking vessel. Also said to be lost was a cache of stolen nickels that had been recovered in Port Blakely.

The aftermath of the disaster led to a public outcry over maritime safety standards. Investigations revealed that the *Dix* had structural weaknesses, including a faulty rudder, which contributed to the inability to avoid the collision. This tragedy spurred significant changes in maritime regulations, emphasizing the safety of passenger vessels.

The *Dix* has remained undiscovered since its sinking. However, in 1982, an Oak Harbor boy discovered the ship's wheel from the *Dix* on a beach near the town.

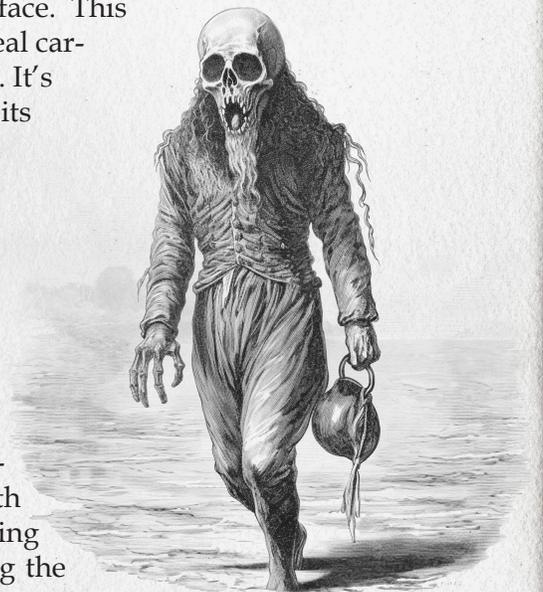
Handout C - Library's encyclopedia article on the Mosquito Fleet and sinking of the *Dix*

The Goblin-Thing (Washington)

In the eerie depths of Puget Sound, a chilling legend lurks: the Goblin-Thing, a grotesque, tentacled entity with a skull-like face. This spectral creature is known for its grim habit of carrying seal carcasses and its obsession with treasures from sunken ships. It's said to dwell in an underwater cavern, fiercely guarding its amassed hoard of maritime spoils.

The Goblin-Thing, while not typically hostile, casts a menacing shadow over local fishermen's tales. Some recount unnerving encounters with this enigmatic figure, especially when alone at sea. Its presence is a haunting reminder of the sea's mysteries and dangers.

The creature's origins are ambiguous, with some scholars suggesting a link to Swinomish mythology, yet this connection remains speculative. Wrapped in the fog of myth and uncertainty, the Goblin-Thing endures as a captivating and mysterious part of Puget Sound folklore, embodying the enigmatic and eerie essence of the ocean's depths.

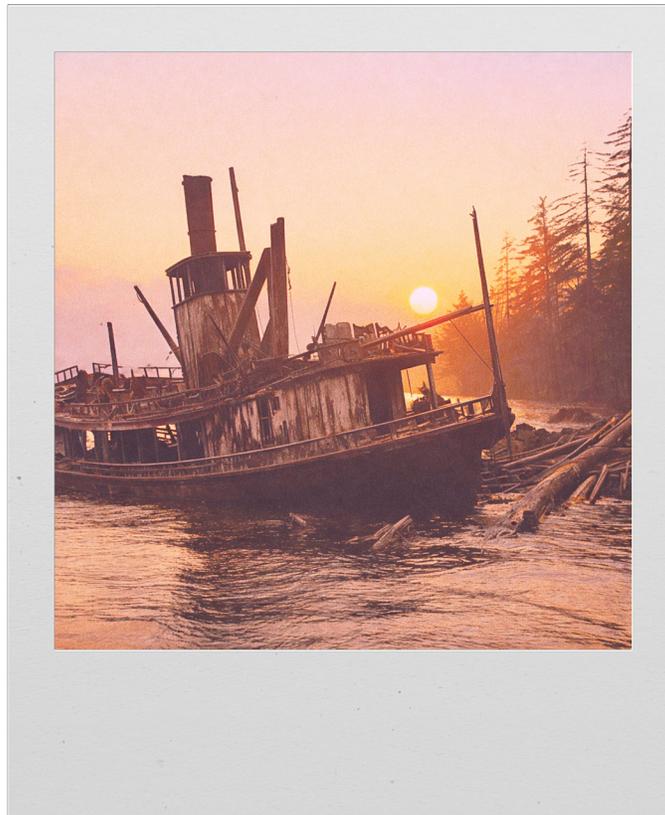


Handout D - Goblin-Thing research from the library, from *West Coast Cryptids* (1969)

Handouts



Handout E - Old photo of Zacharias and Conroy. On the back it says “Conroy and Father, 1952”



Handout F - Jake Samson's photo of the *Dix*, found in his backpack in Zacharias' cabin.

Handouts

Zacharias,

I can't believe you'd betray me. Your own son. You turned me in, testified against me, and now I'm rotting in this cell all because of you. Your actions have destroyed any love or respect I once had for you. I am Consumed with fury and disgust. I'll tell you this - I won't be behind these bars forever. When I'm out, I'm coming for you with a vengeance you can't even imagine. You've created your own worst enemy.

Your son no more.

Conroy

Handout G - Letter from Conroy to Zacharias, Found in his Cabin

Nulthnooch's Protective Army

This incantation hath been wrought to shield from a single malevolent and evil wretch. In succession, it calleth forth adjacent forsaken souls and those departed, who shall emerge and safeguard the spellbinder. But lo — their hatred against the living shall also be unquenched.

The enchantment shall persist until such time as the malefactor is slain by the forsaken souls, hanged by the neck until death taketh him, or the sacred rite of Maanul's Peace (see p.47) be duly executed.



fig. 1 - Ritual

Maanul's Peace

This solemn rite is devised to obliterate the ambulant corpses roused by another's conjuration, such as the incantations of Nulthnooch. Paramount to this ceremony is the thorough destruction of the burial grounds whence the deceased hath emerged.

This act shall invoke the presence of the Sovereign of the Dead, with whom one must simply need to parley. Upon successful entreaty, this overlord of the nether realm shall summon hence his stiff legged underlings from the earth.



Player Safe Maps



Player Safe Maps

SITKA ISLAND



GURPS HORROR 1986

Name "MOTHERBOARD" KYLE KIRBY Player _____ Point Total 100
 Ht 5'9" Wt 105 Size Modifier 0 Age 16 Unspent Pts -
 Appearance The town's boy genius - just don't call him a nerd

ST	9	[-10]	HP	9	[0]	MOVE
DX	11	[20]	WILL	13	[4]	
IQ	13	[60]	PER	13	[0]	DR
HT	12	[20]	FP	12	[0]	



BASIC LIFT (ST x ST) / 5 16 lbs. DAMAGE Thr 1d-2 Sw 1d-1
 BASIC SPEED 5.75 [0] BASIC MOVE 5.75 [0]

REACTION MODIFIERS

Appearance _____
 Status -1 from Social Stigma (Minor)
 Reputation +2 from people helping with projects

ENCUMBRANCE

None (0) = BL 16
 Light (1) = 2 x BL 32
 Medium (2) = 3 x BL 48
 Heavy (3) = 6 x BL 96
 X-Heavy (4) = 10 x BL 160

ACTIVE DEFENSES

Dodge	Parry	Block
8	8 (Unarmed)	-

ADVANTAGES & PERKS

Absolute Timing	[2]
Doodad (once per session, pull out a useless item)	[1]
Gizmo 2 (twice per session, pull out a useful item)	[10]
Talent (Master Builder) 2	[10]
Honest Face	[1]

DISADVANTAGES & QUIRKS

Bad Sight (Nearsighted, has Glasses)	[-10]
Claustrophobia (Mild, Resist on a 15-)	[-7]
Pacifism (Reluctant Killer)	[-5]
Sense of Duty (Friends)	[-5]
Skinny	[-5]
Social Stigma (Minor)	[-5]
Loves dogs - goes out of his way for them	[-1]
Occasionally steals from Radio Shack... when he's broke	[-1]
Constantly gets lost	[-1]
Hates camping	[-1]
Utterly loses temper when called a nerd or similar	[-1]

SKILLS

Name	Level
Architecture	14 [1]
Bicycling	12 [2]
Carpentry	15 [1]
Computer Operation	13 [1]
Current Affairs (Science & Technology)	14 [2]
Electronics Operation (Communication)	13 [2]
Electronics Repair (Computers)	12 [2]
Engineer (Electrical)	13 [2]
Engineer (Ships)	12 [1]
Explosives (Demolitions)	12 [1]
Filch	11 [2]
Guns (Pistol)	11 [1]
Mathematics (Applied)	12 [2]
Mechanic (Gas Engines)	12 [1]
Research	14 [4]
Scrounging	15 [4]

Sam Marrone

Outdoorsy Daredevil



PER 11

Motherboard

Town Genius



PER 12

Ali Berrigan

Natural Athlete



PER 11

Gerard Thomas

Mouthy Freshman



PER 11

Kiana Jackson

Accidental Babysitter



PER 12

Miguel Abarca

Obsessed with the FBI



PER 13