



About the Adventure

The Siren's Citadel is a historical, swashbuckling 5E adventure, although it can easily be adapted to other game systems (a GURPS and *Pirate Borg* version is also available on www.1shotadventures.com). The adventure is set in the Caribbean in 1689. Fresh off a disastrous privateering expedition, the heroes are stranded on the island of Nevis and pressured to perform a dangerous hostage exchange for the desperate English governor. However, they soon end up in a race to discover the island's mysterious Secret Citadel, where they are drawn into one of the world's most scandalous events!

The Siren's Citadel is suitable for three-to-six characters. The end of this adventure includes six pregenerated characters so you can get started right away.

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

Adventure Background

The nearby islands of St. Kitt's and Nevis have a tangled and bloody history. The English, French, and Spanish

having claimed and reclaimed the islands many times over the last hundred years. By 1688, the British and French reluctantly shared the island of St. Kitts.

That precarious situation dramatically changed in August of 1689. The French launched a bold attack on the British, plundered most of their territory, and successfully besieged the British defenses at Fort Charles. The British surrendered and were forced from St. Kitts to the smaller island of Nevis. As a final insult, the French handed the valuable English plantations to the Irish mercenaries who helped them in the war. The exiled British governor Thomas Hill is as mad as a hornet and planning revenge.

Before Hill can plan a counterattack, he has to secure the release of valuable prisoners. Among the hostages is Hill's best friend, John Tibbets, who was taken by the French as he fled his land. Fortunately, Hill has a prisoner of equal value – the nephew of a French noble. Swapping the two men *should* be an easy matter. However, due to John Tibbets' utterly despicable reputation as a cruel, petty plantation tyrant, Hill can't find anyone to agree to perform the exchange.

Fortunately for Governor Hill, several bedraggled pirates (the PCs) just washed up on Nevis' beach. Arresting them for unspecified and vague crimes, he offers them freedom and an old sloop in exchange for performing the hostage swap with the French.

Adventure Summary

An awkward hostage exchange is only the beginning of the PCs' adventure. While performing the swap, a blindfolded young nobleman stumbles into the midst of the negotiation.

The man, Richard Reve, explains that he is in the middle of a hazing of sorts, and that only by completing three tasks will he be eligible to enter a Secret Citadel hidden on the island, and then win one of the legendary Five Diamonds of Saint Christopher. He begs the PCs to help him win one of the prized diamonds.

Locating the Secret Citadel requires the PCs to find three statues hidden near the island's Mount Misery. Once they have found the statues – and fended off some competitive ruffians – they'll discover the location of the hidden citadel.

However, in a twist, there are no actual diamonds or gems at this citadel. Instead, the citadel is the home of a *truly scandalous* contest. Each year, five noble men and women who wish to marry for love and not politics become the "diamonds". Over several days, other nobles compete for the Diamonds' attention by writing them love letters and poetry. The PCs are welcomed to participate in the romantic contest.

After a day or so of carousing, mischief, and romance, the PCs learn that one of the Diamonds has escaped into the old catacombs underneath the citadel. The harlequin master of ceremonies requests that the PCs recover the lost Diamond before the big wedding. What's more, the PCs hear about a legendary artifact – the Sireystone – that is lost in the catacombs.

Braving the underground caves, the PCs will undoubtedly recover both the stone and the Diamond. However, when the PCs return to the citadel, they discover that it's been taken over by an old enemy and his gang of marauders. These cutthroats are determined to ruin the great contest through murder, pillaging, kidnapping, and worse. It's up to the PC's to stop the marauders from turning a scandalous festival into an unspeakable tragedy!



The Drunken Hangman

The *Drunken Hangman* is a 23', square-rigged Bermuda sloop. It has a single mast, which makes it straightforward to operate – three people are required to crew the ship, with room for a handful of passengers. The VEHICLES (WATER) skill is used to pilot the ship.

The ship originally flew under a British flag and was used to ferry supplies between St. Kitts and Nevis. The *Drunken Hangman* can carry 2 tons of cargo below deck. It was retrofitted by an enthusiastic British merchant to carry a single cannon during the recent war. The cannon has since been removed by the French after the ship was captured.

Unfortunately, the ship has a stubborn leak near the bowsprit, which makes the ship difficult to handle during rough weather, or when the ship is loaded beyond a ton of cargo. Once the tricky leak is found (with a DC 15 INT (INVESTIGATION) roll, a DC 15 DEX carpentry attempt can repair it for good.

23' BERMUDA SLOOP

AC 15
HP 80 (damage threshold 10)
Move 2 mph

Introduction

To kick off the adventure, the GM should read, paraphrase, or roleplay through the following:

Your great ship, the Swearing Doubloon has met a fateful end. Exactly six months from the day you were hired on to crew the frigate, it was hit astern by a dozen French cannons. Your memory still flinches when you think how quickly the screams, splinters, and swirling sea water overcame your senses.

You are the last survivors of the Swearing Doubloon, washed ashore on the small island of Nevis. Before you even finished choking up salt and sand you were surrounded by English soldiers and dragged in front of Governor Thomas Hill. The governor is as defeated in spirits as you are, for his mighty forces were recently driven from the nearby island of St. Kitts.

You came close to hanging in that meeting. Only your wits saved your necks, when you offered to do him a service in exchange for freedom. Governor Hill agreed.

The governor ordered you to sail from Nevis to Sandy Point Town on St. Kitts. Hill's best friend, John Tibbets was caught by the French before he could flee his sugar plantation on the island. Fortunately, Hill's men caught the nephew of a French nobleman, Count de Blanc, in the fighting.

Your job is to swap the two prisoners. You are given an official letter that authorizes you to exchange Iean de Blanc for John Tibbets, and return to Nevis. It seems that Tibbets, a foul-tempered, petty plantation tyrant, has a foul enough reputation that few others would agree to do this errand for the governor. If you complete the mission, Governor Hill will give you a small sloop and letter of marque so that you and your companions can resume a life of privateering.

Part 1: People of Quality

The PCs are en route from Nevis to Sandy Point Town, a bustling port on the western point of St. Kitts. The six-hour voyage is uneventful. The day is sweltering, the waters calm, and the clouds fancifully shaped. The only sight of interest is when the PCs spot the *Royal Louis*, one of the largest flagships in the French Navy. It bristles with over one hundred guns and has a complement of over 800 men!

The PCs are accompanied by their hostage, IEAN DU BLANC, the impulsive teenage nephew of an unremarkable French count. Iean is in good spirits and even volunteers to help on the ship.

Sandy Point Town

Overlooking the port is the damaged Fort Charles and the nearby Brimstone Hill, where an intimidating line of French cannons protect the town. As the PCs sail in, they'll note dozens of warehouses that line the docks. Hundreds of weary and abused porters load sacks of sugar on to Dutch and French merchant ships.

After the ship anchors, French agents from the harbor master welcome the *Drunken Hangman*. It's clear they are hunting potential British spies. However, if the agents are presented with Governor Hill's official letter that authorizes a prisoner transfer, the PCs are directed to a small inn down the street – The Wapping Landlord. There, the PCs are told they can find ALEX-ANDRE DUBORDIEU, the French governor's trusted quartermaster who can arrange for a hostage exchange.

The Wapping Landlord

Named after the birthplace of its owner, the Wapping Landlord is a dim tavern known for its roast chicken and clam broth. The place is the favorite dining establishment for senior French officers. Occasionally even the newly-promoted French governor of St. Kitts, Lieutenant-General Charles de Guitaut stops by.

Because of its popularity, the Wapping Landlord attracts all manner of minor nobles, hangers-on, and merchants looking for deals with the new government. However, unless the PCs are themselves high status, they'll feel the harsh looks of the tavern's clientele on them. Particularly obnoxious are three fops (ORGON, BRINDAVOINE, and TRISSO) in the corner, who loudly whisper crude and barely-funny comments their way – “can't you smell that wonderful Banbury Cheese?” “I've sharpened my understanding of bovines today!”). See p. 8 for a description of these foul fellows.

GM's Note: These fops make a reappearance later in the adventure. GM's should aim to make an impression with these foul fellows without starting an outright brawl! If threatened, the fops only chuckle and leave. If violence breaks out, French soldiers will quickly intervene to throw the fops out. The dandies have a reputation for trouble here.

Anyone inquiring politely about Alexandre Dubordieu's whereabouts is pointed to his private table in the rear of the establishment. He is a middle-aged man who is clearly tired and already overcome by the day's heat. He can be found studying dozens of pages of supply records with two stuffy-looking accountants.

Dubordieu has little time for pleasantries. He's not easily charmed, but is blunt and polite. Once he learns that the PCs are here for a hostage exchange, he sends one of his men into a backroom to retrieve a folio that contains the names of various prisoners of war.

After verifying that John Tibbets is still alive and a prisoner, Dubordieu quickly explains the procedure. Tibbets is being held at a sugar crushing mill located a mile outside of town. In exchange for leaving their hostage, Iean du Blanc, here at the Wapping Landlord, he will write a letter of pardon for Tibbets. If the PCs present the letter of pardon to the commander at the mill, Tibbets will be released and can go on his way. He must leave the island within 24 hours else his pardon be forfeit.

Handling petty hostage exchanges is the least interesting part of Dubordieu's job. He offers his word that there are no tricks at work here. He has no real idea who John Tibbets is, nor does he care. If the PCs insist on handling the exchange in a more difficult way (for example, not releasing leun du Blanc until they have recovered Tibbets), Dubordieu won't likely agree unless the PCs do some spectacular roleplaying and get a very good reaction out of him (and remember that he doesn't especially trust Englishmen...).

The Sugar Crushing Mill

John Tibbets and a handful of other low status prisoners are being kept at a sugar crushing mill outside of Sandy Point Town. The place is easy to find – it's located in a large field just a mile or so up a worn road marked by heavy wagon tracks. The mill was rented out to plantation owners who didn't have their own sugarcane crushing equipment.

The mill is a large open-air building with a steep conical roof. Several oil lanterns hang from the struts, used to light the place at night. Especially noticeable are two massive grinding stones that are held in a chassis at the center of the structure. Horses are typically attached to the contraption and led to rotate the stones, grinding the sugar inside.

As the PCs approach the mill, they hear anguished screaming coming from ahead. A half-dozen shirtless prisoners are chained to the posts that support the mill's roof. Two French guards are holding a man near the grinder. His hand is caught in the machine. Having fed this prisoner's hand into the machine, the soldiers are getting a good laugh out of the torture they are inflicting upon him. A third soldier goads a tired nag into operating the mill, hitting the creature's rump with the flat of his sword to continue to move the grinding stones.

The man whose fingers are getting crushed in the grinder is none other than John Tibbets. Unable to keep himself from insulting his French captors, the soldiers finally grew tired of his insults and decided to teach him a crippling lesson. Most of the other men tied up nearby are keeping their mouths shut, although one, also annoyed by Tibbets, is shouting his approval for the soldiers' grisly ingenuity.

The PCs can approach this situation any way they like. If they rush into battle, the French soldiers scramble for their arms and defend themselves to the best of their ability. If the PCs negotiate for Tibbett's surrender,

John A. Tibbets

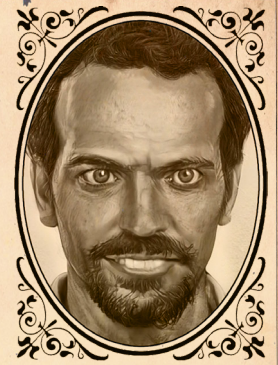
Arrogant & Cruel Merchant

Medium human, lawful evil

Armor Class 14 (leather) **Speed** 30 ft.

Hit Points 58 (9d8+18)

STR	DEX	CON
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)
INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)



Skills Intimidation +3

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages English, French (Accented)

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Dirty Trick. Once per turn, he deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when he hits a target and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of one of his allies that isn't incapacitated.

Multiattack. Tibbets makes two broadsword attacks (when armed)

Fine and Balanced Broadsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Notes: John Tibbets is utterly, irredeemably, despicable. He's made a living off the backs of slaves, has no respect for anyone who is not higher status, and uses his wealth to fund ventures he finds creative and cruel. He has hidden much of this behavior from his friend, Governor Thomas Hill, who has arranged for his trade. With the PCs, he'll swear he is innocent and is nothing but an honest merchant with good intentions. However, like all villains, he'll betray them at the first chance he sees, and will likely show up at the Secret Citadel later in the adventure.

showing them the written pardon, the soldiers argue they require a few minutes more with their captive before freeing him:

"He's a right monster, this one. He spits and bites at you when you go to feed him. He keeps everyone awake at night shouting blasphemous insults all night long. And he tells disgusting stories of all the ungodly things he did to the poor men on his plantation. He is no good and does not deserve to be freed. Give us ten minutes more with him, and then you can tell your governor that his hand was maimed in the battle."

JIM BOWLES, the captive who was shouting his approval at the soldiers' actions, agrees with them:

"Give the Frenchies a few minutes more, mates. You should hear what he was saying about their wives just minutes ago. And also about the boy he drowned in Mount Misery's waterfall. He deserves everything he's getting right now."

French Soldiers

Callous Guards (x3)

Medium human, lawful neutral

Armor Class 14 (leather) Speed 30 ft.
Hit Points 58 (9d8+18)

STR	DEX	CON
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)
INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	11 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +5, Intimidation +5, Perception +2
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages French, English (Accented)
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Multiattack. The soldiers make two melee attacks.

Spear or Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Musket. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 40/120, one target. Hit: 7 (1d12) piercing damage.

Notes: The three soldiers, Jules, Gerard, and Victor, were found mostly-useless during the recent battle with the British. As such, they were assigned prisoner duty here at the sugar crushing mill. Bored, intolerant of British, and barely educated, the men have taken to torturing their least favorite captives.



Richard Reve

Dashing & Hapless Nobleman

Medium human, chaotic good

Armor Class 14 (leather) Speed 30 ft.
Hit Points 58 (9d8+18)

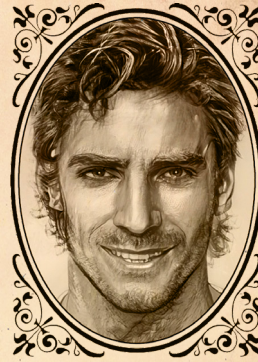
STR	DEX	CON
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)
INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

Skills Athletics +4
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages English, French (Accented)
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Multiattack. Reve makes two melee attacks.

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage.

Notes: Flaxen-haired and debonair, Richard Reve is desperate to make a bold name for himself. He's obsessed with earn fame and fortune by acquiring one of the rare Diamonds of St. Christopher. However, once he arrives at the Secret Citadel, he ceases to care about wealth and instead becomes enamoured with the Contest and pledges himself to winning the heart of one of the women there (and again begs the PCs for help in the matter).



A Galloping Interruption

In the middle of a fight or a negotiation with the Frenchmen, a DC 10 WIS (PERCEPTION) check hears frantic hoofbeats coming towards the sugar mill. Within a minute, a white stallion bearing a blindfolded young man bursts into the area near the mill. Blindly swinging a sword around his head, endangering no one, the man begins to sing loudly:

*The first to come in was a soldier,
no captain e'er looked bolder.
His gun on his right shoulder,
his good broadsword he drew.
He said he'd fight with all his might
Before old England should be drunk dry;
And so they spent a rowdy night
When Jones' ale was new!*

In this chaos, the blind nag attached to the mill rears and bolts, snapping its harness. It rushes towards one of the PCs, threatening to trample anyone in its way (treat it as DC 12 DEX save to avoid 1d6 bludgeoning damage). The sudden jolt to the mill causes one of its

oil lanterns to fall, shatter, and light the dry straw under the mill on fire. The already screaming John Tibbets screams even louder when he sees that he's about to be caught in a conflagration.

The French are likely to think that this new chaotic intrusion is a crazed sneak attack. If they haven't already, they immediately grab their weapons and prepare to chase the PCs and this intruder off!

The French soldiers, however, recognize when they are outmatched and will not put up a fevered defense. Once the scales tip against them, they flee towards town. Ideally, the encounter ends with John Tibbets in custody or escaped, the French driven off, and the PCs ready to question this newcomer.

GM's Note: The GM should try to make sure both John Tibbets and the newcomer, RICHARD REVE, survive this encounter. Richard Reve is easier to keep alive, because other than singing loudly and waving a sword, he is not really endangering anyone. If he's shot at, his horse might take the hit first. If the villain

Tibbets is left to die while his hand is trapped in the fiery grinder, the GM should describe how the entire mill is choked with thick black smoke – under the cover of the fire, Tibbets pulls his mangled hand out of the grinder and escapes, to be found nearby later on.

Richard Reve's Three Tasks

Once the situation is calm, Richard Reve strips off his blindfold and is surprised to find himself surrounded by fellow Englishmen.

"Did I do it?" he asks. "Did I successfully chase the French off while singing 'While Jone's Ale was New?'" he asks hopefully.

Young Reve is friendly and charismatic, the kind of man who can pull off any antic and make everyone laugh good-naturedly at his story afterwards. After introducing himself, he explains his odd situation. Reve is in some kind of unusual competition to claim one of the **hidden Diamonds of St. Christopher**, and that he has to complete three difficult tasks in order to even have a chance of claiming one of them:

"I sailed here from Dover just five days ago. I had not received news that the French had taken the island, so you can imagine the trouble I had smuggling myself here. But it was worth the danger! I came here to make myself the owner of one of the Five Diamonds of St. Christopher, the precious jewels that are held in a Secret Citadel located somewhere near Mount Misery!"

He points to the dormant volcano east of the mill.

"I met the Harlequin of Scandals, a French fellow who talks like he is master of the world itself. It took me days to find the man. He said, in order to gain entry to the citadel and retrieve one of its diamonds, I had to perform three tasks. The first was simple enough. I had to pay a 5,000 crown entrance fee. The next was harder – I had to scare a Frenchman back to town while wearing a blindfold and singing 'While Jones' Ale was New'. Task accomplished!"

"The third task is to find the citadel itself, somewhere near the mountain. Once I find it, they shall let me in and I shall have my pick of one of the diamonds!"

"Unfortunately, this last task seems to be the hardest. They gave me a map and a series of clues, but it is beyond my ability I think. Thus far, I have found nothing but brush and scree on that mountain."



Richard Reve's eyes light up as it dawns on him that the PCs can help him find the citadel. He promises to share the wealth of one of the Diamonds of St. Christopher if they can escort him to the citadel. To prove that he's not crazy, he shows them a piece of paper that announces the contest ([Handout A](#)).

If asked for more information, Richard Reve is happy to go on:

- The five Diamonds of St. Christopher are given away each year in a sort of competition. Reve suspects that there's more difficult contests awaiting him inside the citadel.
- The annual contest takes place in a different part of the world each year. Just finding where it is to happen is part of the game. Last year, the competition was in the ancient Spanish town of Torrejoncillo, but Reve got there too late when his horse went lame. "All that was left were some servants cleaning up the mess..." he despairs.
- If asked how much each diamond is worth, Reve simply laughs and says "priceless!"
- Reve is really intent on winning a diamond for the reputation gained from winning one. "Everyone knows that all of nobles from England, Spain, and France respect those who won one of the diamonds."
- He's never actually seen one of the diamonds in person. "Of course, they must be locked away once won!"

Richard Reve *begs* the PCs to help him find and gain entry to the Siren's Citadel so that he can claim one of its diamonds. He offers them wealth for helping him.

He starts with 600 gold crowns apiece, but can be negotiated up to 900 gold crowns! He offers to pay half up front and the other half upon his success and return to Sandy Point Town.

Part 2: Search for the Citadel

Richard Reve only vaguely knows where the citadel is: it is somewhere near Mount Misery and is rumored to be partially underground. He was given an unhelpful map from the Harlequin of Scandals, and he's at a bit of a loss on how to find the place.

The map shows Mount Misery and marks three diamonds to its north, west, and south. Reve tells the PCs that he visited two of the spots (which are neatly crossed out on his map – see [Handout B](#)) but that there were just piles of white marble rubble at each.

Northern and Eastern Clearings

Navigating to the northern and eastern diamond marks on the map is straightforward. Reve remembers where they are and can lead the PCs to each location.

As he described, each location is a clearing near the base of the mountain. Each clearing contains a pile of fine, white marble rubble. What Reve did not notice was that the piles of rubble were once man-sized statues. Even a cursory glance spots the shapes of limbs, a chunk of torso, and even the remnants of angelic wings. An inspection reveals the statues were smashed with hammers and other blunt instruments.

An investigation and appropriate knowledge identifies the marble as Tuscan sculptor's marble, something not found in the Caribbean! A DC 15 INT (HISTORY) check can identify the artist of the sculptures. The intricate details, obvious pathos, and baroque stylings are clearly the marks of the renowned sculptor Pierre Puget, King Louis XIV's renowned sculptor of Versailles. These works were commissioned for an incredibly high sum – at least 15,000 gold crowns apiece!

In the **north clearing**, a search of the area finds the head of the statue casually tossed into some nearby brush, alongside a bent bronze bow. A DC 12 INT (HISTORY) or similar check identifies the statue as that of Roman Cupid, the god of love in all of its many varieties. Carved on Cupid's bow are the words "FOR DIAMONDS."

Similarly, in the **eastern clearing**, digging through the rubble finds a sculpted book carved with the words "WHERE THE MOUNTAIN."

The Fops and the Western Cliffside

The PCs need to find the western clearing marked on the map; Reve has not yet found it himself. With the map, a DC 10 INT check finds the way there. A failure results in getting lost and requires a night in the wilderness, which in turn requires a DC 10 (WIS) SURVIVAL check or else everyone takes 1d4-1 damage from the sun, wind, and other environmental hazards.

The western clearing holds the third statue – a statue of Anteros, the Greek god of love returned. It is mounted high up on a cliff, at least twenty-five feet above the path. A rope dangles from the top of the cliffside. A DC 15 WIS (PERCEPTION) check is required to see the statue so far above the PCs!

Climbing up the cliff with the rope requires a few minutes and a DC 14 STR (ATHLETICS) check. A roll of '1' results in a bad fall for 2d6 bludgeoning damage!

As the PCs approach the cliff, a DC 10 WIS (PERCEPTION) check hears a three-man argument above. One man tells the others to hurry, but the others are irritated and scold him to be patient. The argument goes on in circles. These are the same voices as of the fops from the Wapping Landlord.

The three fops – Orgon, Brindavoine, and Trisso – are atop the cliff, still dressed in ridiculous and outrageous fineries. One holds a massive two-handed hammer and looks eager to smash the statue. The other two are warding him off, warning him that they cannot destroy it until they've found its secret.

If the PCs wait, the fops will eventually find what they are looking for. The tallest will point to the statue's buttocks and giggle that it is written right there. He jots it down on a piece of paper: "CRIES"

With that, they smash the statue to smithereens and head to leave.

If the fops spot the PCs, they recognize them and accuse them of spying. The fops are arrogant and quick to insult the PCs, *especially* if they are commoners. They make no excuse as to why they were destroying valuable statues. They have no desire to let anyone have the word on the statue that helps lead to the Secret Citadel.

The Fops

Arrogant Ruffians

Medium human, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14 (leather) **Speed** 30 ft.

Hit Points 49 (11d8)

STR	DEX	CON
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)
INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

Skills Deception +6, Stealth +5

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages French, English (Accented), Spanish (Accented)

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)



Foppish Finesse. In the first round of combat, the fop has advantage on attack rolls.

Multiattack. Tibbets makes two melee attacks.

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

Puffer Pistol. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 40/120 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8) piercing damage.

Notes: Orgon, Brindavoine, and Trisso should be very annoying. They love hurling insults, especially *dew-beater* (a clumsy person), *cumberground* (a useless man), and a *mumblecrust* (toothless and poor beggar). They also like to snicker “smells like Banbury Cheese” when low-status folk enter their company.

This encounter can play out in a few ways and GMs should customize it to the players’ liking. If the players are hungry for a fight, the fops are quick tempered and happy to engage in a dangerous cliffside brawl.

If the PCs are of a more diplomatic nature, the fops talk to the PCs long enough to reveal that they are also searching for the Secret Citadel, and have no intent to let the PCs get there first. Unless the PCs are excellent roleplayers or use strong social skills, the fops will try to destroy the written clue on the statue’s rear end, and then chase the PCs away.

The fops also love good sport, and might agree to a one-on-one duel for the information; or, their love of gambling might entice them to a card game or drinking contest for access to the statue’s secret.

GM’s Note: If one or more of the fops are seriously wounded or killed here, his friends will retreat but passionately swear bloody vengeance on the PCs. The fops may return in the final part of the adventure to seek their revenge.

Solving the Riddle

The PCs end this part of the adventure with three clues. Once assembled in order, the words read:

WHERE THE MOUNTAIN CRIES FOR DIAMONDS

The solution to this riddle is Mount Misery’s waterfall, which plummets thirty feet off its southern edge.

The waterfall’s existence was hinted at by the captive Jim Bowles in the previous scene. If the players can’t make the connection themselves, or don’t have appropriate area knowledge, then the GM should help. Richard Reves or an accidentally-helpful fop can help solve the puzzle, or perhaps the PCs stumble upon a local who knows about the falls. Otherwise, several hours and a DC 10 WIS (NATURE) check can track the mountain’s water to its likely location.

Part 3: The Secret Citadel

The Secret Citadel is located behind Mount Misery’s only large waterfall. A rough, uphill trail leads to the waterfall’s base. The tropical heat, humidity, and insects are unbearable on the trail. But once the PCs reach the waterfall, they likely find the remote location breathtaking. Three stories of silvery-blue water plummet into a pool as clear as glass.

While there’s no immediate sign of an entrance to the citadel, crates and barrels litter the area. The discarded containers once held a great deal of foodstuffs, wine, and rum.

A successful search finds a lost bottle of ridiculously expensive Dopff-Au-Moulin red wine in the packing straw at the bottom of one of the crates – a king’s vintage to be enjoyed sometime later! The PCs also find some broad wooden planks hidden behind some rocks nearby, which makes navigating to the cave behind the falls easier.

Without the planks, the PCs must navigate slippery rocks to get behind the waterfall. A DC 12 DEX (ACROBATICS) check is required to get behind the falls without incident, with a failure resulting in a bad slip for 1d3 damage.



The Sentry and Tunnel Entrance

In a cave behind the waterfall is a sturdy iron door mounted into the rock. Rapping on the door causes a slot to open in the door, where a grim-faced, elderly visage appears to demand the business of anyone who wishes entry into the citadel.

The citadel's SENTRY keeps a list of approved visitors on him, which includes both Richard Reve and the fops, and any servants they are bringing with them. Those who haven't paid their dues, or who haven't had a report of chasing off Frenchman with song, are not allowed entry under any circumstances.

GM's Note: If the PCs somehow arrive without Richard Reve, they can try impersonating him or someone else invited to the citadel. A reasonable acting or fast-talk attempt or a great roleplaying performance will convince the guard to open the door.

Once through the door, the sentry escorts the PCs via lantern-light down a twisting, wet cave tunnel. Soon, the he mouth of the cave widens... and they find themselves squinting in a bright, tropical valley.

The Secret Citadel

Verdant mountain walls protect this hidden valley from wanderers. Several pristine white buildings skirt the valley, a neat green lawn connecting them.

The centerpiece of the citadel appears to be a small lake that originates from a volcanic spring. A thin layer of warm mist covers the clear lake, giving the feature

an ethereal appearance. A fragile floating bridge leads to a flower-covered ivory gazebo in the middle of the lake.

A dozen or so well-dressed nobles stroll the lawn, laughing and celebrating their jokes by clinking their goblets of wine together. Two violinists play a mesmerizing baroque concerto, the walls of the valley acting as the world's greatest concert hall. Italians, artists, and musicians easily identify one of the musicians as the renowned ARCANGELO CORELLI, an Italian composer famed for playing for popes and queens alike!

The First Diamond is Given

An exuberant and exquisitely-moustached servant, PASCUAL, rushes over to greet the PCs and introduce himself. The GM should read or paraphrase the following:

"Welcome to the citadel and the Contest of Five... er, Four Diamonds! It is good that you are here, for the festivities are about to begin, and the first Diamond is about to be awarded!"

The servant ushers everyone towards the lake and forces goblets of sweet wine into your hands.

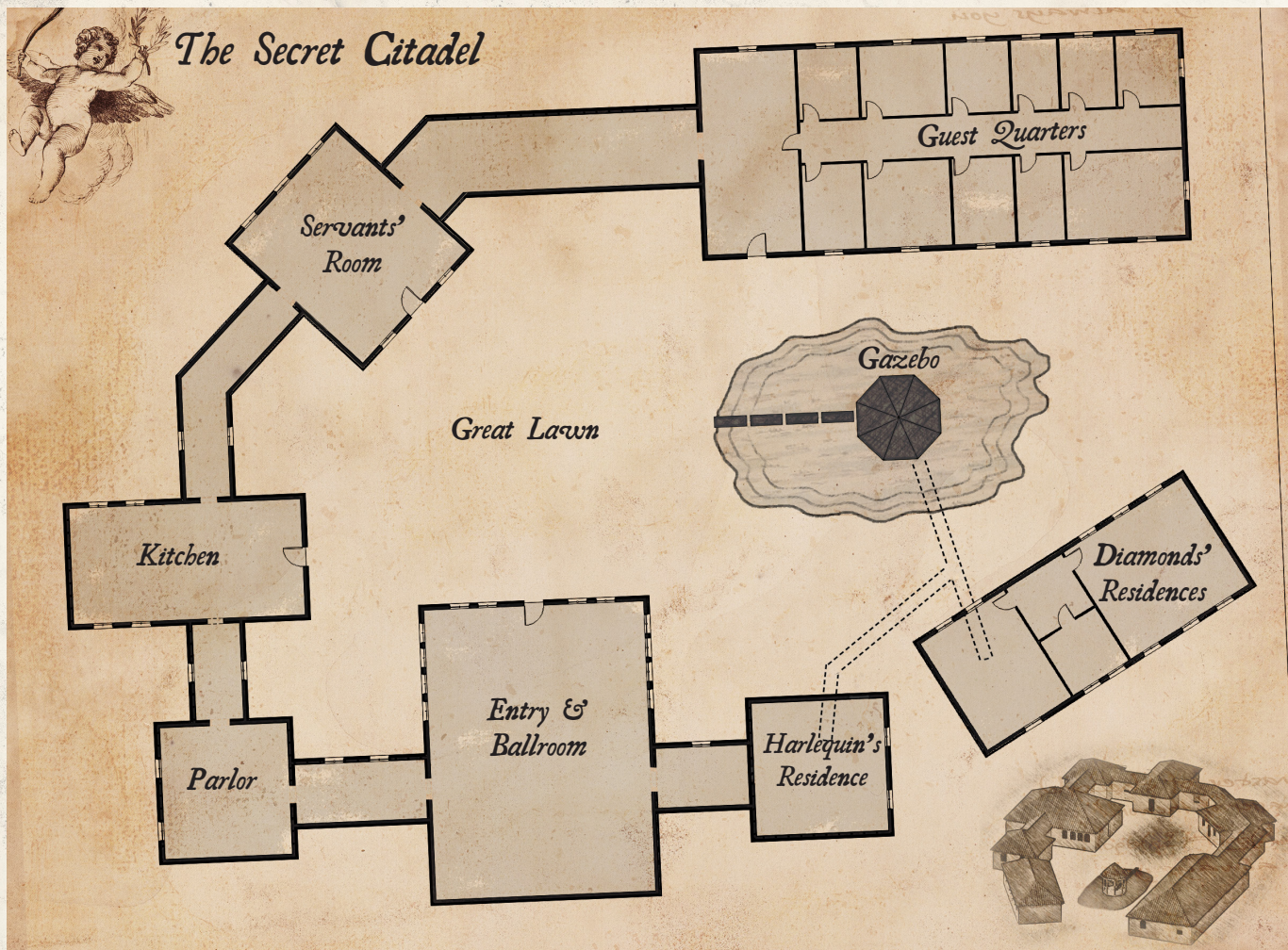
"Here she comes now!"

A thick sudden mist rises from the lake, obscuring the gazebo for a few moments. Two figures appear in the haze. A beautiful woman, finely dressed in a red, fringe-trimmed, brocade gown, stands smiling in the gazebo. Standing next to her is a lanky harlequin, dressed in a heavy, upholstered costume and wearing an ornate, gold-trimmed mask. He bangs a walking stick on the floor of the gazebo to get everyone's attention, and then speaks in perfectly-pronounced French:

"Mademoiselle de le Porte has made her choice!"

The woman smiles nervously and holds up a piece of parchment.

"I was up late into the night, reading and rereading your letters. Truly, they all spoke to my heart. But there was one that touched my soul. Each time I read it, I knew that I had found a connection. Although I knew they were just words of a mortal man... it was as if Eros himself spoke them to me."
She pauses dramatically.



"So, it is with great joy, that I choose... Duke Pedro de Silva!"

A man from the crowd yelps with excitement and rushes to the gazebo, leaping along a wobbly bridge across the water. He bows before the woman and kisses her hand. She raises him to his feet and embraces him tightly. The violinists break into celebratory music as the crowd claps politely. But everyone notices that some of the men in the crowd seem deeply disappointed.

The Harlequin bangs his staff against the floor of the gazebo and clears his throat:

"Well, my friends, the first of our jewels, the Red Diamond, has been awarded. But do not be disappointed, for there are three more to be given away. Perhaps in the morning, it shall be the rare Green Diamond who shall stand with me. Ladies, remember that he enjoys... poetry and illustration! Turn in your most alluring love letters!"

The Harlequin gestures to a letter box on the lawn. As Duke Pedro and Madam de le Porte walk to the lawn,

mist again fills the gazebo. Within seconds, the Harlequin has disappeared.

Fionnlaoch Fairbain

After the ceremony, a gray-haired Scottish gentleman, FIONNLAOCH FAIRBAIN, walks over to introduce himself. Fionn drifts towards the PC with the biggest personality. Unlike some of the other nobles at the Contest, he prefers witty parlay over status.

Fionn explains that it's not a shocking surprise that Laure de le Porte picked Duke Pedro. He guesses that the two had known each other, and somehow Duke Pedro put a code into what should have been an anonymous letter.

Fionn is happy to give some history on the citadel's unusual event:

- Every year, the Society of St. Christopher accepts applications from five nobles who are brave enough to escape their families and marry for love. The men and women – the "Diamonds" – are secreted away and participate as the prizes in this scandalous

contest. Other nobles who brave and clever enough to find the Secret Citadel – always hidden in a different location each year – compete with each other by writing anonymous love letters to the Diamonds. Over the course of several days, the Diamonds choose their future spouses, and the event ends with a spectacular wedding for all involved. Even those who do not win a Diamond often leave thrilled with the adventure and romance of the event.

- Fionn himself has no interest in a Diamond. He enjoys the Contest for the challenge and thrill of finding the place, and the friends he meets in the process. He's authentically happy for the first couple.
- This year, now that one Diamond has found her match, there are two princesses to be given away along with one prince (see the [Diamonds](#), p.20). Sadly, another would-be Diamond, Lady Alice Stanley, was caught in a storm and her ship has not been heard from in weeks. It is feared that she has drowned – a most tragic and sad event.
- If asked about *actual* diamonds or treasure, Fionn playfully scolds the PCs for their lack of romance.
- If asked about the master of ceremonies, the Harlequin of Scandals, Fionn shrugs and says the man's been the center of the contest for years and years. No one knows who he is, and no one dares ask. "To interfere with the Harlequin risks ruining this treasured contest forever."
- Fionn reminds the PCs that this event is illegal and *very* scandalous, and now that they are privy to it, they should keep secret all that they have seen here. "Enjoy your time here, then remember it no more."
- If the PCs inquire about entering the contest, he'll say that anyone can win, regardless of status or wealth. If the PCs push the topic, he advises them to write a love letter to one of the Diamonds and place it in the box near the lake, where the Harlequin will deliver it. He points them to a nearby poster that shows the Diamonds to be wooed (see [Handout C](#)).
- However, he warns them that he is sure that the Harlequin makes sure that only well-bred folks' love letters actually make it to the diamonds. "I can smell from the smoke that comes from his chimney each night that some of those letters are burned."

Fionn also fills the PCs in on some of the more interesting guests at the event (see [Guests of the Citadel](#), p.12). He is particularly keen to gain the PCs help kicking out one of the most foul-mouthed and rude guests, "GREAT-SWORD" GONÇALLVES. This mission is described in more detail in [Scandals of the Citadel](#), p. 21.

Fionnlaoch Fairbain

Romantic Scotsman

Medium human, neutral good

Armor Class 15 Speed 30 ft.

Hit Points 38 (7d8+7)

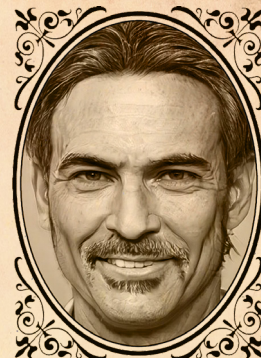
STR	DEX	CON
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)
INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills Perception +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages English, French

Challenge 2 (450 XP)



Intimidating Stance. When armed, his AC includes his Charisma modifier.

Multiattack. Tibbets makes two melee attacks.

Scottish Broadsword (in his room). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage. He also carries a walking stick, which does 1d6 + 2 bludgeoning damage.

Notes: Fionn is extraordinarily friendly and outgoing, slow to anger but never forgetting a slight. He loves talking to strangers of all status levels. He is known among the other nobles of the Contest for his constant conversation and loud early morning baths. While he's a romantic at heart, he has little desire to be tied down with a spouse.

After the PCs speak with Fionn, the servant Pascual informs them that he has a room ready for them in the guest chambers. The PCs are welcome to stay until the end of the ceremonies at the citadel.

Pascual hands each of the guests a tidy basket containing dried sausage, some bread, and a slice of guava coated in sugar – for when they inevitably get hungry at night.

A Mysterious Note

One of the PCs finds a note inside his basket (see [Handout D](#)). The mysterious note asks the PCs to meet near the lake an hour after midnight, and is signed "H.S." – the Harlequin of Scandals – though the PCs may not figure that clue out just yet.

GM's Note: If the players enjoy roleplaying, making mischief, and want to compete in the Contest, the GM should give them a free day before the midnight meeting. In this case, deliver the baskets and the note the next morning after the PCs have arrived. This gives them an entire day for socializing. See the section [Scandals of the Citadel](#) on p. 21 for mini-adventures that can be inserted between arrival and this night. If the GM is

on a time-limit, or just wants to thrust the PCs directly into the action, the meeting should take place the same night as their arrival.

The Midnight Meeting

The sound of hushed voices awakens the PCs sometime after midnight. Two cloaked men stand near the lake. One holds a hooded lantern. They are waiting for the PCs to join them.

As the PCs approach, they immediately recognize one man as the famed musician, Arcangelo Carelli. The other man is dark-haired, sharp-featured, and has a memorable grin visible under a Venetian-style half-mask – the Harlequin of Scandals himself, the Contest’s revered master of ceremonies.

The Harlequin is pleased that the PCs have joined him this evening, for he has a special mission that requires their skills.

The Harlequin explains that one of the Diamonds has escaped, and is believed to have fled into the catacombs underneath the secret citadel. He and his servants briefly looked for the Diamond, but the old tunnels are dark, half-flooded, and likely dangerous, and he dares not send any more of the servants or – heaven forbid – the noble guests into the tunnels.

His companion Corelli clearly cares little for the escaped Diamond, and quickly interrupts to explain something else:

“A hundred years ago, an English explorer named Francis Drake landed on this island, intending to celebrate Christmas here with his new wife before travelling on to Spain. In exchange for peaceful passage, he gave the native Caribs here a gift – a mirrored stone that he had found on one of his many voyages. It was known as the Sirenstone, and was said to be a perfect amber marble, but one that held a single golden hair of an archangel. If you listened to it, you’d hear the music of heaven itself.”

The Harlequin, rolling his eyes, interrupts:

“Carelli here met an old Carib in Dominica who told him that the stone was lost in this valley, buried in some caves. He thinks that the stone is still here. Recover the Diamond, but my musician friend will pay you even more to recover the stone. That will make his Christmas Concertos worth listening to, eh?”

Guests at the Citadel

About a dozen nobles have discovered the Secret Citadel this year. If the players decide to cavort with the contestants, they find colorful personalities:

Greatsword Gonçallves*. A foul-mouthed and rude Portuguese gentleman, Gonçallves has angered nearly everyone in the citadel. He’s determined to win a Diamond at any cost.

Lady Kitty Mary Maryann*. A mischievous lady who has a senile husband at home. She is looking to claim any man here as her own, Diamond or not.

Cosme Gallardo*. An older Spanish gentleman who is looking for a young bride. Cosme is a compulsive liar and makes up many tall tales. He’s also the long lost father of one of the PCs...

Mademoiselle Touraine*. A frugal, raven-haired young lady who has an eye for the Green Diamond, Guillem Ramon. She is utterly rude to servants, including her own.

Duke Jose Pedro. A young Spanish duke who is madly in love with one of the Diamonds, Laure de le Porte. Now that she has picked him to be her fiancé, he spends his days bemoaning how hard it is to wait for his wedding day.

Arcangelo Corelli. A famous Italian musician, known for his violin concertos. While he has made a few efforts to win one of the Diamonds, he is more obsessed with finding a legendary artifact, the Sirenstone.

** See [Scandals of the Citadel](#), p. 21 for plots for involving this NPC.*

GM’s Note: *It doesn’t really matter which of the Diamonds is missing. Pick from the [Diamonds](#) on p. 20 that would best suit your play group.*

The Harlequin offers 300 gold crowns apiece for the rescue of the Diamond. Carelli offers 1,800 gold crowns for the recovery of the stone! Both offers can be reasonably negotiated.

If asked about the Diamond, the Harlequin claims ignorance as to why the person fled. He suggests that maybe it was boredom, or perhaps cold feet. He emphasizes that there is no allowance for a Diamond to escape the festivity without getting married. “Every single one has

agreed to all of the rules of the Contest all up front,” the Harlequin explains. “True love requires risk.”

Conversing with the two adds more details:

- It is imperative that the Diamond be rescued by the morning, when they are due to make their decision. He also insists that the PCs mission remain secret this night.
- The Harlequin explains that the entrance to the catacombs is located through the building that holds his quarters. The only way into his quarters is via a secret tunnel that leads from the gazebo, underneath the Diamonds’ residence, and into his quarters.
- If asked more about the Sireystone, only Carelli seems to be able to answer. He is obsessed with finding the stone so he can become a world-famous musician. “It is a muse unlike any other!” he explains.
- The two can provide some basic supplies for the rescue mission: some rope, torches and lanterns, and mundane tools.

The Secret Passage

Once the PCs have agreed to the bargain, the Harlequin leads them across the floating bridge to the gazebo. He taps his walking stick at a dark knot on the floorboards and a trap door hidden on the floor silently hinges inwards. A ladder descends into a wide stone-lined tunnel that runs underneath the lake.

“The trap door was cleverly designed by the brilliant architect of King Louis himself, Louis le Vau... may he rest in peace,” he winks. A DC 15 INT (HISTORY) check recalls le Vau as the great, architect of Versailles.

The Harlequin tells the PCs to make a **right** at the fork in the secret tunnel and then into his quarters. He urges the PCs not to bother the Diamonds, whose residence lies along the left fork. This is how the Harlequin makes the Diamonds’ “magically” appear in the gazebo.

If any of the PCs have submitted love letters to the Diamonds, the Harlequin reminds them that meeting a Diamond in person disqualifies them. The Harlequin, however, won’t actually accompany the PCs into the secret tunnel unless he suspects they plan to violate that request.

As described, the underground tunnel soon forks, with one passage leading into the Diamonds’ residence.

The other route leads into the Harlequin’s chambers. Even though the chamber is temporary, it’s surprisingly

The Diamonds’ Residence

The PCs may decide to ignore the Harlequin’s request to leave the Diamonds alone. They can divert into the Diamonds’ residence before heading to the catacombs. This may be an attractive option for any of the PCs looking to make an impression on one of the Diamonds!

A wooden ladder and trapdoor puts the PCs directly into the bedroom of Guillem Ramon de Muntanyola (who will be surprised to see anyone but the Harlequin popping into his room!)

The GM can improvise a late night encounter with one of the Diamonds. The Diamonds already have a taste for scandal, and may find any cheating at the game thrilling. Regardless, waking up a Diamond in the middle of the night likely prompts a poor reaction! However, impressing the Diamond in this way will increase the odds of winning their hand later. The conclusion of the adventure discusses how to win the hand of a Diamond in more detail.

luxurious. Gold-framed mirrors are everywhere on the walls, a decorated armoire holds exquisite fineries, and the bed is made of the softest down. This is the bedroom of a prince.

A loose flagstone in the corner of his chambers drops ten feet into the catacombs underneath the citadel. A bedsheet has been hastily tied to a scone mounted on a nearby wall, providing access down into the dark catacombs. It seems this makeshift rope was how the lost Diamond escaped into the depths.

Part 4: The Catacomb Rescue

The Secret Citadel was built atop an old Carib native settlement. The catacombs are actually natural limestone caverns that once protected the natives from storms.

The caves are muddy and smell of salt and earth. Navigating the dark maze is difficult, as the passages twist and turn in circles. It’s no wonder the Harlequin and his servants gave up looking down here.



Cave Locations

#1. Entrance. This is the chamber where the PCs enter the caverns. Climbing back up into the citadel with the help of the bedsheet or a rope is easy and only requires a DC 5 STR (ATHLETICS) check. Without help, it requires a DC 15 check to find good handholds.

The entry chamber is filled with ancient pictographs drawn on to the walls by the original Carib people.



#2. The Flooded Chambers. This central area is filled with deep sea water that sloshes around the cave and makes a sound reminiscent of a giant, gurgling stomach. Hearing anything nearby this flooded area is nearly impossible.

Unless the PCs have a clever plan, they need to swim across this heaving, underground lake, which requires a DC 8 STR (ATHLETICS) check. On a bad failure, a strong

current grabs hold of the PC and drags them on a perilous trip through some tight squeezes and finally into the lake around the citadel's gazebo!

The flooded chamber is also home to a giant, albino cave squid. This aggressive creature is attracted to unnatural movement and anyone struggling in the water.

GM's Note: For maximum tension, the first time the PCs cross the lake, ask the PCs to make a DC 13 Wis (PERCEPTION) check due to the darkness. On a success, they spot a tentacle or beaked shape break the water in the distance. The second time they cross the lake, on the way back, the hungry creature attacks, targeting anyone who fails their swimming checks or is straggling behind!

#3. A Shaft of Light. A shaft of moonlight can be seen beaming from a hole in the ceiling thirty feet above the catacomb floor. A rope can be found on the ground here, but it is only half the length required to get to the hole in the ceiling.

This area can act as an escape from the catacombs, but anyone climbing up must make a DC 15 STR (ATHLETICS) check to get started on the muddy, wet walls, and then make a second ACROBATICS check (a jump) to reach the hole and escape on to the slopes of Mt. Misery.

#4. The Dead Arquebusers. Waist-deep, viscous water separates this alcove from the main catacombs. Here are the skeletons of two British soldiers, along with the recognizable remnants of their old-style Elizabethan uniforms. A DC 8 Wis (MEDICINE) check identifies that they died violently, likely by native weaponry.

Searching the chamber finds a usable halberd and a rusty, crested morion helmet. One of the men has a valuable emerald ring around his bony finger, worth 200 gold crowns. There is also a glass bottle that contains final prayer written by one of the men (see [Handout D](#)), which reveals that they were deserters from Francis Drake's expedition who tried to steal the Sirenstone from the Caribs. The note reveals that they hid it in an abandoned cannon here in the catacombs.

#5. The Abandoned Cannon. One hundred years ago, these caves more easily accessible. Some of Drake's men wheeled a regimental cannon here, hoping to use it to scare off the natives. It didn't work.

Hidden inside the cannon's barrel is the Sirenstone, a marble-sized, wondrous artifact imbued with the resonance of an angel (see [The Sirenstone](#), p. 17 for details).

Industrious PCs might think to get the old field cannon working again. A search in the area finds enough dry gunpowder stored in the caves nearby. A DC 18 INT check is required to get the thing working. The old English cannon still packs quite a punch. Firing the cannon is at +6 to hit, range 200/1800 ft., one target. Hit: 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage.

Dragging the heavy cannon is another matter. It weighs 1,000 pounds and the wheels are fragile. Applying some carpentry finesse repairs the wheels.

#6. The Lost Diamond. The escaped Diamond is huddled in this part of the cave, lost and hopeless. Regardless of which Diamond the GM chose to go missing, the reason is the same: the Diamond was overwhelmed by the Contest, did not feel that anyone was a good match, and wanted to escape back to Sandy Point Town. The lost Diamond begs the PCs to negotiate on their behalf with the Harlequin to let them leave the Contest without choosing a suitor.

The Diamond mentions a few other useful pieces of information:

- They tried to escape in the northern section of the caves (#3), but their rope was too short. The Diamond mentions they heard voices coming from above, and assumed it was the Harlequin's servants scouting the area for them.
- They swear they heard voices coming from the lake about thirty minutes before the PCs arrived.
- While swimming across the underground lake looking for another exit, they saw a horrible monster emerge from the water and make a terrible sound that shook the cavern. "It was like a many-armed, beaked devil."

Return to the Citadel

With the lost Diamond rescued and the Sirenstone (hopefully) recovered, the PCs likely head back to the citadel. To achieve this, they must again cross the water-filled chambers, where the dangerous blind kraken lives.

The Blind Kraken

Aggressive Cave Squid
Huge beast, unaligned



Armor Class 15 Speed 60 ft.
Hit Points 105 (14d12+28)

STR	DEX	CON
19 (+4)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)
INT	WIS	CHA
2 (-4)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +5 (advantage underwater)
Senses blindsight 60 ft.; passive Perception 14
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Multiattack. The kraken makes two melee attacks, but only one bite

Beak Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Arms. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 21 (4d6 + 7) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it is Grappled (escape DC 19). Until this grapple ends, the target is Restrained, and the squid can't use its tentacles on another target.

Ink Cloud (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). A 20-foot radius cloud of ink extends all around the squid. The area is obscured for 1 minute, although a significant current can disperse the ink. After releasing the ink, the giant squid can jet away as a bonus action, moving 240 feet in a line.

Before the PCs recross the water-filled chamber, they hear voices coming from up ahead. They soon see the flickering of torchlight. An investigation spots several men crossing the tunnels on the other side of the lake, coming from the cave exit in area #3. If the search is a good one, they even get a view of the leader of the gang (see The Marauders, below).

They will soon hear some nefarious muttering:

"Nobles will be so drunk, they'll never know what stuck 'em in the spine."

"Gonna get us some girly friends, I think."

"I hear there are real diamonds where we're going... gonna be rich, rich, rich!"

GM's Note: It's possible at this point that the PCs simply abandon the citadel and try escaping through the catacombs. Hopefully, there's a reason the PCs want to prevent the citadel being overrun by marauders –

friendships they've made or romances they've started. Certainly, the lost Diamond will beg them to stop any would-be ambushes. Failing that, the GM should post a couple of sentries above the exit, armed with muskets and unwilling to let the PCs climb up without incident.

Part 5: The Marauders

A gang of marauders have found an entrance into the Secret Citadel through the catacombs. Having heard of the scandalous festivity, they plan on looting, killing, and worse as means to make a fortune.

The GM should pick a familiar "Lead Marauder" to head up this marauding gang. The best choice is an NPC that the PCs have previously met *and* built an enmity towards. The most logical choices include:

John Tibbets – Tibbets was the despicable man the PCs originally tried to "rescue" from the island. He was likely either left for dead or returned to the PCs' boat. Either way, he survived and escaped, deciding he didn't like the PCs at all. When he overheard where the PCs were going, he followed them with the intent to get rich through ill-means. Tibbets is unscrupulous and feels as if the entire world has abandoned him. He makes for a great archvillain.

"Greatsword" Gonçallves – If the PCs listened to Fionn and "escorted" Gonçallves out of the citadel, he is back with a gang of cutthroats to get his revenge. Seething mad, he plans to kill Fionn and the Harlequin, and steal one of the Diamonds as his own. Gonçallves makes an intimidating, bloodthirsty opponent.

Orgon, Brindavoine, and Trisso – The three fops never like playing fair, and when they heard that there were three Diamonds left, they decided to steal them away in the middle of the night. While the fops prefer intimidation over violence, the men they hired don't operate the same way. What starts as a kidnapping ploy devolves very quickly into violence and looting, causing the PCs to step in to rescue the situation.

The Citadel Under Siege

By the time the PCs deal with the squid and escape back to the entrance chamber, they find the way back to the citadel sealed. The men dragged a heavy chest on top of the flagstone that led to the catacombs. The PCs will have to climb up and then make a DC 12 STR check to pry it open and climb into the Harlequin's chambers.

Cutthroats

Hired Marauders (2 per PC)

Medium human, chaotic evil

Armor Class 11 (leather) **Speed** 30 ft.

Hit Points 60 (11d8+11)

STR	DEX	CON
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+0)
INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Skills Intimidation +3

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Various, but usually a bit of French and English

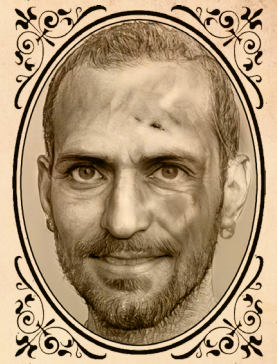
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Underhanded blows. When the cutthroat hits, he does an extra die of damage (already included below)

Multiattack. Cutthroats make two melee attacks.

Cutlass. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Notes: While the cutthroats are being well-paid by their leader, they have no desire to die for him. If outmatched or severely wounded, an individual cutthroat will choose to flee over standing his ground.



The view from the window in the Harlequin's room reveals a terrible sight. The Lead Marauder and his gang have rounded up the Contest's nobles on the lawn, along with the three remaining Diamonds. There is no sign of the Harlequin.

The Lead Marauder is giving a boastful speech along these lines:

"All of you drunk and useless. Have you had your fill of romance now? Nothing like a little gunpowder before the big wedding, aye? Now, two at a time, you're going to return to your quarters and bring out your valuables. Your gold, your silver, your gems, and especially your letters. My men enjoy dirty literature... heh."

"You lucky Brits will be returning to my ship with me to be ransomed off. Count yourself truly fortunate, because the ones who don't pour enough gold at my feet this night will be shot without remorse."

At this, one of the nobles shouts out "you dishonorable and vile pirate!"

With that, the Lead Marauder nods his head and one of his marauders fires a shot into that noble. The man falls over, dying.

“Dishonorable, yes, but never a *pirate*.”

The marauders howl in delight and begin selecting some guests to return to their quarters to retrieve their treasure, each escorted by at least two armed cutthroats.

Rescuing the Contest

To rescue the hostages and save the day, the PCs must deal with the Lead Marauder and his cutthroats. The GM can adjust the difficulty of this final encounter, but since the PCs have the element of surprise, it's suggested that the GMs use two cutthroats per PC for a reasonably dangerous final battle.

To help even the odds, the Harlequin meets the PCs in the Diamonds' Residences. He explains that he snuck away during the occupation, and he volunteers to help distract the marauders. If the PCs are ill-equipped, he also supplies them with some arms that he hid before the Contest began – a couple of fine rapiers and a puffer pistol.

The PCs can approach this final confrontation in a few ways. Since it is likely still nighttime, they can use stealth and guile to sneak around, eliminate guards, and eventually challenge the Lead Marauder. In this case, the GM should draw the PCs towards the gazebo, so the final duel takes place over the water (which may be filled with electric eels! See *Scandals at the Citadel* for details...).

The PCs may also be able to rescue a few friends as they are escorted to the guest quarters. Nobles like Fionn Fairbain, Richard Reve, and even the fops (if present and not among the marauders) will happily fight the marauders once they are reasonably armed!

Conclusion

With the defeat of the marauders and the arrival of dawn, the Harlequin congratulates the PCs for saving his Contest.

“The most Scandalous of Contests yet!” he declares happily. “Which would not have been possible if it weren't for your efforts. Alas, I'd invite you to stay, but your trip into the catacombs has you smelling like rotten fish, so if you please...”

The Sirenstone

The Sirenstone is a sparkling amber marble, approximately the size of a walnut. If you carefully look into the marble, you'll see a golden eyelash embedded into the amber – said to be the very eyelash of seraphim.

Holding the stone up to the ear is a life changing experience. The stone emits multiple, beautiful tonalities. Faint violin-like notes cascade from the stone, inspiring and delighting listeners. Merely listening to the stone for a few minutes is enough to give a +3 bonus to any music composition attempts made within the day.

If the stone is damaged through force, it emits a burst of sonic dissonance. Anyone within 2 yards of the sound must make a DC 12 CON saving throw or else fall unconscious. Anyone within 5 yards rolls at advantage.

The stone, however, is fragile. If it is damaged, it has a 30% chance of shattering. Anyone nearby will hear a tremendous and indescribable sound, like the Gates of Heaven opening themselves. All nearby will be stunned for 1d6 rounds.

The Harlequin points towards the exit. After a beat, he laughs, and servants burst forth, bringing everyone fine embroidered garments, clothes worthy of dukes.

If the PCs wish to negotiate for the release of the escaped Diamond, the Harlequin will consider the request. While he hems and haws at the thought of breaking tradition, a good argument will win him over.

Many Weddings

The Harlequin breaks out the precious Vin Mousseux wine to kickoff the grand celebration on the Contest's final day.

The remaining Diamonds announce their choices, which is entirely up to the GM and the events that have happened so far. If nothing else, Richard Reve wins a Diamond... and is shocked, as he swears he only wrote one, short lover letter and it barely rhymed.

If one of the PCs competed to win the hand of a Diamond, the GM can declare whether it worked, or rely on the luck of the dice.

GM's Note: To roll to see whether a PC's flirtation worked, make a DC 25 CHA check. Add +2 if the PC met and charmed Diamond in person at some point (perhaps en route to the catacombs...). If the PC wrote a love letter and succeeded at a DC 15 CHA (PERSUASION) check, add +1 to the roll, or +3 if the PC made sure to take into account the Diamond's personality. Successfully impressing a Diamond with dancing during La Belle Danse earns another +1. On a success, the Diamond chooses the PC as their future partner!

As the noon sun peaks above the citadel, the Harlequin introduces a local priest – looking a bit befuddled and confused – who has agreed to perform the wedding ceremony. All of the guests cheer and clap and knock goblets together as each couple swears their loyalty and love for each other.

The ceremony at a close, the Harlequin stands in the gazebo and gives a final speech thanking everyone for their attendance. He exclaims that he looks forward to next year, where the Contest will be in a different location entirely. With that, he vanishes from sight, his trick of mist and smoke obfuscating his disappearance into the tunnels below.

Epilogue

As the PCs leave the citadel and head back to their ship, they see a strange sight. Moored in the harbor is the magnificent *Royal Louis*, one of the largest First Rank ships in the French Navy. It bristles with over one hundred guns and has a complement of over 800 men.

Rowing towards the ship of the line is a small tender boat. Proudly standing on the boat is the Harlequin, but he is surrounded by several Royal Guard. He removes his mask and dons a luxurious brown wig. His men replace his jacket with a royal one. As he looks towards the PCs' boat he gives a nod and smiles.

An old sailor near the PCs squints and asks aloud, "Could it be we're looking at Louis the Sun King...?"

Rewards

For successfully completing this adventure, the PCs should typical XP, usually enough to level up. Great success may also grant appropriate allies or enemies for future games.

If the PCs manage to return John Tibbets to Nevis, Governor Hill gives them the reward he promised – the Drunken Hangman. If Tibbets died along the way, Hill decides to dangle the reward a little longer, and assign the PCs another dangerous mission...

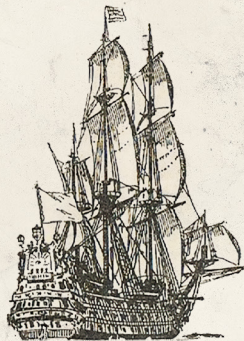
Extending the Adventure

One of the mysteries left unsolved in *The Siren's Citadel* is the whereabouts of the fifth Diamond, Lady Alice Stanley.

Strongheaded Lady Alice Stanley had no wish to marry for politics. Her cousin, Princess Anne of Great Britain, arranged for her enter the Contest. Unfortunately, her ship was hit by a savage storm near Jamaica and sunk. Alice survived the tragedy and drifted in the open ocean for several days before she was picked up by buccaneers under the command of the honorable pirate Laurens de Graff. Intending to ransom Alice Stanley, Laurens changed his mind when he realized the woman was a capable tactician. He's appointed her his apprentice, and is teaching her the ways of privateering before he retires.

By the time the English hear that Alice Stanley has survived, the story is told differently. Authorities in Jamaica believe she is held captive by Laurens de Graff, and a reward of 6,000 gold crowns has been posted for her rescue.

Alice Stanley has no desire to be rescued, but tracking her down and discovering her tale will make an adventure in itself.



Adventure Notes

For more free one shot adventures, please visit 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 1shotadventures.com or tweet @SageThalcos on Twitter.

Special Thanks

Special thanks to Hafizaprilio on Fiverr.com for his illustration of the blind squid. Thanks also to thispersondoesnotexist.com and artbreeder.com for helping create images of the various human characters. Thanks also to *The Pirate Class 5E* available on dmsguild.com for inspiration for one of the pregenerated characters. This is a must have for pirate games!

For more one-shot adventures and VTT assets, 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. Please post a note on www.1shotadventures.com or tweet @SageThalcos.

A Note on History

I enjoy including real-life people in my historical adventures. In *The Siren's Citadel*, the composer Arcangelo Corelli was a highly-influential Baroque musician, famous for popularizing violin music. Ümmi Sultan

was also a real-life Ottoman princess. While there's not much recorded on her life, it is true that her uncle tried to find her a good match after her father was deposed.

Also, it is impossible to write a Caribbean pirate adventure without mentioning all of the awful events that actually happened in that region. St. Kitts and Nevis in particular have a bloody history, with all of the indigenous peoples being cruelly murdered or deported in just a few decades. The islands' soon became home to sugar plantations worked by black slaves. By 1774, the population on St. Kitts was 1,900 white people and 23,000 Black slaves.

I've done my best not to ignore the fact that these horrible and harmful events happened, but I also steered far away from spotlighting any of it. Player character should be heroes and stand against outright evil. The fun of a pirate adventure should be duelling bad guys, shouting witty insults, and fighting krakens.

But if you run this adventure, please take a few minutes and read up on the real history of St. Kitts and Nevis, the treatment of the native Caribs, and the slave trade. History is there to teach us, and I learned a lot researching this adventure.

Change Log

v1.0 - Original 5E release.
v1.1 - Minor edits and fixes



The Four Diamonds

Each year, five willing men and women, who wish to marry for love, are secretly chosen by the Society of St. Christopher to participate in the contest. Once chosen, they are secreted away to a hidden location, where romantic men and women compete for their attention. In 1689, however, there were only four diamonds, as one of them – Lady Alice Stanley – is thought lost at sea on the way to the Contest.



Laure de le Porte
(The Red Diamond)

When the PCs enter the citadel, Laure has just chosen Duke Pedro from Spain to be her husband. The two of them had already met and fallen in love prior to the event. Laure's French father had no intention to allow her to marry her to a Spaniard, so Laure

schemed to sign up for the Contest of Five Diamonds, and was able to leak the location of the event to her lover.

Laure has an exuberant personality. She loves to talk (she speaks three languages), drink, and gamble. She's madly in love with Duke Pedro, however, and cannot easily be lured from his side.



Ümmi Sultan
(The Gray Diamond)

An Ottoman princess, Ümmi found herself in grave danger when her father was deposed two years ago. Unable to find a marriage, her beloved uncle urged her to petition to enter the Contest and find a husband who can help hide her from her father's enemies.

While Ümmi is apprehensive about the contest, she is intelligent, well-educated, and practical about her need to escape the Ottoman Empire for now. While the Contest implores her to find a romantic partner, she's looking for a husband as sharp and intelligent as she is. She also loves astronomy and mathematics, and looks for someone who can challenge her knowledge on those great subjects.



Christina Anna
(The Yellow Diamond)

A lively Danish noblewoman, Christina Anna is known for her great love of hunting and riding. She also loves decor, and is a great critic of things she does not find beautiful. Christina Anna was married once before to a Danish prince. He died, however, in a skirmish and left her widowed at age 16. While

her family assured her that they would find her match, she was done with political marriages and decided to take her fate into her own hands. She fled Denmark to Paris, where she found representatives of the Order of St. Christopher. She insisted she be admitted into the Contest, and eventually, they relented.

Christina is willful, has a good sense of humor, and is looking for a partner who treats her as an equal. She is attracted to athletic and strong men, but has no desire to enter another relationship with a soldier.



Guillem Ramon de Muntanyola
(The Green Diamond)

Handsome Guillem is the youngest son of House Muntanyola, one of Spain's great noble houses. He is an artist at heart, however, and has no desire to think about politics, war, or affairs of state. His family tried to push him into the clergy, but he

found the thought of that occupation dull and boring. He really just wants a simple life, a partner that acts as his muse, and well-made oil paints.

Guillem did not sign up for the Contest. His older sister, Felipa, worrying about her sibling's ability to find the life he wanted by himself, wrote letters on Guillem's behalf to the Order of St. Christopher. He had no idea what he was in for until he arrived at the Secret Citadel. Now, he is enjoying the food and wine and finds the entire event interesting enough – for now – to hold his attention.

Scandals at the Citadel

Once the PCs arrive at the Secret Citadel, the GM has a choice. If the players enjoy free-form roleplaying, interacting with NPCs, and general mischief making, the adventure becomes a sandbox for a day. During this time, the GM can use the following events and adventure hooks to keep the PCs distracted and entertained. Only once the day is done do they receive the note from Pascual that leads to the midnight meeting where it is discovered that one of the Diamonds has gone missing.

Of course, if the GM is short on time, or the players just want to move on to the action set pieces, some or all of these side adventures can be skipped.

The Uncouth Gentleman

While most of the nobles participating in the Contest are well-mannered, a particularly rude Portuguese gentleman, “Greatsword” Gonçallves, is the very opposite. His foul mouth and grating personality has made him an anathema among the other guests. Unfortunately, he is a savant at poetry, and the others are worried that he might actually win one of the contest’s precious Diamonds.

Fionn Fairbain asks the PCs to find some manner of “eliminating” Gonçallves from the event. It’s against the rules of the event for contestants to duel or fight... but those *not* competing are not held to such high standards. Fionn thinks the PCs with their shady backgrounds can figure out a solution here. While Fionn prefers the PCs find a clever way for Gonçallves to either quit the game or not be present when one of the Diamonds makes their choice, he doesn’t really care if some blood is shed.

Gonçallves is not easily intimidated, especially by anyone of lower status. He can easily be goaded into violence, which will disqualify him. He also has a big ego, and hates being embarrassed in front of high-status nobles. An embarrassment might cause him to quit the competition, swearing revenge some other time.

If the PCs can’t figure out a way to get Gonçallves to quit the contest, they can also sabotage his chances of winning. His poems really *are* that good, and he’ll win the heart of the Diamond Ümmi Sultan if she continues to receive his letters. Removing his letters from the letterbox, or forging new ones, will effectively eliminate him from the contest.

Greatsword Gonçallves

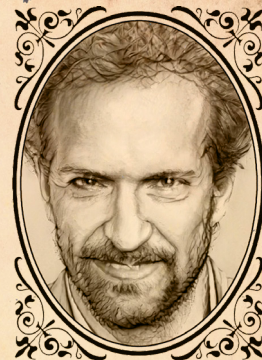
Foul-mouthed Bully

Medium human, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 15 (studded) Speed 30 ft.

Hit Points 55 (10d8+10)

STR	DEX	CON
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)
INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)



Skills Intimidation +4, Perception +4

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages Portuguese, Spanish (Accented), English (Accented), French (Accented)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Beating attack. He deals an extra 10 (3d6) damage when he hits with his weapon and is stronger than his opponent.

Multiattack. He makes two melee attacks.

Fine Greatsword “Coragem”. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (1d10 + 10) slashing damage.

Puffer Pistol. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 40/120 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8) piercing damage.

The Stolen Vin Mousseux

Vin Mousseux is a rare, effervescent Champagne wine. In the 17th century, such a thing was a brand new invention, and was looked down upon by most serious winemakers. Nevertheless, Vin Mousseux became a hit among the French aristocracy. This makes it the *perfect* beverage to open at the finale of the scandalous Contest.

Unfortunately, the crate containing six rare bottles of the Vin Mousseux has gone missing. Only a few of the servants know this, including the head servant, Pascual. Too busy arranging the day-to-day affairs of the Contest, he asks the PCs for help finding the lost crate. He says it was last seen in the citadel’s kitchen, hidden under a stone in the floor.

“Only myself and the sommelier BELARDINO knew that it was there!”

Interviewing Belardino is a non-event. The flustered sommelier is utterly distraught that the Vin Mousseux

Scandals at the Citadel (cont'd)

is gone. He's been the master of wines of the contest for six years now, and is honestly terrified he'll lose his job.

Investigating the kitchen finds the hidden storage spot under the floor. Lifting up the heavy stone that hides the cubby requires two people, or one person with STR 14+. Stealing anything from the spot was likely a two-person job!

The storage contains about a dozen bottles of expensive red wine, but there is no sign of the Vin Mousseux. A DC 15 WIS (PERCEPTION) check (difficult due to the darkness of the cubby) finds a small glass stopper at the bottom – the stopper of an expensive perfume bottle. Investigating PCs also detect the scent of a sophisticated, dewy perfume coming from the floor of the storage.

With some effort, the unique perfume can be traced to MADEMOISELLE TOURAINE, a raven-haired young woman who is aggressively competing for the Green Diamond. She is often accompanied by two of her servants, her handmaid MARIE and her bodyguard CLOVIS. It is the two servants, who are secret lovers themselves, that stole the Vin Mousseux. Tired of being served a single glass of cheap wine each night, they snuck into the kitchen late at night, stole the Vin Masseaux, and squirreled it away in Mademoiselle Touraine's room, where they've been enjoying the bottle by themselves. However, during the theft, Marie accidentally dropped her mistress' perfume bottle, where much of it spilled.

If confronted about the theft, the two servants have very different reactions. Marie is unrepentant. She hates her mistress with a passion. She calls her a "frugal peacock" and rants that the lady never treats her as well as the other servants. Clovis, on the other hand, is terrified of losing his job if he is caught. He claims he was pressured into the theft by Marie, and swears to God that he will owe the PCs a huge favor if they keep his involvement a secret.

If Touraine finds out her servants were involved, she is horrified and castigates them publicly and fires them. She spends the rest of the Contest upset and drunk, overcompensating for the embarrassment she suffered.



An Eel-mannered Jest

One of the more mischievous guests, LADY KITTY MARY MARYANN asks the PCs to help play a prank on Fionn. Lady Kitty Mary Maryann, who insists on her full name being used, is a thirty-something woman with a sharp sense of humor but little formal education. She has a senile husband at home in London, and is planning on wooing one the noble men here to return to England as her lover.

Lady Kitty Mary Maryann's first choice was Fionn Fairbain, but he rebuffed her. Irritated in the extreme, she told her servant to plan an elaborate jest.

Fionn has a reputation for waking people up in the morning by taking a bath in the hot spring that surrounds the gazebo. He loves his baths, and his loud morning singing invariably wakes everyone up.

Lady Kitty Mary Maryann's servant has smuggled a cauldron of slimy black eels into the citadel, and asks that the PCs dump the eels into the water when no one else is around. The lady can't wait for what happens when Fionn takes his next swim in the morning, surrounded by a dozen nipping eels. The lady and her servant assure the PCs that once the prank happens,

Electric Eels

Armor Class 12 Speed 30 ft. (swim)

Hit Points 13 (2d6+6)

STR	DEX	CON
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)
INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	8 (-1)	4 (+-3)

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +4

Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Challenge 1/5 (50 XP)

Tail Lash. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6+2) lightning damage. On a critical hit, the target must succeed on a DC 13 Con saving throw or be stunned for 1d6 turns.

Scandals at the Citadel (cont'd)

the eels will be caught and dined upon that afternoon, and everyone will get a good laugh.

The eels are, in fact, massive electric eels. The pranksters claim that they are harmless and only nip and cause one's hair to rise. Unless the PCs touch an eel, or succeed a DC 15 Wis (NATURE or SURVIVAL) check, they won't be able to tell they are anything other than giant eels.

If the heroes refuse the ask, Lady Kitty Mary Maryann expresses her annoyance and finds a different way to achieve her goal.

Either way, the result is Fionn waking up the next morning to a nasty surprise. He screams and shouts as the eels shock him. If the PCs don't rush to his rescue in the lake – a dangerous endeavour – he will fall unconscious from the electric shocks and drown.

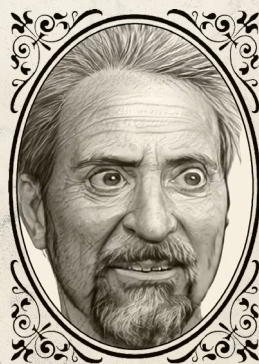
My Father the Spy

One of the PCs, Esteban Gajardos, is searching for his lost father, who was last seen sailing to St. Kitts a decade ago. The man, Cosme Gajardo can be found here at the Contest.

The first time the PCs spot Cosme, they see the old man, mostly drunk, walking towards the letter box, a parchment in his hand. He winks at the other nobles and announces that he'll need to take confession for all of the dirty thoughts he wrote into his love letter this day. Before he stuffs the letter into the box, he asks if anyone knows the Danish word for melons, which prompts a laugh from the crowd.

Cosme will be shocked and embarrassed to see his son in the crowd. After an awkward pause, he runs over to the PC and embraces him.

At first, Cosme insists that he's on a secret mission for the Vatican. He makes up some ridiculous story about spying on the Harlequin, possible devil worship, and how he's been unable to contact his family because of these important matters. It's all *almost* believable, and



the GM should do their best to make the player thing that all of that might be true.

The true story is that Cosme grew bored of his family, heard about the scandalous Contest, and left to find a younger bride. Eventually, he'll admit the truth to his son, and beg forgiveness.

La Belle Danse

Around noon, the Harlequin of Scandals announces that the evening shall be filled with a wondrous dance. Because of the Diamonds has gone missing at this point, the Harlequin announces that one of the Diamonds isn't feeling well and won't be attending *La Belle Danse*.

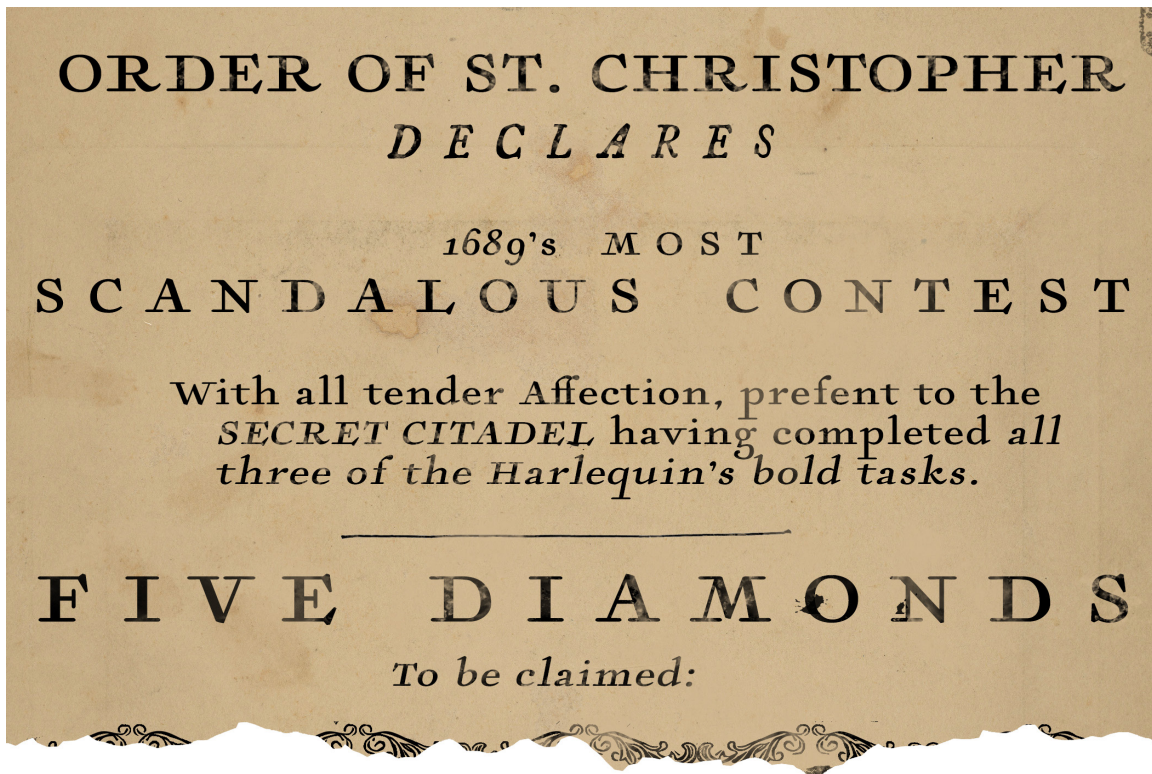
Because anonymity is important in the Contest, masks will be worn by all attendees. The moves of the baroque dance are published ahead of time on parchment posted around the citadel, so would-be dancers can impress by studying up on the moves. (Spending an hour studying the dance grants Advantage to appropriate rolls made during the dance.)

The dance is festive, with opportunities for charm and flirtation. The Harlequin himself is the best dancer of the event. During the dance, one of the more confident guests (this could be one of the fops, or perhaps Cosme Gallardo) challenges Arcangelo Coralli, the citadel's musician, to play faster and with more spirit. He agrees, and the dance becomes more ribald.

Unfortunately, a bad-tempered guest -- perhaps Lady Kitty Mary Maryann or Greatsword Gonçallves takes a tumble, splitting their corset or pants in a terribly embarrassing way. The victim immediately starts a scene and threatens Corelli, arguing that they "played the music inappropriately." Corelli insults the person's agility, and the night suddenly becomes tense, with no one seeming willing to calm the nerves of the party.

This is an opportunity for the PCs to step in and smooth the situation over. Doing so will earn the respect of those involved, and catch the eye of any of the Diamonds the PCs are wooing.

Handouts

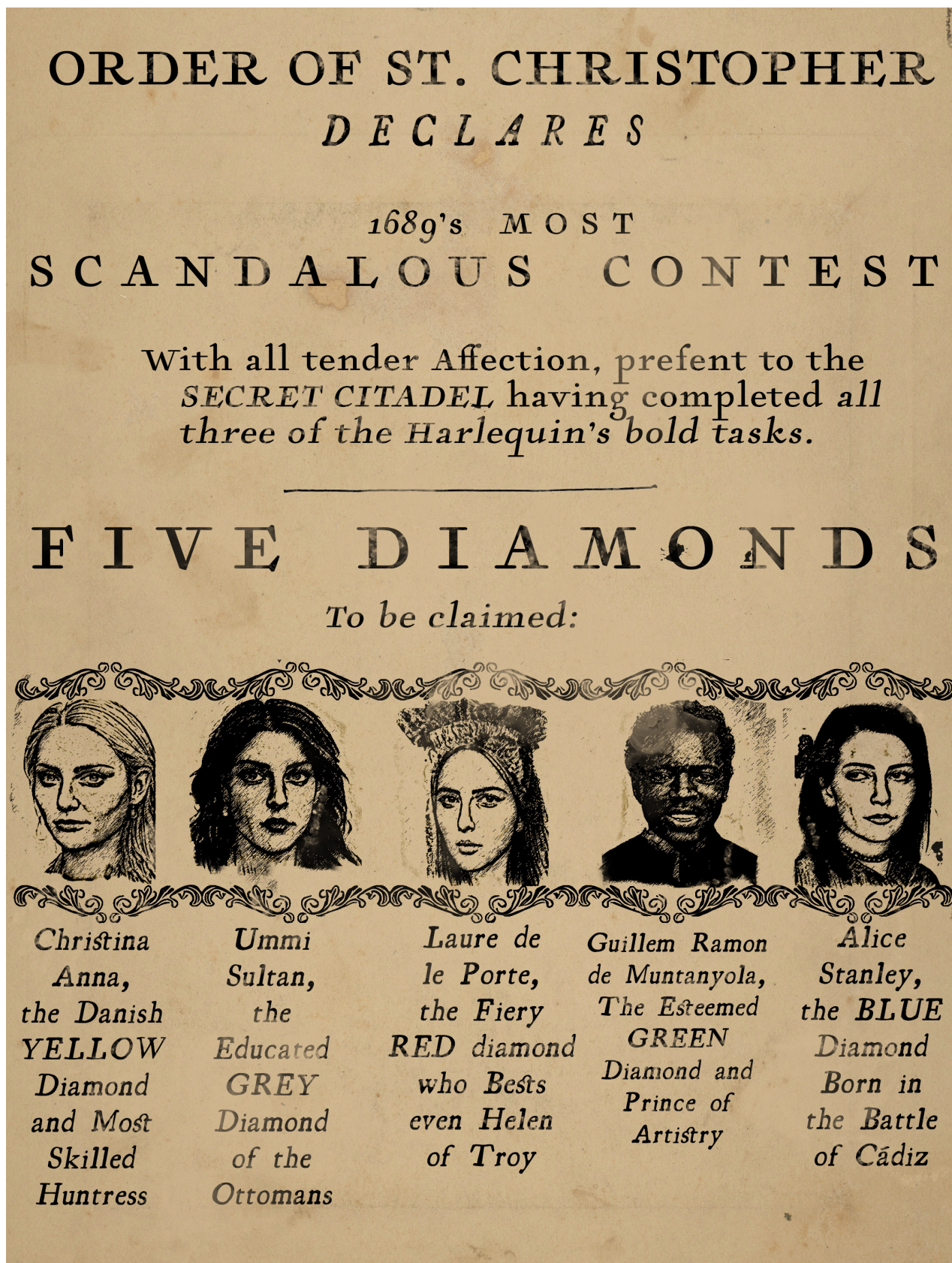


Handout A - Richard Reve's paper that proves the existence of
the Contest

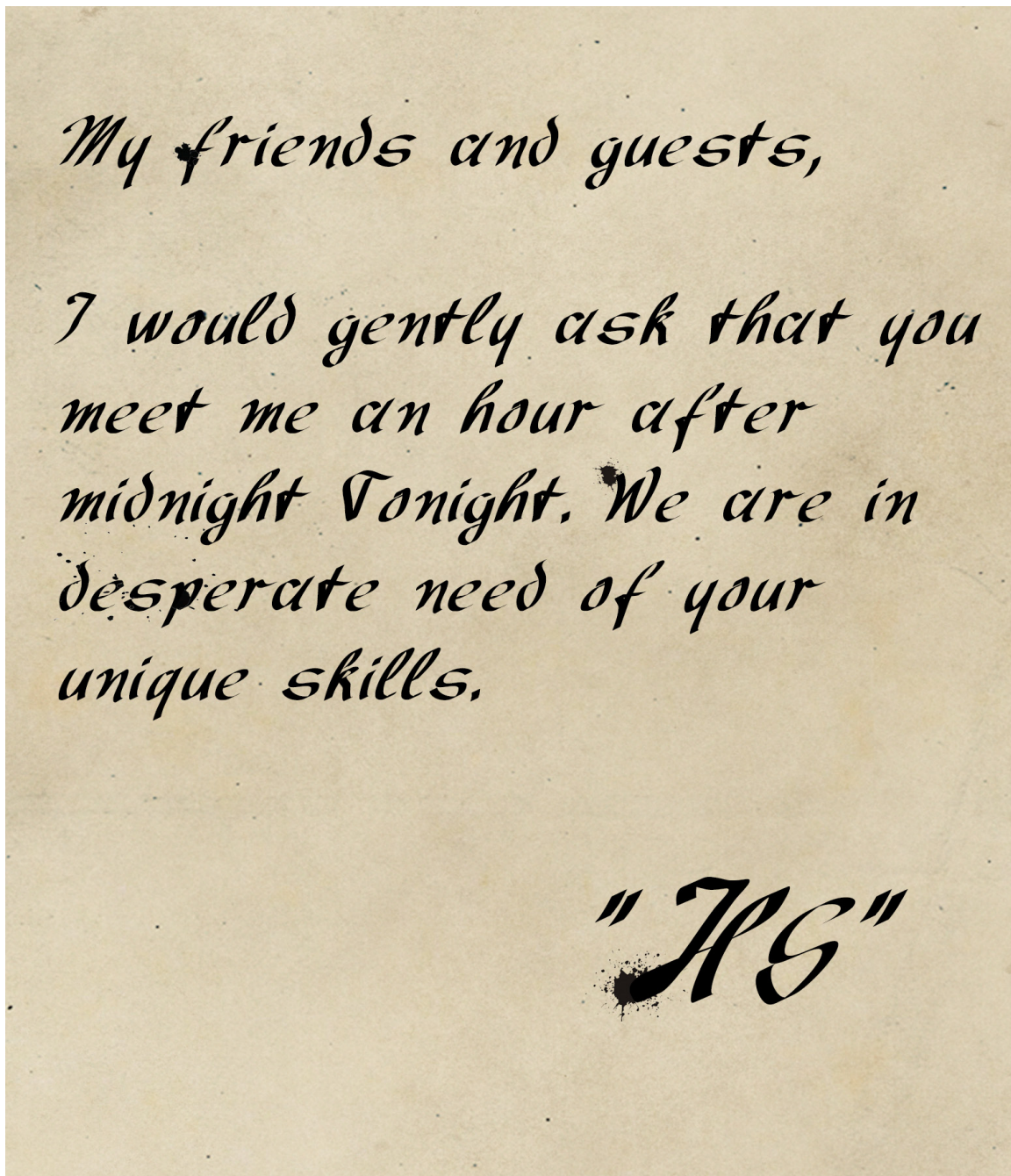
Handouts



Handout B - Richard Reve's map that shows the way to the Secret Citadel



Handout C - The poster in the Citadel showing all five of the diamonds



Handout D - Secret Note slipped into the PC's baskets, shortly after arriving at the Citadel.

Januari 1586

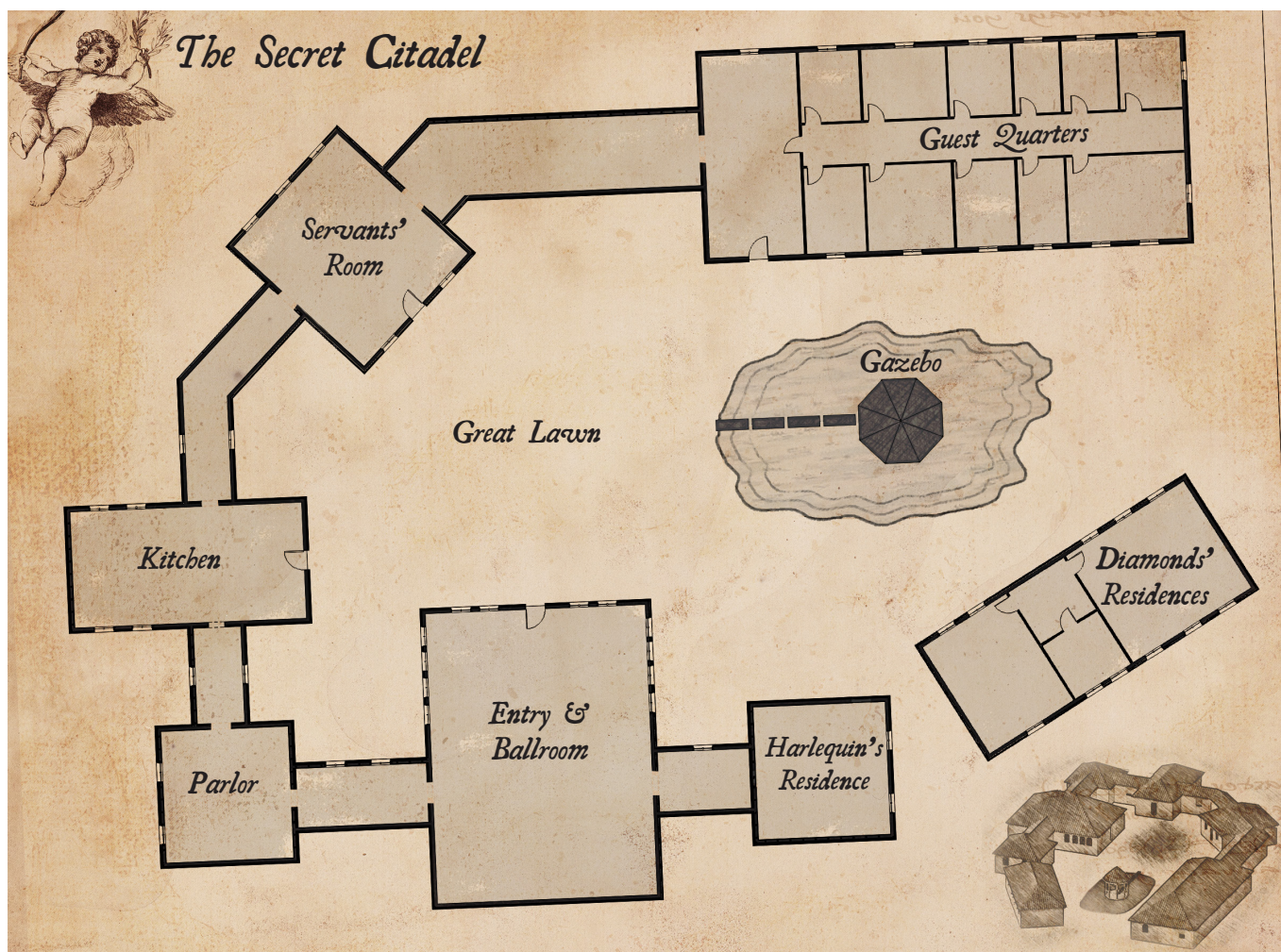
Barnard and I left Drake's
crewe at Christmas. Drake
was a fool to give the stone
to the Carib king. We left
the shipe to claim it back,
but wereth left behind.

Barnard is dead now, and
I am wounded by an arrowe.
If I am naught rescued, we
hid the angel's stone in the
gonne stored in the supplie
grotto. God saveth the Queen
as wel as my soul.

Wolstan of Ridlington

Handout E - Note found in a bottle near the dead arquebusers in the catacombs

Player Safe Map



Name: El Grande (aka Big Quartermaster)
 Player: _____ Age: 36
 Class: Ranger (Non-spellcasting) Race: Human
 Level: 3 Alignment: Neutral
 Speed: 30'

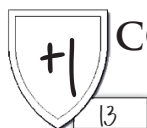
Inspiration



STR ● Athletics



DEX ○ Acrobatics
○ Sleight of Hand
○ Stealth



CON



INT ○ Arcana ○ Religion
○ History
● Investigation
○ Nature



WIS ○ Animals ● Survival
○ Insight
○ Medicine
○ Perception



CHA ○ Deception
○ Intimidation
○ Performance
○ Persuasion



Abilities

Ranger Training: You are proficient in light, medium armor, shields, simple weapons, and martial weapons. You are also proficient in Str and Dex saves.

Favored Enemy (Pirates and Officers): You have advantage on Wisdom (Survival) checks to track your favored foes, as well as Intelligence checks to recall information about them. You can also speak their language.

Natural Explorer (Coast): When you make an Intelligence or Wisdom check relating to your favored terrain, your proficiency bonus is doubled.

Combat Superiority: You have 4 battle superiority dice (1d6, which recharge after a short or long rest) and know 2 maneuvers: BRACE lets you use your reaction to attack a foe that moves into reach of your melee weapon. Add your superiority die to damage. MENACE allows you to spend a die after you hit with a weapon. The foe must make a Wis saving throw, or be frightened of you until the end of your next turn.

Herbal Poultice (3rd): With an hour gathering supplies, you can craft 2 poultices, which when you apply them heals 2d6 hp. You can carry 2 at a time.



Passive Wisdom
(Perception)



Proficiency Bonus

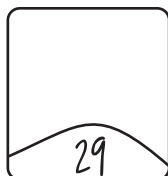


Initiative



Armor Class

A armor: 11
 Shield: -
 Dexterity: +0



Hit Points (3d10)

Max: 29
 Con: +1
 HD Used: _____
 Temp: _____



Main Weapons

Weapon	To-Hit	Damage	Type	Weight
Boarding axe	+5	1d8+3	slashing	4 lbs
Hatchet	+5	1d6+3	slashing	2 lbs
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Equipment

Item	Weight	Notes
Leather armor	10 lbs.	AC 11 + Dex modifier
Cloth sack		

Weight Carried: lbs (5X Str is -10' Speed; 10X Str is -20' Speed and Disadvantage)

Gold & Gems

5



Background

You were the official quartermaster of the Swearing Doubloon, taken on by good Cap'n Smythe after he rescued you from a Spanish merchant ship. Ship's surgeon didn't think you'd live after he pulled that piton from your noggin, but you hardly felt a thing. And to think you'd never been able to do math problem 'fore that piton found it's way in and out of your head.

'Tis a great shame that the Doubloon sunk, taken out by a French ship that should never have been able to hit you from that distance. You saw Captain Smythe hit by a cannon and his self sink beneath the waves, his body floating in one direction, his arm in another. But at least some of friends made it to the beach with you.

Languages

Spanish, English

Traits: Human

Tough Feat: Your hit point maximum increases by an amount equal to twice your level, then +2 per level thereafter.

Actions

ATTACK

Attack, shove, or grab (Athletics vs. Athletics/Dexterity)

MOVE

Dash to increase your Speed, or disengage to escape attacks of opportunity

HELP

One ally gets advantage on their next ability check. Or foe within 5' of your ally has disadvantage.

DODGE

All attacks against you have disadvantage

STABILIZE

DC 10 Medicine check

Experience

901

2700
XP Needed

Resting

Short Rest (1 hour): Spend 1 or more HD (+Con bonus) to regain health.

Long Rest (8 hours): Regain all lost HP and spent HD equal to half the PC's total HD.

Attribute Modifiers

Attribute 4-5	-3
Attribute 6-7	-2
Attribute 8-9	-1
Attribute 12-13	+1
Attribute 14-15	+2
Attribute 16-17	+3
Attribute 18-19	+4

Name: Key Picton
 Player: _____ Age: 25
 Class: Pirate Race: Human
 Level: 3 Alignment: Neutral good
 Speed: 30'

Inspiration



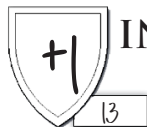
STR ☐ Athletics



DEX ☐ Acrobatics
☒ Sleight of Hand
☐ Stealth



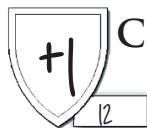
CON



INT ☐ Arcana ☐ Religion
☐ History
☐ Investigation
☐ Nature



WIS ☐ Animals ☒ Survival
☐ Insight
☐ Medicine
☒ Perception



CHA ☐ Deception
☐ Intimidation
☐ Performance
☐ Persuasion



Abilities

Pirate Training: You are proficient in light, medium armor, shields, simple weapons, crossbows, firearms, scimitars, and shortswords. You are proficient in tinker's tools, thieves' tools, and ships. You are also proficient in Dexterity and Charisma saves.

Deadeye: You gain +2 to attack rolls with martial and simple ranged weapons and firearms.

Pirate Jargon: Your pirate lingo lets you speak secretly to pirates and cut-throats.

Swagger (2nd): You have 3 swagger points, which recover with a long rest. You can spend 1 point for a dazing shot, which forces your foe to make a Con save or suffer disadvantage until the end of their next turn. Or, for 1 point, you can gain advantage on an attack roll, as long as you are not already at disadvantage.

Dread Pirate - Raise Morale (3rd): Once per long rest, one ally that you can see gains +1 to attack rolls, damage, and saving throws, for up to one minute.

12 Swagger Save +4 Spell Attack



Passive Wisdom
(Perception)



Proficiency Bonus

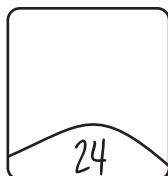


Initiative



Armor Class

A armor: 11
 Shield: -
 Dexterity: +2



Hit Points (3d8)

Max: 24
 Con: +2
 HD Used: _____
 Temp: _____



Main Weapons

Weapon	To-Hit	Damage	Type	Weight
Flintlock Pistol (x2)	+4	1d8	piercing	6 lbs
____ Must be reloaded with an action or bonus action. Misfires on a roll of 1-2				
Knife	+4	1d4	piercing	1 lb
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Equipment

Item	Weight	Notes
Leather armor	10 lbs.	AC 11 + Dex modifier
Bandolier		
Fine cockerel hat		
Cloth bag		
Spectacles on a ribbon		

Weight Carried: lbs (5X Str is -10' Speed; 10X Str is -20' Speed and Disadvantage)

Gold & Gems

5



Background

You were the boatswain on the Swearing Doubloon, but also one of Captain Smythe's most trusted junior officers. He always said you had a "nose for gold" and would laugh mightily when you raced him to be the first on the deck of boats that had surrendered to your flag. Many times he asked you if you wanted your own ship, but every time you said no. You never wanted the responsibility. And seeing how the Swearing Doubloon ended up on the bottom of the sea, Captain Smythe dead with it, you have no desire to follow those footsteps. But... you also have no desire to live on land, so you've sworn to the surviving crew that you'll help them find a vessel to call their own soon enough.

Languages

English, Spanish

Additional Traits: Human

Alert Feat: You gain +5 to initiative, you can't be surprised, and creatures you don't see don't gain advantage on attack roll against you

Actions

ATTACK

Attack, shove, or grab (Athletics vs. Athletics/Dexterity)

MOVE

Dash to increase your Speed, or disengage to escape attacks of opportunity

HELP

One ally gets advantage on their next ability check. Or foe within 5' of your ally has disadvantage.

DODGE

All attacks against you have disadvantage

STABILIZE

DC 10 Medicine check

Experience

901

2,700
XP Needed

Resting

Short Rest (1 hour): Spend 1 or more HD (+Con bonus) to regain health.

Long Rest (8 hours): Regain all lost HP and spent HD equal to half the PC's total HD.

Attribute Modifiers

Attribute 4-5	-3
Attribute 6-7	-2
Attribute 8-9	-1
Attribute 12-13	+1
Attribute 14-15	+2
Attribute 16-17	+3
Attribute 18-19	+4

Name: Esteban de Alcalá de los Gajardos

Player: _____ Age: 25

Class: Fighter Race: Human

Level: 3 Alignment: Neutral good

Speed: 30'

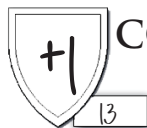
Inspiration



STR ● Athletics



DEX ○ Acrobatics
○ Sleight of Hand
○ Stealth



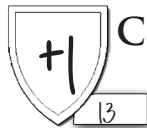
CON



INT ○ Arcana ○ Religion
● History
○ Investigation
○ Nature



WIS ○ Animals ○ Survival
○ Insight
○ Medicine
○ Perception



CHA ○ Deception
○ Intimidation
○ Performance
○ Persuasion



Abilities

Fighter Training: You are proficient in all armor and shields, and simple and martial weapons. You are also proficient in Strength and Constitution saves.

Fighting Style - Two Weapon Fighting (1st): When you engage in two-weapon fighting, you can add your ability modifier to the damage of the second attack.

Second Wind (1st): On your turn, use a bonus action to regain 1d10 + your level hit points. You must rest before using it again.

Action Surge (2nd): You can push yourself beyond your normal limits for a moment. On your turn, you can take one additional action on top of your regular action and a possible bonus action. You must rest before using this again.

Champion - Improved Critical (3rd): Beginning when you choose this archetype at 3rd level, your weapon attacks score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.



Passive Wisdom
(Perception)



Proficiency Bonus

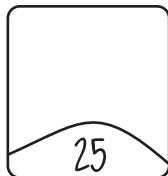


Initiative



Armor Class

A armor: 11
Shield: -
Dexterity: +3



Hit Points (3d10)

Max: 25
Con: +1
HD Used: _____
Temp: _____



Main Weapons

Weapon	To-Hit	Damage	Type	Weight
Grandfather's sword	+5	1d8+3	slashing	3 lbs
Main-gauche	+5	1d4+2	piercing	1 lb
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Equipment

Item	Weight	Notes
Leather armor	10 lbs.	AC 11 + Dex modifier
Spyglass		
Family's seal		
Cloth bag		

Weight Carried: lbs (5X Str is -10' Speed; 10X Str is -20' Speed and Disadvantage)

Gold & Gems

5



Background

The house of Alcalá de los Gajardos had a long and proud history. Your grandfather, Duke Gonzalo, served as an admiral and bravely fought the Dutch in 1605. But tragedy struck when you were a boy. Your grandfather was poisoned by a mysterious one-eared man he had invited to a private dinner. Your clever father barely escaped and has not been seen in years. You know he's in hiding, biding his time for revenge! But King Phillip accused your family of heresy and took your duchy away. Months later, the one-eared man came for you one night, bearing a green-bladed dagger. You kicked his blade away, climbed out the window, and fled to the Caribbean and found work as a privateer, hoping to gain the strength and cunning you'll need to find your father and with his help reclaim your family's title!

Languages

Spanish, English

Additional Traits: Human

Slasher: +1 to Dex Once per turn when you hit a creature with an attack that deals slashing damage, you can reduce the speed of the target by 10 feet until the start of your next turn.

When you score a critical hit that deals slashing damage to a creature, you grievously wound it. Until the start of your next turn, the target has disadvantage on all attack rolls.

Actions

ATTACK

Attack, shove, or grab (Athletics vs. Athletics/Dexterity)

MOVE

Dash to increase your Speed, or disengage to escape attacks of opportunity

HELP

One ally gets advantage on their next ability check. Or foe within 5' of your ally has disadvantage.

DODGE

All attacks against you have disadvantage

STABILIZE

DC 10 Medicine check

Experience

901

2,700
XP Needed

Resting

Short Rest (1 hour): Spend 1 or more HD (+Con bonus) to regain health.

Long Rest (8 hours): Regain all lost HP and spent HD equal to half the PC's total HD.

Attribute Modifiers

Attribute 4-5	-3
Attribute 6-7	-2
Attribute 8-9	-1
Attribute 12-13	+1
Attribute 14-15	+2
Attribute 16-17	+3
Attribute 18-19	+4

Name: Charlotte Abney
 Player: _____ Age: 24
 Class: Fighter Race: Human
 Level: 3 Alignment: Neutral
 Speed: 30'

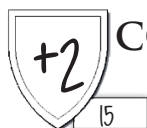
Inspiration



STR ☐ Athletics



DEX ☒ Acrobatics
☐ Sleight of Hand
☐ Stealth



CON



INT ☐ Arcana ☐ Religion
☐ History
☐ Investigation
☐ Nature



WIS ☐ Animals ☐ Survival
☐ Insight
☐ Medicine
☐ Perception



CHA ☐ Deception
☒ Intimidation
☐ Performance
☐ Persuasion



Abilities

Fighter Training: You are proficient in all armor and shields, and simple and martial weapons. You are also proficient in Strength and Constitution saves.

Fighting Style - Dueling (1st): When you are wielding a melee weapon in one hand and no other weapons, gain +2 to damage rolls with that weapon.

Second Wind (1st): On your turn, use a bonus action to regain 1d10 + your level hit points. You must rest before using it again.

Action Surge (2nd): You can push yourself beyond your normal limits for a moment. On your turn, you can take one additional action on top of your regular action and a possible bonus action. You must rest before using this again.

Champion - Improved Critical (3rd): Beginning when you choose this archetype at 3rd level, your weapon attacks score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.



Passive Wisdom
(Perception)



Proficiency Bonus

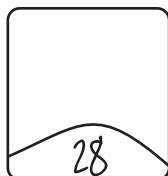


Initiative



Armor Class

Armor: 12
 Shield: -
 Dexterity: +2



Hit Points (3d10)

Max: 28
 Con: +2
 HD Used: _____
 Temp: _____



Main Weapons

Weapon	To-Hit	Damage	Type	Weight
Cheap Rapier	+4	1d8+4	piercing	3 lbs
Dagger	+4	1d4+2	piercing	1 lb
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Equipment

Item	Weight	Notes
Studded leather armor	13 lbs.	AC 12 + Dex modifier
Worn shoes		
Cloth bag		

Weight Carried: lbs (5X Str is -10' Speed; 10X Str is -20' Speed and Disadvantage)

Gold & Gems

5



Background

Captain Smythe took you on to his crew when you were just twelve years old. Your merchant father "died fighting like a lion" he told you, which meant you were worth keeping and training. By the time you were fourteen, you could best any man on his crew. That feat alone meant you got out of all the chores on the ship, get extra portions of grog, and no one dared wake you up early. But now that Captain Smythe has met his end, you're not sure what the future holds for you. After all, you've spent the last decade letting someone else decide where to sail...

Languages

English

Additional Traits: Human

Savage Attacker: Once per turn, you can reroll melee weapon attack damage.

Actions

ATTACK

Attack, shove, or grab (Athletics vs. Athletics/Dexterity)

MOVE

Dash to increase your Speed, or disengage to escape attacks of opportunity

HELP

One ally gets advantage on their next ability check. Or foe within 5' of your ally has disadvantage.

DODGE

All attacks against you have disadvantage

STABILIZE

DC 10 Medicine check

Experience

901

2,700

XP Needed

Resting

Short Rest (1 hour): Spend 1 or more HD (+Con bonus) to regain health.

Long Rest (8 hours): Regain all lost HP and spent HD equal to half the PC's total HD.

Attribute Modifiers

Attribute 4-5	-3
Attribute 6-7	-2
Attribute 8-9	-1
Attribute 12-13	+1
Attribute 14-15	+2
Attribute 16-17	+3
Attribute 18-19	+4

Name: Maria de Xamora
 Player: _____ Age: 27
 Class: Rogue Race: Human
 Level: 3 Alignment: Chaotic Good
 Speed: 30'

Inspiration



STR ☐ Athletics



DEX ☐ Acrobatics
☒ Sleight of Hand
☐ Stealth
☒ Thieves Tools
☒ Artisan Tools



CON



INT ☐ Arcana ☐ Religion
☐ History
☒ Investigation
☐ Nature



WIS ☐ Animals ☐ Survival
☒ Insight
☐ Medicine
☒ Perception



CHA ☐ Deception
☐ Intimidation
☐ Performance
☒ Persuasion



Abilities

Rogue Training: You are proficient in light armor, simple weapons, hand crossbows, longswords, rapiers, and shortswords. You are also proficient in Intelligence and Dexterity saves.

Expertise (1st): Two of your skills' proficiency bonus is doubled.

Sneak Attack (1st): Once per turn, deal 1d6 extra damage if you have advantage on the roll and are using a finesse or ranged weapon. If another enemy of your foe is engaged with him, you don't need advantage to use this.

Pirates' Cant (1st): You can speak the secret language of thieves and pirates.

Cunning Action (2nd): You can take a bonus action on each of your turns in combat. This action can be used only to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Cunning Action (3rd): You can use the bonus action granted by your Cunning Action to make a Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check, use your thieves' tools to disarm a trap or open a lock, or take the Use an Object action.



Passive Wisdom
(Perception)



Proficiency Bonus

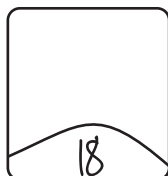


Initiative



Armor Class

Armor: 11
 Shield: -
 Dexterity: +2



Hit Points (3d8)

Max: 18
 Con: +0
 HD Used: _____
 Temp: _____



Main Weapons

Weapon	To-Hit	Damage	Type	Weight
Barnacle Blade	+4	1d6+2	slashing	3 lbs
Dagger	+4	1d4+2	piercing	1 lb
Blunderbuss	+2	2d6	piercing	5 lbs

_____ Must be reloaded with an action or bonus action. Misfires on a roll of 1-2

Equipment

Item

Weight Notes

Leather armor 13 lbs. AC 12 + Dex modifier

French leather boots

10 yards of 3/8" rope

Gold & Gems

5



Background

The sinking of the Swearing Doubloon has devastated you. You were the one on deck who assured Captain Smythe that the French guns couldn't possibly hit the ship from that distance. He looked at you and asked again, rubbing that great white beard of his as if he wasn't sure. But you said, "not a chance, captain" - just seconds before the French broadside smashed below the waterline. An hour later, over forty crew were dead and you were floating in the water.

Weight Carried: lbs (5X Str is -10' Speed; 10X Str is -20' Speed and Disadvantage)

Languages

Portuguese, English, Spanish

Additional Traits: Human

Skilled: You gain proficiency with an additional three skills or tools.

Actions

ATTACK

Attack, shove, or grab (Athletics vs. Athletics/Dexterity)

MOVE

Dash to increase your Speed, or disengage to escape attacks of opportunity

HELP

One ally gets advantage on their next ability check. Or foe within 5' of your ally has disadvantage.

DODGE

All attacks against you have disadvantage

STABILIZE

DC 10 Medicine check

Experience

901

2,700

XP Needed

Resting

Short Rest (1 hour): Spend 1 or more HD (+Con bonus) to regain health.

Long Rest (8 hours): Regain all lost HP and spent HD equal to have the PC's total HD.

Attribute Modifiers

Attribute 4-5	-3
Attribute 6-7	-2
Attribute 8-9	-1
Attribute 12-13	+1
Attribute 14-15	+2
Attribute 16-17	+3
Attribute 18-19	+4

Name: Rowland Grymbalde
 Player: _____ Age: 56
 Class: Noble Race: Human
 Level: 3 Alignment: Neutral Good
 Speed: 30'

Inspiration



STR ☐ Athletics



DEX ☐ Acrobatics
☐ Sleight of Hand
☐ Stealth
☒ Artisan's Tools



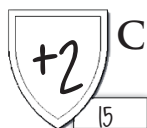
CON



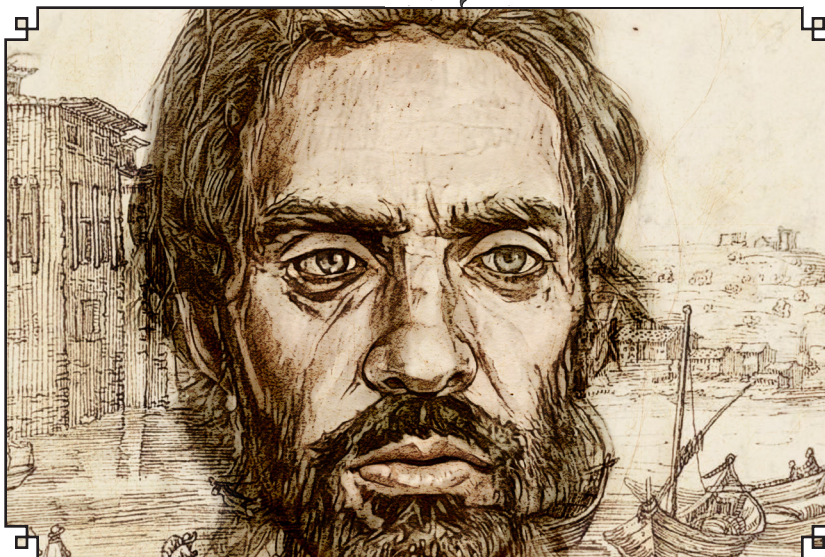
INT ☐ Arcana ☐ Religion
☒ History
☐ Investigation
☐ Nature



WIS ☐ Animals ☐ Survival
☒ Insight
☒ Medicine
☐ Perception



CHA ☐ Deception
☐ Intimidation
☒ Performance
☐ Persuasion



Abilities

Noble Training: You are proficient in simple weapons, artisan tools, and two more skills. You are proficient in Wisdom and Charisma saving throws.

Rallying Word (1st): You can use a bonus action to make an ally within 30 feet to regain hit points. The amount healed is 1d8 + noble level. You must complete a long rest before you can use this again.

Path of the Heart - Noncombatant (1st): You have disadvantage on all attack rolls, and while in armor or with a shield, on all Str and Dex checks. However, if you give up an Attack action, one of your allies can choose an enemy and make a single weapon or spell attack against that enemy.

Path of the Heart - Cry Out (1st): You can use two cries between rests: **CRY FOR ATTENTION** (as a bonus action, a foe has advantage on attacks against you, but disadvantage against anyone else). **CRY FOR HELP:** When a foe attacks you, an ally can use their reaction to move 30 ft towards you and attack that foe. **CRY FOR LIFE:** When an ally is at 0 hp, use your reaction to allow the ally to spend Hit Dice equal to half your noble level. They regain the result + their Con modifier + your Cha modifier. **DISTRACTING CRY:** As a reaction when an ally is attacked, impose disadvantage on all that attacker's attacks against the ally.

Direct Ally (2nd): You can use your action to allow an ally that can hear or see you to make a single weapon attack, cast a cantrip, or move up to half their movement on your turn as a reaction. You must rest before you can use this again.

Spur Ally (3rd): You can use your reaction to allow an ally to reroll a failed saving throw or ability check. You must complete a long rest before you can use this again.



Passive Wisdom
(Perception)



Proficiency Bonus

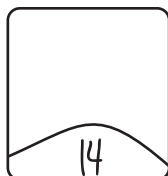


Initiative



Armor Class

Armor: _____
 Shield: _____
 Dexterity: -1



Hit Points (3d6)

Max: 14
 Con: +0
 HD Used: _____
 Temp: _____



Main Weapons

Weapon	To-Hit	Damage	Type	Weight
Flintlock Pistol	-1	1d8	piercing	3 lbs
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Equipment

Item Weight Notes

Signet ring of Petworth Hall

Leather boots

Gold necklace

Weight Carried: lbs (5X Str is -10' Speed; 10X Str is -20' Speed and Disadvantage)

Gold & Gems

5



Background

Fifteen years ago you got drunk and passed out in a tavern in Liverpool. When you woke up, pirates had locked you in their ship and set sail for Jamaica. Five times you thought you were going to be ransomed, but each time your family at Petworth Hall were unable to pay the full amount. You love to remind everyone that you're still a baron, still a the hostage of pirates, and will have them all hanged one day. But, honestly, you've grown to like this ragtag crew, enjoy helping them with their privateering, and have no desire to return to Petworth Hall.

Languages

English, French, Spanish

Experience

901

2,700
XP Needed

Additional Traits: Human

Lucky: You can reroll one d20 or force a foe to reroll an attack roll against you. Usable three times before you need a long rest.

Attribute Modifiers

Attribute 4-5	-3
Attribute 6-7	-2
Attribute 8-9	-1
Attribute 12-13	+1
Attribute 14-15	+2
Attribute 16-17	+3
Attribute 18-19	+4

Resting

Short Rest (1 hour): Spend 1 or more HD (+Con bonus) to regain health.

Long Rest (8 hours): Regain all lost HP and spent HD equal to half the PC's total HD.

Actions

ATTACK

Attack, shove, or grab (Athletics vs. Athletics/Dexterity)

MOVE

Dash to increase your Speed, or disengage to escape attacks of opportunity

HELP

One ally gets advantage on their next ability check. Or foe within 5' of your ally has disadvantage.

DODGE

All attacks against you have disadvantage

STABILIZE

DC 10 Medicine check

El Grande

The Big Quartermaster

PER 12



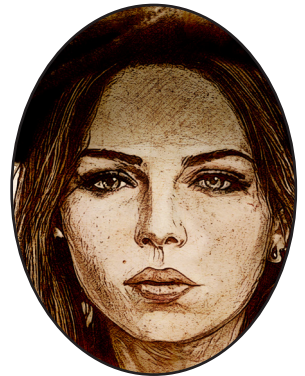
**Esteban de Alcalá
de los Gallardos**
Grandson of a Duke

PER 10



Maria de Xamora

A Hesitant Carpenter



PER 11

Charlotte Abney

A Difficult Swordmaster



PER 9

Rowland Grymbalde

Officially a Hostage...



PER 12

Key Picton

Boatswain and Senior Officer



PER 11