

Faith & Sails

A dicey microRPG about persecution and pirates.

Sixty-one seasons ago, the ships of the Nation of Night arrived on your shores. Their ships and settlements belched black smoke, turning day into night.

Thirty-eight seasons ago, they seized the last temple-grove. Your people were made second to their own, and your words to your gods were silenced in favor of their deity of wood and smoke.

Fourteen seasons ago, you found one of the old ships from the times of war between the isles, and gathered veterans of the resistance, remaining faithful, and idealistic youth, and set out for the domain of the sea gods.

Though they had burned many of your gods down to smoke, they could not burn the sea, a grand domain of the elements. The gods of the sea were always dealt with sparingly, for they were tumultuous. Now, they are your only hope.

Hawanta of the Stained Pearl. The Bloodied Dogfish. The Bridequeen of the Tide. You take from the Nation of the Night, as they took from you, though you grasp to survive, not to subjugate.

You're corsairs, kings of the sea. And you will not have your people forget who they are.

Preparing the Ship

You'll need some note cards or paper, pencil, a tumbler (tall cup), a spoon, and as many of the following dice as you can grab: \triangle , \square , \diamond , \circ , and. Varied tokens also will help (coins, cubes, etc.) for supplies or foreboding, or you can track such by paper or electronic documentation. Dice should not have water-soluble ink or any other issues with potentially being immersed in water.

You'll also need three to six players.

Crewing the Vessel

The core of a ship is the crew.

Each player rolls \square and selects that many crew roles, which they'll be portraying. Reroll any 1. You can select whatever roles you like, but you require at least a captain, navigator, priest, and oracle, which should be spread amongst the players as evenly as possible.

Specialist roles include: captain, priest, oracle, quartermaster, boatswain, carpenter, deckhand, dogfish trainer, gunner, helmkeeper, fisher-hunter, master-at-arms, musician, navigator, oracle, priest, rigger, surfer, surgeon, and swab. You can make up new ones if you like.

Generalized roles include the first (second, third) mate, and deckhands after that.

When selecting roles, specialized roles let you perform tasks, while generalized roles allow you to increase your chances of success. A combination of the two is ideal

If there is an argument between who can take a given role, roll dice to break the standoff.

Then, pick two ship's specialties: behemoth-butcher, boarding-beast, cargo-cow, craft-chaser, mortar-master, or spirit-ship.

Take one crew member that the group agrees is expendable (not the captain, navigator, priest, or oracle). Fill the tumbler about three-fourths full of water. Toss that crew member in. This crew member is somebody that's already been claimed by the gods of the sea. If there's an argument, break it down to who can toss a crew member in the cup first. If multiple crew members end up in there, the game (and the gods) do not mind.

Name all your crewmembers, so you can grieve their loss before the gods. **Then set sail!**

Sailing the Sea

When sailing the sea, you're usually performing one of several activities: hunting ships, hunting behemoths, seeking treasure, seeking land, or wounding the empire.

Crew members each have a die. Assign a die of any value to them, generally higher/larger in regards to their rank or expertise. Larger dice are required for difficult tasks, but lower dice are more likely to be applicable across multiple situations. Roll those dice at the start of the game. They determine the current starting state of the crew; those with lower values are more tired or exhausted.

Decide what to do. If there is disagreement that can't be resolved in a minute, argue fiercely.

When performing a task, select one specialist crew role that's applicable and generalists to support them, no less than the number of people at the table (if possible), but no more than twice the people at the table. Then, have the player with the oracle, stir the tumbler with a spoon, then look into the tumbler to create the difficulty. (If you have a lid, it can be shaken instead.) They can announce any visible value of a non-obscured die, their *scry*, which is compared with the table below to determine the difficulty. They may lie, but must reveal that lie when determining difficulty.

The player with a priest may have them bless a crew member, and allow them to become refreshed.

A refreshed crew member rerolls their die and assumes the new value.

When sailing, Answer two of the following questions as a group:

- What is the name of what we're seeking?
- What strategy or blessing are we employing?
- What additional difficulty is in the way?



Scry Value	Current Total Crew				
	1-6	7-12	13-18	19-24	25+
1	D1	D2	D2	D3	D3
2	D1	D2	D2	D3	D3
3	D2	D2	D3	D3	D4
4	D2	D2	D3	D3	D4
5	D2	D3	D3	D4	D4
6	D2	D3	D3	D4	D4
7	D3	D3	D3	D4	D4
8	D3	D3	D4	D4	D5
9	D3	D4	D4	D5	D5
10	D3	D4	D4	D5	D5
11	D3	D4	D5	D5	D5
12	D3	D4	D5	D5	D5

The D (difficulty) means you roll a number of dice equal to the task in ascending value from \triangle to \circ . So a difficulty 2 rolls \triangle + \square , while a difficulty 4 rolls \triangle + \square + \diamond + \circ .

To succeed at a task, you must match the current difficulty dice. Each die may only be used once when matching. Multiple dice may be added together to match a value, but if you do so, discard all dice in that group except the one with the highest value into the tumbler. So if you're trying to match an 8 with a 5 and a 3, you would successfully match, but lose the crew member with a value of 3, then mourn them.

If the group agrees that one of the ship's specialties applies (only one may apply), you may take one crew die and adjust it up or down by a value of 1, as long as that value exists on the die itself. So a die roll of 5 on a \square could become 4 or 6, but a 6 could only become a 5.

The Fate of the Crew

For every difficulty die that fails to match, you may sacrifice one crew member in the task not used to match to succeed or one supply.

If you succeed, increase the values of all crew involved in the task by 1, not to exceed their die value. Gain a foreboding token.

If you fail, take the values of all crew involved in the task and decrease them by 1. Any crew member reduced below 1 perishes into the tumbler.

For example: *the crew, thirteen strong, decides to hunt a Moon Jelly. They assign their fisher-hunter (d10), first mate (d8), second mate (d8), and two deckhands (d6 & d6). They roll a 4, 6, 8, 5, and 4. Considering this, the Oracle looks to the cup and sees a die of 5, which becomes a difficulty 3 on the above. The group rolls a d4, d6, and d8, and gets a 3, 6, and 4. They can match 6 with the first mate, and 4 with the fisher-hunter. However, they cannot match a 3. They lose the second mate to the Moon Jelly's poisoned waters, who perishes into the tumbler.*

When you succeed at a task, answer two of the following questions:

- *How do you celebrate your success?*
- *What did you lose, and how do you cope?*
- *What's unique about your success?*

When you fail at a task, answer two of the following questions:

- *What do you blame for your failure?*
- *What did you gain, however small??*
- *What did you learn from your failure?*

Successful tasks provide a number of benefits, as noted below:

- *Hunting Ships: Gain supply and add to the tumbler.*
- *Hunting Behemoths: Add to the tumbler and refresh crew members.*
- *Seeking Land: Gain supply and gain a new crew member.*
- *Seeking Treasure: Gain supply and refresh crew members.*
- *Wounding the Empire: Reduce foreboding tokens by \triangle , and add to the tumbler.*

When you gain supply, take supply equal to the difficulty divided by 2 (rounded up).

When you refresh crew members, reroll a number of crew members equal to the difficulty. You *must* reroll that number. If you cannot work how who would do this, argue fiercely.

When you add to the tumbler, take the highest difficulty die and add it to the tumbler.

Arguing Fiercely

Whenever players cannot agree on a course of action in a few minutes, they are arguing fiercely. (You may set a three-minute timer if you like.) An argument isn't necessarily a bad thing, but it does introduce some difficulties.

All players participating should have a different solution or answer; no teaming up! Each hides their dice, then takes any many of their crew as they wish to participate in the argument, and rolls them. Total the crew rolled; the higher value gets their way, but gives their crew member in the argument with the lowest roll to the player with the lowest total roll. If there is a tie, the captain may decide, or break the tie in whatever manner they deem fit.

Then, move on with what you're doing next.

Running Into Trouble

Whenever you perform an action, gain a foreboding token (plus an additional one, if successful). Whenever you gain a foreboding token(s), roll \triangle . If the roll is less than the foreboding tokens, a trouble comes due.

Compare that \triangle roll to the following table:

Roll	Trouble	Scry Value
1	Storm	10
2	Privateers	10
3	Behemoth-Child	10
4	Deadwind	11
5	Night-Nation Warship	11
6	Behemoth	11
7	Maelstrom	11
8	Ghost of the Lost Sea	12
9	The Ship-Swallower	12
10	The Sargaaso Still	12
11	The Divine's Fury	12
12	The Burning Armada	12

If the trouble you're encountering is the same as the most recent trouble you encountered, increase the roll by 1. The difficulty value is compared with your crew on the task table, but there is no reward; only survival.

Finally, reduce your foreboding by \triangle .

Afterwards, ask two of the following questions:

- *What did you do to invite that?*
- *Who was particularly heroic?*
- *What miracle helped you survive?*

Ending the Journey

The game ends when any of the following happen: you run out of dice, the tumbler overflows, or you run out of crew. If the latter, the ship perishes, ending its tale in tragedy on the seas.

Otherwise, discuss what you've accomplished, and decide if you deserve to find a new land to settle, if you strike a powerful blow against the Nation of Night, or become a legends of the seas.

If there's a disagreement that can't easily be resolved, it's time to argue fiercely: only this time with all your crew on the table. Highest roll completes the story.

Other Stuff

What if a necessary role dies? Change out the role of an existing crew member for them.

What's a [thing not explained]? You can figure it out, don't rely on the text too much.

What other stuff can we do? If it's not covered above, just come up with something agreeable.

Can we mutiny? Sounds like arguing *more* fiercely, and works much the same, except you probably throw the captain in the tumbler when you're done.

Are the gods real? That's for you to answer.