



HOSTLY ECHOES

Competition Winning Ace Tale™ for Savage Worlds by Marcus D. Bone.

A MISSION FOR SUNDERED SKIES

INTRODUCTION

Where: Any port

When: Anytime

This tale involves a heroic rescue attempt, and requires a party to have access to a skyship.

AN OFFER

It is late one night when the characters are approached by a man introducing himself as Garius Toovale. Dressed in simple trappings, he asks if the characters would be willing to assist him in a mission of mercy. He can't pay much – 500 cogs only – but explains he is desperate to find out what has happened to his family.

If they accept, Garius will proceed. About seven months ago, a trade ship chanced upon an undiscovered island. A free floating isle, it seemed abundant with the basics for life and held much potential. Upon the ship's arrival in port, her captain – who had collected some of the isle's earth – met a young miner, Karl Vouz, whose family excavation had recently run dry. Seeing this as an oppor-

tunity to start anew, Karl gathered families affected by the downturn in mining, and together they purchased the location of the island. With little preparation, but much hope and determination, Vouz and four other families – including Garius' – set out towards their new home.

Garius has not heard from them since. While it may seem odd that he's so concerned after such a brief period of time, he says the plan was for the colonist's ship to return as soon as possible for the others. He realizes he might be overreacting, but he needs to find out what has happened.

Toovale is reluctant to share any more personal information, but he does indicate he has a sample of the island's earth, which he will allow the party to have once they are underway.

THE VOYAGE

The voyage to the island is quiet enough, with few encounters. Garius is happy to be allocated any berth on the ship, and will help as much as he is able on the trip.

However, as the ship closes to visual range of the island, Garius suddenly disappears. He cannot be found anywhere onboard, and even his personal effects and sample of earth (regardless of where it was stored) has vanished.

PEACE

The island, dubbed Peace by the colonists, is quite small. Dominated by forest, everything needed to survive is catered for, including a large lake for water collection.

The colony itself is easily seen from the Void; a small clearing with a dozen various structures. As the party's ship comes into land (Boating roll -2 due to the lack of any sub-

stantial moorings), however, they see that Garius' fears may have come true; something has happened at the colony. It is not immediately obvious as to the cause, but one could swear that a hurricane has smashed through the community.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED

Upon their arrival on Peace, Vouz and his followers thought they had found paradise. Peace provided for its new guests with food, water and wood for making their homes, and quickly the community took shape: homes built, crops planned, and the island explored.

Then the storms hit. Being a floating island, Peace is at the mercy of the winds, and a month after making landfall the colonists discovered the true terrors of their new home.

Suffice to say all of their hard work was undone, and worse still, their only ship – Peaceful Endeavour – was ruined beyond repair. At first this set back did little to dampen their spirits, but then they discovered the effects of the Glow on the island.

While the trees on Peace did offer some protection, their natural evolution – to bend and flex in the high winds – meant they offered little substantial shade. Worse still, progress on the repairs slowed; the loss of vital materials – nails, tools and other supplies – being almost insurmountable.

Once the glow started to drive the families mad, there was little the others could do to stop the rot. In the end, a brief but bloody battle broke out between those Blinded and the survivors. Only the Toovale family survived, escaping to a cave near the lake. They remain there now, their supplies dwindling, yet too scared to venture back out into the Glow.

EXPLORING PEACE

Upon their arrival, the characters will have no idea what really caused the colony



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to collapse, but can explore what remains in the hope of finding survivors.

The Peaceful Endeavor: The colonist's sloop has been destroyed. With a Repair or Notice -2 roll, they can make out portions of the deck have been wretched up (these were to be used to repair the colonists' homes).

Crops: These lie between the moorings and the settlement proper. It is obvious that these have not been tended in months, and only the most glow resistant crops continue to grow. Amongst a tall stand of wheat, a young man's long-dead body can be found.

Homes: The homes are almost totally destroyed, yet offer no explanation as to why this is so. Repair rolls indicate that the homes were initially well built but have since been knocked down by some great force.

Common Hall: Of all the buildings, the hall is in the best condition. A Repair roll indicates it has received some repair recently, but still requires many more hours of work to be livable. Inside the hall there three bodies, two colonists – both males – and a young female Blinded; all three died in some larger melee. Here also is a scrawled message can be found – *Make for the caves near the lake.*

Forest Path: An obvious trail leads away from the settlement towards the lake. It is well defined, and easy to follow.

THE ATTACK

Most of the surviving Blinded remain in the tree-line, sleeping and eating whatever they can find. These poor creatures are still caught-up in their initial Glowmadness, and will gather together (two Blinded for each character) and attack once the rescuers have explored the Common Hall or enter the forest.

THE CAVE

Just before the lake, the trail passes by a rocky outcropping. A Notice roll indicates there has been a fight here, with a long dried blood trail leading into a narrow cave mouth. Inside the characters will note the blood leads towards a collapsed section of the cave. Beyond this the Toovale family – Jua, and her two young sons – are trapped.

Almost immediately the party will be

attacked by Vous and six other Blinded. After defeating these, the Toovales will call out from the cave beyond the collapse. Clearing the cave-in takes a few hours, during which a discovery is made – the body of Garius Toovale crushed beneath the rocks.

WRAPPING UP

Once rescued, the family can relay the fate of the colonists. As for Garius, Jua will say that he died protecting his family by collapsing the cave. She has no idea what the characters are talking about if they say he hired them, and will become distraught if they don't believe the facts surrounding his death.

So what did happen? Perhaps it was just the final blessing of a pious man, or some devil taking his guise? Whatever the truth, the character's actions have saved three lives, and will ensure that Peace is not just another mysterious colony lost in the Void.

KARL VOUS, BLINDED

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d10+3, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d10+3, Guts d8, Notice d12, Stealth d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9(2)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2:** Scaly skin.
- **Blindsight:** 10". Targets beyond are totally concealed.
- **Enhanced Glowmad:** +3 Fighting and Strength, -2 Parry. Ignores random hit possibility.
- **Fear:** Anyone seeing him must make a Guts roll.
- **Leap Attack:** Leap 8" (minimum 3"), +2 to Fighting and Damage rolls.
- **Weakness:** Sound and scent attacks, +2 damage and -2 to resist.

BLINDED COLONISTS

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d8+2, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d8+2, Guts d8, Notice d10, Stealth d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7(2)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2:** Scaly skin.
- **Blindsight:** 10". Targets beyond are totally concealed.
- **Fear:** Anyone seeing him must make a Guts roll.

- **Glowmad:** +2 Fighting and Strength, -2 Parry. A 1 on their Fighting die and they hit a random adjacent target.
- **Leap Attack:** Leap 8" (minimum 3"), +2 to Fighting and Damage rolls.
- **Weakness:** Sound and scent attacks, +2 damage and -2 to resist.

OUT NOW!

