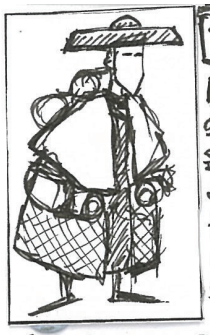

THE GOLDEN SEA | A roleplaying game by Grant Howitt, 2016

ERAS AGO, this was a city the size of a kingdom, a city that scraped the sky. Then the sands came - a dry ocean that washed away all but the tallest towers. THE CROWN, a cartel of merchants and mystics, rules the shifting sands. You work for them.

THE GODDESSES are real and wait beneath the sands, sending omens and crystal miracles upwards. They are COMMERCIA (gold, charm, tongues), DEMOS (beasts, wine, chaos) and QUILL (storms, stars, sands).

WHEN YOU ACT AND THE OUTCOME IS UNCERTAIN, roll a D20 and add the relevant stat. The GM sets the difficulty of the action:

10 EASY | 15 CHALLENGING | 20 VERY DIFFICULT

If you equal or beat the difficulty things go well for you. If you don't, things go badly. When you act against an NPC, their stat +10 is the difficulty. When they act against you, roll vs their stat +10 to defend.

IF YOU ACT AGAINST AN NPC AND SUCCEED, you inflict stress on them. If you fail to defend against an NPC, you take stress. If the D20 roll is even, stress is equal to the chosen stat +1; if it's odd, stress is equal to the stat -1. On an attack roll of 20 or a defence roll of 1, stress is stat +3. IF AN NPC CAN'T TAKE ANY MORE STRESS, they're at your mercy. If you can't take any more, you're out of the scene; but you can choose to remove all current stress and struggle on. If your stress fills up after you do this before the end of the scene, you're dead (or lost, or captured, or mad, or broke, or whatever).

WHEN YOU BEGIN, choose two paths from the options below, and tick two abilities. When the GM reckons you've done something remarkable in service of The Crown or your chosen Goddess, tick another ability in either of your chosen paths.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS (NPCS)

BANDIT PHYS 3 SOC 3 MEN 2 STRESS 4
Scarf-wrapped vagabonds on creaking shanty skimmers

IRON ERRANT PHYS 5 SOC 2 MEN 3 STRESS 7
Strange knights in roaring vehicles from a neighbouring land

HERETIC PHYS 2 SOC 5 MEN 4 STRESS 4
Sinister followers of The Lost Brother

NAILBOYS PHYS 3 SOC 3 MEN 2 STRESS 5
Hustlers with trademark stilettos and piercings

DAUGHTER OF THE SAND PHYS 6 SOC 1 MEN 5 STRESS 10
Body-wracked with crystal viruses, no longer human

GOLDEN GUARD PHYS 4 SOC 3 MEN 3 STRESS 5
Ruthless and expensive private security

ESTRIKOS PHYS 3 SOC - MEN 3 STRESS 3
Large, chitinous stingrays that swarm in packs.

HEKATOS PHYS 5 SOC - MEN 4 STRESS 12
Eyeless, pallid serpents, much bigger than a man

AND ALSO: HOLLOW KNIGHTS, ARACHNID EMPIRES, ZEALOTS OF DEAD GODS, JUNKIE PIRATES, INVASIONS FROM THE ISLES OF THE MOON, ANCIENT AUTOMATONS, AND MORE.

THE MAIDEN'S HAND, HQ OF THE CROWN

YOU ARE ABOARD THE SUNRISE, A WELL-WORN SKIMMER THAT ALLOWS YOU TO TRAVERSE THE SHIFTING DUNE SEA.

← A MAP OF THE GOLDEN SEA

GM, on the right, draw your eventual destination. Pass the map around the group. EACH PLAYER, draw your home town, one place you've been, and one place you've heard of. In your home town, you're +1 to all rolls. YOUR JOURNEY BEGINS in The Maiden's Hand, a towering structure, and HQ of The Crown. Your duty is to trade, collect cargo, protect your interests, and uphold the values of the Goddesses Three.

Stats (roll 5D6, drop highest and lowest, assign 1 to each)

PHYSICAL ☐
(RUN, FIGHT, CLIMB, ETC)

SOCIAL ☐
(CHARM, LIE, SCARE, ETC)

MENTAL ☐
(KNOW, SPOT, OUTWIT, ETC)

STRESS: (refreshes when you rest)
☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

NAME:

THREE POSSESSIONS:

AGENT

☐ CROWNSMAN
+2 SOCIAL, INTIMIDATE

☐ SILVERTONGUE
+2 SOCIAL, LIE

☐ ACQUISITIONS DEPT.
+2 PHYSICAL, STEAL

(Get the listed bonus to your roll when you do the thing listed)

CELEBRANT

☐ JOYBRINGER
+2 SOCIAL, SPREAD JOY

☐ DERVISH
(MENTAL/DAY) MAKE 3 ATTACKS PER TURN

☐ PERFORMER
(SOCIAL/DAY) GIVE ALL ALLIES +1 NEXT ROUND

DEFENDER

☐ SHIELD-BEARER
+1 PHYSICAL WHILE DEFENDING THE WEAK

☐ UNTOUCHABLE FAITH
+2 STRESS BOXES

☐ SWORD OF THE GODDESS
INFLICT +1 STRESS WHEN YOU FIGHT

GUILDER

☐ CANNY
+2 MENTAL, ANALYSE INFORMATION

☐ CAUTIOUS
DEFEND WITH ANY STAT IN COMBAT

☐ GOLDEN
+2 SOCIAL, CUT A DEAL

ORACLE

☐ DOOMSAYER (MENTAL/DAY)
ATTACK AT RANGE USING MENTAL VS MENTAL

☐ DIVINATOR
+2 MENTAL, INVESTIGATE

☐ THE SANGUINE
(MENTAL/DAY) RESTORE STRESS EQUAL TO YOUR SOCIAL ON ANOTHER

PERSECUTOR

☐ SACRED BLADE
+1 PHYSICAL WHILE BRINGING A CRIMINAL TO JUSTICE

☐ THE INEVITABLE
+2 PHYSICAL, MENTAL WHILE SEEKING AN EVILDOER

☐ MARTYR
(MENTAL/DAY) MARK 1 STRESS TO REROLL A D20

PILGRIM

☐ CAPTAIN
+1 ALL WHEN ABOARD YOUR SHIP

☐ SHADOW
+2 PHYSICAL, STEALTH

☐ WELL-TRAVELLED
+2 SOCIAL WHEN YOU ARRIVE IN A PORT

WITNESS

☐ LIVING ARCHIVE
+2 MENTAL, KNOW HISTORY

☐ TRAILBLAZER
+1 ALL WHEN YOU'RE SOMEWHERE FOLK HAVEN'T BEEN FOR 100+ YEARS

☐ WISE (MENTAL/DAY)
ADD SOCIAL TO AN ALLY'S ROLL AS YOU ADVISE THEM