

It is true what they say, there is nothing quite like a life upon the waves. The salty tang of the sea air, the gentle tug of a warm breeze on your back and the rhythmic, almost calming, snap of the ship's sails and rigging are the things that make life good!

And to date, you can count yourself lucky, blessings be to Straasha, with favourable winds, fine weather, and nary a sign of a Pan-Tangian sail on the horizon you have made good time on your latest voyage. In fact, now you think of it, your journey has been just a little too easy, a smidgeon too fast, and a might too uneventful than is surely good for you? So now, standing here at the rail, you can see the seas ahead a-changing, with dark cloud gathering on the horizon – and here on bobbing like a cork on a vast sea of green, you can only but pray that these changes in fortune do not spell your doom on the Oldest Ocean.



This Adventure Seed is set during one of the party's journeys across the many seas of the Young Kingdoms. While it can be run under any circumstance, the plots outlined below work best if the group is travelling either as passengers on another vessel or when they have taken travellers onboard in their own ship.

Among the other passengers onboard joining the party on their voyage are two unique individuals, the middle-aged Cadsandrian courier, **Hommas Goingle** and a young Raschilian noblewoman, **Mergret Avenod**. Although these two souls seem to not know each other before the ship departs from port, throughout the journey the couple will become close companions.

About Goingle

Once possessed of a fine, tall, athletic body, the now 39-year-old Hommas Goingle has let his genetic advantage go to waste too soon. Although still attractive and charismatic, he is well now overweight and struggles with back problems.

Worse, despite being loud, brash, and very willing to share tales from his life story with anyone within earshot, he possesses one of those unique personalities that people cannot but be attracted to – with many onboard quickly looking upon him as a 'lifelong' friend, while others struggle not to develop a 'teenage-like' crush on the man.

Hommas, as he will inform all and sundry, works as an agent for the famed University

of Cadsandria, couriering the library's extensive collection of books and manuscripts to and from the privileged few who are allowed to take advantage of such services within the Young Kingdoms. He will tell long, but never boring, stories of his travels – of engagements with noble kings and beautiful queens, of encounters with lawful bishops and sorcerers aligned with the powers of Chaos, and of course, all the dangers and troubles met in between.

Of course, in all these stories, the mainstay of these narratives remains the same, with everyone he meets immediately being captivated by his wit, intellect, and charming, good looks, and all soon becoming either fast friends or lovers.

About Avenod

Even though Mergret Avenod is already 21, she seems to be trapped in an alternating state of either having a child-like wonder for everything new she encounters or sees, or a maturity well beyond her years, to handle stress, conflict, and personal setbacks with ease.

These two aspects of her personality often clash, and this has led some who know her better to believe that she might have a split personality or other difficulties.

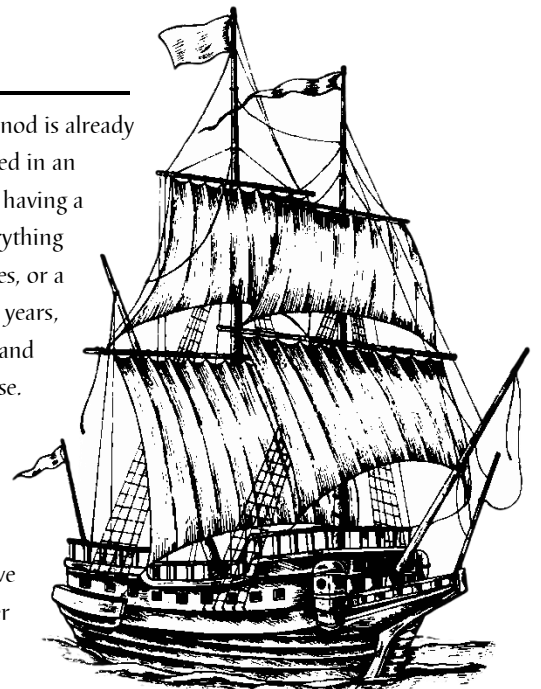
Quiet and reserved onboard the ship,

ABOUT THIS STORY SEED

ON THE OLDEST OCEAN was written by Marcus D. Bone (©2024) and is designed to be an interlude for characters sailing the seas of the Young Kingdoms.

Stormbringer Story Seeds are developed to spark a Gamemaster's imagination and help to create an interesting and diverse world in which their players adventure.

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THE MERGRET-THING

In this form, the Mergret-Thing is a winged woman, with stone-like skin, sharp claws, and elongated teeth.

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**STR 14, CON 23, SIZ 11,
INT 14, POW 21, DEX 25, APP 3**

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HIT POINTS: 23

MAGIC POINTS: 21

ARMOUR: Rough Skin (1pt)

DAMAGE BONUS: +1d4

WEAPONS: Claws (x2) 55%
1d4+db, Bite Auto% 1d6+db
(the bite attack is an automatic
attack if both claws hit the
demon's target)

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SKILLS: Dodge 43%, Climb 86%,
Fly 74%, Hide 62%, Jump 90%.

SPELLS: None

SPECIAL: Invisibility – The
Mergret-Thing can go invisible
at will, although will become
visible if it makes contact with
another mortal.

Illusions – The Mergret thing
can make a target within visual
range believe they see things
that do not exist. This requires
a POW vs POW roll to succeed
and costs the demon 2 Magic
Points for each minute the
vision is maintained.

she is often seen up on deck but is difficult to pin down even for a casual conversation. If cornered, she will reveal – asking the inquirer to keep such detail to themselves – that she is the youngest daughter of Ivid Avenod's of Rachil. Long in the service of the Kings of Filkar, her family have long dedicated themselves to roles as advisors, courtiers and soldiers in the royal court and she is the only one of her three brothers and two sisters to not take up one such position since coming of age.

Instead, Mergret desires to explore the Young Kingdoms, and having spent many years training in the arts of combat and diplomacy, knows how to handle herself, no matter what life might throw in her way.

Developments

During the voyage, it is hard for the crew and the characters to not notice how Homas and Mergret draw close, and the following events can be used to demonstrate the kindling relationship.

- Shortly after the departure of the ship from port, Homas will see Mergret and although deep in tale-telling with another passenger will compare her beauty with a princess from the Sighing Desert he once knew. Mergret will scowl at these comments and after a tirade of abuse will angrily storm off.
- Over a meal, Homas will be seen to sit down next to Mergret and start asking her awkward questions about her life, family and the purpose of her journey. Although annoyed at first, it looks as if the young lady is soon charmed by the older man's attention, and the two talk late into the evening.
- One evening, Mergret and Homas are seen on the quarterdeck whispering somewhat urgently. Although nothing of an intimate nature is witnessed by either the party or the crew, it is suggested by one more uncouth among the crew that the two are obviously sleeping together. This will lead to bets, speculation and further comments on how long this relationship might last.

SCENARIO POSSIBILITIES

The following are three suggestions of how to use this Story Seed in your adventures. Gamemasters are, of course, encouraged to develop their own ideas and outcomes.

Option One: The Demon

A shout in the night, a cry for the captain and the stamp of rushing feet awakens the characters. Homas Goingle has been found dead in his bed, and Mergret Avenod is missing!

Mergret Avenod is in fact a Demon (see the sidebar for her statistics) summoned to retrieve 'The Codex Humucious', a rare book Homas had been transporting. This true purpose was discovered by Homas, and the

demon acted before her guise was revealed to the ship, killing the man. This Mergret-Thing now hides within the vessel, using its powers of invisibility and illusion to confuse and distract the crew and passengers.

The scenario will commence as an investigation into the cause of Homas' death and the mystery of Mergret whereabouts but will quickly descend into a deadly game of cat-and-mouse as the demon fights to survive long enough to complete its mission. In this option, the narrative is likely to play out like a horror movie, with the ship's crew being picked off, one by one, as the characters attempt to isolate and defeat the demon before the ship makes landfall.

Option Two: For the Family

The Goingle and Avenod families have long been rivals, and to this very day hate each other with a passion. While outwardly the two scions of these dynasties might act pleasantly enough - and even seem to begin to enjoy each other's company - both are secretly plotting to 'do away' with the other before the voyage is through.

Reluctant to openly attack the other party in case they are 'placed in irons' or worse dropped on a remote island in the middle of nowhere, Mergret and Homas will use their charm, skills, and abilities to turn the crew and other passengers against their opponent. As the characters are drawn into this generations-old dispute, they will find the ship descending into chaos as factions are formed, and other old grievances are resolved.

This conflict will also likely distract the crew from other external threats and makes the ship vulnerable to everything from Straasha's storms to attacks by Pan-Tangian raiders.

Worse still this entire dispute is nothing more than a slice of ignorance and misunderstanding, with the Goingles believing that the Avenods undermined them generations ago (which saw the family having to flee penniless to Cadsandria) while the Avenods claim that it was the Goingles' 'kidnapping' of the young heirs that started the feud. Of course, the simple truth of the matter is that years ago a son and daughter of the two families eloped, having been refused permission to marry, and it is their angry parents who begin the hostilities.

Both Homas and Mergret know - in part - the truth of the matter and others onboard will also know more, but it is up to the characters to bring the quarrel, at least her on the ship, to a conclusion.

Option Three – False Identities

Neither Mergret nor Homas are who they say they are, and - in fact - are the infamous sibling thieves, Kern and Laiyin Fessdin.

Forced to flee after a heist they had planned failed spectacularly, the two stole the identities of the real Mergret and Homas and made their way onboard the party's vessel. Desperate and with few options, they are on now look for a new safe harbour from where they can recuperate and rebuild their powerbase and influence.

Unfortunately for the brigands, one of the other passengers, Plidor Dourbrow, a well-travelled Purple Town trader, believes he recognises the couple. This will lead to the thieves needing to quietly dispose of the nosey merchant, while Laiyin's own uncontrollable desire to pocket and steal whenever she can, will result in the disappearance of coin, trinkets, and other valuables from among the crew and passengers. These two events will lead to false accusations, 'tit-for-tat' deeds of thievery and even the potential for out-and-out conflict among those on board, all of which will require the characters to resolve before things get truly out of hand,

Worse still for all on board the group's vessel, the Fessdin's previous collaborators and crew - those few who survived the failed robbery - are hard on the heels of the siblings and will likely arrive in their own ship at the most inopportune moment.

