

In the Chains of el Grillo

In the Chains of el Grillo is a Savage Worlds, Pirates of the Spanish Main, one-sheet intended to open up the Spanish Main to new characters, though it can be adapted for more experienced characters.

Lash of El Azote

The characters begin the adventure in the hold of the slave hoy *Carolina*. Perhaps they were sold into slavery by jealous relatives, press-ganged during a night of heavy drinking or captured after their first ill-fated battle. Any way you slice it, the heroes awaken in the close hold, their senses assaulted by the reek of unwashed bodies, the pinch of iron shackles on their ankles, wrists and necks, and the bellow of El Azote. The massive Spaniard taskmaster, stomps into the hold, his spiked namesake cracking against the split backs of his charges. Any resistance, even simple speech, enrages the taskmaster and he unlocks the offender from the communal chain dragging him or her to a central pole for discipline.

The shackles and communal chain are easily picked (Lockpicking +1), and a character can free one slave per round. El Azote makes a Notice -1 per round to detect the attempted escape while he whips his victim. If the characters do not attempt to escape, four random slaves do and attack, though they only last 2 rounds without help. Four rounds after El Azote begins, 4 slavers enter to watch the show. If the taskmaster is engaged in battle or dead, three of them attack while the fourth runs back to the deck to alert the crew and captain. Otherwise, noises of battle do not draw additional attention. If the characters escape, they can sway all ten other slaves to their cause with a successful Persuasion roll. Alerted or not, the next scene is Battle on the *La Carolina*.

If the characters fail to defeat El Azote, or otherwise fail to escape, the slave hold is locked for the remainder of the trip (10 days) and the slaves are denied food and water. The next scene is French Betrayal, unless the characters attempt another escape.

Battle on *La Carolina*!

Fifteen slavers and El Grillo hold the ship and fight smartly, using cover and the heights to their advantage. El Grillo hangs back and uses his three pistols to best effect before closing with his

trademark rapier. The slave hold contains several improvised weapons (shackles, chains, wooden benches, chamber pots), and once engaged, the characters should have plenty of weapons to choose from. Though he wishes to preserve his valuable cargo, El Grillo is not above making an example of a couple of downed opponents with a finishing move. If the characters are successful, they control the hoy. The surviving slavers can be persuaded (or intimidated) into assisting to sail the ship and will fight when the French attack.

If the characters fail, the next scene is their fate.

The Plank!

The leaders of the rebellion are lined up and cast overboard without ceremony. If the characters reignite the battle at this point, and fail again, defeated leaders are killed. Those thrown overboard are in dire straits, with no food or water, and nothing to keep them afloat. Nice GM's might run the French Betrayal either directly after the characters are defeated or after they are cast adrift.

The French Betrayal

El Grillo's slaves are bound for Isla del Cangrejo, where a French captain has discovered a mother lode in gold. Deciding he doesn't wish to share his find or his money with the slaver, he sends a sloop to take the slaves by force. The French fly a series of pre-arranged flags before approaching. Grillo knows the sequence, though if he's alive and/or in control of the ship, he suspects betrayal. Depending on his disposition, he may alert the characters to the impending attack. If the replying sequence is not the pre-arranged signal, the sloop begins firing when in range.

Unless opposed, the French sloop approaches to grapnel range. As the captain calls to El Grillo, 8 marines charge from below decks and start boarding operations. The French mean to keep everyone alive, if possible, including the slavers, in order to put the lot to work in the mines. If half of the marines are slain, the French captain and his sailors cut the lines and attempt to escape.

Aftermath

Success grants the characters the *Carolina* (and possibly the French sloop), and at least a temporarily

willing crew. Half of the slaves have sailing experience (Boating d6). Investigation of El Grillo's papers reveals that the slavemaster owns shares in the gold mine, and that it's unknown to the French government. El Grillo has a map to Isla del Cangrejo and the fort, though it's clear that the characters need support to mount an assault. It should be well known that El Grillo is wanted by the French, English and Spanish for random kidnapping and unauthorized slave trading. The details and reward are left up to the GM.

If the characters attack the French sloop, they end up on wanted posters in French territories for piracy on the high seas.

El Azote (the Taskmaster)

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

Skills: Boating d4, Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d8 (-2), Swimming d4

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Ugly, Hard of Hearing

Fame: -8

Edges: Improved First Strike, Quick

Booty: Loot

Gear: Barbed Whip (STR+d6, 2" reach), Club (STR+d6), Shackles, Keys

Slavers

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Boating d6, Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Swimming d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Garrulous, Greedy, Mean

Fame: -5

Edges: Dirty Fighter

Booty: Loot per every 5 minions

Gear: Knife (d6+d4), cutlass (2d6), flintlock pistol (per 3 minions) (Range 5/10/20; Damage 2d6+1), shot and powder (20).

Monte de Grillo (the Slavemaster – Wild Card)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Boating d8, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Swimming d8, Throwing d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 9; **Toughness:** 7

Hindrances: Mean, Obese, Wanted

Fame: -40

Edges: Connections (French), Reward (shares in mining operation), Really Dirty Fighter, Iron Jaw, Wind Sense, Command, Hold the Line, Trademark Weapon (rapier), Block

Booty: \$1000 (gold ring, gold/pearl earring, silver tooth, ruby and gold brooch, 200 pieces of eight)

Gear: Rapier (+1 Fighting, Str+d4, +1 Parry – gold and silver filigreed -- \$300), Flintlock pistol (3) (Range 5/10/20, Damage 2d6+1, shot and powder (10)

The Carolina (Hoy)

Acceleration: 2

Top Speed: 4

Crew: 8+16

Cargo Space: 4

Guns: 6

Notes: Heavy Armor, Shallow Draft, Small Quarters

Toughness: 14(2)

Wounds: 2

Travel Speed: 1

Handling: +2

Cost: \$20,000

Weapons: 2 16-pounder guns and 4 4-pounder guns. (3 guns to a side)

The *Carolina* fields 8 sailors and 15 slavers. The slavers provide security and combat muscle. The *Carolina* rarely carries more than about 10 days of food (1/2 a cargo space). The rest of the cargo space is typically filled with slaves.

The French

Sloop: Use *La Repulsa* (PotSM pg 116)

Marines (8): Use Typical Marine (PotSM pg 232)

Lieutenant Le Loutre: Use Typical Junior Officer (PotSM pg 235)

Sailors (3): Do not fight. Use Sailors (PotSM pg 241)