

The Wreck of the *Sarah-Jane*

A scenario for **Haunted House**:

http://www.ukg.co.uk/free_games/haunted_house.html

Blurb

Deep in the South Seas, far from the normal trade routes, the merchant ship *Unconquerable Angel* sees a tattered sail off the beam, with distress flags hanging limply in the stifling calm. A closer look, and the drifting hulk is revealed to be the brig *Sarah-Jane*, out of Southampton, reported on the registers as missing presumed foundered these five years. Something about the old ship - the dark gaze of its empty ports, the fat glossy rats that can be glimpsed scuttling about on deck, the sickly-sweet odour that intermittently wafts across the water - fills the *Angel's* crew and passengers with a nervous dread. A select group is readied to board the derelict vessel. What they find will change their lives - those who survive the encounter. And it might just change the lives of a lot more people than that..

Each player will have one character who is a crewperson of the *Unconquerable Angel*, and one who is a passenger of some sort.

Background for players

It is the year 1810, and the globe has been tamed, for the most part. The great colonial nations have spread their wings wide across the fertile and productive lands of the world, subjugating their idle and decadent native peoples at will. But there are still corners of the Earth where the unknown holds sway—remote, inaccessible, inhospitable, ignored? Here may mystery yet be found.

The British East India Company's merchantman *Unconquerable Angel* is presently plying the South Seas, having rounded Cape Horn in fair winds, out of London *en route* to the luxuries of the Orient. But this is no ordinary trading voyage. On board, as well as the usual crew and armed marines (for the hated French and despised Dutch are active in these lawless waters, and pirates too may yet be found hereabouts), traders from the Company and their families, and a handful of paying passengers, there is a small body of scientists, or natural philosophers—their purposes unknown to most on board. Suffice to say that their measurements have been many, various and obscure. Rumour is that they report directly to the Royal Society in London, or even to the Prince of Wales himself.

Four nights out of Feejee, with the next landfall expected in the Solomons ten days hence, the lookout spies a tattered sail off the port beam, distress flags hanging limply in the baking calm. As the *Unconquerable Angel* nudges closer, the derelict is revealed as the merchant brig *Sarah-Jane*, out of Southampton, reported on the registers as missing presumed foundered these five years.

Something about the old ship—the dark gaze of its empty ports, the fat glossy rats that can be glimpsed (by spy-glass) scuttling about on deck, the sickly-sweet odour that intermittently wafts across the water—fills the *Angel's* crew and passengers with a nervous dread.

Captain Harris orders a select group to take boat and board the *Sarah-Jane*, to see whatever may there be seen. A mix of skills and interests is felt most suitable. The sun's late-afternoon rays paint the flat sea a dull red, as the boat makes its way across to the becalmed ship with barely a sound from the oars.

—*In the teeth of G*d, I would not undertake such a venture*, one stout fellow remaining on the *Angel* is heard to mutter. His companions agree. But none of them moves away from the taffrail, from where they now see the boat pull into the distant shadow of the *Sarah-Jane*, and cast a rope upwards.

Player preliminary questionnaire

Each of you is going to be playing two characters: (a) a member of the *Unconquerable Angel's* officers, crew or marines; and (b) a passenger, merchant, family member, or scientist. These people are the entire complement of the boat sent over to the *Sarah-Jane* - there are no NPCs present (that you know about!)

We'll do the detailed character creation on the day, but here are some broad questions about your character to start with:

For the crew character, would you like to be:

- An officer?
- A sailor?
- A marine (ie. essentially a soldier specialized in fighting at sea)?
- Male? / Female (and necessarily disguised)?
- Old? / Middle-aged? / Young?
- Dedicated to serving the East India Company?
- Dedicated to earning pay?
- Would really rather be in the Navy?
- With your own secret agenda?
- Anything else you think might be good to add?

And for the passenger character, would you like to be:

- A paying passenger?
- A merchant?
- A family member of one of the above?
- A scientist?
- Male? / Female?
- Old? / Middle-aged? / Young?
- Straightforwardly what you appear to be?
- A disguised secret agent, for Britain or another nation?
- A political rebel or malcontent?
- A seeker of esoteric knowledge?
- Anything else you think might be good to add?

Some suggested locations:

Crow's nest

Bow lookout

Main deck

Poop deck / helm

Fore cabin 1

Fore cabin 2

Captain's cabin

Mess

Galley

Gun bay

Powder room

Heads

Crew's quarters

Brig / lock-up

Forward hold

Mid hold

Aft hold

... etc

The Wreck of the *Sarah-Jane*

Location:	Terror:
Discovered by:	
Description:	
Deaths etc:	
Notes:	

Location:	Terror:
Description:	
Deaths etc:	
Notes:	

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Deaths etc:	
Notes:	

GM summary

#	Player	Character	Stats	Attachments	Denouement
I			F: B: E:	# : # : # :	
2		Vuln:	F: B: E:	# : # : # :	
3			F: B: E:	# : # : # :	
4		Vuln:	F: B: E:	# : # : # :	
5			F: B: E:	# : # : # :	
6		Vuln:	F: B: E:	# : # : # :	
7			F: B: E:	# : # : # :	
8		Vuln:	F: B: E:	# : # : # :	
9			F: B: E:	# : # : # :	
IO		Vuln:	F: B: E:	# : # : # :	

The Wreck of the *Sarah-Jane*

Name:

Player:

Description:

Fatedness: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Attachment: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ to:

Bravery: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Attachment: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ to:

Empathy: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Attachment: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ to:

Vulnerability:

Locations visited:

Clues linked:

Denouement:
