



"Dark Waters"

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A Horror Rules Script
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Story

A stormy night at sea and a desperate distress call plunge the passengers and crew of cruise liner *Agamemnon* into deadly peril. After rescuing a team of scientists from a floating research station, the characters discover they have also unwittingly retrieved a hideous undersea ooze creature. Unfortunately, efforts to battle the creature are complicated by a group of Cuban terrorists who seize control of the ship. It's a struggle to survive as characters battle both the creature and the gun-toting baddies in a last-ditch effort to escape from a ship (and a future) that is slowly sinking out from underneath them. The dark waters are rising...

Setting

The Agamemnon

A medium sized cruise ship, with whitewashed decks, clean fresh paint and pennants of the Pan-Atlantic Cruise Line whipping smartly in the breeze. The ship is populated with a perky, professional crew dressed in snappy white uniforms and a lively mix of passengers, both old retirees and young hip singles looking for love.

Crossing the dark Atlantic from New York to London, the voyage will take the better part of a month. The ocean is vast, dark and empty. The first few days pass peacefully, but wheather grows increasingly stormy as they head further out. A small storm, but fine skies.

The layout of the ship is as follows:

Bridge - controls, captain's quarters

Upper Decks - recreation, food, pool, shuffleboard

Middle Decks - passenger

Lower Decks - crew, kitchen, stores, engines, machine shop, maintenance yards

Goal

Escape.

Destroy the creature? Sure, yeah, okay. While you're thinking about, get off the boat before it sinks. When the Point of No Return hits, start counting rounds cuz they're runnin' out. Hope you can swim.

Bad Guys

Name: The Ooze Creature

Grip Check: Freak

COR: 4

Move: 2/11 (every other round)

Health: 80 Weak Spot: 2 (fire/electricity only)
Fighting Skill: Acid squirt 6, slime slam 8 Damage: acid - cat, slam - moderate
Powers: squish into small spaces (flow like oil), grapple (as in HR rules), up to 8 ooze tentacles max 15'
long, normal attacks drop 2 levels, regenerates 10 health per day; acid squirt only once every 3 rounds,
move up to 11 every other round
Skills: Sneak 8, Watchfulness 6
Vulnerabilities: fire and electricity do full damage
Description: elephant sized blob of black, slick, ooze; fish and other victims float suspended in its
digestive sack or saved for a snack later in its bulk; sucking orifice located in center with brain mass (not
visible), waving tentacles (up to 8, max 15')

Name: Cuban Terrorist (12) Grip Check: Startle
COR: 3 Move: 5
Health: 7 Weak Spot: 5
Fighting Skill: Gun - 6, HtH - 5 Damage: Machinegun, rocket, fist
Powers: Machinegun, rocket as explosive shoot on gun range long speed pond damage catastrophic
ammo 1
Skills: Sneak 5, Watchfulness 5, Technical 4, Thief 6
Vulnerabilities: Little to no English, fanatics
Description: jumpy and nervous, Cuban features, unshaved, fatigues or plain clothes

Cast

1. **Captain Jon Wayne** - the Duke at the helm of a ship, bearded, big, tough
2. **Pauline "Polly" Masters** - lead anchor for the popular TV program "World of Wonder", beautiful, spunky, pony tail, long brown hair, winning smile, a real go-getter
3. **Jimmy Fix** - a greasemonkey, his place is with the ship's engines, which is just where he likes it. Thin, nervous, smeared with oil, yet a friendly and loveable misfit in his own right.
4. **Dr. Carl Gearie** - head of deep-sea research station Deep 6, glasses, balding, stern and self-absorbed, lab coat
5. **Eduardo Caldon** - the Captain of the Cuban soldiers; mustache, cigar, cruel, jerk, loves to go "heh heh heh," often after some dire threat

Walk-Ons

Lex Conner - big handsome camera guy, leads the "World of Wonder" team, loves the ladies
Simon Foster - nervous young doctor from Deep6, knows a great deal and wants to talk
Kinkade Jones - activities director for the *Agamemnon*, black, pretty, energetic, tennis shoes, health nut
Manuel Cardenas - a terrorist concerned for his captive brother back home; might help characters

Mood

1. **The Creature** - there are a host of ookie things about the creature to heighten suspense: slime trails, stink, fish bones (and human) left behind from feeding, echoing eery dripping, a feeling of being watched, fish carcasses, missing people with shoes left behind, oozing squelching noises, occasional slams and other noises behind bulkheads. There's enough here to keep the characters jumping all night.
2. **The Dark Atlantic** - the ocean itself is a great source for suspense, since it can change so suddenly. Vast empty stretches of water stretching to the lonely horizon, ominous clouds, sudden rain squalls, black waves, deep swells which carry the boat toward the unknown, etc.
3. **The Terrorists** - in light of the "9/11" tragedy in the U.S., it might be judicious to play down the role of the Cuban terrorists. Read your players. If they're still sensitive, you might want to cut back on the Cuban's involvement. If not, a few suspicious-looking characters lurking about, strange bulges under jackets, some casual threats and menacing looks could help increase tension. We suggest you downplay it.
4. **Scientists** - after taking on the scientiests, it will become very apparent that they are all frightened and have experienced something traumatic. Nervous looks and whispers between them, jumpiness, as well as the everpresent and watchful eye of Dr. Gearie should really pique the character's interest.

5. **Superstition** - make up some old superstitions by the crewmembers, such as sailing on the 13th of the month, having a blue-footed booby fly over the ship at noon, changing course at the 37th parallel, etc.

Chain of Events

1 - *The Agamemnon*

The characters have all signed up for a one month cruise across the Atlantic (or else are part of the crew, stowaways, etc.) on the pleasure liner *Agamemnon*. The voyage begins on the 13th of the month. Despite much superstitious complaining by the crew, a week passes in peace, calm and recreation. The only ruffle is a small storm early in the week. Give the players a chance to meet as they compete in the shuffleboard tournament. **Kinkade Jones (walk-on)**, the Activity Director, leads the "fun." Winners and participants of the tournament will dine with **Captain Wayne** as his guests, and are joined by **Polly Masters** and **Lex Conner (walk-on)**. After dinner the characters encounter **Jimmy Fix**, who is being threatened by several Cubans. They are nervous and jumpy and are accusing him of spying on them. The Cubans will act suspicious and pushy and might come to blows, but will not pull any weapons. Jimmy will be extremely thankful and immediately adopt himself to the group.

2 - SOS

The next night a big storm hits, and as the ship is being tossed about, a broken S.O.S. call comes in. The call is from *Deep Six*, a floating research station. The **Captain** alters course and sends a launch out to the rescue the crew, a panicked but tight-lipped cluster of 16 scientists (once 45), who practically fight each other to get off the sinking station. Characters passing a Watchfulness check will notice strange burn-like injuries, lots of dead fish floating nearby, and severe damage to the research station, parts of which look as if they've been crushed. The head scientist, **Dr. Carl Gearie**, tells them it was a chemical explosion and mechanical failures, but will say no more. **Simon Foster (walk-on)** might try to say something, but he will be quickly shushed. In reality, the team dredged up the dormant Ooze Creature several days ago during deep sea research. The creature was awakened with an electric probe, at which point it began destroying the station and eating people. Needless to say, anyone descending into the station to investigate will not return. Of course, when the launch departs, the creature is attached to the hull and hauled unknowingly back to the *Agamemnon*. Later that night, have a random character witness a secret deckside meeting of the Cubans. They see what they think is a weapon.

3 - The Dark Atlantic

The next day is eventful. **Simon** will attempt to talk to the characters, and if they seem trustworthy (Sweet Talk checks), he will try to slip them a sample taken from the Creature, and might talk (though he doesn't know much). Later on one of the walk-ons goes missing (Creature food). Throw in a few Scares and Startles from the Creature too, like strange noises in the pipes and bulkheads, thumps and bangs in the night, maybe a dead fish or two lying in the middle of a locked bedroom, or some sticky ooze on a dresser. Any investigation of the Cuban situation will yield no evidence, veiled threats and a sinister visit from **Eduardo Caldon**. Play with the tension for a day or two, dispose of another walk-on, then spring the next surprise on the group - **Jimmy** bursts into their stateroom in the middle of the night in a state of panic (Scare check). He insists they come with him but won't tell why, saying they're the only people he can trust and it's easier just to show them. On the way he tells of hearing strange noises during his shift, and that he saw "something" oozing behind the turbines. They arrive to find the turbine room half-flooded and a great hole burned in its housing. Jimmy will leap forward in shock to attend the damaged engines, at which point the creature, hiding in the room, will attack a random character from behind with an acid spray (or Jimmy, if you're really vicious) and then the rest of the party. Escape is highly recommended. The creature will not pursue them above the lower decks.

4 - A Bad Time to Go to Cuba

Survivors of the attack will encounter their next surprise during the flight topside. The characters are jumped by 6 armed terrorists, who hold them at gunpoint and shout rude things at them in Cuban accents. During the action in the engine room, the terrorists have struck at last. In a quick coupe, they captured the crew, destroyed the radio and have turned the *Agamemnon* toward Cuba in an effort to involve the US in their battle with political enemies. The ship is theirs. They will not listen to any babble about "ooze monsters" and will promptly shoot any resistors (they mean business). Prisoners will be

stripped of all weapons and equipment and taken to a storage room in the lower decks, where they will be locked up.

5 - The Ooze Creature (*Point of no return*)

The cell is already occupied by **Polly, Dr. Gearie**, and any of the walk-ons who still survive (except Manuel Cardenas). They will have several hours to talk, during which the Doctor can be convinced to spill everything he knows about the Creature, figuring the time for secrets is up. At this point strange sounds begin to filter down to the characters as the Creature attacks in force. Explosions, gunfire and screaming can be heard from above. One of the explosions is quite loud, causing the whole ship to lurch and seawater to begin pouring into the cell (Scare check). During the battle, one of the terrorists has fired a rocket into some oil barrels and blown a hole in the hull. The ship is now sinking. Luckily the explosion also pops open a sealed access hatch in the roof, allowing the characters a means of escape. Still, it's no cake walk. The room will be completely flooded in 12 rounds and it will take 2 rounds per person to crawl into the narrow access hatch. Also, after 3 rounds the Creature arrives and starts attacking through the breached wall. It can only get two tentacles in, but this should be enough.

6 - Sink or Swim

The access hatch leads to an adjoining storage room where the characters can regroup. The situation is grim. The only way off the ship is by one of the lifeboats, which are located on the top deck far above. Only seven Cubans remain, but they are crazed with fear and armed with automatic weapons and rocket launchers. The ship will sink in 10 minutes. Start a real timer at this point to heighten suspense, and tell them that when it runs out, they die. For the dash topside, it doesn't really matter how they get there; if they try to be clever, let them. The clock is ticking. Whatever route they take, roll for random encounters on a D10 each floor: 1-5 is the Ooze Creature, 6-8 is a Cuban terrorist, 9-10 is nothing. When (if) they reach the upper deck, they will discover only one lifeboat remaining. As they jump in, **Eduardo Caldon** (if he still lives) will step out from hiding with his submachinegun. He is badly burned by the creature's acid (3 Health left) but determined to get the last lifeboat. If you have any mercy, you can use **Captain Wayne** to save them. Anyone surviving will end up in a lifeboat in the middle of the Atlantic with little water and food and no radio, surrounded by the floating debris of a sunken ocean liner. And they should be darn happy about it.