

# Back at Work

By Holly Lisle

Now researching sailing ships – my biggest challenge is going to be to come up with a design that will offer me passenger room and cargo room in what is essentially a fast fighting ship. My guys are privateers who hunt down slavers and rescue the slaves that have been kidnapped from their shores. Need to figure out how many crew can man a ship that will permit the rescue of (X=number of rescued captives), how much the ship will weigh, how much sail it will carry, tech terms for some of the sails (English terms have an English/American history that my Tonk sailors don't share.

No sense having a mizzenmast or a galleon or a clipper ship or a poop deck. That lack of shared history implies a necessary lack of shared terminology. Which means I need to learn about ship design and not just memorize a few names for spice, but understand the terminology and the technology of sailing ship, and then create a workable ship that fits my Tonks' universe, meets my story specs (or alter my story specs if I've gone too far astray), and doesn't strain credulity.

And I was bitching about the background research involved in writing a stripper/cop/Army Ranger book.

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