

Got What I Need

written by Holly

July 29, 2005

By Holly Lisle

This rough east-cost map (located by Jim Woosley), made it clear that I had one place in Costa Rica where I could drop my wreck and use the methods I want to use to have my folks find it. Boca del Rio Colorado, which serves as the border between Costa Rica and Nicaragua. Isla Brava, slightly inland from the mouth of the river, may play a part, too. This isn't ideal – a place close to Limon, much farther south, would have been perfect. But the shelf didn't cooperate.

And silt deposition from the river may actually play into my favor, story-wise.

Thanks to everyone who hunted or is hunting. Additional links are still welcome, and I'll give credit to finders for those I can use.

Wish I could send my folks to the west coast. It's much better designed for my needs, but that would entail a trip through the Panama Canal, which would be a plot drag.

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Need Some Research Help with

the Onyx Proposal

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I'm looking for topographical maps or images of the seafloor off the **east** coast of Costa Rica, out to about five miles – though more would be better than less – and preferably presented on the web, though if the maps are attainable through simple, reasonably-priced purchase (twenty bucks max), that would be okay, too. I need as much of the area as I can get. I'm trying to place a wreck, and I need a specific type of seafloor terrain for its placement (ties in to the plot). I've not had any luck finding what I need in this regard. I'll credit the person who suggests workable resources in the acknowledgments, provided the book sells. And thanks for any help on this.

Other research is going well; resources on wreck diving and shipbuilding are plentiful online, and I have good books in hand or on order for the specifics I'll need to do this book. Yeah, I'm pretty confident about this one.

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Background Up

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You'll find it here.

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Done

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The ship is built. Will scan and upload some other time. It's been a long day.

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STILL Backgrounding

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If I'm at this all night, I guess I'll just be at it all night. But I'm not putting another writing day into it.

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Shipbuilding and Subconscious Answers

written by Holly

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Got much of the ship built last night. Discovered that deep-water sailing ships have about a 4:1 length/width ratio or more, that the length/height ratio is anywhere from 4:1 up to 16:1 or better, but that in smallish wooden sailing ships is much closer to 4-5:1

Also discovered that I'm going to have to throw out a lot of sailing terminology. Starboard – comes from the Viking steerboard, which was always on the right side of the Viking longship. Tonks don't come from a world that had Vikings. Mizzenmasts and genoas and topgallant sails – all from the age of European wind sailing. Tonks didn't have Europeans, either.

Discovered that for the size ship I need to rescue the number of people I want to rescue, there's no way anybody was rowing anything. Which means upping the number of windmen.

I did front, top and side views on the ship, but still have to do the detailed deck plans. Finding out your ship doesn't have a kitchen is never a good thing.

Discovered that my hero's little sister was kidnapped by slavers – finding her is his compelling reason for leaving the nomadic Tonk life when he was sixteen to live on ships. Didn't know that until I woke up this morning.

My subconscious has so far been much less forthcoming on what I'm going to do with Hawksparr and the bitch inside her head.

Back to work. I have a ton of things to do, and some of them I have to figure out before I can write any more. But I don't

want to have to count today as a second rethink day. If I can add two thousand words to yesterday's one-thousand-word count, though, I'll have only lost one rethink day.

So. Onward, markers, rulers, and tons of reference books in hand. (I'll scan the Tonk wolf-ship pages when I get them done, and post them on the site. I think they're kind of cool. I probably have a few things in there that will make real boatmen shriek, but if I'm lucky, I've done good enough research that there won't be many.)

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Back at Work

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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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Found My Villain

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Found my villain here, and also here. And I have a couple of ideas now for specific crimes.

This story should be fast-paced, terrifying, and horribly possible.

And as a bit of extra fun on corporate villainy, check out this list on overthrowing corporate rule. The corporatization of hospitals and other healthcare providers should be the first privatization overturned. ... Though this is me, the nurse, not me the writer, talking. Hospitals have NOTHING to do with the story.

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And a Shadow Passes

written by Holly

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An Editorial on the Death of Arafat

More 'shadow of death' stuff.

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Valley of the Shadow of Death

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A range of fascinating things my search on the term "valley of the shadow of death" turned up:

- Directions on how to get there
- Israeli bus article
- Lewis Carroll poem
- Crimean war photo
- Bizarre instructions for a card game
- A grim article in the Asia Times about life under Islamic fundamentalists
- Synopsis of Episode 6 of Ken Burns' amazing **The Civil War** documentary
- A hospice RN's editorial about options at the end of

life – as an RN who dealt directly with these issues, I strongly encourage you to read all of this

- Article on the 150th anniversary of the Charge of the Light Brigade
- A man's reaction to his wife

There were a lot more. A story about a cuckoo clock. A whole lot of Sept. 11 reminiscences (always encouraging to find that I spelled "reminiscences" correctly).

But nothing that went "click". Nothing that said, "I'm the shadow you're searching for." Might be time to open up Inspiration and dig through some of my old shadows.

No. New document in Word, and ten minutes of free writing with the sentence "I am the shadow you're looking for" as the first line.

Try it too, if you're feeling daring.

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