

SWEET HOME CSS ALABAMA

By Brent Wolke • For use with S. John Ross' *Risus: The Anything RPG*

HOW IT HAPPENED

At the Battle of Cherbourg in 1864, it would appear that the USS Kearsarge defeated and sunk the CSS Alabama, but no...the resulting explosion and apparent sinking was just a rationale for a massive cross-dimensional rip which caused the CSS Alabama to 'sink' out of our reality, and rise into the World of Atragha.

WHY IT HAPPENED

A sorcerer of some might in the Atragha used his powers to summon other-worldly heroes to his aid. It worked, and it brought the CSS Alabama and crew into his world, but the explosive energies also killed the sorcerer in the effort. What the sorcerer wanted other-worldly heroes for, or indeed, who he was, is unknown. The only thing for sure is...the crew of the CSS Alabama is stuck in another world.

THE WORLD OF ATRAGHA

To the limits of anyone's knowledge, Atragha is a primitive world of immense magic and monsters. It exists as a massive continent with 3/4ths of it dominated by tangled forests, swamps, and networks of rivers. There is a large snow covered mountain range with cuts off the remaining 1/4th and is said to be a desolate desert. Everywhere are the ruins of civilizations that have come before.

The people of Atragha are primitive, organized into thousands of tribes with complicated alliances, and look pretty much like the human crew of the CSS Alabama. The Atraghans work no metal or stone (but often live in the ruins). Despite this, they are powerful for they have access to magic so powerful they can command the weather, create lightning and fire from their hands, and all other manner of world-shaking effects.

And they need it.

Atragha is also populated by monsters. At one end, there are terrible beasts lurking in ruins or stalking people through the swamps and forests, and at the other end, the giant cloud eaters...monsters so huge their heads touch the sky and who usually take no notice of the villages they crush beneath their feet by accident.

Into this world, the humans have been thrown, and in it they find themselves...far more powerful than any Atraghan, rivaling even the sorcerers.

CHARACTER CREATION

Characters are built using 10 dice and may take Hooks and Tales. If the *Risus* Companion is in use, then Lucky Shots, Questing Dice, Side Kicks and Shieldmates, are also available.

Suitable cliches to choose from are related to naval combat or operations, fighting, shooting, and the like. If the adventures are to take place after sometime arriving in Atragha, then characters could have conceivably picked up some new 'native' skills. Players may also choose to play native Atraghans.

Human: Humans, even though they are roughly the same in size and appearance of Atraghans, are 3 to 4 times stronger, and capable of immense physical feats in comparison. Any (any!) cliche taken by a human is automatically considered a Double Pump cliche at no extra cost. Humans cannot take any cliche related to magic.

Atraghans: The native people of Atragha look to be roughly human, but are significantly weaker than humans. On the other hand, they are capable of magic, a force so potent as to rival humans. Any cliche involving magic is considered a Double Pump cliche at no extra cost.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Rifles, sabers, bayonets, cannons, and other personal items from the civil war era as possibilities for humans. Clubs, bows, spears, furs, and other primitive gear as possibilities for Atraghans.

CONFLICTS

A few notes about conflicts between humans, Atraghans, monsters, and everything else. Humans are powerful. Very powerful. So are monsters. The Atraghans? Not so much unless they have magic. As such, use the following rules.

Human versus Monster: Humans and monsters are on roughly equal footing, and so use their cliches in conflict as normal.

Human or Monster versus Atraghan: In this case, the Atraghan is considered at half-dice versus either humans or monsters.

Human or Monster versus Magic: If an Atraghan has access to magic, and is using magic in a conflict, then she battles at full dice.

MAGIC

Magic is mighty. It can change the weather, and call thunder from the sky. It can cause earthquakes and floods. It can make one fly or turn skin to living stone. It can make someone spit fire, or throw lightning. It can animate trees to do a sorcerers bidding, or blight a forest of every living thing. It can summon monsters and banish them as well. Magic is mighty.

ADVENTURES

Individual human crew of the CSS Alabama may choose to abandon ship and take up life in Atragha, while some Atraghans may have been taken up as crew aboard the CSS Alabama. Adventures as such may follow the ship as it steams or sails its way through the many rivers or adventures may follow humans and Atraghans as they explore a mysterious world.

The following are possible adventure seeds to get players started.

Over The Sea: Atragha is but one (albeit large) continent. The Alabama is capable of sea voyages. What other lands and people exist over the sea? Perhaps others who will know of a way home?

Resupply: There is plenty of wood to repair the Alabama as it takes damage, but mining operations must commence if they are to replace damaged metal, or to forge new sabers, and manufacture new rifles, cannons, and shot. An outpost in the mountains must be founded, working mines must be dug, and crews of natives must be hired.

Strangers: The crew of the Alabama may find they are not the only humans on Atragha. Others, summoned through magic, from different time periods of Earth are also attempting to make a new life on this magical planet, and can present allies or enemies.

Who Came Before?: Ruins of multiple past civilizations can be found half-buried in swamps and hidden in forests. Who were these people? Why did their civilizations fail? What are these strange artifacts? Some one needs to find out, and watch out for the monsters.

What Child Is This?: The first human-Atraghan baby is born and while no one knows what this child will be capable of--stronger or weaker than the combined parentage--everyone is in a panic with some claiming a God or a Demon has been born. Some will protect it. Some will attempt to kill it. The heroes?