In 1984, Glen Cook introduced the world to the Black Company. Readers followed the Company's service to the Lady, watched as they battled the Dominator, and traveled with them to find their origins in fabled Khatovar. Now, 20 years later, the world of the Black Company is finally yours to explore in this campaign setting for the popular d20 System. The Black Company Campaign Setting is suitable for games set in any era in the novels, during either the Books of the North or the Books of the South. Moreover, it is suitable for any style of play, from low-magic fantasy to epic excitement. Players can take part in the Lady's consolidation of the Empire in the north, become embroiled in the intrigues of Taglios, and even lead armies at the Tower of Charum. They might take the role of unsavory thieves in Oar, or face Kina in an epic showdown. Players can explore the time before the novels, or even pick up where the novels left off.

The Black Company Campaign Setting has it all, promising new worlds of excitement for fans of the series both new and old. Characters are the role of powerful wizards, terrifying berserkers, or dastardly thieves, taking advantage of new skills and feats to achieve the heights of power as generals or as the terrible Taken. For campaigns set within the novels, this new sourcebook details everyone's favorite characters in the novels from Sleepy and Croaker, to the enigmatic Raven, and the terrifying Lady. With new classes, monsters, setting information, mass combat rules, and an all-new magic system, this book gives you everything you need to play from 1st to epic levels and beyond. Relive favorite moments of the novels, or tell your own stories, but watch out...because the Black Company is looking for you!

CHECK OUT THIS SPECIAL PREVIEW OF THE BLACK COMPANY CAMPAIGN SETTING

CROAKER

Novels: The Black Company, Shadow Linger, The White Rose, Shadow Games, Dreams of Steel, Black Seanners, She is the Darkness, Water Sleeps, Soldiers Live

Croaker is the central character of many of the most important moments of the Black Company's later years. Originally from a trading town located on a crossroads south of the Jewel Cities, Croaker left his family to seek fame and fortune with the legendary mercenaries. Already a trained physician's aid, he soon rose to be the Black Company's primary bone-cutter. The ancient wizard One-Eye was pleased to have less work to do with the injured, and named the new recruit Croaker as a jest. As with many jests in the Black Company, no one thought it was particularly funny.

Because he had a true gift for languages and flowery descriptions, Croaker also soon became the Annalist, a position that had been largely ignored for years before his arrival. In many ways Croaker was not a good choice for this role – he had no head for maps or directions, and numerous errors can be found in his descriptions of the Company's travels. Additionally, Croaker never made any real effort to remain impartial in his Annals entries, happily painting those who had irritated him as villains, while leaving out the less savory details of his closest comrades' actions. What Croaker did have was a true love for the Black Company and the traditions it represented. Though cutthroat and killers, these misfit fighters were his family.

Even when Croaker decided the Black Company was done, he opted to take the Annals to Khatovar, a city 8,000 miles away that might not even exist. His romance with the lady flourished despite their differences, and Croaker forged a new Company to defeat the Shadowmasters who might destroy the world. He became the new Captain, called the Old Man as often as Croaker, and waged war across the continent to fulfill his duty as Annalist. If Khatovar ever existed it was never what Croaker thought it was, but in searching for it he did his part to save the world from shadow.

In the end, Croaker had seen too much of the world to simply die the death of an old man. He traded roles with Shieveya, a solemn demigod with the power to watch all of history. The simple peasant had become a god, and doubtless spends much of his time looking after whatever exists of the Black Company.

PERSONALITY

Croaker was a romantic and a traditionalist, his knowledge of the Company's past deeds and victories driving him to become the keeper of the Black Company's honor. Even when looking for a way to escape a commission, Croaker wished to at least fulfill contracts to the letter of the law. Croaker wished to maintain honor, but knew that eventually every employer tried to eliminate the Black Company, rather than pay its fee.

This combination of romanticism and pragmatism flawoned Croaker through his days. When the Company took to the service of the Lady, wife of the godlike Dominator, Croaker wrote fantasies about how she might look, watching at an Empire out her tower window. When he met her, in fact, some strange romance began to bloom between them, perhaps because only Croaker in all the world had the balls to think of such a thing. But when it became clear the Lady was only the lesser of two evils, Croaker saw through plans to strip her of her power forever.

DESCRIPTION

Croaker was a big man, about 6'4" tall, with unremarkable brown hair that had begun to recede by the time he was in Taglios, when he was probably about 50 years old (although the Lady then estimated his age at 45). His eyes were hard and humorless, icy blue, deeply set; his mouth was thin and seldom smiled. His face was hard and a little off-center. His skin was scarred from childhood pox and acne. He was never comfortable with his appearance. In Taglios he wore a ragged greying beard. Though he wore a sword and dagger as well as mail when expecting trouble, he often carried only a long knife when further away from fighting.

The write-up below represents Croaker at the peak of his mortal life, as the Protector of Taglios, commander of its mighty armies, and Captain of the Black Company.

CROAKER

Male Academician 5/Fighter 3/Jack of All Trades 5/Great General 2; CR:15; Medium human; HD 5d6+5/5d6+3d10+2d8; hp 63; Mt:17; Int: +2; Spd: 30 ft.; AC: 16; touch: 12; flat-footed: 14, BAB +9; Grapple +10; Atk +11 melee (1d8+1/19-20, longsword), +12 ranged (1d8+1/19-20, longbow); Full Atk +11/6 melee (1d8+1/19-20, longsword), +12/7 ranged (1d8+1/19-20, longbow); SQ: commander, emulate feat 1/day, emulate feat 1/day, expanded repertoire (Command as class skill, bonuses to Command, Research, Linguist (+4 languages points), research +8, sneak attack, style (organizer), uncanny insight 2/day, AL: Black Company; SV: Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +13; AP: 7; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 18, Wis 15, Cha 15.

Background: Physician, Concentration, Heal, Profession (herbalist), and Survival are always class skills. Croaker gains +1 skill point per level usable only on these skills.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +16, Command +25, Concentration +5, Decipher Script +9, Diplomacy +16, Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Forgery +5, Gather Information +14, Handle Animal +5, Heal +22, Hide +10, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (history) +14, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +4, Knowledge (religion) +3, Listen +5, Move Silently +8, Profession (herbalist) +15, Research +18, Ride +11, Search +11, Sense Motive +9, Spot +12, Survival +8 (+10 following tracks), Jack of All Trade Class Skills: Bluff, Command, Gather Information, Heal, Hide, Knowledge (history), Knowledge (local), Move Silently, Profession, Research, Speak Language, Spot, Advanced Healing, Bushwhack, Disciplined Troops, Far Shot, Gift of Tongues, Judge of Character, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Self-Sufficient, Skill Focus (Command), Skill Focus (Heal), Weapon Focus (longbow).

Languages: All spoken and written Finger Speech (mastered), Forbischer (mastered), Jewel Cities (mastered), Jewel Cities = ancient (good), Juniper (mastered), Nyen'bao (good), Rosean (good), Shadowlander (good), Taglian-low (mastered), Tell'ku (fair).

Possessions: Chain shirt, mastercraft longsword, mastercraft longbow, mastercraft dagger, medical kit, 500 sp.

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