

A PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO



# MURDER ON THE THROATY MERMAID™

By Mark Moreland



# MURDER ON THE THROATY MERMAID

PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO 2–13

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*Pathfinder Society Scenario 2–13: Murder on the Throaty Mermaid* is a Pathfinder Society Scenario designed for 1st- to 5th-level characters (Tiers 1–2 and 4–5). This scenario is designed for play in Pathfinder Society Organized Play, but can easily be adapted for use with any world. This scenario is compliant with the Open Game License (OGL) and is suitable for use with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game.

The OGL can be found on page 25 of this product.

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# MURDER ON THE THROATY MERMAID

BY MARK MORELAND



For nearly 10,000 years, the mysterious elves of the Mordant Spire have guarded the ruins of lost Azlant, protecting the remnants of their former enemy's civilization from plundering by the humans of the Inner Sea. Since its founding, the Pathfinder Society has been at odds with these strange, masked stewards, ever denied full access to one of Golarion's richest sources of historical relics, forgotten secrets, and unimaginable wealth. Every few generations, however, the Decemvirate welcomes an envoy from the Mordant Spire to the Grand Lodge in Absalom to discuss a possible arrangement to allow them access to Azlant's treasures.

Such a meeting has recently concluded, and the elven diplomat, an enigmatic negotiator named Sephriel, prepared to return home to the Mordant Spire. He planned no simple journey, however, hoping to use his present situation as a chance to test the Pathfinder Society's loyalty before finalizing any agreement and hoping to glean a sense of who his and the Mordant Spire's enemies may be in the world at large.

Under the ruse of remaining incognito during his voyage west, Sephriel requested passage on an unscrupulous smuggler's vessel called the *Throaty Mermaid*, and asked for a Pathfinder escort to assist his bodyguard should the ship run into any trouble. This ship wasn't selected at random, however, and Sephriel has arranged a number of incidents he hopes will truly test the Pathfinders' resolve and ingenuity. Most notably, Sephriel has set himself up to be murdered.

With a clone safely stowed in the Mordant Spire, waiting to receive his soul in the event of his death, Sephriel threw caution to the wind and boarded the ship of pirates and thugs, hoping they'll provide him with what he wants. After nearly two months at sea, and stops in Ostenso, Corentyn, Kintargo, and Magnimar, the *Throaty Mermaid* is finally on the last leg of its journey; the Mordant Spire is its next stop. But, as Sephriel expected, the ship's crew can't be trusted, and its first mate, Marzack Mallick, weaves a deadly plot with one of his fellow crewmembers to eliminate Sephriel 3 days out from his final destination. Unhappy with Captain Veane's leadership and hoping to gain control of the *Throaty Mermaid* himself, Marzack

## WHERE ON GOLARION?

*Murder on the Throaty Mermaid* takes place on a smuggler's ship in the Arcadian Ocean somewhere between the Varisian city of Magnimar and the Mordant Spire. The entirety of the adventure's action is contained to the ship itself, save brief scenes in the introduction and conclusion of the scenario. For more information on the Arcadian Ocean, Magnimar, and the Mordant Spire, see the *Pathfinder Chronicles Campaign Setting* or *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide*.



has found an ally among the crew and all that remains is for the moment to be right. With Sephriel murdered on the captain's watch, the Mordant Spire elves will have no choice but to punish the ship's highest authority, leaving command of the *Throaty Mermaid* to Marzack.

## SUMMARY

The PCs begin the scenario seven days out from Magnimar, the *Throaty Mermaid's* last port before the Mordant Spire. Under the cover of night, in the open waters of the Arcadian Ocean, a band of aquatic elf separatists attack the ship, hoping to prevent Sephriel from returning home to potentially finalize an alliance with the land-dwellers of the Inner Sea. As the PCs battle the attackers, a member of the crew slips into Sephriel's cabin and murders him, a fact quickly discovered when the ship's captain investigates the extent of the aquatic elf assault.

Knowing that he is ultimately responsible and fearing for his own skin, Captain Veane accuses the PCs of orchestrating the killing and threatens to turn them over to the Mordant Spire elves to face punishment, unless they can prove their innocence before the ship makes landfall. Thus begins the PCs' investigation; they have free roam of the *Throaty Mermaid* and total access to her crew to piece together who really killed Sephriel. During the course of their investigation, they face the maniacal dwarven cook who has been slowly poisoning the entire crew for weeks, a wererat stowaway, and a dangerous rust monster being transported to an underground fighting ring in distant Riddleport.

Just before the ship reaches the Mordant Spire, a violent storm threatens the entire vessel, and the PCs must work to keep the ship on course and intact. In the squall's wake, the killers reveal themselves and attack the weakened PCs, hoping to cover their tracks, or at least put the blame on Captain Veane when the Mordant Spire elves require justice for the death of their representative. When the ship lands at the Mordant Spire, the PCs find Sephriel—in his new clone body—waiting for them.

## GETTING STARTED

Inform all the players that this adventure takes place on a long sea voyage, and permit each the opportunity to purchase any items they wish to have obtained before embarking. Once everyone has prepared for the voyage, read the following:

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After fifty days at sea, the Pathfinder lodge at Heidmarch Manor in Magnimar is a welcome place to spend the night on dry land. In the shade of the gazebo on the shore of the manor's exotic carp pond, the resident venture-captain, Sheila Heidmarch, speaks to the assembled Pathfinders in a low, breathy voice.

"I hope you've found your brief stay here in the City of Monuments relaxing. The Pathfinder Society owes you a debt of gratitude for engaging in such an important and lengthy mission. When you set out from Absalom nearly two months ago, I'm sure you never anticipated the monotony of a life at sea, but I'm happy we can put you up as the ship restocks before the final leg of the journey to the Mordant Spire.

"Thus far, you have done an excellent job of representing the Society as the escorts of the Mordant Spire's envoy, the distinguished Sephriel, whom we hope had a productive meeting with the Decemvirate regarding the Azlanti ruins over which the Mordant Spire elves hold such a protective position. If he was pleased with the meeting and doesn't find you too reprehensible, perhaps we can launch full expeditions into the lost continent of Azlant from this very lodge in the near future."

She winks, and her eyes glance around the assembled agents. With a wry smirk, she continues.

"Keep up the good work, and ensure that Sephriel's final two weeks on the *Throaty Mermaid* are as pleasant and event-free as they can be on as disreputable a smugglers' ship as it is. Thus far, it's provided an unassuming cover for such an important dignitary. Let's hope the unscrupulous crew delivers their current cargo on time and in pristine condition. When you arrive at Riddleport after dropping Sephriel at the Mordant Spire, a chartered boat will be waiting to take you back to Absalom. May Desna's blessings be upon you."



### Sheila Heidmarch

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PCs may have questions for Venture-Captain Heidmarch. Below are some possible inquiries and answers regarding the Pathfinders' mission and their journey thus far.

**Who is Sephriel?** "He is a representative of the isolationist Mordant Spire elves who have stood guard over the ruins of ancient Azlant for millennia. His safe arrival at the Mordant Spire is of paramount importance, and your primary mission."

**Why are we traveling on a smugglers' ship?** "Passage on the *Throaty Mermaid* was arranged by Sephriel himself. He knew that a military escort or even a respectable merchant vessel might attract unwanted attention, and felt that no one would suspect his presence on a disreputable ship like the *Throaty Mermaid*. That's why you're there: to make sure the smugglers and thieves who make up the ship's crew don't cause him any problems."

**What kind of name is "Throaty Mermaid?"** "It's an immature and uncreative double entendre, if you ask me. I prefer to think it refers to the ship's figurehead, a busty mermaid smoking an absurdly large tobacco pipe."

**How long until we reach the Mordant Spire?** "Unless you encounter unexpected delays, the Mordant Spire is ten days' travel from Magnimar by sea."

## ACT 1: ASSAULT ON THE OPEN WATER (CR 3 OR CR 6)

A week out from Magnimar, on the open waters of the Arcadian Ocean, the *Throaty Mermaid* is attacked in the dead of night. The PCs' may be in their bunks in area 5 or on watch on the main deck (area 2). It is a clear night, and the deck is empty of every member of the crew save the PCs. If PCs are on watch on the main deck, allow them DC 20 Perception checks to notice the sound of grappling hooks clinking against the railing of the aft deck or DC 25 Perception checks to hear someone climbing the sides of the ship from the water.

**Creatures:** A small band of aquatic elves board the *Throaty Mermaid* under the cover of darkness and attack the PCs. Separatists who believe the Mordant Spire elves shouldn't even be talking to the humans in Absalom, they've come to kill Sephriel. If there are PCs on the deck, the elves attempt to board the ship stealthily. If the PCs sleep in their cabin, the elves board silently and begin their systematic search for Sephriel in the PCs' cabin.

### Tier 1–2 (CR 3)

#### AQUATIC ELF SEPARATISTS (4) CR 1/2

Male aquatic elf warrior 2

CN Medium humanoid (aquatic, elf)

**Init** +1; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +1

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +1 Dex)

**hp** 15 each (2d10+5)

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +1, **Will** –1; +2 vs. enchantments

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

**Melee** trident +3 (1d8+1)

**Ranged** javelin +3 (1d6+1)

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Once on the ship's deck, each aquatic elf applies one dose of hunter urchin venom to his trident and one to a javelin.

**During Combat** The elves attack first with their poisoned javelins, then close in for melee against staggered foes.

**Morale** The elves are fanatical and fight to the death.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 13, **Dex** 13, **Con** 10, **Int** 12, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 9

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 14

**Feats** Toughness

**Skills** Climb +4, Handle Animal +4, Perception +1, Ride +3, Swim +11; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Perception

**Languages** Common, Elven, Aquan

**SQ** amphibious, elven magic, weapon familiarity

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure light wounds*, two doses of hunter urchin venom; **Other Gear** masterwork hide armor, trident,

### WHODUNNIT?

This scenario is inspired by classic murder mysteries like Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express* and the board game *Clue*, in which an isolated group of characters are all suspected of having committing a murder. In this case, the PCs play the role of Hercule Poirot or Sherlock Holmes, and they must uncover the killer before the scenario's conclusion. This mystery also features an additional twist—the murderer may be different each time the scenario is run.

Each faction has a contact aboard the ship who comes to the adventure with a unique piece of information to help solve the mystery at hand, and one of these five contacts is guilty of conspiring with the adventure's main villain. To determine which NPC is the culprit, follow these simple steps:

First determine which factions are not represented among the PCs. If there are any absent factions, select the murderer from the missing factions in the following order of priority: Killik (Qadira, see page 21), Ulamon (Andoran, see page 23), Azuretta (Cheliah, see page 20), Anera (Taldor, see page 18), Thanzeril (Osirion, see page 22). If all five factions are represented among the PCs, pick whichever murderer you think would be best for the game. Once you have determined who the killer is, pass out the faction handouts to each PC and allow them a few minutes to go over their mission. Use this time to read the "What Happened" section of the murderer's entry in the *Dramatis Personae* on page 18.

Each encounter provides evidence for PCs to discover with a note on how this evidence changes based on who the murderer is. In each case, all other clues serve as red herrings.

For more tips on running a mystery adventure, see page 246 of the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game GameMastery Guide*.

javelin (5), grappling hook, masterwork manacles, silk rope, sunrod (2), 5 gp

### Tier 4–5 (CR 6)

#### AQUATIC ELF SEPARATISTS (4) CR 2

Male elf fighter 3

CN Medium humanoid (aquatic, elf)

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +3

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex)

**hp** 31 each (3d10+9)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +3, **Will** +2; +2 vs. enchantments, +1 vs. fear

**Defensive Abilities** bravery +1

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

**Melee** mwk trident +7 (1d8+2)

**Ranged** javelin +5 (1d6+2), net +5 (—)

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Once on the ship's deck, each aquatic elf applies

# The Throaty Mermaid

One square = 5 feet



GameMastery Flip Mat: Ship

one dose of spear urchin venom to his trident and one to a javelin.

**During Combat** Two elves target casters with their nets, while the other two elves attack first with their poisoned javelins. The following round, all four elves close in for melee against nauseated or entangled foes.

**Morale** The elves are fanatical and fight to the death.

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#### STATISTICS

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**Str** 15, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 17

**Feats** Exotic Weapon Proficiency (net), Stealthy, Toughness, Weapon Focus (trident)

**Skills** Climb +7, Escape Artist +3, Handle Animal +5, Perception +3, Ride +6, Stealth +3, Swim +13; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Perception

**Languages** Common, Elven, Aquan

**SQ** amphibious, armor training 1, elven magic, weapon familiarity

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure light wounds*, two doses of spear urchin venom; **Other Gear** masterwork hide armor, masterwork trident, javelin (5), grappling hook, masterwork manacles, silk rope, sunrod (2), 10 gp

**Development:** If the PCs take any of the aquatic elves captive, they may wish to interrogate the attackers. The elves refuse to speak in any language other than Elven unless magically forced to do so, adhering to their staunch belief in racial superiority. The captives begin with an initial attitude of Hostile, and the DC to change their attitude is 2 higher than normal for any non-elves (including half-elves). If their attitude can be brought to at least indifferent, the aquatic elves reveal that they are part of an elven supremacy group opposed to the Mordant's Spire's recent diplomatic relations with the "low-bloods" of Absalom. Their superiors dispatched them to board the *Throaty Mermaid* and assassinate Sephriel for his betrayal of his people.

How PCs deal with the captives after they've been captured is up to them, but Captain Veane suggests they be executed and thrown into the water as a warning to any of their kind in the area. This course of action is legal, coming from the undisputed authority figure on the ship, but good PCs may feel it violates their code of ethics. If they suggest the elves be kept as prisoners, Veane relents but only after insisting they be knocked out for the remainder of the voyage and he turns the forward hold (area 5) into a makeshift brig, forcing the PCs to sleep on the deck.

**Rewards:** If the PCs defeat the aquatic elves, award each PC thusly:

**Tier 1–2:**

Give each PC 136 gp.

**Tier 4–5:**

Give each PC 256 gp.

### SEA URCHIN VENOM

A wide variety of sea urchins populate the ocean floor, and aquatic races from merfolk to elves employ their deadly venoms as poisons while hunting or in combat. Two such forms are detailed here. For more information on giant sea urchins and their poisons, see *Pathfinder Adventure Path #37: Souls for Smuggler's Shiv*.

#### HUNTER URCHIN VENOM

Hunter urchin venom causes intense pain that staggers those who suffer its effects, but does not actually inflict ability damage. The save DC is Constitution-based.

#### HUNTER URCHIN VENOM

**Type** poison, injury; **Save** Fort DC 13

**Frequency** 1/round for 6 rounds

**Effect** staggered for 1 round; **Cure** 1 save

#### SPEAR URCHIN VENOM

Spear urchin venom causes horrific pain that weakens the muscles and causes intense nausea. The save DC is Constitution-based.

#### SPEAR URCHIN VENOM

**Type** poison, injury; **Save** Fort DC 16

**Frequency** 1/round for 6 rounds

**Effect** 1d2 Str and nauseated for 1 round; **Cure** 1 save

## ACT 2: MURDER MOST FOUL

While the PCs defend the ship from the aquatic elf incursion and then discuss the next course of action with Captain Veane on deck, first mate Marzack Mallick and his accomplice among the crew make their move against Sephriel. Regardless of who the conspirators are, Sephriel is murdered during the fray, and Marzack rushes to the main deck to inform the captain shortly thereafter. Claiming that he made a sweep of the ship to assess the extent of the attack, he informs Veane and any nearby PCs of the dignitary's assassination. Veane rushes to area 8, where Sephriel has been lodged since the ship departed Absalom. PCs are welcome to follow.

### The Scene of the Crime

This finely decorated cabin contains a brightly colored Qadiran rug, a small bookshelf, several storage trunks and barrels, and a modest bed. Lying face down on the ruffled, blood-soaked sheets rests the body of a tall, golden-haired elf in elegant bedclothes, his face covered in an intricately carved wooden mask.

### MAGICAL POLYGRAPHS

PCs are smart individuals and one or more of them may have ways to determine if a member of the crew is lying. While *Elixirs of Truth* and *Candles of Truth* are available for purchase before the voyage, they're expensive (500 gp for the elixir and 2500 gp for the candle) and the elixir requires the target to drink it, something the crew, being the rascallions they are, won't readily do. There's also *zone of truth*, a 2nd-level cleric spell. While targets that fail can't tell lies, they can be evasive and/or just not say anything. To complicate things further, since it's an area effect spell, casters don't know if the targets failed their save or not. In the end, while the PCs have many ways of magically determining the truth, you as the GM don't have to make it easy on them. The crew of the *Throaty Mermaid* are hardened criminals and they should act that way, especially in light of a criminal investigation.

Veane leaps toward the bed, turning Sephriel over and feeling for signs of life. Finding none, the captain shakes his head and looks downtrodden at the corpse. Mallick, standing outside the door, calls in to the captain, saying offhandedly that the Mordant Spire elves will have his hide for failing to deliver Sephriel safely. As the words sink in, Veane pales and turns to the PCs with a look of pure terror in his eyes. The fear passes quickly, however, and his expression shifts into one of pure rage.

"You're the only ones on this ship I don't know well," he says, pointing accusingly at the PCs. "I'm not taking the rap for this, by Besmara, and neither is my crew. It might not be fair, but when we get to the Mordant Spire in three days, it's you who'll have to answer for Sephriel's death!"

With that, he storms out of the cabin and up the stairs to the main deck, Mallick close on his heels, leaving the PCs alone in Sephriel's cabin with his lifeless body. From this point, the PCs have three days to uncover the true murderers and prove their innocence before arriving at the Mordant Spire. If, in the course of their investigation, PCs attack any of the potential murderers or Marzack, Captain Veane intervenes and puts an end to the combat, insisting that he needs his crew to reach the Mordant Spire and get the PCs safely to land.

**Development:** PCs will most likely begin their investigation in this chamber. Those looking at Sephriel's corpse discover over a dozen deep gashes in his back, identified as dagger wounds with a DC 12 Heal check. A DC 20 Heal check places the time of his death as coinciding with the time of the aquatic elf attack. If a PC removes Sephriel's intricate wooden mask, she finds only an ordinary looking elf behind it, a look of peaceful sleep on his face.

PCs in Tier 4–5 may have access to the *speak with dead* spell. If they employ this method of investigation, Sephriel

describes a memory of standing atop a prominent sea cliff, looking out over a fleet of elven warships sailing out to sea. It takes a DC 14 Wisdom check for a PC to determine that he was sleeping when he was attacked, and died without waking up from his dream. PCs may ask other questions of the corpse, but ensure that the responses are cryptic or unhelpful enough that they don't preclude the entire investigation or reveal that Sephriel had a *clone* waiting for him as contingency for this very event.

A DC 15 Perception check of the cabin door shows no signs of forced entry, and a DC 20 check confirms that the lock was either unlocked to begin with or was opened with a key, not picked. A search of Sephriel's belongings reveals merely a collection of fine clothes, several works of elven literature in ornately bound books, and a scrimshaw pipe and empty sac smelling of tobacco.

PCs with ranks in Survival may wish to look for footprints or other signs of the assassin, but the deck in and around Sephriel's cabin sees heavy traffic and no trace of the killers remains distinguishable from the regular crew movement.

Once the PCs have examined Sephriel's quarters, they are free to explore the ship to find the true killer and clear their names. Each location on the *Throaty Mermaid* has at least one clue for the PCs to discover, whether it's a piece of physical evidence or a bit of NPC knowledge. PCs may approach the encounters in any order, and some may be skipped entirely.

## 1. Aft Deck

The aft deck of the *Throaty Mermaid* is the territory of navigator **Ulamon** (see page 23), who can be found manning the steering wheel during the day and poring over star charts and maps with Captain Veane in the evenings. A Bonuwat shaman from Sargava, Ulamon employs his mastery of wind and waves to keep the ship on course and moving faster than pirates with eyes on their cargo or authorities who might frown on the *Throaty Mermaid's* less-than-legal activities.

**Development:** If the PCs question Ulamon about his whereabouts at the time of the murder, he claims to have been sleeping after finishing setting a new course with Captain Veane. PCs who were on the deck at the time of the attack can verify his absence on deck. With some questioning of the crew they can learn that he was seen leaving the captain's cabin shortly before the assault. His alibi is solid inasmuch as he did go to bed before the attack. If, however, he is the murderer, he got out of bed when he heard the commotion on the deck and assassinated Sephriel at that time.

If asked what he saw or heard, he claims to have heard someone get out of their bunk and leave the crew's cabin at some point in the night, but doesn't recall who or



exactly when. This is true if he is innocent, but is a lie if he was the murderer.

Andoran faction PCs should have an insight into his possible motives to kill Sephriel, and may bring up this line of questioning. If asked about his history on the *Polished Barnacle*, Ulamon admits to holding a grudge against the elves of the Mordant Spire, but asserts that he would never murder one of their dignitaries outright as a result.

Ulamon's desire to see Captain Veane removed from command of the ship, however, might be enough to warrant his involvement in the murder, though he does his best to hide his true feelings for the captain. Allow Ulamon a DC 15 Will save. If he succeeds, he holds his opinion of the captain secret despite any level of prodding from the PCs. If he fails, during the conversation, he lets slip that he hopes Veane is punished harshly for the crime, and that he's sure Marzack would make a better captain.

**Faction Notes:** Andoran faction PCs may attempt to procure Ulamon's ring when they meet with him. If they inquire about his time on the *Polished Barnacle* and declare their dedication to fighting Cheliox or spreading freedom, he gladly offers it to them, saying they seem to have stronger ideals than he does.

## 2. Main Deck

The main deck still shows signs of the recent aquatic elf attack. First Mate **Marzack Mallik** (see page 17) works to clean up any damage from the ambush. In Tier 4–5, Anera's animal companion Keeneye watches them from the crow's nest.

**Development:** Marzack is brusque and uncouth, and clearly wishes the PCs weren't talking to him. He makes offhand comments throughout any interaction that it's about time the captain got what was coming to him, and similar indications of his dissatisfaction with Veane. If pressed on the issue, he quickly does an about-face and warns the PCs that such comments could be construed as mutinous, and as First Mate it would be his duty to report such behavior to the captain.

Marzack claims to have been in Captain Veane's quarters at the time of the murder, discussing crew discipline. PCs may recall that he was not in the captain's cabin at or after the time of the murder, as it was Marzack that reported the assassination to the Captain. In truth, Marzack was in the main hold, acting as lookout for his accomplice who actually killed Sephriel. If magically compelled to reveal this, he attempts every loophole or omission to implicate his accomplice as the patsy without associating himself with the crime.

Marzack may not like discussing himself, but he gladly throws PCs off the trail by gossiping about the rest of the

crew. He doesn't spread rumors about his accomplice, but does reveal the following red herrings for other members of the crew if asked. He notes that Killik was among the first on the scene of the crime yet he did nothing within his powers as a cleric to heal or help Sephriel. He simply confirmed he was dead and went back to his rack. Marzack also recounts that he has heard Thanzeril arguing with Sephriel several times over the course of the voyage from Absalom about some internal disagreement on Mordant Spire politics. The first mate motions to Anera if her name comes up, and mentions how vocal the woman is about her hatred of elves, winking at the PCs as if this explains it all.

## 3. Fore Deck

On the fore deck of the *Throaty Mermaid*, the PCs may find **Anera** (see page 18), who stands looking out over the water while fiddling with a black-bladed knife. Anera is a Taldan woman with shoulder-length brown hair pulled back into a ponytail and a large scar across her cheek. She performs odd tasks around the ship and holds no position of authority, though she often sends her osprey companion Keeneye to hunt for fresh fish while at sea.

**Development:** If the PCs question Anera about her whereabouts at the time of the murder, she claims to have turned in for an early night after falling ill shortly after supper. This claim is truthful, but she omits any reference to what she did later that night if she is the murderer. In this case she got out of bed when she heard the commotion on the deck and assassinated Sephriel at that time.

If asked what she saw or heard, she claims to have heard nothing, having been deep asleep while her body fought off the sickness. This is true if she is innocent, but is a lie if she was the murderer.

Taldor faction PCs should have an insight into her possible motives to kill Sephriel, and may bring up this line of questioning. If asked about her membership in the Woodbane Hunters assassins' guild, Anera denies her involvement. Any PC succeeding at a DC 16 Perception check may notice a tattoo of a dead tree on her right forearm, and identify it as the symbol of the Woodbane Hunters with a DC 18 Knowledge (local) check. Anera is less reticent to speak of her hatred for elves, of which she is neither ashamed nor humble. Her attitude toward any elven or half-elven PCs is always one step closer to Hostile than the rest of the party.

If Azuretta is the murderer, PCs may learn from Anera that she overheard Sephriel snub Azuretta's advances three nights before the murder, and that she seemed to take the rejection personally.

**Mission Notes:** Osirion faction PCs may attempt to remove the tobacco pipe from the *Throaty Mermaid's*

figurehead. Doing so requires a DC 20 Acrobatics or Climb check to move out onto the prow of the ship and remove the pipe. PCs who attempt the check and fail by 5 or more fall into the water, but are fished out by the crew before they risk drowning. Taldor faction PCs should wish to deliver Baron Jacquo's letter to Anera. She accepts it, and reads it immediately, then signs it and hands it back to the PCs, saying that she will contact the good Baron herself upon arrival in Riddleport.

#### 4. Captain's Cabin

The relatively nicely furnished captain's cabin is where Captain Veane can be found when not on deck giving orders. When the PCs come here during their investigation, they find him busy at work at his desk, writing in a thick, leather-bound logbook. Veane is not alone, as the ship's resident harlot Azuretta lazes on his bed, reading an illustrated chapbook.

**Development:** Captain Veane remains preoccupied with his logbook, simply reminding the PCs that their freedom has yet to be secured. If asked about where he was at the time of the murder, he reminds the PCs that he was in his cabin, which they may recall as true, since he came from his cabin after the aquatic elf attack. If they openly accuse another member of the crew of the murder, Captain Veane dismisses the accusation, saying that he needs real proof. The only member of the crew he comments on directly is Marzack, whom he admits he doesn't trust, but says it isn't worth risking mutiny to accuse or even investigate the first mate, whom the crew admire and would most likely side with.

Azuretta, on the other hand, is more willing to talk. If she is the murderer, when she hears the PCs coming or while they speak to Captain Veane, she quietly casts *innocence* on herself, granting her a +10 bonus on Bluff checks for 1 minute per level. If the PCs are present when she casts it, she attempts to hide the verbal and somatic components as part of humming and dancing to a song in her head with her unmodified Bluff check used against PCs' Spellcraft checks.

If asked where she was at the time of the murder, Azuretta claims to have been in the forward hold with Thanzeril. She doesn't go into detail about their activities, but makes thinly veiled innuendo to any PCs that question her. Azuretta has a strict policy of not "kissing and telling" and she won't reveal whom she has been with or when unless magically compelled to do so.

PCs may make a DC 16 Perception check to notice that her perfume, which smells strongly of cinnamon, jasmine, and umberberries, was also present at the scene of the crime. Whether Azuretta is innocent or guilty of Sefhriel's assassination, she was in his quarters on the night of the murder, but was there to proposition Thanzeril, not the Mordant Spire dignitary.

**Mission Notes:** Cheliox faction PCs have instructions to recruit Azuretta into the service of Cheliox on behalf of Paracountess Dralneen. With a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check, Azuretta writes a letter on a loose piece of parchment, seals it, and gives it to the PCs to deliver to their faction head upon leaving the ship.

#### 5. Forward Cabin

This cabin is the PCs' home on the ship, and their possessions rest here if they haven't specifically placed them elsewhere. Makeshift bedding lies strewn amid the barrels, casks, and crates that fill the room. If the PCs kept any of the aquatic elves as prisoners, Captain Veane has stowed them here, tied up and rendered unconscious.

#### 6. Main Hold (CR 2 or CR 5)

This large hold acts as temporary storage and the *Throaty Mermaid's* galley. At present, it contains a number of strange pipes that were brought on board at Magnimar but seem to belong to a larger system of plumbing, mining ventilation or other technical purpose. A set of wooden stairs leads up to the main deck in the aft starboard corner of the hold, and a wooden door to the first mate's cabin (most recently used by the late Sefhriel) stands in the aft port corner. A door in the fore port corner leads to a stairwell down into the cargo hold. The fore bulkhead contains a thin wooden door to the crew's quarters. The fore starboard corner of the hold is filled with various crates and barrels of foodstores, a modest washbasin, and a strange alchemical apparatus apparently used for heating food.

**Creatures:** Shira Acidaxe can be found in the galley at almost any time of day. This one-eyed dwarf serves as the *Throaty Mermaid's* cook and has for the last twenty years. Her time at sea has not been kind to her, and in addition to her tattered eye patch, she sports a mouth of silvered teeth, a nasty scar on her cheek, and is missing half of her left ear. Shira is among the most despicable characters on the ship's crew, and out of spite has been slowly poisoning her shipmates in their daily meals for the last few months. She begins the encounter with an Unfriendly attitude toward PCs, and is easily provoked to attack if she feels the Pathfinders might uncover her poisonous plotting.

#### Tier 1–2 (CR 2)

SHIRA ACIDAXE	CR 2
Female dwarf alchemist 3 ( <i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 26)	
NE Medium humanoid (dwarf)	
Init +3; Senses Perception +5	
<b>DEFENSE</b>	
AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +1 Dex, +2 natural) (+4 dodge vs. giants)	
hp 26 (3d8+9)	

## MURDER ON THE THROATY MERMAID

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +4, **Will** +0; +2 vs. poison, spells, and spell-like abilities; +2 vs. poison

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### OFFENSE

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**Speed** 20 ft.

**Melee** battleaxe +3 (1d8+1/x3)

**Ranged** bomb +6 (2d6+2 fire)

**Special Attacks** bomb 7/day (2d6+2 fire, DC 13), +1 on attack rolls against goblinoid and orc humanoid

**Alchemist Extracts Known** (CL 3rd)

1st—*cure light wounds*, *negate aroma*\*, *shield*, *stone fist*\*

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### TACTICS

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**Before Combat** Shira has heard of the PCs' investigation from other crewmembers, and she drinks her mutagen when they first approach her (already calculated into stats).

**During Combat** Shira throws bombs at PCs from range, but does not hesitate to fight in melee with her battleaxe. If there are any half-orc PCs, she targets them first.

**Morale** Shira is maniacal and fights to the death.

**Base Statistics** Dex 12, Wis 10; AC 14

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### STATISTICS

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**Str** 13, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 15, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 14 (18 vs. bull rush, 18 vs. trip)

**Feats** Brew Potion, Extra Bombs, Point Blank Shot, Throw Anything

**Skills** Craft (alchemy) +9, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Perception +5 (+7 unusual stonework), Profession (cook) +5, Spellcraft +8, Survival +5, Use Magic Device +5; **Racial Modifiers** Acrobatics (−4 jump), +2 Appraise (nonmagical metals or gemstones), +2 Perception (unusual stonework)

**Languages** Common, Dwarven, Giant, Orc

**SQ** alchemy (alchemy crafting +3, identify potions), mutagen (+4 Dex/−2 Wis, +2 natural, 30 minutes), discoveries (concentrate poison), poison use, swift alchemy

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of delay poison*, *wand of purify food and drink* (24 charges); **Other Gear** studded leather, battleaxe, belladonna (1 dose), formula book, portable alchemist's lab\*, soothe syrup\*, 15 gp

\* See *Advanced Player's Guide*

## Tier 4–5 (CR 5)

### SHIRA ACIDAXE

CR 5

Female dwarf alchemist 6 (*Advanced Player's Guide* 26)

NE Medium humanoid (dwarf)

**Init** +3; **Senses** Perception +8

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### DEFENSE

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**AC** 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +2 natural) (+4 dodge vs. giants)

**hp** 54 (6d8+24)

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +8, **Will** +1; +2 vs. poison, spells, and spell-like abilities; +4 vs. poison,

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### OFFENSE

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**Speed** 20 ft.

**Melee** mwk battleaxe +6 (1d8+1/x3) or 2 claw +5 (1d6+1), bite +5 (1d8+1)

**Ranged** bomb +9 (3d6+3 fire)

**Special Attacks** bomb 11/day (3d6+3 fire, DC 16), +1 on attack rolls against goblinoid and orc humanoid

**Alchemist Extracts Known** (CL 6th)

2nd—*barkskin*, *cure moderate wounds*, *detect poison*, *transmute potion to poison*\*

1st—*cure light wounds*, *endure elements*, *negate aroma*\*, *shield*, *stone fist*\*

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### TACTICS

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**Before Combat** Shira has heard of the PCs' investigation from other crewmembers, and she drinks her mutagen when they first approach her (already calculated into stats).

**During Combat** Shira throws bombs at PCs from range, but does not hesitate to fight in melee, preferring her natural attacks over her axe, and applying one available dose of injury poison to her axe or a claw as a swift action each round. If there are any half-orc PCs, she targets them first.

**Morale** Shira is maniacal and fights to the death.

**Base Statistics** Dex 12, Wis 10; AC 14

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### STATISTICS

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**Str** 13, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 16, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 18 (22 vs. bull rush, 22 vs. trip)

**Feats** Brew Potion, Extra Bombs, Point Blank Shot, Throw Anything, Weapon Focus (bomb)

**Skills** Craft (alchemy) +13, Intimidate +1, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Perception +8 (+10 unusual stonework), Profession (cook) +8, Spellcraft +12, Survival +8, Use Magic Device +8; **Racial Modifiers** Acrobatics (−4 jump), +2 Appraise (nonmagical metals or gemstones), +2 Perception (unusual stonework)

**Languages** Common, Dwarven, Giant, Orc, Undercommon

**SQ** alchemy (alchemy crafting +6, identify potions), mutagen (+4/−2, +2 natural, 60 minutes), discoveries (concentrate poison, concussive bomb\* [3d4+3 sonic plus deafness], feral mutagen), poison use, swift alchemy, swift poisoning

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of delay poison*, *wand of purify food and drink*, alchemist's fire, flash powder\*, giant wasp poison (1 combined dose; DC 20; 1/rd. for 12 rds.), liquid ice\* (2), tanglefoot bag, thunderstone; **Other Gear** masterwork studded leather, masterwork battleaxe, antitoxin, belladonna (1 dose), formula book, portable alchemist's lab\*, soothe syrup\*, 90 gp

\* See *Advanced Player's Guide*

**Development:** Though Shira Acidaxe is irritable, paranoid, and itching for a fight, it's entirely possible that PCs won't fight her when they first encounter her, or at all. If PCs interrogate Shira, she claims to have been washing dishes all night, getting a head start on the morning meal. This is a lie; Shira turned in for an early night that night, thus leaving her with no verifiable alibi. A DC 14 Perception check allows a PC to notice that the stack of dirty pots and pans in the washbasin

is so caked with filth that the items within must have been there since the ship left Absalom. A more thorough investigation of the galley (DC 18) reveals a number of empty vials, and Shira's alchemical formula book, which she attempts to keep from PCs at all costs. A DC 20 Craft (alchemy) check identifies the former contents of the vials as various ingestible poisons, all of which Shira admits to having put in the crew's food if the PCs succeed on a DC 15 Intimidate check.

If questioned about what she saw on the night of Saphriel's murder, Shira bumbles over her story, unsure of whether to admit that she wasn't in the main hold at the time or to make something up. She bluffs to the best of her limited ability, finally relenting and admitting she wasn't there if the PCs press the issue. She becomes unresponsive and attacks if they accuse her of being the murderer at any point in the conversation.

**Treasure:** If PCs do not fight Shira, they may locate a cache of raw alchemical reagents and ingredients hidden in a barrel marked "pickled oysters" with a DC 15 Perception check. This stash is worth 396 gp in Tier 1–2 and 1,320 gp in Tier 4–5, and contains any poisons or alchemical items in Shira's stat block from each respective tier. Additionally, Shira's formula book rests among her mundane recipe books, and can be used by an alchemist PC to learn any of her formulae, as detailed in her statblock for the PC's tier.

**Mission Notes:** Taldor faction PCs may be interested in one of Shira's recipe books entitled *Concocted Libations to Die For*, located among the rest of her books. If Shira is dead or unconscious, obtaining it requires no skill check, but if she is awake and present, a PC must succeed on an opposed Sleight of Hand check versus her Perception check to remove the book without her noticing. If she catches the PC in the act, she immediately initiates combat.

**Rewards:** If the PCs defeat Shira or discover her stash of alchemical supplies, award each tier thusly:

**Tier 1–2:**

Give each PC 66 gp.

**Tier 4–5:**

Give each PC 220 gp.

## 7. Crew's Cabin (CR 2 or CR 5)

This cramped cabin is jammed full of rickety cots and threadbare hammocks and smells of dank body odor. Each bunk has a small footlocker nearby where the occupants keep their personal belongings. While all members of the crew use this room, the only current occupant is the *Throaty Mermaid's* medic, the Besmaran cleric **Killik** (see page 21). The healer rests in his cot, staring into space, and ignores the PCs unless directly approached.

**Traps:** Killik is extremely suspicious of his fellow crewmembers and has taken precautions to protect his possessions from theft. His footlocker is trapped with a *glyph of warding* using *inflict light wounds* (cast from a scroll in Tier 1–2), and the rest of the crew knows not to mess with it. Any PC opening the chest, however, may not have such forewarning. If a PC discharges the trap and confronts Killik about it, he simply states that the PCs should not have been meddling in his affairs and that everything has a price, even if one pays it unintentionally.

### Tier 1–2 (CR 2)

#### INFLECT LIGHT WOUNDS TRAP CR 2

Type magic; Perception DC 28; Disable Device DC 28

##### EFFECT

Trigger touch; Reset none

**Effect** When triggered, this trap activates an *inflict light wounds* spell targeting the person opening the chest for 1d8+1 damage. A DC 12 Will save halves the damage.

### Tier 4–5 (CR 5)

#### GLYPH OF WARDING TRAP CR 5

Type magic; Perception DC 28; Disable Device DC 28

##### EFFECT

Trigger touch; Reset none

**Effect** When triggered, this trap deals 2d8 points of sonic damage to the person opening the chest and all within 5 feet of him or her. Each creature targeted may attempt a DC 17 Reflex save for half.

**Development:** Killik is an entrepreneur (or pirate, depending how one looks at it) through and through, and he is hesitant to reveal anything to the PCs without a price. If the PCs interrogate him, he demands payment of 10 gp per PC for his time, stating that every minute he spends talking to them he's losing money in other areas. He may be convinced to lower this bribe to 5 gp per player with a DC 20 Diplomacy or Intimidate check, or eliminate it altogether if any PC beats the DC by five or more.

Killik is uninterested in the fate of fellow crewmembers who may be responsible for the recent murder, and if innocent answers apathetically any questions the PCs pose. He states that he was in bed at the time, and heard someone get up several times in the middle of the night, but that isn't unusual. If PCs ask what he did to help Saphriel, he honestly says he did nothing, because he was already dead and because a dead man couldn't pay him for his efforts. PCs who push the issue are met with a clear declaration of Killik's motives: he heals or helps people only when they can pay him, and that goes

for fellow crew members, Pathfinder guests, and elven dignitaries alike.

If asked about any of the other crewmembers, he makes special mention that he thought it was strange how much Anera pressured Sephriel's bodyguard to a game of knivesies, even after her challenge was declined, almost like the sailor was hoping for a chance to kill the elf without retribution.

If Thanzeril was the murderer, Killik got up in the middle of the night, cast disguise self to take the form of a woman, and went to the forward cargo hold to meet Azuretta. Killik does not admit to this unless magically forced to do so, embarrassed of his exotic preference.

If Killik is the murderer, he does everything he can to send PCs on other lines of investigation, including providing false leads about other crew members, especially Snig, whom he sees as an easy scapegoat should PCs get too close to the truth. In Tier 4–5, Killik casts *nondetection* on himself before meeting with the PCs to throw off any divination magic they may use.

**Treasure:** Inside Killik's footlocker are a number of valuable art items, jewelry, and two bars of platinum, altogether worth 90 gp. A DC 25 Appraise check or DC 20 Knowledge (nobility) check allows a PC to recognize that several of the bracelets contain markings of elven origin representing high status. Whether Killik is guilty of Sephriel's murder or not, he stole these trinkets from the elf's corpse when he checked for signs of life and hoped to sell them to elves in Varisia for exceptional profits.

**Mission Notes:** Qadira faction PCs should be interested in Killik's experience on various slaving ships before coming aboard the *Throaty Mermaid* and may wish to ask him about getting human chattel in or out of the Katapeshi port of Okeno. Killik is hesitant to reveal trade secrets that not only incriminate him, but also give him a financial advantage over other smugglers, though he will do so with a successful DC 20 Diplomacy or Intimidate check.

**Rewards:** If the PCs open Killik's footlocker and retrieve his spoils, award each tier thusly:

**All Tiers:**

Give each player 15 gp.

## 8. First Mate's Cabin

This cabin normally serves the first mate's quarters, but has been Sephriel's cabin since the *Throaty Mermaid* departed Absalom. Sephriel's body remains on the bed, preserved with a *gentle repose* spell. The metallic smell of blood no longer fills the cabin, and PCs who succeed on a DC 10 Perception check notice the scent of a heady perfume in the air. Here the PCs find **Thanzeril** (see

### OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER

The rust monster encounter in area 9 is optional and should be run only if you have at least two hours left to complete the scenario. If there are fewer than two hours remaining, the rust monsters do not escape, and PCs' may interact with Velagon Dorhay as normal.

page 23), Sephriel's bodyguard, lamenting his failure and agonizing over the impending punishment.

**Development:** Thanzeril's story is fairly straightforward. Whether innocent or guilty, he claims to have left his position watching Sephriel to meet Azuretta in the forward cargo hold in the middle of the night. Should the PCs inquire about his relationship with Sephriel, Thanzeril, if innocent, admits that it was strained and that they disagreed with one another on the isolationist stance the Mordant Spire should take with regards to Azlant. If guilty, he claims that he was simply tasked with protecting the dignitary and that their relationship was purely professional. He confirms that Anera repeatedly challenged him to a game of knivesies and made unprovoked racial slurs at both himself and Sephriel, but claims to have seen no concrete evidence of a physical threat to his master.

**Mission Notes:** Chelixa faction PCs may wish to leave something on Sephriel's body. Doing so without being seen requires an opposed Sleight of Hand or Stealth check against Thanzeril's Perception. Osirion faction PCs may deliver the Ruby Prince's cabochon to Thanzeril here.

## 9. Cargo Hold (CR 3 or CR 6)

Amid the crates and cargo of the *Throaty Mermaid's* lowermost hold stand two sturdy wooden cages filled with straw and sawdust.

**Creatures:** A rare creature smuggler named **Velagon Dorhay** (N male human expert 2) can be found here, tending to his current cargo—a mated pair of rust monsters. He sits on a small wooden stool, leaning against the slats of the creatures' wooden crates. If there is time for the optional encounter as indicated in the sidebar, while the PCs interrogate Velagon, one or both of the rust monsters escapes from the cage by stretching to reach the metal lock through the bars. If PCs attack the creatures unprovoked while they remain penned, one or both of the rust monsters (as indicated by tier) breaks loose the following round.

### Tier 1–2 (CR 3)

#### RUST MONSTER

CR 3

hp 27 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 238)

## Tier 4–5 (CR 6)

### ADVANCED RUST MONSTERS (2) CR 4

hp 37 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 238, 294)

**Development:** Velagon recounts that on the night of the murder, he was asleep on his bedroll next to his cages, but was continually awakened by foot traffic to and from the forward hold. He wasn't able to see who it was most of the time, but several people came and went throughout the night. The only people he remembers seeing were the murderer and Marzack, who Velagon recalls came down together to look briefly at the rust monsters before heading back upstairs. They whispered something to each other, knelt down in front of the male creature, then left. Velagon apologizes for not having more to tell, since he was half asleep during the event.

If the PCs kill either of the rust monsters, whether they remain in their cages or break free, Velagon refuses to talk to them, weeping at his lost pets and the profit he will now miss out on due to their “murder” at the PCs' hands.

**Mission Notes:** Qadira faction PCs should be interested in establishing a working relationship with Velagon, and may open a line of communication with him regarding future smuggling of magical desert creatures from Katheer. Unless Qadira faction PCs have angered Velagon by killing his cargo, he is open to discussion and accepts their terms.

## 10. Forward Cargo Hold (CR 2 or CR 5)

The *Throaty Mermaid's* forward cargo hold is full of barrels, crates, and burlap sacks. The room smells of a mix of wet animals and a heady perfume, and a nest of tattered rags and straw lies crammed in the prow of the ship.

**Creatures:** The stowaway Snig Lacorse calls this portion of the ship home. An afflicted wererat, Snig is allowed to nest here by the crew—all are aware of him despite his efforts to remain hidden—because he keeps the inevitable rat population under control. While he typically remains in hybrid form, Snig is embarrassed by his curse and is quickly angered when anyone mentions it.

### Tier 1–2 (CR 2)

#### SNIG LACORSE (HUMAN FORM) CR 2

Male human afflicted wererat rogue 2 (augmented humanoid)  
hp 18 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 197)

#### SNIG LACORSE (HYBRID FORM)

hp 20 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 197 with the following changes)  
DR 5/silver  
Melee bite –1 (1d4–1 plus disease)

### Tier 4–5 (CR 5)

#### SNIG LACORSE (HUMAN FORM) CR 5

Male human afflicted wererat rogue 5 (augmented humanoid)  
NE Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger)  
Init +7; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +11

#### DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)  
hp 43 (5d8+15)  
Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +4

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

#### OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.  
Melee mwk short sword +7 (1d6+1/19–20)  
Ranged light crossbow +6 (1d8/19–20)  
Special Attacks sneak attack +3d6

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Snig readies his crossbow at the first sound of the PCs' approach. He stays in his corner or with his back to a wall at all times.

**During Combat** Snig begins combat by transforming into his hybrid form and firing his crossbow at a flatfooted PC. He prefers melee combat with his sword over ranged attacks after his initial attack.



## MURDER ON THE THROATY MERMAID

**Morale** Snig is a pitiful creature and gives up, whimpering, if reduced to less than 10 hp.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 13 **Dex** 16 **Con** 14 **Int** 10 **Wis** 16 **Cha** 6

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 17

**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Acrobatics +11, Bluff +6, Climb +9, Escape Artist +5, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (local) +8, Perception +11, Sense Motive +11, Stealth +13, Swim +9

**Languages** Common

**SQ** change shape (human, hybrid, and dire rat; *polymorph*), rogue talents (combat trick, fast stealth), lycanthropic empathy (rats and dire rats), trapfinding +2

**Gear** +1 studded leather, mwk short sword, light crossbow with 20 bolts

### SNIG LACORSE (HYBRID FORM)

Male afflicted wererat rogue 5  
(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 197)

NE Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger)

**Init** +8; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +11

### DEFENSE

**AC** 21, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural)

**hp** 48 (5d8+20)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +8, **Will** +4

**Defensive Abilities** evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; **DR** 5/silver

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** mwk short sword +8 (1d6+2/19–20), bite +2 (1d6+3 plus disease)

**Ranged** light crossbow +7 (1d8/19–20)

**Special Attacks** sneak attack +3d6

### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Snig readies his crossbow at the first sound of the PCs' approach. He stays in his corner or with his back to a wall at all times.

**During Combat** Snig begins combat by firing his crossbow at a flatfooted PC. He prefers melee combat with his sword over ranged attacks after his initial attack.

**Morale** Snig is a pitiful creature and surrenders, whimpering, if reduced to less than 15 hp.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 15, **Dex** 18, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 6

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 20

**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Acrobatics +12, Bluff +6, Climb +10, Escape Artist +6, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (local) +8, Perception +11, Sense Motive +11, Stealth +14, Swim +10

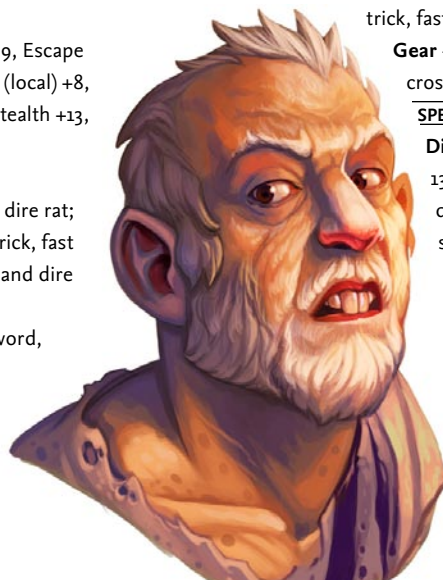
**Languages** Common

**SQ** change shape (human, hybrid, and dire rat; *polymorph*), lycanthropic empathy (rats and dire rats), rogue talents (combat trick, fast stealth), trapfinding +2

**Gear** +1 studded leather, masterwork short sword, light crossbow with 20 bolts

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Disease (Ex)** *Filth Fever*: Bite–Injury; *save* Fort DC 13; *onset* 1d3 days; *frequency* 1 day; *effect* 1d3 Dex damage and 1d3 Con damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.



Snig Lacorse

**Development:** If questioned about his activities on the night of the murder, Snig recounts that he was hiding in his nest while several crew members came in to get some privacy. As they often do, they ignored him, and he watched their activities quietly, living vicariously through their experience. Unless Thanzeril is the murderer, Snig identifies the two crewmembers as Thanzeril and Azuretta. He hints that their activities were “romantic” in nature, but doesn’t go into details. If

Azuretta was Marzack’s accomplice, she tied Thanzeril up and gagged him shortly after they arrived in the hold, then slipped out of the chamber, leaving him alone for quite some time. If Thanzeril was the murderer, Snig reports that he didn’t get a good look at the crewmembers in the hold that night, but that they were both clearly female.

**Treasure:** If PCs do not fight Snig, they may locate a sack of precious gems hidden beneath a floorboard with a DC 15 Perception check. This stash is worth 108 gp in Tier 1–2 and 258 gp in Tier 4–5.

**Mission Notes:** Andoran faction PCs should be interested in convincing Snig to abandon the *Throaty Mermaid* to work as a shipboard spy for the Eagle Knights. Snig is unreceptive to the idea, citing extreme agoraphobia as his reason for not leaving the ship. PCs may change his mind with a DC 20 Diplomacy check.

**Rewards:** If the PCs defeat Snig or locate the hidden gems, award each tier thusly:

**Tier 1–2:**

Give each PC 18 gp.

**Tier 4–5:**

Give each PC 43 gp.

### RUNNING LOW ON TIME

Some parties may spend a lot of time roleplaying in Act 2, leaving very little time to wrap up the scenario in Act 3. If there is less than an hour and a half to complete the scenario, consider skipping the possibly lengthy encounter detailed in part 1. In this case, describe to the PCs what a tiring ordeal the storm is, and the types of threats they had to deal with before moving straight into step 2.

## ACT 3: TYING UP LOOSE ENDS

### 1. Storm Strikes (CR 2 or CR 5)

As the PCs wrap up their investigation, the *Throaty Mermaid* encounters a minor squall that requires the PCs' assistance to safely weather. Read the following to get the encounter underway:

A tolling bell sounds from the *Throaty Mermaid's* deck, and the entire ship jolts to life as though awakened from a startling dream. Crew members rush between cabins and up and down the narrow stairs between decks.

"All hands to storm stations," Captain Veane calls into the ship's bowels. "We got ourselves a mean one comin'!"

Captain Veane makes it clear to the PCs that they'll need to help as well if they hope to make it to the Mordant Spire safely, orders them to the main deck if they aren't already there, then rushes below deck to ensure everything is in order in the lower holds. From the time the captain issues his order, the PCs have five rounds to get to the main deck to prepare for the coming storm. At the beginning of round 6, allow each PC an initiative roll to determine their order of action during the encounter, and roll initiative for the storm with a +0 modifier.

If the PCs arrive on deck prior to the start of round six, they may use the extra time as the storm approaches to prepare for the event. Possible actions include casting spells, tying themselves to the ship, or securing loose objects on the deck. Remember to reward creative solutions should players come up with clever ways of bypassing or overcoming the effects of the storm.

Beginning on the sixth round of initiative, roll on the Squall Events table to determine what effect the storm has each round on its initiative order. Each result is detailed below, including what actions PCs must take to deal with each, and the penalties for failure. After the storm begins, consider the entire deck as difficult terrain when calculating movement and making Acrobatics checks due to the violent movement of the ship and the increasingly wet surface. All spellcasters must make Concentration checks to cast spells as detailed on pages 206 and 207 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*. Unless otherwise

noted, the wind during the storm is strong, checking Tiny or smaller creatures, and providing a -2 penalty on all Fly checks (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 439).

When attempting to overcome any of the squall's effects, a PC with ranks in Profession (sailor) may use her Profession (sailor) modifier in place of any other required skill. Additionally, she may make one Profession (sailor) check each round to grant a +2 circumstance bonus to one ally within 30 feet on any check made to avoid or suppress an effect of the storm.

#### Squall Events

d10 (Tier 1-2)	d12 (Tier 4-5)	Result
1-2	1	moment of calm
3	2	gust of wind
4-5	3-5	violent motion
6-8	6-7	loose rudder
9-10	8-10	rogue wave
—	11	broken rigging
—	12	lightning strike

**Broken rigging:** A rigging above the main deck snaps as the wind causes the sails to billow wildly. The loose rope lashes about unexpectedly. Once rolled, on each round thereafter, the rope snaps at one randomly determined creature on the main deck (area 2) with an attack modifier of +8. On a hit, the loose rope deals 1d4 points of slashing damage. On her turn a PC may grab the rope with a successful DC 18 Reflex save as a standard action from anywhere on the main deck (area 2).

**Gust of wind:** The wind picks up for a moment, raising the wind speed to severe strength for 1d3 rounds. While the wind is gusting, any Small creature must make a DC 10 Strength check to move on the deck or a DC 20 Fly check if in the air, and Tiny or smaller creatures risk being blown away, as detailed in Table 13-10: Wind Effects on page 439 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*. If this effect is rolled randomly while the effects of a previous gust of wind are still in effect, the duration of the effect is increased by 1 round.

**Lightning strike:** A bolt of lightning strikes the fore deck (area 3), igniting a small fire. The fire initially occupies 1 square, but spreads to one additional square each round in a randomly determined direction. When the ship is under the effect of severe winds, any burning squares continue to burn but do not spread. A creature occupying or moving through a burning square takes 1d6 points of fire damage. A PC may extinguish a square from any adjacent square as a standard action; doing so requires a DC 13 Reflex save to avoid taking 1d4 points of fire damage in the process.

**Loose rudder:** The steering wheel spins out of control, lurching the ship to one side. Until the ship is brought under control all non-flying creatures must make a DC 15 Acrobatics check each round to avoid falling prone. Any PC who succeeds at a DC 14 Strength check while adjacent to the wheel on the aft deck (area 1) ends the effect.



*Moment of calm:* No additional effects begin this round, though existing effects continue as normal.

*Rogue wave:* A giant wave crashes over the rail, flooding the deck with cold, salty water. All creatures on the main deck (area 2) must succeed on a DC 15 Strength check or be knocked prone. Creatures that are already prone are pushed 1d4+1 squares toward the ship's edge, stopping at the rail if the movement would push them into the sea. Any creature knocked prone from the wave or moved across the deck takes 1d4 points of nonlethal damage.

*Violent motion:* The turbulence of the jostling ship causes the entire crew to hold back a violent bout of nausea. Any creature failing a DC 14 Fortitude save gains the sickened condition for 1d4 rounds. Creatures who are already sickened must succeed at a DC 16 Fortitude save or become nauseated for 1d6 rounds.

**Development:** The *Throaty Mermaid* remains in the storm for well over an hour, but the most violent moments of the squall subside after only a few minutes. In Tier 1–2, stop making random rolls for additional storm effects after round 9 (4 rounds of checks), allowing existing conditions to expire as written. In Tier 4–5, the storm lasts longer, subsiding after 12 rounds (7 rounds of checks).

## 2. The Final Reveal (CR 3 or CR 6)

As the storm dissipates, the PCs have the chance to gather themselves after the ordeal, but only for a few moments. Once the ship has cleared the rain and high winds and the deck's violent rocking subsides, the murderers take the opportunity to end the PCs' investigation once and for all.

**Creatures:** Marzack Mallick, first mate of the *Throaty Mermaid*, emerges from the lower decks, followed by his accomplice. See the Dramatis Personae for combat statistics for the five possible murderers. Marzack begins the encounter feigning interest in the PCs' well-being, inquiring about their injuries and taking the opportunity to assess their weaknesses. Marzack's true intention is to kill the PCs while they are alone on the main deck and before they can fully recover from the sudden squall. Should the PCs accuse Marzack of treachery, he and his accomplice immediately attack. Otherwise, they position themselves to be most effective in the fight before springing their ambush on the unsuspecting Pathfinders.



**First Mate  
Marzack Mallick**

## Tier 1–2 (CR 3)

### MARZACK MALLICK CR 1

Male human rogue (swashbuckler) 2

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; Senses Perception +4

#### DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 17 (2d8+4)

Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +0

Defensive Abilities evasion

#### OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk scimitar +5 (1d6+1/18–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Marzack attempts to catch PCs off guard on the first round of combat to utilize his sneak attack against a flat-footed foe.

**During Combat** Marzack tries to flank foes with his ally to increase his damage output, but fights solo, using Combat Expertise as needed to increase his AC against particularly heavy hitters.

**Morale** Marzack knows that he's tipped his hand to the PCs and admitted his guilt by attacking them. He fights to the death rather than face captain

Veane's discipline or the punishment of the Mordant Spire elves.

#### STATISTICS

Str 13, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 10

Base Atk +1; CMB +2; CMD 15

Feats Acrobatic, Combat Expertise, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +10, Appraise +7, Bluff +5, Climb +6, Diplomacy +5, Escape Artist +8, Fly +5, Intimidate +5, Perception +4, Profession (sailor) +4, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +8

Languages Common, Elven, Varisian

SQ martial training, rogue talents (combat trick), trapfinding +1

Gear masterwork studded leather, masterwork scimitar, *cloak of resistance* +1

## Tier 4–5 (CR 6)

### MARZACK MALLICK CR 4

Male human rogue (swashbuckler) 5

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; Senses Perception +7

#### DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 38 (5d8+10)

Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +1; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities daring +1, evasion, uncanny dodge

#### OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 scimitar +7 (1d6+3/18–20)

**Special Attacks** sneak attack +3d6

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#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Marzack attempts to catch PCs off guard on the first round of combat to utilize his sneak attack against a flat-footed foe.

**During Combat** Marzack tries to flank foes with his ally to increase his damage output, but fights solo, using Combat Expertise as needed to increase his AC against particularly heavy hitters.

**Morale** Marzack knows that he's tipped his hand to the PCs and admitted his guilt by attacking them. He fights to the death rather than face captain Veane's discipline or the punishment of the Mordant Spire elves.

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#### STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 17, **Con** 12, **Int** 14, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 19

**Feats** Acrobatic, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Acrobatics +14, Appraise +10, Bluff +8, Climb +10, Diplomacy +8, Escape Artist +11, Fly +5, Intimidate +8, Perception +7, Profession (sailor) +7, Sleight of Hand +11, Stealth +11

**Languages** Common, Elven, Varisian

**SQ** martial training, rogue talents (combat trick, offensive defense\*)

**Gear** +1 studded leather, +1 scimitar, cloak of resistance +1

\* See *Advanced Player's Guide*

**Development:** After the PCs defeat Marzack and his coconspirator, Captain Veane comes from below deck with a surprised look on his face. He asks the PCs why they've attacked his first mate and another member of his crew, giving them the perfect opportunity to present their evidence against Marzack. The most damning evidence is, of course, the fact that the murderers attacked the PCs moments earlier. If either Marzack or his accomplice were captured, they know their ruse is up, and openly admit to their crimes, each providing his or her own motive as described in their respective character backgrounds.

Captain Veane thanks the PCs for their efforts, and assures them that he no longer holds them accountable for Sephriel's murder. With those responsible identified and proven guilty, he knows his own skin is safe as well. He offers the PCs any assistance he can provide in terms of healing their wounds, and orders any aboard the ship with magical healing capabilities to use them on the PCs free of charge.

**Rewards:** If the PCs successfully defeat Marzack and his accomplice, award each tier thusly:

**Tier 1–2:**

Give each PC 213 gp.

**Tier 4–5:**

Give each PC 575 gp.

## CONCLUSION

In the morning two days following the squall and the PCs' confrontation with Sephriel's killers, the *Throaty Mermaid* arrives at the Mordant Spire as planned. An enormous, extravagant elven galleon meets the smugglers' vessel a mile from the shore, sending a smaller boat between the ships as an envoy. Captain Veane explains the events of the journey since Magnimar to the small band of masked elves who come aboard. They nod solemnly, and seem unusually calm given the cold-blooded murder of one of their diplomats. As Veane ends his story, another figure climbs over the ship's rail onto the deck—Sephriel.

He explains to the captain and any PCs present that he never leaves the Mordant Spire for human lands without ensuring that a clone awaits him in safekeeping. He thanks the PCs for hunting down and uncovering his murderer and says that he now has a better idea of who the Mordant Spire's enemies are and who can be trusted, such as the Pathfinder Society whom the PCs represent. As a reward for their service to the Mordant Spire, Sephriel awards the PCs 450 gp in Tier 1–2 or 1,200 gp in Tier 4–5.

After a lavish elven meal for the entire crew and the Mordant Spire envoys, Sephriel and his retinue depart for their island home, and the *Throaty Mermaid* sets sail for Riddleport, where the PCs will catch passage back to Absalom.

**Rewards:** If Sephriel rewards the PCs for their discovery, award each tier thusly:

**Tier 1–2:**

Give each PC 75 gp.

**Tier 4–5:**

Give each PC 200 gp.

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The social and investigative nature of this scenario means that knowing the cast of characters is vital to running the adventure smoothly. Below is an overview of the members of the *Throaty Mermaid's* crew not detailed in individual encounters above.

### Captain Veane

**Captain Veane** (N male human expert 4/fighter 5) is the ship's master and commander. He suspects that his first mate wants his position, but doesn't dare risk mutiny by accusing him openly. Stats for the captain should be unnecessary in this scenario, but if they are needed, use the First Mate stats on page 295 of the *GameMastery Guide*.

### Anera

Anera is a woman with a singular motivation: avenge the death of her beloved at the hands of elves. While

## MURDER ON THE THROATY MERMAID

adventuring in her youth with her love Masilk in the wilds of Kyonin, an elven patrol attacked them for trespassing into elven lands. They both fought tirelessly, but the couple were incredibly outnumbered, and Masilk was killed. Since that day, she has dedicated her life to eliminating what she calls “the elven threat,” and joined a prominent assassins’ guild to hone her craft.

She is generally thrifty with her words, and answers questions as briefly and succinctly as possible. Only when prompted about elves does she vent a tirade of insults, hatred, and bigotry, but she denies her affiliation with the assassins’ guild as well as her involvement in the murder. Anera’s racial hatred for elves makes her a likely suspect in Sephriel’s assassination, and if she is Marzack’s accomplice, she was easily swayed to assist in the crime.

**What Happened:** If Anera is Marzack’s accomplice, she went to bed shortly after supper, nauseous from the effects of the poisoned food. Awakened by the sound of fighting on the main deck and feeling better after her brief rest, Anera got out of her bunk and slipped out into the main hold, making her way to Sephriel’s chambers. Using Marzack’s key, she entered the room and stabbed the elf repeatedly in his sleep. She then left the chamber and took the knife down to the cargo hold, where she fed it to the hungry rust monsters to dispose of the evidence. She returned to her bunk immediately thereafter.

### Tier 1–2

#### ANERA CR 1

Female human ranger 2  
CN Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +3; **Senses** Perception +6

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +3 Dex)

**hp** 20 (2d10+4)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +1

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** mwk short sword +6 (1d6+2/19–20), dagger +5 (1d4+1/19–20)

**Ranged** dagger +5 (1d4+2/19–20), shortbow +5 (1d6/×3)

**Special Attacks** favored enemy (elves +2)

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Anera positions herself to attack any elves first, though if threatened alone, she tries to put distance between herself and her aggressors.

**During Combat** Anera focuses her attacks on any elves present, even to her own tactical detriment. Anera prefers fighting with both her short sword and dagger in melee over ranged combat, as she likes to see the fear in her opponents’ eyes. If she fights with an ally, she tries to provide flanks whenever possible, unless she has an elven target that takes her attention.

**Morale** If Anera is the murderer, she fights to the death. If she

fights alone, she surrenders if reduced to less than 8 hp, unless one of her foes is an elf or half-elf, in which case she fights relentlessly to the death.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 17, **Con** 12, **Int** 8, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 17

**Feats** Skill Focus (Survival), Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Climb +6, Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (nature) +4, Perception +6, Survival +9

**Languages** Common

**SQ** track +1, wild empathy +2, wild empathy +2

**Combat Gear** *oil of magic weapon*, *sleep arrow*; **Other Gear** masterwork chain shirt, masterwork short sword, dagger, shortbow with 20 arrows, 10 gp

### Tier 4–5

#### ANERA CR 4

Female human ranger 5  
CN Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +8; **Senses** Perception +9

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge)

**hp** 44 (5d10+10)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +8, **Will** +2

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 short sword +10 (1d6+3/19–20), dagger +9 (1d4+1/19–20)

**Ranged** dagger +9 (1d4+2/19–20), shortbow +9 (1d6/×3)

**Special Attacks** favored enemy (elves +4, animals +2)

**Ranger Spells Prepared** (CL 2nd; concentration +3)

1st—*charm animal* (DC 12), *longstrider*

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Anera positions herself to attack any elves first, though if threatened alone, she tries to put distance between herself and her aggressors.

**During Combat** Anera focuses her attacks on any elves present, even to her own tactical detriment. Anera prefers fighting with both her short sword and dagger in melee over ranged combat, as she likes to see the fear in her opponents’ eyes. If she fights with an ally, she tries to provide flanks whenever possible, unless she has an elven target that takes her attention. If Keeneye is present, Anera directs her to attack any elves she cannot reach or provide her or an ally a flank if there are no elves present.

**Morale** If Anera is the murderer, she fights to the death. If she fights alone, she surrenders if reduced to less than 15 hp, unless one of her foes is an elf or half-elf, in which case she fights relentlessly to the death.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 18, **Con** 12, **Int** 8, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 22

**Feats** Dodge, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus

(Survival), Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse  
**Skills** Climb +9, Handle Animal +8, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (nature) +7, Perception +9, Survival +12  
**Languages** Common  
**SQ** track +2, hunter's bond (animal companion), wild empathy +5  
**Combat Gear** *oil of keen edge, scroll of cure light wounds, sleep arrow*; **Other Gear** masterwork chain shirt, +1 *short sword*, dagger, shortbow with 20 arrows, 50 gp

**KEENEYE**

Osprey animal companion  
 N Small animal  
**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +11

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**DEFENSE**

**AC** 14, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size)  
**hp** 16 (3d8+3)  
**Fort** +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +3

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**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 10 ft., fly 80 ft. (average)  
**Melee** bite +3 (1d4), 2 talons +4 (1d4)

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**STATISTICS**

**Str** 10, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 2, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 6  
**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13  
**Feats** Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (talons)  
**Skills** Perception +11  
**SQ** link, share spells  
**Tricks** Attack, Come, Defend, Fetch, Guard, Seek, Stay

**Azurette**

Azurette is responsible for maintaining the *Throaty Mermaid's* crew's morale. A Chelish half-elf from Ostenso, Azurette was born into a noble family but her racial heritage required that the family quickly disown her. She was deposited on the stoop of an orphanage and forced to find her own way in the world. She has been in the employ of Captain Veane for five years, and has become quite adept at providing the Captain and his crew exactly what they want when she spends time with them. As part of her employment, Azurette's services are provided free of charge to any crewmember, but her company is considered to be a benefit the captain enjoys by default.

Azurette has no qualms about her position on the ship, and propositions any PCs who inquire too deeply into her role aboard the *Throaty Mermaid*, offering to show them firsthand what her duties entail. Despite her forwardness, she tells PCs exactly what they want to hear, even if it's a lie, unless doing so would implicate her in Saphriel's murder, using her Bluff skill to present herself as innocent, naive, and alluring, but is easily insulted if the PCs imply that she is anything but desirable and beautiful.

**What Happened:** If Azurette is the murderer, she made advances toward Saphriel several times on the voyage. Each time she was insulted by the elf's elitist rejections, and her

damaged ego eventually led her to ally with Marzack to end the snooty dignitary's life. On the night of the murder, she lured his bodyguard to the forward cargo hold under the guise of a romantic encounter, only to tie him up and leave him there while she returned to his master's cabin and murdered him. On her way back to the hold, she disposed of the murder weapon in the rust monsters' cage.

**Tier 1–2 (CR 1)**

**AZURETTA**

**CR 1**

Female half-elf bard 2  
 NE Medium humanoid (elf)  
**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +3

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**DEFENSE**

**AC** 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +2 Dex)  
**hp** 15 (2d8+2)  
**Fort** +0, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4; +2 vs. enchantment

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**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 30 ft.  
**Melee** mwk whip +1 (1d3-1 nonlethal), dagger +0 (1d4-1/19-20)  
**Ranged** dagger +3 (1d4-1/19-20)  
**Special Attacks** bardic performance 9 rounds/day (countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire courage +1)  
**Bard Spells Known** (CL 2nd; concentration +5)  
 1st (3/day)— *charm person* (DC 15), *innocence\**, *sleep* (DC 15)  
 0 (at will)— *daze* (DC 14), *ghost sound*, *lullaby* (DC 14), *message*, *read magic*

**TACTICS**

**Before Combat** Azurette attempts to *charm* a PC to act as her protector if she suspects an impending combat.  
**During Combat** Azurette prefers not to fight alone, knowing that her true strength is augmenting her allies' attacks. If alone, she casts *sleep* on as many PCs as possible and attempts to flee. If fighting with an ally, she inspires courage and works to provide a flank if possible.  
**Morale** If Azurette is the murderer, she fights to the death. If she is innocent, she attempts to flee from the onset of the battle, and surrenders completely if brought below 5 hp.

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 8, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 13, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 17  
**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 12  
**Feats** Skill Focus (bluff), Spell Focus (enchantment)  
**Skills** Acrobatics +6 (+2 jump), Bluff +11, Climb +0, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +8, Escape Artist +6, Perception +3, Perform (dance) +8, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +6, Stealth +7; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Perception  
**Languages** Common, Elven, Varisian  
**SQ** bardic knowledge +1, versatile performance (dance), elf blood  
**Combat Gear** *potion of invisibility, scroll of cure light wounds* (2), *wand of disguise self* (5 charges), acid flask; **Other Gear** leather armor, masterwork whip, dagger (4), perfume, 21 gp

\* See *Advanced Player's Guide*

## Tier 4–5 (CR 4)

**AZURETTA****CR 4**

Female half-elf bard 5

NE Medium humanoid (elf)

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +3**DEFENSE****AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex)**hp** 33 (5d8+5)**Fort** +2, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6; +2 vs. enchantments, +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** mwk whip +7 (1d3–1 nonlethal), dagger +6 (1d4–1/19–20)**Ranged** dagger +6 (1d4–1/19–20)**Special Attacks** bardic performance 16 rounds/day (countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire competence +2, inspire courage +2)**Bard Spells Known** (CL 5th; concentration +9)2nd (3/day)—*alter self*, *hold person* (DC 18), *suggestion* (DC 18)1st (5/day)—*animate rope*, *charm person* (DC 17), *innocence\**, *sleep* (DC 17)0 (at will)—*daze* (DC 16), *ghost sound*, *lullaby* (DC 16), *mage hand*, *message*, *read magic***TACTICS****Before Combat** Azuretta attempts to *charm* a PC to act as her protector if she suspects an impending combat.**During Combat** Azuretta prefers not to fight alone, knowing that her true strength is augmenting her allies' attacks. If alone, she uses spells such as *animate rope*, *hold person*, and *suggestion* to waylay PCs and attempts to flee. If fighting with an ally, she inspires courage, casting the same spells as needed to keep enemies away from her ally.**Morale** If Azuretta is the murderer, she fights to the death. If she is innocent, she attempts to flee from the onset of the battle, and surrenders completely if brought below 10 hp.**STATISTICS****Str** 8, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 13, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 18**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14**Feats** Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Focus (enchantment), Weapon Finesse**Skills** Acrobatics +10 (+6 jump), Bluff +12, Climb +0, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +12, Escape Artist +8, Perception +3, Perform (dance) +12, Sense Motive +9, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +9;**Racial Modifiers** +2 Perception**Languages** Common, Elven, Varisian**SQ** bardic knowledge +2, lore master 1/day, versatile performance (dance), elf blood**Combat Gear** *potion of invisibility*, *scroll of cure light wounds* (2), *scroll of haste*, *wand of hideous laughter* (10 charges), acid flask, alchemist's fire; **Other Gear** +1 *studded leather*, masterwork whip, dagger (7), *cloak of resistance* +1, perfume, 50 gp\* See *Advanced Player's Guide*

## Killik

The *Throaty Mermaid's* shipboard medic is an unscrupulous cleric of the Pirate Queen Besmara, who doles out healing only when financially rewarded. Killik has a long history of piracy and smuggling and his experience is invaluable to Captain Veane as the ship moves contraband in and out of the Inner Sea region's most lawful ports. The only motivation Killik has for just about every aspect of his life is how much he can profit from a given action, and he is unlikely to assist or even cooperate with anyone who he doesn't see as presenting a financial benefit to himself. Killik is ambivalent about his fellow crewmembers' well-being, and couldn't care less about Sephriel or the political implications of his death, but if Killik is the murderer, he was offered a substantial cut in all future profits brought in by the ship when Marzack takes over as captain, hence his involvement.

If Killik is not the murderer, he willingly heals any PC to the best of his ability for the cost of the spell plus a 50% markup.

**What happened:** If Killik is the murderer, he went to bed as normal on the night of the assassination, but arose when he heard the commotion on the main deck. He quietly cast *disguise self*, taking the form of Captain Veane, and slipped out into the main hold. He proceeded to Sephriel's cabin, where he murdered the dignitary, then disposed of the murder weapon in the cargo hold, still disguised as the captain.

## Tier 1–2

**KILLIK****CR 1**

Male human cleric of Besmara 2

CE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +2; **Senses** Perception +3**DEFENSE****AC** 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +2 Dex)**hp** 15 (2d8+2)**Fort** +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +6**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** rapier +2 (1d6+1/18–20)**Ranged** light crossbow +3 (1d8/19–20)**Special Attacks** channel negative energy 2/day (DC 10, 1d6)**Domain Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 2nd; concentration +5)6/day—*copycat* (2 rounds)6/day—*battle rage* (+1 damage)**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 2nd; concentration +5)1st—*cure light wounds* (2), *disguise self*<sup>P</sup>, *sanctuary* (DC 14)0 (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *light***D** Domain spell; **Domains** Trickery, War**TACTICS**

**Before Combat** If Killik suspects an impending combat, he casts *sanctuary* on himself and attempts to talk his way out of any conflict.

**During Combat** Killik prefers fighting from range with his crossbow, but channels negative energy if surrounded. If he fights with an ally, Killik stays close enough to his companion to heal them should they need assistance. If forced into melee combat, Killik uses his battle rage and copycat domain powers to boost his defenses and damage output.

**Morale** Killik fights to the death if he is Marzack's accomplice. If he is innocent of the crime, he attempts to buy his freedom as a term of surrender if brought below 6 hp.

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**STATISTICS**

**Str** 13, **Dex** 14, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14

**Feats** Combat Casting, Deceitful

**Skills** Bluff +5, Disguise +1, Heal +10, Knowledge (religion) +4, Profession (sailor) +7, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +4, Swim +2

**Languages** Common

**SQ** aura

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure moderate wounds, scroll of gentle repose*; **Other Gear** masterwork studded leather, rapier, light crossbow, healer's kit, silver holy symbol, 25 gp

## Tier 4–5

### KILLIK

CR 4

Male human cleric of Besmara 5

CE Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +2; **Senses** Perception +4

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**DEFENSE**

**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex)

**hp** 38 (5d8+10)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +10

---

**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** mwk rapier +5 (1d6+1/18–20)

**Ranged** light crossbow +5 (1d8/19–20)

**Special Attacks** channel negative energy 2/day (DC 11, 3d6)

**Domain Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 5th; concentration +9)

7/day—copycat (5 rounds)

7/day—battle rage (+2 damage)

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 5th; concentration +9)

3rd—*dispel magic, glyph of warding, nondetection*<sup>P</sup>

2nd—*cure moderate wounds, gentle repose, invisibility*<sup>P</sup>, *spiritual weapon*

1st—*cure light wounds* (2), *disguise self*<sup>P</sup>, *sanctuary* (DC 15), *shield of faith*

o (at will)—*create water, detect magic, detect poison, light*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Trickery, War

---

**TACTICS**

**Before Combat** If Killik suspects an impending combat, he casts *shield of faith* and *sanctuary* on himself and attempts to talk his way out of any conflict.

**During Combat** Killik prefers fighting from range with his crossbow and *spiritual weapon*, but channels negative energy if surrounded. If he fights with an ally, Killik stays close enough to his companion

to heal him should his ally need assistance, and attempts to dispel the largest threat's magical effects to weaken him or her. If forced into melee combat, Killik uses his battle rage and copycat domain powers to boost his defenses and damage output.

**Morale** Killik fights to the death if he is Marzack's accomplice. If he is innocent of the crime, he casts invisibility on himself and attempts to buy his freedom as a term of surrender if brought below 14 hp.

---

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 13, **Dex** 14, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16

**Feats** Combat Casting, Deceitful, Iron Will, Toughness

**Skills** Bluff +7, Disguise +1, Heal +14, Knowledge (religion) +6, Profession (sailor) +10, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +5, Swim +3

**Languages** Common

**SQ** aura

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure serious wounds, scroll of speak with dead*;

**Other Gear** +1 studded leather, masterwork rapier, light crossbow, feather token (swan boat), healer's kit, silver holy symbol, 70 gp

## Thanzeril

Thanzeril has served as Sephriel's bodyguard for two years, and over the course of time, an ongoing political debate has grown between him and the dignitary. Thanzeril is a young and progressive Mordant Spire elf who feels that the world has much to gain from exploring the ruins of Azlant. He performs his duty as bodyguard to the best of his ability, but has no love for his master. If Thanzeril is the murderer, he was easily persuaded by Marzack to eliminate Sephriel for his outdated conservatism. In the event that Thanzeril is innocent of the murder, he is guilty of letting his guard down; after two months at sea with the same crew, he became complacent and succumbed to Azuretta's seductions on just the wrong night.

**What happened:** If Thanzeril killed Sephriel, he stood guard as normal outside his master's cabin on the night of the murder. When he heard the commotion on the main deck as the PCs fought the aquatic elves, he entered the cabin and murdered him. After killing Sephriel, Thanzeril met Marzack in the main hold and they proceeded down to the cargo hold where they destroyed the murder weapon in the rust monsters' cage.

## Tier 1–2

### THANZERIL

CR 1

Male elf fighter 2

CN Medium humanoid (elf)

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +2

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**DEFENSE**

**AC** 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +2 Dex)

**hp** 20 (2d10+4)

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0; +2 vs. enchantments, +1 vs. fear,

**Defensive Abilities** bravery +1

---

**OFFENSE**

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**Speed** 20 ft.

**Melee** mwk elven curve blade +5 (1d10+3/18–20)

**Ranged** composite longbow (+1 Str) +4 (1d8+1/x3)

---

**TACTICS**

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**Before Combat** Thanzeril positions himself to charge if he suspects combat may be imminent.

**During Combat** Thanzeril begins combat by charging and power attacking if possible, otherwise he power attacks as often as he can, using his Cleave and Combat Reflexes feats to attack as many foes a round as possible. If he fights with an ally, he attempts to flank as often as doing so doesn't conflict with his normal tactics.

**Morale** If Thanzeril is guilty, he fights to the death. If innocent, he fights as well as he can against the provocateurs, but surrenders if brought below 10 hp.

---

**STATISTICS**

---

**Str** 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 13

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16

**Feats** Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack

**Skills** Climb +3, Intimidate +5, Perception +2, Swim +4; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Perception, +2 Spellcraft to identify magic item properties

**Languages** Common, Elven

**SQ** elven magic, weapon familiarity

**Gear** masterwork scale mail, masterwork elven curve blade, composite longbow with 20 arrows

## Tier 4–5

### THANZERIL

CR 4

Male elf fighter 5

CN Medium humanoid (elf)

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +2

---

**DEFENSE**

---

**AC** 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge)

**hp** 44 (5d10+10)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1; +2 vs. enchantments, +1 vs. fear

**Defensive Abilities** bravery +1

---

**OFFENSE**

---

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 elven curve blade +11 (1d10+6/18–20)

**Ranged** composite longbow (+3 Str) +7 (1d8+3/x3)

**Special Attacks** weapon training (heavy blades +1)

---

**TACTICS**

---

**Before Combat** Thanzeril positions himself to charge if he suspects combat may be imminent.

**During Combat** Thanzeril begins combat by charging and power attacking if possible, otherwise he power attacks as often as he can, using his Cleave and Combat Reflexes feats to attack as many foes a round as possible. If he fights with an ally, he employs Spring Attacks to hit foes while ending his turn in position to provide his ally a flank.

**Morale** If Thanzeril is guilty, he fights to the death. If innocent, he fights as well as he can against the provocateurs, but surrenders if brought below 20 hp.

---

**STATISTICS**

---

**Str** 16, **Dex** 14, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 13

**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 21

**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (elven curve blade)

**Skills** Climb +6, Intimidate +8, Perception +2, Swim +6; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Perception, +2 Spellcraft to identify magic item properties

**Languages** Common, Elven

**SQ** armor training 1, elven magic, weapon familiarity

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of invisibility*;

**Other Gear** masterwork chainmail, +1 elven curve blade, composite longbow (+3 strength) with 20 arrows, 20 gp

## Ulamon

Ulamon has spent his entire life at sea, honing his natural skills as a weather druid as navigator on a number of vessels. He holds a grudge against the elves of the Mordant Spire, as the *Polished Barnacle*, the first vessel he served on as a young man, was sunk after its captain ignored the elves' warnings and sailed too close to lost Azlant. The rest of the crew died, but Ulamon was lucky enough to find a sufficient piece of wreckage and controlled the weather to lead himself back to shore. Additionally, Ulamon feels that his specialized skill set has pigeon holed him as navigator and that he has no hope of moving up in the ship's ranks, and he welcomes any suggestion from Marzack that would involve a shuffling of the crew's power structure.

**What Happened:** If Ulamon is Marzack's accomplice, he went to bed after meeting with Captain Veane regarding the course for the next day as he claims. In the middle of the night, when he heard the commotion of battle on the main deck, he got out of his bunk and slipped out into the main hold, making his way to Sephriel's chambers under the effects of a *pass without trace* spell. Using Marzack's key, he entered the room and stabbed the elf repeatedly in his sleep. He then left the chamber and took the knife down to the cargo hold, where he fed it to the hungry rust monsters to dispose of the evidence. He returned to his bunk immediately thereafter.

## Tier 1–2

### ULAMON

CR 1

Male human druid 2

N Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +1; **Senses** Perception +7

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**DEFENSE**

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**AC** 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge)

**hp** 17 (2d8+4)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +1, **Will** +5

**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** quarterstaff +2 (1d6+1)

**Ranged** sling +2 (1d4+1)

**Special Attacks** storm burst (1d6+1 nonlethal damage, 5/day)

**Druid Spells Prepared** (CL 2nd; concentration +4)

1st—*endure elements*, *obscuring mist*<sup>D</sup>, *pass without trace*, *shillelagh*

o (at will)—*guidance*, *know direction*, *light*, *purify food and drink*

D Domain spell; **Domain** Weather

**TACTICS**

**Before Combat** If Ulamon expects combat, he casts *shillelagh* on his quarterstaff.

**During Combat** Ulamon casts *obscuring mist* to give himself cover while he casts *shillelagh* if he hasn't done so yet. He attacks opponents from range with his storm burst ability, fighting in melee only if required.

**Morale** If Ulamon is the murderer, he fights to the death. If he is innocent, he attempts to parley from the onset of the battle, and surrenders unconditionally if brought below 5 hp.

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 12, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 8, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 12

**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14

**Feats** Dodge, Self-Sufficient

**Skills** Climb +5, Heal +4, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (nature) +5, Perception +7, Survival +11, Swim +5

**Languages** Common, Druidic, Polyglot

**SQ** nature bond (Weather domain), nature sense, wild empathy +3, woodland stride

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure light wounds*, *scroll of summon nature's ally I*; **Other Gear** masterwork studded leather, quarterstaff, sling, *elixir of swimming*, *feather token (anchor)*, *feather token (fan)*, 30 gp

**Tier 4–5**

**ULAMON**

**CR 4**

Male human druid 5

N Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +1; **Senses** Perception +10

**DEFENSE**

**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge)

**hp** 38 (5d8+10)

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +7; +4 vs. fey and plant-targeted effects

**Defensive Abilities** resist nature's lure

**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** quarterstaff +4 (1d6+1)

**Ranged** sling +4 (1d4+1)

**Special Attacks** storm burst (1d6+2 nonlethal damage, 6/day), wild shape 5 hours/day

**Druid Spells Prepared** (CL 5th; concentration +8)

3rd—*call lightning*<sup>D</sup>, *cure moderate wounds*, *water breathing*

2nd—*aspect of the bear*<sup>\*</sup>, *barkskin*, *fog cloud*<sup>D</sup>, *resist energy*

1st—*alter winds*<sup>\*</sup>, *endure elements*, *obscuring mist*<sup>D</sup>, *pass without*

*trace*, *shillelagh*

o (at will)—*guidance*, *know direction*, *light*, *purify food and drink*

D Domain spell; **Domain** Weather

**TACTICS**

**Before Combat** If Ulamon expects combat, he casts *barkskin* and *resist energy* on himself and *shillelagh* on his quarterstaff.

**During Combat** Ulamon casts *fog cloud* to give himself cover while he casts *barkskin* and *shillelagh* if he hasn't done so yet.

He attacks opponents from range with *call lightning* and his storm burst ability, fighting in melee only if required.

**Morale** If Ulamon is the murderer, he fights to the death. If he is innocent, he attempts to parley from the onset of the battle, and surrenders completely if brought below 10 hp.

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 12, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 8, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 12

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16

**Feats** Combat Casting, Dodge, Self-Sufficient, Skill Focus (Profession [sailor])

**Skills** Climb +5, Heal +5, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (nature) +9, Linguistics +0, Perception +10, Profession (sailor) +13, Survival +14, Swim +5

**Languages** Common, Druidic, Polyglot

**SQ** nature bond (Weather domain), nature sense, trackless step, wild empathy +6, woodland stride

**Combat Gear** *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *scroll of summon nature's ally I*, *scroll of control water*; **Other Gear** +1 studded leather, quarterstaff, sling, *astrolabe*<sup>\*</sup>, *elixir of swimming*, *feather token (anchor)*, 3, *feather token (fan)*, *sextant*<sup>\*</sup>, 50 gp

\* See *Advanced Player's Guide*

**FACTION MISSIONS**

**Andoran Faction:** Andoran faction PCs who retrieve Ulamon's ring earn 1 Prestige Award. Andoran faction PCs who convince Snig LaCorse to work as a spy for the Eagle Knights in Act 2 earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

**Cheliox Faction:** Cheliox faction PCs who successfully get Azzurta to work for the Paracountess earn 1 Prestige Award. Cheliox faction PCs who also hide the scrying focus on Sephriel's body in Act 2 earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

**Osirion Faction:** Osirion faction PCs who give the Ruby Prince's cabochon to Thanzeril in Act 2 earn 1 Prestige Award. Osirion faction PCs who also retrieve the figurehead's pipe earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

**Qadira Faction:** Qadira faction PCs who deliver their message to Velagon Dorhay in Act 2 earn 1 Prestige Award. Qadira faction PCs who also convince Killik to share his Okeno slaving secrets in Act 2 earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

**Taldor Faction:** Taldor faction PCs who deliver Baron Jacquo's letter of hire to Anera in Act 2 earn 1 Prestige Award. Taldor faction PCs who also retrieve Shira Acidaxe's copy of *Concocted Libations to Die For* in Act 2 earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.



## MURDER ON THE THROATY MERMAID

### SCENARIO 2-13: MURDER ON THE THROATY MERMAID

Event \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
GM # \_\_\_\_\_ GM Name \_\_\_\_\_

Character # \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  Prestige Points

Character Name  Andoran  Cheliox  Taldor  
 Osirion  Qadira

Character # \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  Prestige Points

Character Name  Andoran  Cheliox  Taldor  
 Osirion  Qadira

Character # \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  Prestige Points

Character Name  Andoran  Cheliox  Taldor  
 Osirion  Qadira

Character # \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  Prestige Points

Character Name  Andoran  Cheliox  Taldor  
 Osirion  Qadira

Character # \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  Prestige Points

Character Name  Andoran  Cheliox  Taldor  
 Osirion  Qadira

Character # \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  Prestige Points

Character Name  Andoran  Cheliox  Taldor  
 Osirion  Qadira

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## Andoran Faction Handout

### Defender of Freedom,

Though your current mission puts you at sea for months, you may still be of use to the Eagle Knights and the nation of Andoran. We have obtained a list of the Throaty Mermaid's crew and believe several of them have information or skills we can use in our efforts to gain control of Absalom.

First, the ship's navigator, Ulamon, has served on many ships, including the Polished Barnacle, which the Mordant Spire elves destroyed. The Polished Barnacle was among the fleet of Sargavan vessels that defeated Cheliox's navy in 4643 ar. All of the Barnacle's crew since received special rings from the Sargavan government that I believe may serve us well in our ongoing feud with the Chelish fleet. Do what you need to in order to gain this from Ulamon.

Additionally, a not-so-secret stowaway on the ship, a wererat named Snig Lacorse, could be used as an asset on another vessel were he spying on Andoran's behalf. Convince him to disembark in Riddleport where we will place him aboard a more strategically beneficial ship.

*Capt. Colson Maldris*

For Democracy,

Captain Colson Maldris



## Cheliox Faction Handout

### Loyal Lovely,

Though your journey at sea will take you through a number of Chelish ports between Absalom and the Mordant Spire, your mission involves tasks I need performed at sea.

It has come to my attention that among the Throaty Mermaid's crew is a half-elfen woman with a most curious background and certain exceptional "talents." She is currently in the employ of the ship's captain, but I would be ever so grateful if you could negotiate her employment on my behalf. Given her pedigree it would please me greatly to have such an asset among my court.

Additionally, I need you to hide the enclosed coin somewhere on Saphriel's person. Cheliox has much to gain by learning the secrets of the Mordant Spire and the lost continent of Azlant. Her Majestrix's best diviners are set to sory on the elfen dignitary once he has returned to his island citadel. Do not disappoint me by failing in this.

May Cheliox be ever in your thoughts,

*Zarta Draldeen*  
Paracountess Zarta Draldeen

## Osirion Faction Handout

Keeper of Lore,

The waters of the open ocean are quite the contrast to the dry sands of the Osirian desert. Enjoy your time at sea, but serve the Ruby Prince during the voyage.

First, find enclosed a special cabochon from the Ruby Prince himself, which he wishes to be given to Sephriel's bodyguard, an elf named Thanz-eril. He is a vocal proponent for the opening of Azlant's ruined shores to the world. The Ruby Prince shares this view of our own desert ruins. Ensure Thanz-eril knows he isn't alone in his desire to see the secrets of the past open to modern man.

Additionally, I'd like you to retrieve the iconic pipe from the Throaty Mermaid's figurehead. With all the ancient relics smuggled by Captain Veane and his crew, having a scrying focus to further monitor the vessel's activities would be invaluable.



With dedication to knowledge,

Otoneraphim

Otoneraphim, Humble Scribe of the Ruby Prince

## Qadira Faction Handout

*Servant of the Satrap,*

*Your upcoming assignment on a smugglers' ship as notable as the Throaty Mermaid is quite a blessing for the mighty Kelesh Empire's coffers. There are several contacts I wish you to make during your voyage to the Mordant Spire.*

*First, find a man named Killik, the ship's medic. He once served aboard a very successful slaving vessel out of the Katapeshi port of Okeno and may have information to offer regarding smuggling in and out of this important city. See what you can glean from him and report it back to me.*

*It has come to my attention that there is an exotic animal smuggler on board as well, taking a pair of rust monsters to Riddleport. See if he might be open to working with us to bring magical beasts in and out of Katheer and establish a line of communication in the event we may use his services in the future.*

*In the spirit of profit,  
Pasha Muhlia Al-Jakri x *

## Taldor Faction Handout

*Esteemed Agent of the Empire,*

*I am glad it's you who will be spending so much time at sea and not me. The salty air is bad for my complexion. Also, while you're there, you'll be able to help the Empire maintain our power and glory.*



*Among the Throaty Mermaid's crew is a skilled assassin from the Woodbane Hunters guild. I want to hire this woman, named Anera, to eliminate a particularly annoying elven problem I've been having. Enclosed is a sealed letter to Anera; ensure that she gets it. If she accepts the assignment, she'll sign and return the letter to you. In this case, get it to me as soon as you reach land.*

*I've also received a tip that the ship's cook owns a rare tome on disguising poisons in everyday foods. If you can, bring me her copy of *Concocted Libations to Die For*. I've an upcoming dinner party where it may be useful.*

*For the Grand Prince,*

*BARON JACQUO*

*Baron Jacquo Dalsine*

