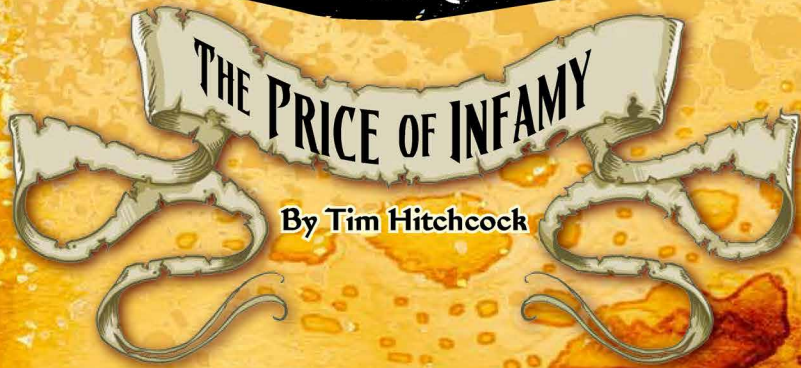


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By Tim Hitchcock

THE SHACKLES



Island of Empty Eyes

Fever Sea

Gannet Island

Island of the Black Tower

Besmara's Throne

Queen Bes

Teroto and Ina

Skeletal Cutlass

Hell Harbor

Port Peril

Mister Ripples

Goathead

Firegrass Isle

Dagon's Jaws

Fever Sea



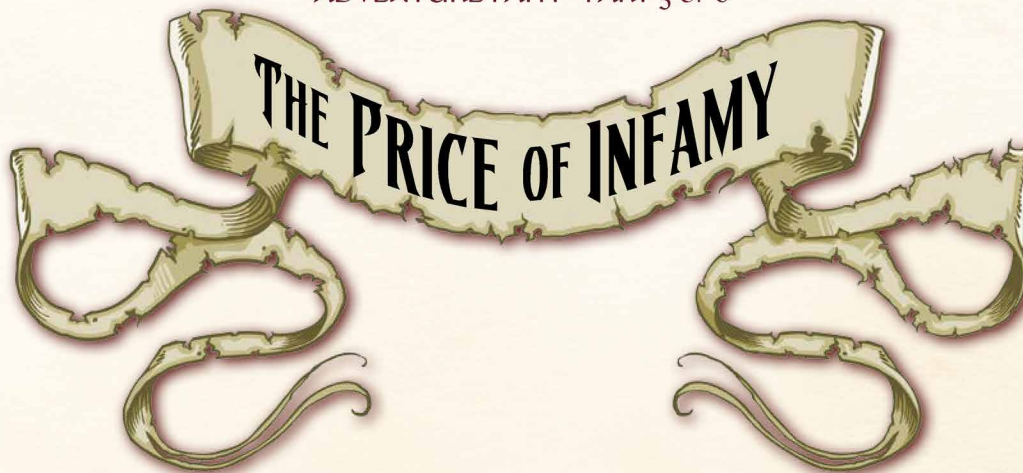
X = Rumored Treasure

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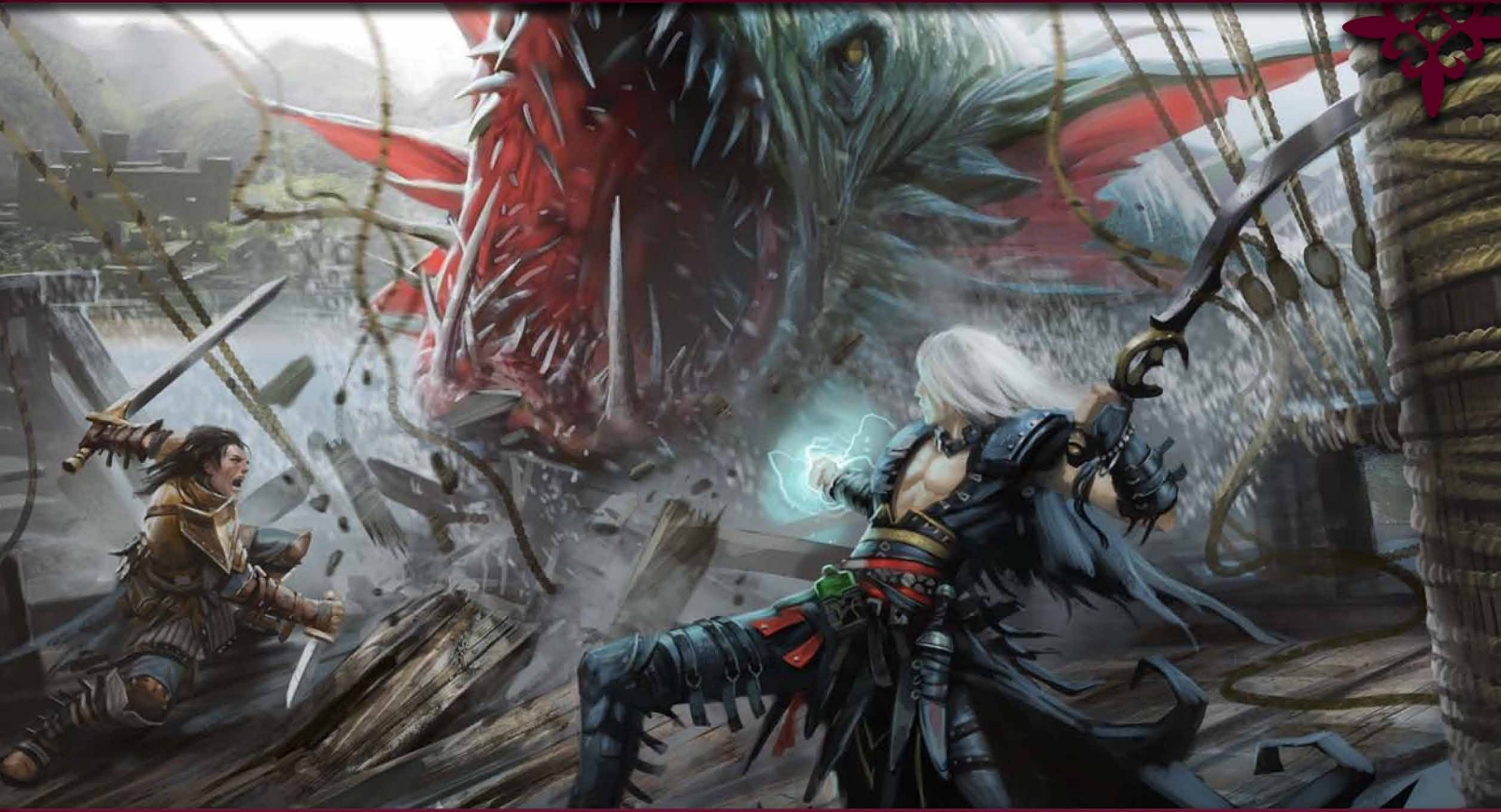


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THE YOUNG MAN AND THE SEA

I'll admit, last year at PaizoCon 2011 when it was announced that a pirate Adventure Path was on the schedule, I wasn't super-excited. I know, I know... to the lash with you! Keelhaul the swab! But wait—hear me out.

Raised on the Texas Gulf Coast, I had the opportunity to spend a good amount of time on the water. In some places it's not a particularly pretty body of water, but you can still easily get out there on a small boat and sail far enough away that land fades into the horizon, leaving you alone on the water with nothing but the sky above. I grew up going fishing with my dad on the Gulf. While most of that was just fishing from piers or wade fishing from the beach and whatnot, every now and then we'd go out and do some deep-sea fishing.

You'd get up before the sun and head down to the coast, get some strong coffee in you, and look for a good spot to start dropping lines in the water. Turns out, all the offshore oil rigs attract a lot of fish, so out in the Gulf you see boats camped

out near them pulling up redfish, snapper, dolphin, wahoo, and other tasty sea fare. It was on one of these trips I spotted my first shark, and once witnessed a guy pulling one in that was bigger than me at the time. On one of the deep sea fishing trips, one of the other guys on the boat accidentally hooked an octopus. It was a fairly small one, with a head the size of a baseball, and before we threw it back they let me hold it. Its suckers felt weird on my skin, and it kept trying to crawl away, slithering its tentacles around my forearm. I even felt its beak drag against my open palm, and it was then that I announced I was done holding it. Back into the water it went.

As I got older, I fished less, but my connection with the Gulf of Mexico wasn't reduced. I merely transformed that relationship into other activities. My friend Kyle's family owned a 30-foot single-mast sailboat, a 16-foot Hobie catamaran, and a small Laser sailing dinghy. I'd never sailed before, but they taught me on the Laser before moving me

up to the catamaran. Kyle's dad taught me all the right terms (many of which I've since forgotten), and for that entire season it seemed like we were out on the water every day. The "big boat" named *Shi-Bui* (which they joked meant "stuck in the mud," because of its really long keel) had a fiberglass hull and deck, but the mast, rails, and other fixtures were wood. The summer between my junior and senior year of high school, Kyle and I sanded and refinished the deck, rails, and all the fixtures. While working on the boat, we slept in the cabin every night, the gentle waves rocking us to sleep. Each morning I'd climb up the mast like a monkey and stand on the spreaders looking out over the marina. Toward the end of that time, once we were mostly done with the work, we took it out a few times. The boat had a diesel engine, but the whole time I spent with that family and that boat, the engine never worked, so we'd have to raise the sail in the slip and push off, then strike the sail and coast into the slip when we'd return. This old salty sailor that lived on his boat in the marina was extremely impressed watching two skinny teenagers sail in and out of the slip without the use of an engine, and would tell us so on every occasion we'd run into him. We weren't going to spoil his pride in us by telling him we only did it because the engine was busted and we had no other choice.

That busted engine ended up being a major source of stress one weekend when we moved *Shi-Bui* from Sabine Pass to Kemah. The trip should've been short and sweet, but once we got fully out into the Gulf and started heading west, the wind died and we just bobbed there for hours. After night fell, I started seeing lights from the radio towers and realized we were drifting toward shore. Kyle and I stayed up all night doing what we could to stay on course and not end up beaching the boat. We took a lot of small tacks, rowed for a bit, and even jumped in and swam behind the boat pushing it (until a porpoise startled us into realizing that maybe it wasn't the best of ideas to be swimming a quarter-mile out into the Gulf at night.)

So, yeah, I've spent some time on the water. Strangely enough, though, I'd never been a huge fan of the pirate genre, and as a result I had mixed feelings about this Adventure Path during my previous months as a fan. But once I got here and started working on the *Skull & Shackles* AP, all of the emotions and memories about being on the water with the wind at my back came crashing back, and I fell in love.

It was weird. I liked pirate movies well enough, but I was never strongly connected to the genre. I guess I was having a disconnect relating my actual experiences on the water to a roleplaying setup, but all it took was immersing myself in what we were producing to rekindle my old romance with the sea.

PLAYING ADMIRAL

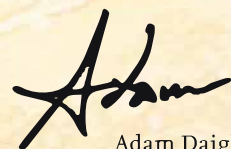
A couple of weeks ago, Rob, Wes, and I took a few hours out of our busy workdays to play a game. We weren't

ON THE COVER

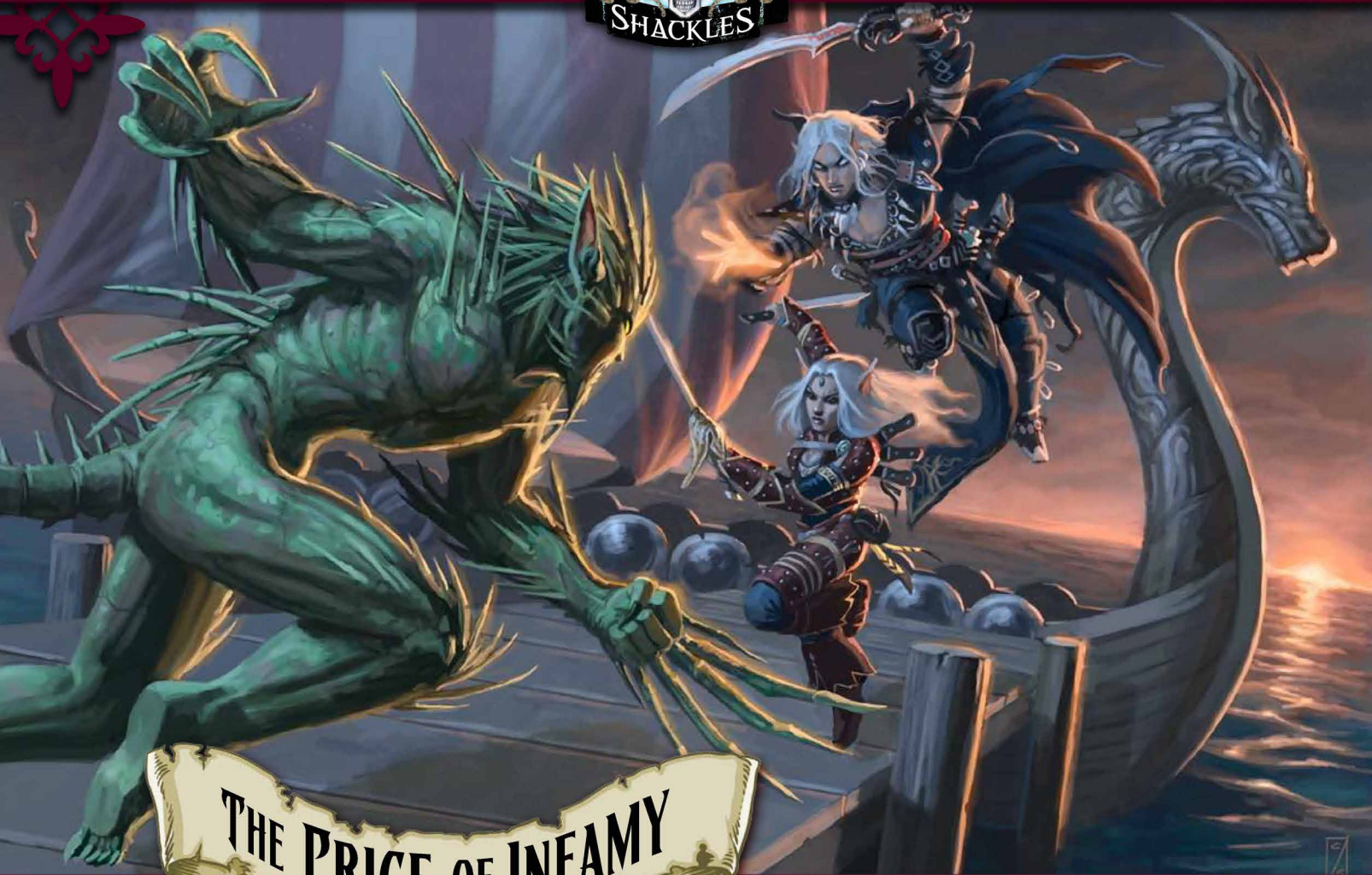
Druvalia Thrune, admiral of the Chelish Imperial Navy and commander of the Chelish armada sent to invade the Shackles, stands proud on this month's cover. Although the PCs will not face Druvalia and her armada until the final adventure, they'll get their first glimpse of the admiral and learn of her plans to annex the Shackles when they finally confront their old nemesis, Captain Barnabas Harrigan, in this month's Adventure Path installment, "The Price of Infamy."

just goofing off on company time: we were playtesting the fleet battle rules you'll find if you keep turning pages. We crowded into Wes's office and read through the rules James wrote, then collected a few stacks of the ship counters from the free *Skull & Shackles Player's Guide* (available online at paizo.com), and got to work building our fleets. Rob (or "The Admiral," as he's sometimes called these days) chose Tessa Fairwind as his fleet's admiral. (I think he has a crush on her.) I named my fleet's fearless, generic leader Admiral Soandso. We chose our ships and built our squadrons. Rob's fleet skewed more toward the PCs' side of things, and I built my fleet based on what the bad guys would be bringing to the battle. My fleet was weaker, but that's okay—you don't want to piss off The Admiral. Wes acted as an impartial observer and made notes based on our experiences and the outcomes of the battles.

Of course, as with any playtest, we rewound a few times, replayed a round or two, and made less than favorable decisions just to see how it would play out. While we were playing, I realized this would make a fine standalone game, and immediately wanted to find the constructible pirate ships I bought last year at Gen Con. I could even play this game with my friends who don't play RPGs but are fond of board games, since at its heart this system is a set of simple, streamlined rules that involves bits of chance and some strategy. So today I'll print up some ship counters to bring home, and see if my lady would enjoy a quick pirate fleet battle. Enjoy the fights you'll find in the adventure this time around, and good luck!



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THE PRICE OF INFAMY

PART ONE: BLOOD IN THE WATER

After attending a meeting of the Pirate Council, the PCs get a grim warning that their old enemy Barnabas Harrigan is readying an attack, and they must build a fleet to defend their home!

PAGE 7

PART TWO: ISLANDS OF THE DAMNED

An attempt to rescue one of Harrigan's former officers puts the PCs up against a hideous aquatic undead threat.

PAGE 17

PART THREE: THE BLACK TOWER

A quest to retrieve an infamous sword requires a descent into a trap-filled tower once ruled by a legendary cultist.

PAGE 25

PART FOUR: HARRIGAN MUST DIE

Harrigan's fleet attacks! The PCs must defend their home, then go on the offensive to get revenge against their former captain!

PAGE 35

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

"The Price of Infamy" is designed for four characters and uses the medium XP track.

11 The PCs begin this adventure at 11th level.

12 The PCs should be 12th level by the time they start exploring the Black Tower—if they're not close at this point, consider having them go on a few additional side quests to earn more XP.

The PCs should be 13th level by the end of the adventure.

THE PRICE OF INFAMY

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Captain Barnabas Harrigan's loss to his upstart former crew members in the Free Captains' Regatta churned in his craw like the fury of the Eye of Abendego itself. Robbed of his prize and disgraced by the defeat, he grew determined to avenge himself. While the PCs busied themselves with the exploration and conquest of the Island of Empty Eyes, Harrigan got to the task of bolstering his fleet in order to sail against the PCs and take their newly claimed prize by force. But revenge against the PCs is only the beginning of Harrigan's treachery.

Meanwhile, Tessa Fairwind continued her hunt to root out traitorous pirate lords in the Shackles, possibly even within the Pirate Council itself. Despite her work, her well-founded suspicions remain poorly placed, for the real traitor, Barnabas Harrigan, lurks outside the Council's inner circle. Few suspect that Harrigan, believed by so many to be a scourge of the Chelish navy, is in fact deep in Cheliox's pocket and has been for several months. After he was captured by Admiral Druvalia Thrune of Cheliox, craven Harrigan bartered for his life by offering to serve as her primary secret agent the Shackles. At present, Harrigan's forces now swell with Chelioxians disguised as hostages or low-life pirates. What most believe to be his recent spate of victories over Chelish merchant ships are actually carefully orchestrated performances, fake battles with dummy ships. Harrigan's "seizures" of Chelish plunder and slaves allow his allies to covertly supply him with men, ships, and funding while bolstering his appearance as a sworn enemy of Cheliox.

As his apparent victories over Cheliox bolster his infamy, Harrigan has come to realize that with such notoriety comes unwanted attention, and in order to distract his enemies long enough for Cheliox's plans to play out, he's decided to create dissent and suspicion between the various Free Captains. Some of his agents scoured their crews for stooges willing to sell their captains' secrets. In other cases, he paid large sums in "stolen" Chelish coin to ruin more powerful rivals by planting false evidence to imply their own involvement in traitorous acts against the Pirate Council. The most prominent of his brazenly selected targets was Arronax Endymion, the lord of Hell Harbor. Now, with the Pirate Council fearfully rooting through its ranks in search of traitors, Harrigan has one last obstacle in his path before he calls down the Chelish Armada upon the Shackles—his onetime swabs and riggers, the PCs.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

After earning their seats on the Pirate Council, the PCs attend their first meeting of the council only to learn from a friend that their old nemesis Barnabas Harrigan is preparing for an all-out attack on their new home.

ADDITIONAL RULES

The Skull & Shackles Adventure Path makes use of several new rules subsystems.

Plunder, Disrepute, and Infamy: The rules for plunder and Infamy may be found in "The Life of a Pirate" in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #55: The Wormwood Mutiny*.

Ship-to-Ship Combat: Sample ship stat blocks, as well as detailed rules for handling combat between ships, are presented in the *Skull & Shackles Player's Guide*, available for free at paizo.com.

Fleet Battles: Rules for building fleets and fighting mass-scale naval conflicts appear in this volume on page 62.

The PCs must gather their allies and recruit new ones to build a fleet of ships to protect their island. In doing so, they have a chance to rescue several castaways who once served under Harrigan, and to recover a powerful and infamous weapon from an eerie tower. They may even clear the name of one of the Shackles' major pirate lords, who is suspected of being a Chelish sympathizer, and in so doing gain the support of another powerful ally.

Harrigan's attack on the PCs' island comes soon enough, and after the PCs defeat Harrigan's fleet with their own, the time is right to finally strike back against Harrigan with an attack against his own island fortress. When the PCs finally confront and defeat their old enemy, though, they discover that not only was Harrigan a Chelish agent, but that Cheliox's fleet is fast approaching the Shackles and intends to conquer the pirate confederacy as a new colony!

PART ONE: BLOOD IN THE WATER

Part One of "The Price of Infamy" deals with the PCs' efforts to build a fleet to defend their island home, but Parts Two and Three also provide opportunities for the PCs to increase their infamy and attract new ships to their flag. As a result, you should run Parts Two and Three concurrently with Part One, adjusting the timing of these events as you see fit. Only after the PCs have had time to complete the encounters in Parts One, Two, and Three should you move into Part Four.

THE PIRATE COUNCIL

Among the prizes the PCs were promised for winning the Free Captains' Regatta was a seat on the Pirate Council, and after their (hopefully) fine showing at the climax of the previous adventure, they should have earned at least a single seat on the Council, even if they didn't earn the right to vote. This adventure begins with the PCs attending their first council meeting in Port Peril.

FIREARMS IN THE PRICE OF INFAMY

Firearms are rare on Golarion, and as a result, firearms do not appear in the Skull & Shackles Adventure Path until the final adventure. If firearms play a more prominent role in your campaign, however, you can use the following suggestions to modify “The Price of Infamy” to incorporate them. See *Ultimate Combat* for details on all of these firearms and more.

The best opportunities to introduce firearms into “The Price of Infamy” come in Part Four (although you could certainly have “Barracuda” Aiger’s ships be outfitted with cannon if you wish at the end of Part Three). Consider giving Kipper a +1 *flaming musket* instead of a longbow; he may even have taken a few levels of gunslinger rather than rogue levels since the last time the PCs met him. The light ballistae at Harrigan’s fortress can easily be turned into cannons—if you do so, make sure to give the fortress a supply of cannon balls and gunpowder (likely stored in area E2). Harrigan himself should be given a pistol of some type—he still prefers to fight with his sword, but can start a battle with a shot or two!

The Pirate Council meets in a large chamber located in Fort Hazard itself. The Hurricane King typically sits at the head of a long oaken table in an overly ostentatious chair with a high back carved with images of sea monsters coiled around ships, while 30 smaller, less extravagant but still rather comfortable chairs are positioned around the table (15 to a side). No one sits at the far end of the table, where a second enormous chair sits—this chair is reserved for Besmara herself, should she ever decide to attend. Food and alcohol are served in quantity during a Pirate Council—the meal is quite fine, serving almost as a bribe to encourage the pirate lords to attend in the first place. Several other, smaller tables sit against the walls of the room—these are for minor pirate lords who do not actually have votes, but who are still welcome to provide feedback and opinions during the meeting.

A typical council meeting begins a half-hour before the food and rum is served—and typically lasts a half-hour after the meal begins and the effects of the rich repast and fine rum begin to have their effects. Eventually, the Hurricane King calls the council to an end by rising and declaring the meeting adjourned, usually leaving more than a few agenda items on the table for the next meeting.

During a Pirate Council, the chairs at the central table are reserved for pirate lords who have full votes. Depending upon the PCs’ success in “Island of Empty

Eyes,” they may have one vote, no votes, or they might have all earned voting rights. If the PCs have only one vote, only one of them is allowed a seat at the table, while all others must sit at the smaller tables.

For this meeting, there are only 11 pirate lords attending, leaving 20 chairs empty (some of which may well be filled by PC pirate lords, of course). These include Tessa Fairwind, Arronax Endymion, and the Master of the Gales. In addition, the three pirate lords who were sent to the Island of Empty Eyes to observe the PCs are here—Avimar Sorrinash, Cerise Bloodmourn, and Mase Darimar. A few other pirate lords the PCs may or may not know are in attendance as well: Delemona Burie, Hardluck Massey, Jolis Raffles, and Wide Olga. Hurricane King Kerdak Bonefist, of course, sits at the head of the table. You can use the “Scourges of the Shackles” article from *Pathfinder* #57 to round out who is in attendance if you wish (all of the pirate lords listed in that article have votes on the council), although if you do, you’ll need to adjust the vote counts as appropriate.

The issues up for vote are detailed below. Each topic has a champion for and against, along with arguments as to why the council should vote aye or nay on the topic. In each case, you can allow the PCs to state their opinions on the matter at hand as they wish in order to try to sway the voting. Once they’re done and all the pirates have had a chance to have their say, Bonefist calls for a vote of ayes and nays, which are tallied and recorded by his first mate Tsadok Goldtooth.

To influence a vote, a PC must make a Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check. The DC of this check varies between issues, but with a successful check, the PC can sway the votes by 1 in a direction of his choice (aye or nay), effectively moving one vote from one side to the other. Each issue may be influenced up to 3 times in this manner (once with a Bluff check, once with a Diplomacy check, and once with an Intimidate check)—additional characters can aid another on these checks. The PCs can also rely upon their reputations to influence the voting as well—by spending a point of Disrepute, they can shift a single vote from one side to the other. Unlike the skill checks, there’s no limit to the number of votes they can adjust by spending Disrepute save for their total Disrepute available to spend.

Once the PCs have made any attempts they wish to influence votes, the actual voting takes place. Adjust the issue’s votes by the total votes necessary (as determined by the results of influencing attempts), shifting votes from one side to the other as appropriate, then call for the voting PCs to cast their votes before revealing the final results. Each issue has an Aye/Nay result listed so you can track the repercussions of the voting over the rest of the Adventure Path.

THE PRICE OF INFAMY

VOTING PIRATE LORDS

Name	Stats	Home Port	Affectations
Arronax Endymion	NE male human	Hell Harbor	Hates Cheliox, paranoid, sullen, troubled
Avimar Sorrinash	CE male human werewolf	Olo	Bloodthirsty, blunt, lustful, short-temper
Cerise Bloodmourn	CN female human	Quent	Ambitious, clever, manipulative
Delemona Burie	CG female human	Lilywhite	Anti-slavery, entertaining, well-spoken
Hardluck Massey	CN male human	Pex	Cigar smoker, quick-tempered, swaggers
Jolis Raffles	CN male halfling	Slipcove	Enjoys comfort, kind of lazy, reactionary
Kerdak Bonefist	NE male human	Port Peril	Arrogant, bone hand, carries pistol
Mase Darimar	CN male half-aquatic elf	Drenchport	Loves the sea, observant, quiet, secretive
Master of the Gales	CN male human	Drenchport	Eerie, middle-aged, mysterious
Tessa Fairwind	CN female half-elf	Quent	Flirty, friendly, stubborn, swashbuckler
Wide Olga	CN female human	Oyster Cay	Foul-mouthed, stocky build, toothy grin

ISSUE #1: INCREASED SHARES FOR THE ISLAND OF EMPTY EYES

Summary Normally, a new pirate lord earns only a quarter share of the tithes from Sargava, but some of the pirate lords (Arronax, Delemona, the Master of the Gales, and Tessa) are impressed enough with the PCs that they think the PCs should earn full shares.

Champion Tessa Fairwind (believes the PCs are worthy of a full share of the tithe, rather than the standard quarter share for new Lords)

Opponent Kerdak Bonefist (isn't impressed with the PCs and thinks they should go through the same multiyear proving period as other new pirate lords in order to earn a full share)

VOTING

Influence DC 28

Initial Votes 4 aye/7 nay

REPERCUSSIONS

Aye The PCs earn a full share of the most recent Sargavan Tithe (this amounts to an immediate payment of 12,000 gp to the party).

Nay The PCs earn a quarter share of the most recent Sargavan Tithe (this amounts to an immediate payment of 3,000 gp to the party).

ISSUE #2: USE OF SARGAVAN TITHE FOR PUBLIC WORKS

Summary The bulk of the funds from the Sargavan Tithe are supposed to go toward the improvement and port defense of Port Peril, as well as upgrading the Shackles' fleet, but Cerise Bloodmourn, ever eager to curry favor, pushes instead to have a large amount of the funds go toward the creation of towering statues in all of the Shackles' major ports in honor of the Hurricane King.

Champion Cerise Bloodmourn (argues that placing the visage of "our tremendous leader" in every port will only increase the infamy of the Shackles)

Opponent Master of the Gales (the only pirate who's not afraid enough of the Hurricane King to openly point out how ridiculous a waste of money such a venture would be)

VOTING

Influence DC 32

Initial Votes 10 aye/1 nay

REPERCUSSIONS

Aye A fair amount of resources go toward the erection of several statues over the next several months (the DC to increase sale of plunder increases by +5 for the remainder of the campaign, and all prices associated with hiring squadrons increase by +25%).

Nay Spending of the tithe is handled normally (no change to resources).

ISSUE #3: DECLARATION OF RIGHTS OF SALVAGE

Summary With all the whispering and stories being told of the Isle of the Black Tower and the magical sword *Aiger's Kiss* that is said to be lost inside, Avimar Sorrinash wants Olo to be granted salvage rights over the island and its waters, as Olo is the closest significant settlement to the isle in question.

Champion Avimar Sorrinash (asks for a 20% tithe of all plunder taken from the isle over the next 12 months)

Opponent Jolis Raffles (still bitter about a similar request he made for a different island during the last council meeting being voted down, and doesn't think it's fair for other pirates to succeed where he did not)

VOTING

Influence DC 20

Initial Votes 6 aye/5 nay

REPERCUSSIONS

Aye Avimar earns his requested tithe (if the PCs don't pay him 20% of the total value of treasure they take from the Isle of the Black Tower in Part Three, Avimar becomes their bitter enemy and may even sail out to Gannet Island in Part Four to join forces with Harrigan against the PCs).

Nay The Isle of the Black Tower remains in a "finders-keepers" state and any plunder and loot taken from the isle requires no tithe at all.



ISSUE #4: DECLARATION OF SCAGS ROTGRAM AS AN OUTLAW

Summary Captain Barnabas Harrigan paid a hefty bribe to Hardluck Massey to have this issue brought to the table—according to Harrigan, his former first mate Scags Rotgram has been engaging in unsanctioned piracy against Sargavan vessels. He wants Scags and his ship, the *Devilish Duchess*, to be declared outlaw.

Champion Hardluck Massey (has no true loyalty to Harrigan, and only brought this before the council because he was bribed)

Opponent Kerdak Bonefist (regards this as merely the latest example of Harrigan's increasingly poor attitude and not worthy of the council's time)

VOTING

Influence DC 22

Initial Votes 5 aye/6 nay

REPERCUSSIONS

Aye Scags Rotgram is declared outlaw—a 5,000 gp bounty is placed on his head (this bounty can be collected at Port Peril if the PCs find Scags in Part Two and collect his head).

Nay No bounty is placed on Scags Rotgram's head.

ISSUE #5: FUNDING AND SUPPORT FOR CHELISH INVESTIGATIONS

Summary Tessa Fairwind reveals to the council the results of her research into the possibility that there's a Chelish sympathizer and traitor among the pirate lords, based in large part on the clues and intelligence the PCs recovered for her during "Tempest Rising."

Champion Arronax Endymion (some might think he's a bit too quick to push for an increase in the funding and support for finding a Chelish spy, prompting several pirates to wryly observe, "Well, ain't that the pot calling the kettle black!" or "Don't they call Hell Harbor 'Little Chelixa'?" or the like—comments that put Arronax into a sullen and foul mood)

Opponent Kerdak Bonefist (secretly would rather those funds go to building statues for him, or barring that, just padding his treasury—he refuses to entertain the thought that Chelixa honestly poses a threat to the Shackles)

VOTING

Influence DC 30

Initial Votes 4 aye/7 nay

REPERCUSSIONS

Aye Tessa gets the funding and support she needs to make it more difficult for Chelixa to support their agent by forcing them to spend more time and effort on maintaining their cover. When the PCs reach Part Four of this adventure, they won't face additional Chelish support in Harrigan's fleet or fortress.

Nay Without the council authorizing additional support and funding for the investigations, Chelixa can supply Harrigan with extra troops and ships, increasing his fleet and fortress defenses as detailed in "Additional Support" on page 35.

Story Award: Each issue the PCs can get resolved in their favor earns them an award of 3,200 XP.

TESSA'S WARNING

After Issue #5 is voted upon, Kerdak Bonefist's patience for bureaucracy wears out. Although a dozen topics were on the agenda, the fifth issue annoys Bonefist enough that he calls the meeting to a close, citing a desire to visit his lovely consort for some "comfort in arms." The other pirates, already feeling the effects of the food and grog, are for the most part eager to comply, and quickly vacate Fort Hazard, heading back to their ships to return home.

As she leaves the harbor in her ship *Luck of the Draw*, Tessa Fairwind sends the PCs a *silver raven figurine of wondrous power*, which is waiting for the PCs aboard their ship with a message from its mistress clenched in its beak. This message is reproduced as the Player Handout on page 11.

BUILDING A FLEET

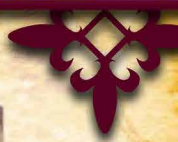
The amount of time the PCs have to build their fleet is left to you—Captain Harrigan's preparations for his attack on the PCs' island are hindered by his own bad attitude and the necessity of splitting his resources between serving his Chelish masters, disciplining his crew, and enjoying bottles of fine brandy and rum.

You should let the players study the rules for fleet battles at this point (found on pages 62–69 of this volume); this will allow them to plan for their fleet and determine who and what they want to recruit. The PCs can either attempt to hire mercenary squadrons or recruit existing allies into their fleet. Both methods of building a fleet are detailed below. Keep in mind that the maximum number of squadrons in a fleet is determined by the PCs' Infamy score, modified by the Charisma modifier of the admiral put in command of the fleet.

MERCENARY SQUADRONS

Hiring a squadron of mercenaries requires at least one PC to spend 1d4 days in a port no smaller than a large town (with a minimum population of 2,001)—smaller settlements simply don't have enough mercenaries to round out an entire squadron of ships without several weeks, or even months, of work. Only five settlements in the Shackles meet this requirement: Drenchport, Hell Harbor, Ollo, Port Peril, and Quent, effectively giving the PCs a total of five opportunities to recruit mercenaries.

Recruiting mercenaries requires a Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check—additional PCs can aid another with DC 10 checks of their own to help the primary recruiter's check. The exact skill used to hire a mercenary squadron makes little difference—stats for squadrons that are



My friends! It pains me to darken your accomplishments, but I feel I must.

Despite your triumphs of late, there remain those who do not accept you as deserving of the prize you have been awarded. If you expect to keep your isle, you'll need to fight for it. Even as I pen this warning, know that your old nemesis Barnabas Harrigan is bolstering his own fleet, funded through his recent spate of successes raiding the Chelish shipping lanes.

And he will come for you as soon as he is ready.

War is coming to the Shackles, whether Bonest wants to admit it or not. We have a traitor, or perhaps traitors, in our midst, and when the Chelish navy sails south, it will divide us through our own greed and betrayal if we are not ready.

*I intend to survive this war—and to do so, I need all the help I can get. I hope to see you survive as well, but to do that, you must gather a fleet. In time, I will join my resources to yours, but for the immediate future I must retain a low profile—I fear I have drawn too much attention to my plans already. Hire mercenaries if you must, but seek out friends and allies if you can—they will serve better than those bought with coin. Bolstering your infamy can only help as well—some of the topics that came up in the council meeting seemed to me good places to start. Looting the Black Tower and recovering the sword *Fliger's Kiss* from within would certainly increase your fame, and if you can track down Scags Krogam... well, an old mate of Harrigan's could be an invaluable ally, especially if he knows something about Harrigan's weaknesses!*

Until I contact you again, keep the silver raven figurine as proof of my word. Sell it off if you wish... after that party you threw at your fortress, I suspect you might need the spare coin to help pay for the fleet you'll soon need!

—Tessa

tricked, sweet-talked, or press-ganged into service are all essentially the same. The DC to recruit a mercenary squadron is 30. Failure brings no penalty other than time wasted. All squadrons recruited have identical statistics with average commodores (NPCs with a Charisma modifier of +0, allowing a mercenary squadron to have a maximum of 3 ships). Once a mercenary squadron is recruited from a port, a new mercenary squadron cannot be recruited from that port for 1d4+4 weeks—likely too long a wait for the PCs.

A mercenary squadron expects to be paid for their work. Hiring a mercenary squadron also involves paying for a significant part of the ships as well, be it repair work, bribes to the owners, or the outright purchase of ships. Paying for a mercenary squadron isn't cheap—it costs either 40,000 gp or 40 points of plunder. If the PCs pay with plunder, they can also spend Disrepute to reduce the price—1 point of Disrepute lowers the price of a squadron by 5 points of plunder (to a minimum cost of 25 points of plunder).

Even when paid, a mercenary squadron takes a –2 penalty on morale checks—such squadrons are notoriously prone to mutiny.

A mercenary squadron remains part of a fleet only until the first significant battle—if the PCs wish to keep that fleet for a later battle, they must pay the squadron's cost again.

Statistics for a mercenary squadron are given below. If the PCs wish to increase the size of a squadron by adding a ship or ships of their own, they'll need to replace the squadron's commodore with someone more charismatic, such as a PC or an NPC ally. Adding ships, of course, increases the cost of a fleet as appropriate.

MERCENARY SQUADRON

Configuration 3 sailing ships or 3 longships (recruiter's choice)

Commodore Mercenary Captain (Profession [sailor] +10,

Charisma modifier +0)

Hits 9; **Morale** 3

Defense Value 20

Attack Value +10; **Damage** 1d6+3

Morale Check –2

Story Award: Award the PCs 1,200 XP for successfully recruiting a mercenary fleet—this award may be earned up to five times (once per port).



RECRUITING ALLIES

The wisdom of recruiting allies to build a fleet should become clear to the PCs soon after they learn about the prices for mediocre mercenary squadrons—certainly, Tessa's advice for the PCs to do so is sound. Which allies the PCs might be able to turn to will vary from campaign to campaign—three sample allies are listed below. You can use these allies as templates to generate additional recruitment opportunities as appropriate for your campaign.

Recruiting an ally's squadron has two significant advantages over mercenary squadrons—no check is needed to recruit them, they do not cost money to recruit or retrain, and they have stronger squadrons. The only major disadvantage is that an allied squadron, if destroyed, cannot be replaced.

Each entry below lists the NPC's current location—the PCs must travel to that location to recruit the NPC and her fleet. A successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) check or Diplomacy check to gather information is enough to determine the current whereabouts of these NPCs if the PCs haven't kept track on their own. The entries also include the name of the NPC's squadron and its statistics. In many cases, the Profession (sailor) skills of these NPC commodores have increased from their original score, to reflect their experience since the PCs last encountered them.

Note that if one of the NPCs on the list below has been traveling with the PCs for the campaign, or if that NPC perished earlier in the campaign, he or she cannot provide a fleet for the PCs. In this case, you can replace one or more of such characters with other NPCs from earlier in the campaign, such as Lady Agasta Smythee or others.

Merrill Pegsworthy (Firegrass Isle—Goatshead): Still somewhat bitter about his situation, Merrill Pegsworthy was drawn to Goatshead on Firegrass Isle after hearing about how highly freedom is valued there. Since he last saw the PCs in *Pathfinder* #56, he's become rather well liked, and can field a squadron of three sailing ships (he sold one of the ships he originally had) with particularly high-spirited crews that gain a +4 bonus to their initial Morale scores and a +2 bonus on morale checks.

DRALE'S EAGLES

Configuration 3 sailing ships

Commodore Merrill Pegsworthy (Profession [sailor] +12, Charisma modifier +0)

Hits 9; **Morale** 7

Defense Value 22

Attack Value +12; **Damage** 1d6+3

Morale Check +2

Pierce Jerrell (Port Peril): Pierce Jerrell hasn't gone far from where the PCs first encountered him in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #57. He is still in Port Peril, and even more

conveniently, has stumbled into a bit of good luck—he recently won six fine Ulfen longships in a high-stakes game of towers, as well as a fair amount of gold—more than enough to hire crews for these ships.

LUCKY GAMBLE SQUADRON

Configuration 6 longships

Commodore Pierce Jerrell (Profession [sailor] +11, Charisma modifier +3)

Hits 18; **Morale** 3

Defense Value 21

Attack Value +11; **Damage** 1d6+6

Morale Check +3

Sandara Quinn (Besmara's Throne—Queen Bes): The PCs first encountered Sandara Quinn while press-ganged aboard the *Wormwood* in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #55. If she's not been traveling with the PCs since then, she's made the pilgrimage to Besmara's Throne and has risen quickly in the ranks of the church. By the time the PCs contact her again, she has a squadron of five warships under her command.

QUEEN BES'S OWN SQUADRON

Configuration 5 warships

Commodore Sandara Quinn (Profession [sailor] +14, Charisma modifier +2)

Hits 20; **Morale** 3

Defense Value 24

Attack Value +14; **Damage** 1d6+5

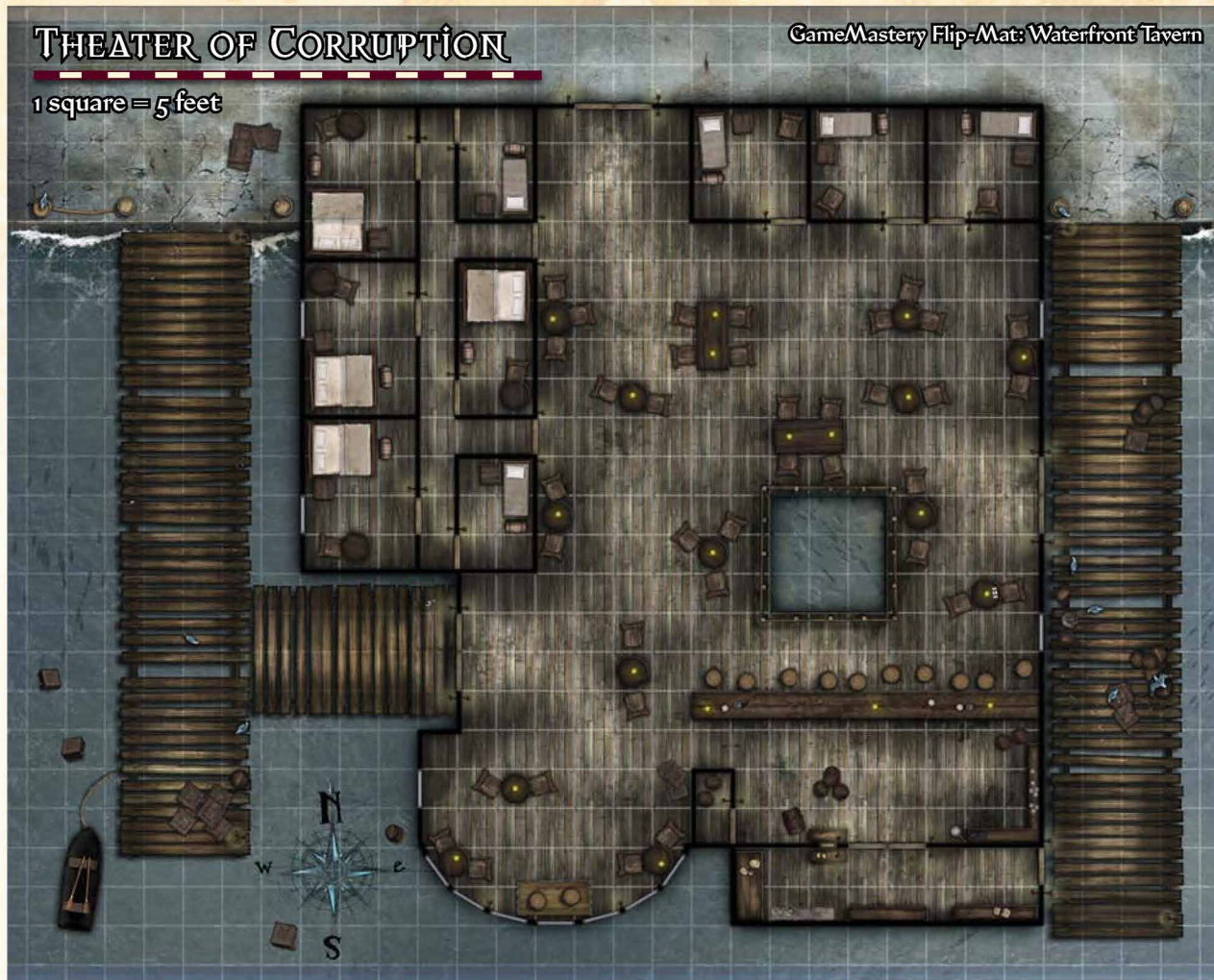
Morale Check +2

Story Award: Award the PCs 4,800 XP for successfully recruiting an ally's fleet.

CLEARING ENDYMION'S NAME

As the PCs build their fleet, word of what they're doing spreads through the Shackles. At some point during the adventure before Part Four (preferably after the PCs have started recruiting squadrons but haven't yet filled up their fleet), when the PCs are visiting a port looking for recruits, they are approached by a well-dressed man who introduces himself as Chambros Egrossa, first mate of the *Tyrannous*. A successful DC 12 Knowledge (local) check is enough to recognize the *Tyrannous* as the flagship of Arronax Endymion, former admiral of the Chelish navy and lord of Hell Harbor.

Chambros apologizes for interrupting the PCs, then informs them that his captain, Arronax Endymion, would like to speak with them aboard his ship, which awaits them in the port. If asked why, Chambros apologizes again, saying Admiral Endymion didn't give him the details, only that he wanted to speak to the PCs about a mutually beneficial arrangement that would see their



fleet gain some significant support. As a show of good faith, Chambros presents the PCs with a small wooden chest as a gift of solidarity, one that the PCs can keep even if they do not accompany him back to the *Tyrannous*. Inside the chest is 200 pp. The implication is clear that if the PCs accept the gift but do not go to the *Tyrannous* to hear Endymion out, they'll lose an important potential ally. However, Endymion is eager enough to meet the PCs that he'll agree to meet them aboard their ship or on land if they wish—in such a case he brings six stalwart pirates with him as an honor guard (use the stats for smugglers on page 41 for these pirates).

Arronax Endymion is detailed on page 56. He greets the PCs with a hearty salutation, but seems worried and distracted. Nevertheless, he gets right to the point.

"I know you and your ally Lady Fairwind have been rooting about for Chelish conspirators. You've doubtless heard the rumors that I'm one of those conspirators as a result. I assure you that nothing could be further from the truth—my hatred

of Cheliox and her devil-besotted fools plumbs deeper than any well of loathing in the Shackles. But still, the rumors persist—in fact, they've been spreading of late in my own home port of Hell Harbor. I wish these rumors squashed, but to do so, I need your aid. I cannot directly move against the source of this latest campaign of falsehoods against me, but if you do this for me—if you teach these slanderers a lesson, I'll reward you with a squadron of my finest warships."

If the PCs express interest, Endymion goes on to explain that the slanderers in question are a small group of exiled Chelish performers who have purchased a seaside tavern and have been using it as a cover for their campaign against him. Their performances are quite popular among the citizens of Hell Harbor, and by the time Endymion realized it was they who were slandering him, any overt move he made against the troupe would only martyr them and "prove" his guilt, since it would look like he was attempting to crush those attempting to get the truth out. But if an apparently nonallied group

were to infiltrate the theater and reveal the truth, his name would be cleared.

If the PCs confront Endymion with evidence they may have uncovered that implicates him, he curses and denies any involvement, saying, “Prime examples of their work! You see the nature of the vilification I’m up against!” He wants the PCs to sail to Hell Harbor and to investigate the troupe and find proof of their work against him, or at the very least, proof that they are Chelish agents. If no such proof can be found, then no harm is done, for Hell Harbor has no shortage of entertainers.

Assuming the PCs agree to do this task, Endymion invites them to visit his manor once the matter is settled and he’ll reward the PCs with the squadron of ships he promised.

THE THEATER OF CORRUPTION

Endymion gives the PCs an address for the old waterfront tavern his enemies have converted over to a makeshift theater, but requests that the PCs time their investigation of the site for the late night or early morning. Not only does this have a good chance of catching those within off guard, but it minimizes collateral damage—Endymion does not want any locals harmed in the pursuit of revealing the truth.

The tavern has been renamed the “Theater of Corruption” by the performers, who are a trio of Chelish expatriates sent to the Shackles by Admiral Druvalia Throne to wage a war of misinformation designed to draw attention away from Harrigan and his activities. She charged the troupe (which consists of the Chelish diva Isawyn, a tiefling illusionist named Lady Nightshade, and a showboating barbarian named Gorebeard Trench) with choosing a high-profile lord to target with their slander. The troupe chose Endymion after discovering the pirate lord already had a fair amount of rumors about supposed Chelish sympathies.

The Theater of Corruption is both a cover for the troupe’s actual efforts and a way for them to make a little extra money, while protecting themselves from direct reprisal from Endymion in a cloak of popularity. Deliberately delving into abstract reworkings of ancient Chelish theater, Isawyn creates disturbing operatic comedies featuring dark fiends as protagonists and mortal antagonists who embroil themselves in sins and devilry. As a result, the antagonist suffers ironic or tragic loss, deformity, and most commonly damnation. Isawyn’s new theater has raised quite a stir, even within the hardened port of Hell Harbor.

As long as the PCs approach the tavern between the hours of 3:00 in the morning and noon, they find the site to be relatively deserted. Although the tavern looks run down, the doors and windows are all kept locked, requiring a successful DC 25 Disable Device check to open.

A DEVILISH DECEPTION (CR 11)

Creature: While the troupe sleeps inside the Theater of Corruption, a barbed devil watches over the building, crouched atop the tavern under the cloak of invisibility granted by its ring. The devil was called up via a *planar binding* spell cast by Lady Nightshade and charged with watching over the tavern—the troupe has been expecting Endymion to send mercenaries against them for some time.

If the devil notices anyone snooping around during the off hours, it uses *major image* to confront the PCs with an illusion of a heavily armored guard who steps out from behind a corner to accost them loudly. The illusory guard demands the PCs’ names, then orders them to move along—stating that this building is under the personal protection of Lord Endymion himself. If the PCs persist, the guard calls out an alarm (which does little more than alert the troupe inside of trouble—they react as detailed in their “before combat” tactics), and then attacks. The barbed devil hopes to get the PCs to waste a few resources on the illusion, and once the PCs realize the truth, the devil attacks from the roof above with *unholy blight*. He cackles, and as ordered by Lady Nightshade (in an attempt to further confuse intruders who she suspects will have been sent by Endymion), shrieks out in Common, “Lord Endymion sends you his regards, fools... now die at his command!” The devil then leaps down to attack, fighting to the death.

BARBED DEVIL

CR 11

XP 12,800

hp 138 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 72)

Treasure: The barbed devil wears a *ring of invisibility*.

THE TROUPE (CR 13)

Creatures: The troupe of performers at the Theater of Corruption consists of three hardened adventurers who have been in the employ of Chelixa’s Thrice-Damned House of Throne for many years, working as slanderers, destroyers of reputations, and spreaders of propaganda and misinformation. They prefer to undertake these missions, which can last months or even years, under the cover of a performing troupe of actors, moving in much as they have done in Hell Harbor: buying a small tavern or theater, and using that to explain their long-term presence in the region rather than risk their true purpose becoming known.

When the PCs confront the three, they do not waste time trying to trick the PCs into thinking they’ve been duped—the slanderers would rather press the advantage as best they can and attack at once, hopefully killing the PCs quickly so that they can loot them and have their bodies disposed of before their first show of the day just after noon.

THE PRICE OF INFAMY

Isawyn handles the directing of the troupe's performances and functions as its public face. As a result, she also considers herself the leader of the group, although she's always careful to frame this role to the others in a way that makes them feel more like equals than minions. Isawyn is secretly somewhat bitter about her role as the leader of the troupe—she would much prefer a role as a true Chelish diva in a grand opera house in Egorian, and sees her current service to Thrune as merely another stepping stone in that direction.

Lady Nightshade serves as the troupe's magical support, be that a need for "special effects"—illusions or summoned monsters to play the role of victims in their performances—or a need for the same to play the role of thugs and minions in battle. Nightshade's ancestry carries a strong dose of urdefhan blood. These eerie, half-daemonic creatures dwell in the deepest reaches of the Darklands, and she's inherited their disturbing trait of transparent skin and musculature. She appears as a skeleton wrapped in a woman's translucent flesh, and as such tends to stay behind the scenes during performances so as to not distract the audience.

Gorebeard Trench is the troupe's violent, murderous star. Many of the performances involve nothing more than this savage barbarian mutilating himself, summoned creatures, or in rare cases, "volunteers" from the audience. In the latter cases, Isawyn does her best to prevent death, but at times Gorebeard gets carried away. He ends most of his performances by soaking his scab-crusting beard in fresh blood. Of the three, Gorebeard is perhaps the only one who tends to get mixed up whether he's "in character" or not, and in fights tends to showboat and revel in the carnage. His latest obsession is with pirates—he wears his pirate outfit all the time, and has been seriously considering self-amputation so he can wear a peg leg or a hook hand.

ISAWYN

CR 10

XP 9,600

Female human bard (Chelish diva) 10 (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting Inner Sea Magic* 32)

LE Medium humanoid (human)



Isawyn

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 13, flat-footed 19 (+7 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 shield)

hp 108 (10d8+60)

Fort +7, **Ref** +9, **Will** +9; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *keen rapier* +10/+5 (1d6+2/15–20)

Ranged mwk composite shortbow +10/+5 (1d6+1/x3)

Special Attacks bardic performance 26 rounds/day (move action, countersong, devastating aria, distraction, fascinate, inspire courage +2, inspire greatness, scathing tirade, suggestion)

Bard Spells Known (CL 10th; concentration +14)

4th (2/day)—*dimension door*, *dominate person* (DC 18)

3rd (4/day)—*confusion* (DC 17), *crushing despair* (DC 17), *dispel magic*, *haste*

2nd (5/day)—*cure moderate wounds*, *detect thoughts* (DC 16), *invisibility*, *sound burst* (DC 16), *whispering wind*

1st (6/day)—*animate rope*, *cure light wounds*, *disguise self* (DC 15), *unseen servant*, *ventriloquism* (DC 15)

o (at will)—*light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

TACTICS

Before Combat Isawyn casts *unseen servant* at the start of every day. She drinks a *potion of bear's endurance* just before combat.

During Combat Isawyn activates her bardic performance to inspire courage, then casts *invisibility* and uses *haste* and healing magic to aid Gorebeard and any summoned monsters. She uses her *unseen servant* to open and close doors, pick up fallen weapons, and otherwise do small tasks during combat to keep opponents on their toes and force them to waste time with move actions to counter these minor inconveniences. She targets the most heavily armored foe with *dominate person* and orders that person to strip out of his armor, drop his weapons, and then stand patiently in the corner of the room. If the battle turns bad, she risks ordering the dominated person to attack her enemies with his bare hands. If a foe looks like he's only a few points away from being knocked unconscious, Isawyn uses *devastating aria* to try to knock him out with the damage it causes.

Morale Isawyn doesn't want to die here; she casts *dimension door* to escape into the surrounding slums if reduced to fewer than 15 hit points. Isawyn holds grudges, however, and having heard of the PCs' infamous grudge against Harrigan, she seeks him out and joins him in defending his island if she can escape.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 21

Feats Arcane Strike, Dodge, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perform [sing]), Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +17, Bluff +23, Fly +17, Diplomacy +17, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Linguistics +6, Perform (dance) +17, Perform (oratory) +17, Perform (sing) +23, Sense Motive +23, Sleight of Hand +11

Languages Common, Gnome, Goblin, Infernal, Polyglot

SQ costume proficiency, famous, jack-of-all-trades (use any skill), prima donna, versatile performance (sing, dance, oratory)

Combat Gear *potions of bear's endurance* (2); **Other Gear** +1 *glamered breastplate*, +1 *buckler*, +1 *keen rapier*, masterwork composite shortbow with 20 arrows, spell component pouch, 92 pp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bardic Performance—Devastating

Aria (Su) By spending 1 round of bardic performance as a standard action, Isawyn can direct a burst of sound at a target within 30 feet. This deals 1d4+10 points of sonic damage to an object, or half this amount to a living creature.

Bardic Performance—Scathing Tirade (Su) To affect a creature with a scathing tirade, Isawyn must be within 30 feet of the target, who must be able to see and hear her. The targeted creature becomes frightened (Will DC 19 reduces the effect to the shaken condition) for as long as Isawyn continues the performance plus 1d4 rounds. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

Costume Proficiency (Ex) Isawyn is proficient with medium armor and can cast bard spells while wearing medium armor without incurring arcane spell failure chance.

Famous (Ex) Isawyn gains a +3 bonus on Bluff and Intimidate checks made in and around certain parts of central Chelixa—this ability is of little use to her at this time.

Prima Donna (Ex) Isawyn can expend an extra round of bardic performance to gain a +2 bonus on Perform checks or save DCs to her countersong, fascinate, and scathing tirade bardic performances.



Lady Nightshade

LADY NIGHTSHADE

CR 10

XP 9,600

Female daemon-spawn tiefling illusionist 11 (*Blood of Fiends* 19)
NE Medium outsider (native)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 16, flat-footed 20 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 shield)

hp 107 (11d6+66)

Fort +11, **Ref** +8, **Will** +11

Resist cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +6 (1d4/19–20)

Tiefling Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +10)

1/day—*death knell* (DC 11)

Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +15)

At will—invisibility field (11 rounds/day)

7/day—blinding ray

Illusionist Spells Prepared (CL 11th;

concentration +15)

6th—quicken *mirror image*,
summon monster VI

5th—*persistent image* (DC 19),

quicken *shield*, *summon monster V*

4th—*dimension door*, *greater invisibility*, *phantasmal killer* (DC 18),
summon monster IV (2)

3rd—*dispel magic*, *fly*, *lightning bolt* (DC 17),
major image (DC 17) (2), *summon monster III*

2nd—*acid arrow*, *bear's endurance*, *blur*, *glitterdust* (DC 16),
invisibility, *minor image* (DC 16)

1st—*disguise self* (DC 15), *floating disc*, *mage armor*, *magic missile* (2), *silent image* (DC 15)

0 (at will)—*ghost sound* (DC 14), *mage hand*, *mending*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*

Opposition Schools enchantment, necromancy

TACTICS

Before Combat Lady Nightshade casts *bear's endurance* and *mage armor*.

During Combat Lady Nightshade hangs back from combat, casting quicken *shield* and *greater invisibility* on the first round and then using *summon monster* spells each round thereafter. If her invisibility is countered, she casts quicken *mirror image* on the next round, snapping her fingers at the same time to also activate her *contingency* spell of *displacement*.

Morale Lady Nightshade abandons the troupe if reduced to fewer than 15 hit points, using *dimension door* to escape into Hell Harbor. After that, she does her best to avoid the PCs and escape the Shackles.

THE PRICE OF INFAMY

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 16, **Con** 18, **Int** 18, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

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

Feats Combat Casting, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Mobility, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Toughness

Skills Disable Device +5, Disguise +10, Fly +17, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (local) +8, Knowledge (planes) +8, Perform (act) +7, Sleight of Hand +16, Spellcraft +18

Languages Abyssal, Aquan, Common, Gnome, Goblin, Infernal, Polyglot

SQ arcane bond (amulet), contingency (displacement on self if she snaps her fingers as a free action), extended illusions +5 rounds

Combat Gear wand of grease (48 charges);

Other Gear masterwork dagger, cloak of resistance +2, ring of protection +2, ring of the ram (17 charges), spellbook, spell component pouch, ivory statuette of herself worth 1,500 gp, 328 gp

GOREBEARD TRENCH

CR 10

XP 9,600

Male human barbarian (savage barbarian) 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 79)

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 14, flat-footed 20 (+3 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +3 dodge, +4 natural, -2 rage, +4 shield)

hp 143 (11d12+66)

Fort +11, **Ref** +5, **Will** +9; +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge, naked courage +2, natural toughness +2

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +20/+15/+10 (1d3+9)

Ranged improvised weapon +13 (1d4+9)

Special Attacks greater rage (25 rounds/day), rage powers (intimidating glare, powerful blow +3, raging leaper +11, rolling dodge +2, unexpected strike), stunning fist (2/day, DC 16)

TACTICS

Before Combat Gorebeard drinks a *potion of barkskin* +2.

During Combat Gorebeard rages, then charges the closest, toughest-looking target, using Power Attack to gain a +6 bonus on damage rolls at the cost of a -3 penalty on attack rolls. He uses Stunning Fist in the first 2 rounds of combat. If he reduces a foe to fewer than 0 hit points, Gorebeard must make a DC 20 Will save to resist the compulsion to smear his beard in the victim's blood on his next turn as a move action—this provokes attacks of opportunity.

Morale Gorebeard fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 29, **Dex** 14, **Con** 18, **Int** 10, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 34

Feats Dodge, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Power Attack, Stunning Fist, Throw Anything, Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +15 (+19 when jumping), Intimidate +13, Perception +15, Perform (act) +10, Swim +22

Languages Common, Polyglot

SQ fast movement

Combat Gear *potions of barkskin* +2 (2); **Other Gear** +2 heavy wooden shield, bracers of armor +3, ring of protection +1, 593 gp



Gorebeard Trench

Treasure: Once the troupe is defeated, a search of the tavern finds 4,800 gp in coin and jewelry (some of which was earned honestly from patrons, but most of which was pickpocketed by Lady Nightshade). The search also turns up plenty of evidence proving that the three performers are Chelish agents sent to the Shackles by House Throne specifically to discredit Arronax Endymion. If the PCs found evidence that cast suspicion on Endymion in previous adventures, they should also find clues here that the evidence itself was created and set into motion by these three conspirators.

Development: If the PCs deliver the proof of his innocence to Endymion, the pirate lord thanks the PCs profusely. Although something of a sadist and a murderer, Endymion is as good as his word, and provides the PCs with a squadron of warships captained by a snarling, scruffy, but quite compelling commodore named Brok "Madshanks" Cordain.

MADSHANK'S MARAUDERS

Configuration 5 warships

Commodore Brok "Madshanks" Cordain (Profession [sailor] +15, Charisma modifier +2)

Hits 20; **Morale** 3

Defense Value 25

Attack Value +15; **Damage** 1d6+5

Morale Check +2

PART TWO: ISLANDS OF THE DAMNED

Beyond compelling them to build a fleet, Tessa's initial missive to the PCs suggested they seek out Barnabas Harrigan's former first mate, Scags Rotgram. This advice is sound, for Harrigan's method of command relies on fear more than devotion or trust, and once

THE VANISHING OF SCAGS ROTGRAM

“Looky mates, I know all about Scags Rotgram, and his ship, the *Devilish Duchess*. Fell afoul o’ the curse of Dagon’s Jaws, he did, or so everyone says. But see here, the curse of Dagon’s Jaws is all a bucket of sahuagin piss! The problem is, ain’t too many know how to navigate ’em. They’re ‘red isles,’ mates. Iron heavy. They’ll kick yer compass off a little. Yellowbacks get scared when their needles start twitchin’ and head for landmarks. Problem is, there ain’t none ‘cept by traveling between the two isles. There’s a quarter-mile strait between ’em called Dagon’s Gullet. Why? Cause it swallows ships. It’s all sargasso and shoals. Those trying to shoot the Gullet usually end up grounding out on the rocks. Bet there’s a dozen ships at the bottom of that channel. I’d also bet the *Devilish Duchess* ain’t one of ’em. Scags, he warn’t fooled by old legends. He knew what he was doing when he headed that way—knew that if someone were chasin’ him, the Jaws’d be his best bet t’scape pursuit. If Scags ain’t back yet, I’d wager that’s his own doing—that man’s got a talent for dodgin’ Besmara’s last kiss, he does. I’m sure he’s still kickin’ somewhere on that rock...”

an officer escapes from under the man’s direct control, few remain loyal for long. Unfortunately, regardless of where the PCs start asking around for Scags, the answers seem to be the same—none of Harrigan’s old officers still live, for Harrigan is notorious for seeking out and making violent examples of those who dare turn against him—much as he is currently planning to do to the PCs, in fact.

Every day, the PCs can attempt a DC 35 Diplomacy check to gather information about Scags Rotgram. This Diplomacy check gains a cumulative +1 bonus each time it’s made, but costs a PC 2d20 gp each time in bribes and the like. With a failure, they only find frustrating dead ends and doubtful leads—but rumors that Scags still lives persist. Once someone succeeds at the check, the work pays off, and the PCs learn about Scags Rotgram’s last known whereabouts (see the sidebar, above).

SCAGS’S FATE

Scags Rotgram served as Harrigan’s first mate aboard the *Wormwood*, but he gave Harrigan the slip only a few months before the *Wormwood* was captured by Cheliox. This gave Scags the time he needed to go to ground and hide out—otherwise, Harrigan would certainly have tracked him down by now and killed him twice over. For a time, Scags commandeered a ship called the *Devilish Duchess*, and made a quiet living

for himself plundering ships along the southern Mwangi coast under an assumed name. When Scags returned to the Shackles, however, Harrigan was waiting for him. Scags only survived the ambush by sailing the *Devilish Duchess* toward a notoriously accursed pair of islands known as Dagon’s Jaws. Trusting that the cursed denizens of that isle would do for Scags, Harrigan broke off pursuit, and to date it appears that Harrigan made the right call, for no word of Scags or the *Duchess* has been heard since.

In truth, Scags decided to “shoot the Gullet” between Dagon’s Jaws in an attempt to lose his pursuers, a decision that cost him his life. While the advice on navigating the Jaws from “The Vanishing of Scags Rotgram” is mostly sound, the true danger in the region is far more sinister than mundane navigation perils like seaweed and hidden reefs. In fact, a colony of aquatic undead shapeshifters known as brykolakases has long haunted Dagon’s Jaws. The brykolakases keep watch over the islands and attack ships that pass through Dagon’s Gullet. After slaying and devouring sailors, the creatures dismantle the ships and hide their hulks within a massive cavern hidden on the smaller island, hoping to keep the Gullet clear of wrecks and lure in new prey. Thus, to the rest of the world, the ships seemingly disappear.

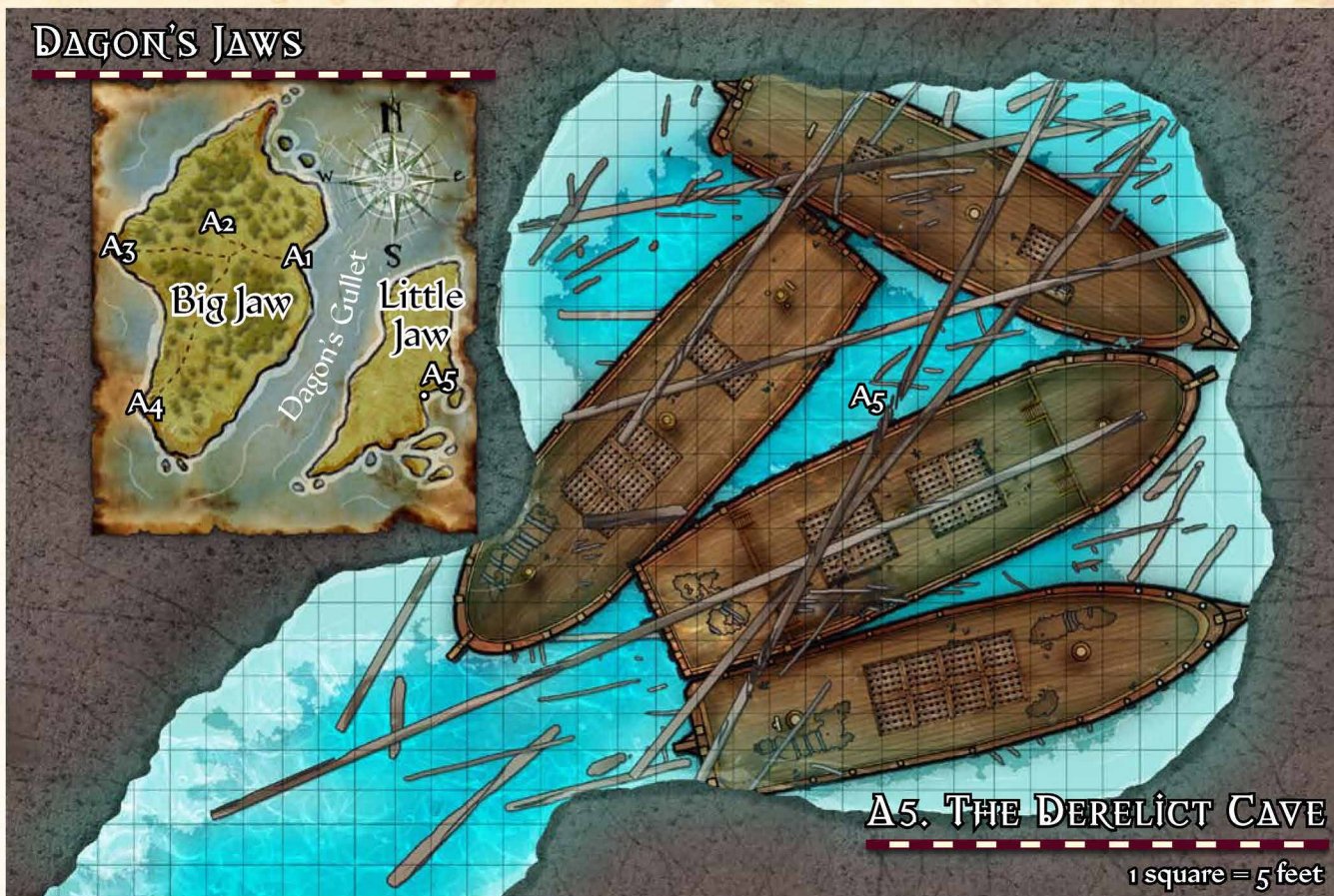
The brykolakases struck soon after the *Devilish Duchess* entered the strait. As the undead swarmed up over the sides of his ship, Scags swiftly realized why Dagon’s Jaws had earned their reputation, as well as just how outclassed and outnumbered he was. Determined to save his crew, Scags desperately attempted to beach the *Duchess* on the western island so that his crew could escape the water-dependent undead. The captain and several of his officers held the deck long enough for two-thirds of the crew to abandon ship and make the mad dash into the jungle to safety. Scags himself was not as lucky. He exists now in the brine below the Gullet as a lacedon minion of a brykolakas master (see area A1).

Scags’s only surviving officer is his first mate Alise Grogblud, whom he charged with leading the crew to safety into the jungles of Dagon’s Jaws, and who remains in command of the remaining crew. And while Scags is now dead (or, to be precise, undead), much of his knowledge of Harrigan and his fortress lives on in certain documents that, to Alise’s knowledge, still reside aboard the wreck of the *Devilish Duchess* (see area A5).

EXPLORING DAGON’S JAWS

Dagon’s Jaws consist of a pair of rocky islands southwest of Motaku Isle. Big Jaw, the larger western island has a peak elevation of almost 300 feet above sea level. The smaller isle, Little Jaw, rises no more than 60 feet above sea level (with 50 feet of that height consisting of the island’s cliff shoreline). A rocky, relatively shallow (never more than 30 feet deep) three-quarter-mile channel known as Dagon’s

DAGON'S JAWS



A5. THE DERELICT CAVE

1 square = 5 feet

Gullet divides them. All Profession (sailor) checks made within a mile of Dagon's Jaws take a -4 penalty due to the difficulty of navigating the area.

Big Jaw: The larger of the two islands, Big Jaw is covered by relatively dense jungle. A few small streams provide fresh water as they trickle down the hillsides to the sea. Tropical birds, foul-tempered monkeys, snakes, and insects make up the primary forms of life on Big Jaw.

Little Jaw: Little Jaw's soil is rockier and less fertile than that of Big Jaw—no trees grow here, and the place is dominated by tall, hearty, yellow grass. Sea birds and tortoises are the primary inhabitants of Little Jaw. No beaches welcome visitors here, for 50-foot-high cliffs surround the island.

Dagon's Gullet: Navigating the Gullet requires intense concentration—if a pilot fails a DC 25 Profession (sailor) check, the ship hits a hidden reef and becomes grounded. This deals 8d8 points of damage to the ship and prevents it from moving until the tide changes (roll 2d4 to determine the number of hours until the next high tide).

THE DROWNED DEAD (CR 12)

Creatures: A frightening number of the shapechanging brykolakases swim the waters around the Gullet and Little Jaw, usually in the form of rays or dolphins. The undead

are patient, and do not immediately attack all ships that sail near the shores, but it's only a matter of time before the brykolakases show themselves. As those slain by a brykolakas rise as undead themselves (ghoulish lacedons with pale gray skin), the number of undead in the region is significant—enough that the PCs could face as many waves of the undead as you wish. Listed below are the various ways in which the PCs could find themselves faced with a brykolakas attack.

Running Aground in the Gullet: If the PCs attempt to sail through Dagon's Gullet, they won't be attacked unless they run aground. In this case, a raiding party of brykolakases clamber up onto the deck of their ship at some point after the ship runs aground—stage the timing of this event so it's as sinister and creepy and tense as possible (perhaps just after night falls, or as the ship is just about to float free of the reef).

Spending the Night Offshore: If the PCs decide to spend the night anchored offshore, the brykolakases swim out to their ship to attack that evening. If the PCs leave their crew alone on their ship while they investigate the islands, you might want to consider running a short "side adventure," in which the PCs take on the roles of the NPCs that they left behind to try to defend the ship from the attack. In this event, chances are probably good that

the brykolakas will defeat the crew, in which case you should allow the PCs to make DC 15 Perception checks as soon as it's logical for them to notice that their ship has gone adrift. If the PCs act quickly (likely with the aid of teleportation or flight or other magical means of travel), they should be able to reach their ship before it runs aground, at which point the PCs themselves will need to fight the remaining undead and retake their ship.

Rescuing the Castaways: If the PCs manage to avoid all encounters with the undead, you should have the brykolakas attack the ship as they're returning to their ship with the rescued castaways from area A3.



Elder Brykolakas

All of the brykolakas in the area are particularly powerful elder versions of their kind. In their natural form, they appear as tall, lanky humanoids with rotting, gray flesh, tangles of black hair, and cold gray eyes, but they do not assume this frightening form except when attacking. Whenever a group of undead attacks, the force consists of three brykolakas and 1d6 lacedons—a CR 12 encounter on average.

ELDER BRYKOLAKASES (3)

CR 9

XP 6,400 each

Variant brykolakas (*Tome of Horrors Complete* 85)

CE Medium undead (aquatic, shapechanger)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +24

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+5 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 123 each (13d8+65)

Fort +10, **Ref** +9, **Will** +12

DR 10/silver; **Immune** undead traits; **SR** 20

Weaknesses water dependency

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee 2 claws +16 (2d6+6/19–20 plus disease)

Special Attacks create spawn, death throes

TACTICS

During Combat The brykolakas let their lacedon minions engage opponents first, using them as sacrificial troops to distract enemies and perhaps use up some resources before they step in to focus their attacks on the same foes.

Morale A brykolakas fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 20, **Con** —, **Int** 15, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 30

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (claws), Improved Natural Attack (claws), Power Attack, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (claws)

Skills Acrobatics +18, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (nature) +15, Perception +24, Stealth +21, Swim +27

Languages Common

SQ change shape (dolphin or manta ray, *beast shape I*)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Create Spawn (Su) A humanoid or monstrous humanoid killed by a brykolakas rises as a lacedon in 1d4 days under the control of the brykolakas that created it.

Death Throes (Su) When reduced to 0 or fewer hit points, a brykolakas is destroyed and its body changes into a pool of deadly poison that quickly fills a 10-foot-radius spread (if underwater) or a 10-foot-diameter puddle (if on land) in 1 round. All creatures in this area are exposed to this foul venom. The poison disperses in 1 round if underwater, or 1d2 rounds if on land.

Brykolakas poison: Death throes—contact; *save* Fort DC 20; *onset* 1 minute; *frequency* 1/round for 2 rounds; *effect* 1d6 Dex damage; *cure* 1 save. The save DC is Charisma-based.

THE PRICE OF INFAMY

Disease (Su) A brykolakas's claw attacks deliver a virulent disease that breaks down the victim's internal organs, resulting in internal bleeding and a gradual darkening of the skin. This supernatural disease is called brykolakas fever. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Brykolakas fever: Claw—injury; save Fortitude DC 20 negates; onset 1 minute; frequency 1/day; effect 1d4 Con and 1d4 Dex damage; cure 1 save.

Water Dependency (Ex) A brykolakas can survive out of the water for 6 hours. After that, its body begins drying out, and within 1 hour, the brykolakas crumbles into dust (this does not activate its death throes ability) unless it can reach saltwater before the hour passes.

LACEDONS (1d6) CR 1
XP 400 each
hp 13 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 146)

A1. THE BEACH (CR 11)

The waves have gnawed great chunks from the earth that edges the shoreline along this rocky beach. From the water, the land slopes gradually upward into a series of rocky escarpments. Beyond, the terrain continues its ascent through tangles of dense brush toward the highest point of the island. A game trail leads up into the jungle from the beach itself, while fragments of what appears to have once been a ship's longboat lie strewn among the rocks along the shore.

It was here that the castaways from the *Devilish Duchess* came ashore. A search of the wrecked longboat finds a plank bearing the *Devilish Duchess's* name upon it, confirming that Scags's crew was indeed here. The game trail that leads up the rocky slope into the jungle is the route the castaways took to flee the beach. No Climb check is required here to move inland. A successful DC 20 Survival check notes sets of humanoid tracks entering and returning along this route—barefoot tracks left by the castaways during their periodic visits to the shore to confirm that the undead still waited for them in the waves of the Gullet.

Creatures: As the surf rolls against the shore, the shapes of a half-dozen sodden corpses bob face-down in the gentle waves. These are actually a number of lacedons, floating in the surf and posing as the drowned corpses of Scags Rotgram's crew. They lie still in the water, letting the surf push them toward the intruders. Meanwhile, their brykolakas masters wait in deeper waters, still in dolphin form. These two brykolakas wait for their lacedons to engage foes, then swim up out of the waves, assume their true forms, and attack any obvious clerics or other characters who utilize positive energy, knowing that these foes are the most dangerous to them.

Although it's unlikely the PCs will recognize him, one of the lacedons here is none other than Scags Rotgram himself. If the PCs rescue the castaways from area A3 and he remains in this location, they certainly recognize their old captain and do their best to put him out of his misery (or ask for his remains to be buried at sea).

ELDER BRYKOLAKASES (2) CR 9
XP 6,400 each
hp 123 each (see page 20)

LACEDONS (6) CR 1
XP 400 each
hp 13 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 146)

A2. THE SACRED SPRING

A sizable clearing opens along this ridge, the edge marked by rows of upturned boulders that almost seem to be keeping the trees back. In the center, a bubbling spring breaks the surface, forming a small series of freshwater pools dotted with mountain lilies and swarming with dragonflies. Along the west side, the spring waters race downhill through a series of rocky, moss-covered sluices cut into rock, eventually running down the hillside toward the sea to the southwest.

After the cyclops empire of Ghol-Gan collapsed, yet before the advent of the modern era, countless societies lived among the islands of the Shackles. These small populations came and went, often without leaving any evidence of their existence behind at all. This small spring is all that remains of one such culture that dwelled upon Dagon's Jaws thousands of years ago.

The stones surrounding this sacred spring bear faint carvings of three entwined spirals, identifiable with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check as an archaic symbol of Pharasma. The waters from the sacred spring itself channel into the rock, creating a sort of fresh waterspout that emerges off the western shoreline. Despite the fact that the brykolakas are powerful enough creatures to withstand the spring's effects, they tend to avoid the spring, as well as the water along the western shore.

A successful DC 20 Survival check is enough to note a large number of footprints around the spring—the castaways come here often for water.

Treasure: The spring's blessed waters are highly magical—among other things, they act as a bane against undead. The waters themselves contain traces of positive energy, which radiate outward from the source. A weapon anointed with the waters of this spring gains the benefit of the *undead bane* weapon special ability until sundown—the pool's waters can anoint up to three weapons per day in this manner. A character who drinks from the



fountain gains the effects of a *cure moderate wounds* spell (CL 10th)—a single character may benefit from the waters in this manner up to once per day. Water bottled from the spring becomes nonmagical, yet remains pure and delicious to drink. The effects of the spring can be identified as if it were a magic item (CL 10th).

A3. THE CROWN (CR 11)

A swath of barren soil stretches atop a forty-foot-high cliff overlooking the Fever Sea to the west of the isle, sheltered from the sea winds by a lone massive boulder. The boulder rises another thirty feet above the edge of the cliff, an almost pyramidal structure perched precariously at the edge. A half-dozen crude shelters—little more than lean-tos—huddle around a campfire in the lee of the stone.

Creatures: The survivors of the *Devilish Duchess* have dwelled here for several weeks now, and while they are in no danger of starvation or dying of thirst (there's plenty of game and water available on Big Jaw, after all), their morale is low. Originally numbering 18 strong, only nine castaways remain after several attempts to escape the island on rafts resulted in death from undead talons. All of the castaways have endured poisoning and disease from fights against the brykolakases, and while they've recovered by now (due in large part to spending the last few weeks away from the dangerous beaches), they've all but given up on the opportunity for rescue.

Each time the PCs sail their ship off the island's west shore, there's a cumulative 10% chance that the castaways (who have largely given up on watching for ships) spot the ship. The castaways immediately light a signal fire that the PCs automatically notice.

The castaways, however, are paranoid—after having been chased into the region by Harrigan, their leader Alise Grogblud worries that this new ship isn't here to rescue them but to finish the job. As a result, she rallies the castaways into defensive positions, planning on attacking whoever answers the signal so that the castaways can take their ship and escape the islands. The castaways move into hiding in the surrounding jungle, leaving the central campfire smoldering. When the PCs enter the campsite, the castaways step out of the surrounding brush, crossbows at the ready, as Alise demands the PCs drop their weapons and gear and hand over their ship. How the PCs react to these demands is up to them. A successful DC 15 Perception or Sense Motive check is enough for a PC to note how desperate and ill-prepared the castaways are.

If the castaways aren't aware of the PCs' approach, they are sprawled about the campsite, listless and depressed. Roll 1d6, with the result indicating how many of the castaways are asleep when the PCs arrive. Alise is always

awake. In this event, Alise commands the castaways to wake up in a frantic voice and does her best to demand the PCs' surrender, despite her less-than-prepared situation.

The simplest way to secure the cooperation of the pirates is to fight back and accept their surrender, of course, but silver-tongued PCs may be able to use Bluff, Diplomacy, or even Intimidate to convince the castaways that they're here to help. The castaways are initially hostile, but the PCs need only convince Alise of their good intentions to secure the cooperation of the lot of them.

ALISE GROGBLUD

CR 7

XP 3,200

Female human rogue 8

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; Senses Perception +10

DEFENSE

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

hp 71 (8d8+32)

Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +1

Defensive Abilities evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 scimitar +11/+6 (1d6+4/18–20)

Ranged mwk throwing axe +10 (1d6+3)

Special Attacks sneak attack +4d6

TACTICS

During Combat Alise makes good use of Spring Attack in combat, staying on the move so she can make flanking attacks while minimizing full attacks on herself from enemies. She avoids ending her turn standing within 5 feet of any foe.

Morale Alise surrenders if either she's brought below 25 hit points or at least four of the other castaways are defeated. In this event, Alise throws herself upon the PCs' mercy, tearfully explaining that she feared they were assassins sent by Harrigan and begging them to rescue her and her crew from this "cursed rock." If she finds out that the PCs are Harrigan's enemies, she tells them about the files her captain Scags kept on his old commander, stored in a watertight chest on the *Devilish Duchess*, which she knows has been claimed by the brykolakases and is in area A5. See "Rescue and Repairs" on page 25 for more details on how Alise can help the PCs against Harrigan.

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 12

Base Atk +6; CMB +9; CMD 23

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Martial Weapon Proficiency (scimitar), Mobility, Spring Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (scimitar)

Skills Acrobatics +14, Bluff +12, Climb +14, Intimidate +12, Perception +10, Profession (sailor) +10, Stealth +14, Survival +7, Swim +14

THE PRICE OF INFAMY

Languages Common

SQ rogue talents (bleeding attack +4, combat trick, stand up, weapon training), trapfinding +4

Gear +2 leather armor, +1 scimitar, masterwork throwing axe, ruby worth 1,000 gp

PIRATE CASTAWAYS (8)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

Human fighter 2/rogue 3

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; Senses Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 shield)

hp 51 each (5 HD; 2d10+3d8+23)

Fort +7, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1, evasion, trap sense +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk cutlass +9 (1d6+3/18–20)

Ranged mwk light crossbow +6 (1d8/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 13, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (cutlass)

Skills Acrobatics +9, Appraise +6, Climb +11, Intimidate +7, Perception +9, Profession (sailor) +9, Swim +11

Languages Common

SQ rogue talents (combat trick), trapfinding +1

Other Gear +1 studded leather, +1 buckler, masterwork cutlass, masterwork light crossbow with 10 bolts, 60 gp

Story Award: For each castaway the PCs manage to rescue alive from the island, award them XP as if they had defeated that castaway in combat.

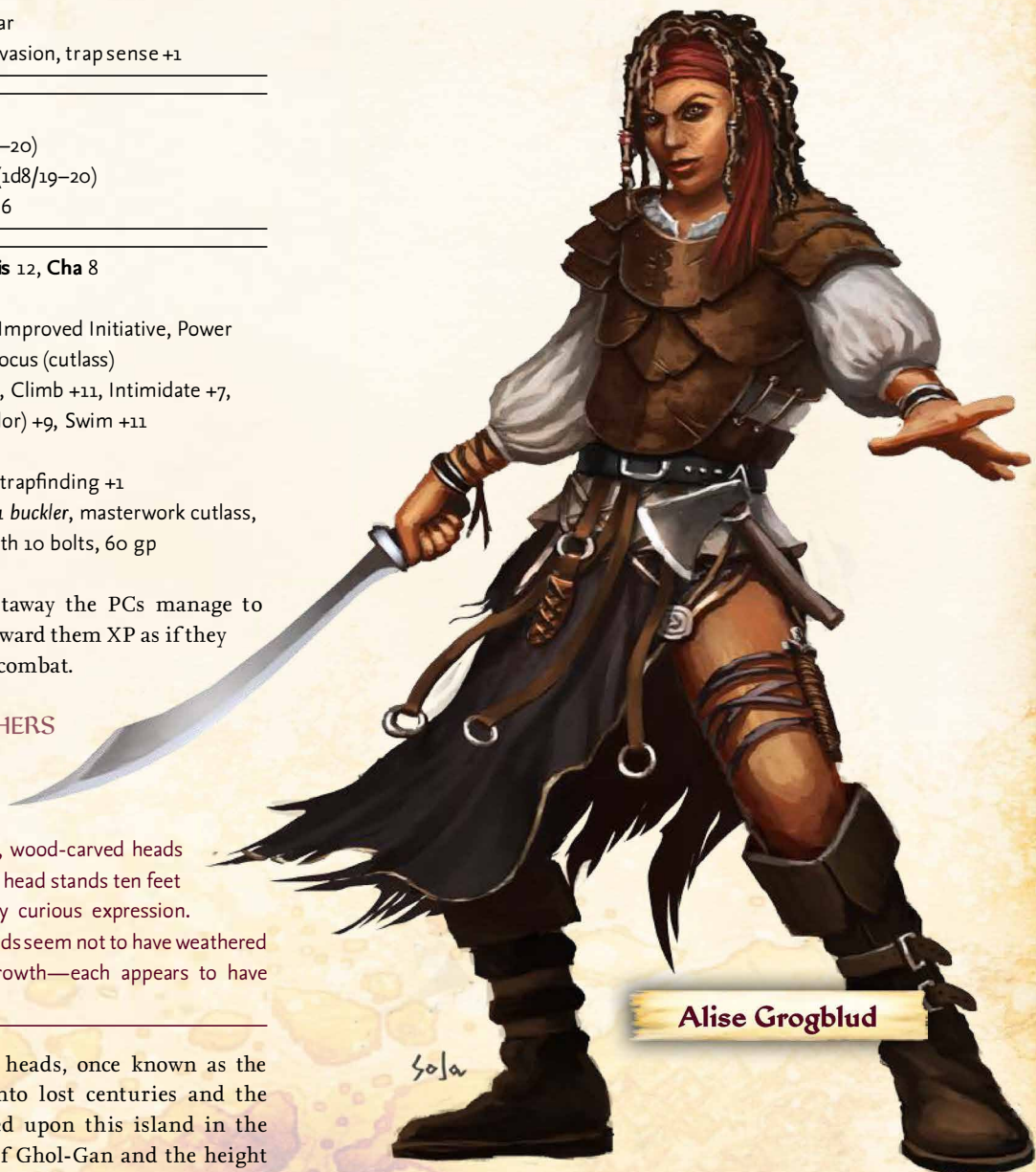
A4. THE DUSK WATCHERS (CR 12)

Atop this thirty-foot-tall sea cliff loom a half-dozen towering, wood-carved heads peering out over the ocean. Each head stands ten feet in height, and bears a strangely curious expression. Although carved of wood, the heads seem not to have weathered or become covered with overgrowth—each appears to have been carved as if only yesterday.

These mysterious wooden heads, once known as the Dusk Watchers, date back into lost centuries and the mysterious tribe that dwelled upon this island in the dark years between the fall of Ghol-Gan and the height

of the Age of Destiny. The stone heads are magically enhanced to be as hard as iron—in the time of their construction, these heads possessed magical auras that allowed those who dwelled upon the island to use strange amulets to unerringly navigate their way home through any storm or across any distance. The heads retain an aura of divination, and their original use can be determined with a successful DC 25 Spellcraft check.

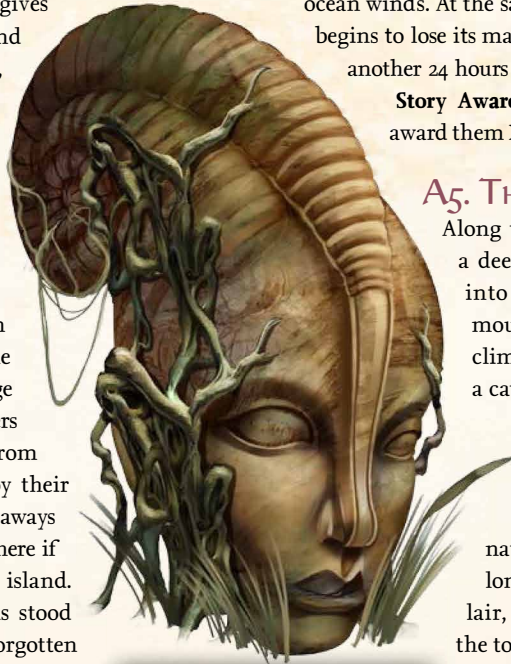
Creature: Although the ancient tribe that once lived upon this island is long gone, one of their legacies lives on here—a creature of gleaming black metal and chiseled stone, wrapped in a heavy cloak with a deep cowl. This is Lakorian-Kriss, a kolyarut inevitable bound to the area



Alise Grogblud

as a protector and guardian of the Dusk Watchers. The inevitable has very little imagination and even less capacity for free thinking—it was placed here to guard the Dusk Watchers from any but the ancients themselves.

As the PCs come within 30 feet of the Dusk Watchers, the inevitable (which spends its time invisible) speaks to them in its booming voice: “OUTLANDERS! STEP AWAY FROM THE DUSK WATCHERS OR BE JUDGED!” The kolyarut gives intruders 1 round to retreat beyond the 30-foot mark—if they do not, it immediately attacks. As long as the PCs remain respectfully distant, Lakorian-Kriss remains silent, but if the PCs can make the stoic (and unfriendly) inevitable at least friendly via Diplomacy or Intimidate, they can carry on a short conversation with the guardian. The inevitable unfortunately has little knowledge of the undead in the waters surrounding the island, apart from confirming that it does not enjoy their proximity. It knows about the castaways at area A3, and can direct the PCs there if they ask if anyone else lives on the island. Over the thousands of years it has stood vigil here, Lakorian-Kriss has forgotten much about the ancient tribe who placed it on this duty, save for the fact that it must continue to guard the Dusk Watchers until those ancients release it. Lakorian-Kriss only reveals the method of its release if made helpful (somewhat paranoid, the inevitable finds it easier to believe that any promise to release it is merely a sneaky way to approach and damage the Dusk Watchers). To release Lakorian-Kriss from its bound duty, one need only anoint the six brows of the six wooden heads with water taken from the sacred spring at area A2.



Dusk Watcher

LAKORIAN-KRISS

CR 12

XP 19,200

Kolyarut inevitable (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 163)

hp 150

Treasure: If the PCs successfully dismiss Lakorian-Kriss from his no-longer-necessary duties, the grateful inevitable promises to reward the PCs at some future date. The next time the PCs return to the Island of Empty Eyes, a delivery is waiting for them—a lacquered wooden box (itself worth 400 gp and delivered by a very busy and rushed arbiter inevitable that does not remain to engage in conversation) that contains a single and unusual *scroll of summon monster*

VIII (CL 20th) that can be used to summon Lakorian-Kriss for aid.

Developments: Lakorian-Kriss’s presence is the only thing maintaining the magic that suffuses the Dusk Watchers and the pool at area A2. If the PCs defeat the kolyarut or dismiss it from its duty, a slight tremor rushes through the surrounding soil. Minutes later, the towering wood-carved heads crumble to ash and blow away in the ocean winds. At the same time, the sacred spring in area A2 begins to lose its magical properties—it only functions for another 24 hours before turning into nonmagical water.

Story Award: If the PCs dismiss the inevitable, award them XP as if they had defeated it in combat.

A5. THE DERELICT CAVE (CR 13)

Along the southwest shore of Little Jaw lies a deep inlet that cuts a narrow cleft deep into the stony cliffs. At low tide, the gaping mouth into the cavern is quite navigable, climbing almost 10 feet above the water in a cathedral-like arch, but at high tide the waves move in, forcing DC 20 Swim checks for those who wish to enter.

Creatures: Beyond the cave entrance lies a vast cavern with a natural cathedral-like roof. This cave has long served as the primary brykolakas lair, though at any one time, only a few of the total undead in the region can be found here. Currently, there are just four of them present. Over the years, the brykolakas have dragged dozens of ships into the cave, transforming the interior into a chaotic graveyard of rotting derelicts draped with sea kelp like fetid cocoons. Despite the changing tides, the sickly green water stinks of death. During the day, only a few rays of sunlight penetrate from the outside world. At night, the cavern is pitch black.

To fit the ships into the sea cave, the brykolakas break off the ships’ masts. They can only haul the ships in during high tide, at all other times, the ships’ keels have too much draw. Once inside, the creatures let the ships float and slosh together so they can use them as macabre tenements. As older ships rot and fall apart, the brykolakas haul in new ones, and beneath the cavern waters rest the rotting remains of dozens of ships and thousands of bones. At present only four ships remain in good enough shape to identify. All four are sailing ships—the largest among them being the *Devilish Duchess*.

The four elder brykolakas who lurk amid the ships here watch and wait for the PCs to start exploring the ships, lying in wait in the water below. They move to attack any target that lets itself get separated from the main group, or all at once if the PCs attempt to loot any of the treasure they find within.

THE PRICE OF INFAMY

ELDER BRYKOLAKASES (4)

CR 9

XP 6,400 each

hp 123 each (see page 20)

Treasure: Much of the cargo once carried by the ships here has fallen into the water below and has been destroyed, but the PCs can still find a fair amount of plunder in the cargos of the four still-seaworthy ships. In all, there are 8 points of plunder to be had from these four ships.

In addition, a successful DC 30 Perception check made while searching the captain's cabin of the *Devilish Duchess* reveals a small hidden panel in a beam just above a slowly moldering hammock. Scags kept his small hoard of private treasures in a hollow within this beam. Although Scags thought none of his crew knew about this secret stash, his first mate Alise Grogblud did, and if she tells the PCs about the hidden cache, they can locate it automatically. Scags's treasures consist of a leather pouch containing 120 pp, an exceptionally well-carved ivory statuette of two entwined succubi worth 500 gp, three bottles of fine spiced Sargavan rum worth 250 gp each, two *potions of remove disease*, a *potion of cure serious wounds*, and a *bottle of air*. In addition, a small leather journal is wedged in the hollow. This journal contains a detailed accounting of Scags's grievances against his former captain, Barnabas Harrigan. The bulk of the journal is relatively useless, although the PCs may take some level of satisfaction at reading another person voicing their complaints about their shared enemy. Near the back of the journal, Scags makes clear his fears that, as long as the both of them live, Harrigan will never cease in his attempts to track Scags down and kill him for daring to abandon the *Wormwood*. The back of the journal contains numerous notes about how Scags hopes to some day invade Harrigan's fortress in the middle of the night and assassinate him. While Scags never had the guts to carry out these plans, his research is solid—he'd visited Harrigan's fortress many times before he left the man's employ, and the PCs can use these notes to great effect in Part Four of this adventure (see "Planning Revenge" on page 39 for more details).

The true treasures here, however, may well be the four derelict ships—while they lack masts, the four ships are in remarkably good shape. If the PCs can salvage them, they'll gain four new sailing ships for their fleet (see "Rescue and Repairs" below).

RESCUE AND REPAIRS

The four sailing ships found in area A5 are badly damaged—each has only 400 hit points remaining (with 0 hit points for the sails) and cannot sail at all until the masts are repaired. If the PCs choose to make repairs here, they'll be attacked by groups of brykolakases every

night (sometimes more than once a night), but the PCs can tow the ships back to a safe port to repair them.

More importantly, if the PCs return from Dagon's Jaws with four new ships and the rescued castaways, word quickly spreads. The PCs gain 1 point of Disrepute and Infamy for this accomplishment, but more importantly, the proof that they braved the so-called "curse of Dagon's Jaws" and not only survived, but returned with additional ships and crew, quickly attracts enough new sailors that they can crew the four ships recovered here free of cost.

THE LOST SQUADRON

Configuration 4 sailing ships

Commodore Alise Grogblud (Profession [sailor] +10, Charisma modifier +1)

Hits 12; **Morale** 3

Defense Value 20

Attack Value +10; **Damage** 1d6+4

Morale Check +1

PART THREE: THE BLACK TOWER

In order to build a strong fleet in the Shackles, one needs more than mere gold to pay for ships and crews. Those who would seek command must also bring a significant amount of Infamy to the table. During the Skull & Shackles Adventure Path, the PCs should have been accumulating Infamy all along, yet they may find that they're still short of the maximum amount of Infamy they could possess.

While the PCs could certainly work to increase their Infamy as this adventure progresses, Tessa Fairwind's advice to seek out a particularly infamous treasure to claim as their own represents the fastest way they can gain a significant boost in a single dangerous mission. Her suggestion of seeking out the lost weapon *Aiger's Kiss* is an excellent one, and if the PCs ask around about the weapon, the rolling eyes, low whistles, and shaking heads they'll elicit from normally brave scallywags should confirm the fact. Any group capable of retrieving *Aiger's Kiss* and wielding it in battle would be assured of a place in the oral histories of the Shackles.

As with gossip, tall tales, and bawdy jokes, the popularity of fabled and infamous treasures waxes and wanes as the years roll by. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (history) or Knowledge (local) check or Diplomacy check to gather information confirms that the mysterious legend of *Aiger's Kiss* currently dominates the curiosity and imaginations of the Free Captains of the Shackles. It's been 25 years since infamous pirate Captain Tevenida Aiger (known in the legends to have been a powerful cleric of Norgorber) led a raid on the Isle of the Black Tower and its foul mistress, the Shrouded Queen, whose mastery over ocean currents and strange monsters had rendered the nearby sea lanes dangerous for any pirates seeking a

shortcut into the lucrative shipping lanes. Captain Aiger lost her sword, her ship, and her life in that raid, but the Shrouded Queen was defeated and the sea lanes around her isle opened again. Yet while the Shrouded Queen no longer menaced the surrounding seas, something remained active within her Black Tower, for all attempts to retrieve *Aiger's Kiss* have failed. With this year being the silver anniversary of the Shrouded Queen's defeat and the loss of Captain Aiger's magical sword, the tale seems to be on everyone's lips, along with speculation about Captain Aiger's son, an unpleasant man with the nickname of "Barracuda," of whom very little has been heard of late. Many suspect Captain Aiger's son of being but the latest fool to go missing in the Black Tower, while others muse that he's fled the Shackles completely, unable to bear the shame of the loss of such a potent heirloom. In any event, all agree that the time is right for someone to seek out *Aiger's Kiss* and rescue the sword from the Black Tower!

ISLE OF THE BLACK TOWER

The Isle of the Black Tower lies along the western edge of the Shackles archipelago. Despite being near the Cannibal Islands, even the notorious flesh-eaters give the isle wide birth, for it is commonly believed today that the island is haunted by the ghost of the Shrouded Queen. In fact, the rumored dangers on the small isle are quite true, if inaccurate—for something worse than a mere ghost haunts the place.

A mysterious slender tower of black stone sits at the small island's center. Standing over 400 feet in height but measuring only 30 feet in diameter, the tower looks more like an impossibly tall black pin sticking out of the center of the isle, as if some vengeful god had pierced the island from above with a gargantuan needle. In fact, the tower was the creation of a powerful mystic theurge and cleric of the demon lord Dagon—her original name lost to the mists of time, she was known at the height of her power as the Shrouded Queen, due to her penchant for dressing in funerary shrouds, bound to her body by coils of rope. She raised the Black Tower herself, choosing this island as the site for her home due to the thinness of the planar boundaries between the Material Plane and a deep, remote Abyssal realm known as Yad Iagnoth—the legendary entrance to the mind-shattering realm of the fiends known as qliploth. The tower itself was grown more than constructed—the Shrouded Queen tore a hole in reality and helped guide a tumorous length of Abyssal stone out of the hole, sculpting it into the 400-foot-tall tower before the artificial planar rift stabilized and closed. From her new home, the Shrouded Queen began studying the Abyssal realm of Yad Iagnoth and those realms that lay deeper still, in hopes of finding a way to conjure and control one of the mightiest of the qliploth, a unique monster known as the Iathavos.

She turned to the surrounding shipping lanes to supply her ever-growing demand for live sacrifices—necessary payments to the increasingly inhuman monstrosities with which she trafficked for knowledge.

The Shrouded Queen's reign ended when a cabal of frustrated and frightened pirate captains joined forces under the flag of their most powerful member, the Norgorber-worshipping pirate priestess Tevenida Aiger. Armed with the legendary sword *Aiger's Kiss*, she led her allies on a brazen assault on the Black Tower. Despite the facts that no one rightly knows what happened to Captain Aiger or her sword, and that not a single pirate returned from the mission, during the next few months the seas calmed and the weather around the island returned to normal. Whatever had happened, it appeared that the Shrouded Queen had perished. Soon after, many captains eagerly launched their own expeditions to the island, determined to plunder the tower's supposed treasures and recover *Aiger's Kiss* for themselves, yet none of them emerged from the mysterious edifice either. As the Black Tower's fame grew in the years to follow, increasingly few have dared to set foot upon the island. Were it not for this year being the twenty-fifth anniversary of Aiger's assault on the Black Tower, few would be talking about the legend today at all.

In truth, Captain Aiger and her allies underestimated the Shrouded Queen's power, and were surprised to find that the tower itself contained an almost fully functional portal to the Abyssal realm of Yad Iagnoth, one through which the queen could pull an endless amount of qliploth minions to throw against the invaders. Captain Aiger and her allies breached the tower and fought their way down through the chambers within. In the end, only Aiger herself survived long enough to confront the Shrouded Queen in her inner sanctum, and when she realized she could not slay the queen, she did the next best thing—she used *Aiger's Kiss* to destroy the Abyssal portal. The resulting surge of magical backlash unleashed raw Abyssal energy into the Black Tower, simultaneously transforming the Shrouded Queen and cursing her. She became a qliploth herself, a powerful augnagar, yet at the same moment she became bound to the sundered portal, unable to travel far from its fractured frame without sickening and wasting away. Captain Aiger managed to escape as far as the floor above, but perished from her wounds before she could make it out of the tower to report her Pyrrhic success. The newly transformed Shrouded Queen was unable to repair her portal or even touch *Aiger's Kiss*—although she won the fight, she lost the battle, and for the quarter century to follow has remained imprisoned in her tower.

The island on which the Black Tower is located was little more than a nameless, jungle-covered rock before the Shrouded Queen rose her home from its heart. Today, the island is known as the Isle of the Black Tower in honor of

THE PRICE OF INFAMY



its most striking feature. The island is roughly circular, about a half-mile in diameter, covered with dense jungle, and 120 feet above sea level at its highest point (where the Black Tower extends another 400 feet into the air). The highest orders of life dwelling in the island's jungle are insects, spiders, and other invertebrates—even birds avoid the island, leaving the place an infested morass. Characters who travel through the thick undergrowth do so as if through trackless jungle. For each full hour spent in the humid, unpleasant tangle, a PC must make a successful DC 15 Fortitude save to resist contracting red ache (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook 557*) from the countless insect bites they must endure.

Creature: As the PCs approach the Black Tower, there's a 50% chance of encountering one of the nyogoths from area B4 as it prowls the jungle. In this case, the nyogoth fights the PCs until reduced to fewer than 60 hit points, at which point it fills the area with *acid fog*, then flies back to the Black Tower until it is close enough to use *dimension door* to return to area B4.

THE BLACK TOWER

The Black Tower is made of a strange, weirdly porous but fantastically strong dark stone with a rough, grainy feel similar to pumice, yet with the strength of marble. The slender tower is supported as much by magic as its architecture, something a successful DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (engineering) check confirms. The tower has no visible entrances—in fact, only one entrance into the tower exists, located at its peak. Indeed, the bottom half of the tower consists of solid stone (see the side view on the map on page 28). The sides of the tower are overgrown with thick, slippery vines—a DC 10 Climb check is all that's required to scale the tower's sides as a result. The chambers inside the Black Tower are unlit unless otherwise indicated. Ceilings vary from 15 to 20 feet high.

B1. THE CROWN

Years of neglect and exposure to a quarter-century of storms have apparently caused the tower roof to collapse in on

THE BLACK TOWER

1 square = 5 feet



itself, forming a bowl-shaped, rubble-filled concavity at the tower's crown. Most of the stonework and rubble lies buried beneath thick blankets of moss, vines, and other hanging plants that cling to the foot-deep layer of soil, composed entirely of the sodden, decomposing remains of over two decades of jungle growth.

A successful DC 25 Perception check made while searching this overgrown area reveals a section where the ground seems strangely sunken. This marks the point at which an ancient trap door hangs partially open, clogged with rubble, soil, and roots. A few minutes of work clears the debris and reveals an old stone trap door opening onto the top of a curved flight of stairs winding down into the tower. A successful DC 18 Strength check is all that's required to force the door open wide enough to admit entry.

The walls of the curving stairway beyond are carved with disturbing imagery of coils of tentacles seemingly without end twisting downward into the darkness. Now and then, the tentacles are shown crushing people, ships, and in more than a few cases, entire cities or islands. Amid all of these carvings is repeated an eerie symbol—an octopus eye surrounded by sinister runes. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check identifies this as the symbol of Dagon, the demon lord of deformity, the sea, and sea monsters.

B2. ENTRANCE HALL (CR 11)

Patches of dull blue mold spot the walls of this room, partially obscuring a faded mural that depicts some sort of enormous amalgam of eel, fish, and cephalopod rising off the shore of an island. Opposite the entrance, a pair of patina-crusted iron posts suspend a massive gold-plated disc, etched with elaborate runes. Within the center of the disc stares a grayish and bulbous fleshy eye with a horizontally shaped pupil. Beside each post, a serpentine basin rests upon a short, wooden pedestal painted with flaking gold leaf. Within a small alcove opposite the massive disc stands a wooden statue also painted in badly flaking gold leaf. The statue depicts the same horrid creature as shown in the mural, and holds its hands in front of its chest to clench a fist-sized chunk of serpentine carved in the shape of a human heart. A reinforced wooden door stands to the southwest, its hinges and metal hardware forged in the shapes of fish fins and spiked gills. Iron spikes have been hammered into the perimeter of the door, presumably to hold it shut. Crudely scrawled graffiti mars the door's face.

A successful DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check ties the decorative motifs to the worship of Dagon. The strange eye-disc is the demon's unholy symbol and the paintings and statuary represent his various cultural depictions.

THE PRICE OF INFAMY

The basins have long dried out, leaving their interiors lightly crusted with sea salt crystals. A successful DC 15 Perception check reveals a lump beneath the salt in one of the basins that disguises a fist-sized chunk of serpentine. This chunk of stone is about the same size as the statue's serpentine heart and can be used as a replacement weight to prevent the trap from triggering (see Trap below).

The graffiti on the door is written with charcoal in the Common tongue and simply reads "She Lives." Beneath the inscription is a charcoal handprint with wide splayed fingers. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check associates the handprint with a sect of Norgorberite holy assassins who refer to their deity as "Blackfingers"—the same sect that Captain Aiger belonged to. The door leads to area B3, and must either be forced open (hardness 5, hp 35, Break DC 25) or its spikes removed with a DC 20 Disable Device check to access the area beyond.

Trap: The serpentine heart in the statue's fists is far more than a valuable work of art—it's a key that can be used to open the secret door in the adjacent room. While easily removed, an object of similar size and weight must be placed within the hands as quickly and gently as possible (requiring a DC 20 Dexterity check) to prevent triggering a deadly trap. One round after the heart is removed, the eye upon the great disc animates and begins shooting dangerous magical rays around the room, targeting living creatures at random. The eye can be destroyed with force (AC 15, hardness 8, hp 130, Fort +6, Break DC 34)—although attacks against it trigger the trap as surely as removing the serpentine heart without replacing it with an identical weight do. Once the trap is triggered, it continues firing rays each round until an object of equal weight to the serpentine heart is placed in the statue's hands.

EYE OF DAGON

CR 11

XP 12,800

Type magic; Perception DC 32; Disable Device DC 32

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** automatic; **Bypass** replace serpentine heart with equal weight (DC 20 Dexterity check)

Effect Once activated, the eye of Dagon fires a blast of vile-smelling water at a random creature in the room; the water evaporates as quickly as it strikes, making a +10 ranged touch attack. A creature struck takes 1d4 points of Wisdom damage and must make a DC 20 Fortitude save to resist

being transformed into some form of foul-looking but relatively harmless sea creature (such as an eel, an octopus, or a hagfish) as if by *baleful polymorph*. A victim that is so transformed automatically takes on the mental facilities of the new form, and is likely to asphyxiate due to the lack of water.

Treasure: The 6-inch-diameter serpentine heart is worth 750 gp and weighs 10 pounds.

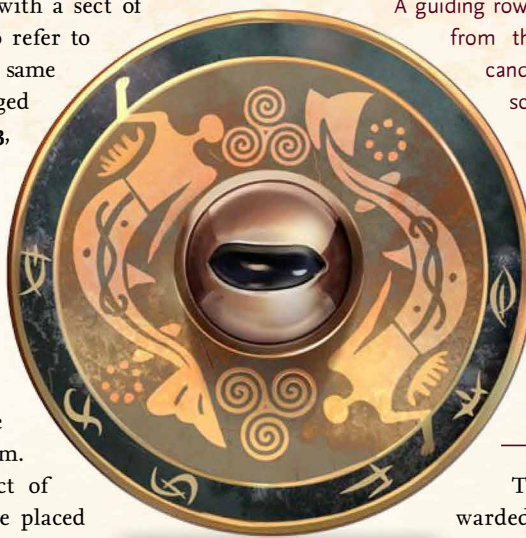
B3. HALL OF CANDLES (CR 12)

A guiding row of black iron candleholders protrudes from the curving southwestern wall, their candles long since melted into foul-scented, yellowish tallow lumps. Behind the candles, flaking plaster laid in the shape of fish scales exposes a rough stone wall beneath. Within a shallow alcove at the end of the hall stands a serpentine statue carved in the shape of a naked male human being devoured by tiny, flesh-boring eels that wind their hungry way through every part of his body save for an area over the center of his chest.

The statue is actually a magically warded secret door that conceals a flight of steps leading to the level below. An examination of the statue (and a successful DC 20 Perception check) reveals that the statue actually stands before a flight of stairs leading downward, and can be slid into the alcove to the north. Unfortunately, the statue is also trapped—something that may not be immediately obvious to the observer!

On a result of 30 or higher on the Perception check, an additional interesting feature of the statue can be noted. The section in the center of the statue's chest that's devoid of eels can be rotated and then pushed into the statue to reveal a hollow sized to accept the serpentine heart from area B2. Placing the heart into this hollow causes the statue to slide harmlessly aside, providing access to the stairway behind without triggering the trap.

Trap: If the statue is forced aside, or if any attempt to bypass it via effects like *gaseous form* is made, the statue suddenly shrieks in horrific pain as the burrowing eels seem to come to life. At the same time, flesh-eating eels suddenly manifest on the bodies of all living creatures in area B3 or on the stairs leading down to area B4 (save for those who worship Dagon) and begin chewing their way into their victims' flesh. The curse activates each time a new attempt to move or bypass the statue is made—teleporting can bypass this curse but only if the



Eye of Dagon



teleportation effect brings the traveler directly to area B4 and not to the stairwell leading down to it.

CURSE OF THE FLESHEATERS

CR 12

XP 19,200

Type magic; Perception DC 30; Disable Device DC 30

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** automatic; **Bypass** place serpentine heart inside of statue

Effect When this trap is triggered, all creatures in area B3 or on the stairs leading to B4 who do not worship Dagon are immediately cursed to become infested with flesh-eating eels. Victims must succeed at a DC 20 Will save or take 1d4 points of Constitution drain and be staggered for 24 hours from the pain. On a successful save, a victim is only sickened for 1 minute. Only those under the effects of this curse can perceive the burrowing eels, for this is a mind-affecting curse, and the eels themselves are merely incredibly realistic hallucinations. The periodic bites that open on a cursed victim's body are plainly visible to all.

Curse of the Flesheaters: Curse—trap: save Will DC 20; frequency 1/day; effect 1d4 points of Constitution drain plus staggered for 24 hours (or sickened for 1 hour with a successful save); cure—(any effect that heals this Con drain also ends the staggered condition—at least until the next time the victim fails his save against the curse's ongoing effect)

B4. CRUMBLING ANTECHAMBER (CR 12)

Huge, once-lavish tapestries hang from this circular chamber's walls, although the curtains are now sodden and thick with yellowish fungus. The floor in the northwest portion of the chamber has crumbled away into a chamber below, leaving behind a gaping hole and significant cracks and fissures in the remaining mold-encrusted floor. A few furnishings remain, including the moldering remnants of chairs decorated with gold leaf and a wooden table, ornately carved with ichthyic motifs and draped with rotting silken cloth. A tall clay statue sculpted in the image of a bloated, fishlike humanoid stands to the south, also covered with mold. A few feet ahead, another flight of stairs descends deeper into the lower chamber exposed by the collapsed flooring.

The floor in this room is as unstable and dangerous as it looks, as a successful DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) check can confirm. Only the section of ground directly above area B6 is stable—stepping on any of the floor elsewhere in this room (including the landing between the stairs) brings a good chance of additional collapse. Check for a collapse at the end of each round for each creature standing in the room—a Small creature has a 25% chance of causing a collapse while a Medium one has a 50% chance. Tiny creatures do not raise the chance, and the

floor automatically collapses if a Large or larger creature stands upon it. If a collapse occurs, the victim falls 20 feet into area B5 below, and also triggers the mold on the walls.

Hazard: The fungus growing on the walls, the statue, and across the room is a large colony of yellow mold. All surfaces in this room are caked with the stuff.

YELLOW MOLD

CR 6

XP 2,400

Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook 416

Creatures: While paranoid adventurers may fear that the clay statue to the south is a golem, it is, in fact, merely a statue. The actual guardians of the room are a pair of horrific qliphoth that survived the original attack on the Black Tower by Captain Aiger and her allies. These qliphoth are known as nyogoths, roughly man-sized clots of wriggling intestines wrapped around a many-toothed maw. Some of the dangling intestinal lengths end in snapping mouths of their own, and the whole dripping mass floats and wriggles in the air using a supernatural ability to fly (and thus the two nyogoths do not run the risk of collapsing the floor in this room). Both nyogoths are “starving”—while they cannot actually die or even take damage from starvation, it has been so long since either has eaten that they attack on sight and fight to the death, driven by their relentless hunger. Note that, as nyogoths are immune to poison, they need not fear the yellow mold's spores, and may well deliberately activate a patch of mold adjacent to a PC during the fight as a move action.

NYOGOTHS (2)

CR 10

XP 9,600 each

hp 125 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 224*)

Treasure: A successful DC 20 Perception check reveals that the clay statue's eyes glitter. Almost entirely crusted over with yellow mold, each of the statue's four eyes is in fact an emerald worth 1,000 gp.

B5. BREATH OF DAGON (CR 12)

Rubble from the collapsed ceiling fills the center of this room, which is shaped like three-quarters of a circle. The walls bear scorch marks, and the plaster shows severe cracks. To the southeast, two eerie ivory statues stand on either side of a closed door. These statues are carved into the forms of handsome men that have been bound, gagged, and blindfolded, both heads turned inward to face the other. The statues seem strangely moist, as if they have just been pulled from the sea.

The rubble on the floor creates difficult terrain in this room. This chamber is where Captain Aiger and her allies clashed with the agents of the Shrouded Queen. The



majority of those invaders were defeated by the queen and her minions, but not before the queen was forced to flee down to the portal chamber (area B7).

A successful DC 25 Knowledge (history) or Knowledge (religion) check identifies the statues as depictions of Maok and Seft, twin sons of the fabled Mad Mwangi Priest-King Arot-Sheb, as described in the epic poem *Tides of Ishiar*. In the legend, Arot-Sheb sacrificed his sons to Dagon by lashing them to a drowning pole at low tide. The following day, the Priest-King drank the seawater from his drowned sons' lungs as part of an unholy ritual. Soon after, he received guidance from Dagon that enabled him to not only conquer the fabled Crystal Isles of Zyracia off of Garund's western coast, but also to whisk them away to Dagon's Abyssal realm of Ishiar as offerings to the demon lord.

Trap: The two statues that guard the door into area B6 are trapped. Any attempt to damage the statues or to pass between them (even if only to attempt to open the door) triggers the trap, which causes both statues to weep and drool seawater from the eyes and mouths. A successful DC 20 Perception check made while searching the statues isn't enough to notice the trap (that requires a DC 30 Perception check), but is enough to note that the statue heads can be rotated. Turning both heads so they look away from each other instead of toward each other deactivates the trap, but the statues' heads automatically turn back to face each other after a delay of 1 minute, which may catch the PCs unawares as they return from the chambers beyond!

BREATH OF DAGON

CR 12

XP 19,200

Type magic; Perception DC 30; Disable Device DC 30

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity and visual (*true seeing*); **Reset** automatic;

Bypass rotate heads to face away from each other

Effect When this trap is triggered, the creature between the statues becomes afflicted with a potent curse—the breath of Dagon. If only one of the statues' heads is rotated away, the trap still triggers but the victim gains a +4 bonus on his initial saving throw to resist being affected by the curse.

Breath of Dagon: Curse—trap: *save* Fortitude DC 20; *frequency* 1/minute; *effect* every round, the cursed victim's lungs fill with water, and he must immediately hold his breath or risk drowning. Every minute, the victim can attempt a new DC 20 Fortitude save—with a successful save, he can expel the water from his lungs and breathe normally for 1 minute. This condition is permanent until the curse is lifted—but until that time, the victim may find himself unable to sleep and thus grow increasingly fatigued or exhausted, since having one's lungs fill spontaneously with water is a sure method to wake you from even the deepest slumber! If the victim can breathe water, this curse has no effect.

B6. THE SHAFT

Flaking plaster speckled with patches of mold crusts the walls of this room. Faded frescoes portray a strange, crystalline city rising out of a vast ocean beneath a gray sky. In several places, imposing iron hooks protrude from the wall, now rusted with age. To the southwest, a jumble of bones held together by an aged suit of black leather armor slumps against the wall, while in the middle of the room, a huge circular trap door sits in the floor. Three lengths of chain have been hammered over the hatch, bound in place by iron spikes that have been hammered into the floor. A black handprint is on the wall next to the skeleton, along with a few lines of scribbled text.

This room was once the entrance to the Black Tower's portal chamber, and now serves as the final ward preventing the Shrouded Queen from escaping her prison. After she used her sword *Aiger's Kiss* to seal the Abyssal portal, Captain Aiger watched horrified as the Shrouded Queen transformed into an augnagar qlipthoth. The pirate priestess fled back up the shaft using air walk, but as she fled, the augnagar got in one last strike at the pirate, biting her and afflicting her with the rotting curse.

Upon making it back up here, Captain Aiger cast *forbiddance* on the chamber below to prevent the augnagar from using planar travel to escape from the room, then slammed the heavy door in place. Too large to fit through the shaft in pursuit, the augnagar was forced to rage impotently as Aiger hammered spikes into and through the chains once used to raise and lower the trap door. Unfortunately, Aiger's wounds and the rotting curse had left her in no condition to attempt an escape with several more qlipthoth guardians still lurking in the tower's upper reaches. She fell asleep against the wall, hoping to survive through the night and remove the rotting curse in the morning. But as fate would have it, Aiger's magic failed her and the curse eventually overtook her. In her final agonizing hours, she used a stick of charcoal to scribble a warning on the wall next to what would become her grave:

"The Shrouded Queen yet lives below, bound by Blackfingers' forbiddance and *Aiger's Kiss*. Seek not entrance for naught but her rotting curse awaits ye—let the slumbering darkness lie!"

Captain Aiger's remains can be identified via *speak with dead*—note that this may also allow the PCs to learn some or all of the events that led to Aiger's demise, depending on the questions they ask.

Opening the trap door leading to area B7 requires either several minutes of work undoing the spiked chains, or a single DC 30 Strength check to wrench the door open. Below, a 5-foot-wide shaft drops down 50 feet into area B7 below. The shaft's walls are smooth and difficult to climb, requiring a successful DC 30 Climb check to safely scale.

Treasure: Captain Aiger's remains are still clad in her +3 shadow studded leather armor. A ring of improved swimming sits on one finger, a ring of improved climbing on the other. Her other gear has long since rotted away.

B7. PORTAL CHAMBER (CR 14)

Decorative stone rafters partition the ceiling of this large circular chamber. A frieze between the vaulted ceiling and lower portion of the chamber depicts a chain of intertwining sea creatures and human bones. In the chamber beneath this frieze, a large altar overlooks a fetid, brackish pool of stagnant water. At the bottom of the pool, what appears to be a black-bladed short sword is impaled in the stone.

Once the chamber in which the Shrouded Queen hoped some day to conjure the Iathavos qliploth to serve her, this room now serves as the queen's prison. The entire chamber is affected by a neutral evil *forbiddance* spell (CL 13th) placed 25 years ago by Captain Aiger, her last act against the Shrouded Queen. The pool once served as a portal capable of linking to

a number of vile bodies of water deep in the Abyss, but is now little more than a pool of brackish water thanks to Aiger and her sword *Aiger's Kiss*.

Creature: When Aiger destroyed the portal, the backlash of magic transformed the Shrouded Queen from a beautiful wizard into a hideous monstrosity. Today, the monster she became remembers only fragments of her previous life as a human, her current intellect barely capable of comprehending anything but her own frustration at being unable to escape this room. A quarter-century of hunger for rotted flesh, as with the nyogoths above, has not harmed the Shrouded Queen—but it has left her insensible with rage and anger. As an augnagar, the Shrouded Queen looks something like a hideous mix of eel, octopus, bat, and spider, all melded together into a body the size of an elephant.

SHROUDED QUEEN

CR 14

XP 38,400

Augnagar qliploth (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 219)

hp 203

TACTICS

During Combat The Shrouded Queen starts combat by casting *waves of exhaustion* on enemies, then switches to physical attacks. Note that while she's too large to fit into the shaft leading out of the room through the ceiling, she can fly up there and use her reach (up to 30 feet with her claws) to attack foes who attempt to flee via that route. If the PCs remove the *forbiddance* spell, she can use *dimension door* to pursue foes throughout the tower, but the nature of the curse she suffers prevents her from leaving the structure for any reason.

Morale Insane with her ravenous hunger, the Shrouded Queen fights to the death.

Treasure: Strewn throughout the chamber lie the Shrouded Queen's most valuable items. These include a set of tiny but elaborate statuary of horrifying deep-sea creatures carved from whalebone and coral worth 2,000 gp, 10 clay amphoras filled with assorted pearls and gold and silver ingots worth a total of 5,000 gp, and a crystalline case containing a collection of six ampoules filled with blood samples from Azlanti kings worth 3,000 gp. One of the most valuable



Shrouded Queen

of her items, though, is the golden tiara she wears upon her misshapen head—an eldritch work of art worth 9,500 gp. Fragments of her spellbooks lie strewn about the room—they are too damaged to be of any use.

The greatest treasure in the room, though, is not one of the Shrouded Queen's belongings, but the sword *Aiger's Kiss* (see page 60), currently embedded in the bottom of the destroyed portal pool. The pool is only 3 feet deep, but pulling *Aiger's Kiss* out of the pool is a standard action that requires a successful DC 28 Strength check. Worshipers of Norgorber automatically succeed at this roll, regardless of their actual Strength modifier. As *Aiger's Kiss* is removed, the pool's waters drain away mysteriously into the tiny hole that remains—from that point on, eerie but unintelligible whispers seem to periodically well up from the hole, but the portal itself remains deactivated.

Infamy: Once word spreads that the PCs have recovered *Aiger's Kiss*, they gain 4 points of Disrepute and Infamy. They gain this reward even if they end up giving the sword to Aiger's heir, but not if he takes *Aiger's Kiss* from them (see below).

AIGER'S HEIR (CR 13)

Although the defeat of the Shrouded Queen and the reclaiming of *Aiger's Kiss* might seem to the PCs to be the climax of this part of the adventure, one final encounter awaits them as they emerge from the Black Tower. From their vantage point atop the tower, the PCs can see that a second sailing ship flying the Shackles flag has come broadside to their own ship.

This second ship is the *Wanton Wastrel*, and her captain is the son of Captain Tevenida Aiger—a man known as Valerande “Barracuda” Aiger. Barracuda earned his nickname for the fact that he filed his own teeth into a row of fangs reminiscent of the toothy fish. Never a particularly brave man, Barracuda has lived his life in the shadow of his famous mother. He became a pirate in an attempt to make his own name for himself, and the extreme steps he takes with his persona (filing his teeth, his outlandishly flamboyant outfits, his shrill voice) are all examples of him trying to shed the shade of his mother from his name.

But when the legend of *Aiger's Kiss* reemerged into popular chatter at the seaside taverns, Barracuda realized here was a chance to embrace his legacy—if he could claim *Aiger's Kiss* for himself, no one would ever see him as a shadow of his mother again! Of course, he'd heard the stories of the Black Tower, and had no desire to risk his life in an attempt to explore it, but once he learned the PCs were going to try for it, he decided that a group of fellow pirates, their resources taxed by an exploration of the dangerous site, would make a much easier target. In short, he's waiting for the PCs to return with *Aiger's Kiss*, then plans on taking the sword from them by force.

At this point in the adventure, the PCs' current Infamy score determines what Barracuda Aiger does. If the party's Infamy score is 40 or lower, Barracuda attacks and boards their ship. Otherwise, he hangs back and waits for the PCs to emerge from the Black Tower to bargain with them.

Barracuda Attacks: If Barracuda attacks the PCs' ship, you can assume he takes the ship with little problem. (If you prefer, you can have the PCs play out the battle between his ship and theirs, of course, but this adventure assumes Barracuda has no problem taking a relatively undefended ship.) He anchors his ship, the *Wanton Wastrel*, nearby the PCs' ship. He lowers the PCs' flag and flies his own—a barracuda on a blue field. From the top of the tower, the PCs can make a DC 20 Perception check to see that their ship appears to have been boarded. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (local) check identifies the flag as belonging to Captain Valerande “Barracuda” Aiger. Barracuda has brought half of his crew over with him to seize the PCs' ship. Six of these pirates are capable of helping Barracuda in battle; the others are there only to help crew the PCs' ship. Barracuda imprisons all of the PCs' crew in the ship's hold but doesn't kill any of them—he only wants *Aiger's Kiss*, after all, not the PCs' ship or their undying hatred. If the PCs visibly approach, Barracuda hails them and proposes a trade: their ship and crew for *Aiger's Kiss*. If the PCs agree, Barracuda asks one PC to deliver the sword to him; he then ties up that PC and he and his crew leave for the *Wanton Wastrel* and try to escape into the open seas. Stealthy groups can sneak on board their ship to ambush Barracuda—in this case, or if the PCs decide not to bargain, Barracuda and his men fight the PCs on the deck of the PCs' ship, or attempt to flee with the ship if attacked from range.

Barracuda Plays It Safe: If the PCs' ship is obviously powerful, or if Barracuda attacks and is defeated, then he approaches the PCs with a bit less confidence. If he's a prisoner, he only begs to be let go, explaining he came here to retrieve his rightful inheritance, *Aiger's Kiss*. If he's simply hanging back and observing, he calls for parley with the PCs, demanding they turn over *Aiger's Kiss* lest they face his wrath. This is mostly bravado and bluster—if the PCs call him on his threats, he backs down immediately and asks for a private meeting with the PCs, during which he remains relatively well mannered as he tries to negotiate a deal for *Aiger's Kiss*. Barracuda may offer the contents of his ship's hold for the sword (worth 8 points of plunder), and while this is not enough to pay for as fine a weapon as *Aiger's Kiss*, he's not above offering one or two of his magic items to sweeten the deal if the PCs push back. He'll certainly agree to join the PC's fleet with the *Wanton Wastrel* if the PCs offer him the sword in exchange (see Development, below).

CAPTAIN VALERANDE "BARRACUDA" AIGER CR 12

XP 19,200

Male half-elf rogue (pirate) 5/Inner Sea Pirate 8 (*Ultimate Combat* 72, *Pirates of the Inner Sea* 24)

CE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +5; Senses low-light vision; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 17, flat-footed 20 (+7 armor, +1 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural, +1 shield)

hp 76 (13d8+18)

Fort +5, Ref +13, Will +3; +2 vs. enchantments, +1 vs. fear and mind-affecting

Defensive Abilities evasion, uncanny dodge, unflinching*

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +2 rapier +15/+10 (1d6+4/18-20), +1 boarding axe +13 (1d6+2/x3)

Special Attacks sneak attack +6d6 plus trip

TACTICS

During Combat Barracuda uses his officers to set up flanking opportunities, barking orders to move them around the combat as needed. He uses his swinging reposition ability to try to bull rush players over the side of the ship, then moves closer to allies so he can make full attacks as soon as possible. He uses Combat Expertise if faced by particularly hard-hitting foes.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 15 hit points, Barracuda drops his weapons and surrenders, hoping to appeal to the PCs' sense of pity at this point to claim his birthright.

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 10

Base Atk +9; CMB +14; CMD 28

Feats Agile Maneuvers, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Feint, Sea Legs*, Skill Focus (Bluff), Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +23, Appraise +14, Bluff +21, Climb +4, Intimidate +15, Perception +17, Profession (sailor) +15, Sense Motive +15, Swim +20

Languages Common, Elven, Osiriani

SQ elf blood, pirate tricks (classic duelist, deep breath, defensive climber, foot sweep, rigging monkey), rogue talents (bleeding attack +6), swinging reposition*

Gear +4 studded leather, +2 rapier, +1 boarding axe, amulet of natural armor +1, ring of protection +1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Pirate Tricks (Ex) Barracuda gains a +1

competence bonus on attack rolls with a cutlass, rapier, or short sword. He can hold his breath for 36 rounds before risking drowning. He does not lose his Dex bonus to AC when climbing. If he damages a foe with sneak attack, he can try to trip that foe as an immediate action. He gains a +2 bonus on Climb checks when using ropes, and when he does so, climbs twice as quickly as normal.

*See *Ultimate Combat*.

BARRACUDA'S OFFICERS (6)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

Pirate castaways (see page 23)

hp 51 each

Development: While *Aiger's Kiss* is certainly a fine weapon, this encounter gives the PCs the chance to not only earn the Infamy for recovering the legendary blade, but to gain an addition to their fleet as well. Barracuda has several additional allied ships he can call to his side if need be—and if the PCs offer *Aiger's Kiss* as a bribe of sorts, he swiftly pledges himself and his allied ships to the PCs' fleet. This squadron of ships only works together as long as Barracuda himself serves as the squadron's commodore, though.

Captain "Barracuda" Aiger

BARRACUDA'S RAIDERS

Configuration 3 sailing ships

Commodore Valerande "Barracuda" Aiger (Profession [sailor] +15, Charisma modifier +0)

Hits 9; **Morale** 3

Defense Value 25

Attack Value +15; **Damage** 1d6+3

Morale Check +0

Story Award: If the PCs manage to resolve this encounter without resorting to combat, award them XP as if they had defeated Barracuda and his six officers in combat.

PART FOUR: HARRIGAN MUST DIE

As this adventure progresses, Captain Barnabas Harrigan is juggling two different and equally complex tasks. He's preparing for the imminent invasion of the Shackles with his minions, working with a small group of highly trained soldiers and scrags (many of whom have been supplied by Cheliox in the form of "prisoners" captured from ships) to prepare them for a surgical strike against Fort Hazard once the Chelish armada attacks Port Peril. At the same time, he's preparing for a naval strike against his onetime swabs and riggers—the PCs. Since Harrigan can only be in one place at a time, he's reluctantly ceded control of his fleet to his current first mate, Adelita Doloruso.

Fortunately for the PCs, the combination of Harrigan's meticulous preparations for this private war and Admiral Doloruso's difficulties in getting her various commodores and squadrons to actually work together instead of bicker among themselves means that it takes quite some time for Harrigan's fleet to get into shape.

The timing of the attack on the Island of Empty Eyes is thus left for you to decide. This adventure assumes that the PCs are there to take part in the defense of their home. If they're avoiding (by chance or design) a return to their home, you should consider having them overhear a rumor that the Island of Empty Eyes has been sacked and claimed by someone else—this "someone else" could be a fleet of Kuru cannibals, an attack by unknown raiders, or even an uprising of undead cyclopes. The rumors could even be accurate—whispers that Harrigan is sending (or perhaps has already sent) his fleet against the PCs' island. A successful DC 20 Diplomacy check to gather information (or perhaps the use of magic like *sending* to communicate with an ally left at the isle) confirms the fact that the island hasn't actually been attacked, but the mere fact that the rumors are flying should get the PCs heading home soon enough.

THE BATTLE OF EMPTY EYES

Before you begin the battle, make sure you're familiar with the rules for fleet battles, as presented on pages 62–69. If you wish, you can allow the PCs to play a few

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

At the start of this adventure, the PCs hopefully helped pass Issue #5 during the Pirate Council, ensuring additional funding and support for the investigations into the Chelish conspiracy in the Shackles. The remainder of this chapter assumes the PCs got this issue to pass, but if they did not, then Harrigan is able to focus less on covering up his treachery and more on bringing in Chelish aid. This manifests in two ways—a larger fleet and more defenses at his fortress.

Fleet Support: Add an additional squadron of seven sailing ships (identical to Zura's Kiss Squadron) to the battle—this additional squadron does not count against the normal maximum of three squadrons that Adelita would normally be able to command.

Fortress Support: In every encounter that includes clerics of Norgorber, add two bearded devils as loyal minions supplied by House Thrune. In every encounter that includes smugglers, add two additional smugglers. Harrigan himself has been granted an additional erinyes bodyguard as well.

"practice rounds" with the rules—to do so, they need merely split their current squadrons into smaller fleets and run training missions in their harbor—attacks are all simulated in the training, but you can still use the fleet battles rules in this simulation to give the players a chance to get used to the rules.

Adelita Doloruso and her fleet arrive at dawn, and they waste no time in sailing to the attack. You can allow the PCs to discuss pre-battle tactics as you wish, but since the fleet battle rules are abstract, actual preliminary tactics won't have much of an impact. If you judge the initial placement and defensive tactics the PCs come up with to be particularly effective or inspiring, though, feel free to give them a +4 bonus on the first Profession (sailor) check made to determine initiative on the first round of fleet combat.

The enemy fleet consists of three squadrons, although each squadron is relatively large. As a result, while the PCs are likely to have more squadrons, and thus will have more attacks during each round, it'll be harder to bring down any one squadron under Doloruso's command.

The battle itself should play out relatively quickly—the fleet battle rules are designed for speed, after all. As each battle phase plays out, you should spice up the attacks and defenses Harrigan's Fleet makes with exciting descriptions of ships coming up broadside, siege engines firing, near misses, and devastating damage to match the results of the die rolls with each attack. Encourage the PCs to also do so, and assuming they do well against the fleet, make sure to describe how they're getting closer and closer to the *Wormwood* itself—for



if the PCs defeat Harrigan's fleet, they'll have a chance to board the *Wormwood* and take it as their prize!

HARRIGAN'S FLEET

XP 19,200

Admiral Adelita Doloruso (Profession [sailor] +17 [+25 to determine initiative])

Flagship *Wormwood*

Significant Characters

Adelita Doloruso (*Wormwood*, Arcane Artillery)

Kipper (*Wormwood*, Swift to Battle)

Riaris Krine (*Wormwood*, Vengeance)

Patch Patchesalt (*Wormwood*, Swift to Battle)

SQUADRONS

Duskwyrn Squadron

Configuration 6 warships

Commodore Wordusk Ghanderwal (Profession [sailor] +15, Charisma modifier +3)

Hits 24; **Morale** 3

Defense Value 25

Attack Value +15; **Damage** 1d6+7

Morale Check +5

Zura's Kiss

Configuration 7 sailing ships

Commodore Delarie Listerveil (Profession [sailor] +13, Charisma modifier +4)

Hits 21; **Morale** 3

Defense Value 23

Attack Value +13; **Damage** 1d6+8

Morale Check +6

Reefspider Squadron

Configuration 5 galleys

Commodore Lesik "Whitecap" Biceroy (Profession [sailor] +11, Charisma modifier +2)

Hits 20; **Morale** 3

Defense Value 21

Attack Value +11; **Damage** 1d6+6

Morale Check +4

Development: Although it's assumed the PCs defeat Harrigan's fleet, the adventure need not grind to a halt if they lose. If things look grim, the PCs can attempt to flee the battle before the last of their ships are destroyed (see *Fleeing a Battle* under *Rout Phase* on page 68). Even if the enemy entirely defeats their fleet, the PCs still have a chance to survive, for Adelita has strict orders from Harrigan to capture the PCs and their ship. With their defeat, Adelita and her crew immediately board the PCs' ship. In this case, you can run the *Boarding the Wormwood* encounter below but with the battle taking place on the PCs' ship instead of on the *Wormwood* itself. If the PCs lose that battle, they'll be captured, stripped of their gear, bound and gagged, and brought to Gannet Island where Harrigan imprisons them

in area **D5**, storing their gear in area **E6**. At this point, you can continue with the chapter as a prison-break scenario. If the PCs manage to defend their ship from the boarding of Adelita and her crew, the remains of her fleet are put into disarray long enough that the PCs can flee, leaving their island in the control of the enemy. If they're quick, they should be able to make it to Gannet Island to strike against Harrigan before his fleet can return—or they can flee and attempt to rebuild their resources to try to retake their home from Harrigan.

If the PCs defeat the enemy fleet, they have an option—they can either sink the *Wormwood* (the ship has been heavily damaged) with relatively little worry, or they can attempt to board it and seize the ship. The former action earns them no additional XP or Infamy—and you should warn the PCs as such before they follow through on such an act—but it does represent the safest method to deliver the death blow to Harrigan's fleet.

Infamy Award: Award the PCs 2 points of Disrepute and Infamy if they defeat Harrigan's fleet without losing more than half of their own ships.

BOARDING THE WORMWOOD (CR 14)

Once the PCs break Harrigan's fleet, leaving sailing ships, galleys, and warships foundering and sinking all about, the PCs spot the fleet's flagship, the *Wormwood*, damaged heavily by the battle, listing to port, and feebly trying to flee for the open sea. There is no need to run ship-to-ship combat at this point, for approaching and boarding the damaged and demoralized *Wormwood* should be child's play. But once the boarding is accomplished, the remaining crew, led by Adelita Doloruso and consisting of several familiar faces from the PCs' first days aboard the *Wormwood*, rise up in a last-ditch attempt to defend the ship and, if they are lucky, take the PCs hostage.

When this part of the battle begins, you don't need to play out the actual grappling procedure—you can simply describe the PCs' grappling of the *Wormwood*, since the enemy ship is in no condition to resist, especially with her crew preparing for battle.

Creatures: Although the PCs may hope to face Captain Harrigan aboard the *Wormwood*, their nemesis is in fact not present. With the death of Mr. Plugg at the PCs' hands, Harrigan has charged his newest first mate, Adelita Doloruso, with the task of captaining the *Wormwood* as the flagship of his fleet.

The battle for the *Wormwood* is a significant conflict with many enemies—as with all shipboard battles, you should assume that the PCs' crew is fighting against the *Wormwood*'s crew, while the PCs themselves focus their attacks on Doloruso and her officers. In all, there are 11 officers on the ship who stand against the PCs—Adelita Doloruso, seven officers, and three other NPCs the PCs will doubtless

THE PRICE OF INFAMY

recognize from their earlier time aboard the *Wormwood*. The first of these is the *Wormwood's* former master gunner, Riaris Krine. As foul-mouthed as ever, Krine is now the ship's sailing master, and is eager to put the upstart PCs in their place—preferably in a watery grave. Krine's former gunner's mate, Kipper, is now the *Wormwood's* master gunner. Having survived the explosion of alchemist's fire on the *Man's Promise*, Kipper is badly scarred, but the accident did nothing to curb his pyromaniac tendencies. Lastly, former boatswain's mate Patch Patchsalt rounds out those officers from the *Wormwood's* original crew. Patch has replaced Cut-Throat Grok as the ship's quartermaster, and has her eye on the first mate's position, should Adelita fail in her duties.

ADELITA DOLORUSO CR 12

XP 19,200
hp 126 (see page 54)

KIPPER CR 8

XP 4,800
Male human rogue 9
CE Medium humanoid (human)
Init +3; **Senses** Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 shield)
hp 89 (9d8+45)
Fort +6, **Ref** +11, **Will** +6
Defensive Abilities evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee mwk short sword +9/+4 (1d6+2/19–20)
Ranged +1 *flaming composite longbow* +11/+6 (1d8+3/x3 plus 1d6 fire) or light ballista +9 (3d8/19–20)
Special Attacks sneak attack +5d6

TACTICS

Before Combat Kipper drinks a *potion of invisibility* as the PCs prepare to board.

During Combat Kipper mans a ballista, hoping to fire on a PC within 30 feet so that he can make one of the most memorable sneak attacks of his life. He then drinks his second *potion of invisibility*, moves to an advantageous spot, and makes a second sneak attack against a foe with his bow. He continues to snipe with his bow until the PCs engage in melee, at which point he moves to flank, if possible, with his sword.

Morale Kipper fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8
Base Atk +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 22
Feats Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (light ballista), Iron

Will, Lightning Reflexes, Shield Focus, Shield Proficiency, Toughness, Weapon Focus (composite longbow)
Skills Acrobatics +14, Bluff +11, Climb +13, Craft (alchemy) +12, Knowledge (engineering) +9, Perception +13, Profession (sailor) +13, Stealth +14, Swim +13

Languages Common

SQ rogue talents (bleeding attack +5, combat trick, resiliency, weapon training), trapfinding +4

Combat Gear *potions of cure moderate wounds* (2), *potions of invisibility* (2); **Other Gear** +1 *chain shirt*, masterwork buckler, +1 *flaming composite longbow* with 20 arrows, masterwork short sword

PATCH PATCHSALT CR 7

XP 3,200
Female gnome fighter 5/rogue 3
CE Small humanoid (gnome)
Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 size)
hp 82 (8 HD; 5d10+3d8+37)
Fort +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +5; +2 vs. illusions, +1 vs. fear
Defensive Abilities bravery +1, evasion, trap sense +1

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.
Melee +1 *human bane short sword* +12/+7 (1d4+5/19–20)
Ranged mwk dagger +13 (1d3+2/19–20)
Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6, weapon training (light blades +1)

TACTICS

During Combat Patch focuses her attacks on humans, if possible, flanking where she can to maximize her damage. She prefers to fight with Riaris Krine at her side, both of them focusing their attacks on the same foe at once.

Morale Patch fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10
Base Atk +7; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 21
Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Toughness, Weapon Focus (short sword), Weapon Specialization (short sword)
Skills Acrobatics +11, Bluff +11, Climb +9, Perception +11, Profession (sailor) +11, Stealth +16
Languages Common, Gnome
SQ armor training 1, rogue talents (combat trick), trapfinding +1
Gear +1 *leather armor*, +1 *human bane short sword*, masterwork dagger, 554 gp

RIARIS KRINE CR 7

XP 3,200
Female human fighter 8
NE Medium humanoid (human)
Init +2; **Senses** Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 18 (+8 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 80 (8d10+32)

Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +5; +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +2

OFFENSE

Speed 15 ft.

Melee +1 boarding pike +14/+9 (1d8+8/x3) or
mwk dagger +12/+7 (1d4+4/19–20)

Ranged mwk dagger +11/+6 (1d4+3/19–20)

Special Attacks weapon training (polearms +1)

TACTICS

During Combat Riaris uses her boarding pike's reach to attack foes being hounded by Patch Patchsalt, using Power Attack to gain a +6 bonus on damage rolls (at a cost of a –3 penalty to hit) to further her blows. She keeps an eye on spellcasters, and attempts to maximize her Disruptive feet by catching as many enemy spellcasters in her weapon's reach as possible.

Morale Riaris fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12,
Cha 8

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 24

Feats Disruptive, Dodge, Greater Weapon Focus (boarding pike), Iron Will, Lunge, Power Attack, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (boarding pike), Weapon Specialization (boarding pike)

Skills Climb +13, Perception +9,
Profession (sailor) +12

Languages Common

SQ armor training 2

Combat Gear *potions of cure serious wounds* (2); **Other Gear** +2 breastplate, +1 boarding pike, masterwork daggers (5), grappling hook, rope, peg leg

WORMWOOD OFFICERS (7) CR 4

XP 1,200 each

Pirate castaways (see page 23)

hp 51 each

TACTICS

During Combat The officers do their best against the PCs, but their true value in the battle is to either provide flanking opportunities for sneak

attacks, or to use the aid another action to bolster the AC of one of the significant NPCs in the battle.

Morale The *Wormwood* officers fight to the death as long as Adelita lives—they surrender if brought below 10 hit points once she's dead. If all four of the significant NPCs above are slain, all remaining *Wormwood* officers immediately surrender.

Treasure: Harrigan's fleet carries very little plunder, the ships' holds mostly empty save for supplies for their crews. Nonetheless, 5 points of plunder can be gathered from the *Wormwood* and the other ships once the Battle of Empty Eyes is over.

Development: Once the battle is over, the *Wormwood* and any non-sunken ships among the enemy fleet can serve as replacements, after repairs, for ships lost by the PCs. Likewise, captured crew members can be recruited—with the exception of the *Wormwood*'s significant NPCs, none of the crew or captains of these ships are loyal enough to Harrigan that they would not jump at the chance to save their lives by joining the PCs' fleet. All of these crew members, officers included, are ignorant of Harrigan's true allegiance to Cheliox, even though the majority of the ships in the fleet are of Chelish make. Harrigan chose these crews specifically because they don't know of his true allegiance, so that if any of them are captured they cannot implicate him. For all they know, the ships are the spoils of Harrigan's increasingly successful piracy campaigns in the Chelish shipping lanes. Even Adelita, if she survives, knows little about Harrigan's treachery.

Any of the crew members can confirm that the fleet itself consisted of the bulk of the vessels Harrigan had at his disposal—he fully expected his fleet to crush the PCs, and as such threw all of his available vessels into the assault. Several other ships are still out to sea pirating, scheduled to return in a few weeks, but until that point, Harrigan is stuck in his fortress with no way to escape and with little in the surrounding waters to defend its harbor. In other words, the time to strike back at him is now!

Infamy: Award the PCs 1 point of Disrepute and Infamy if they manage to capture the *Wormwood*, as stories of their long-lasting conflict against Harrigan have long awaited an end like this!



Riaris Krine

PLANNING REVENGE

If the PCs capture any living pirates during the Battle of Empty Eyes, or if they rescued the castaways from Dagon's Jaws, or if they recovered the documents from the *Devilish Duchess* in area A5, they can determine the location of Harrigan's fortress with ease—otherwise, a successful DC 20 Knowledge (local) check (or a DC 20 Diplomacy check to gather information in a town or city) is needed to learn where Harrigan's lair is. The pirate's fortress and home port is located on a small isle located about 36 miles west of the Smoker called Gannet Island.

Captured crew members from Harrigan's fleet have very little intelligence to offer about Gannet Island or Harrigan's fortress—they know that a sea serpent guards the waters surrounding the isle, and can provide a basic map of the outline of the fortress, but of the pirates, only Adelita has actually been inside the fortress. If she survives and the PCs can make her talk, she can warn of the scraggs Harrigan has recruited, and that he seems to have something secretive going on in the fortress, but can reveal little more.

The greatest boon the PCs have while preparing their assault on Gannet Island is Scags Rotgram's diary from the *Devilish Duchess*. A study of the last few pages of this diary not only provides the PCs with a relatively accurate map of the first floor of Harrigan's fortress (you should sketch out a version of areas D1–D10 for your players), but also reveals the following key bits of information.

- Harrigan keeps a “pet” witch—a foul, long-tongued man who keeps a trained sea serpent in the reef-maze surrounding the isle. Scags's notes indicate that when Harrigan and his ships come and go through the treacherous reefs, they bang large gongs and drop a freshly butchered bull or other large animal over the side as an “offering” to the serpent. The monster's been trained not to attack ships that use this ritual as they pass through the reefs.
- A sea cave exists under the island that serves as an escape route. The cave is exposed at low tide, but even at high tide the tunnel that leads up into the island would provide a stealthy entrance, especially if a force were able to approach the island underwater and enter the cave at high tide.
- Harrigan's personal quarters are on the castle's third floor—an attack against Harrigan from above would certainly be the fastest route, but Scags notes that such a foolish tactic would leave the entire complement of guards on the floors below available as reinforcements to aid Harrigan. Scags had planned on working his way up through the lower floors with several of his allies, hoping to use Harrigan's cowardice and arrogance against him so that when the final confrontation occurred, there would be no reinforcements left to protect the man.

Numerous other entries throughout the diary provide smaller tips on how to infiltrate the castle, with notes on guard patrols, blind spots, and the like. If the PCs take a few hours to study these pages in the diary, they gain a +4 bonus on all initiative checks made inside the fortress.

GANNET ISLAND REEFS (CR 12)

Gannet Island consists of a rocky outcropping surrounded by smaller shoals and rocks that make navigating difficult to those unfamiliar to the territory. Past these shoals lies a small bay ample enough harbor Harrigan's growing fleet—although now, with the bulk of his fleet likely residing on the sea bed near the Isle of Empty Eyes, this harbor is empty. It requires five DC 35 Profession (sailor) check to navigate the treacherous reefs that surround Gannet Island, with each failure dealing 8d8 points of damage to the ship as it strikes a reef. Access to Scags's journal and the harbor charts he copied within its pages grants a +20 bonus on Profession (sailor) checks made to avoid these hidden perils.

Creature: As the PCs approach the island, whether on a ship or attempting a stealthier infiltration via an underwater approach, they run the chance of attracting the attention of the sea serpent that Gilbrok the Tongue has charmed into guarding the island. The sea serpent automatically notices the approach of a ship, but is relatively easy to slip by if the PCs decide to approach the island using stealth without a ship or boat.

While the serpent is charmed, it remains a relatively unintelligent beast. It does know, however, that when passing ships ring a gong and dump fresh food into the waters that it's not supposed to attack those ships. The sight of the tremendous monster coiling up from the waters below to gulp down a cow in a single bite might be frightening, but as long as the PCs don't attack it, the serpent allows their ship to pass by unmolested. Those who do not perform this ritual, on the other hand, are swiftly attacked.

SEA SERPENT

CR 12

XP 19,200

hp 187 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 244)

TACTICS

During Combat The sea serpent attempts to capsize the ship several times, violently slamming into the hull with charge attacks before disappearing beneath the waves. As long as the PCs are in a Colossal ship, they have no fear of actually being capsized, but the attacks should nonetheless be frightening. The sea serpent remains out of sight for 1d6 rounds before returning to attack again. At this time (or if the PCs manage to harm the monster before then), it abandons attempts to capsize a ship and rears from the waters, attempting to knock crew members from the deck by tail slapping them into the water where it can easily devour them.

Morale The sea serpent fights to the death.



GANNET ISLAND FEATURES

The majority of Gannet Island is dense jungle—the island itself is home to insects and thousands of sea birds, but very little else. The shores this U-shaped consist almost entirely of ragged 30-foot-high cliffs, save for a small beach that lies near the northern shore inside the island's natural harbor. No pier exists—travel to and from this beach from ships must be made via ship's boats or the like. A stone staircase winds up from the beach toward the fortress itself, which is perched on the cliff edge and cut off from the island via a 20-foot-deep trough that floods on the stormiest of days. A drawbridge that leads to area **D1** allows for easy foot traffic from the stairs to the fortress itself.

Harrigan's soldiers keep sharp eyes to sea, and if they see the approach of any ship that looks obviously like anything other than one of their own, they do not hesitate to open fire with the light ballistae located at areas **D1**, **E1**, and **E2** against incoming ships (there are five light ballistae in all). The fortress alarm is also raised as soon as any enemy ship is sighted.

Note that as soon as the fortress knows the PCs are approaching, the witch Gilbrok (in area **F**) begins to cast *control weather*, although it'll take an hour after this first sighting for the weather to turn truly foul. During this hour, though, make sure to keep reminding the PCs of the gathering storm clouds and rising winds. See area **F** for more details.

C. SEA CAVE (CR 13)

About 200 feet south of the beach, nestled at the base of the cliffs at the innermost curve of the island's harbor, lies a sea cave. During high tide (noon and midnight at this time of year), this sea cave is entirely submerged, while at low tide (dawn and dusk) a few feet of air exist near the cave's ceiling between waves. Spotting the cave from above water requires a DC 30 Perception check (this check gains a +5 bonus at low tide), but it is automatically visible from underwater. The churning water can be navigated with DC 20 Swim checks. The cave is 20 feet high from floor to ceiling. At the far end, the ceiling rises an additional 10 feet above sea level, at which point a narrow tunnel winds up into the rock, traveling for several hundred feet before opening into the pit in area **D9a**.

Creature: Harrigan knows about this alternative route into the fortress, but hasn't bothered to do much about protecting it since the cave is not only hard to see, but is also the den of a dangerous creature—a giant deep tiger sea anemone, a much more aggressive creature than most sea anemones, either normal or oversized. When it retracts its tentacles, a deep tiger anemone is very difficult to detect among the surrounding rocks, but when it attacks, it unfolds hundreds of wriggling orange-and-black tentacles surrounding a cavernous, toothy maw. The immense predatory creature fills much of the

eastern portion of the cave near the tunnel leading up to the fortress. Normally a denizen of deeper aquatic reaches, the thing enjoys the dark of the cave and feeds well on the constant flow of smaller fish and sea life that gets washed into this cave. That said, it certainly won't hesitate to attack anything that comes within reach of its tentacles!

DEEP TIGER ANEMONE

CR 13

XP 25,600

Variant giant sea anemone (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 238)

N Colossal vermin (aquatic)

Init +2; **Senses** blindsight 30 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 4, flat-footed 17 (+2 Dex, +15 natural, –8 size)

hp 275 (19d8+190)

Fort +21, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities amorphous; **DR** 15/slashing; **Immune** gaze attacks, mind-affecting effects, poison, vision-based effects

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft.

Melee tentacles +20 (8d6+21 plus grab and poison)

Space 30 ft.; **Reach** 30 ft.

Special Attacks fast swallow, poison, swallow whole (4d6+21 bludgeoning damage, AC 17, 27 hp), water jet

TACTICS

During Combat The deep tiger anemone lashes out at all available targets, using its Whirlwind Attack feat to great effect. It only attempts to grab and eat one target per round.

Morale The deep tiger anemone fights to the death, but does not pursue foes.

STATISTICS

Str 38, **Dex** 14, **Con** 30, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +14; **CMB** +36 (+40 grapple); **CMD** 48 (can't be tripped)

Feats Whirlwind Attack^B

Skills Stealth +10; **Racial Modifiers** +24 Stealth

SQ anchored, sightless

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Tentacle–injury; *save* Fort DC 29; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d6 Strength drain and 1d6 Dexterity drain; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Water Jet (Ex) Once every 1d4 rounds as a swift action, a deep tiger anemone can draw large quantities of surrounding water into its body and then expel the water at high pressure. It makes a single combat maneuver check against all creatures within 30 feet—those whose CMD this roll equals or exceeds are pushed back to a maximum distance of 30 feet from the anemone. This forced movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Treasure: The cave floor around the anemone's base is littered with bones and fragments of rusted, encrusted gear left here over the years by unfortunates who attempted to explore the cave only to fall to its guardian. The majority

of the treasure has washed out to sea, but a search of the nooks and crannies of the rocks reveals 534 gp, 22 pp, a *circlet of persuasion*, a *minor ring of fire resistance*, and a *wand of fly* (11 charges).

D1. SENTRY TOWER (CR 12)

This octagonal tower rises 30 feet into the air. A pair of light ballistae loom on the roof above, while chains descend from the tower's eastern face to attach to a drawbridge that spans a dry gulch.

The roof of this tower can be accessed via a rope ladder that hangs down from the north wall; the ladder is usually kept pulled up while guards are on duty above. The doors in this tower are generally kept barred from the west side—each set of doors is of reinforced oak (hardness 5, hp 40, Break DC 27).

Creatures: A group of six smugglers occupies the sentry tower, keeping watch over the winding pathway and the surrounding seas alike for the approach of enemies, whether in ships or on foot. If the smugglers spot anything suspicious, they quickly raise the alarm. Of the six smugglers, two crew the light ballistae on the roof above, while the remaining four hold the line inside the tower after they raise up the drawbridge and lock it in place. Depending on how long the PCs take to get here, they may well face additional forces in this room (smugglers, cultists, and scrag) or the courtyard beyond (area D2) as you see fit.

SMUGGLERS (6) CR 7

XP 3,200 each

Human rogue (smuggler) 8 (*Pirates of the Inner Sea* 23)

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 63 each (8d8+24)

Fort +5, **Ref** +11, **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *short sword* +11/+6 (1d6/19–20)

Ranged mwk *shortbow* +11/+6 (1d6/19–20) or
light *ballista* +11 (3d8/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +4d6

Rogue Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th, concentration +9)

3/day—*detect magic*

2/day—*disguise self* (DC 12)

TACTICS

During Combat The smugglers on the roof use the ballistae against intruders—they can't target foes in area D2, though, so if the PCs move the fight down there or into the floor below, they abandon the siege engines to join

FORTRESS DEFENSES

In addition to a few unique guardians and NPCs, three different types of minions currently defend Harrigan's fortress. While the named NPCs and specific guardians are generally only encountered in the rooms they're listed in (exceptions are noted in the text as they occur), the three types of minions listed below are more mobile, and should the fortress alarm be raised, they can quickly mobilize to come to its defense. See the Additional Support sidebar on page 35 and the To Arms! sidebar on page 43 for more details on additional defenders and how the fortress rises to meet a threat.

Cultists: There are six clerics of Norgorber in the fortress—all loyal to their high priestess Luccaria (see area D10), herself a Chelish agent and the primary point of contact between Harrigan and his Thrune handlers. If the alarm is raised, two clerics remain in the shrine (area D9) with Luccaria to defend it while the others quickly move to intercept intruders and provide support to scrag and smugglers as needed.

Scrag: Four scrag barbarians dwell in the fortress in area D4. Foul tempered at having to remain out of water for so long, these aquatic trolls remain loyal as a result of *charm monster* spells cast by Harrigan's witch-man, Gilbrok the Tongue. They quickly move to oppose any attempt to enter the fortress once the alarm is raised.

Smugglers: With the bulk of Harrigan's personal crew and followers out with his fleet, the pirate captain has retained a large number of Chelish smugglers here for his fortress's defense. These men and women are loyal Chelaxians who have been ordered to serve as Harrigan's guards and to aid in covering up and smuggling Chelish support and supplies to the traitor. There are a total of 15 smugglers in the fortress—they move quickly to engage the enemy once the alarm is raised.

the fight. Smugglers in melee combat work together to surround foes and flank, relying on their shortbows only when they can't reach a foe in melee.

Morale The smugglers are highly trained Chelish agents—they fight to the death.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 20

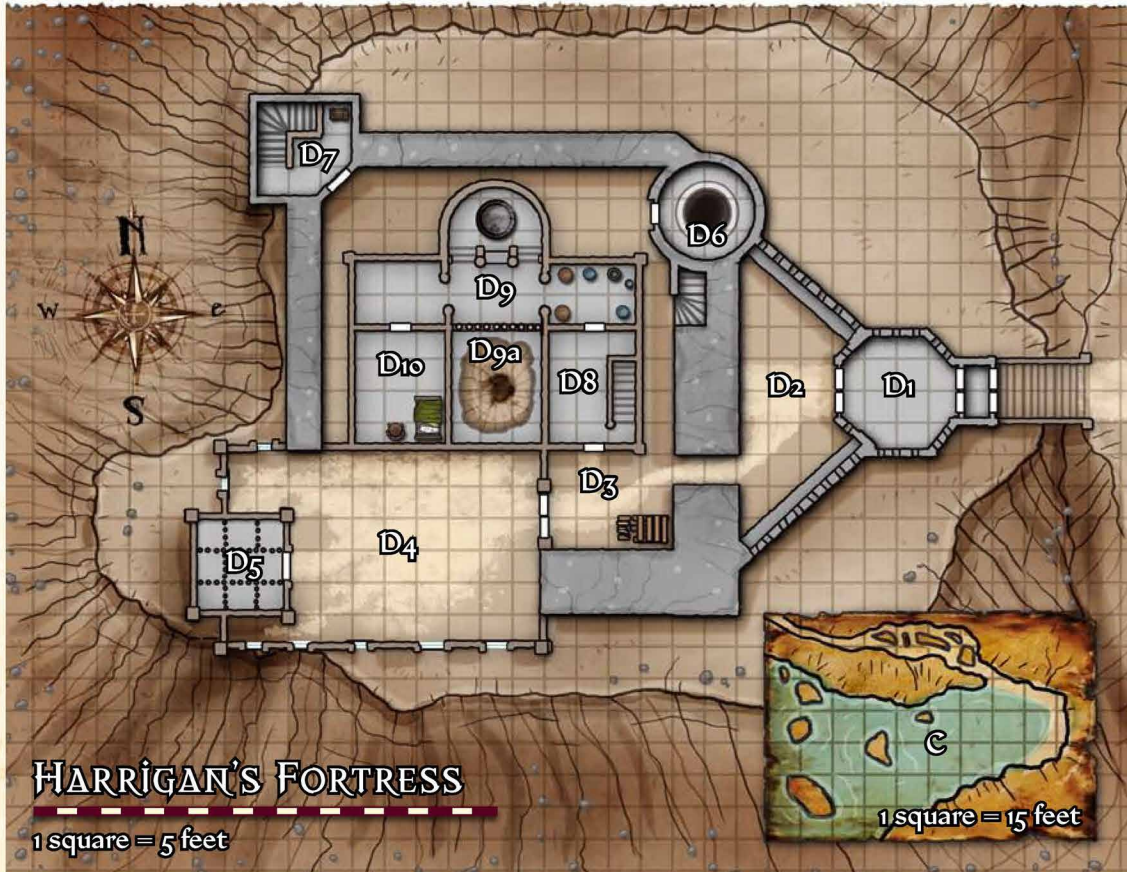
Feats Dodge, Iron Will, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (light ballista), Mobility, Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +15, Bluff +13, Diplomacy +13, Disable Device +15, Disguise +13, Knowledge (engineering) +12, Perception +11, Sense Motive +11, Sleight of Hand +19, Spellcraft +9, Stealth +15

GANNET ISLAND



1 square = 5 feet



HARRIGAN'S FORTRESS

1 square = 5 feet

1 square = 15 feet

THE PRICE OF INFAMY

Languages Common, Polyglot

SQ rogue talents (bleeding attack +4, finesse rogue, major magic, minor magic), smuggler abilities (bribery, conceal item, distraction)

Gear +2 studded leather, +1 short sword, masterwork shortbow with 20 arrows, cloak of resistance +1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Smuggler Abilities These smugglers gain a +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks made to smuggle contraband through a checkpoint and a +4 bonus on Sleight of Hand checks. In addition, a smuggler can make a Bluff check opposed by a searcher's Perception check when a searcher looks for items the smuggler has concealed—if the smuggler makes this check, the searcher must roll a second Perception check and take the worse of the two rolls as his actual result.

Development: If the proper questions are asked of a smuggler prisoner (and he's made helpful), he could reveal the truth about Harrigan's alliance with Cheliox. This counts as "aid that could result in punishment," and thus increases the Diplomacy DC to earn that information by +15, making it a DC 42 Diplomacy check to convince a hostile smuggler to come clean.

D2. OUTER YARD

This weed-choked courtyard features little more than a filthy trail leading from the outer sentry tower to a short tunnel that passes through the main wall of the fortress.

If the alarm is raised, this yard can serve as a marshaling area or a staging ground for defense. Otherwise, the area remains empty.

D3. LIFT

Hard-packed earth covers the ground of this courtyard. To the southeast, a wooden platform sits on the ground, nestled in the corner of the surrounding wall. A winch and crane nearby provides the mechanism to raise and lower the lift to the walkway twenty feet above.

The lift can be operated from ground level or the walkway above. A single person can operate the winch, but it takes a full minute for the slow-moving lift to make a complete journey. The lift can support up to 1,500 pounds before collapsing. A successful DC 20 Climb check is required to scale the walls to the parapets above.

D4. SCRAG PEN (CR 12)

This large room has a floor of hard-packed earth. Numerous open windows along the walls give the place a drafty feel, while

TO ARMS!

Once the alarm is raised in Harrigan's fortress, the option to explore the castle at a leisurely pace vanishes—the denizens of the fortress quickly rise up to fight against the PCs, including the named NPCs. Only Gilbrok the Tongue (area F) doesn't immediately join the fight if he's still using his weather control hex to call up a storm.

How you run this battle depends on your preferences. Not only is it unfair to force the PCs to fight every one of the fortress's denizens at the same time, it's not particularly fun or realistic. When the alarm is raised, the rest of the fortress reacts in waves. Rather than forcing the PCs to take on all of the fortress's defenders at once, simply have new groups of defenders arrive as the previous wave is defeated. By throwing multiple CR 11–12 encounters at the PCs, you'll wear down their resources and force them to fight smarter and use better tactics than they might otherwise. Feel free to have significant NPCs show up early in this fight, but you should save Harrigan for some point near the end of this long, multi-wave fight. Consider having Harrigan flee back to his bedroom (area G3) with Gilbrok and perhaps an erinyes or two once it looks like the PCs are about to win. With Harrigan barricaded in his room as he tries to recover, the PCs can take a bit of a breather before recovering to attack their nemesis one final time.

the ceiling above is supported by a network of rafters and wooden beams, all thick with cobwebs.

Creatures: Harrigan has kept scrag as guardians for his fortress for years, relying upon the magic of his "pet witch" Gilbrok to keep the aquatic trolls in line with *charm monster*. Traditionally, Harrigan has used the scrag as guardians for his fortress's jail (area D5), but of late, with so many of his regular guards out on the seas, he's relied more and more on the scrag to serve as primary guards. They've been ordered to immediately move to aid battles if the alarm is raised.

SCRAG SAVAGES (4)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

Scrag barbarian (sea reaver) 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 268, *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* 29)

CE Large humanoid (aquatic, giant)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., eyes of the storm*, low-light vision, scent; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +7 natural, -2 rage, -1 size)

hp 127 each (9 HD; 6d8+3d12+81); regeneration 5 (acid or fire, when in contact with water)

Fort +17, Ref +7, Will +7

OFFENSE

Speed 25 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee mwk handaxe +14/+9 (1d8+9/x3), mwk handaxe +14/+9 (1d8+9/x3), bite +10 (1d8+4) or 2 claws +15 (1d6+9), bite +15 (1d8+9)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks rend (2 claws, 1d6+10), rage (15 rounds/day), rage powers (swift foot +5 feet)

TACTICS

During Combat Even though their regeneration doesn't work out of water, the scraggs are ruthless and aggressive in battle. The scraggs do more damage with their axes, but if a scrag consistently misses foes, it throws the axes aside in disgust to switch to biting and clawing.

Morale Although the scraggs are charmed, this doesn't make them foolhardy. A scrag panics if brought below 25 hit points, and immediately attempts to flee the castle and into the ocean to activate its regeneration ability. If a scrag

is released from a *charm monster* effect, it immediately realizes it's been tricked and flees into the ocean at once, abandoning its duties.

STATISTICS

Str 29, Dex 18, Con 29, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 4

Base Atk +7; CMB +17; CMD 29

Feats Double Slice, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Intimidating Prowess, Iron Will, Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills Acrobatics +5, Climb +16, Intimidate +12, Perception +6, Profession (sailor) +7, Survival +6, Swim +22

Languages Giant

SQ amphibious, marine terror*, savage sailor*

Gear masterwork handaxes (2), *amulet of natural armor* +2

* See *Ultimate Combat*.

D5. PRISON

The entrance to this area is blocked by an iron-shod door held fast with a metal drop bar, chains, and two masterwork good locks (hardness 8, hp 40, Break DC 28; Disable Device 35). The key to the locks is carried by Jakaw Razorbeak, Harrigan's current master-at-arms and jailer (see area E3).

This dark, filthy chamber has been split into five cells—four small cramped ones to the north and south with a larger cell to the west. Manacles hang from the walls, and the floor is strewn with filthy, moldering straw.

Creatures: This room is where Harrigan keeps his "favorite" prisoners—enemies he's captured or crew member who tried to defy him and failed. The current occupants of this chamber are two familiar faces from the PCs' days on the *Wormwood*—former sailing master **Peppery Longfarthing** (CN female human sorcerer 8) and ex-ship's surgeon **Habby "Stitchman" Quarne** (N male human fighter 4/expert 3). When word reached Harrigan of the loss of the *Man's Promise* during the PCs' mutiny, his anger was staggering—and the *Wormwood's* crew took the brunt of it. Some of them managed to stay in his good graces, but a few crew members, such as the two imprisoned here, became the unfortunate targets of his wrath. Harrigan merely lopped off one of Habby's feet and put out an eye with a hot iron before throwing him into this prison cell—he got off easy, compared to Peppery Longfarthing. Once a close friend of Harrigan, she miscalculated his loyalty when she dared to suggest that the PCs' mutiny could be an object lesson for



Scrag Savage



Harrigan—“Maybe if you kept your officers on a shorter leash they’d inspire more loyalty among their crews,” she’d said. She’s had the months since to regret those words, for Harrigan cut off both her hands, put out both of her eyes, and cut out her tongue to teach her a lesson and ensure that she could tell no one what she knew of Harrigan’s association with Cheliah. She’s still alive only because of her long friendship with Harrigan—an ironic fate, perhaps, since in her current state she’s all but helpless.

If other significant crew members remained with the *Wormwood* in your campaign, feel free to have them found here in similar dire straits. Without at least a few *regenerate* spells, none of the prisoners found here can be of much use in helping the PCs, but if they can be communicated with, you can use them to fill the PCs in on what Harrigan’s been up to of late. However, the prisoners refuse to talk until they’ve been rescued and are far away from this island—or alternatively, until they’re sure Harrigan is dead.

Story Award: If the PCs show mercy to their old enemies and rescue the prisoners, award the PCs 4,800 XP.

D6. TORTURE PIT

The door to this tower is carved with lines of prayers to Norgorber. A successful DC 18 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the prayer as the Psalm of the Splintered Spine, an unholy psalm dedicated to the revelation of hidden truths. This psalm inspired an entire sect of Norgorberites devoted entirely to the art of forcing individuals to reveal their secrets through the manipulation of both mind and flesh. The door is of reinforced iron and is locked (hardness 8, hp 40, Break DC 28, Disable Device DC 40). The key can be found in area D9.

Beyond the door, a narrow walkway encircles a wide stone-lined pit just deep enough to trap a human. Mounted to the pit walls hang half a dozen pairs of iron manacles, all spattered with dried blood. Around the ledge, metal racks hold a bizarre array of vicious-looking torture implements, including barbed whips, bone chisels, metal piercing spurs, flasks with strange colored liquids, and coal-filled braziers.

Creature: The cultists of Norgorber use this room to practice their torture techniques—their current victim lies tightly bound in chains laced with hooks in a coffin-shaped cage in the pit below. As with the prisoners in area D5, the PCs are likely to recognize the *Wormwood*’s former quartermaster, **Cut-Throat Grok** (N female half-orc fighter 5), even without her arms and legs or ears and nose (all of which have been expertly and surgically removed over the past several months). Grok has long since fallen into insanity from the horror and pain of the torture, and the Norgorberites have for the moment suspended their work until they can arrange to have a *greater restoration* spell cast on her to restore her awareness.

For now, Grok is lost in a permanent state of catatonia and must be cared for lest she die of thirst or starvation—a task the torturers are disturbingly diligent about.

Treasure: Items stored in this room include a +2 *whip*, a masterwork scourge, 10 flasks of acid, six branding irons, eight masterwork manacles, a case of candles, a set of masterwork bone chisels worth 350 gp, a set of adamantite torture needles worth 500 gp, and a cabinet containing 15 *potions of cure light wounds* and a rusty metal funnel with a strap tied to it so it can be affixed in place around a person’s mouth and head.

Development: As with the prisoners in area D5, feel free to replace Grok with another NPC the PCs may have inadvertently befriended and left aboard the *Wormwood*. If the PCs can get through to Grok by healing her, she can, like the other prisoners, inform the PCs about what Harrigan’s been up to.

Story Award: If the PCs rescue Grok, award them 4,800 XP. If they cure her madness and restore her limbs and facial features with *regenerate* spells, she immediately pledges her life to the PCs, effectively serving the party as a loyal minion or cohort for as long as they will have her.

D7. TOWER STOREROOM

Within this tower hang several shanks of dried, salted meat, while crates and other shelves hold barrels of drinking water and other food stores.

There’s enough food and water stored here for the occupants of the fortress to last for 2 weeks, though in practice, the presence of so many clerics in the fortress (and hence access to spells like *create water*, *purify food and drink*, and *create food and water*) means that they can last a lot longer than that. Stairs here lead up to the watchpost at area E2.

D8. ENTRANCE HALL

Over a dozen battle-scared flags decorate the walls of this room. A flight of stairs to the east leads up to an upper floor, while a strange sigil of a faceless black mask marks a door at the north end of the room.

The flags on the walls are various trophies claimed by Harrigan over the years—nearly two-thirds of them are from Chelish vessels. The sigil on the northern door can be identified as a symbol of Norgorber (specifically, in his aspect as the Reaper of Reputation, patron of secrets) with a successful DC 12 Knowledge (religion) check. The stairs lead up to area E3.

If the alarm is raised, the southern iron and oaken door is double barred from inside (hardness 5, hp 30, Break DC 28, Disable Device DC 30).



D9. SHRINE OF NORGORBER (CR 13)

The walls of this long hall are lined with complex tapestries depicting crowds of faceless people going about their daily tasks in an unrecognizable but sprawling city. Hammocks suspended from hooks driven into the ceiling hang near the north walls to the east and west, while in the center, the long hall opens to the north into an upraised pulpit featuring a circular black altar stone. Directly opposite this pulpit, a railing replaces the southern wall, which looks out over a large sinkhole in the floor to the south.

While Harrigan himself isn't a very religious man, he understands the value of having clerical allies. He's long kept secrets (his allegiance to Cheliox merely being his greatest secret), and has found this plus his penchant for taking what he wants to match well with the dogma of Norgorber. But when Cheliox sent down a secretive group of Norgorber cultists, ostensibly to serve as allies and agents, Harrigan was right to suspect more. In fact, these cultists are here as much to keep an eye on Harrigan as they are to provide support. The shrine itself is a relatively mundane affair, although it does bear an *unhallow* effect (CL 12th) that fills all of area D9, D9a, and D10 with its effects. This *unhallow* also carries a *silence* effect that targets all non-worshippers of Norgorber.

The railing to the south looks out over a large room whose floor has fallen away into a large sinkhole (area D9a). It's a 10-foot drop to the sinkhole, which opens into a large cavern below that is filled with water. The tunnel from area C leads to this cavern—climbing up through the hole in the cave roof (which is about 5 feet from the surface of the water) requires a successful DC 25 Climb check.

Creatures: Four of the Norgorber cultists are present in the shrine, all followers of a woman named Luccaria (see area D10). All of them follow strict rules and interpretations of the Reaper of Reputation's holy texts, and are much more rigid and pedantic in their readings. While they work well together, their methods would certainly amuse or even annoy most other worshippers of Norgorber.

An additional threat lies in the cavern below the sinkhole—an enormous spiny eurypterid (also known as a spiny water scorpion) dwells in the water. Captain Harrigan considers the eurypterid a pet, and calls it by the name Mr. Clack. Harrigan keeps the thing fed (including with body parts—or entire bodies—from his enemies) and it remains here as a guardian of the back way into the fortress.

NORGORBER CULTISTS (4) CR 6

XP 2,400 each

Female human cleric of Norgorber 7
LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19 (+7 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 63 each (7d8+28)

Fort +9, **Ref** +3, **Will** +9

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 short sword +7 (1d6+1/19–20)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 4/day (DC 14, 4d6)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +11)

7/day—copycat (7 rounds), touch of evil (3 rounds)

Spells Prepared (CL 7th; concentration +11)

4th—*confusion*^D (DC 18), *cure critical wounds*, *poison* (DC 18)

3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 17), *cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic*,
magic circle against good^D

2nd—*cure moderate wounds* (2), *death knell* (DC 16),

invisibility^D, *silence* (DC 16)

1st—*bane* (DC 15), *cure light wounds* (2), *disguise self*^D (DC 15),

divine favor, *sanctuary* (DC 15)

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *guidance*, *read magic*, *stabilize*

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

TACTICS

During Combat The cultists prefer playing support roles, hanging back in a battle with *sanctuary* or *invisibility* spells in effect so they can move to and fro casting healing spells on those better suited for combat. If directly confronted, they rely heavily upon their ability to channel negative energy and *confusion* spells.

Morale The cultists are fanatic and fight to the death.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 16

Feats Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Selective Channeling, Toughness, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Heal +10, Knowledge (arcana) +4, Knowledge (religion) +6, Profession (torturer) +9, Sense Motive +10

Languages Common

Combat Gear *potions of cure moderate wounds* (2), *potions of invisibility* (2); **Other Gear** +1 chainmail, +1 light wooden shield, +1 short sword, spell component pouch, silver unholy symbol of Norgorber worth 25 gp

MR. CLACK CR 12

XP 19,200

Advanced spiny eurypterid (*Pathfinder* #37 78)

N Huge vermin (aquatic)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision, tremorsense 30 ft.; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 10, flat-footed 25 (+2 Dex, +17 natural, –2 size)

hp 184 (16d8+112)

Fort +17, **Ref** +7, **Will** +8

Defensive Abilities spiny carapace; **Immune** mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee 2 claws +20 (2d6+10/19–20), sting +20 (1d6+10 plus poison)

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Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft. (20 ft. with sting)

Special Attacks rend (2 claws, 2d6+15)

TACTICS

During Combat Mr. Clack attacks anyone it notices approaching its den. Note that anyone who climbs down into the sinkhole (or, for that matter, bumps the edge of the railing) is in reach of the eurypterid's sting attack. With its tremorsense, Mr. Clack can lash out through the hole at anyone in or adjacent to area **D9a**.

Morale Mr. Clack is too big to pursue foes out of its den. It fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 30, **Dex** 14, **Con** 24, **Int** —, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +24; **CMD** 36 (48 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Critical (claws)^B, Improved Initiative^B, Improved Natural Attack (claws)^B

Skills Swim +18

SQ amphibious

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Sting—injury; *save* Fort DC 25; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Con and 1d2 Dex; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Spiny Carapace (Ex) Any creature that attacks Mr. Clack with a light weapon, unarmed strike, or natural attack takes 1d6 points of piercing damage from the eurypterid's spiny carapace. A creature that grapples or is grappled by Mr. Clack takes 2d6 points of piercing damage per round the grapple is maintained.

Treasure: A small niche on the north side of the altar contains a few objects of interest: two blocks of *incense of meditation*, two *scrolls of restoration*, and an iron key to the door to area **D6**.

D10. MISTRESS OF REVELATIONS (CR 12)

Along one wall of this elegantly appointed room, shelves hold a collection of ominous looking tomes. Near the shelf rests a bed with black silk sheets. A huge red-and-black banner depicting a spiked cross in a circle hangs above the bed. Along the far wall stands a stone masked-shaped font, filled with a dark liquid.

A successful DC 10 Knowledge (local) or Knowledge (nobility) check identifies the banner as that of the House of Thrune and the nation of Cheliah. The tomes consist mostly of religious works dedicated to Norgorber, but several focus on Chelish history and genealogy instead. The strange font on the far wall is filled with 10 doses of unholy water. Sacred to Norgorber, this magical font also allows for communication with Thrune agents far to the north (see Development, below).

Creatures: The high priestess of the Norgorber cultists, and the primary point of contact between Harrigan and his Chelish mistress Druvalia Thrune, is a woman named

Luccaria. She's occupied this chamber since Harrigan's return from his capture, when she replaced the previous cleric of Norgorber Harrigan kept. Luccaria is a much more powerful priestess, and Harrigan has left her to her own devices as a result.

Luccaria spends the majority of her time scrying upon various people of interest to her—Harrigan, low-ranking agents of the Hurricane King, even some of the PCs' followers. She takes care not to ever directly scry those whom she is interested in, knowing that such actions could reveal her interest. It's up to you to determine how much she knows about the PCs, but if they possess any secrets, feel free to have Luccaria reveal some of them before the other players—after all, she also has access to spells like *commune* and *divination* in order to learn more!

Luccaria prefers to appear dressed in formal black gowns, when in fact even her clothing has secrets—it is in fact a magical *glamered chain shirt*. She is attended at all times by two cultists of Norgorber—loyal followers who do their best to protect her.

LUCCARIA

CR 11

XP 12,800

Female human cleric of Norgorber 12

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 17, flat-footed 22 (+7 armor, +4 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 117 (12d8+60)

Fort +11, **Ref** +7, **Will** +12

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +3 *grayflame short sword* +14/+9 (1d6+3/19–20), +3 *short sword* +14/+9 (1d6+3/19–20)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 5/day (DC 18, 6d6)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +16)

At will—charming smile (12 rounds, DC 16), master's illusion (12 rounds/day)

7/day—copycat (12 rounds), dazing touch

Spells Prepared (CL 12th; concentration +16)

6th—*blade barrier* (DC 20), *heal*, *mislead*^P (DC 20)

5th—*charm monster*^P (DC 19), quickened *divine might*, *flame strike* (DC 19), quickened *shield of faith*

4th—*air walk*, *heroism*^P, *greater magic weapon* (2), *spell immunity*

3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 17), *cure serious wounds*, *contagion* (DC 17), *dispel magic*, *magic vestment*, *suggestion*^P (DC 17)

2nd—*bear's endurance*, *cure moderate wounds* (2), *death knell* (DC 16), *hold person* (DC 16), *invisibility*^P

1st—*charm person*^P (DC 15), *cure light wounds* (3), *deathwatch*, *obscuring mist*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *guidance*, *read magic*, *stabilize*

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

TACTICS

Before Combat Luccaria casts *greater magic weapon* on her swords and *magic vestment* on her armor. As soon as she hears her cultists in area **D9** shouting, she casts *air walk*, *bear's endurance*, and *invisibility* on herself. She also casts *spell immunity*, choosing spells she knows the PCs favor.

During Combat Once combat starts in area **D9**, and once she is invisible, Luccaria sends her two attendant cultists into area **D9** as well to join the fight. She follows, casting quickened *shield of faith* and *heroism* as she enters the room. If the opportunity presents itself, she casts *blade barrier* to block escape routes. Once she's visible, Luccaria casts her ranged attack spells. If she's engaged in melee she casts quickened *divine might* before attacking, then channels negative energy as a swift action the following round to activate her *grayflame short sword* (which increases the weapon's enhancement bonus by +1 and deals +1d6 points of damage for 6 rounds). Luccaria casts *heal* on herself if she ever drops below 40 hit points.

Morale If dropped below 15 hit points, Luccaria casts *mislead* and attempts to escape to Harrigan's side (in area **G3**) to inform him of the PCs and to aid him in combat. She does not abandon Harrigan as long as he lives, but if he is slain, she attempts to flee the Shackles entirely.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 8, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 26

Feats Combat Casting, Quicken Spell, Toughness, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Diplomacy +9, Heal +11, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Profession (torturer) +11, Sense Motive +11

Languages Common

Combat Gear *wand of cure serious wounds* (14 charges), unholy water (2);

Other Gear +1 glamered chain shirt, +1 *grayflame** short sword, masterwork short sword, *headband of inspired wisdom* +2, *ring of mind shielding*, spell component pouch, silver unholy symbol of Norgorber worth 25 gp

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

NORGORBER CULTISTS (2)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

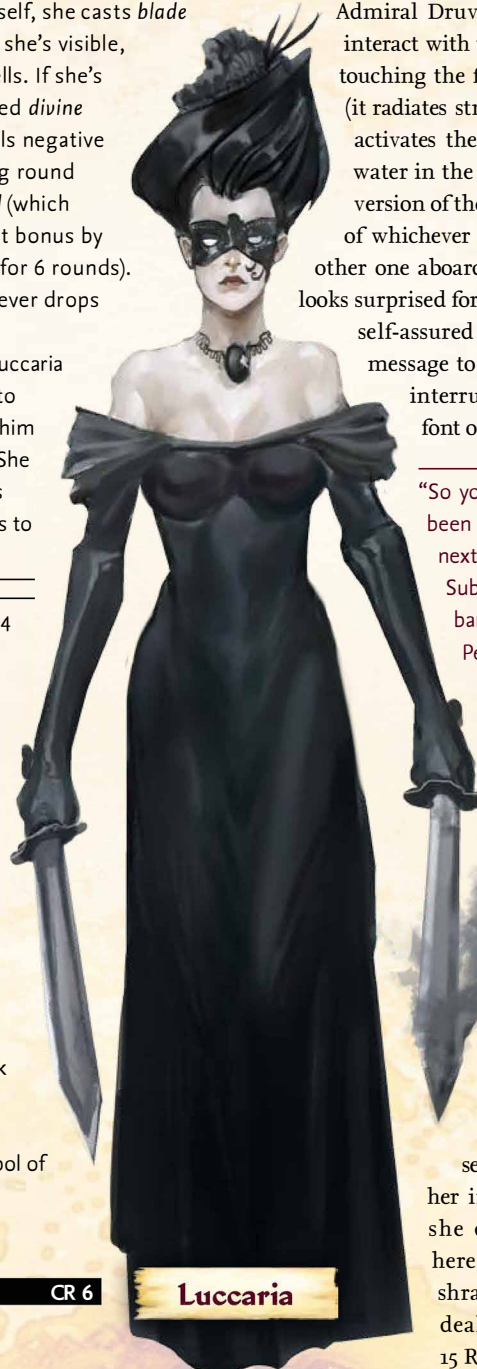
hp 63 each (see page 46)

Treasure: The books kept here range from the mundane to the truly rare: 10 of the tomes here are particularly scarce editions worth 200 gp each.

Development: For a cultist of Norgorber, Luccaria keeps very few physical valuables—she values her secrets much more than wealth. The most valuable object in the room is her scrying font—for when it is filled with holy or unholy water, it allows her to establish a two-way communication link with a second font located in the captain's cabin of *Abrogail's Fury*, the flagship of the Chelish armada under Admiral Druvalia Thrune's command. If the PCs interact with the font in any way, including simply touching the font or examining it with *detect magic* (it radiates strong divination), Druvalia notices and activates the font from her end. This causes the water in the font to rise up and form a miniature version of the woman—at the same time, an image of whichever PC activated the font appears in the other one aboard the *Abrogail's Fury*. Admiral Thrune looks surprised for a moment, but quickly recovers with a self-assured smile. She then delivers the following message to the PCs (a message that the PCs can interrupt at any moment by emptying the font or tipping it over if they wish).

"So you must be one of Harrigan's pests. I've been curious about you! Hopefully, when we next meet, you will have a change of heart. Submit to Thrune, and perhaps we may bargain—my thralls are well kept, after all. Perhaps you would enjoy a magistrate's position within our new colony? I suppose by the time you've finished with Harrigan, he won't be needing it. A shame, really... he was such a good puppet. If your pride prevents you from bending the knee to me, no matter. There are plenty among the Free Captains who will gladly serve us once Bonefist falls and the Shackles break beneath my armada. In any event, I'll see you soon, so be sure to have an answer for me."

Druvalia punctuates her final sentence by blowing a kiss, after which her image quickly winks out. As it does, she destroys her font, causing the font here to explode, sending stone and metal shrapnel out in a 5-foot-radius burst that deals 3d6 points of slashing damage (DC 15 Reflex half) to anyone in this area.



Luccaria

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E1. FORTRESS BATTLEMENTS (CR 11)

Wide parapets atop the fortress walls allow guards to walk its perimeter. The battlements provide partial cover against foes on the ground below. The drop from the parapets to the ground is 20 feet. A single light ballista sits at the location marked **E1** on the map.

Creatures: A group of four smugglers patrols the parapets at all times. As soon as they spot intruders, they raise the alarm and attack with ranged weapons (including the ballista here), or move to engage in melee if the PCs have managed to gain the parapet walls without being noticed.

SMUGGLERS (4)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 63 each (see page 41)

E2. WATCHPOST (CR 9)

A few empty crates provide makeshift furniture in this room. A trap door accessible via a rope ladder sits in the ceiling above, while a flight of stairs winds down to the northwest.

The trap door above leads to the roof of the tower (area **E2a**), atop which sit a pair of light ballistae. The stairs lead down to the tower storeroom (area **D7**).

Creatures: A pair of smugglers is stationed on the roof above. They keep the trap door open so they can descend as needed once foes move out of easy range of the two ballistae.

SMUGGLERS (2)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 63 each (see page 41)

E3. BARRACKS (CR 12)

A total of eight bunk beds, along with a few foot lockers, furnish this room. A flight of stairs leads down to the east.

The stairs lead down to area **D8**.

Creatures: Originally a barracks for Harrigan's guards and some of his officers, this room now serves as a barracks for the Chelish smugglers. Only one of the denizens of this room remains Harrigan's man—a tengu named Jakaw Razorbeak. Harrigan recruited Jakaw to serve as his master-at-arms after he lost Master Scourge, but kept Jakaw back from the fleet, reasoning that he needed at least a few people at his side whom he could trust to be loyal to him first and Cheliix second. Harrigan placed Jakaw in command of the smugglers, but Jakaw knows that the smugglers answer first to Cheliix. The tengu doesn't trust the smugglers all that well as a result, but admires Harrigan both for his brutality and for the simple fact that Harrigan never treats Jakaw as a mascot.

JAKAW RAZORBEAK

CR 10

XP 9,600

Male tengu ranger 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 263)

NE Medium humanoid (tengu)

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 15, flat-footed 21 (+6 armor, +1 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, +1 shield)

hp 120 (11d10+55)

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

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +1 scimitar +15/+10/+5 (1d6+5/18–20), +1 kukri +15/+10/+5 (1d4+5/18–20), bite +12 (1d3+4)

Ranged mwk shortbow +15/+10/+5 (1d6/x3)

Special Attacks favored enemy (aquatic humanoids +2, elves +2, humans +6)

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +10)

3rd—*greater magic fang*

2nd—*barkskin*, *bear's endurance*

1st—*charm animal* (DC 13), *longstrider*, *resist energy*

TACTICS

Before Combat Jakaw casts *barkskin*, *bear's endurance*, *greater magic fang*, and *longstrider* if the alarm is raised.

During Combat Jakaw uses his hunter's bond to grant bonuses to the smugglers in the area on the first round of combat, while declaring the toughest-looking human enemy as his quarry. If the alarm is raised, Jakaw can establish one of the PCs as his quarry early by watching them from afar if he gets the chance. Jakaw leaps into battle with a cackle once he's established quarry and granted his companions his hunter's bond, focusing his attacks on his quarry before moving on to other humans or elves if possible.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 40 hit points, Jakaw attempts to retreat to Harrigan's side (area **G3**) to report his failure and then help protect his captain. He fights to the death otherwise.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 30

Feats Dodge, Double Slice, Endurance, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Toughness, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (scimitar), Weapon Focus (kukri)

Skills Acrobatics +13, Bluff +10, Intimidate +13, Linguistics +6, Perception +16, Profession (sailor) +16, Stealth +18

Languages Aquan, Common, Elven, Osiriani, Polyglot, Tengu
SQ favored terrain (urban +2, water +4), gifted linguist, hunter's bond (companions), quarry, swift tracker, swordtrained, track +5, wild empathy +10, woodland stride

Gear +2 chain shirt, +1 kukri, +1 scimitar, belt of giant strength +2, ring of protection +1, keys to areas **D5** and **E5**, 78 gp

SMUGGLERS (3)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 63 each (see page 41)

Treasure: There are eight footlockers in this room, each containing a small stash of assorted coins, gems, and jewelry worth 500 gp.

E4. OFFICE

This small room contains a single wooden table with a few chairs around it. A short stack of papers is pinned to the table with a bejeweled dagger.

Stairs lead up from this chamber to area F above.

Treasure: Harrigan and others meet in this office to plan raids or other shenanigans. The papers tacked to the desk include all the plans for assaulting the PCs' fortress. The dagger is a masterwork dagger fitted with garnets and amethysts, worth 800 gp.

E5. WAREHOUSE (CR 12)

The doors leading into this area are kept locked. Jakaw Razorbeak (area E3) and Harrigan (area G3) both carry keys to unlock the iron doors (hardness 10, hp 60, Break DC 28, Disable Device DC 40).

Numerous crates, boxes, barrels, and chests lie scattered about this large room, interspersed among sails, timber, figureheads, bolts of cloth, ballista bolts, and other various forms of plunder.

Two staircases along the south wall climb to the fortress's third floor. The western stairs lead to area G1, while the eastern steps lead to the hallway between areas G2 and G3.

Creature: This room is off-limits to most of the fortress's denizens, and Harrigan thus employs a different guardian here—a derghodaemon called in and bound here at great expense using a *scroll of greater planar ally* and a *scroll of binding*, cast courtesy of his current first mate, Adelita Doloruso. The derghodaemon is under orders to attack and kill anyone who enters the room that it doesn't recognize as an ally of Harrigan's. The daemon communicates telepathically with Harrigan if it attacks, warning him of intruders.

DERGHODAEMON

CR 12

XP 19,200

hp 161 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 66*)

Treasure: The goods stored in the crates in this room are worth 12 points of plunder.

E6. TREASURY (CR 13)

The stout iron door to this room is kept locked at all times (hardness 10, hp 60, Break DC 28, Disable Device DC 40). Harrigan has the only key. Those without the key must force the door or pick the lock, but doing so activates a trap on the door.

Trap: If the door to this treasury is opened without key, or if it's merely jostled roughly (as in an attempt to break the door down), six poisoned spikes jut up out of the walls and floor, all pointing inward to impale the target.



Jakaw Razorbeak

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POISON SPIKES

CR 13

XP 25,600

Type mechanical; Perception DC 35; Disable Device DC 35

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; Reset automatic

Effect Atk +20 melee (4d8+16 plus deathblade poison)

Treasure: Harrigan's treasury is somewhat sparse at this point, despite the fact that, according to rumor, he's been looting countless Chelish ships. In fact, Harrigan's had to use most of his significant treasure to pay to his Thrune handlers, to build his fleet and secure the loyalty of his new crews, and in his pursuit of the PCs. As a result, most of the chests in this room lie empty, but enough coins, jewelry, and the like remain for a total haul of 6,500 gp.

F. THE TONGUE (CR 12)

This lightly furnished room contains little more than a modest sleeping pallet, a writing desk and chair, and a tin candleholder with a drippy candle stub. Near the foot of the pallet rests a small sea chest filled with various old, worn burlap robes. Light enters from a pair of window slits cut into the curved outer wall. To the east, a flight of stairs descends to a lower level.

The stairs lead down to area E4.

Creature: This drafty room is the home of one of Harrigan's own retainers—his "pet" witch, Gilbrok the Tongue. So called for his unusually protuberant and rather hideous tongue, Gilbrok the Tongue has long served Harrigan, even before the pirate captain's capture by Cheliox. Alone among Harrigan's crew, Gilbrok has never served aboard one of Harrigan's ships, instead remaining here as a defender of the fortress. The old witch and his filthy, mangy monkey familiar Maka-ruku are something of an institution on the isle. Gilbrok considers himself Harrigan's man—viewing himself almost as a lifelong slave after Harrigan rescued him from a particularly hideous fate at the hands of a tribe of Kuru cannibals many years ago.

Gilbrok lives simply. His small writing table is rimmed with waxy candle stumps that surround piles of weathered tomes—mostly obscure histories, almanacs, tide readings, calendars, and weather logs, along with lunar, solar, and star charts. Gilbrok spends most of his time alone in his quarters, and for the first hour of the PC's invasion of Gannet Island, that remains the case as he capers and dances with his monkey to call up a powerful storm with

his weather control hex. At the culmination of this hour, assuming the PCs do not reach him in the meantime to interrupt the hex, the weather in a 2-mile-radius surrounding the island becomes a powerful windstorm (*Core Rulebook* 438–439) for 4d12 hours.

GILBROK THE TONGUE

CR 12

XP 19,200

Male old human witch 13 (*Advanced Player's Guide* 65)

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; Senses Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10

hp 74 (13d6+26)

Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +12

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)

Melee mwk quarterstaff +5/+0 (1d6–2)

Special Attacks hexes (agony [13 rounds], blight [130 feet], charm [2 steps, 6 rounds], evil eye [–4, 9 rounds], healing [*cure moderate*], misfortune [2 rounds], weather control)

Witch Spells Prepared (CL 13th;

concentration +19)

7th—*heal*

6th—*cone of cold* (DC 22), *flesh to stone* (DC 22),

mass suggestion (DC 22)

5th—*baleful polymorph* (DC 21), *dominate person* (DC 21), *geyser** (DC 21), *overland flight*

4th—*black tentacles*, *control water*, *charm monster* (DC 20), *dimension door*, *phantasmal killer* (DC 20)

3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 19), *dispel magic*, *lightning bolt* (DC 19), *suggestion* (DC 19), *vampiric touch*

2nd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 18), *detect thoughts* (DC 18), *fog cloud*, *glitterdust* (DC 18), *hold person* (DC 18), *pox pustules** (DC 18)

1st—*burning hands* (DC 17), *command* (DC 17), *cure light wounds* (2), *ill omen**, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 17)

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 16), *dancing lights*, *message*, *stabilize*

Patron water

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

TACTICS

Before Combat Gilbrok casts *overland flight* on himself every day.

During Combat Once Gilbrok finishes his weather control hex, or once he's confronted in combat, he uses a dose of *dust of disappearance* at once—he knows he's close to helpless in direct melee combat, and relies upon the *greater invisibility* afforded by the dust to survive, using flight to stay mobile and change position each round while he harries foes with his ranged attacks. Each time his dust wears out, he uses a new dose to maintain invisibility.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 30 hit points or if his



Gilbrok the Tongue



invisibility tactics aren't working (or if he runs out of *dust of disappearance*), Gilbrok flees to Harrigan's side in area G3 to cower behind him for protection. He won't surrender or flee at this point, but if Harrigan is slain, he immediately surrenders and begs the PCs for mercy, promising to serve them well if they spare his miserable life.

STATISTICS

Str 7, **Dex** 10, **Con** 11, **Int** 22, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16

Feats Arcane Strike, Combat Casting, Eschew Materials, Great Fortitude, Improved Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Spellcraft), Toughness

Skills Craft (alchemy) +22, Fly +26, Handle Animal +13, Knowledge (arcana) +22, Knowledge (nature) +22, Perception +15, Spellcraft +28, Survival +15, Swim +11

Languages Aklo, Aquan, Boggard, Common, Cyclops, Osiriani, Polyglot

SQ witch's familiar (monkey named Maka-ruku)

Combat Gear *dust of disappearance* (4 doses), *potions of cure moderate wounds* (3), *potions of gaseous form*, *wand of cure moderate wounds* (24 charges); **Other Gear** masterwork quarterstaff, *necklace of adaptation*

G1. GUARD ROOM (CR 11)

Creatures: As part of its commitment to support Harrigan, House Thrune used some of its vast resources to assign four erinyes devils to him to serve as bodyguards. The erinyes are dreadfully bored with this duty, but serve without complaint, for in fact they are here to keep an eye on Harrigan for Admiral Druvalia Thrune. Once she's arrived and the Shackles are under Chelish control, the erinyes have been promised Harrigan and his remaining loyal crew as sacrifices to take back to Hell.

Of the four erinyes, two are always located in this room, standing by until Harrigan calls for their aid. A third patrols the hallway to the north, while the fourth is stationed as a stoic guardian in the war room (area G2). As soon as any one of them spots foes, though, she telepathically alerts the others.

ERINYES DEVILS (3)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 94 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 75)

G2. WAR ROOM (CR 8)

This room is decorated with trophies (mostly flags and figureheads) taken from a wide variety of ships. A round table surrounded by chairs sits in the room's center.

Harrigan uses this room as a study as well as to host private conferences. Open boxes hold rolls of charts, blank chart paper, and pirate maps of seas throughout

the Inner Sea region and beyond—but there is no incriminating evidence here of Harrigan's alliance with Cheliah. The cupboard is in fact a closed bar stocked with crystal decanters and a wide selection of brandies and rums.

Creature: One of the four erinyes devils guards this room. She remains in telepathic contact with her sisters elsewhere on this floor at all times.

ERINYES DEVIL

CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 94 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 75)

Treasure: The six crystal decanters in the bar are worth 250 gp each, but the collection of fine alcohol is much more valuable. In all, there are two dozen unopened bottles, each worth 500 gp.

G3. HARRIGAN'S BEDROOM (CR 15)

This moderately sized room is furnished with a dresser and some shelves. A huge four-poster bed occupies the southern end of the room, while bookshelves along the walls hold a few dust-covered leather journals, strange coral-encrusted skulls, ships in bottles, nameplates from ships, and other nautical-themed treasures and trophies.

Creature: This room is where Captain Barnabas Harrigan has been spending much of his time of late—with the Chelish invasion of the Shackles looming on the horizon and his own fleet at sea attacking the PCs, Harrigan has been particularly stressed of late, and has found relief in his fine rum and long, drunken slumber. When the alarm is raised, he wakes quickly, but is fatigued—at least until he downs one of the *potions of lesser restoration* in his nightstand.

How quickly Harrigan prepares for battle is left to you. If the PCs manage to confront him here without raising the alarm, Harrigan fell asleep on his bed fully equipped after a drunken binge. If the alarm is raised elsewhere, then the amount of time Harrigan takes to prepare to join the battle should be a variable amount so that his appearance on the field of battle is dramatic as possible after the PCs have already cut their way through several waves of cultists, smugglers, scraggs, and pirates.

CAPTAIN BARNABAS HARRIGAN

CR 15

XP 51,200

hp 204 (see page 58)

Treasure: While most of the trophies on the shelves are of sentimental value only to Harrigan, five of the objects are in fact valuable treasures. These valuable prizes are a

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skyrocket crossbow (see page 61), a *rod of splendor* incorporated into a harness for use as a peg leg, a mithral masterwork cutlass with a gem-studded ivory hilt worth 7,000 gp, a darkwood ship's wheel bearing carvings of wrestling sahuagin and mermaids worth 4,500 gp, and a skull with a jaw full of gold teeth, each carved with a different demonic rune—this is the skull of a notorious pirate named Wretched Baxus whose fate has, until now, remained unknown. The skull is worth 2,500 gp.

In addition, a drawer in Harrigan's nightstand contains six *potions of lesser restoration*, three *potions of remove disease*, and a *potion of cure serious wounds*.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

After defeating Harrigan, a search should soon reveal the *bag of holding* he keeps in his *glove of storing*—and inside that bag, all the evidence the PCs need to not only prove that Harrigan was the traitor Tessa Fairwind was seeking, but also all the intelligence they need to locate the approaching Chelish armada. Also included among the papers are

details on a secret entrance to Fort Hazard created (and subsequently forgotten) by a previous Hurricane King—Harrigan's notes indicate he plans to escort the Chelish admiral and several of her more powerful captains into this tunnel to finish off Kerdak Bonefist once Port Peril is taken. Of particular note to the PCs is the timetable on one of these documents, for if this chart is to be believed, the Chelish armada is not far from launching its assault on the Shackles! There should be just enough time for the PCs to travel to Port Peril and call for an emergency meeting of the Pirate Council—if the other pirate lords act quickly, they can organize their combined fleets into an armada that can meet the Chelish fleet just north of the Shackles.

Unfortunately for the PCs and the Shackles, Hurricane King Kerdak Bonefist is a more stubborn and arrogant leader than anything else, and as the final adventure in the Skull & Shackles Adventure Path begins, the PCs soon find themselves at the vanguard of the Shackles defense, with only them and what allies they can gather standing between Cheliah and their homeland!



ADELITA DOLORUSO

While Adelita serves as first mate to Barnabas Harrigan, her alliance is merely one of temporary convenience. Only a fool would fail to recognize her true ambition to become a Free Captain in her own right.

ADELITA DOLORUSO

CR 12

XP 19,200

Female human evoker 13

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; Senses Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 20 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 shield)

hp 126 (13d6+78)

Fort +12, Ref +10, Will +11

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee wizard hook +6/+1 (1d4)

Ranged mwk silver dagger +9 (1d4–1/19–20)

Special Attacks intense spells (+6 damage)

Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th; concentration +17)

At will—elemental wall (13 rounds/day)

7/day—force missile (1d4+6)

Evoker Spells Prepared (CL 13th; concentration +17)

7th—quicken fireball, prismatic spray (DC 21)

6th—chain lightning (DC 20), quickened scorching ray, repulsion (DC 20)

5th—cone of cold (DC 19), quickened shield, telekinesis (DC 19), teleport

4th—bestow curse (DC 18), dimension door, ice storm (DC 18), phantasmal killer (DC 18), shout (DC 18), wall of fire

3rd—dispel magic, fireball (2; DC 17), heroism, vampiric touch (2)

2nd—arcane lock, flaming sphere (DC 16), ghoul touch (DC 16), gust of wind, invisibility, mirror image

1st—burning hands (DC 15), mage armor, magic missile (2), shocking grasp (2; DC 15)

o (at will)—dancing lights, detect magic, flare, light, read magic

Opposition Schools enchantment, transmutation

TACTICS

Before Combat Adelita casts *mage armor* every day.

During Combat Adelita hangs back at first, letting her crew move forward while she supports them with spells. She casts quickened *shield* on the first round, along with *invisibility* so she can prepare a few other spells (*mirror image* and *heroism*) before she joins in with her attack spells. She casts *repulsion* if too many enemies are reaching her.

Morale Adelita fights until reduced to 40 hit points or fewer,

at which point she attempts to teleport back to Harrigan's fortress to warn him of the fleet's failure. If she escapes in this manner, feel free to either have her join forces with Harrigan (if your PCs could use a bigger challenge) or join the other prisoners in the prison (area D5) after some unfortunate mutilations to her hands and tongue.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +6; CMB +5; CMD 20

Feats Arcane Strike, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Great Fortitude, Improved Familiar, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +10, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (geography) +13, Knowledge (history) +13, Knowledge (nature) +13, Perception +14, Profession (sailor) +17, Spellcraft +20

Languages Common, Cyclops, Infernal, Osiriani, Polyglot
SQ arcane bond (cacodaemon familiar), *contingency* (*stoneskin* activates as soon as she takes any physical damage)

Gear wizard hook (+1 hook hand; see page 61), masterwork silver daggers (6), *belt of mighty constitution* +4, *cloak of resistance* +2, *mutineer's bane earring* (see page 60), *ring of protection* +2, jewelry worth 1,200 gp, spellbook

Adelita Doloruso was born in Galt, daughter to a husband and wife who had collaborated on more than just her—they were the authors of a particularly scandalous underground series of chapbooks that saw circulation throughout the city of Isarn. Her parents were always careful to cover their tracks, but one day, a week after Adelita's 11th birthday, her father was captured and taken to the *final blades*. Fearing for her daughter, Adelita's mother disguised her and put her aboard a merchant vessel bound for distant Sargava, a scant few hours before the noble parent was captured and executed herself.

Adelita was discovered halfway to Sargava, but rather than throw her overboard, the cruel captain merely smashed her hand with a mallet as punishment. Adelita bore the pain stoically and without a cry, and the ship's crew began to grow worried about the young girl who was immune to pain. When a terrible storm struck several

days later, they blamed the girl and cast her adrift in a small rowboat. It would be 2 days before her boat washed ashore on the wild coast of the Kaava Lands. She was badly sunburned and half-dead from thirst, but still lived, though her hand had turned gangrenous.

Adelita was rescued by a Zenj wizard—a man who saved her life not only by giving her food and water, but also by amputating her hand and preventing the gangrene from spreading. For the next decade, Adelita lived with her savior's tribe, learning the ways of the wizard and his people. Then pirates came, seeking fresh slaves. Many of those strong enough to resist were slain in combat, the weak and infirm were butchered, and the prisoners (Adelita among them) were taken aboard the *Wormwood* to the slave markets of Port Peril. The ship's captain, a florid man named Alaster Flint, took a liking to Adelita, and kept her as his own prize. In a matter of weeks, she was with child. Once her pregnancy was obvious, Captain Flint quickly lost interest in her and planned to sell her off at their next port—if he could find no buyers for a pregnant slave, he'd just toss her overboard. Always a fool, Captain Flint made the mistake of openly bragging about his plans in front of Adelita. On the night before they were to sail into Bloodcove, Adelita snuck into Flint's cabin and slit his throat.

Rather than attempt to flee the *Wormwood*, she instead made a canny move, confessing her crime to the first mate, a young man named Barnabas Harrigan, who had been more than vocal about his desire to seize the *Wormwood* for his own command. If Harrigan promised to let her go free in Bloodcove, she would back him up on his claim of having murdered Captain Flint. Harrigan agreed, and took command of the *Wormwood* at dawn. He honored his promise to Adelita, granting her freedom and dropping her off in Bloodcove. It would be several years until the two spoke again.

In Bloodcove, Adelita sought whatever menial work she could find. She saved any extra coin she scrounged in order to acquire a spellbook, determined to continue the studies she once pursued with the old Zenj wizard. Hoping to make

a better life for herself, she eventually took a job as a weatherwitch aboard a small vessel headed back to Absalom, where she thought she might start her life anew. After a week at sea, tragedy struck again when a drunken crew member made unwanted advances and attacked Adelita. Though she was able to defend herself, Adelita suffered several rough blows during the fight that caused her to miscarry later that evening. After this loss, she spiraled into darkness and violence.

Instead of continuing on to Absalom, Adelita jumped ship at Ollo, where she fell in with thugs and cutthroats, and she convinced them to let her join their crew after promising victory on their next raid. Good to her word, she helped them bring down a small merchant vessel by torching its sails with her magic. Having earned their respect, she stayed aboard as a battlemage, and through her fierce use of evocation magic, she quickly gained a reputation for ruthlessness. In 6 months, she helped seize seven merchant vessels, including two Chelish galleons. Her growing reputation caught the attention of an older and more notorious Barnabas Harrigan, who upon meeting and recognizing her as the woman who had helped win him the *Wormwood*, immediately offered her the recently opened position of first mate aboard his ship.

Adelita is in her late twenties. She dresses like a male pirate and favors traditional Zenj jewelry, wearing tiger fang plugs in her earlobes. Still, her most identifiable feature is the cruel metal hook fastened to the stump of her left forearm—a weapon she recently paid to have turned into a *wizard hook*.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Adelita is the admiral of the fleet that Barnabas Harrigan sends to attack the PCs, and is the primary antagonist of the naval Battle of Empty Eyes. If she survives the battle and escapes back to Harrigan's side only to be thrown in prison for her failure, she may well have a change of heart if the PCs rescue her, and would likely join them in seeking revenge for this latest mistreatment.





ARRONAX ENDYMION

Lord of Hell Harbor and captain of the former imperial frigate *Tyrannous*, this disgraced Chelish admiral is one of the leading lords of the Pirate Council.

ARRONAX ENDYMION

CR 11

XP 12,800

Male middle-aged human aristocrat 6/fighter 6

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 13, flat-footed 23 (+8 armor, +2 deflection, +1 Dex, +3 shield)

hp 94 (12 HD; 6d10+6d8+30)

Fort +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +7; +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *keen longsword* +16/+11 (1d8+7/19–20)

Ranged mwk dagger +12 (1d4+3/19–20)

Special Attacks weapon training (heavy blades +1)

TACTICS

During Combat Endymion prefers to avoid combat whenever he can by bluffing or intimidating foes into standing down before a fight begins, but if battle is inevitable, he fights with Combat Expertise and attempts to disarm his foes as quickly as possible. Once combat begins, Endymion rarely, if ever, has an interest in taking hostages or prisoners—he kills his foes as quickly and ruthlessly as possible.

Morale Endymion fights to the death.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +13 (+17 disarm); **CMD** 26 (28 vs. disarm)

Feats Alertness, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Greater Disarm, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Shield Focus, Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

Skills Bluff +15, Climb +9, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (nobility) +8, Perception +10, Profession (sailor) +15, Sense Motive +10, Swim +9

Languages Common, Infernal

SQ armor training 1

Combat Gear *potions of cure serious wounds* (2); **Other Gear** +2 *breastplate*, +1 *keen longsword*, masterwork dagger, *belt of mighty constitution* +2, *boots of speed*, *feather token* (anchor), *ring of force shield*, *ring of protection* +2, bicorne hat, Chelish admiral's coat, 682 gp

Arronax Endymion was born in Westcrown. A military brat and second son to famed Commodore Arrodius Endymion, Arronax was quick to follow in his father's footsteps, enlisting in the Chelish Imperial Navy at the young age of 16. His father used his position and influence to have his young son stationed at a relatively safe and small port in the Bay of Solva, but Arronax lusted for the chance to prove himself in battle, and switched his paperwork with another new conscript. He was soon off to guard the Arch of Aroden at Corentyn. Arronax stayed on at the Arch for the next 5 years, attaining the rank of captain and taking a wife soon after. The promotion placed him in command of a small ship with a letter of marque granting him permission to raid the ships of rival nations, a task at which Arronax proved most adept. After numerous successes, the young captain caught the eye of Lyserius Thrune, a wealthy noble who offered to sponsor him. With Lyserius's support, Arronax swiftly achieved the rank of admiral, in command of the Fourth Chelish Fleet. During this time, he spent months at sea chasing down enemies of the House of Thrune throughout the entire Inner Sea region, traveling as far north as the Steaming Sea, east to the isle of Jalmeray, and south to the waters of Desperation Bay. Through his exploits, Arronax grew rich and became quite the toast of Corentyn society.

Still, while Arronax's successes grew, the months at sea gnawed their way through his personal life. His many triumphs brought significant attention to his house and his beautiful young wife Adeline. The Endymions were often expected to attend important social affairs, but with Arronax usually at sea and unable to attend, Adeline went to these events in her husband's stead. An excellent conversationalist, she grew quite versed in culture and current politics, and transformed into a budding socialite. As she became more of a scene fixture, she started squandering the family's considerable finances, and eventually fell into a sordid and very public affair with Lyserius Thrune, the very nobleman who had sponsored Arronax's ascension to the admiralty. When Arronax returned to Corentyn and learned of the affair, he marched straight into Lyserius's court and demanded a duel. Lyserius responded by ordering a guard to shoot Arronax

in the knee with an arrow and had the wounded admiral thrown out into the street. With great effort, Arronax staggered back to his flagship *Tyrannous* and, after healing his injury, retaliated by plundering Lyserius Thrune's shipping houses and burning them to the ground. This triggered a rapidly escalating clash that, in the end, Lyserius Thrune won. With an Imperial warrant issued for his arrest, Arronax had no choice but to abandon his wife and holdings forever and flee south to the Shackles.

His crew remained loyal, and when the *Tyrannous* finally sailed into Hell Harbor with a boatload of riches ransacked from Thrune warehouses and ships, flying an upside down Chelish flag with a white skull painted over the shield, they found a place more welcoming of plunder and treachery. Arronax purchased the service of several moderately talented captains and went on a piratical rampage, principally targeting Chelish trading vessels. With his knowledge of Chelish tactics, trade routes, and the weaknesses of the ships and their captains, he proved to be a highly efficient scourge indeed. Within a month, he'd seized more than a dozen vessels, enough to make a name for himself as a Free Captain.

Over the following years, Endymion acquired a sizable fleet and reputation. His crew swelled with mutineers from the Chelish navy, who soon became known throughout the Shackles as the Devils' Own. Endymion continued to operate out of Hell Harbor, and purchased large chunks of property within the port, building himself a great manse overlooking the harbor. Endymion's reputation for swift and creatively cruel punishment earned him loyalty as surely as his reputation for crushing Chelish ships, and soon, Endymion found himself referred to as Lord of Hell Harbor. He did little to stifle the use of this title.

Arronax Endymion is a powerfully built, middle-aged man with pale skin and strong, chiseled Chelish features. His short-cropped black hair is only beginning to gray at the temples, and his eyes shine an icy blue. He takes great pride in his appearance, and he wears only the finest clothing, custom tailored in the style of the pre-Throne Chelish

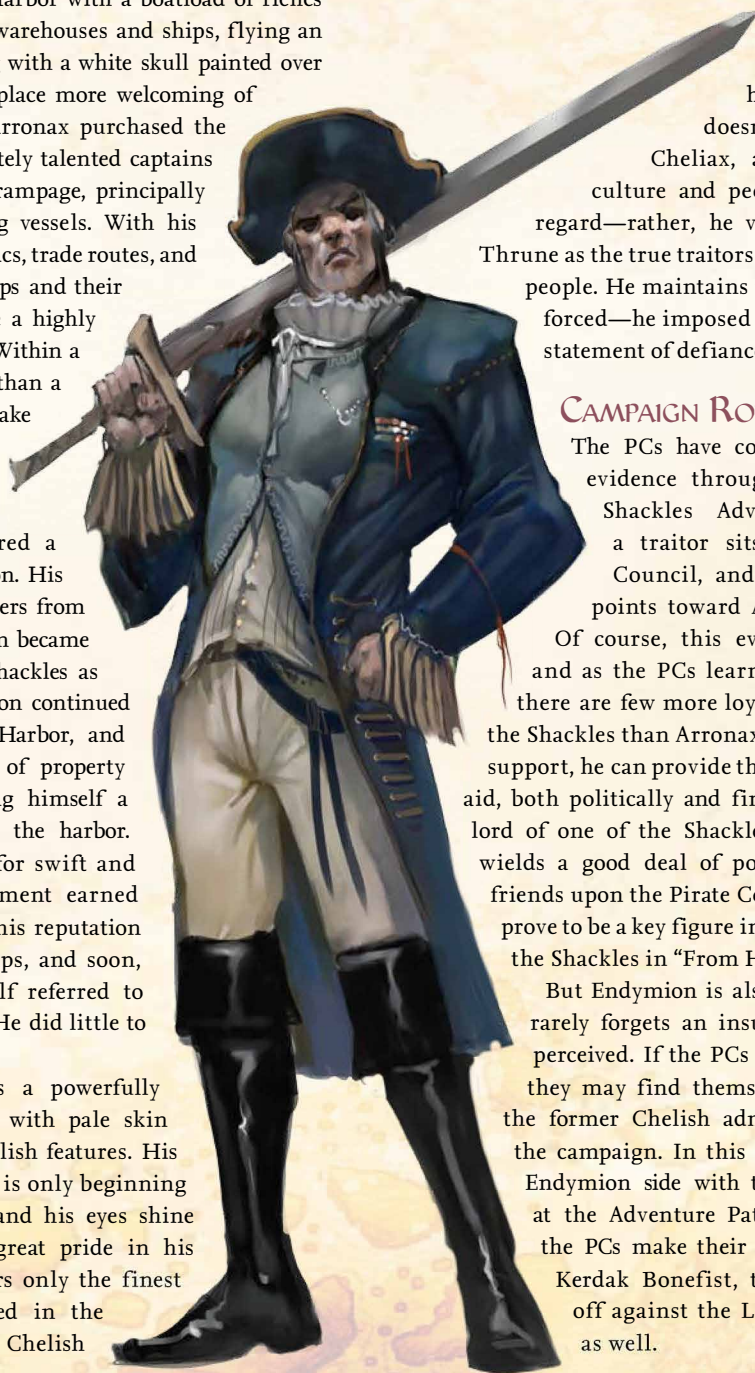
naval uniforms. He wears dozens of medals, presumably from his navy days, though he has had all of them re-cast in the shape of his jolly roger, a crouching imp skeleton run through with a spit. He retains the use of his previous rank of admiral, but he deliberately wears his admiral's stripes upside down on his sleeves.

To this day, Arronax continues to nurture his hatred for the House of Thrune, its lower houses and families, and the Chelish aristocracy in general. He despises implications that he somehow played a role in his wife's infidelity or that he is at fault for what happened to his personal life. He doesn't actually dislike Cheliox, and still holds its culture and people in the highest regard—rather, he views the House of Thrune as the true traitors to his nation and its people. He maintains that his exile wasn't forced—he imposed it upon himself as a statement of defiance and rebellion.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

The PCs have collected tiny bits of evidence throughout the Skull & Shackles Adventure Path that a traitor sits upon the Pirate Council, and thus far, all of it points toward Arronax Endymion. Of course, this evidence is falsified, and as the PCs learn in this adventure, there are few more loyal to the concept of the Shackles than Arronax. If the PCs gain his support, he can provide them with significant aid, both politically and financially, for as the lord of one of the Shackles' largest ports he wields a good deal of power and has many friends upon the Pirate Council. He may even prove to be a key figure in the final defense of the Shackles in "From Hell's Heart."

But Endymion is also a bitter man who rarely forgets an insult, whether real or perceived. If the PCs get on his bad side, they may find themselves pitted against the former Chelish admiral at the end of the campaign. In this event, you can have Endymion side with the Hurricane King at the Adventure Path's end, and when the PCs make their final moves against Kerdak Bonefist, they'll have to face off against the Lord of Hell Harbor as well.





BARNABAS HARRIGAN

Few suspect that Captain Barnabas Harrigan holds a secret pact with Cheliox to sell out his pirate brethren. In exchange, the infernal nation has promised Harrigan a position as the new governor of the Shackles once the archipelago become a new Chelish colony.

BARNABAS HARRIGAN

CR 15

XP 51,200

Male human fighter 5/rogue 11

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +9; **Senses** see *invisibility*; Perception +20

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 16, flat-footed 24 (+6 armor, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural, +4 shield)

hp 204 (16 HD; 5d10+11d8+123)

Fort +16, **Ref** +16, **Will** +10; +5 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1, evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +3 *short sword* +23/+18/+13 (1d6+8/17–20)

Ranged +1 *returning handaxe* +19 (1d6+3/x3)

Special Attacks sneak attack +6d6, weapon training (light blades +1)

TACTICS

Before Combat Once Harrigan knows combat is near, he drinks a *potion of barkskin* +4, a *potion of cat's grace*, and a *potion of invisibility*. He also activates *see invisibility* from his eye patch.

During Combat If he starts a battle invisible, Harrigan drinks his *potion of haste* on the first round of combat, then positions himself to block the most obvious escape route. On the next round, he activates his *howling skull armor* to attempt to frighten his foes. In succeeding rounds, he focuses his attacks on frightened targets, using Dazzling Display to shake more foes whenever necessary so he can make sneak attacks against such victims thanks to his Shatter Defenses feat.

Morale Harrigan fights until reduced to 30 hit points or fewer, at which point he attempts to escape battle. He fights to the death only when cornered.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 20, **Con** 22, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 31

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dazzling Display, Dodge, Improved Critical (short sword), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Shatter Defenses, Shield Focus, Toughness, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword), Weapon Specialization (short sword)

Skills Acrobatics +24, Appraise +10, Bluff +11, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (local) +11, Perception +14, Profession (sailor) +20, Stealth +14, Swim +14

Languages Common

SQ armor training 1, rogue talents (bleeding attack +6, crippling strike, defensive roll, finesse rogue, ledge walker), trapfinding +5

Combat Gear *potions of barkskin* +4 (2), *potions of cat's grace* (3), *potion of haste*, *potions of invisibility* (2); **Other Gear** *howling skull armor* (+3 *studded leather*; see page 60), +2 *light steel shield*, +3 *short sword*, +1 *returning handaxe*, *belt of mighty constitution* +4, *cloak of resistance* +3, *glove of storing*, *mariner's eye patch* (see page 60), *bag of holding* (type IV), Chelish invasion plans (kept in *bag of holding*), key ring

Originally hailing from the port city of Senghor, Barnabas Harrigan was born Dwali Kepu, the fifth child to a poor family of Bonuwat fisherfolk. As a young child, he accompanied his mother to her job as a fish-gutter. There, he listened to the stevedores tell romantic tales of pirates and plunder, and he became seduced by thoughts of living a life of freedom, riches, and infamy. When he turned 13, as his mother lay dying of blood poisoning from an infected cut she suffered on the job, Dwali left home and took a job on a merchant vessel headed to Bloodcove, where he hoped to seek a new destiny as a pirate. Upon arriving, his fantasies were quickly shattered when he discovered the pirates he'd romanticized were little more than lice-infested drunks who'd cut a boy's throat over a few gold pieces. With little money and fewer prospects, Dwali lurked around the docks, pickpocketing sailors and stealing stray crates from merchant ships. Eventually, he ran afoul of the authorities, and for his crimes he was pressed into the service of Bloodcove. He served most of his 2-year stint in the militia, during which he received martial training and made numerous contacts with local pirates. Only 2 months before completing his sentence, he abandoned the Bloodcove militia and joined the crew of the pirate ship *Sea Wasp*. As a pirate, Dwali changed his name to Barnabas Harrigan, and over the next 5 years, slowly rose to the rank of first mate, though he lost one of his eyes in the process.

The *Sea Wasp* mostly targeted merchant vessels off the coast of Senghor, but eventually worked its way up the coast to Port Peril. There, Harrigan jumped ship in search of his own vessel to command. Unfortunately, he learned that there were few opportunities to immediately start as a ship captain, and so he pledged himself to the service of Captain Alaster Flint of the *Wormwood*. Harrigan soon found himself headed south again, but after enduring a few months of slim pickings at sea, Captain Flint looked to shore for easier bounty—slaves. The *Wormwood's* first raid was quick and brutal, and in one strike against a Zenj village, the ship's hold was full of living plunder. Among these slaves was the young Adelita Doloruso, a wild girl who eventually slit Flint's throat and handed Harrigan his ship in exchange for her freedom.

Now finally in command, Captain Harrigan spent the next few years developing a fearsome reputation. But Harrigan's fortunes would not last, for just as his star seemed to be on the rise, he fell into the clutches of the Chelish navy. Although most believe that Harrigan was able to escape the Chelaxians, his greatest secret is that he turned to their side and now serves the Chelish admiral Druvalia Thrune as a pawn who will lead her to the conquest of the Shackles.

Captain Harrigan is a tall, muscular man, with skin the color of fertile earth. His head is shaved, and he keeps his long black beard twisted and waxed into a single lock bound with gold rings.

Years of practice have made Harrigan an accomplished commander. He's edgy enough to push his crew, though he isn't a cruel leader. In his eyes, abusiveness shows weakness. He would have been a champion pirate had his luck not ran out when Druvalia Thrune caught him. Harrigan appears confident, but while he attempts to bolster his ego with Thrune promises, ultimately he realizes he's a pawn and has been for some time. This sense of lost destiny feeds his anger and his mania.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Captain Barnabas Harrigan has plagued the PCs from the very beginning of the Skull & Shackles Adventure Path. At this point in the campaign, Harrigan serves as a transition between a speculated danger and the final threat of actual war. He alone has done more than anyone to empower Chelax's presence in the Shackles. Even dead, his plans cannot be defeated, for they now belong to Druvalia Thrune.

If Harrigan escapes the PCs at the end of this adventure, he has few choices for survival. He knows his game has ended, for he is no Chelaxian, and the House of Thrune will show him no

sympathy for his failure. He has indeed made a deal with a devil, and the devil holds the contract. Instead, he seeks out a safe spot to hide out on his island until the PCs leave. Then he attempts to stow away on one of the other ships in his harbor, hoping to catch a ride to some other port. He still has a few allies within the Shackles that he can call on for help, so getting a new ship won't be an impossible task for the clever captain. Once he gets a new ship, he also takes on a new identity. Calling himself Dwali the Bloodcove Butcher, he disguises himself by donning a long powdered wig and a frightful Tian demon-faced mask. Tracking down the PCs and murdering them becomes his obsession—one that could well last beyond the climax of the campaign.





SKULL & SHACKLES TREASURES

The following unique treasures can be found in “The Price of Infamy.” Player-appropriate handouts appear in the GameMastery Skull & Shackles item card set.

AIGER'S KISS (MINOR ARTIFACT)

Aura strong abjuration and evocation; **CL** 20th
Slot none; **Weight** 2 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

The Shackles are rife with tales of legendary treasures, but the story of the loss of *Aiger's Kiss* has seen a resurgence of late, it being the 25th anniversary of the blade's loss in the Black Tower near the Cannibal Isles. Wielded before that loss by Captain Tevenida Aiger—and rumored to have been given to her by Norgorber's herald as a reward for an unknown task—*Aiger's Kiss* is said to have been a particularly potent weapon against outsiders. In addition to being a notorious pirate captain, Tevenida Aiger was a priestess of Norgorber, and her specialty was the capture of Chelish warships, particularly those employing devils or other extraplanar defenses. Some whisper that Captain Aiger and her sword vanished in the Black Tower due to a Chelish trap set in the structure, but in fact her fate was much grimmer than that (see Part Three of “The Price of Infamy” for details).

Aiger's Kiss is a *short sword of the planes* (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 477). Three times per day, it can be used to cast *dimensional anchor* on a creature the sword has just struck—activating this effect is a swift action for the sword's wielder. If the strike is a critical hit, the effect gains a +10 bonus on its caster level check to penetrate the target's spell resistance, if any.

The weapon's greatest power, though, is its ability to destroy portals or seal planar rifts. Once per year, *Aiger's Kiss* can be plunged into an extraplanar portal as a standard action—doing so immediately results in two effects. First, it targets the portal with a *mage's disjunction* (this effect lasts for as long as the sword remains in the portal). Second, as long as the sword remains lodged in the portal, it becomes affected by an *antipathy* effect against all outsiders. Once removed from a portal, it takes the sword a year to build up its magic to be able to use this ability again.

DESTRUCTION

If *Aiger's Kiss* is used to attempt to seal a planar rift from the Material Plane to an extraplanar realm under Norgorber's control, the sword is immediately destroyed and the planar rift is unharmed—in fact, doing so immediately summons the herald of Norgorber to the site to claim the fragments of the sword and punish those who destroyed it.

HOWLING SKULL ARMOR

Aura moderate necromancy; **CL** 7th
Slot armor; **Price** 20,375 gp; **Weight** 20 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This suit of +3 *studded leather armor* is decorated with metal skulls. Once per day as a standard action, the wearer can command the skulls to unleash a cacophonous chorus of howls, causing all creatures within a 30-foot spread to make a DC 16 Will save to avoid becoming frightened for 1d4 rounds. The wearer can choose up to three targets (plus himself) in the area of effect to be exempt from the effect. The wearer of a suit of *howling skull armor* gains a +4 bonus on all saving throws against fear effects. Each time the wearer of *howling skull armor* succeeds at a saving throw against a fear effect created by someone other than himself, he gains a +2 bonus on Will saves for 1 round.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *fear*; **Cost** 10,275 gp

MARINER'S EYE PATCH

Aura faint evocation and divination; **CL** 5th
Slot eyes; **Price** 12,000 gp; **Weight** —

DESCRIPTION

This pirate's eye patch typically features at least one jewel set into a leather patch. Upon uttering a command word as a standard action, the eye patch allows the wearer to use the following abilities once per day each: *comprehend languages*, *scorching ray*, and *see invisibility*. The *mariner's eye patch* originally appeared on page 73 of *Necromancer Games' Dead Man's Chest*.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *comprehend languages*, *scorching ray*, *see invisibility*; **Cost** 6,000 gp

MUTINEER'S BANE EARRING

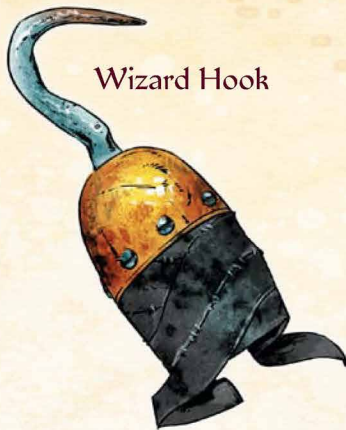
Aura moderate divination; **CL** 7th
Slot none; **Price** 4,000 gp; **Weight** —

DESCRIPTION

This magic earring grows warm whenever a ship's crew begins muttering of mutiny, granting the wearer of a *mutineer's bane earring* a +5 bonus on all Sense Motive checks made while on a ship under such conditions of poor morale.

A *mutineer's bane earring* has additional effects if worn by a commodore or admiral. If worn by a commodore, that

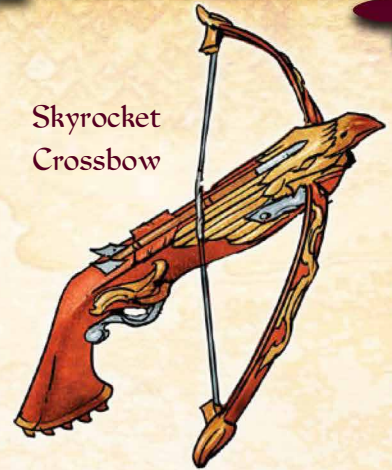
SKULL & SHACKLES TREASURES



Wizard Hook



Howling Skull
Armor



Skyrocket
Crossbow



Aiger's Kiss



Mutineer's Bane
Earring



Mariner's
Eye Patch

commodore's squadron gains a +3 bonus on morale checks in fleet battles. If worn by an admiral, all squadrons in the admiral's fleet gain a +1 bonus on morale checks in fleet battles.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *detect thoughts*; **Cost** 2,000 gp

SKYROCKET CROSSBOW

Aura moderate divination and evocation; **CL** 6th
Slot none; **Price** 10,400 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

The stock and bow of this +1 *distance hand* crossbow are decorated with the golden head of an osprey, sea eagle, or other avian creature. Three times per day, a *skyrocket crossbow* can imbue one of two special abilities on its ammunition.

The first causes a bolt fired from the crossbow to explode in a dazzling burst of colored light when it hits a creature or object, or if it reaches its maximum range increment (600 feet). Creatures within a 10-foot radius of the target point are blinded for 1d4+1 rounds. A successful DC 13 Will save means a creature is dazzled for 1 minute instead. Sightless creatures, or those without line of sight to the target point, are unaffected.

The second ability causes a bolt fired from the crossbow to function as a *screaming bolt* (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 475).

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *doom*, *flare burst* (*Advanced Player's Guide* 223);
Cost 5,400 gp

WIZARD HOOK

Aura moderate necromancy; **CL** 6th
Slot none; **Price** 4,310 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

A *wizard hook* is a +1 *hook hand* (*Pirates of the Inner Sea* 19) and a useful item for any arcane spellcaster. Although a *wizard hook* does not allow for fine manipulation, it is infused with magic that bolsters somatic components—you can use a hand stump outfitted with a *wizard hook* to fulfill any somatic components for casting arcane spells. A *wizard hook* also grants proficiency in its use as a weapon. You can make touch attacks with spells using a *wizard hook*, either by making a normal attack with the hook (in which case it deals normal hook hand damage plus the spell effect), or by making a touch attack with the hook (in which case you gain a +4 bonus on the attack roll and the save DC of the spell increases by +1, but you do not do hook hand damage).

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *spectral hand*;
Cost 2,310 gp



FLEET BATTLES

“I was just a cabin boy on old Captain Gresham’s ship back when we fought the Chelish fleet at Desperation Bay, but let me tell you, that was some battle. That Thrune fleet came at us, but I’ll bet they didn’t know what to expect. Hundreds of us Shackles pirates set up at the mouth of the bay and waited for them. The whole bay was awash in rippling sails and taut lines, and the creak of dozens upon dozens of masts and booms filled the air before the fighting started. When that first wave came, the ships at the front launched their ballistae before sailing full ahead to ram. Other ships in our fleet circled around to flank them, firing all the weapons we had, launching flaming pots and burning their sails away. It was a glorious day, I’ll tell you, and not one that’s been repeated since.”

—Old Blind Krauss, Shackles pirate

Throughout much of the Skull & Shackles Adventure Path, the PCs come into conflict with other ships on the high seas—whether these conflicts arise as the PCs seek to seize plunder or are forced to defend themselves from attack, the ship-to-ship rules presented in the *Skull & Shackles Player's Guide* are meant only to suffice for small-scale naval battles between just a handful of ships at most. But in “The Price of Infamy,” and then again in the final adventure, “From Hell’s Heart,” the PCs are destined to find themselves involved in some much larger naval conflicts involving dozens of ships at once. Rather than playing out such large, complex battles ship by ship, you can use the following rules for fleet battles to determine the results of these mass conflicts. Note that while the rules presented here are specifically tailored for individual naval battles that occur in the last third of the Skull & Shackles Adventure Path, they can serve to resolve large-scale naval battles in other campaigns as well.

FLEET BASICS

A fleet consists of multiple ships organized under a single admiral. Each individual ship in a fleet is crewed by a captain and her crew. Technically, it only takes two ships to constitute a fleet for the purposes of these rules, but in the battles that occur in the last two installments of Skull & Shackles, the number of ships involved will always be quite a bit higher (if you’re just doing a battle between a couple of ships, it’s generally better to simply use the ship combat rules from the *Skull & Shackles Player's Guide*).

Fleets consist of a number of squadrons of ships. All of the ships in a squadron must be of the same type of ship (longship, junk, sailing ship, warship, etc.). Each squadron involved in a fleet battle is commanded by a single commodore. A squadron consists of at least one ship, and can consist of a maximum number of ships equal to 3 + the commodore’s Charisma modifier. A character whose Charisma modifier is –3 or worse cannot serve as a commodore.

The fleet as a whole is commanded by a single admiral. An NPC fleet consists of a number of squadrons equal to 3 + the admiral’s Charisma modifier. A PC fleet can have a number of squadrons equal to the party’s Infamy score divided by 10 (round down)—this base number is then increased by the admiral’s Charisma modifier. A character whose Charisma modifier is –3 or worse cannot serve as an admiral.

READING A FLEET STAT BLOCK

A fleet is represented in text as a stat block (see, for example, Harrigan’s fleet on page 37). Alternatively, you can record all of a fleet’s relevant numbers on the fleet sheet presented on page 69. What follow are notes on how to read fleet stat blocks.

Name: This lists the fleet’s name.

XP: This lists the number of experience points earned by the PCs for defeating the fleet. See page 68 for rules on determining a fleet’s XP value.

Admiral: This lists the name of the fleet’s admiral, followed by the admiral’s Profession (sailor) skill modifier and the fleet’s initiative modifier.

Flagship: This lists the name of the fleet’s flagship.

Significant Characters and Boons: This lists the fleet’s significant characters, their location in the fleet, and the boons they provide to the fleet.

Squadrons: The second half of a fleet stat block lists the fleet’s individual squadrons. The entries below are repeated for each of the fleet’s squadrons. Some fleets may have all unique squadrons (this is likely to be the case for the PCs’ fleet) while others might simply have multiple essentially identical squadrons (as far as game statistics go).

Configuration: This lists the number and type of ships in the squadron.

Commodore: This lists the name of that squadron’s commodore, the commodore’s Charisma modifier, and her Profession (sailor) skill modifier.

Hits: The amount of damage a squadron can take before all of its ships sink.

Morale: This lists the squadron’s morale score.

Defense Value: This lists the squadron’s Defense Value (DV)—essentially, the DC of any attack against the squadron in order to cause significant damage. A squadron’s Defense Value is equal to 10 + the commodore’s Profession (sailor) modifier + any miscellaneous modifiers granted by flagship boons.

Attack Value: This lists the squadron’s attack roll modifier.

Damage: This lists the damage the squadron deals on a successful hit.

Morale Check: This lists the squadron’s morale check modifier.

TERMINOLOGY

Listed below are key terms for describing fleet battles.

Admiral: Commander of a single fleet. An admiral influences a fleet’s morale score and determines the fleet’s maximum size.

Battle Phase: Period during which each squadron attacks the enemy fleet.

Captain: Commander of a single ship.

Commodore: Commander of a single squadron. A commodore primarily influences a squadron’s Attack Value and Defense Value.

Disabled: A ship that has taken an amount of damage equal to its hits is disabled. A disabled ship does not count toward its squadron’s damage rolls or the squadron’s number of hits. A ship that takes further damage while it is disabled sinks.

Flagship: The ship in a fleet on which that fleet’s admiral is located.

Fleet: A number of squadrons that are commanded by a single admiral.

Hits: Every ship in a squadron takes up a certain number of squares—this number represents the number of times the ship can be damaged during fleet combat before becoming disabled, and is referred to as its hits. As long as the amount of damage a ship has taken does not equal its number of hits, the damage is automatically repaired at the end of the fleet battle. A squadron has a number of hits equal to the sum of its ships' hits.

Morale: Every squadron has a morale score ranging from 1 to a maximum of 10. When a squadron's morale score drops to 0, that squadron mutinies and is lost.

Morale Check: This check is made during the rout phase of a fleet battle, and requires rolling a d20 and adding the squadron's morale check modifier. This check determines whether a squadron mutinies and is removed from play.

Round: A round consists of a battle phase and a rout phase. A single round of mass naval conflict generally accounts for 10 minutes of open warfare in game time.

Rout Phase: Period after a battle phase when each squadron must make a morale check to avoid mutiny.

Ship: A single ship in a fleet, which is commanded by a single captain.

Significant Character: A PC (in the case of a player fleet) or a named unique NPC (in the case of a GM-controlled fleet) whose presence in a fleet grants additional boons and bonuses.

Squadron: A number of similar ships commanded by a single commodore.

Sunken: When a ship sinks, it is removed entirely from a fleet. A new ship must be purchased or recruited to replace it. Survival of any characters on a sunken ship is subject to the GM's discretion and how quickly and successfully the PCs undertake rescue attempts (in the case of a player fleet).

CREATING A FLEET

When the PCs begin gathering allies for their fleet at the start of "The Price of Infamy," you should provide them with a blank copy of the fleet sheet on page 69. While they won't be able to fill in the information about their squadrons until they start recruiting commodores during the adventure itself, they can start filling in basic information about their fleet

at the start. (The point of these rules is not to create multiple small fleets under PC control, but rather to create one single large fleet—as such, any one party can only ever control a single fleet at a time in a Skull & Shackles campaign.)

The PCs should follow the following steps to build their fleet.

Step 1—Fleet Name, Home Port, and Flagship: The name the PCs choose for their fleet and the names of their home port and the fleet's flagship have no effect on the fleet's statistics—these are purely flavor elements.

Step 2—Select an Admiral: A fleet can have only one admiral. Whether this is a PC or an NPC ally



is in large part irrelevant, but you should explain to the PCs that a fleet admiral should have a high Charisma score and possess many ranks in Profession (sailor). Note that non-admiral PCs can still bolster a fleet by granting flagship boons (see Step 4). Record the admiral's name and his or her Profession (sailor) bonus on the sheet.

Step 3—Determine Maximum Squadrons: A single fleet can consist of a maximum number of squadrons equal to the party's Infamy score divided by 10 (rounded down)—this initial value is increased or decreased by the admiral's Charisma modifier. For NPC fleets, this maximum is 3 + the admiral's Charisma modifier.

Step 4—Assign Significant Characters: Each fleet possesses a number of significant characters—either PCs (in the case of a player-controlled fleet) or unique, named NPCs (in the case of a GM-controlled fleet). Record the names of the significant characters here, as well as their location in the fleet (either on the fleet's flagship, or in a squadron). If a significant character is an admiral, he must be located on the flagship—if a significant character is a commodore, she must be located in the squadron she commands. Finally, each significant character grants the fleet a boon—record that significant character's boon here. See “Flagship Boons” on page 66 for more details.

Step 5—Begin Recruiting Squadrons: Without squadrons, a fleet is merely theoretical. A large portion of this adventure covers the steps necessary to recruit squadrons of vessels to a fleet. Each squadron recruited has its own statistics to go along with it, but if the PCs wish to build up their own squadrons from scratch, they can do that as well (although this is fantastically expensive—it's generally faster and easier to recruit existing squadrons—see page 10 of the adventure for details).

CREATING A SQUADRON

A squadron consists of a number of individual ships, each commanded by a captain. The squadron (and its captains) are in turn commanded by a single commodore. A squadron can have no more ships than its commodore's Charisma modifier + 3.

Each squadron and its statistics is listed in its fleet's stat block under a separate subheading. On the fleet sheet, each squadron is recorded in its own squadron box. Follow the steps below to fill out a squadron box.

Step 1—Name the Squadron: Record the squadron's name at the top of the box—this name can be whatever you want.

Step 2—Determine the Configuration: Record the number of ships in the squadron, along with the type of ships in the squadron. Record how many hits each ship contributes to that squadron's total hits. Ship type determines how many hits each ship contributes. All of the ships in a squadron must be the same type of ship. The types of ships available for use in a fleet are listed on

HITS PER SHIP

A ship possesses a number of hits equal to the number of squares it takes up in the ship-to-ship combat rules presented in the *Skull & Shackles Player's Guide*. Those totals are reprinted here for sake of ease in determining a squadron's hits.

1 Hit per Ship: Raft, rowboat, ship's boat

2 Hits per Ship: Keelboat

3 Hits per Ship: Junk, longship, sailing ship

4 Hits per Ship: Galley, warship

pages 23–26 of the *Skull & Shackles Player's Guide*. The hits per ship for these ships are listed in the “Hits per Ship” sidebar on this page.

Step 3—Select Commodore: List the name of the squadron's commodore, along with her Charisma modifier and Profession (sailor) skill modifier. An admiral can never serve as a commodore. If a commodore is also a significant character (either a PC or a significant named NPC), that squadron gains a +2 bonus on all attack rolls, damage rolls, and morale checks. (As a general rule, most NPC fleets should have 2–4 significant named NPCs serving as commodores.)

Step 4—Determine Hits: A squadron's hits equals the number of ships in the squadron multiplied by the number of hits each ship contributes. For example, a squadron of five rafts would have only 5 hits (since a raft is only a 1-hit ship), whereas a squadron of five warships would have 20 hits (since a warship is a 4-hit ship). This number is temporarily reduced by disabled ships and permanently reduced by sunken ships.

Step 5—Determine Morale: Morale for each squadron fluctuates during a battle. A newly consigned squadron's starting morale score is equal to the party's Infamy score divided by 10 (round down), with a minimum morale score of 1 and a maximum score of 10. An NPC fleet's squadron has a starting morale score of 3 points. If a squadron's morale score is ever reduced to 0, the squadron mutinies and is lost—it cannot be “repaired” in this case, and can only be replaced by a new squadron. A single squadron's morale score can never be higher than 10.

Step 6—Determine Defense Value: A squadron's Defense Value (DV) is equal to 10 + the commodore's Profession (sailor) skill check modifier, further increased by some flagship boons.

Step 7—Determine Attack Value: A squadron's Attack Value is equal to its commodore's Profession (sailor) check. This value can be increased by flagship boons or the presence of a significant commodore.

Step 8—Determine Damage: A squadron deals 1d6 points of damage to a fleet on a successful attack, plus an additional point of damage per ship in the squadron. This damage can be further modified by flagship boons and the presence of significant commodores.

Step 9—Determine Morale Check: A squadron's base morale check is equal to its commodore's Charisma modifier, further modified by flagship boons and the presence of significant commodores. Each time that squadron has a ship become disabled, add +1 to its loss count. Each time a squadron has a ship sink, add +1 to its loss count. Each time an entire squadron is destroyed or mutinies, add +1 to each surviving squadron's loss count. A squadron's total morale check is equal to its base check minus its loss count.

FLAGSHIPS AND SIGNIFICANT CHARACTERS

A flagship is the ship on which the fleet's admiral is located. A flagship moves around during a fleet battle, issuing orders and providing support as needed, but does not itself belong to a specific squadron. A flagship cannot be damaged or sunk during a fleet battle, and is generally regarded as a prize or trophy of any conflict. See the "Victory" section on page 68 for more details on the fate of a flagship once a fleet battle is resolved.

A flagship's primary purpose in a fleet is to grant boons to the fleet. Boons are advantages granted by the fleet's significant characters. For a party-controlled fleet, each PC counts as a significant character. A GM-controlled fleet's significant characters are unique NPCs—a GM-controlled fleet generally has four significant characters.

A fleet gains one boon for each significant character who travels with the fleet. If the significant character associated with a particular boon is not present in the fleet (either because that character was elsewhere at the time of the battle or because that character's squadron was destroyed), the fleet does not gain that boon.

FLAGSHIP BOONS

Flagship boons must be chosen when the fleet is created, and once chosen, they cannot generally be changed. Adding a new significant character to the group allows a new boon to be selected, but otherwise, you must decommission the current flagship and place a new flagship in command of the fleet in order to be able to pick different boons. Decommissioning a flagship in this way deals 1d4 points of damage to each squadron's morale score—which can result in the need to replace squadrons if mutinies result from this morale damage.

The available flagship boons are as follows. A boon cannot be taken more than once for a fleet unless otherwise noted.

Advanced Tactics: At the start of a battle phase, select a squadron. That squadron gains a +2 bonus to its Attack Value. Whenever that squadron deals damage during

that battle phase, you can determine which enemy ships take the damage, rather than the damaged fleet doing so. *Requirement:* Significant character with at least 11 ranks each in at least 5 different skills.

Defensive Tactics: At the start of a battle phase, select a squadron. That squadron gains a +2 bonus to its Defense Value for that battle phase. *Requirement:* None. *Special:* This boon may be taken multiple times. Each time it is taken, you may add a +2 bonus to a different squadron at the start of the battle phase. (This bonus does not stack if it is placed on the same squadron.)

Divine Protection: At the start of a battle phase, select a squadron in the fleet. That squadron takes 1 fewer point of damage than it normally would when attacked by a squadron in the other fleet. *Requirement:* Significant character with the channel energy class feature. *Special:* This boon may be taken multiple times. Each time it is taken, it must be applied to a different squadron at the start of the battle phase. (This bonus does not stack if it is placed on the same squadron multiple times.)

Loyalty: Whenever you recruit a new squadron, all squadrons gain a +2 bonus on morale checks (this bonus does not stack if multiple squadrons are recruited). *Requirement:* Significant character with a Charisma score of 15 or higher.

Magical Artillery: All squadrons gain a +1 bonus on damage rolls and a +1 bonus on morale checks. *Requirement:* Significant character capable of casting at least one 6th-level spell.

Overwhelming: The fleet's maximum number of squadrons increases by 1. If this boon is lost, the squadron with the lowest morale (determined randomly if multiple squadrons have equally low morale) immediately mutinies. *Requirement:* Significant character with the Leadership feat. *Special:* This boon may be taken multiple times—its effects stack.

Reckless Maneuver: At the start of a battle phase, select a squadron in the fleet. That squadron gains a +4 to its Attack Value for that round, but these maneuvers leave it open to attacks. The selected squadron takes a -2 penalty to its Defense Value until it acts in the next battle phase. *Requirement:* None. *Special:* This boon may be taken multiple times. Each time it is taken, it must be applied to a different squadron at the start of the battle phase. (This bonus does not stack if it is placed on the same squadron multiple times.)

Remorseless Advance: At the start of a battle phase, select a squadron. That squadron gains a +2 bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls for the duration of that battle phase. Its morale increases by +1 at the start of the battle phase. *Requirement:* Significant character with a base attack bonus of +11 or higher.

Swift Repairs: At the end of a battle phase, roll 1d6. You may remove this amount of damage from any combination

of non-sunken ships from any single squadron.
Requirement: Significant character capable of casting at least one 4th-level spell.

Swift to Battle: The admiral gains a +4 bonus on all Profession (sailor) checks made to determine initiative.
Requirement: None. *Special:* This boon may be taken multiple times—its effects stack.

Vengeance: The first time one of the fleet's ships sinks in a battle phase, all allied squadrons become overwhelmed with a need for vengeance and gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls and morale checks for the rest of that battle phase. *Requirement:* None.

RUNNING MASS NAVAL COMBAT

A fleet battle begins as a result of two fleets encountering each other on the high seas. During a mass naval conflict, players do not draw upon their characters' abilities—instead, they use their fleet's squadrons to make attacks against the enemy, with their characters serving as commanders on the ships. A mass naval combat plays out over the course of multiple rounds, with each round consisting of a battle phase and a rout phase.

At the start of a combat, place each fleet's ships on the table as representations for the attack—this works best if you use photocopies or printouts of the ship counters from the *Skull & Shackles Player's Guide*. For each squadron, place a number of appropriately sized ship counters on the table so that they are adjacent to each other. Actual placement on the table is irrelevant; since these fleet battle rules are streamlined and simplified, the allocation of damage represents the ships maneuvering and shifting position during the battle.

BATTLE PHASE

At the start of a battle phase, each fleet's admiral makes a Profession (sailor) check to determine initiative. The admiral whose result is higher gains the upper hand in that battle phase, which grants all of his squadrons a +1 bonus on attack rolls. This Profession (sailor) check is made at the start of each battle phase.

Each fleet then takes turns making attacks with their squadrons. The winner of the initiative roll gets to make the first attack, using any one of his squadrons. The other fleet then makes its first attack, using any

one of its squadrons. Attacks with squadrons go back and forth during the battle phase until all squadrons able to attack have done so—a single squadron can only attack once per battle phase. If one fleet has more squadrons than the other, the additional squadrons attack at the end of the battle phase after the other fleet has used up all of its attacks for that round.

Attacking: When you attack with a squadron, pick one of the enemy fleet's squadrons as your target. Roll 1d20 and add that squadron's attack value. If the result equals or exceeds the enemy squadron's Defense Value, you deal damage as appropriate for your squadron. If you miss, you still deal 1d4–1 points of damage (damage from a miss can never be increased by any other effect). This damage



is an abstract combination of siege weapons, ramming, spellcasting, missile fire, and even boarding actions against enemy crews.

Assigning Damage: The damaged fleet normally gets to assign its damage by marking (either by crossing out or by placing a marker such as a die, penny, or some other counter) the amount of damage on the targeted squadron. This damage doesn't all have to be on the same ship—you can spread it out in any way you wish among all of the non-sunken ships in your squadron.

Critical Hits and Fumbles: A natural 20 on an attack roll always hits and allows you to assign damage to the enemy as you wish, rather than allowing the defender to allocate it (you do not deal double damage with a critical hit, though). A natural 1 always misses entirely (and results in no damage at all to the enemy fleet). Every time a squadron scores a critical hit, its morale score increases by 1; each time it rolls a fumble, its morale score decreases by 1.

Effects of Damage: Each point of damage reduces a squadron's total hits. When a particular ship takes an amount of damage equal to its hits, it becomes disabled. A disabled ship does not count toward its squadron's damage rolls, and increases that squadron's loss count by +1. A ship that takes damage while it is disabled sinks and is removed entirely from the fleet, increasing that squadron's loss count by +1.

Losing a Squadron: Each time you lose an entire squadron (as a result of either damage or mutiny), increase the loss count for each surviving squadron by +1.

Abandoning Ship: For simplicity's sake, you can assume that a commodore's ship is the last to sink in any squadron. Note that not all characters on a sinking ship automatically perish. Typically, a ship sinks slowly enough that officers and crew can abandon ship, and there's usually ship's boats and other pieces of wreckage to grab onto. Once a battle is over, you can assume that any significant characters who were on a sinking ship survive, either by escaping in a boat, by clinging to flotsam, or by fleeing via magical means. The ultimate fate of a significant character on a sunken ship depends more on the results of the actual battle itself. If the imperiled character's fleet wins, she can be rescued after the battle, but if her fleet loses, the best she may be able to look forward to is capture by the enemy—more often, such victims are merely left to perish via the countless methods the sea presents for death.

ROUT PHASE

A rout phase occurs after each battle phase. At this point, each surviving squadron must succeed at a DC 10 morale check by rolling 1d20 and adding its morale check modifier. Failure indicates that the squadron takes 1d4 points of damage to its morale score. A squadron whose

morale score is reduced to 0 immediately mutinies and is removed from play.

Fleeing a Battle: At the end of a rout phase, an admiral can attempt to flee the battle entirely. When he does so, the other fleet immediately gets one free attack using any one of its squadrons and can target any one of the fleeing fleet's squadrons. The fleeing admiral makes a Profession (sailor) check at a -4 penalty, opposed by the other admiral's Profession (sailor) check. If the fleeing admiral's check result is higher, his fleet escapes; otherwise, every squadron in the fleeing admiral's fleet takes 1 point of morale damage and the battle continues into a new round.

VICTORY

A fleet wins a battle once all of the enemy's ships are removed from play, either by disabling or sinking all the ships in play or by causing squadrons to mutiny. When victory is secured, the enemy fleet's flagship is rendered defenseless, allowing the victors to board the flagship at once.

PC Defeat: If the PCs are defeated, the repercussions of that defeat are described in the text of the adventure. In general, the enemy captures and/or executes the PCs, resulting in a loss as if the PCs had all been defeated in regular combat. A defeated fleet generally disbands. In the unusual case of a PC fleet managing to surrender or even escape before it is destroyed, every squadron takes 1d8 points of damage to its morale score.

PC Victory: If the PCs win the battle, they capture the enemy flagship. In most cases, the fleet's commanders refuse to go down without a fight. At this point, the PCs resolve the conflict by engaging in shipboard combat against the enemy, but because of their recent triumph, all PCs gain a +2 morale bonus on attack rolls, skill checks, and saving throws made during this shipboard combat.

All surviving squadrons gain 1d4 points of morale with a fleet victory, minus 1 point for every ship in that squadron that was sunk during battle (minimum 0 morale gain).

After a battle, any damage to non-disabled ships are repaired at the rate of 1 hit per hour as the crew works to recover from the battle. Disabled ships must be towed back to a harbor, where repairs can be made at the normal cost (see page 16 of the *Skull & Shackles Player's Guide*). A disabled ship is reduced to 5% of its total hit points.

Sunken ships and ships that fled a battle after their squadron was reduced to 0 morale cannot be repaired—they must be replaced.

Experience point awards for defeating a fleet should be tailored to be a CR award roughly equal to the party's average party level at the time the battle took place. For particularly tough or easy battles, the GM can adjust this award upward or downward as she sees fit.

FLEET BATTLES



FLEET SHEET

FLEET NAME _____

HOME PORT _____

FLAGSHIP _____

ADMIRAL

CHA MOD _____

PROF. (SAILOR) _____

INIT. MOD. _____

MAX. SQUADRONS _____

SIGNIFICANT CHARACTERS

NAME _____	LOCATION _____	BOON _____
NAME _____	LOCATION _____	BOON _____
NAME _____	LOCATION _____	BOON _____
NAME _____	LOCATION _____	BOON _____
NAME _____	LOCATION _____	BOON _____
NAME _____	LOCATION _____	BOON _____
NAME _____	LOCATION _____	BOON _____
NAME _____	LOCATION _____	BOON _____

SQUADRON 1

NAME _____

HITS _____

MORALE _____

CONFIGURATION

SHIP TYPE _____

OF SHIPS _____ HITS PER SHIP _____

COMMODORE

CHARISMA MOD. _____

PROFESSION (SAILOR) _____

COMBAT

DEFENSE VALUE _____

ATTACK VALUE _____

DAMAGE _____

MORALE _____ + _____ = _____
BASE LOSS COUNT TOTAL CHECK

SQUADRON 2

NAME _____

HITS _____

MORALE _____

CONFIGURATION

SHIP TYPE _____

OF SHIPS _____ HITS PER SHIP _____

COMMODORE

CHARISMA MOD. _____

PROFESSION (SAILOR) _____

COMBAT

DEFENSE VALUE _____

ATTACK VALUE _____

DAMAGE _____

MORALE _____ + _____ = _____
BASE LOSS COUNT TOTAL CHECK

SQUADRON 3

NAME _____

HITS _____

MORALE _____

CONFIGURATION

SHIP TYPE _____

OF SHIPS _____ HITS PER SHIP _____

COMMODORE

CHARISMA MOD. _____

PROFESSION (SAILOR) _____

COMBAT

DEFENSE VALUE _____

ATTACK VALUE _____

DAMAGE _____

MORALE _____ + _____ = _____
BASE LOSS COUNT TOTAL CHECK

SQUADRON 4

NAME _____

HITS _____

MORALE _____

CONFIGURATION

SHIP TYPE _____

OF SHIPS _____ HITS PER SHIP _____

COMMODORE

CHARISMA MOD. _____

PROFESSION (SAILOR) _____

COMBAT

DEFENSE VALUE _____

ATTACK VALUE _____

DAMAGE _____

MORALE _____ + _____ = _____
BASE LOSS COUNT TOTAL CHECK

SQUADRON 5

NAME _____

HITS _____

MORALE _____

CONFIGURATION

SHIP TYPE _____

OF SHIPS _____ HITS PER SHIP _____

COMMODORE

CHARISMA MOD. _____

PROFESSION (SAILOR) _____

COMBAT

DEFENSE VALUE _____

ATTACK VALUE _____

DAMAGE _____

MORALE _____ + _____ = _____
BASE LOSS COUNT TOTAL CHECK

SQUADRON 6

NAME _____

HITS _____

MORALE _____

CONFIGURATION

SHIP TYPE _____

OF SHIPS _____ HITS PER SHIP _____

COMMODORE

CHARISMA MOD. _____

PROFESSION (SAILOR) _____

COMBAT

DEFENSE VALUE _____

ATTACK VALUE _____

DAMAGE _____

MORALE _____ + _____ = _____
BASE LOSS COUNT TOTAL CHECK



NORGORBER

Norgorber (NOR GOR ber) is one of the Ascended, a mortal who became a god through the power of the *Starstone*. Little is known of his life as a mortal, for he conceals this information—or has murdered those who knew him—so others may not use it against him. He is a mysterious deity who rarely lets anyone learn much about his goals or interests. Only his most favored worshipers know more than the most general information about him so they may help bring about his plans in the world, and sometimes he wipes the knowledge from their minds when the job is done to better preserve his secrets. Beyond these basic ideas, he says little, as he does not want to disclose anything useful to his enemies. Some sages believe that if Norgorber's true nature were discovered, he would be undone—perhaps as a side effect of his passing the Test of the *Starstone*, or perhaps from some sacrifice he has made for greater power. He is also unique among the Ascended in that he is the only evil one, though he is not overtly malicious like Lamashtu or Rovagug, for his power relies on the manipulation of others, not their destruction.

Norgorber has four aspects, all of them sinister. Those who call him the Reaper of Reputation venerate him primarily as the god of secrets and are typically spies or politicians. Thieves' guilds often revere him as the Gray Master, and look to his skills as a thief more than anything else. Many alchemists, herbalists, and assassins know him as Blackfingers and see his work in every poisoned meal and venomous beast. His most notorious and dangerous cultists, though, are the madmen, murderers, and maniacs who call him Father Skinsaw, and believe that with every murder, the future is sculpted according to their dark god's unknowable plan.

In artwork, Norgorber is shown only as a featureless, polished black mask, or sometimes as an invisible man dressed in the garb of a thief. Other depictions show him as a spectrelike figure with an obscured face and sinister black gloves. Those who try to paint or sculpt him as a recognizable figure, even if the image is purely from the artist's imagination and not based on any knowledge or insight, find their hands fumbling and their work increasingly erratic if they persist, until their motor control is permanently afflicted. Wiser priests of his church say this is because if the god only blotted out accurate depictions of him, mortals could deduce his true appearance by determining what they are not allowed to paint, so instead he simply hinders all attempts to portray his visage.

The Reaper of Reputation cares little for flashy displays of power. When he manifests to mortals, he appears to be a normal human dressed in brown and black, of average height and build, always with his face concealed or entirely invisible. Mortals in his presence always have the impression that he's actually behind them, even when he stands in full view of a crowd, and he is vaguely threatening even when speaking pleasantly.

Norgorber treasures secrets like misers hoard gold, whether the secret is his own or belongs to a mortal or supernatural creature. He counts and catalogs these secrets, and measures them by their value based on whether they are totally hidden, known to a few, in the hands of an enemy, or open secrets. He trades them for more valuable secrets, gives them away if such knowledge serves his long-term goals, and takes them from volunteers who can't trust themselves not to speak of what they know. He modifies memories or kills to preserve secrets. It is important to note that he is not a god of lies, but sometimes finds lies useful—in particular, if a secret is actually a lie and its existence protects the truth of the matter or makes it more

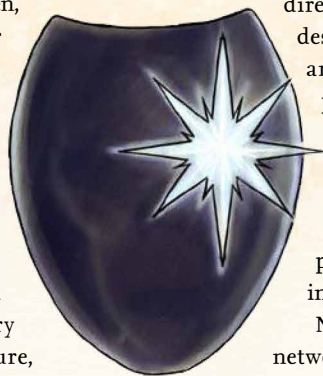
valuable. Still, he dislikes altering knowledge or fact to make a true thing false or a false thing true.

Norgorber understands that controlling something is having power over that thing, and having power leads to wanting more power. This desire can motivate people to commit illicit or immoral acts to obtain what they seek. Because he is subtle rather than overt, Norgorber knows there may be negative consequences for acting directly against whoever controls the thing you desire, which leads to deceptive, circumspect, and insidious methods like blackmail and poisoning rivals. Of course, some poisons are merely an inconvenience to the target, and some targets are easier to eliminate than to accommodate. Together, these ideas make Norgorber the god of secrets, greed, poison, and murder—four pernicious traits interwoven to create a treacherous whole.

Norgorber's realm in the Great Beyond is a network of sprawling tunnels and caverns beneath the perfect city of Axis. Its shadows and dark inhabitants hum silently with secret intent, bending the letter and spirit of Axis's laws but never going so far as to disrupt

the harmony upon which it feeds. The domain connects to various points in Axis, not always in a conventional manner or relying on normal perceptions of time and space. Norgorber's presence and that of his followers is like the grease in a complex mechanism: dirty, messy, and hidden away, but crucial to its overall function.

Like a thief in the night, Norgorber is subtle in his direct intervention. When he is pleased, a pickpocket finds a gold coin in an otherwise poor man's purse, a spy overhears a juicy bit of information from an unexpected source, a poisoned weapon retains its coating for a second attack, or a slain guard dies with merely a quiet gurgle. When roused to anger, however, his ire is carefully measured and meted out suddenly. A thief finds she's lost the jewel she was supposed to steal, a speaker completely forgets whatever important topic he was talking about, an envenomed blade nicks the hand of even a master assassin, or a skilled murderer finds himself downed by a lucky blow from an alley thug. Norgorber is disinclined to kill his own useful followers, even if they know far too much, and prefers to instead punish them with humiliation, sickness, or a crippling injury for a time, wiping key information from their minds to preserve his master plan. However, he has been known to kill those who are of no further use to him, especially those whose lives could be a threat to his objectives, and even more so if their deaths also serve as a lesson to surviving members of the cult.



"THERE IS VALUE IN THE THINGS THAT OTHERS SHUN OR CONCEAL. A SECRET IS AN INTANGIBLE COIN WORTH MORE THAN A NOBLE'S MURDER."

—THE WORDS BEHIND THE MASK



Norgorber is neutral evil and his portfolio is greed, secrets, poison, and murder. His weapon is the short sword and his holy symbol is a featureless black mask, sometimes polished to a mirror-sheen. Some cults represent his presence as a black masklike badge or an empty black glove, and are known to nail a black glove to a door as a warning to someone who has offended the cult. His domains are Charm, Death, Evil, Knowledge, and Trickery.

His faith is outlawed or at least persecuted in most civilized lands. Fortunately, the cult's reliance on secrecy allows it to thrive under these conditions, whether operating behind a facade of legitimate business or literally working underground with lairs and meeting-places in a city's sewers and basements. Many city-dwelling members of the cult lead double lives, reputable by day and murderous at night. Some gifted priests pretend to be members of a different religion, speaking false prayers and making false offerings to a different god with laypeople none the wiser, and only showing their true colors and allegiance when in the company of the Sons and Daughters of the Mask. A few—particularly among the crazed worshipers of Father Skinsaw—take this habitual dual identity to such an extreme that they develop a form of psychosis, living two lives separated by nightfall and sunrise, completely forgetting the existence of the other self except for brief moments of transition.

Norgorber's primary worshipers are thieves, assassins, and murderers, with alchemists, spies, and politicians a minority among the faithful. Common folk are rightfully suspicious of any who openly worship Norgorber, fearing them for being thieves, bandits, and liars at best and assassins or serial killers at worst.

Ceremonies to Norgorber are quiet, even in cities where his faith is tolerated. Typically, a masked senior priest leads a prayer, pausing for murmured assent from the faithful. Ceremonies avoid singing or using musical instruments, though some rituals are accompanied by the shaking of coins in a cup or the sharpening of a blade with a whetstone.

Norgorber has no opinion about marriage or families. He recognizes that some cults and guilds have strong traditions of marriage, forming powerful crime families that vie for control of a city's business, but doesn't care whether these marriages are political, romantic, barren, or fruitful. He does, however, recognize that marriage often leads to infidelity and secrecy, and relishes the opportunities this gives mortals to manipulate each other, for even an honest man can be corrupted if his lover puts his arranged marriage at risk.

Most of Norgorber's cults are associated with or run a thieves' guild, and the guildlike traditions have carried over into temple practices, even for the other three aspects of the god. Once a new member of the cult has established competency at basic tasks, she is usually given a mission

relating to the cult's more nefarious activities. Successfully completing this mission is a rite of passage within the cult and elevates the member to full (journeyman) status within the organization. For example, a cult of the Gray Master may require a person to steal goods of a certain minimum value, recruit an especially attractive person into prostitution, get a gambler into a specified amount of debt, or use violence to extort a significant protection payment from a merchant. In the cult of Blackfingers, membership is attained upon the synthesis of a particular poison, reverse-engineering a drug's components from its final product, or discovering a new alchemical use for an animal gland. For followers of the Reaper, typical initiations involve liberating a choice secret, defaming or defeating a key rival outside the organization, or accomplishing a political goal of value to the cult. Unsurprisingly, the challenges of the cult of Father Skinsaw involve murder, either of a high-profile target or a specific number of people in a short period of time.

THE FOUR ASPECTS

Members of Norgorber's cult usually align themselves to one of his four aspects and ignore the others. Though the faithful are all "Sons and Daughters of the Mask" and the different branches of the church might work together toward some secret plan orchestrated by the god and his direct agents, in many respects they operate like four distinct churches of different deities.

BLACKFINGERS

In his alchemist and poisoner aspect, Norgorber represents unethical experimentation for the sake of knowledge and the use of alchemical knowledge to harm others. His alchemists breed spiders and scorpions with stronger venom, invent paralytics and memory-fogging drugs to aid criminal activity, and practice vivisection and surgery without anesthetic to discover secrets of the flesh or create hybrid or altered monsters. By mastering the use of exotic drugs and toxins that duplicate the effects of food poisoning, dropsy, and dyspepsia, his assassins engineer deaths easily attributed to accidents. The god's followers prefer masks of smoked glass, ostensibly to protect the wearers' faces from chemical spatters but also concealing their identity when meeting with other cultists. Disciples of Blackfingers are not kindly folk and rarely use their knowledge for benign purposes. Good- and neutral-inclined alchemists usually worship Abadar, Gozreh, or Nethys instead, though all have at least heard of the secrets taught by Blackfingers.

FATHER SKINSAW

The most dangerous branch of Norgorber's church is the Skinsaw Cult. It attracts the most extreme and dangerously insane folk, from bloodthirsty bandits to unabashed serial

killers. Many of them wear magical masks made of human skin that allow them to detect the most vulnerable parts of their targets (see page 426 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path: Rise of the Runelords Anniversary Edition*). For these evil men and women, every murder is a prayer to their dark god and a step toward completing his mysterious plan. Their killings are not clean or gentle; bodies are mutilated and the scene of the crime left bloody. No good or neutral person worships Father Skinsaw. Those whose honest work is killing (such as executioners, mercenaries, or soldiers) normally serve Abadar, Gorum, or Iomedae instead.

THE GRAY MASTER

Just as a predator hunts the weakest prey animal in a herd, worshipers of Norgorber's thieving aspect target the weakest and most vulnerable citizens in a society. Whether through burglary, gambling, prostitution, extortion, blackmail, or selling illegal materials, the guild profits at the expense of others and usually outside the allowances of the law. Individual thieves' guilds vary from evil thugs who would disfigure a merchant or his family members for not paying protection money to nearly legitimate organizations that don't allow drugs or the mistreatment of prostitutes in their territory. Masks of this cult are usually simple strips of gray or black cloth that create anonymity by concealing the face below the eyes, often a scraps of cloth or scarves that are easily discarded after a crime. Neutral and evil thieves worship the Gray Master; good individuals who like the idea of liberating wealth from evil folk usually prefer Cayden Cailean or Desna.

THE REAPER OF REPUTATION

Perhaps the most benign (if that is the word) aspect of Norgorber is his guardianship of hidden information, which makes him a favorite of politicians and spies. Secrets and manipulation are bread and butter to these folk, and even the most amiable politician or good-hearted spy is wise to master their use. Of course, most of the Reaper's followers have selfish interests at heart, using their knowledge or influence for personal gain, but those interests might benefit others as well. For example, the guildmaster of a crafting guild who manipulates market prices to drive out foreign competition enriches the wealth of the artisans he represents as well as his own. However, most of the Reaper's followers are simply corrupt politicians and informants for powerful tyrants or despots. Some followers of the Reaper take a more aggressive route to gathering information, most notoriously the mysterious Ustalavic assassins known as the Anaphexia, who collect esoteric secrets and slay all others who possess such knowledge. A typical mask for a worshiper of the Reaper is a domino or masquerade mask or a spiral that covers the mouth. Good folk interested in politics usually flock to Abadar and Iomedae instead, and nonevil spies usually follow Cayden Cailean, Iomedae, or Torag.



TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Norgorber's temples are organized like thieves' guilds. A guildmaster (usually a rogue, assassin, or cleric) runs each temple, with lieutenants and lesser bosses in charge of various plans and controlling teams of followers. Temples to Blackfingers sometimes operate more like a merchant's guild with a legitimate front selling exotic substances.

Ceremonial clothing for the church is predominantly black and brown. Attracting attention to the cult by standing out from local fashion is frowned upon, so the clothing styles usually follow current trends to allow the wearer to blend in with those outside the faith.

Shrines are uncommon in the faith. Any place with a large populace supports a temple that operates in secrecy, leaving little need for another location that the public could discover. The Skinsaw cult may secretly bury the remains of murdered victims in public places and treat such sites as shrines, albeit shrines with no obvious markings. Followers of Blackfingers might designate one place in town as their dumping-ground for dangerous alchemical leftovers, creating a blighted space where nothing grows and treating it as a shrine to the god's secrets.



A PRIEST'S ROLE

Norgorber welcomes people from all walks of life into his priesthood. Most are rogues, clerics, bards, assassins, or alchemists, but inquisitors, shadowdancers, illusionists, enchanters, and even more exotic types are not unheard of. A few druids and witches serve Blackfingers for his patronage of poisonous creatures, and particularly heinous barbarians venerate the brutal teachings of Father Skinsaw. Depending on which aspect their temples favor, priests usually have some skill in thievery, information-gathering, poison, or stealth.

Thievery, whether common or elaborate, is a typical profession for priests. Some are master imitators, stealing others' identities and using them to cover up dark deeds or simply take their valuables from homes and vaults.

Others use their knowledge of alchemy, poisons, and potions to keep villains supplied in deadly goods while keeping public personas of harmless apothecaries. More sociable priests work as diplomats, spies, or negotiators, buying and selling information and contracts.

Followers behave according to their chosen aspect of the god. Those who worship the Reaper of Reputation are coy and secretive, followers of Blackfingers tend to be bookish, those of the Gray Master are greedy and covetous, and those of Father Skinsaw are antisocial. Of course, these traits color rather than define a worshiper, and while some are caricatures of these qualities, most have the good sense to rein in their urges and present a normal demeanor to the outside world.

HOLIDAYS

Norgorber's followers celebrate his Ascension in midwinter by snatching a random person from the street, bringing her to their temple, quietly murdering her with poison, then hiding the body where it will never be found. Cults that avoid killing might plant incriminating evidence on a target, drug a target and place him in a compromising position, or steal something valuable in a way that embarrasses its owner.

APHORISMS

With four different aspects and countless individual organizations scattered across the Inner Sea region, only two phrases stand out as common to the entire religion.

With One Hand I Give: Used as a salutation, this is also a warning—the speaker's true motivations remain secret, and a gift in one hand may be offset by a threat in the other.

I Wait for a Fair Price: Something of little apparent value may be worth something in the right hands or whispered in the proper ear. A person who says this possesses some item or knows some secret that has not yet reached its full potential.

HOLY TEXT

At least 17 short texts are associated with the faith, all given innocuous code names and often disguised as mundane books or encoded to prevent easy scrutiny. Among the faithful, the collected teachings of Norgorber are called *The Words Behind the Mask*, though any two cults may have very different ideas about how the chapters are organized, the specific wording of certain phrases, or which sections are the most important.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Norgorber is careful to maintain civil relations with most deities. When he must act against another deity, he does so through intermediaries or in ways that obscure his involvement, allowing him to appear innocent even under great scrutiny. As a master of secrets, he is often able to use his knowledge to leverage assistance out of those who dislike him, usually for the purpose of striking a common enemy. He has been known to unexpectedly assist those who dislike or oppose him, most likely to achieve a secret goal.

Of all the major deities, only six refuse to speak with Norgorber. Abadar opposes him, as the god of thievery represents an aversion to the idea of laws benefiting a society, and his actions directly undermine merchants and the acquisition of honest wealth. Cayden Cailean considers him a coward and a villain—and perhaps some of their rivalry is due to them being the only surviving males among the Ascended. Erastil has seen him and his followers ruin enough lives—whether through criminal activity or family-damaging secrets—to never trust him. Iomedae steadfastly believes Norgorber has evaded justice for far too long, and thinks the dark god was somehow involved in the death of Aroden. Sarenrae has given him enough chances to redeem himself and has been burned many times by Norgorber using false repentance to further some evil plot. Torag hates him because he is the cancer that destroys a city from within, despite the mightiest walls to keep out dangerous foes. Despite their enmity, even these deities have dealt with Norgorber in the past through intermediaries to obtain some of his valuable secrets.

Father Skinsaw has a unique relationship with Achaek. Both love the conception, planning, and execution of a murder, and the two cults have been known to work together. He has been known to consort with Gyronna and Sivanah as well, calling upon their aid directly or manipulating them for his own purposes, and withdrawing in silent amusement when they manage to manipulate him in turn.

NEW SPELL

The unique magical abilities of a priest of Norgorber depend on which aspect is the priest's patron. Clerics and druids of Blackfingers may spontaneously cast *poison* as

CUSTOMIZED SUMMON LIST

Norgorber's priests can use *summon monster* spells to summon the following creatures in addition to the normal creatures listed in the spells.

Summon Monster III

Human natural wererat rogue 2*

Summon Monster IV

Choker*

Summon Monster V

Shadow mastiff (*Bestiary* 3)

* This creature has the extraplanar subtype but is otherwise normal for its kind.

a 3rd-level spell. Clerics of the Reaper of Reputation may prepare *nondetection* as a 3rd-level spell. Clerics of Father Skinsaw may spontaneously cast *slay living* as a 5th-level spell. Clerics of the Gray Master may spontaneously cast *clairaudience/clairvoyance* as a 3rd-level spell, and his antipaladins may prepare it as a 2nd-level spell.

In addition to *poison egg* (see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Gods and Magic*), his priests have access to the following spell, which they often cast on patsies to wipe their memories after they've magically compelled them to commit a crime.

FALSE ALIBI

School enchantment (compulsion) [mind-affecting]; **Level** bard 3, cleric 3, inquisitor 3 (Norgorber)

Casting Time 1 round

Components V, S, M (100 gp of emerald dust)

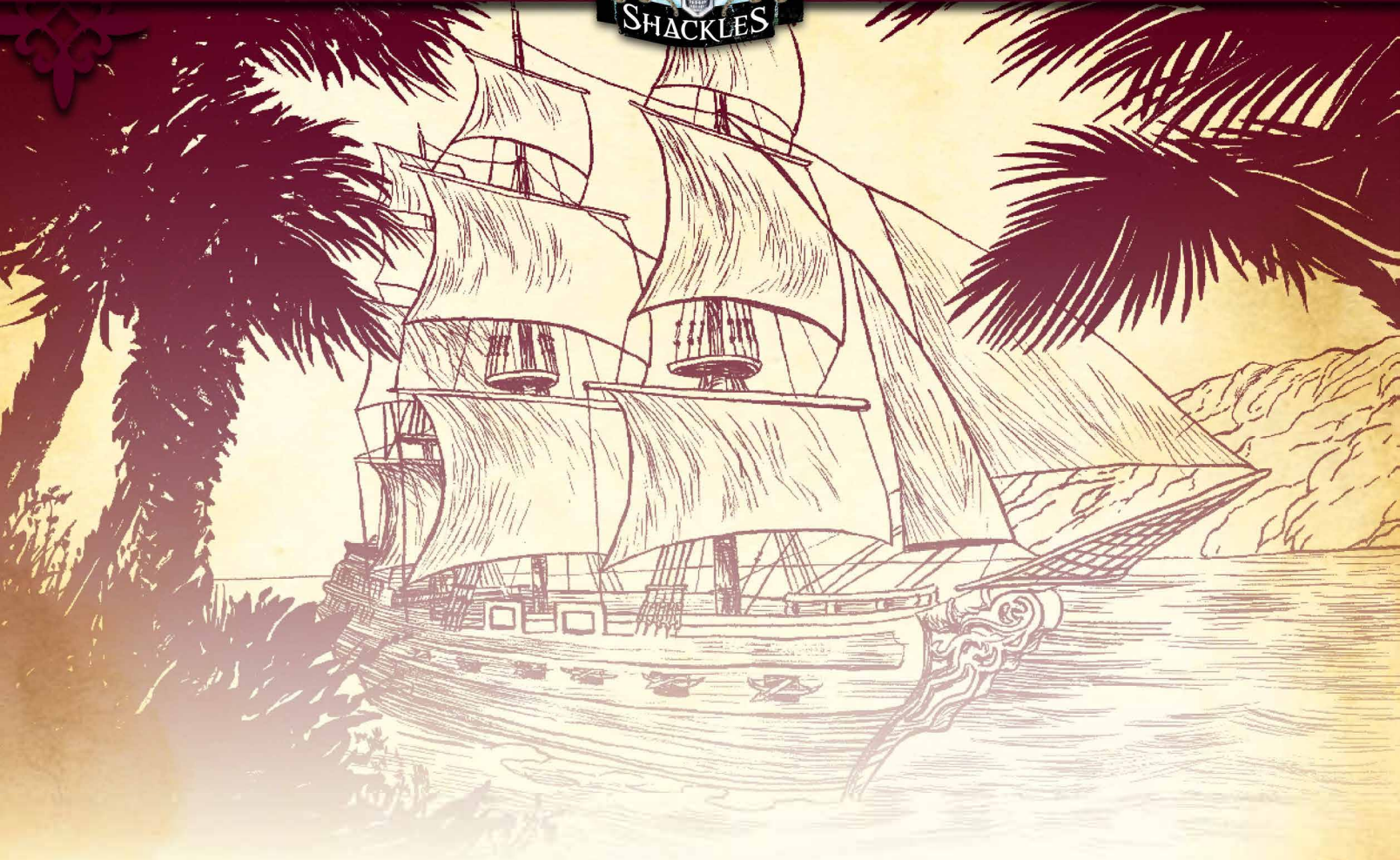
Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target one living creature

Duration permanent; see text

Saving Throw Will negates; **Spell Resistance** yes

This spell functions similar to *modify memory*, except you can modify the target's memory only in a specific way. In response to a triggering condition you determine, up to the last 5 minutes of the target's memory are eliminated and replaced with a memory of your choosing (or no memory at all). For example, you could cast this on an assassin, set it to trigger when he completes his kill, and replace his memory of the murder with the memory of him discovering the body and picking up the murder weapon. You can cast this spell multiple times on the same target, even with the same trigger, affecting different memories. A single casting of false alibi affects a creature only until the specified condition has been triggered; once a condition has been triggered and the target's memory altered, that condition no longer triggers this spell unless the victim is subject to another casting of *false alibi* that specifies the same trigger.



BECALMED

Pathfinder's Journal: The Treasure of Far Thallai 5 of 6

The harpies had strewn an assortment of bones around their nest, mostly human, all well gnawed. As my adjutants stripped the monstrous corpses of their jewels, they tripped over rib cages and tumbled skulls from their resting places. Among the gruesome litter I spotted also the skeletons of elves and halflings. Not all of them had been adults. The large bones had been cracked open to get at the marrow. I wished one of the harpies would rise back to life, so I could send it right back to Hell.

A burlap sack, blotched with rusty stains, held a man-sized form. A dirty length of cord tied its mouth shut. I stepped my way through the pile of bones and slain harpies to tear loose the cord and open the sack.

My shoulders slumped in frustration—the pot-bellied, white-haired man inside appeared to be dead. Then came a flutter of movement. A blue tinge below the eyes

told the tale: He'd been dosed with a sedative. I waved Otondo over and dug into the supply pack he carried on his back. Though the healers back on the ship likely had a cheaper remedy, I uncorked a healing potion and dribbled its contents onto his lips. The man awoke with a start. Goggling in terror, he scuttled back, clutching at his hip and finding only an empty scabbard. His frantic effort to free his legs from the sack entangled him further.

I knelt down, placing a foot on the burlap to help him work himself free. Gently taking hold of his right arm, I pulled it clear of the sack. The forefinger was missing.

We'd found Twill Ninefingers.

"My name is Challys Argent," I said.

Comprehension eluded him; it would take him a few more moments to shake off the mind-dulling effects of the sleep draught. He held out his hands, as if afraid I was about

to run him through. A shadow passed over my shoulder: it was Otondo. "What have I told you about looming?" I said. The ogre retreated, smirking. Twill's expression veered from abject dread to mere apprehension.

"We came here to rescue you," I told him.

"W-why?" he managed. Like the nest around him, he stank of carrion. A general pallor, coupled with inflammation of the eyelids, showed that he had not been properly fed in a good long time. Judging from his sagging cheeks, he'd begun his recent misadventures as a much portlier man.

"You are Twill Ninesingers, the famous lockbreaker?"

"Who wants to know?"

"As I said, I am Challys Argent, captain of the *Aspidochelone*."

"If you are she..." He swiveled his gaze to each of my adjutants in turn. "...then these are the Devil's Four!"

Otondo chortled at the term, which I had not heard before.

"If you have heard that much about them," I told Twill, "you are also aware that they now atone for their past crimes."

"No one believes that will last," he whispered.

"She does," said Aspodell.

I moved to block Twill's view of the others. "Whether you think they serve me or the devil, you'll have to admit we're preferable to a nest of ravening harpies."

"They weren't going to eat me."

"No, they were holding you for Kered Firsk. Who do you prefer to sail home with? Him or us?"

"Do not think me ungrateful." He finally made his way fully out of the sack, leaving it in a bundle at his feet. "But I'm not opening no treasure box for you."

"We don't have a treasure box."

"No, but the Monster Captain has the Treasure of Far Thallai, and you want it. I'm not getting mixed up in no set-to between the two of you. Just drop me someplace secluded, and you can tell whatever fool god you serve that you've added another good deed to your ledger book."

I held out my hand to him. "Perhaps we'll do exactly that. It's true I seek the treasure, but I won't force you to open anything. Did you hear the harpies say what they were supposed to do with you?"

He took my help, wobbling to his feet. "They were waiting for someone to arrive."

"Who?"

"Someone they didn't much like. There was a lot of squabbling over whether they'd go down to meet them, or would make them come up to the nest. They called them *nyoggot*, or some such. Any meaning in that?"

I scribbled the word in my small carry-diary, for later transcription into a logbook proper. "Harpy slang, I suppose, or a fragment of some long-lost tongue."

"Whatever a *nyoggot* is, the harpies didn't trust them. They argued about whether they should just fly me to the

destination themselves. But that wasn't what Firsk told them, and they feared him."

"Destination?"

"They mentioned Dead Slave Cove."

"That's on Raptor Island," Seagrave said. "South side."

"He'll slay me if he finds me with you," Twill said.

"You're worried that he'll do it anyway, once you've opened the Thallai case, or you wouldn't have fled Moonplum to escape him. You heard he was coming?"

Twill tottered to the edge of the volcanic crater, where he surveyed the formidable slope below. "A spice trader putting in at Moonplum said he'd heard that Firsk had the Thallai case but needed someone to open it. I needed to hear no more than that. Sooner or later word would get back to him I was living there."

"So you sought the protection of a cyclops?"

"Easy enough now to call me a fool. I thought even Kered Firsk might think twice before raiding an island teeming with one-eyes. And whatever Megeus's faults, I'd dealt with him in the past. It was a point of lunatic pride with him, how he'd never violated an oath. And he swore up and sideways he'd never betray me to Firsk."

"He didn't."

"But the ghosts..."

"They weren't working for Firsk. They wanted you for themselves."

"I don't understand."

"Your brother is now a grandee of Drowningtide. He misses you. And would like you at his side, forever."

"Geor?" Twill grimaced. "He never cared for me in life."

"Death exists, for some, as an eternity of pondering and regret. At any rate, they weren't delivering you to the harpies. The bird-bitches intercepted you."

Twill leaned against the crater's edge. "That explains it. They were all set to open me up and feast on my liver, till they saw my face and counted my fingers."

"Firsk has more than one set of monstrous allies scouring the Shackles for you. If we drop you off on a lonely atoll, how long do you think it will be before you're sniffed out by a sea drake, draugr, or something worse?"

The lockbreaker noticed an overlong fingernail and commenced to neatly clip it off with his teeth. "I see your point."

"And, in a more urgent vein, how long before more harpies return to this nest?"

Even in the best of health, no one would mistake Twill for a climber. We nearly lost him twice on the way down Sarenvent's slopes. Nonetheless we conveyed him to the boat, and from there to the *Aspidochelone*. After turning him over to the ministrations of the healers, Jeffret and Cold Bendani, I consulted with Old Hallegg.

"Any trouble?" I asked him.

"Shapes move beneath the waters, captain."

“Haul anchor and ready the sails.”

“Where to?”

“That’s the question, isn’t it?”

I met with the Devil’s Four—a term that lodged itself in my head, despite its idiocy—in my quarters. “Where do we take him?” I asked. “At first I’d thought we hide him inland, at Neruma.”

Seagrave’s beard appeared to writhe with disapproval. “An overland journey? As tough on us as it would be on Firsk.”

“Right. Other suggestions?”

“We’re using Twill as bait, yes?” Rira asked.

“Well-protected bait.”

“Then north, to the edge of the Abendego storms?”

Seagrave twitched. “Firsk’s crew is as able there as we. If we’re to fight an even battle, let’s not do it on the skirts of a hurricane.”

“We take him to Port Peril, then,” said Aspodell. “Firsk doesn’t dare invade the very city of the pirate king. He’d have to come at us by stealth, alone or with a handful of crew. And when it comes to subtlety, my wager’s on us. By which I mean, me.”

I left a moment’s pause for objections, nodded my assent, and left the cabin to order a course for Port Peril.

A good wind cleared the sky and filled our sails. As the *Aspidochelone* bore down on the Terwa coast it grew stronger. The ship’s hull and decks sang in harmony as we cut the water, carried on the waves. Seagrave took the helm, belting out a ribald shanty about a ship besotted with a mermaid. I’d heard the song before, but never so many verses of it. The crew bellowed the chorus and left the verses to him. I joined him on the aft deck, not to better hear what rhymed with “weatherduck,” but to scan the horizon for signs of Kered Firsk’s vessel, the *Slicer*. From my eavesdropping on the harpies before we slew them, it seemed more than likely that they’d already alerted the Monster Captain to Twill’s presence. His dark ship could be waiting for us behind any island.

Twill stumped up beside me. The set of his brow suggested that he’d also mulled the chances of an ambush.

“You look haler already,” I said.

“Salt cod and hardtack. Now I remember why I promised myself never to sail again.”

“When we get to Port Peril, we’ll feed you better than that.”

“Your healers say you’re a Pathfinder.”

“That I am.”

“So you care more about discovering facts to put down in your little books than you do about the fates of others.”

“These goals are one and the same. The soul needs knowledge like the belly needs food.”

“There’s nary a lesson I’ve learned that I don’t wish I hadn’t,” he said, almost to himself. “How to break locks most of all. Things are put behind lock and key for a reason,

that’s what I’ve discovered. Best to leave secret doors secret and closed chests shut. Ain’t nothing I e’er opened wasn’t more trouble than good. It’s a curse, a punishment for curiosity and greed. For caring more about ill-got riches than my own kinfolk and comrades. They say I’m among the best in the world. Near as good as Vitta of Mendev, they say. And what’s it got me? Bad company and worse grub. What’s money? It runs through your fingers. What’s lore? A bunch of words. Dead thoughts about dead men.”

“Men prosper when they learn, and suffer when old truths are lost.”

“How many truths are my life worth?”

Before I could answer him, the ship lurched. I flew against the rail, catching myself just in time to avoid a nasty bang on the head. Twill landed face-first on the deck. From the corner of my eye I saw a sailor plummet from the rigging. A loud splash announced his fall into the sea. I looked to the anchor, wondering if some fool had let it drop. But it remained in place, drying and swinging, its chain still well secured.

The *Aspidochelone* continued to slow until finally we were becalmed altogether. The winds blew as powerfully as ever, rattling in the sails to no effect. It seemed like magic, so I called for Rira. In the meantime, men leaned over the port rail, looking for the fallen sailor. They cried his name. It was Feddick, a recent recruit who signed on with us at Hell Harbor, bringing with him a haunted look and a history of having been press-ganged.

We waited for him to break up through the waves. They ran fast, so he could easily have been pulled out ahead of our inexplicably halted ship. Old Hallegg took command of the detail, leaving me to deal with whatever had stopped us.

“What is this?” I asked Rira.

“I don’t like it,” she said.

“I’m not asking you to like it, I’m asking you to account for it.” This outburst I immediately regretted. An angry captain is a weak captain. I wondered what sly expression hid behind Rira’s mask.

She wove a looping pattern in the air with the fingers of her left hand while muttering a barely audible arcane formula. A faint hum followed her movements. It stopped when her hands did. “Whatever it is, it’s not a spell.”

“The work of an enchanted object?”

“Not that, either.”

“Battle stations!” I called. The crew broke from the search for Feddick to take up the cry. Soon they were arrayed with swords in hand, or behind ballistae or fire-throwers.

The waves broke into a white froth. Creatures bubbled up from below the waves. Fishy heads appeared, framed by fans of red gill-fins. Some were drably colored, others splendid. It was the sea devil war-party we’d outdistanced on our way to Sarenvent, back to greet us again. How had they stilled our ship, if not by magic?

The most outrageously patterned of the sea folk, whom I took to be a queen or the like, rose up from the water, held aloft by two lesser subjects. Droplets of water fell from the tips of her face-spines, some of which extended to a yard in length. Her enormous shark and its aquatic howdah were nowhere in evidence. We'd last seen the sea devils as they fought off a squid-thing; presumably her mount and its apparatus were now in its gullet.

"Who leads you greasy airbreathers?" the sea devil queen called, her voice a distorted burble.

I swept to the rail. "I am Challys Argent, captain of the *Aspidochelone*."

"Your appearance disgusts me. The sound produced by your useless lungs and lips is like unto the coupling of clawfish. To address you is to demean myself. So I shall merely specify my name, which is Kless of milting Snasn, breeding Shalligilat, lineage Sho-ese. The remainder of this parley shall be undertaken by one of lesser worth, the herald Drid, of milting Lellij, of breeding unspecified."

As captain of a pirate vessel, I should have perhaps interrupted her insults and asserted my authority. As a Pathfinder, I'd won a priceless opportunity to observe the speech patterns of southern sea devil royalty, and to record them accurately for future posterity.

A mottled specimen, its headdress of fins thin and punctured, bobbed up in the waves ahead of Kless. "Though I am but a worm, I am still of the true race, and thus infinitely superior to all else who swim the waves, and, it need not be said, landwalking nonentities such as yourselves. Yet at the behest of the great and merciless Kless, I command you to obey."

This had gone far enough. "Show respect, sea-trash, or I'll boil the water around you with our battery of fire-throwers."

The drab fish-people darkened; the vivid ones grew even more so.

"Let me demonstrate," said the herald Drid.

The prow of the *Aspidochelone* rose into the air, seemingly pushing itself up out of the water. Sailors tumbled down from the fore deck to the aft. They dangled from the rigging. A few thudded to the deck. The prow then fell, abruptly released. A shockwave ran up through the ship and into our bones. Loosened nails jutted up through the planking. A fire-thrower fell from its housing to clatter and roll. Rira stopped it with her foot.

"Were it our desire, pathetic motes," continued Drid, "we could, with a shrug, tear your ship to shreds. This will become our desire should you make any untoward or hostile motion, or speak in such a way as to offend the supremacy of our race. Is our position clear, ape-spawn?"

"You have articulated it precisely," I replied, hands curled tightly around the rail. In the hilt of my cutlass, a crystal pulsed with cold blue light. Of the five stones, it was the one that held Rira's geas. Its sudden gleam meant

that she was fighting its hold over her. My adjutants always chose inopportune moments to test their magic bonds. This struck me as particularly ill-timed.

Drid gurgled on: "Be it also clear that the true race never acts out of mercy toward inferiors."

I caught Rira in a sidelong glance. Her position mimicked mine—spine straight, gripping the rail as if to strangle it, quaking with contained rage. Was her rebellion aimed at me? Was it even conscious? As fully intent as I should have been on Drid's demands, I couldn't help but consider her mask. Of its origins, Rira refused to speak. Its metal lips and flaring gills certainly bore a striking resemblance to the creatures below.

"If we do not destroy your ship," Drid said, "it is merely because we do not wish unnamed others to count themselves over-pleased by our cooperation."



"It appears the lockbreaker has a sense of honor."

“You mean Kered Firsk. If you hate all humans, why do—”

“Do not inquire of us!”

The queen flared her face-spines. In response, the prow of the ship again pushed itself up, though not quite so high or for as long as before. The crew let me see its collective fear. If it were only me in danger, I’d have restated the question. Instead I fell silent.

“Inutile landwalker Challys Argent, you will do as we command. We intuit that on board your laughable vessel quivers a contemptible bag of flesh known by your people as Twill Ninesingers. For reasons we do not deign to enumerate, we demand this chattel. It will be surrendered to us forthwith. We will then depart, without feeding any of you to our sharks. Though you might be inclined to fall to your knees and weep with gratitude, we eschew such displays. Give us the Ninesingers, and consider our business transacted.”

At some point during the parley, Aspodell had eased up next to me. “They can’t tell one inutile fleshbag from another. Tell them I’m Twill.”

“I can’t let you sacrifice yourself.”

“Nor am I suggesting it. That queen’s last meal will be the steel of my rapier.”

“Even you can’t take an entire sea devil war party.”

Twill Ninesingers appeared at my other elbow. “Nobody’s going in my stead.”

“Twill—”

“This is my doom. That’s plain to see. I should never have opened that first lock. Anybody taking my place dies for nothing.” He leapt up on the railing. “I’m Twill Ninesingers! You want me?”

I grabbed for him, but Aspodell pulled me back.

“You got me, you rotten nyoggot!” Twill leapt from the rail into the sea below. Unprepared for this, the sea devils swam in a confused pattern. Ninesingers hit the waves on the outer periphery of their formation. One of their great white sharks lunged at him. Sea devil soldiers leapt on it, grappling its slippery hide. It bucked and snapped at them. A soldier cried out in thrumming tones, the underside of his arm stripped to the ulna. Blood pooled in the water, sending the other sharks into frenzy. The sea devils fell on them, hauling on reins of seaweed, or prodding them with long poles. The ends of these devices glowed when they made contact, and seemed to exert a pacifying magic. One by one the sharks succumbed to docility. In the meantime, Drid and several other of the queen’s attendants had plucked Twill from below the surface. They yanked his head up and

back as still others produced a drinking vessel fashioned from the ornate shell of some deep-sea mollusk. Holding his mouth open with their webbed claws, the attendants poured a saffron-colored liquid. It spilled across Twill’s face and into the water. Having thus dosed him—undoubtedly with waterlung—they ducked his head down and out of sight. Still working to calm their sharks, the entire party disappeared into the depths.

The crew held its collective breath, waiting for the force holding our ship to release it. Though fresh gusts rattled the *Aspidochelone’s* sails, it did not budge. Pressure built in the masts and booms; they groaned as if ready to crack. “Lower the sails,” I shouted. The crew rushed to seize the halyards.

A yell from the aft deck sent me running, to see Feddick’s upper half bobbing in the waves below.

“Shark bite?” I asked Seagrave.



**“Never argue with a sea devil—
especially not a queen.”**

"If so, it's no shark I've ever seen. See how the bite is shaped like a narrow V?"

I nodded, though in truth I could make out nothing more precise than a gruesome smudge of severed entrails.

"What did this was more beak than sharky jaw," Seagrave said.

"Giant squid? Kraken?"

"Or the like."

A dark mass snaked under the surface of the water. Feddick's remains jerked and were gone, pulled below.

I ordered Old Hallegg to fetch our own supply of waterlung. We'd liberated several doses from Megeus the cyclops, and so had draughts to spare. When he came back with the chest containing the potions, he said, "You wouldn't be going yourself, would you, captain?"

Otondo growled over Old Hallegg's shoulder. "We don't need you talkin' 'er out of things. Do we?"

Hallegg withdrew a step.

"I need one to come with me," I said.

Rira stepped forward. "It should be me."

When Hallegg offered her the potion chest, she waved it away. In response to my questioning stance, she tapped her mask. "What do you think this does? Who do you think put it on me?" Before I could turn these rhetorical questions into an occasion for further inquiry, she plucked up one of the specialized crossbowlike weapons the crew sometimes used for spearfishing, strode to the rail, and jumped over. I quaffed the waterlung potion and followed her, doffing superfluous items of clothing along the way. An instant of vertiginous suspension followed. Then I angled my body to mimic a knife, and in this shape sliced down through the waves. I rode the force of my dive until it dissipated, then curled around to view the underside of the ship from a vantage dozens of yards below the surface.

An enormous creature, half fish, half octopus, dangled below the ship, seven spined tentacles wrapped around our rudder and much of the hull's aft section. Its skin, mottled and fibrous, was the color of a blood blister. Bony projections protected its glowing cerulean eyes. Muscular, elongated flippers extended past its vestigial tail. These fluttered in tandem with a prominent anterior dorsal fin, holding our ship in place. They would have worked harder still when the sails were up. My memory flashed to a page from a long-destroyed copy of the second folio of the *Abyssal Synoptic*. The author, Praligeus, called it a devilfish. He identified the term as a misnomer, however: It was an escapee not from one of the layers of Hell, but from the aquatic regions of the demon-haunted Abyss. Praligeus also claimed for it the rudiments of a mind. But then, he also assured readers that it grew no larger than a horse. This specimen was nearly as large as my ship.

If it was capable of thought, it could have received and carried out instructions from its sea devil masters—or it

could choose to disobey them. However, I had no means of divining what its instructions were, or plumbing the extent of its loyalties. Nor could I communicate with it while underwater. We would have to dislodge it the simple way.

Rira, a string of bubbles pouring from her mask, directed a barrage of complex gestures at me. She swam toward the devilfish, enacting a spell. A pulsing, white energy rippled from her fingertips. They traveled outwards in a series of expanding circles. As each ripple struck me, my muscles spasmed in agony.

She was throwing lightning bolts beneath the water. Rira had been struck by the force of her own spell, and seemed worse off than I. She floated in the water as if stunned.

The first of the white circles reached the devilfish. Energy danced along its rugose flesh. Instantly, it released the ship's hull. It collapsed into a defensive ball, with its tentacles wrapped protectively around its body. Each time an electric ripple struck it, the beast shuddered. As badly as it had hurt us, Rira's spell had clearly done greater harm to the creature.

It remained in its ball as the last ripple washed over it. With sluggish movements, Rira seized the crossbow she'd slung across her back. I swam forth, cutlass ready.

As I neared it, the first of Rira's projectiles struck the creature. Guided by enchantment, the spearlike bolt homed in on a spot between tentacles, lodging in the devilfish's eye. The behemoth uncurled itself from its ball, emitting a black liquid. This billowed out to fill a sizeable volume of water centered around the nexus of its tentacles—what would have been its nose, had it been configured like an ordinary fish.

I reversed course too late; clouds of the dark substance washed over me. As soon as it made contact with my flesh, my gut erupted with the urge to vomit. Fighting this with all my will, I swam back, out of the cloud. Concentrating my strength into my legs, I dove behind and beneath the devilfish. Above me Rira had done much the same, avoiding the cloud. A succession of bolts already pierced the thing's spine. I stabbed my cutlass into the muscle fixing its flipper to its body.

The creature rolled over, grazing me with its half-severed flipper. It skittered through its inky cloud and made a foolish attempt at flight. In the panicked effort, it caused its flipper to detach entirely from its side. Only a threaded cord of nerves connected the creature to it. Gouts of blood blackened the water. The devilfish pitched onto its side and bobbed to the surface.

Rira and I clambered onto the ship to the cheers of the crew. She leaned against the rail. I lay on the deck, gasping. My next command was issued flat on my back and heedless of my dignity.

We would make speed to Dead Slave Cove, and a decisive reckoning with Kered Firsk.



BESTIARY

We heard the beast before we saw it. A long, low groaning rumbled through the air, suddenly rising in pitch to become a keening wail. Half of the crew stood transfixed in fear and awe, unsure what to do as the rotting creature erupted from the water in an attempt to dive onto the ship. Without a second thought, I ordered the crew who still had their wits about them to take evasive measures, only narrowly avoiding the skeletal whale. With its second leap, we were not so lucky. Half of us managed to swim ashore, but now we're stuck on this blasted island.

—From the journal of Captain Rory Nightgull of the *Dreaming Dryad*

The warm seas surrounding the Shackles teem with life both benign and malevolent. Those sailing these waters must keep a keen eye on the horizon for any signs of approaching danger. Better yet, a clever captain employs submerged scouts to warn of the even greater threats that may surge up from the dark waters below.

SHIPS, SAILORS, AND OTHER VICTIMS

Myriad ships cross the Arcadian Ocean and Fever Sea every day, and any one of them can serve as easy prey for pirates—or as dangerous foes for those who attempt to board the vessels. GMs looking to challenge their PCs on the high seas might have any of the following ships serve as threats. Each of the following ship entries provides information on a particular pirate ship and describes its place in the Shackles. GMs looking for more tools to help them conduct their boarding raids and shipboard battles should also check out *GameMastery Flip-Map: Pirate Ship* and *GameMastery Map Pack: Ship's Cabins*.

The Dark Sword: Runaway criminals and indebted stowaways alike know to fear Derin Skallas, an accomplished bounty hunter (use the bounty hunter statistics on page 283 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*), who teamed up with Captain Clanston Arrento (use the first mate statistics on page 295 of the *GameMastery Guide*) to sail the seas and hunt down those who've fled their responsibilities. The Shackles are ripe for this kind of work, since people from all over hope to hide in this pirate paradise. In their first year operating in this way, they brought nearly a dozen outlaws and runaways back to face their crimes and swelled their coffers to fund future endeavors. Cheliox pays the greatest bounties, and the two frequently make trips back and forth to Egorian to claim their prizes and obtain new targets for their enterprise. The *Dark Sword* is crewed by 24 additional shipmates (*GameMastery Guide* 294) and a trusted sellsword (*GameMastery Guide* 283), making this a CR 13 encounter.

The Dying Moon: This dilapidated barkentine carries a cult of Groetus making their way around the Inner Sea preaching apocalypse and spreading their nihilistic philosophy. A figure of a full, pale moon with a faint skull graces the ship's black sails, and the sound of the crew's feverish chanting swells as the ship approaches. These followers of the God of the End Times are fanatical in their beliefs and thoroughly mad, and boldly commandeer other vessels they come across, either converting or sacrificing the crews. Sometimes the ship and crew practice less violent methods, making a show of peace in order to gain access to another ship in order to proselytize about their grim patron's ultimate goal of total apocalypse. Few care to hear their mad ravings, though, and these evangelical missions often end in bloodshed. The *Dying Moon's* crew consists of 30 working believers (use the vagabond

HIGH-LEVEL OCEAN ENCOUNTERS

%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–9	1d8 giant jellyfish	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 170
10–14	1 clockwork leviathan	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 55
15–21	1d4 ghawwas	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 87
22–28	2d8 saltwater merrows	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 189
29–34	1 sea serpent	12	<i>Bestiary</i> 244
35–42	1 charybdis	13	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 56
43–49	1d4 lukwatas	13	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 187
50–56	1d4 basilosaurus	14	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 193
57–62	1 old brine dragon	14	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 94
63–66	1 great white whale	14	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 282
67–71	1d6 hezrou demons	14	<i>Bestiary</i> 62
72–76	1d8 sapphire jellyfish	15	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 155
77–81	1 sea bonze	15	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 239
82–86	1d12 siyokoys	15	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 246
87–91	1 scylla	16	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 241
92–95	1 bakekujira	17	See page 84
96–97	1 kraken	18	<i>Bestiary</i> 184
98–99	1 deep sea serpent	19	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 240
100	1 thalassic behemoth	20	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 38

statistics on page 291 of the *GameMastery Guide*), 13 cultists (*GameMastery Guide* 278), 2 mercenaries providing muscle (use the sellsword statistics on page 283 of the *GameMastery Guide*), and one cult leader (*GameMastery Guide* 279). If things get violent, all crew members fanatically fight to the death, making this a CR 14 encounter.

The Salty Gear: Captain Crissa Serucest keeps a ship crewed by only her constructs. Perfectly content living without any other human contact, she talks to her constructs at length and treats them as if they were her children, giving each of the golems and animated objects names and assigning personalities to the creatures. To keep from losing any of these mindless servants, she prefers to use wood golems that will remain afloat if they fall overboard. This strange pirate captain and cleric of Brigh also secured the services of a master artisan to help her permanently animate the siege weapons aboard the *Salty Gear*. Some say she resorted to piracy in order to save up to fully animate this sturdy sailing junk. Captain Crissa (use the high priest statistics on page 305 of the *GameMastery Guide* but change her spells and domains) maintains a crew of eight wood golems (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 164) and eight Large animated objects (*Bestiary* 14). If attacked, they all join in the fight, making this a CR 15 encounter.

BAKEKUJIRA

This hulking, rotted mass of pale blubber and bone looks like it was once a whale. Ghostly flames glow in each of its eye sockets.

BAKEKUJIRA	CR 17			
XP 102,400				
NE Colossal undead (aquatic)				
Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +20				
Aura undead parasites (30 ft., DC 28)				
DEFENSE				
AC 32, touch 2, flat-footed 32 (+30 natural, -8 size)				
hp 262 (25d8+150)				
Fort +14, Ref +10, Will +14				
Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4; DR 15/bludgeoning;				
Immune undead traits				
OFFENSE				
Speed 15 ft., swim 60 ft.				
Melee bite +27 (6d6+16/19-20), tail slap +21 (4d6+8)				
Space 30 ft.; Reach 30 ft.				
Special Attacks capsizes, leviathan's call, resonant song, smashing breach				
STATISTICS				
Str 42, Dex 10, Con —, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 23				
Base Atk +18; CMB +42 (+46 bull rush); CMD 52 (can't be tripped)				
Feats Awesome Blow, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Greater Bull Rush, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Lightning Reflexes, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Staggering Critical, Stunning Critical, Weapon Focus (bite)				
Skills Intimidate +16, Perception +20, Swim +28				
ECOLOGY				
Environment any ocean				
Organization solitary				
Treasure none				
SPECIAL ABILITIES				

Leviathan's Call (Su) The tone of a bakekujira's eerie song varies from that of a wistful memory to a burning, pain-racked hatred. As a standard action, a bakekujira can alter its song to make creatures either fascinated or frightened. All living creatures within a 120-foot radius must succeed at a DC 28 Will save or gain one of the conditions (bakekujira's choice) for as long as the bakekujira sings. The bakekujira can maintain the song using a standard action each round, though affected creatures receive a new save each round to end the effect. Any creature that succeeds at this save cannot be affected by the same bakekujira's leviathan's call ability for 24 hours. This is a sonic mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Resonant Song (Su) As a standard action once every 1d4 rounds, the bakekujira can release a single pure note that causes a damaging resonance, dealing 12d8 points of sonic damage to all creatures in a 60-foot cone (Fortitude DC 28 halves). The save DC is Charisma-based.

Smashing Breach (Ex) As a full-round action, a swimming bakekujira can make a special charge attack against creatures on the surface of the water. At the end of its charge, the whale breaches, then slams down onto the target with incredible force. Any Huge or smaller creatures in the bakekujira's space must succeed at a DC 28 Reflex save or take 4d8+24 points of bludgeoning damage and be forced into the nearest empty square adjacent to the bakekujira. Any humanoid creatures killed by this ability rise as draugr (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 110) in 1d6 hours. Animals or vermin killed by this attack rise as either skeletons (*Bestiary* 250) or zombies (*Bestiary* 288) in 1d6 hours. A bakekujira can use its capsizes special attack in conjunction with this ability. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Undead Parasites (Su) A bakekujira's rotting flesh is infused with necromantic energy. Creatures feeding on the beast's carcass (such as fish, insects, and sea-going birds) sicken and die, later rising as undead thralls. This host of carrion eaters manifests itself as a sickening cloud of sea birds and fish churning within 30 feet of the bakekujira in both air and sea. Any creatures coming within 30 feet of the bakekujira must succeed at a DC 28 Will save or be nauseated for 1 round as per the distraction special ability. In addition, those entering this area take 6d6 points of damage as this undead swarm pecks, claws, and chews on living flesh. Any animal, humanoid, or vermin killed by these parasites rises as a skeleton or zombie in 1d6 hours. Creatures with the ability to channel positive energy can suppress this aura by using one of their uses of channel energy. The bakekujira receives a Will save against this effect. The save DC is equal to 10 + 1/2 of the caster's level + the caster's Charisma modifier. If the bakekujira fails this save the undead parasite aura is suppressed for 1 minute. Channel energy used in this way has no other effect (it does not harm the bakekujira or any other undead in the area.)

The seas of Golarion are home to many legends both living and undead, but the bakekujiras is perhaps one of the largest among these latter horrors. Some have trouble believing the old stories, but woe to anyone that discovers the truth. These embodiments of corrupted majesty prowl the seas, along with their flocks and schools of pestilent parasites.

A bakekujira weighs about 50 tons, though sometimes less, depending on how long it has been decomposing. Bakekujiras are as large as they were in their former lives, measuring from 50 to 60 feet long.

ECOLOGY

Though the exact circumstances vary, the story of each bakekujira is similar: It was nothing more than an ordinary whale when whalers attacked. The whale managed to escape, but sustained a grievous wound from a whaler's harpoon. It died after days of anger and pain, only

to arise as an undead monstrosity bent on taking revenge for its demise.

As a bakekujira goes about its new, corrupted existence, it continues to rot until all the flesh is stripped from its bones, leaving behind only an immense skeletal whale. The decomposition process draws all sorts of sea scavengers to the rotting whale, from gulls to fish. However, the flesh of a bakekujira is not only rotten—it is also toxic and deeply infused with negative energy. Any creature that eats of this flesh sickens and dies, only to rise shortly thereafter and continues its existence as an undead thrall inexplicably bound to the bakekujira. Normally these creatures take up residence in and around the putrefied body of the bakekujira, swarming throughout the creature and only emerging to push back any who would seek to do harm to their rotting host.

The bakekujira is relentless in its mission to upset and capsize any vessels reminding it of its descent into unlife, though because of the vastness of the sea, its quarry can be scarce. When a bakekujira does come across a ship, its rage is such that the beast cares little whether the vessel is an actual whaler or just a fishing sloop. The whale pits its full power against the ship, and is capable of capsizing all but the luckiest of ships with the most skilled captains. Bakekujiras are also able to affect the minds of the ships' crews. Their usual song is gentle, evoking thoughts of peaceful days in the sea. However, bakekujiras are able to channel their fury through their music, transferring to their victims the terror and helplessness the bakekujiras themselves experienced in their last moments of life. Using its jaws, tail, and enormous girth, a bakekujira attacks relentlessly until its angry spirit is laid to rest.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

While there are stories about pods of bakekujiras collaborating to lay waste to fleets and port towns, it is unlikely that the massive undead beasts would even notice each other. They are creatures of destruction and see other creatures, even their own kind, as mere obstacles in their pursuit to wreak as much havoc as possible. This doesn't mean that multiple bakekujiras never attack the same target; rather, they simply attack independently, motivated by their own individual anger.

On rare occasions, large creatures such as giant vultures and dire sharks feed alongside the bakekujira's undead parasites. These creatures frequently succumb to these parasites and join the throng, swimming or flying alongside the bakekujira and taking a more active role than the whale's aura suggests. A GM can enhance encounters with bakekujiras by providing other undead creatures as auxiliary foes. Below is a list of appropriate animals typically encountered among a bakekujira's larger undead parasites, either with the skeleton or zombie template applied.

Creature	Base CR	Hit Dice	Source
Albatross (use vulture stats)	1/2	1	Bestiary 3 284
Eagle	1/2	1	Bestiary 118
Electric eel	2	2	Bestiary 119
Manta ray	1	3	Bestiary 2 232
Seagull (use raven stats)	1/6	1	Bestiary 133
Shark	2	4	Bestiary 247
Stingray	1/2	2	Bestiary 2 232
Vulture, giant	4	5	Bestiary 3 284



CETACEAN


Among the largest animals on Golarion, cetaceans are as varied as the seas in which they make their homes. From the deadly white whale to the often-friendly dolphin, these air-breathing aquatic mammals are perfectly adapted to life on the open ocean, and aside from their need to occasionally surface to breathe air, they are as versatile swimmers as the fish upon which they feed. Cetaceans are split into two categories: toothed whales and baleen whales. Toothed whales eat fish, scooping up whole schools in their wide mouths, while baleen whales filter their tiny-sized food through a comb-like structure. Only toothed whales use echolocation; they possess a lumpy organ on the front of their head called a melon that aids in this ability.

Whalers often hunt cetaceans for their blubber, which whalers render down into oil. Whalers also prize cetaceans' bones and teeth, which artisans use to craft weapons and art objects using a method of carving called scrimshaw.

Despite their massive size, cetaceans can be relatively docile, but predatory species or threatened members of any species make formidable foes in combat, as their size, speed, and relative intelligence make them more of a challenge than most mundane sea creatures.

BLUE WHALE

This massive aquatic mammal has bluish-gray coloration, a wide fluke tail, and a wide mouth filled with layers of baleen.

BLUE WHALE CR 12 
XP 19,200
 N Colossal animal
Init -1; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +27

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 1, flat-footed 26 (-1 Dex, +25 natural, -8 size)

hp 184 (16d8+112)

Fort +17, **Ref** +9, **Will** +8

OFFENSE

Speed swim 40 ft.

Melee tail slap +21 (8d6+24 plus stun)

Space 30 ft.; **Reach** 30 ft.

Special Attacks capsize, swallow whole (4d6+16 damage, AC 22, 18 hp)

STATISTICS

Str 42, **Dex** 8, **Con** 25, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +36; **CMD** 45 (can't be tripped)

Feats Awesome Blow, Diehard, Endurance, Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (tail slap)

Skills Perception +27, Swim +35; **Racial Modifiers** +12 Perception
SQ hold breath

ECOLOGY

Environment any ocean

Organization solitary, pair, or pod (3-18)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hold Breath (Ex) A blue whale can hold its breath a number of rounds equal to 10 times its Constitution score before it risks drowning.

Powerful Tail (Ex) A blue whale's massive tail deals more damage than a normal tail slap. The blue whale's tail slap is a primary attack and applies 1-1/2 times its Strength bonus to its tail slap damage.






Stun (Ex) A blue whale's fluke can deliver a powerful stunning blow. A creature struck by this attack must succeed at a DC 34 Fortitude save or be dazed for 1 round. If the strike is a critical hit and the target fails its save, it is instead stunned for 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Strength-based.

The imposing blue whale is one of the largest animals in the sea, though it is generally docile toward anything it doesn't perceive as a threat. A filter-feeder, the blue whale does not look at humans or ships as potential meals, instead preferring to eat millions of tiny invertebrates known as krill, which it sucks through its baleen in massive gulps. The most dangerous thing about a blue whale, other than its sheer size, is its powerful tail, which can capsize boats and kill humanoids. These enormous mammals can be found in all of Golarion's oceans and seas. An adult blue whale is 100 feet long and weighs 200 tons.

CRIMSON WHALE




Similar to other whales in many ways, this giant aquatic beast is notable for its enormous teeth, menacingly strong jaws, and blood-red skin.

CRIMSON WHALE	CR 8	  
XP 4,800		
N Gargantuan animal		
Init -2; Senses blindsense 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +21		
DEFENSE		
AC 22, touch 4, flat-footed 22 (-2 Dex, +18 natural, -4 size)		
hp 105 (10d8+60)		
Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +6		
OFFENSE		
Speed swim 40 ft.		
Melee bite +17 (2d8+26 plus grab)		
Space 20 ft.; Reach 20 ft.		
Special Attacks swallow whole (4d6 damage, AC 19, 10 hp)		
STATISTICS		
Str 36, Dex 7, Con 21, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6		
Base Atk +7; CMB +24 (+28 grapple); CMD 32 (can't be tripped)		
Feats Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite)		
Skills Perception +21, Swim +29; Racial Modifiers +12 Perception		
SQ hold breath, powerful bite		
ECOLOGY		
Environment any ocean		
Organization single, pair, or pod (3-8)		
Treasure none		
SPECIAL ABILITIES		
Hold Breath (Ex) A leviathan can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to 6 times its Constitution score before it risks drowning.		
Powerful Bite (Ex) A leviathan applies twice its Strength modifier to bite damage.		

While many cetaceans are docile, the crimson whale is an aggressive hunter that evolved to quickly kill even the largest and most powerful of prey. It sports a full set of deadly teeth that average between 1 and 2 feet in length, and its powerful bite can tear through flesh and crush bone. A typical adult crimson whale is 45 feet long and weighs 30 tons.

NARWHAL

This small whale lacks a dorsal fin and has pale, mottled skin, but its most notable feature is the single tusk protruding from its nose, easily as long as a human.

NARWHAL	CR 3	  
XP 800		
N Large animal		
Init +3; Senses blindsight 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +12		
DEFENSE		
AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+3 Dex, +4 natural, -1 size)		
hp 30 (4d8+12)		
Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +3		
OFFENSE		
Speed swim 80 ft.		
Melee bite +7 (1d8+7)		
Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.		
Special Attacks tusk		
STATISTICS		
Str 21, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 6		
Base Atk +3; CMB +9; CMD 22 (can't be tripped)		
Feats Skill Focus (Swim), Toughness		
Skills Perception +12, Swim +20; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception		
SQ hold breath		
ECOLOGY		
Environment cold oceans		
Organization solitary, pair, or pod (3-18)		
Treasure none		
SPECIAL ABILITIES		
Hold Breath (Ex) Narwhals are expert deep divers, and a narwhal can hold its breath a number of minutes equal to 2 times its Constitution score before it risks drowning.		
Tusk (Ex) A charging narwhal can make a single gore attack with its tusk in place of its normal bite attack. If it hits, the tusk deals 2d6+14 points of damage with a x3 critical multiplier.		

The narwhal is a skilled hunter in arctic waters, and has been known to dive deeper than even much larger cetaceans both in open water and beneath thick sheets of waterborne ice. Male narwhals possess a single, 6-foot-long tusk extending from just above the mouth that serves to impress females during mating season, though in times of need the tusks may be used to break through thick ice or even in self-defense. A typical narwhal is 14 feet long (not including the tusk) and weighs 3,200 pounds.



GALVO

This creature is constantly crackling with blue energy, and appears to be composed of dozens of undulating electric eels tightly knotted into a slithering, humanoid shape.

GALVO CR 9

XP 6,400

NE Medium magical beast (aquatic)

Init +4; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 18 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +8 natural)

hp 127 (15d10+45)

Fort +12, **Ref** +13, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities swarmlike; **DR** 10/slashing; **Immune** electricity

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee bite +19 (1d6+3 plus 2d6 electricity), 2 slams +19 (1d6+3 plus 2d6 electricity)

Ranged eel dart +19 (1d6+3 plus 1d6 electricity)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with slam)

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 19, **Con** 16, **Int** 7, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 33

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Point-Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Vital Strike, Weapon Finesse

Skills Perception +10, Stealth +15, Swim +15

Languages Aquan (can't speak)

SQ amphibious, compression, varied attack

ECOLOGY

Environment any aquatic

Organization solitary, pair, or tangle (3–9)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Eel Dart (Ex) A galvo can launch one of its component eels like a dart up to 30 feet as a ranged touch attack. An eel dart deals 1d6+3 points of damage plus 1d6 points of electricity damage.

Swarmlike (Ex) A galvo has no discernible anatomy, and is not subject to critical hits or flanking. It is also immune to any physical spell or effect that targets a specific number of creatures (including single-target spells such as *disintegrate*). Mind-affecting effects that target a single creature function normally against a galvo, since the creature's individual components share a hive mind. A galvo takes half again as much damage (+50%) from damaging area effects such as *fireball* and splash weapons.

Varied Attack (Ex) A galvo's slam attack deals both bludgeoning and slashing damage since the creature is formed completely of biting eels.

In a sunless trench in the Arcadian Ocean, deep siyokoy fleshcrafters created the first galvos to serve as soldiers

in their war against the sahuagin and skum. Since those days, galvos have moved beyond their darkened trenches, breeding and expanding into shallower, warmer waters. In recent years, they have begun to come closer to civilizations, preying on coastal communities. A true horror to look upon, a galvo averages 7 feet tall and weighs around 300 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Direct sunlight dries out a galvo's hide. This does not harm the galvo in the short term, but it causes discomfort. As a result, galvos prefer to stay deep underwater during the day and stalk the shadows by docks and riverbanks at night. A galvo can live both in the water and on land, and frightening stories tell of galvos springing up from the water to strike at prey both on ships and on beaches. While an electric eel's diet of invertebrates and fish would easily sustain a galvo physically, it would not satisfy the sadistic creature's appetite for terror. Invertebrates and fish accept death too easily; galvos prefer prey that screams.

Galvos do not wear armor or wield weapons. They attack with their natural weapons which are augmented with potent electrical charges. Much like the electric eels that form their bodies, galvos focus their energy into concentrated electricity, and discharge it with a touch. Even without their formidable electric powers, galvos are dangerous creatures. The eels that make up their bodies tear at their victims with biting mouths. To attack opponents outside their reach, galvos launch component eels from their swarming bodies.

When a galvo kills a target, it feasts as soon as it safely can, usually after bringing the victim back to its underwater cave lair. The victim is stripped of any bulky metal armor and weapons, then subsumed into the galvo's writhing body, which peels apart and engulfs the corpse to swiftly and brutally devour its prey. A galvo discards the bones of its victims from its swarming body as they are picked clean. If the meal is small enough, a galvo can maintain its normal activities while it digests, chewing and tearing apart one meal as it hunts for another. Galvos defend themselves with a greater fervor when digesting, but do not attack as aggressively, as they are not usually in the habit of killing more than they can consume at one time.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

There is no true galvo society. Galvos sometimes work together, but these alliances often are short and last only through a single hunt and feeding. The strange creatures make exceptions during their two-month mating season, when spawned and fertilized eggs require additional protection in order to survive.

Despite their propensity to work together during mating seasons, galvos do not actually require other galvos to reproduce. As galvos are composed of eels of both sexes, all eels forming a galvo are attracted to one another during these two months and the creatures appear more tightly wound, reducing their size slightly. Instead, the female component eels lay eggs within the swarm, which are inseminated by the male component eels. When the eggs hatch it appears as though a tiny swarm of eels simply emerges from the larger parent galvo, leading many observers to incorrectly assume galvos reproduce asexually.

There is no sexual interaction between separate galvos. They instead come together in cohabitation, working together to attack prey and feed. Typically each galvo births three to 10 infant tangles during this time. Adult galvo cohabitants care for the entire nest, not caring to keep track of which galvo birthed which tangle. As the mating season ends, the galvos find themselves less interested in one another. They drift apart towards the end of this hormonal phase, and each returns to its own lair. At this time, the infant tangles are expected to leave as well and fend for themselves. Only about half of all galvo infants survive to reach adulthood.

When a galvo reaches adulthood, it claims a permanent lair. Ideal lairs are underground caves, although any large clearing between rocks and out of direct sunlight is satisfactory. A galvo primarily hunts the area near its lair, specifically the land above, where prey is plentiful and one catch makes a large enough meal to sustain it for several days.

The magically enhanced galvo hive mind develops a higher intellectual capacity than individual electric eels ever could, showing a level of intelligence approaching that of a below-average human. Galvos cannot speak, but they learn to understand languages when living among or near creatures that communicate verbally. If their need to cause harm is met and they are provided an aquatic living space, galvos sometimes even come to be loyal followers of more powerful creatures. This is especially true for siyokoys, who keep large stables of galvos at the ready in their endless fight against the sahuagin and skum.

Underwater, electric eels are irresistibly drawn to galvos out of a mix of familiarity and curiosity. Galvos, for their part, typically tolerate such followers for short periods of time before spurning the pests. There has never been a recorded case of a stray electric eel being absorbed into the swarm, although there have been many cases of galvos tiring of mundane eels' company and cannibalizing these followers.

Galvos do not use items nor intentionally collect wealth. However, when they consume a victim, galvos indiscriminately eat its belongings during their hasty meal. Whatever gear on the corpse of a victim was too big to be eaten is expelled nearby, most often in the galvo's underwater lair. Reports tell of undigested gems and other valuables being found in the gutted component eels of a freshly killed galvo. In extremely rare circumstances, traditionally worn wondrous items (like a *headband of inspired wisdom* or a *belt of mighty constitution*) caught within component eels sometimes convey their magical effects to the galvo.



THE STABBING BEAST

This cottage-sized scorpion-man moves with an eerie grace and an intelligent, murderous intent.

STABBING BEAST (HUMANOID FORM) CR 15

XP 51,200

NE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar, shapechanger)

Init +16; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, see in darkness, *see invisibility*; **Perception** +27

DEFENSE

AC 35, **touch** 23, **flat-footed** 22 (+12 Dex, +1 dodge, +12 natural)
hp 225 (18d10+126)

Fort +18, **Ref** +18, **Will** +15; +4 vs. mind-affecting

Defensive Abilities all-around vision,



scorpion mind; **DR** 10/good and magic; **Immune** poison;
Resist acid 30, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 26

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee +1 short sword +20/+15/+10/+5 (1d6+4/17–20 plus bleed),
+1 short sword +20 (1d6+2/17–20 plus bleed), sting +22
(1d6+5 plus bleed and poison)

Ranged poison stream +30 touch (blindness)

Special Attacks bleed 2d6, scorpion strike, sneak attack +5d6,
sudden strike

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 18th; concentration +20)

Constant—*see invisibility*

At will—*absorbing touch**, *alchemical allocation**, *charm*
person (DC 13), *keen edge*, *poison* (DC 16), *true strike*

3/day—*false alibi* (DC 15, *see page 75*), *greater teleport* (self
only plus 50 lbs.), *invisibility*, *modify memory* (DC 16),
suggestion (DC 15), *summon* (level 6, 1 fiendish deadfall
scorpion**, 100%)

* *See the Advanced Player's Guide.*

** *See Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3.*

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 35, **Con** 24, **Int** 13, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +18; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 44

Feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows^B,
Dodge, Greater Feint^B, Improved Feint^B, Improved
Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Mobility, Skill
Focus (Stealth), Spring Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting^B

Skills Appraise +13, Bluff +22, Climb +12, Craft (alchemy)
+13, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (local) +13,
Knowledge (nature) +10, Knowledge (planes) +13,
Knowledge (religion) +13, Perception +27, Sense Motive +14,
Stealth +39; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Bluff, +4 Perception

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Infernal, Protean;
telepathy 100 ft.

SQ change shape (Huge scorpion or scorpion-tailed
human), murderer's reward

ECOLOGY

Environment any land or urban

Organization solitary

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Murderer's Reward (Su) If the Stabbing Beast's attack reduces
a target to fewer than 0 hit points, the Beast immediately
gains 2d6 temporary hit points. If the attack kills the target,
the Beast immediately gains 3d8 temporary hit points.
Neither aspect of this ability can heal the Stabbing Beast
more than the maximum hit points of the target. The
temporary hit points last for 1 hour.

Poison (Ex) Sting—injury; *save* Fort DC 26; *frequency* 1/round
for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d6 Str; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. The
save DC is Constitution-based.

Poison Stream (Ex) The Stabbing Beast can force a stream of
poison from its stinger at a target as a ranged attack.



The target must make a successful DC 26 Fortitude save or be blinded for 1d4+1 rounds. This attack has a range of 180 feet with no range increment. The Beast can make this attack in place of a melee sting attack (for example, attacking twice with its weapons or claws and once with its poison stream).

Scorpion Mind (Ex) Though the Stabbing Beast is an intelligent outsider, its mind functions much like an augmented vermin's brain, granting it a +4 bonus on all saving throws against mind-affecting effects.

Scorpion Strike (Ex) The Stabbing Beast can make a single melee attack as a standard action. If this attack hits, it deals damage normally, and the target's base land speed is reduced to 5 feet for 2 rounds unless it succeeds at a DC 21 Fortitude saving throw.

Sudden Strike (Ex) The Stabbing Beast is adept at moving quickly when its foes are surprised. During a surprise round, it may act as if it had a full round to act, rather than just one standard action.

STABBING BEAST (SCORPION FORM) CR 15



XP 51,200

NE Huge outsider (evil, extraplanar, shapechanger)

Init +14; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, see in darkness, *see invisibility*; Perception +27

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 19, flat-footed 20 (+10 Dex, +1 dodge, +12 natural, –2 size)

hp 225 (18d10+126)

Fort +18, **Ref** +16, **Will** +15; +4 vs. mind-affecting

Defensive Abilities all-around vision, scorpion mind; **DR** 10/good and magic; **Immune** poison; **Resist** acid 30, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 26

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee 2 claws +27 (2d6+12/19–20 plus bleed and grab), sting +27 (2d6+12/19–20 plus bleed and poison)

Ranged poison stream +26 touch (blindness)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks bleed 2d6, constrict (2d6+12), scorpion strike

Spell-Like Abilities (same as humanoid form)

STATISTICS

Str 32, **Dex** 31, **Con** 24, **Int** 13, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +18; **CMB** +31 (+35 grapple); **CMD** 52 (64 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows^B, Dodge, Greater Feint^B, Improved Feint^B, Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Mobility, Skill Focus (Stealth), Spring Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting^B

Skills Appraise +13, Bluff +22, Climb +20, Craft (alchemy) +13, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (local) +13, Knowledge (nature) +10, Knowledge (planes) +13, Knowledge (religion) +13, Perception +27, Sense Motive +14, Stealth +37 (+45 in forests); **Racial Modifiers** +8 Bluff, +4 Perception, +8 Stealth (+16 in forests)

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Infernal, Protean; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ change shape (Huge scorpion or scorpion-tailed human), murderer's reward

The Stabbing Beast is the herald of Norgorber, the god of greed, murder, secrets, and poison. It is an incredibly dangerous predator, a creature of immense strength that uses its keen intellect and deadly poison to stalk and kill its prey. Its natural form is that of a huge scorpion, but it can also assume an armored humanoid shape suitable for stealth or interacting with Norgorber's followers. Though its main purpose for coming to Golarion is to kill, it has also been called to aid great thefts and bury terrible secrets.

The Stabbing Beast enjoys the company of mortals in the same way that a well-fed barn cat enjoys the company of mice. It sometimes "plays" with these toys, teaching them secrets of alchemy or assassination, though it just as often maims or kills them as it sees fit or according to Norgorber's greater plans. It ignores most creatures as if they were unimportant or not even alive, bowling over these irrelevant people in its way and casually murdering those who make nuisances of themselves.

ECOLOGY

The Stabbing Beast is guilty of thousands of killings and has no fear of death. It does not believe that anything other than its master can kill it, despite mortal records showing that it has been killed in the past; Norgorber wiped its memory of these failures when he resurrected his herald. Norgorber's herald is normally emotionless and cold, showing no remorse or regret for any death or injury. When the cult of Norgorber summons the Stabbing Beast, the mortals may present it with several choice targets to hunt and slay, though predicting its interests is difficult and the Beast may select its own target—or none at all—in exchange for its services. The Beast keeps trophies of its kills by covering the corpses in a preservative bile, swallowing them in its scorpion form, and regurgitating them when it returns to its lair deep beneath the planar metropolis of Axis.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

The herald of Norgorber lives only to serve his dark master, whose mandates may come to the Stabbing Beast in a steady stream of evil deeds or sporadically and with long periods of dormancy between. When idle for too long, it tends to turn off its mind and simply waits in stasis, completely inert like a clockwork device that has run down. It reacts to prayers to Norgorber as if they were echoes of its master's voice, drawing its attention without violence and bringing it to full alertness.

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By Jason Nelson

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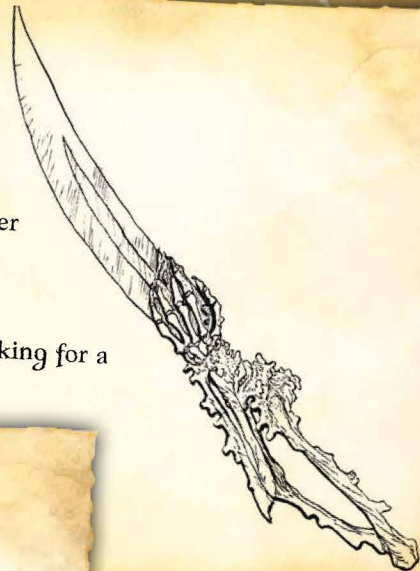
Teroro and Ina

Captain Malago first found this carved cup near one of the outer isles of the Shackles, and he's been looking for its mate ever since. These paired cups represent two figures from ancient kuru tales; one who gave life, and another who took it away. As such, one of these cups provides constant nourishment, while the other leaves the drinker endlessly thirsty. Poor Captain Malago possesses the latter.



Skeletal Cutlass

Gregsly One-Arm found this strange cutlass in a tidepool on a remote island. As the tale goes, the blade belonged to a pirate captain who, when pressed to surrender, said his attacker would have to pry it from his dead fingers. The curse worked, and his entire forearm had to be removed to take the weapon. Gregsly is now looking for a way to fuse the old cutlass with his stump.



Liecaller

Ever fearful of leaked secrets, Captain Marissa Gabrelle commissioned this amulet to ensure no one would ever be able to use magic to speak with her corpse upon her death. The sea witch who made it claimed that after wearing the device for a year, Marissa would be protected from such divinations. Furthermore, Captain Gabrelle learned that she could use the liecaller to point to any lies or secrets nearby, making it an invaluable tool in keeping her crew honorable.



Mister Ripples

Mascot of the *Briney Blade*, this grotesque mummified trophy steers the ship away from storms and barely submerged rocks. Some of the crew says it talks to the captain; others claim it sings during the night. No one knows where Captain Crenshaw got the blasted thing. Some think it's a long-dead ningyo, while others claim it's a shaved selkie. Either way, the important thing is that Mister Ripples keeps the ship and crew safe.



ASSEMBLE THE FLEET

The adventurers now have their own island and port, but they'll need more than one ship to defend it. When a past rival sends a fleet to attack them, they're forced to pull out all the stops to defend their island home, scouring the harbors and docks of the Shackles in order to recruit more ships and crews to their flag. Yet when they sail to the attacker's own island to get their revenge, the adventurers discover a traitor—one whose betrayal threatens not only their own fleet, but the very islands of the Shackles themselves.

This volume of Pathfinder Adventure Path includes:

- “The Price of Infamy,” a Pathfinder RPG adventure for 11th-level characters, by Tim Hitchcock.
- Fleet battle rules that allow players to stand as admirals and commodores directing their own armadas against enemy fleets in large-scale naval warfare, by James Jacobs.
- A glimpse behind the gray veil of Norgorber, Golarion's most secretive deity, by Sean K Reynolds.
- Lock-breakers and sea-devils in the Pathfinder's Journal, by Robin D. Laws.
- Four new monsters, by Savannah Broadway, Ryan Costello, Mark Moreland, and Sean K Reynolds.



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