

RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA



PART ONE: HIDING THE EVIDENCE

To cover up the fact of their mutiny, the PCs head to an isolated shipyard to get their ship “squibbed”—changing its identity by overhauling and refitting the vessel into a new pirate ship.

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PART TWO: PIRACY ON THE FEVER SEA

The PCs embark on their careers as buccaneers by engaging in various acts of piracy in their newly squibbed ship upon the waters of the Fever Sea.

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PART THREE: THE LADY OF THE ROCK

To further augment their reputations, the PCs travel to an isolated island fort to prove an old Shackles saying true and gain its luck for themselves.

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PART FOUR: THE TREASURE OF MANCATCHER COVE

The PCs come into possession of a tattooed treasure map that promises to lead them to a legendary buried treasure, if they can fight their way past the treasure’s guardians.

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ADVANCEMENT TRACK

“Raiders of the Fever Sea” is designed for four characters and uses the medium XP track.

- 4** The PCs begin this adventure at 4th level.
- 5** The PCs should be 5th level before they attempt to crack Tidewater Rock.
- 6** By the time they are ready to brave the dangers of Mancatcher Cove and face the sahuagin in their lair, the PCs should be 6th level.

The PCs should be 7th level by the end of the adventure.

RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The Free Captains are the most obvious menace of that maze of hell-cursed waterways and a thousand perilous isles and knife-edged reefs called the Shackles, but they are not its only danger, nor the worst. Nearly a century ago, Free Captain Cyrus Wolfe, a black-hearted rogue with an even blacker gift for the dark arts, plied the waters off the western coast of Garund and brought fear to hundreds of ship's captains and crews. His daring daylight raid on the fortified Thuvian port of Aspenthar directly under the nose of that city-state's admiralty left a dozen of the principality's warships in flames and over a hundred of its citizens carried off as captives for ransom. For that grand audacity, Wolfe was offered the Hurricane Crown by his fellow Free Captains, but it is said that he simply laughed in their faces.

After 3 decades of terrorizing the shipping lanes, Captain Wolfe made his biggest haul ever when he surprised a convoy of Katapeshi treasure ships returning from secret mine holdings on the coast of southern Garund. It is believed that Wolfe divided up his treasure and hid it in several different sites, but the locations of most of them have been lost to time. However, one name has stayed at the forefront of maritime legend as the location of his spoils—Mancatcher Cove.

To dispose of the most valuable portion of his plunder, Captain Wolfe selected an uncharted island somewhere in the Shackles—an island shrouded in dense jungle and surrounded by forbidding cliffs save for one cove said to be so deep that it descended all the way to the pits of Hell. There Wolfe hid his treasure, reputedly using his sorcerous powers to reach down into the very heart of Hell to summon forth a guardian beast to crush any ships that dared anchor in the cove. Before departing, Captain Wolfe made a map of the island and the location of his treasure. However, less than a year later he was captured by a flotilla of ships commissioned by the queen of Aspenthar and the Pactmasters of Katapesh. Even under torture, Wolfe refused to divulge the location of his ill-gotten treasure, and so he was hung from a gibbet over the harbor of Aspenthar, where his bones were picked clean by gulls and crows as a warning to others.

Since then many of Captain Wolfe's treasure troves have been located and looted, and copies of his map of Mancatcher Cove have likewise managed to find their way into the hands of fortune seekers. However, unlike at Wolfe's other caches that were looted, those few ships that came to Mancatcher Cove in search of the fabled treasure were never seen again—victims, it was whispered, of the Beast of Mancatcher Cove. In time, the last few copies of Wolfe's map were lost, and the hunt for the greatest hoard of Captain Wolfe's treasure subsided, leaving little more than an old sea dog's legend.

FIREARMS IN RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA

Firearms are rare on Golarion, and as a result, they do not make an appearance 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 "Raiders of the Fever Sea" to incorporate them.

While few of the merchant ships in **Event 7** would have cannons or other firearms, pirate ships such as the *Devil's Pallor* (**Event 12**) and the *Thresher* (**Event 17**) would likely each carry a couple of cannons, and their captains, Gortus Svard and Isabella "Inkskin" Locke, might each carry a pistol or pepperbox. Likewise, the Chelish pirate hunter *Dominator* (**Event 13**) would likely have rows of cannons instead of ballistae, and the Chelish marines on board could be issued muskets. The island fort of Tidewater Rock (area **B13**) might have bombards or cannons to defend against marauding pirates. Although the sahuagin of Mancatcher Cove would be unlikely to use firearms, the *captain's locker* in area **D21** could contain more firearms as treasure for the PCs. Perhaps Cyrus Wolfe was known to use a magical dagger pistol, or perhaps he buried a few of his ship's magical cannons along with the rest of his booty.

The truth of Captain Wolfe's treasure is somewhat different. Though he was a sorcerer, Captain Wolfe did not summon forth a fiend from Hell to protect his gold; he didn't need to. For when he arrived at the unnamed island that later became known as Mancatcher Cove, he transplanted a vine he had found in the hold of a Katapeshi ship—an exotic plant recovered from some unmapped region of southern Garund. Wolfe created the tale of the beast summoned from below to divert attention away from the true threat. He was never able to return for his treasure, however, as he found his neck stretched by a Thuvian noose shortly thereafter, leaving the secret of the treasure in the hands of the few who possessed one of his maps.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The adventure begins with the PCs in command of their new ship, the *Man's Promise*. Despite their successful mutiny, they know that Captain Barnabas Harrigan is not likely to let the slight against him pass and that he will attempt to find them. To throw him off the trail, they must refit the ship to change its appearance and its name. To accomplish this, the PCs sail to a dry dock called Rickety's Squibs, where they learn of the legend of Tidewater Rock and the good fortune that is supposedly brought by



securing control of the castle there. Regardless of whether they choose to take on the Rock, the PCs know they need to increase their fame and fortune before they will be welcomed in the waters of the Shackles as Free Captains in their own right.

As the PCs set out to make their fortune as pirates upon the Fever Sea, they run across the activities of a sinister undersea race called the sahuagin bent on dominating and cannibalizing those who ply the waves above. The PCs' course likewise keeps leading back to Tidewater Rock, which ultimately they must defend from an attack by pirate allies of the sahuagin.

After this battle, the PCs discover a treasure map tattooed on the back of the pirate captain leading the attack. This map puts them on the trail of the lost treasure of Captain Cyrus Wolfe at Mancatcher Cove. At the cove, the PCs discover that the "Beast" said to guard the hidden treasure is more than it seems and that the treasure itself is in the hands of the sahuagin tribe that has been preying upon ships. The PCs must defeat the sahuagin menace and their four-armed chieftain to claim the treasure of Mancatcher Cove for themselves.

PART ONE: HIDING THE EVIDENCE

At the conclusion of "The Wormwood Mutiny," the PCs mutinied against Barnabas Harrigan's prize crew under Mr. Plugg and Master Scourge, and claimed their own ship, the captured Rahadoumi vessel *Man's Promise*. Though they are now free to commence their own careers as pirates, the PCs must clear up a few matters first. They now control a ship that was seized by one of the most notorious Free Captains of the Shackles, and he likely still considers it to be his property. The wrath of Captain Harrigan, should he catch up to the PCs and the *Man's Promise* before they are prepared for such a confrontation, would be terrible indeed. If the PCs themselves don't realize this right away, it should be brought to their attention by one of their NPC allies on their crew, such as Ambrose Kroop or Sandara Quinn.

Most ships that sail the Inner Sea region, such as the *Man's Promise*, were crafted by hand in shipyards throughout Avistan and Garund. Though ships of the same type are similar in attributes and size, they each have their own look and lines, which the practiced eye of an experienced sailor can recognize in the dark by the silhouette alone. Successfully stealing a ship and hiding it from its owners requires more than a name change and a new coat of paint—there must be a complete rebuild of the superstructures and rigging in order to change the way it looks. Such an overhaul is superficial in nature and changes none of a ship's characteristics, but it does give a ship a different appearance and lines so that even someone familiar with the original ship can only determine the falsehood after several minutes of careful study.

Changing the identity of a ship in such a way is not cheap and must be done in secret or word would quickly get out of the ship's new identity. Powerful Free Captains with their own home ports are able to do such modifications in their own private shipyards and dry docks, and captains with access to skilled carpenters and shipwrights among their crews often make such changes far out at sea away from the shipping lanes or while beached on some distant shore. But not everyone has access to those sorts of resources. As a result, a side industry of sorts has grown into existence at remote locations throughout the Shackles and just beyond its borders, where captains can find discreet craftspeople willing to do the work quickly and with the promise of silence for the right price.

A DC 15 Knowledge (local), Craft (ships), or Profession (sailor) check is enough for the PCs to know of such practices, and a DC 20 check identifies just such an outfitter called Rickety's Squibs, located in a remote estuary on the Slithering Coast, relatively close to the current position of the *Man's Promise*. Again, if the PCs do not have this knowledge themselves, helpful allies on the crew should provide this information.

Another obstacle (perhaps the most important) remains, however—the matter of sailing within the Shackles. Even if the PCs manage to remake the *Man's Promise* into a new vessel that will not be recognized by Captain Harrigan or his associates, they still face the prospect of being a new ship into pirate waters with no reputation to back them up. The Free Captains of the Shackles have a name for this sort of vessel: prey. Unless the PCs want to constantly fend off attacks from their fellow freebooters, they have to make a name for themselves as pirates along the fringes of the Shackles first in order to be accepted and respected as peers among the other Free Captains, a fact that they can realize with another DC 15 Knowledge (local) or Profession (sailor) check (or advice from a helpful NPC ally).

In order establish this name and acquire a reputation, the PCs must accumulate both plunder and Infamy by performing acts of piracy. The PCs should keep track of both of these scores, as they must acquire a sufficient amount of each to enter the society of the Free Captains successfully. It is important that they achieve high scores in both of these attributes, as pirates with a high Infamy score but not much plunder will be seen as merciless and cruel raiders, interested more in brutality than profit, and will thus be accepted by few and trusted by none, while a lot of plunder and a low Infamy score means that other pirate crews will see the PCs as fresh meat just waiting to be butchered and looted. See "The Life of a Pirate" in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #55* for a detailed description of the plunder and Infamy rules.

RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA

A. RICKETY'S SQUIBS

Rickety's Squibs refits and modifies the lines and profiles of ships without changing a ship's size, characteristics, or deck layout, providing both discretion and a new identity for a price. These rebuilt vessels are referred to as "squibs." In fact, "It's like as not to be a squib," is a common saying among the pirates of the Shackles for a ship of suspicious origin.

Rickety's Squibs lies in the estuary of a nameless river on the Slithering Coast. The river mouth is concealed from passing ships by a protruding headland, so that it is difficult to find if one doesn't know where to look, and the facilities are hidden under the eaves of the encroaching jungle, further warding them from prying eyes. Assuming the PCs mutinied on or near Bonewrack Isle at the conclusion of "The Wormwood Mutiny," Rickety's Squibs lies about 100 miles away, a journey of just over 2 days assuming fair winds and a full crew.

Read or paraphrase the following as the *Man's Promise* approaches Rickety's Squibs.

Rounding the tall headland reveals a hidden cove at the mouth of a wide jungle river, its sluggish brown waters staining the waters of the blue sea like an ugly bruise. A series of docks has been built upon this estuary, with buildings concealed beneath the overhanging limbs of the jungle beyond. A wooden watchtower stands upon the promontory of the headland, carefully concealed among the trees to provide a clandestine view of the seas.

As the *Man's Promise* sails past the headland, a checkered flag of yellow and red is raised above the tower on the promontory, and an answering flag of blue is hoisted upon a yardarm at the docks ahead. A number of humanoid figures emerge from the shaded buildings and gather on a pier. A small, single-masted longboat soon sets out from the boathouse on the estuary to meet the *Man's Promise*, and its crew hails the PCs, asking them to drop anchor to discuss terms.

MAKING THE DEAL

Rickety's Squibs is run by old **Rickety Hake** (N old male human expert 7), a retired buccaneer and former mate aboard the *Bearded Whore* under Free Captain Ella Gurnett ("Who fed the kraken at the battle of Nolis Point," as Rickety is fond of relating), and Rickety himself hails the PCs' ship from the deck of the longboat *Peccarine* requesting permission to come aboard. Assuming the PCs have come here in peace (and it would be a bad idea if they have other plans, as it would raise most of the Free Captains against them), Rickety is accompanied by six sailors armed only

with dirks (N human expert 1/warrior 1; use the statistics for a shipmate on page 294 of the *Pathfinder RPG Gamemastery Guide* if needed). They are not looking for a fight and retreat back to the settlement if attacked.

Rickety Hake is a short, stoop-backed old man with a leathery, weatherworn face; watery blue eyes; and a halo of frizzy white hair. Once he is allowed aboard, Rickety gets right down to business, inspecting the ship to see how much work will be needed to "squib" it.

The entire existence of Rickety's Squibs relies upon the service it provides in the refitting of ships. A squibbing costs 20% of a ship's purchase price and requires a minimum of 1d4+4 days to complete, at which point Rickety must make a DC 15 Craft (ships) check (his skill modifier is +14). Once a ship has been successfully squibbed, a DC 20 Perception check is required for someone familiar with the original ship to recognize the squib for what it is after observing it closely for at least 2 minutes.

Roll 1d4+4 to determine the number of days the squibbing will require, and Rickety quotes that amount of time and a base price of 2,000 gp to squib the *Man's Promise*. Rickety can also install hidden 5-foot-square smuggling compartments in the bulkheads of a ship for an additional 500 gp each (a DC 20 Perception check is required to locate such compartments in a search) with no increase to the time. At your discretion, Rickety can also install other ship improvements, as detailed on pages 26–28 of the *Skull & Shackles Player's Guide*.

Rickety's initial attitude is friendly as long as the PCs remain civil, though if they attempt to intimidate or insult him, he becomes indifferent. If he is made indifferent, all prices increase by 10% until Rickety is made friendly again.

Once the price and work has been agreed upon, Rickety discusses payment methods. He requires proof that the PCs possess the funds necessary to complete the work. In addition to coins, he also accepts items in trade at the normal 50% value (up to the community's purchase limit), or plunder at standard percentages (*Pathfinder Adventure Path* #55 62).

If the PCs do not have the funds on hand, Rickety offers other payment options. If the PCs have prisoners they wish to ransom or sell into slavery (such as former crew of the *Wormwood*), Rickety will purchase them at 50 gp a head to ransom or resell later in Bloodcove. If the PCs still lack sufficient funds, Rickety offers to underwrite their burgeoning careers as pirates as a major shareholder in their ship; the PCs will have to pay him one-third of all plunder they recover until they have paid him off in an amount equaling 150% of the refitting costs (he can be bargained



Rickety Hake



down to 133% with a DC 20 Diplomacy check). If the PCs renege on the deal, then the secret identity of their squib will be broadcast throughout the Shackles and their ship will be forfeit to Rickety should another pirate recover it. In the meantime, the PCs will have to return once a month to Rickety's Squibs to show their books and pay out his share.

When a deal has been struck, Rickety instructs the PCs to sail their ship into the estuary where cutters will tow it to the dry dock so that work can commence at once. The PCs can stay at the Commons (area A4) free of charge, but they will have to purchase any food, drink, or equipment during their stay.

rickety's Squibs

N village

Corruption -1; **Crime** -2; **Economy** +0; **Law** -4; **Lore** +0;

Society -1

Qualities insular, tourist attraction (ship squibbing)

Danger +0; **Disadvantages** drought-stricken

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government autocracy

Population 77 (63 humans, 14 halflings)

Notable NPCs

Chief Shipwright and Proprietor Rickety Hake (N old male human expert 7)

Lookout Lyle Godwin (N male human warrior 3)

Steward Chandra Bristlewick (N female human druid 5)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 600 gp; **Purchase Limit** 2,500 gp; **Spellcasting** 3rd

Minor Items +1 *leather armor*, masterwork breastplate, +1 *silver guisarme*, *circlet of persuasion*, *wand of cure light wounds* (29 charges); **Medium Items** +2 *light wooden shield*, *potion of fox's cunning*; **Major Items** —

NOTES

Drought-Stricken: Rickety's Squibs has been under the effects of a severe drought for the last month. The drought has increased the community's Danger value by 10 and reduced its Law modifier by 4.

LOCATIONS AT RICKETY'S SQUIBS

The major locations at Rickety's Squibs are detailed below, followed by the events that transpire during the PCs' stay there.

A1. GODWIN'S WATCH

This watchtower is little more than a covered platform elevated 60 feet atop wooden poles and accessed by a crude stair. Only the covered platform rises above the ridgeline of the headland, obscured from sight by the jungle canopy above. From this platform, one-armed Lyle Godwin lounges in the shade on a rope hammock with his trained parrot, Rotgut, and watches out for incoming vessels. No more than two or three ships arrive at Rickety's in a

typical month, so Godwin spends most of his time in a rum-soused stupor. The only route to the isolated tower is a treacherous, winding path along the knife-edged ridgeline, so Godwin is content to remain where he is most of the time and let Rickety's porters bring out weekly deliveries of food and rum.

A2. DOCKS

A pair of docks reaches out into the muddy waters of the estuary. Three small dinghies are moored here beneath canopies made of wooden poles and dried palm fronds.

In the shelter of the river's mouth where no breeze seems to find its way in, the heat is intense and insects buzz about incessantly. A few sun-darkened workers (N human commoners 1) squat on casks splicing rope and mending nets, and pay the PCs no mind. They put up no fight, and attempt to flee if confronted by the PCs.

A3. BOATHOUSE

Two piers extend out into the river from a long building of rough-cut wooden planks with large openings to allow passage within. Ropes, pulleys, and other equipment common to a boathouse hang inside.

The longboat *Peccarine* that Rickety uses as a tender to treat with customers in the cove is moored inside here with its masts stepped when not in use. There are always 1d4+2 of Rickety's workers (see area A2) here during the day and 1d3 at night to guard it. A slightly larger vessel, the single-masted pinnace *Idlewise*, is normally stored here, but the boat is currently at Bloodcove taking on supplies for the settlement and is not due back for 2 weeks.

A4. THE COMMONS

A once-grand building with broad wings extending from its ground floor stands at the end of the docks, its octagonal dome topped by a cupola. It was obviously a fine villa in its day but time and the harsh sun and rains of the Slithering Coast have faded its paint and cracked its boards, leaving it a gray ghost of its former self. A painted board above the veranda names it as "Rickety's Squibs." Smaller, less grandiose hovels and sheds clapped together of flotsam and jetsam surround the larger building and merge into the jungle behind it.

Rickety's main building was once the summer retreat of a Sargavan noble until resentful water nagas forced her from their territory. Rickety was much more careful to negotiate his use of the lands with the nagas, which has enabled him to exist here peacefully for 13 years. Guests at

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Rickety's Squibs are put up in the somewhat shabby accommodations of the main house, which does at least have a taproom, a small market, and a functioning chow hall that serves the entire settlement. The shade of the jungle canopy here is welcome, as the heat is merciless and many of the trees are wilted with browning leaves that show the effects of an extended drought.

Rickety Hake and a few of his menial hirelings reside in the Commons as well, but most of the residents of Rickety's Squibs live in the smaller huts. Most of these men and women are humans (N human commoners 1–3, though a dozen are experts 3–5 and oversee the actual refitting work) with a handful of halflings as well. None are armored, and few carry anything more dangerous than a knife or hatchet.

The PCs can use the Commons' taproom to increase their Disrepute and Infamy scores, and can sell their plunder at the market at normal rates (*Pathfinder Adventure Path* #55 61–65). In addition, the PCs can also seek out new crew for their ship at Rickety's Squibs (see the sidebar on page 12), though Rickety would be displeased (and likely increase his rates) should the PCs take advantage of his hospitality to press-gang unwilling crew from among his workers.

A5. DRY DOCK

A massive, wedge-shaped wooden ramp rises directly from the river. It is large enough to hold a ship of the line and has

huge mooring points to allow such a ship to be stabilized in place. Wooden scaffolding is erected all along its sides to allow workers easy access to all points of a ship and its hull.

Ships brought here for refitting are hauled up out of the river into this dry dock by teams of oxen pulling on dozens of thick ropes. Once the ship has been seated and secured in place, workers descend on the ship in a swarm and work in shifts day and night to complete the "squib" as quickly as possible in a cacophony of hammering, chopping, and swearing. Torches mounted all over the dry dock at night create quite a spectacle for anyone interested in watching the work.

EVENTS AT RICKETY'S SQUIBS

The following events take place in order while the PCs are at Rickety's Squibs.

EVENT 1: SOMETHING IN THE WATER (CR 6)

This event occurs after the PCs have been at Rickety's for only a couple of days. During that time they should hear all about the drought that has stricken the Slithering Coast for the last month and have the chance to experience the oppressive heat firsthand.

On this day, the sky is cloudless and the color of iron, promising another scorching day. The jungle wilts under the unrelenting sun, and the river is shallow, murky, and



HIRING CREWS AND SHARING PLUNDER

At some point, the PCs will no doubt be interested in acquiring more sailors for their crew. They may do so at any port or settlement, or upon the successful capture of another ship, by making a DC 20 Bluff (to trick sailors on board), Diplomacy (to convince people to join the crew), or Intimidate (to press-gang new crew) check. Each such check takes 1 full day, and a successful check results in 1d4+2 new crew members for the PCs' ship. You can use the statistics for the shipmate on page 294 of the *GameMastery Guide* to represent these sailors.

Unlike many other NPC hirelings, pirate crews do not have a daily wage. Instead, they are paid shares of the ship's plunder taken in acts of piracy, when that plunder is sold. Rather than try to recreate the complexity of share amounts for historical pirate crews, the PCs should simply deduct 1 point of plunder from their total each time they attempt to sell plunder. This represents the shares of the plunder paid out to the crew, regardless of the actual amount of gold received for its sale. See *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #55 for a detailed description of the plunder rules.

This Adventure Path assumes that the PCs follow these guidelines to keep their crew happy and well paid. It is left to the GM to decide how a crew reacts if the PCs do not pay them plunder on a regular basis.

sluggish, with wide swaths of cracked mud exposed along its banks. To pass the time, some of Rickety's off-duty workers invite the PCs to join in a game of ninepins in the shade of the boathouse and share a small cask of beer that's been cooling in the waters of the estuary.

If the PCs accept the invitation, they arrive at the boathouse to find a half-dozen of the locals setting up the game in the shade and another pair pulling on the rope where the keg of beer has been cooling in the water overnight. However, the rope jerks suddenly and one man is pulled into the water with a scream while the woman has the palms of her hands burned bloody where she was holding the line. The screams and thrashing in the water indicate the man who fell into the water 5 feet below is not alone. The water itself is 20 feet deep here. If the PCs elect not to join the game, then they are simply walking past the boathouse when this event occurs.

Creature: While the populace of Rickety's Squibs has been grouching about the oppressive heat, they are not the ones suffering the worst. The river's water nagas have found their favored habitats upriver are drying out, creating pressure on the population as territorial

boundaries shrink and overlap. An immature water naga named Selissa has found herself squeezed from her normal spring-fed tributary into shallower waters that are uncomfortably warm and contain more river mud than fresh water. The toll on her constitution and psyche caused her to snap, and now she has traveled downriver in a haze of fury to lash to out at anything she sees.

SELISSA

CR 6

XP 2,400

Female young water naga (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 199, 291)
hp 60

Development: Rickety's workers do not join in the fight but do attempt to help out by pulling fallen individuals out of the water. If the worker who fell in is saved, Rickety deducts 500 gp from the price of the refitting to thank the PCs.

EVENT 2: BUZZING WINGS (CR 6)

This event occurs at some point during the refitting process while the PCs are loitering at Rickety's Squibs with nothing else to do. As work continues on the *Man's Promise* on another uncomfortably hot day, the PCs can see a cloud of birds rise from the jungle beyond the construction and fly over the dry dock. The workers there suddenly begin to run for cover, some risking serious injury as they leap to the ground below.

Creatures: The cloud of "birds" is in fact a colony of giant wasps, driven from their nests deeper in the jungle by the relentless drought. The sounds of construction attracted their attention, and now they descend upon Rickety's Squibs by the dozens. Everywhere, the settlement's residents run for cover as the horse-sized insects dart among them, stinging and dragging those paralyzed away for food. As soon as everyone makes it inside the Commons or one of the other buildings, the wasps no longer pose much of a threat and they eventually fly off along the coast. Until then, however, the PCs and workers at Rickety's are in real danger, and the PCs must face a group of three giant wasps before they can safely get to cover.

GIANT WASPS (3)

CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 34 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 275)

Development: Only a minute or so after the PCs reach cover, they can see a nearby pair of giant wasps attacking a worker and attempting to carry her off. The PCs can emerge from cover and take on this second group of wasps to save the worker, though they are not required to do so. If they do not, however, the residents of Rickety's Squibs who witness their refusal to help look upon them as a group of lily-livered bilge rats, and the PCs can no longer win

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Infamy and Disrepute at Rickety's Squibs until they reach a new Infamy threshold.

EVENT 3: UNEXPECTED ARRIVALS (CR 5)

This event occurs immediately after Event 2. After the giant wasps are either driven off or move on, the residents of Rickety's Squibs come out from cover. Several workers lie on the ground where they fell to the wasps, and a few were carried off by the giant vermin as they headed back into the jungle, but it seems that casualties were lighter than they could have been. Suddenly, someone shouts an alarm and people once more scatter for cover. A Chelish galleon can be seen anchored in the cove and an armed party is clambering onto the docks from their launch.

Normally when the dry dock is already occupied, the lookout at area **A1** signals to shore and Rickety launches the longboat to meet the incoming ship and advise the crew to return at a later date. The Free Captains are careful to honor Rickety's requests for privacy to protect the identities of the ships he is working on because they know the same courtesy will be afforded to them.

The ship in the cove is the Chelish galleon *Strix*, recently captured by Free Captain Merrill Pegsworth and brought to Rickety's to be squibbed. While those ashore were dealing with the hornets, the *Strix* entered the cove unnoticed and Captain Pegsworth and a landing party were able to row to the docks before anyone realized they had arrived.

Creatures: Captain Pegsworth and eight buccaneers are just climbing onto the docks (area **A2**) when they are spotted. Once on land, Pegsworth can see that the dry dock is occupied with a ship currently being squibbed and immediately realizes the jeopardy that he has placed himself in with the ship's original owner. As a result, he orders his buccaneers to form a defensive semicircle on the dock.

The PCs can make a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check to realize that the Chelish navy would likely not know the location of Rickety's Squibs, while a DC 18 Perception check informs them that the members of the landing party are not garbed as Chelish marines. Furthermore, even though the landing party has weapons drawn and has taken a defensive stance, a DC 15 Sense Motive check allows the PCs to discern that Pegsworth's party is merely wary of attack, not preparing an offensive of its own.

Captain Pegsworth and his buccaneers maintain their defensive position until addressed for parley or attacked. If the PCs make an attempt to parley with Pegsworth, they find him an amiable sort. He recognizes the *Man's Promise* by its distinct Rahadoumi lines and the recent tales of its theft from Captain

Barnabas Harrigan. No friend of Harrigan's, Pegsworth fully supports the PCs' actions and assures them its secret is safe with him. In fact, he even requests permission to rechristen the vessel when its refitting is completed in the next couple of days. The PCs can make a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check to know that it is considered good luck in the Shackles to have a Free Captain or a noble lady of good family christen a ship. Since such a lady is scarcer than hen's teeth in the Shackles, a Free Captain like Merrill Pegsworth is an excellent option. If the PCs decline this offer but do not attack, Pegsworth bids them a friendly farewell and takes leave with his ship, to return later once the PCs are gone. See the NPC Gallery on page 52 for full details on Captain Merrill Pegsworth and the part that he can play in the rest of the Adventure Path.



Selissa



If the PCs attack, the buccaneers attempt to make a fighting retreat back to their launch while Pegsworth jumps into the estuary and disappears, using his *ring of swimming* to swim back to the *Strix*. If the buccaneers can't reach their boat, they follow their captain into the water. Once he is once more back aboard the *Strix*, Pegsworth waits to see whether his crew members manage to get safely back to the ship before leaving. If they do not, he gives them up for lost, and the *Strix* raises sail and departs so he can plot his revenge against the PCs.

BUCCANEERS (8) CR 1

XP 400 each

Human fighter 2
CN Medium humanoid (human)

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

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 19 each (2d10+4)

Fort +5, **Ref** +4, **Will** +0; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk cutlass* +5 (1d6+2/18–20) or
mwk boarding axe* +5 (1d6+2/x3)

Ranged throwing axe +4 (1d6+2) or
shortbow +4 (1d6/x3)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 15, **Con** 15, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

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

Feats Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack

Skills Climb +6, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (engineering) +5, Perception +2, Profession (sailor) +5, Swim +5

Languages Common, Polyglot

Other Gear studded leather, masterwork boarding axe* or masterwork cutlass*, throwing axes (2) or shortbow with 20 arrows, basic pirate clothes*, gold jewelry worth 30 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Exotic Weapon Proficiency Buccaneers have Exotic Weapon Proficiency in whatever type of siege engines are carried aboard their ships.

* See *Pathfinder Player Companion: Pirates of the Inner Sea*.

CAPTAIN MERRILL PEGSWORTHY CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 55 (see page 52)

Story Award: If the PCs befriend Merrill Pegsworth and avoid combat with him and his crew, award them 1,600 XP, as if they had defeated him in combat.

EVENT 4: THE LOST LOOKOUT (CR 4)

This event takes place immediately after Event 3. After Captain Pegsworth has been dealt with, Rickety's crew gets back to work on the PCs' ship, but old Rickety himself approaches the PCs. The fact that Captain Pegsworth's *Strix* arrived unannounced makes Rickety think that something must have happened to his lookout in the watchtower (area A1). If questioned, Pegsworth confirms that he did not see any signal flag from the watchtower when he sailed into the cove. Rickety tells the PCs that he'll knock 100 gp off the price of their squib if they'll follow the trail out to the watchtower to check on Lyle Godwin.



Rotgut

The trail itself winds through the jungle behind the Commons (area A4), then follows the knife-edged ridgeline as it climbs along the headland. The way is rocky and steep, overgrown with jungle foliage, and drops precipitously to the cove 50 or more feet below.

Creatures: As the PCs make their way along this trail, they come upon a pair of wild boars that are hungrily rooting around. The boars are aggressive and immediately attack. The trail is only 5 feet wide where they attack, which means only one boar can reach the PCs at a time. Anyone who falls from the trail plummets 1d4x10 feet before landing on a hard ledge below. Climbing upon the crumbling, jungle-covered rocks requires a DC 12 Climb check.

BOARS (2) CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 18 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 36)

Development: After the boars are defeated, a large, colorful parrot flaps down at the PCs and squawks, "Shoo, fly, don't bother me!" several times before turning and flying back along the trail toward the watchtower. When the PCs arrive at area A1, they find a number of broken rum bottles on the ground below the tower. If the PCs climb the ladder to the tower's simple wooden platform, they find the twisted remains of a rope hammock and a few scattered items of clothing. Lying beneath the hammock, with one boot on and the other lying across the floor from it, is the flyspecked corpse of an elderly man. He is recently deceased, and one side of his neck is black and swollen to the size of a melon. A dried ring of foam cakes the man's beard and moustache around his lips. The parrot flaps over, alights on the corpse, and squawks again, "Shoo, fly, don't bother me!"

RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA

This sad sight is the mortal remains of the lookout Lyle Godwin. One of the giant wasps discovered him here and attacked. He managed to drive off the wasp with his morningstar but not before it stung him. Godwin suffered a major allergic reaction to the wasp's poison and died, which can be determined with a DC 20 Heal check or a spell such as *detect poison*. As a result, no signal flag was raised to warn away the *Strix* as it entered the cove.

Treasure: A search of the platform locates Godwin's *+1 morningstar* where it fell after he used it to drive away the wasp. If the PCs carry Godwin's body back to Rickety, he allows the PCs to keep the weapon as a reward for checking on the lookout. If you wish, Godwin's parrot, Rotgut, could become attached to one of the PCs and serve as a mascot for the party, or as a familiar or animal companion.

EVENT 5: THE RECHRISTENING

When the squibbing of the PCs' ship is finally complete, Rickety holds a ceremony to rechristen the *Man's Promise* with a name of the PCs' choosing. Before the chocks are released and the ship slides down into the estuary, a bottle of Sargavan wine is smashed upon its keel. Captain Pegsworthy (if he is present) or Rickety himself offers this bit of Shackles lore as a toast before the PCs set out to make their fortunes: "Good fortune and sure sail await what one can crack the Tidewater Rock."

The PCs are familiar with this old Shackles adage with a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check, and some of their crew certainly know it if the PCs don't. It refers to a small castle called Tidewater Rock that commands a small, protected harbor on a remote island south of Motaku Isle. It is said that anyone who can claim Tidewater Rock as her own will have good luck, as the castle makes a strategic watch point from which one can strike the nearby shipping lanes. Most Free Captains have better things to do than pursue old wives' tales, but a new pirate captain would surely find a boost to her reputation were she able to claim that she had "cracked the Rock."

PART TWO: PIRACY ON THE FEVER SEA

Part Two of "Raiders of the Fever Sea" consists of a number of encounters and events that form a "sandbox" in which the PCs can get comfortable as pirates in command of their own ship. These events can occur anytime after Part One and before Part Four. Feel free to have the PCs undertake Part Three while still utilizing events from Part Two, so that they can enjoy the benefits of some of the plunder and Infamy they have earned prior to the end of the adventure.

Make the events described herein feel like the natural results of the PCs' actions. Other than Event 6, which should be run first to foreshadow things to come later, these events can occur in any order you see fit, though the PCs should finish the majority of Parts Two and Three before Event 17, since it launches the PCs straight into Part Four.

FISHGUTS' ADVICE

Ambrose "Fishguts" Kroop (or Sandara Quinn, or some other friendly NPC on the PCs' ship) is an experienced old salt, and possesses a wealth of knowledge about sailing, piracy, and the Shackles. Several of the following events describe possible tactics the PCs can use against other ships they encounter. This information should be presented to the PCs as helpful advice from Kroop. They are under no obligation to follow his counsel, of course, but newly minted pirates such as the PCs would be wise to heed his guidance.

EVENT 6: NIGHT SWIMMERS (CR 5)

This event occurs shortly after the PCs have departed Rickety's Squibs in their newly squibbed ship. The encounter should occur when the PCs' ship is in the open ocean shortly before eight bells, the end of the late-night watch and the beginning of the morning watch (about 4 A.M.).



Sahuagin



Creatures: Three sahuagin, members of the tribe that dwells in Mancatcher Cove, have been sent to reconnoiter the Fever Sea and to prey upon lone ships that can be surprised. They clamber onto deck and attempt to silently murder any sailors on watch before slipping back overboard with their victims in tow. If the PCs are on watch, allow Perception checks to detect the sahuagin's stealthy boarding party before they attack. Otherwise, or unless the PCs have posted more than two sailors on watch or taken other unusual precautions, assume that the raid is successful and goes unnoticed until the next watch comes on deck and finds only a few bloodstains. A DC 17 Survival check reveals a few wet prints in the shape of a webbed and clawed humanoid foot, which PCs who succeed at a DC 15 Knowledge (nature) can identify as the tracks of sahuagin.

SAHUAGIN (3) CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 15 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 239*)

TACTICS

Morale If two sahuagin are killed, the survivor leaps overboard and flees. If a sahuagin is in danger of being captured alive, it swallows a puffer fish spine hidden in its mouth, causing it to choke to death on the toxin and preventing it from revealing anything about its tribe.

EVENT 7: SEA WOLVES (CR VARIES)

This event can occur anytime you wish for the PCs to have an opportunity to attack a merchant vessel in an act of piracy upon the Fever Sea. You can run this encounter several times, as needed, each time using a different ship and crew chosen from the ones presented below.

Ship Combat: When the PCs encounter another ship, use the ship-to-ship combat rules from the *Skull & Shackles Player's Guide*. Unless the PCs have some way to mask their presence or a ruse to allay the other captain's suspicions, the other ship sights them at the same time and attempts to run for it. As detailed in the sidebar on page 15 of the *Skull & Shackles Player's Guide*, it is assumed that the PCs engage in ship-to-ship combat only to damage or move close enough to the opposing ship to board it, at which point the encounter turns into normal combat on the deck of the ship. In this case, the ship-to-ship battle just serves as a prelude to the main combat, in which the PCs fight the opposing captain, officers, and marines (if any), while the crews fight in the background. If the PCs win their combat, then their ship and crew are victorious over the enemy ship and crew.

If you don't want to add the complexity of ship-to-ship combat to your game, you can simply assume that the PCs successfully chased and boarded the opposing ship, and play out the shipboard combat as normal on the opposing ship's deck.

All of the ships below use the standard ship stat blocks on presented on pages 22–26 of the *Skull & Shackles Player's Guide*. Each of the stat blocks below has been adjusted to include the pilot's sailing check modifier and any ship improvements, and also includes information on the ship's armament, crew, and any cargo or plunder that can be taken.

You can use the sample ship maps on page 18 to resolve any boarding actions, or use ships from *GameMastery Flip-Mat: Pirate Ship*, *GameMastery Flip-Mat: Ship*, *GameMastery Map Pack: Boats & Ships*, or *GameMastery Map Pack: Ship's Cabins* (available at paizo.com or you local gaming store) for greater variety.

Fishguts' Advice: To keep a vessel from simply trying to flee during ship-to-ship combat, the PCs' pilot can try to fool the opposing ship into believing that it has gained the upper hand in the battle by making a Bluff check opposed by the enemy captain's Sense Motive check, once the PCs' ship has been hit by at least one attack.

ELTEN BAIDE CR 4

Sargavan fishing hooker (keelboat) (*Skull & Shackles Player's Guide 24*)

Init +1

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 6; Hardness 5

hp 600 (oars 80, sails 80)

Save +9

OFFENSE

CMB +15; CMD 25

Ramming Damage 4d8

CREW

Captain Vesgal Falkirk (NG male dwarf aristocrat 2/expert 3; Diplomacy +9 or Profession [sailor] +11)

1 marine (LN human fighter 2)

15 sailors (minimum 15)

EQUIPMENT

Cargo freshly caught mackerel and hake (worth 50 gp)

TRUEWIND CR 5

Absalom barque (sailing ship) (*Skull & Shackles Player's Guide 25*)

Init +1

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 2; Hardness 5

hp 1,620 (sails 480)

Save +11

OFFENSE

Ranged standard catapult +3 (6d6)

CMB +19; CMD 29

Ramming Damage 10d8

CREW

Captain Portia Runescar (N female half-elf aristocrat 2/expert 3; Profession [sailor] +12)

RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA



First Mate Axen Figgs (N male human aristocrat 2/expert 3)
45 sailors (minimum 20)

EQUIPMENT

Gear standard catapult with 15 stones (aft), increased cargo capacity, ram, rapid-deploy sails, 120 squares of sails (four masts)

Cargo 2 points of plunder (manufactured goods)

KURSTAV **CR 6**

Aspis Consortium lugger (longship) (*Skull & Shackles Player's Guide* 24)

Init +1

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 2; **Hardness** 7

hp 708 (sails 120)

Save +10

OFFENSE

Maximum Speed 60 ft. (wind only); **Acceleration** 30 ft.

Ranged light ballista +4 (3d8/19–20), light catapult +7 (4d6)

CMB +19; **CMD** 29

Ramming Damage 8d8

CREW

Captain Aspar Tharkidor (LE male human aristocrat 2/expert 3; Profession [sailor] +11)

4 marines (LN human fighter 2)

24 sailors (minimum 20)

EQUIPMENT

Gear light ballista with 20 bolts (fore), light catapult with 10 stones (aft), wooden plating

Cargo 2 points of plunder (armor and weapons)

DOWAGER QUEEN **CR 7**

Chelish caravel (sailing ship) (*Skull & Shackles Player's Guide* 25)

Init +1

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 2; **Hardness** 7

hp 1,620 (sails 360)

Save +11

OFFENSE

Ranged 2 standard catapults +7 (6d6)

CMB +19; **CMD** 29

Ramming Damage 8d8

CREW

Captain Irius Trock (NE male human aristocrat 2/expert 3; Profession [sailor] +11)

Sailing Master Norva Wintarius (LN female human aristocrat 2/expert 3)

4 marines (N human fighter 2)

34 sailors (minimum 20)

EQUIPMENT

Gear 2 standard catapults with 30 stones (fore and aft), sturdy hull

Cargo 3 points of plunder (gems and grain)

SANBALOT **CR 7**

Rahadoumi schooner (sailing ship) (*Skull & Shackles Player's Guide* 25)

Init +1

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 2; **Hardness** 5

hp 1,620 (sails 240)

Save +11

OFFENSE

Ranged 2 light ballistae +4 (3d8/19–20)

CMB +19; **CMD** 29

Ramming Damage 8d8

CREW

Captain Aisha Hamiyaz (LN female human aristocrat 2/expert 3; Profession [sailor] +11)

2 marines (LN human fighter 2)

Manticore The Pure Legion marines have brought along a trained manticore slave.

30 sailors (minimum 20)

EQUIPMENT

Gear 2 light ballistae with 20 bolts (aft), 60 squares of sails (two masts)

Cargo 2 points of plunder (cloth, copper, and salt)

Creatures: Use the stat blocks below for the captains, officers, and marines on these ships, but feel free to change out some items of equipment to add additional variety or more closely match their port of origin. The marine stat block can represent Chelish marines, Rahadoumi Pure Legionnaires, or simply hired mercenaries, but all serve the same purpose in being brought along to protect the ships from people like the PCs. You can use the statistics for the shipmate on page 294 of the *GameMastery Guide* to represent the sailors that make up these ships' crews, but as combat between crews takes place in the background, their statistics should not be needed.

MANTICORE **CR 5**

XP 1,600

hp 57 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 199)

TACTICS

During Combat The manticore makes strafing runs against any ship that approaches within 100 feet of the *Sanbalot* before landing on the enemy ship's deck and attacking the crew before the ship can close for boarding.

MARINES **CR 1**

XP 400 each

Human fighter 2

N Medium humanoid (human)

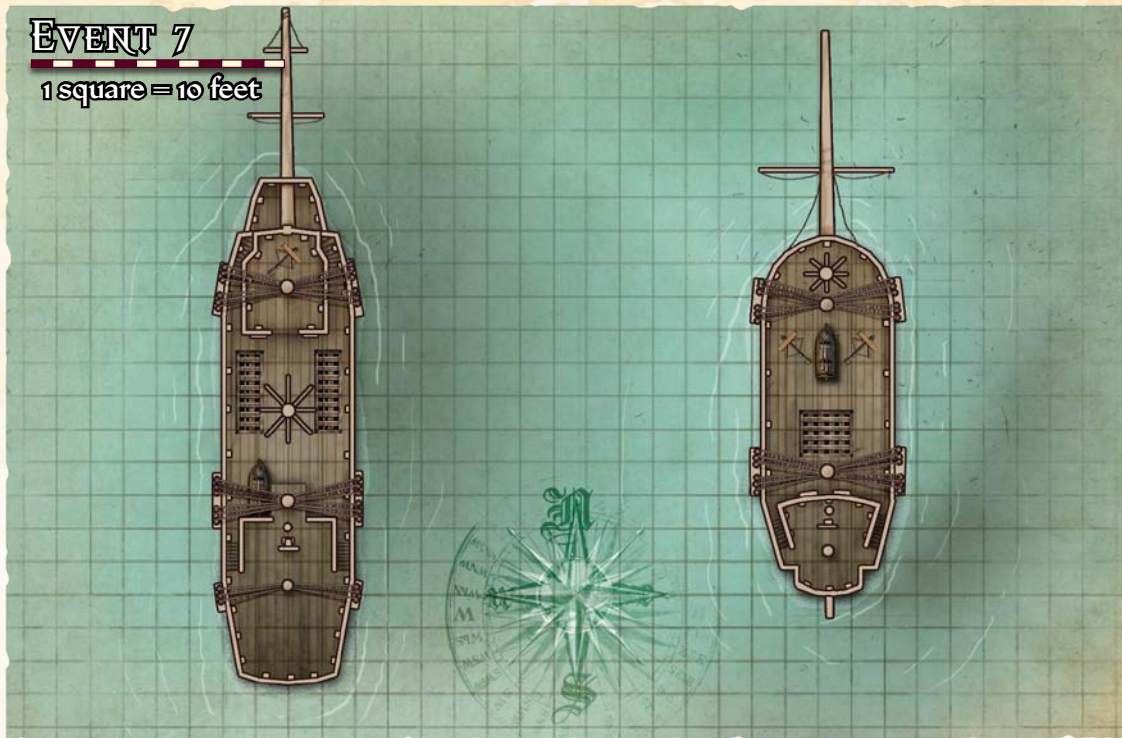
Init +6; **Senses** Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +2 Dex)

EVENT 7

1 square = 10 feet

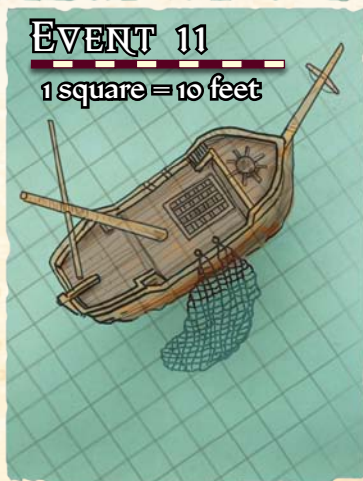
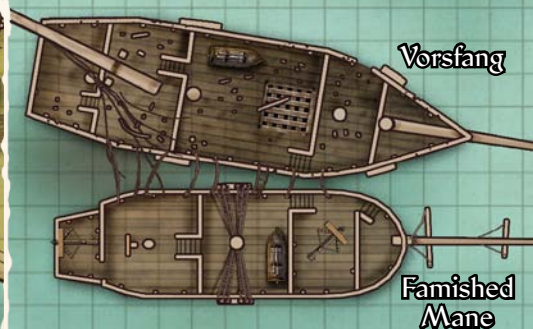


EVENT 8

1 square = 10 feet

EVENT 10

1 square = 10 feet



EVENT 11

1 square = 10 feet



Dominator
(Stern View)

EVENT 13

1 square = 5 feet



Dominator
(Port Cabins)

EVENT 14

1 square = 10 feet



RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA

hp 19 each (2d10+4)

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

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee boarding pike* +5 (1d8+3/x3) or
short sword +4 (1d6+2/19–20)

Ranged light crossbow +4 (1d8/19–20)

STATISTICS

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

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

Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency, Improved Initiative, Power
Attack, Weapon Focus (boarding pike*)

Skills Climb +7, Knowledge (engineering) +5, Swim +7

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*; **Other Gear**
masterwork studded leather, light crossbow with 10 bolts,
boarding pike*, short sword, grappling hook and 50-ft.
hemp rope

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Exotic Weapon Proficiency Marines have Exotic Weapon
Proficiency in whatever type of siege engines are carried
aboard their ships.

* See *Pirates of the Inner Sea*.

SHIP'S OFFICER

CR 3

XP 800

Human aristocrat 2/expert 3

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 30 (5d8+8)

Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk rapier +6 (1d6+1/18–20)

Ranged heavy crossbow +4 (1d10/19–20)

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 13, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 15

Feats Persuasive, Rapid Reload (heavy crossbow), Skill Focus
(Profession [sailor]), Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Diplomacy +9, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (geography) +5,
Knowledge (local) +5, Perception +8, Profession (sailor) +11,
Sense Motive +5, Swim +8

Languages Common, Polyglot

Combat Gear *elixir of swimming*, *potion of cure moderate*
wounds; **Other Gear** +1 chain shirt, heavy crossbow with 10
bolts, masterwork rapier, 30 gp

XP Award: Award the PCs normal XP for the foes they defeat in shipboard combat. If, however, the PCs decided to fight out an entire ship-to-ship battle and

sink or destroy a ship without ever fighting the ship's captain and NPCs, then award them XP based only on the captain's CR.

Development: Although it is assumed that enough members of the defeated crew join the PCs' crew to replenish any losses that may have occurred during the battle, the PCs might also want to recruit additional survivors from the defeated crew onto their own crew, following the rules in the sidebar on page 12.

If the PCs wish to claim a captured ship as their own, they must put a prize crew on the ship (each ship's minimum crew is noted in its stat block) under the command of a trusted officer to sail it to Bloodcove or Senghor, the two closest cities in which they can sell a ship. A captured ship can be sold in Bloodcove or a similar port for half of its cost in plunder, rounded down (usually 5 points of plunder for a longship or sailing ship). A ship that has been damaged below half of its hit points can only be sold for one-quarter its cost in plunder, rounded down. Alternatively, the PCs can hold on to the ship by having it squibbed or sailing it to some hidden location to anchor.

EVENT 8: LOW-HANGING FRUIT (CR 6)

The PCs might also want to raid isolated settlements on the Mwangi and Sargavan coasts in order to increase their plunder and Infamy scores. Larger settlements, such as Bloodcove, Eleder, and Senghor, are certainly beyond the PCs' means—even smaller and more isolated locales such as Crown's End and Port Freedom are too big to tackle without a fleet of ships. However, there are numerous small, unnamed coastal villages along the Mwangi and Sargavan coasts that would be prime targets for such a raid. Each day that the PCs spend sailing within sight of one of these coasts, they have a 15% chance of spotting a village.

You can run this encounter several times, as needed. Use the sample village stat block below along with the sample village map on page 18 to represent any of these nameless fishing villages, modifying them as you see fit to use them again for other villages. Just as in shipboard combat, when the PCs raid a village, they fight the village's primary defenders while their crew fights the other villagers in the background.

Alternatively, the PCs can forgo raiding a village and visit it to sell the plunder they have acquired, following the normal rules for selling plunder in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #55.

Fishguts' Advice: If the PCs attack a village as soon as it is spotted, they face the full might of the village's defenses. However, if they sail on and then return after sunset, they can make a nighttime raid, which gains them 1d4 rounds of surprise before the village's defenders can get organized.



SAMPLE FISHING VILLAGE

N village

Corruption -1; **Crime** -6; **Economy** -1; **Law** +2; **Lore** +1;

Society +1

Qualities insular, superstitious

Danger +0

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government autocracy

Population 65 humans

Notable NPCs

55 noncombatants (N human commoner 1)

8 village warriors (LN human warrior 2)

4 guard dogs

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 500 gp; **Purchase Limit** 2,500 gp; **Spellcasting** 1st

Minor Items 2d4; **Medium Items** 1d4; **Major Items** —

Creatures: Use the stat blocks below for village defenders, again modifying them as you see fit or changing their numbers to adjust the encounter's CR. The inhabitants of a village are primarily Bonuwat if on the Mwangi coast, or a mixture of Bonuwat and Sargavan colonials in Sargava. All noncombatants are 1st-level commoners.

GUARD DOGS (4)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each

Riding dog (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 87)

hp 13 each

VILLAGE WARRIORS (8)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each

Human warrior 2

N Medium humanoid (human)

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

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 13 each (2d10+2)

Fort +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee spear +4 (1d8+1/x3)

Ranged spear +5 (1d8+1/x3)

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 15, **Con** 11, **Int** 8, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 16

Feats Dodge, Weapon Focus (spear)

Skills Craft (any one) +3, Handle Animal +3, Survival +1, Swim +5

Languages Common or Polyglot

Gear spears (3)

Treasure: If all of a village's defenders are defeated, the PCs can loot the village for 1 point of plunder (made up of various trade goods and personal items). The PCs can also

capture the village's noncombatants to sell as slaves for 1 additional point of plunder.

Development: Just as with a captured ship's crew, it is assumed that enough defeated villagers join the PCs' crew to replenish any losses that may have occurred during the raid. The PCs can also recruit additional survivors onto their crew using the normal rules for hiring crew (see the sidebar on page 12).

EVENT 9: ANY PORT IN A STORM (CR 6)

After the PCs have successfully seized a few ships' cargoes in **Event 7** and raided a few villages in **Event 8**, their ship's hold will likely be filled with their ill-gotten plunder (typically, 1 point of plunder takes up 10 tons of a ship's cargo capacity). Until they hide this lucre somewhere or take it to port to sell, the PCs will no longer be able to take on stolen goods in any significant quantities.

Fishguts' Advice: The best options for undertaking such a task are the neutral ports of Bloodcove and Senghor on the Mwangi Coast, or farther south, the Sargavan port of Crown's End. Bloodcove and Crown's End regularly cater to pirates, slavers, and smugglers, while Senghor at least turns a blind eye to pirates, so long as no piracy takes place in their waters. Senghor does not tolerate slavers, however, a fact known with a DC 10 Knowledge (local) check, so if the PCs have slaves to sell, they would be well advised to seek out a different market.

All of these ports are accustomed to servicing pirate ships and can provide all the services for repairs, supplies, and recreation that the PCs and their crew might need. Bloodcove is a small city, Senghor is a metropolis, while Crown's End is a small town. The PCs can sell their plunder in these ports at standard percentages (see *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #55). In addition, the PCs can opt to sell prisoners as slaves or have them held for ransom (the latter managed by ransom brokers available within the cities themselves). Unless considered as plunder, individual captives can be sold as slaves for 75 gp each if uninjured (half that if below half hit points). Officers and other important NPCs can be ransomed for 50 gp per class level, after the brokers collect their fees.

The only exception to the open sale of plunder is if the PCs show up in Bloodcove, a notorious Aspis Consortium stronghold, with Aspis Consortium prisoners or an Aspis Consortium ship for sale. In this case, the secret rulers of the city launch reprisals against the PCs for daring to prey upon their holdings.

Creatures: Once this happens, each day the PCs spend in Bloodcove, there is a cumulative 20% chance that a gang of cutthroats hired by the Aspis Consortium attempts to murder and rob the PCs. This gang consists of four buccaneers led by a ship's officer in the employ of the Consortium.

RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA

BUCCANEERS (4)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 19 each (see page 14)

SHIP'S OFFICER

CR 3

XP 800

hp 30 (see page 19)

Development: Each time the PCs encounter one of these gangs or leave town, the chance of another encounter resets to 20%. Once the PCs defeat three such gangs, no more will attack, but the PCs find that all goods and services cost double while they are in Bloodcove, and their maximum sale percentages for plunder are halved. This trend continues until the PCs pay a bribe of 1,000 gp (or 1 point of plunder) to the Aspis Consortium headquarters in Bloodcove, at which point all is forgiven and the PCs can conduct their trade normally.

EVENT 10: UPON THE FAMISHED MANE (CR 6)

This event can occur at any time a few hours before sundown on the open seas. Off to the east, a column of black smoke rises into the sky. No land is nearby, so it can only be a ship burning. Two miles away, the single-masted Chelish naval cutter, *Famished Mane*, has just defeated the pirate brig *Vorsfang*. The Chelaxians are now in the process of executing the surviving pirates by locking them belowdecks and burning the *Vorsfang* to the waterline. Once the PCs are within a mile of the two ships, they can see the last few bound prisoners being escorted belowdecks by Chelish marines as the fires begin to spread across the *Vorsfang*.

Ship Combat: The *Famished Mane* and the *Vorsfang* are currently grappled together. The *Famished Mane* has its sails furled (current speed of 0) but is about to cut loose and set the burning ship adrift. The PCs can choose to avoid this encounter altogether and slip away before the Chelaxians ever see them, or they can attack while the Chelish ship is unprepared. Use the map on page 18 for this encounter.

Fishguts' Advice: If the PCs attack, they can approach with the setting sun behind them so the Chelaxians don't spot them until the PCs' ship is upon them. If the PCs attack the *Famished Mane* in ship-to-ship combat while it is a sitting duck, they can choose the heading and bearing of their ship before combat (though the marines aboard the *Famished Mane* begin firing its four ballistae on the second round of combat if the PCs opt for this approach). Alternatively, the PCs can automatically grapple and board the *Famished Mane*, catching the Chelish crew off guard. In this case, the PCs gain surprise on the first round of shipboard combat.

FAMISHED MANE

CR 4

Chelish cutter (sailing ship) (*Skull & Shackles Player's Guide* 25)

Init +2

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 2; **Hardness** 7

hp 1,620 (currently 1,571) (sails 120; currently 98)

Save +12

OFFENSE

Ranged 4 light ballistae +3 (3d8/19–20)

CMB +20; CMD 30

Ramming Damage 8d8

CREW

Captain Cyvantris Tisserond (LE female human expert 6; Profession [sailor] +12)**6 Chelish marines** (LE human fighter 2)30 sailors and marines (minimum 20; aboard the *Vorsfang*)

EQUIPMENT

Gear 4 light ballistae with 48 bolts (fore and aft), sturdy hull, 30 squares of sails (one mast)**Cargo** 1 point of plunder (ship's arsenal and stores)

Creatures: Six Chelish marines have been left on the deck of the *Famished Mane* to guard the ship, along with the noncombatant captain. If these marines are defeated, Captain Tisserond surrenders.

CHELISH MARINES (6)

CR 1

XP 400 each

Human fighter 2

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 19 (+8 armor, +1 shield)

hp 19 each (2d10+4)

Fort +5, **Ref** +1, **Will** +1; +1 vs. fear**Defensive Abilities** bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.**Melee** boarding pike* +5 (1d8+4/x3) or cutlass* +5 (1d6+3/18–20)**Ranged** light crossbow +3 (1d8/19–20)

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 16**Feats** Exotic Weapon Proficiency (light ballista), Improved Initiative, Rapid Reload (light crossbow), Step Up**Skills** Climb +0, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (engineering) +5, Swim +0**Languages** Common**Combat Gear** oil of magic weapon, potion of cure light wounds;**Other Gear** half-plate, buckler, light crossbow with 20 bolts, cutlass*, boarding pike*, 7 gp* See *Pirates of the Inner Sea*.



DEEP PLATINUM

This rare platinum alloy is characterized by blue-black whorls of an almost disturbing aspect, and is virtually unknown to those living above the surface of the sea. It is actually mined from platinum deposits in the deepest ocean trenches, where it is tainted by exposure to poisonous deep sea vents called “black smokers.” Only aboleths, krakens, or even stranger creatures of the ocean depths can recover this metal from these fathomless trenches. On land, deep platinum has the same value as normal platinum, but it is of inestimable value to undersea races such as the sahuagin, who often ascribe religious or magical qualities to the rare metal.

Development: As the PCs fight, they can hear the screams of the trapped pirates coming from the hold of the *Vorsfang*. If they defeat the Chelish crew, they can get over to the burning ship and release the trapped crew members before the fire spreads to the hold and kills them all. Nothing of value can be saved from the burning ship beyond the pirates and their equipment, but if the PCs wish to recruit these pirates to their own crew, all 14 of them gladly join.

Story Award: Award the PCs 1,200 XP for freeing the *Vorsfang*'s crew.

EVENT 11: HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER (CR 6)

This encounter can take place at any time.

A fishing trawler rides low in the water, heeling several degrees to port. It is obviously taking on water. The sails flap loosely from the yards and a fishing net drags in the water over the starboard side.

If the PCs circle the ship to examine it, they can easily see a breach in the hull on the port side just above the waterline, and the waves are slowly swamping the ship. The davits that held a small dinghy at the stern are empty, indicating that the crew abandoned ship. There are no signs of damage or battle other than the breach in the hull. Anyone who succeeds at a DC 15 Perception check while making a close pass of the sinking trawler notices the shape of a dinghy deep underwater, slowly sinking. Anyone boarding the ship can make a DC 18 Perception or Survival check to notice that telltale signs of a battle have been hastily cleaned up. If these traces are found, the PCs are not surprised by the ambushers aboard the ship. Use the map on page 18 for this encounter.

Creatures: The abandoned trawler is actually a carefully prepared ambush by a group of four sahuagin. Earlier in

the day they boarded and overcame the crew of the ship. When the sahuagin spotted the PCs' sails, they quickly cleaned up the mess, breached the hull with axes they found on board, and launched and scuttled the dinghy. Now the sahuagin wait in the small hold belowdecks along with the remains of the ship's massacred crew. As soon as anyone descends into the hold, the sahuagin attempt to attack with surprise. They fight to the death and otherwise behave like the sahuagin in **Event 6**.

SAHUAGIN (4)

CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 15 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 239)

Treasure: One of the sahuagin wears a necklace of golden coral and strange, silvery metal with blue-black whorls worth 1,500 gp. The silvery metal is a platinum alloy known as “deep platinum” (see the sidebar).

Development: If the PCs don't take the bait and avoid the ship, the sahuagin instead wait until they pass and then swim after them. After dark they attempt to board the ship and slaughter the sailors on watch as described in **Event 6**, though the sahuagin also attempt to enter the crew quarters and slaughter as many of the PCs in their sleep as possible.

EVENT 12: NO HONOR AMONG THIEVES (CR 5)

This event occurs as the PCs come upon an attack by another pirate ship already underway. The PCs first sight the battle from a mile away and come upon it just as the pirates have disabled the merchant ship and now prepare to board her. Read or paraphrase the following if the PCs approach.

A Sargavan galleon lurches from the impact of a catapult shot upon its stern that shatters its rudder. It heels over hard and feathers until its sails luff and it drifts to a stop. Its attacker, a Shackles drekar, runs in hard to guard its prize.

Ship Combat: The drekar *Devil's Pallor*, under Free Captain Gortus Svard, is moving in on the PCs' ship to prevent it from taking the prize it has been pursuing for the last few hours: the galleon *Sea Chanty* out of Eleder. The *Devil's Pallor* does not attack or pursue the PCs should they avoid confrontation. However, if the PCs linger or attempt to attack the drekar or the disabled galleon, the *Devil's Pallor* turns on the PCs and attempts to sink them.

Place the *Sea Chanty* and the PCs' ship on the battle mat as normal for ship-to-ship combat. The *Devil's Pallor* begins adjacent to the *Sea Chanty*, heading toward the PCs. If the *Devil's Pallor* engages the PCs' ship, the *Sea Chanty* (which starts with a speed of 0) tries to get underway again and flee the battle in 1d4 rounds. You can use the ship maps from **Events 7** or **10** on page 18 if needed for this encounter.

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Fishguts' Advice: The PCs could sail by as if they were leaving and allow the crew of the *Devil's Pallor* to board the *Sea Chanty* before turning back and surprising the pirates in the midst of their own attack. Pulling this off requires the PCs' pilot to make a successful Bluff check against Captain Svard's Sense Motive check. If successful, the PCs gain 1 round of surprise against the *Devil's Pallor* and her crew. If the check fails, the *Devil's Pallor* attacks the PCs' ship anyway.

DEVIL'S PALLOR CR 5

Shackles drekar (warship) (*Skull & Shackles Player's Guide* 26)

Init +2

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 2; **Hardness** 5

hp 1,200 (oars 600, sails 320)

Save +12

OFFENSE

Ranged 2 light ballistae +4 (3d8/19–20), standard catapult +11 (6d6)

CMB +18; **CMD** 28

Ramming Damage 10d8

CREW

Captain Gortus Svard (CE male hobgoblin fighter 3/rogue 3; Intimidate +8 or Profession [sailor] +10)

85 pirates (minimum 20 [wind only])

EQUIPMENT

Gear 2 light ballistae with 11 bolts (fore and aft), standard catapult with 8 stones (amidships), castles (fore, aft, and amidships), magically treated sails, ram

Cargo 1 point of plunder (ship's arsenal and stores)

SEA CHANTY CR 2

Sargavan galleon (sailing ship) (*Skull & Shackles Player's Guide* 25)

Init +0

DEFENSE

AC 10, touch 2; **Hardness** 5

hp 1,620 (currently 871) (sails 360; currently 177)

Save +10

OFFENSE

Ranged 2 light ballistae +6 (3d8/19–20)

CMB +16; **CMD** 26

Ramming Damage 8d8

CREW

Captain Petrel Velroon (CG female human expert 4, Profession [sailor] +8)

29 sailors (minimum 20)

EQUIPMENT

Gear 2 light ballistae with 16 bolts (aft)

Cargo 2 points of plunder (fruit and wool)

Creatures: If the PCs board the *Devil's Pallor*, they must face the brig's captain, Gortus Svard.

CAPTAIN GORTUS SVARD CR 5

XP 1,600

Male hobgoblin fighter 3/rogue 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 175)

CE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 55 (6 HD; 3d10+3d8+21)

Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3; +1 vs. fear

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

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *keen falcata** +10 (1d8+4/17–20/x3)

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

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 14, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 20



Captain Gortus Svard



Feats Dazzling Display, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (falcata*), Exotic Weapon Proficiency (standard catapult), Intimidating Prowess, Skill Focus (Profession [sailor]), Weapon Focus (falcata*)

Skills Acrobatics +7, Climb +8, Disable Device +9, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (engineering) +6, Perception +7, Profession (sailor) +10, Sense Motive +7, Stealth +11, Swim +8

Languages Common, Goblin

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

Combat Gear bolts poisoned with black adder venom (10);

Other Gear masterwork armored coat*, light steel shield, +1 keen falcata*, light crossbow with 10 bolts, masterwork thieves' tools

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

EVENT 13: THE FRYING PAN (CR 6+)

At some point, the PCs will need to replenish their ship's stores of fresh water. This event occurs when the PCs have sailed their ship up a wide river mouth on the Mwangi Coast or an island to take on fresh water. At the end of the day, as the ship makes its way back down the jungle-fringed river toward the cove that encompasses its mouth, their lookout spots the rigging of a large ship rising above the trees in the cove ahead. At this point, the PCs' smaller ship is still concealed from the other ship.

If the PCs disembark to proceed on foot through the jungle or send scouts to reconnoiter the situation from concealment, read or paraphrase the following description.

The cove is completely dominated by a huge warship named, appropriately enough, *Dominator*. Atop the rigging of the massive four-masted ship fly the colors of the Empire of Chelixa. It is clear that the heavily armed vessel, with a full company of armored marines mustered on deck, is a pirate hunter.

As noted, the *Dominator* is a pirate hunter, one of several powerful ships sent by Chelixa to patrol the western coasts of the Inner Sea region and occasionally scout along the edges of the Shackles. A single Chelish pirate hunter is large enough that no Free Captain would be willing to take one on alone, but it does not constitute enough of a threat by itself for the Free Captains to rally a fleet to sink it. Experienced pirate captains know that when a pirate hunter is in port, it's best to simply avoid the ship and wait for it to go home. An unlucky few might fall prey to its attacks, but no more than the treacherous waters of the Shackles are wont to take anyway. On this occasion, the PCs have just had the misfortune to run afoul of just such a ship, for the *Dominator* has anchored in the cove for the night and blocks the PCs' way out. Fortunately, it appears that the *Dominator* is not yet aware of the PCs' ship just up the river, or it would be arrayed for battle and awaiting their emergence.

Ship Combat: The *Dominator* is a three-decked man-o'-war with a high sterncastle containing both a quarterdeck and poop deck. Its middle deck holds 20 light ballistae (10 on each side) that aim out of covered ports in the hull. Atop its forecaste and sterncastle are two standard catapults (the PCs' ship will only be at risk from the stern catapult when it makes a run for the sea). The House Thrune coat of arms is emblazoned across the sterncastle of the ship and below it are galleries of windows into the various cabins, decorated with rows of ornate, brightly painted sculptures of devils and infernal petitioners.

The stat block for the *Dominator* is provided below for reference, though the PCs should not be taking on the pirate hunter in an actual ship-to-ship battle (see Fishguts' Advice below).

DOMINATOR	CR 9
Chelish man-o'-war (sailing ship) (<i>Skull & Shackles Player's Guide</i> 25)	
Init +3	
DEFENSE	
AC 19, touch 2; Hardness 7	
hp 1,620 (sails 960)	
Save +14	
OFFENSE	
Ranged 20 light ballistae +3 (3d8/19–20), 2 standard catapults +7 (6d6)	
CMB +25; CMD 35	
Ramming Damage 10d8	
CREW	
Captain Paracountess Axia Lorvika (LE female human fighter 10; Profession [sailor] +20; +1 on sailing checks to gain the upper hand)	
Commander Kyan Kain (LE male human cavalier 6)	
14 ship's officers (LE human aristocrat 2/expert 3)	
120 Chelish marines (LE human fighter 2)	
60 sailors (minimum 20)	
EQUIPMENT	
Gear 20 light ballistae with 400 bolts (port and starboard), 2 standard catapults with 50 stones (fore and aft), broad rudder, extended keel, magically treated sails, ram, rapid-deploy sails, silk sails, sturdy hull, 120 squares of sails (four masts)	
Cargo 6 points of plunder (ship's arsenal and stores)	

Fishguts' Advice: The situation looks bad but not impossible. The cove is wide enough that the PCs' vessel could drift past the *Dominator* on the current and make the open sea. The problem is that while the PCs could possibly make it past or at least most of the way past the *Dominator* in the dark without being spotted and attacked immediately, as soon as they drop sheets to catch the wind they will immediately be visible to even the most

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inattentive lookout. The *Dominator* would immediately weigh anchor and come in pursuit, and with dozens more yards of sail than the PCs' ship, it would only be a matter of time before it ran their ship down and sank it. There must be some other means of evading a hopeless fight.

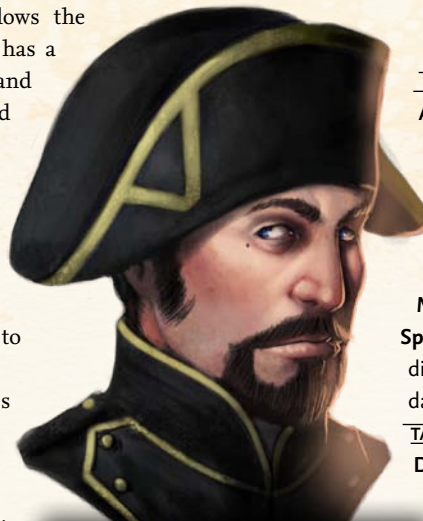
While the *Dominator* is virtually impregnable to any attacks the PCs might make with their ship, a DC 15 Craft (ships) or Knowledge (engineering) check or a DC 20 Perception or Intelligence check allows the PCs to recognize that the *Dominator* has a steering wheel on its quarterdeck and must, therefore, have a pulley-activated tiller in the cabin below. While the ship's rudder is below the waterline and too difficult to easily damage, if the tiller's pulley ropes were severed, the *Dominator* would be crippled for hours while the tiller was repaired, giving the PCs' ship plenty of time to escape without pursuit.

Under cover of darkness, the PCs could row or swim over to the *Dominator*'s stern, using the galleries of the ship's elaborately decorated sterncastle to scale the stern of the ship with cover from guards above. Once they reach the cabin windows beneath the quarterdeck, the PCs simply need to break in and quickly disable the tiller before returning to their own ship to drift past the *Dominator* in the dark and escape.

The map on page 18 shows the portion of the *Dominator*'s stern that the PCs must sneak into.

Creatures: Six Chelish marines are posted on watch on the *Dominator*'s poop deck. The night is moonless, with only bright starlight illuminating the cove with dim light, granting the PCs concealment. For the PCs to sneak aboard the ship, they must make Stealth checks (if swimming) or a sailing check (if in a rowboat or ship's boat) as they swim or float to the base of the stern, opposed by the Perception checks of the marines on the deck above. The marines take a -4 penalty on their Perception checks because of the dim light and the fact that the PCs are in the water. The PCs must then make DC 12 Climb checks to clamber up to the sterncastle galleries and reach the correct windows. The windows to the cabin are not locked. If the PCs are spotted, the marines raise the alarm and fire their crossbows at the PCs for 3 rounds until the PCs get inside.

Once inside the tiller cabin, the PCs encounter Commander Kyan Kain, the *Dominator*'s boatswain, who has just entered the cabin with two Chelish marines as part of his inspection rounds. The officer and marines attack any boarders. If the alarm is raised, 1d2+2 marines arrive every other round that the PCs remain in the cabin.



Commander Kyan Kain

CHELISH MARINES

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 19 each (see page 21)

COMMANDER KYAN KAIN

CR 5

XP 1,600

Male human cavalier 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 32)

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19 (+9 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 55 (6d10+18)

Fort +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 *battleaxe* +11/+6 (1d8+5/x3)

Special Attacks banner +2/+1 (not currently displayed), cavalier's charge, challenge (+6 damage, +2 AC, 2/day)

TACTICS

During Combat Commander Kain

immediately challenges the apparent leader of the invaders, then uses his tactician ability to grant the use of his Precise Strike feat to the marines

accompanying him, who move to engage other boarders.

Morale The arrogant officer does not retreat, though if reduced to fewer than half his hit points, he shouts an alarm (if it has not already been sounded).

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 20

Feats Alertness, Cleave, Power Attack, Precise Strike*, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (battleaxe)

Skills Intimidate +10, Knowledge (nobility) +9, Perception +2, Profession (sailor) +9, Ride +5, Sense Motive +2, Swim +7

Languages Common

SQ expert trainer +3, mount (horse named Carpathius, corralled in the *Dominator*'s hold), order of the lion (lion's call), tactician (2/day, 6 rounds, standard action)

Combat Gear *potion of fox's cunning*; **Other Gear** masterwork full plate, +1 *battleaxe*, *cloak of resistance* +1, Chelish naval officer's gold-embroidered sash, epaulets, and bicorne hat (worth 350 gp total)

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

Development: To disable the tiller, the PCs must cut the thick tiller rope (hardness 0, hp 20, Break DC 43). Once the tiller has been disabled, the PCs have 4 hours to get back to their own ship. They can simply leap overboard, but each round that they remain on the surface of the water they



are subject to crossbow fire from 10 marines on deck if the alarm has been raised. The nearest cover from these attacks is 100 feet from the ship at the jungle-cloaked river mouth, at which point they are no longer subject to attacks from the *Dominator's* marines.

Once the PCs are back on their own ship, they can sail it down the river and out of the cove. If the alarm was not raised on the *Dominator* and the PCs run their ship without sail and lights until they drift past the man-o'-war, they can make it halfway through the cove unnoticed before the alarm is raised, allowing the *Dominator* only a single shot with its aft catapult before the PCs' ship is out of range.

If the alarm was raised, the *Dominator* puts longboats of marines ashore to discern whether any enemies lurk about (which should have no effect on the PCs' plans), but more importantly, the watch notices the PCs' ship as soon as it emerges from the river mouth. This gives the *Dominator* three volleys with its aft catapult as the PCs pass. The PCs' pilot can make a Bluff check against Captain Lorvika's Sense Motive check (she has a +6 modifier on the check). If successful, the *Dominator* only gets off two volleys as the PCs pass.

Story Award: If they manage to evade the *Dominator*, award the PCs 1,600 XP, in addition to the XP awarded for defeated foes. The plunder aboard the *Dominator* should only be awarded if the PCs successfully capture the ship, which is unlikely in this encounter.

EVENT 14: FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS (CR 8)

This event takes place over three successive nights when the PCs are out of sight of the nearest shore. It always occurs in the waning hours of the day as the sun sinks below the horizon.

FIRST NIGHT

Read or paraphrase the following on the first night.

A ship suddenly comes into view, sailing across the setting sun. The glaring light behind it makes the details of the ship difficult to make out, but its lines suggest a whaler riding low in the water. As the last light of day disappears below the horizon, the distant ship also drops from sight in the gloom of twilight.

The sighted ship is the ghost ship *Deathknell*. It is merely giving its prey a glimpse before disappearing. After the ship vanishes, anyone on deck can make a DC 10 Profession (sailor) check to realize that the vessel was moving directly against the wind. If the PCs search for the mysterious whaler, they find no trace of it.

SECOND NIGHT

Read or paraphrase the following on the second night.

A thick bank of fog has rolled in with the evening, reducing visibility to only a few yards and navigation to guesswork. From the gloom comes the dull clanking of a rusted ship's bell somewhere nearby, echoing eerily in the fog. Suddenly, the hulk of a ship looms in the fog off the port bow. Its hull is rotten and stained black with age and rot. Before the mists swallow the ship once more, the ship's name can momentarily be seen on its worm-eaten bow—*Deathknell*.

PCs who succeed at a DC 10 Knowledge (local) check recall tales of the ghost ship *Deathknell*, captained by the terrible Whalebone Pilk, who sails the Fever Sea in search of sailors to feed his ever-hungry crew and fuel his ghostly ship. A result of 15 or higher on the check also reveals rumors that the *Deathknell* always stalks its prey for 2 nights before dragging them down into a watery hell on the third. Once again, no trace can be found of the ship if the PCs search.

THIRD NIGHT

Read or paraphrase the following on the third night.

With the coming of evening, a nor'easter off the Eye sweeps across the Fever Sea, bringing a front of high winds and a purplish-black sky. Even before nightfall, the hurricane lamps must be lit to pierce the gloom. As the ship rides up and down with the swells and sporadic rain lashes the deck, the strained clanking of a bell can be heard once again coming over the water. A red ship's lantern shines in the darkness as the dark bulk of a derelict whaler looms out of the night.

Ship Combat: The *Deathknell* attacks the PCs' ship on the third night. The PCs can attempt to flee if they choose, but if they ever get three-quarters of a mile ahead of the ghost ship, its red lamp disappears in the gloom, only to suddenly reappear out of the darkness directly in front of their ship. The *Deathknell* attempts to ram the PCs' vessel, and grappling hooks come singing over to grapple the two ships together. If the PCs fail to get that far ahead, the *Deathknell* simply closes with them from astern, firing once with the great whaling ballista mounted on its bow before closing for boarding.

DEATHKNELL

CR 6

Magnimarian whaler ghost ship (sailing ship) (*Skull & Shackles* Player's Guide 25)

Init +8

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 2; **Hardness** 5

hp 1,620 (sails 360)

Save +14

OFFENSE

Maximum Speed 120 ft. (magic; can submerge and reappear anywhere within 1 mile at will); **Acceleration** 30 ft.

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Ranged heavy ballista +11 (4d8/19–20)

CMB +26; **CMD** 36

Ramming Damage 10d8

CREW

Captain Whalebone Pilk (CE male breath taker fighter 1;
Profession [sailor] +16)

18 brine zombies

EQUIPMENT

Gear heavy ballista with 20 bolts (fore), ram

Cargo 4 points of plunder (stolen pirate treasure), 670 skulls of
condemned souls

Creatures: Whether the PCs wait for the *Deathknell's* crew to board their ship or attempt to board the ghost ship first, they must face a party of six brine zombies—mindless, evil undead with rotten, bloated bodies and slimy greenish skin. They wear the soggy remains of their former sailor's garb, now dangling strands of seaweed. Their stench is overpowering, and they leave soggy footprints wherever they go. Use the map on page 18 for this encounter.

Once the brine zombies have been defeated, the PCs can reach Captain Whalebone Pilk, who stands on the quarterdeck of the *Deathknell* next to the ship's bell, but every 6 rounds, four more brine zombies boil out of the ship's hold to attack the PCs. A DC 20 Knowledge (local) check allows the PCs to remember the history of the unfortunate Whalebone Pilk and his obsession with his ship's bell (see page 55), and canny PCs might work out that the bell is the key to permanently defeating Pilk.

BRINE ZOMBIES (6)

CR 1

XP 400 each

Tome of Horrors Complete 657

NE Medium undead

Init –1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 9, flat-footed 13 (–1 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 22 each (4d8+4)

Fort +1, **Ref** +0, **Will** +4

DR 5/slashing; **Immune** undead traits; **Resist** fire 10



OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee cutlass* +5 (1d6+2/18–20) or
slam +5 (1d6+3)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 8, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 14

Feats Toughness^b

Skills Swim +10

SQ staggered

Gear rusty cutlass*

* See *Pirates of the Inner Sea*.

WHALEBONE PILK

CR 6

XP 2,400

hp 69 (see page 55)

Development: If Pilk is defeated, the brine zombies all immediately fall inert, and the *Deathknell* begins sinking beneath the waves. The PCs have 10 rounds to cut any grappling lines and get back to their own ship before their vessel gains the sinking condition and is dragged under as well. If the PCs failed to permanently destroy Pilk (see page 55), the *Deathknell* reappears in 1d3 weeks and continues to haunt the Fever Sea, perhaps chasing down the PCs again.

Story Award: If the PCs manage to permanently lay Whalebone Pilk to rest, award them 2,400 XP, in addition to the XP awarded for defeated foes. Furthermore, they immediately gain 2 points of Disrepute and Infamy for triumphing over a legendary scourge of the Fever Sea.

PART THREE: THE LADY OF THE ROCK

When a Free Captain named Magna Stormeyes discovered the natural harbor on Windward Isle over 2 centuries ago, she immediately recognized that it would make the perfect haven from which to launch a pirate fleet. Starting with just one ship and a small encampment on Windward's harbor, she began to ply the trade of piracy. With the plunder from her initial hauls, she set about building a keep, which she called Tidewater Rock. From the vantage point atop the Rock,

she found she could pick out particularly ripe targets while receiving ample of warning of hostile ships approaching.

Over time, Stormeyes' successes enabled her to build a sizeable fleet, as well as more strongholds on several different islands. She became the scourge of the southern sea lanes and eventually claimed the Hurricane Crown as her own. Shortly after becoming the Hurricane King and relocating to Port Peril, she was assassinated by rival Free Captains. Stormeyes' burgeoning fleet fell apart among its squabbling captains. Gerta Frome, first mate of Stormeyes' flagship, the *Cocksure*, seized control of the Rock. Within only a few years, Frome became a powerful Free Captain herself, and the legend of Tidewater Rock as both a powerful good luck talisman and an impregnable bastion was born.

Over the many years since, control of Tidewater Rock has passed from hand to hand, and its strategic location and practical defensibility have enabled its owners to enrich themselves substantially. With the rebellion of Sargava and its ostensible alliance with the Free Captains, Tidewater Rock became of less strategic importance, and its owners came to be of less prominence, but the age-old axiom of "Good fortune and sure sail await what one can crack the Tidewater Rock" has stood the test of time among the pirates of the Shackles and is oft-quoted—if seldom heeded—even today.

The most recent lord of Tidewater Rock was Bertram Smythee, captain of the *Vale* and three other brigs. Like his predecessors, he held Tidewater Rock as his seat, but controlled a few other small castles on surrounding islands as well.

Over a decade ago, "Iron Bert" Smythee went to sea with his small fleet in a feud with Free Captain Carola Antiochus and was never seen again. Word came back that Antiochus had lured Smythee into the edges of the Eye of Abendego and ambushed him with the help of a previously unknown ally—one Barnabas Harrigan—and that Smythee's fleet was cut to pieces between the enemy fleets.

Though Captain Smythee managed to sink Antiochus's *Pergador*, he was last seen on the deck of the crippled and sinking *Vale* at the mercy of the Eye's hurricane winds.



Brine Zombie

RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA



Captain Harrigan claimed the remainder of Antiochus's fleet and took control of several of Smythee's undefended castles. He made an attempt to take the Tidewater Rock as well, only to discover that Smythee's able widow had taken charge of its defenses. She managed to fend off his attack with such alacrity that Harrigan decided to leave the widow to rot in her tower.

Although Tidewater Rock remains a secure base and harbor, it does not command the reputation it once did. The current owner of the Rock is Agasta Smythee, widow of the late Iron Bert. Though Lady Smythee is a competent and formidable figure, without any of her late husband's ships or network of castles, the Lady of the Rock has fallen upon hard times. Lady Smythee's forces have been reduced to a small body of loyal guards and a few family retainers whom she employs to eke out a living. The Rock still commands some treasures—its favorable location, its security, and the late captain's fabled iron shirt from which he gained his nickname—but it is otherwise remote and at the mercy of what the sea chooses to throw upon its shores.

Having heard the legend of Tidewater Rock when their ship was rechristened at Rickety's Squibs, the PCs can attempt to "crack the Rock" at any point during Part Two. A DC 20 Knowledge (local) or Knowledge (history) check reveals much of the information described above. A DC 20 Knowledge (geography) check identifies the location of Tidewater Rock as Windward Isle, the westernmost island in a small archipelago south of Motaku Isle. If none of the PCs has this skill, a friendly NPC can point them in the right direction, or they can find charts belonging to the former captain of the *Man's Promise* that show the island's location. Windward Isle lies just over 100 miles west of Rickety's Squibs, though it could be much farther from (or much closer to) the PCs, depending on their exact location in the Fever Sea when they decide to go to Tidewater Rock.

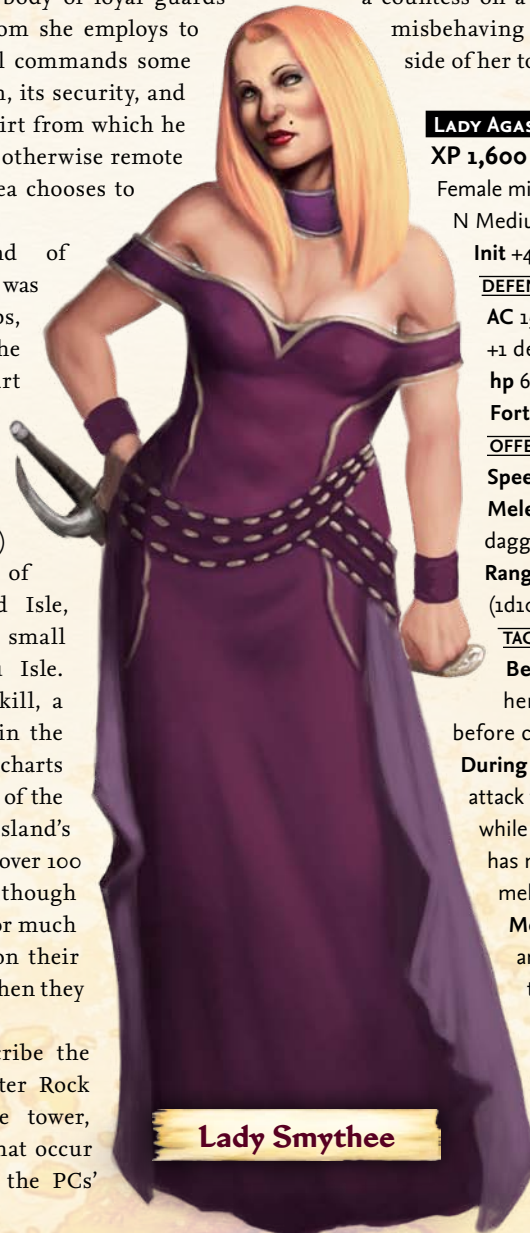
The following sections describe the various inhabitants of Tidewater Rock and the locations within the tower, followed by a series of events that occur at the Rocks, beginning with the PCs' arrival at Windward Isle.

INHABITANTS OF TIDEWATER ROCK

The following NPCs reside at Tidewater Rock. They can be found in various locations throughout the day as they go about their daily chores, as detailed in the description of Tidewater Rock on pages 31–33.

AGASTA SMYTHEE, LADY OF THE ROCK

Widow of Iron Bert Smythee, Lady Agasta is of legitimately noble birth, albeit a far-sprung offshoot of a long-exiled Galtan family. She was once a rare beauty, but now in her middle years she has filled out her big-boned frame into a stocky matron, though she still remains a handsome, if rough-edged, woman. She maintains a commanding presence and rules Tidewater Rock like a countess on a Galtan estate, not afraid to give a misbehaving servant or unruly guest the rough side of her tongue.



Lady Smythee

LADY AGASTA SMYTHEE **CR 5**

XP 1,600

Female middle-aged human aristocrat 4/warrior 3
N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +1 deflection)

hp 63 (7 HD; 4d8+3d10+29)

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +6; +1 vs. fear

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk cutlass* +8/+3 (1d6/18–20) or dagger +7/+2 (1d4/19–20)

Ranged mwk heavy crossbow +8 (1d10+1/19–20)

TACTICS

Before Combat Lady Smythee dons her armor and drinks her *potion of aid* before combat.

During Combat Lady Smythee prefers to attack from a distance with her crossbow while her guards confront attackers, but she has no qualms about using her cutlass in melee combat.

Morale If half of her garrison is killed and the PCs manage to capture and threaten any of the other inhabitants, Lady Smythee agrees to surrender the castle to the PCs in exchange for sparing her retainers' lives.

Base Statistics Without her armor and potion, Lady Smythee has **AC** 11, touch 11, flat-footed 11; **hp** 56; **Melee** mwk cutlass* +7/+2



(1d6/18–20) or dagger +6/+1 (1d4/19–20); **Ranged** mwk heavy crossbow +7 (1d10+1/19–20).

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 11, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 12
Base Atk +6; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 17
Feats Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Persuasive, Rapid Reload (heavy crossbow), Toughness
Skills Bluff +8, Diplomacy +10, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Perception +6, Sense Motive +6, Swim +7

Languages Common

Combat Gear +1 bolts (10), *potion of aid*; **Other Gear** +1 studded leather, masterwork cutlass*, masterwork heavy crossbow, dagger, *ring of protection* +1, noble's outfit, signet ring (worth 50 gp), key to door to area **B12**

* See *Pirates of the Inner Sea*.

ROYSTER McCLEAGH, SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

An aged soldier and longtime retainer of the Smythees, Royster is secretly ashamed that he was not with Captain Smythee on his last fateful expedition. He is a gruff old campaigner with a handlebar moustache and salt and pepper hair, and is rarely seen without his arms and armor. He maintains discipline and training among his small corps of troops even on this backwater island.

ROYSTER McCLEAGH **CR 5**

XP 1,600

Male middle-aged human fighter 6
 LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+8 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 55 (6d10+18)

Fort +7, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3; +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +2

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 *greatsword* +11/+6 (2d6+7/19–20) or spear +8/+3 (1d8+3/x3)

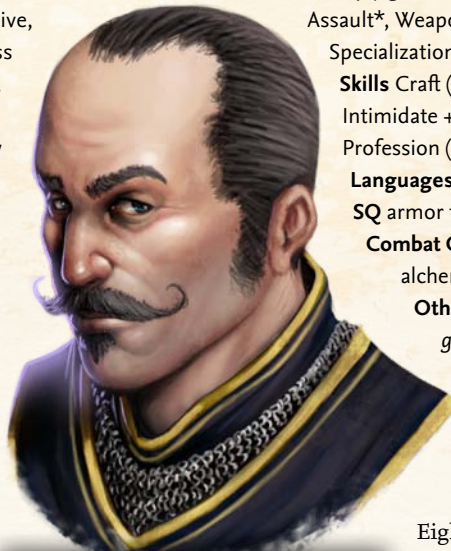
Ranged mwk composite shortbow +9/+4 (1d6+2/x3)

Special Attacks weapon training (heavy blades +1)

TACTICS

During Combat Sergeant McCleagh directs the garrison to defend the Rock, while he protects Lady Smythee, using his Bodyguard feat as needed.

Morale McCleagh is fiercely loyal to Lady Smythee and defends her honor and her person to the death.



Royster McCleagh

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 11, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 20

Feats Bodyguard*, Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (light ballista), Lunge, Power Attack, Pushing Assault*, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword)

Skills Craft (armor) +5, Craft (weapons) +5, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (engineering) +6, Profession (sailor) +7, Profession (soldier) +7

Languages Common

SQ armor training 1

Combat Gear *potions of cure light wounds* (3), alchemist's fire (2 flasks), smokestick;

Other Gear +1 *banded mail*, +1 *greatsword*, dagger, masterwork composite shortbow (+2 Str) with 40 arrows, spear

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

GARRISON

Eight soldiers, all loyal hirelings under the command of Lady Smythee, make up Tidewater Rock's tiny garrison.

Most are the children or relatives of members of Captain Smythee's crews who were too young to join the expedition.

TIDEWATER ROCK GUARDS (8) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 each

Human warrior 2

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 13 each (2d10+2)

Fort +3, **Ref** +1, **Will** +0

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee spear +4 (1d8+3/x3) or

longsword +4 (1d8+3/19–20)

Ranged heavy crossbow +3 (1d10/19–20) or

javelin +3 (1d6+2) or

light ballista +3 (3d8/19–20)

TACTICS

During Combat The guards faithfully follow the orders of Sergeant McCleagh and work together, using their Shield Wall feat to defend one another.

Morale The guards fight to the death to defend the Rock, but surrender if both Lady Smythee and Sergeant McCleagh are killed or captured.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 12, **Con** 11, **Int** 8, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 9

RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 15

Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (light ballista), Shield Wall*

Skills Craft (weapons) +3, Knowledge (engineering) +0,
Profession (soldier) +4, Swim +3

Languages Common

Other Gear chain shirt, light wooden shield, heavy crossbow
with 10 bolts, dagger, javelins (3), longsword, spear

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

SERVANTS

Only four loyal retainers remain in service to Lady Smythee.

Albers and Birney Siggs (N human experts 3): This couple are in their seventies and were Captain Smythee's first retainers. Though they both get around a bit more slowly these days, they do their utmost to maintain the decorum and dignity of Lady Smythee's household. They are concerned about their grandson, Mardus, whose parents went to sea with Captain Smythee and never returned. They feel he needs a role model in his life who is a bit younger than gruff old Sergeant McCleagh, and would welcome a PC of noble spirit who could provide that role.

Clew (N male human commoner 1): Clew is a simpleton in his twenties who serves as a scullion in the keep. Captain Smythee rescued him from a cruel pirate captain and brought him back to the Rock. The rest of the castle's occupants have adopted him as a foster son and are fiercely protective of him.

Mardus Siggs (N male human commoner 1/expert 1): Mardus is the teenaged grandson of Albers and Birney and serves as the herder for Lady Smythee's small flock of goats. He longs to follow in his father's footsteps and go to sea, and would eagerly accept a position of cabin boy or midshipman aboard the PCs' ship if given the chance.

WINDWARD ISLE

Windward Isle is 2 miles long by 1 mile wide and is almost entirely surrounded by rough shingle and gravel beaches. Its central elevation never rises above 100 feet, so the tower of Tidewater Rock commands a good view of almost the entire island. Its soil is rocky and barren, with thin salt grasses, scrub trees, and a few boggy areas where peat is collected. Fauna consists of nothing larger than small serpents and mice. The Lady of the Rock maintains a few small areas of cultivated land where roots, grains, and vegetables are raised to supply the castle, and an orange grove grows near the lagoon. A small hutch inland from the anchorage provides shelter for the goatherd Mardus Siggs to watch over the herd of seven goats that call Windward Isle home during the day. In addition, two small springs (one hidden in a rock cistern) provide fresh water for the island's inhabitants.

The harbor of Windward Isle is a quarter-mile-wide channel that runs just south of Tidewater Rock and ends in a lagoon large and deep enough to safely hold three

TIDES AT THE ROCK

Time of day	Water Depth	Acrobatics DC	Swim DC
12 midnight–2 A.M.	6 ft.	15	10
2 A.M.–4 A.M.	9 ft.	—	15
4 A.M.–6 A.M.	6 ft.	15	10
6 A.M.–8 A.M.	3 ft.	5	—
8 A.M.–10 A.M.	0 ft.	—	—
10 A.M.–12 noon	3 ft.	5	—
12 noon–2 P.M.	6 ft.	15	10
2 P.M.–4 P.M.	9 ft.	—	15
4 P.M.–6 P.M.	6 ft.	15	10
6 P.M.–8 P.M.	3 ft.	5	—
8 P.M.–10 P.M.	0 ft.	—	—
10 P.M.–12 midnight	3 ft.	5	—

seagoing ships. The water in the channel and lagoon never drops below 20 feet deep at low tide, so ships in the anchorage are in no danger of running aground, and are protected from the worst of the storm surges when monsoons blow in off the Fever Sea.

The keep of Tidewater Rock sits right on the lagoon's edge, where the water ranges from knee deep to neck deep, with powerful ebb tides and rip currents that can sweep invaders out to sea. Consult the table above to determine the depth of the water and the DC of Acrobatics or Swim checks (depending on depth) to avoid being swept 1d4×10 feet out to sea each round.

TIDEWATER ROCK

Tidewater Rock is a fortified tower house over 70 feet tall, built upon the same stone shingle that makes up the western shore of Windward Isle. The tower house is composed of reinforced masonry walls atop a 10-foot-high stone base filled with packed dirt. A stone stair rises 10 feet to the heavy front door, and at all times but the greatest ebb of low tide, the shingle below the castle is a swirling morass of tide water. At high tide, the waves lap at the very lip of the door stoop, making assailing the castle virtually impossible.

Interior floors are built of heavy oak beams 2 feet thick, and the tower roof is sheathed in lead tiles. Ceilings are 12 feet high. Doors are of strong wood but only a few have locks (Disable Device DC 25). All the windows except one (in area **B11**) are narrow arrow slits, some of which are set into deep alcoves providing a broad shelf area that can be used for seating or storage. Lighting is provided by these arrow slits during the day and thick tallow candles in wall sconces at night. The entire castle has a feeling of cramped security but still manages to convey a sense of comfort and safety for those who reside there.



TIDEWATER ROCK

1 square = 5 feet



B1. Tower Entrance: The door to the tower is kept locked and barred (hardness 5, hp 20, Break DC 30), and a guard in area **B3** carries the key. The chamber beyond is floored with the dirt filling the tower's base and is used to store assorted supplies, spare timber, kegs of nails and tar, spare sailcloth, fishing lines and nets, lengths of heavy rope, and unused furniture. A rowboat hangs from the rafters. Alcoves in the walls and below the arrow slit hold more delicate items such as tinderboxes, tallow candles, and chipped crockery. A side alcove holds a staggered wooden ladder that accesses the second floor (area **B2**). The ladder is unusual in that its rungs alternate from side to side so that someone not paying attention can easily lose his footing and fall (DC 12 Acrobatics check to climb if taking less than a full-round action).

B2. Defensive Corridor: This corridor runs along the south wall of the tower and provides access to three arrow slits overlooking the shingle. The guard from area **B3** moves here whenever a ship is spotted approaching the island. A chest at one end holds 150 crossbow bolts, and a tarnished silver ewer (worth 35 gp) holding drinking water sits on a table at the other end.

B3. Guardroom: A few chairs and a table compose the furnishings in this room. A guard is always on duty here, and carries the key to the door at area **B1**.

B4. Bunkroom: Narrow plank bunks are crammed into the room along with a few stools and an old sea chest.

Four of the guards are quartered here in rotating shifts, and Royster McCleagh bunks here when not sharing Lady Smythee's quarters. The sea chest holds the guards' collected pay, a total of 85 gp.

B5. Workshop: A small forge has been set up beneath the arrow slit, and worktables around the room are arrayed with tools for ironwork as well as carpentry and general repairs. A few wood planks are stacked against one wall, and a crate holds brass nails. Mardus the goatherd beds down beneath one of the tables here at night.

B6. Defensive Stair: This cramped stair spirals steeply up to the third and fourth floors (areas **B7** and **B11**) and serves as a choke point for invaders. A large masonry jar in the corner contains alchemist's fire that can be thrown from the arrow slit and affects a 10-foot-radius area.

B7. Privy: A stone privy has been built into an alcove on the stair landing. A clay pitcher of water rests on the floor beside it to wash any wastes down the pipe and out into the surf.

B8. Kitchen: A small fire pit has been built into the alcove below the arrow slit. A stack of driftwood rests nearby, while a kettle dangles from an iron brace above it. A table, chopping block, barrels of pickled vegetables, and alcoves holding dry goods fill out the rest of the room. Birney Siggs is usually cooking here during the day, and the scullion Clew beds down atop bags of grain in one of the alcoves.

B9. Water Stores: The door to this room is always locked, and Albers Siggs carries the key. Fresh water is

RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA

one of the most precious commodities on the island, and a dozen large barrels are always kept filled here in case of siege or fire. Several hogsheads of ale and rum are likewise stored here.

B10. Retainers' Quarters: At night, Albers and Birney Siggs retire to this chamber with its simple bed, chest, table, and chair. The couples' combined saving of 310 gp, mostly in silver and copper coins, is hidden in the chest beneath a false bottom (DC 19 Perception check to discover).

B11. Feast Hall: A long oaken table that can seat up to 10 fills this room, over which hangs a heavy iron chandelier. An arrow slit alcove serves as a sideboard and generally holds a tapped keg of ale for meal times and off-duty guards. A wide window—the only true window in the castle—overlooks the picturesque harbor and admits a soft southerly breeze, but has sturdy oak shutters that can be barred from within. A door to the north opens on stairs leading up to the battlements (area **B13**). To the east, a locked door leads to area **B12**, its key held by Lady Smythee herself. Albers Siggs can usually be found here during the day, serving as the lady's chamberlain. A small end table has a secret drawer (DC 18 Perception check to find) where Royster keeps his savings, consisting of 42 pp and a small jadeite Garundi idol (worth 350 gp).

B12. Master Apartment: This is the most spacious room in the castle and holds the only true fireplace, a peat-burning affair that is rarely lit in these tropical climes. A comfortable but sagging couch stands before the fireplace, along with a small writing table and pair of chairs. An old sea chest stands before an elegant bed, next to an antique armor stand. The armor stand holds Iron Bert Smythee's famed "iron shirt," a *buccaneer's breastplate* (*Advanced Player's Guide* 284), which Captain Smythee unfortunately forgot to don in his haste to depart on his last voyage. The sea chest holds the last of Agasta Smythee's fortune hidden beneath her fine, but well-worn, clothing: a *farglass* (see page 56), four *potions of water breathing*, and three additional potions (determine randomly or choose as appropriate).

B13. Battlements: Two guards are always on duty upon this parapet, day or night. The tower chimney rises 10 feet above the walkway, and the peak of the lead-shingled roof rises to a height of 7 feet. Two light ballistae, each with a barrel of 15 bolts nearby, have been set in turrets at the southern corners, overlooking the lagoon. The drop from the battlements to the ground below is 70 feet. On a clear day, a lookout with a good spyglass can see for miles out to sea from here.

EVENT 15: CRACKING THE ROCK (CR VARIES)

This event occurs the first time the PCs travel to Windward Isle and try to "crack" Tidewater Rock. When the PCs first approach the island, read or paraphrase the following description.

A tower rises like a solid block from the sea at the edge of this island. The pounding surf rolls around its base and partially covers the steps that lead up to its front gate. A few arrow slits pierce its walls here and there, and a single shuttered window opens high upon the face of the fortress. A roof of metal shingles rises from its battlements where sentries keep lookout and siege weapons stand ready on corner turrets.

Fishguts' Advice: There are several ways the PCs can attempt to take Tidewater Rock—by force, by stealth, or with diplomacy, but they might wish to peacefully meet with the inhabitants of Tidewater Rock first, in hopes of gathering information that might help the PCs choose which option to pursue in taking the Rock. An initial peaceful encounter generally plays out as described below.

Assuming the PCs approach the tower without any sign of hostile intent, the guard on the battlements (area **B13**) alerts the castle, and Lady Smythee and Royster McCleagh come up to the battlements to speak with the PCs and ask their intentions. Lady Smythee's initial attitude is indifferent. If the PCs speak of parley, trade, or other peaceful intentions, they can change her attitude to friendly with a DC 16 Diplomacy check. If the PCs mention being enemies of Barnabas Harrigan, they receive a +4 bonus on their Diplomacy check. If Lady Smythee is made unfriendly, she orders the PCs to leave Windward Isle immediately.

If the PCs succeed in making Lady Smythee friendly, she invites them to dinner in Tidewater Rock, with one condition. To ensure safe conduct, they must present one of their number as a hostage. She promises the hostage will be well treated as long as the PCs' intentions remain peaceful. The hostage must be left on the doorstep of the keep, unarmed and unarmored, and everyone else must move back at least 100 feet. Sergeant McCleagh and two guards then open the main door and usher the hostage inside before quickly shutting and securing the door behind him. They search the hostage and confiscate anything other than normal clothing (including jewelry). The hostage is given food and water and locked in area **B9** with a guard on the door. Any confiscated items are secured in the chest in area **B4**.

As soon as these conditions are met, McCleagh opens the main door and allows up to five characters (PCs and NPCs) to enter at any one time. The PCs are allowed to keep their arms, but the castle occupants do so as well, and the PCs are warned that the hostage will be executed at the first sign of hostility. Sergeant McCleagh escorts the PCs to area **B11** where Lady Smythee is waiting. McCleagh and at least four guards are always present while the Siggesses serve the meal—a feast of boiled crab, butter-simmered sturgeon, goat cheese, and hard bread, washed down with copious amounts of ale and rum. During dinner, the PCs can make small talk, extend any proposals they have,



and even ask general questions about Lady Smythee and Tidewater Rock. She does not give any tactical information about her castle but will share its general history and the tale of the loss of her husband. After dinner is over and any talk has ended, the PCs are escorted from the castle, followed shortly thereafter by the hostage—none the worse for wear—along with any confiscated gear.

There are three main options for cracking the Rock—by assault, by subterfuge, or by alliance. Depending upon how the PCs play it, any of the following strategies can be initiated at the dinner, or immediately thereafter.

Assault: If the PCs attack the Rock from outside, Sergeant McCleagh rallies the guards to man the battlements, arrow slits, and ballistae. They defend the keep to the best of their ability and attempt to kill the PCs and sink their ship if it comes in too close during high tide. If the PCs attack at dinner, the guard on the door to area **B9** immediately enters the room and attempts to execute the unarmed hostage within. If the PCs are victorious, they can do what they want with any captives, but the survivors will attempt to revolt against the PCs at an opportune moment (except for Lady Smythee, who cleaves to her word if she surrenders the castle to the PCs).

Subterfuge: The PCs might decide to use the dinner as an excuse get within the walls of the castle and then attack their hosts. Doing so places the hostage in jeopardy, as explained above. With a good plan and a little luck, however, there is a good chance the PCs can overcome the castle's defenders, who respond as described under Assault above.

Alliance: It is also possible that wise PCs will seek common cause with Lady Smythee. If they make such overtures over dinner, she remains cordial, but she will not agree to an alliance or give up her sovereignty over Tidewater Rock. However, if the PCs have amassed at least 10 points of Infamy (thus reaching the Disgraceful Infamy threshold), and make Lady Smythee helpful with a successful Diplomacy check, she proposes a counteroffer—marriage under Shackles law to the PC with the highest Charisma score or who has otherwise roleplayed the best in interactions with her.

A DC 15 Knowledge (local) check identifies this somewhat outdated tradition. Under Shackles Law, two parties can agree to a mutually beneficial marriage relationship for a set period of time. During that time, each party enjoys the full benefits of marriage to his or her spouse and concomitant resources. Once the agreed-upon time period is up, however, either party can choose to divorce simply by stating as much, and each party returns amicably to his or her own holdings with no further strings attached. This was a particularly beneficial arrangement in the turbulent politics of the Shackles, as a Free Captain could marry a rival captain for a set period of time, thus ensuring that

her rival's fleet would not take action against her own. If love developed under such an arrangement, the marriage could continue indefinitely if both parties agreed to it.

If the PC in question is agreeable to such a proposal, Lady Smythee promises to marry the PC “for one year certain,” with the future of the arrangement beyond that time to be determined at a later date. The benefit of the PC in this arrangement is lordship of Tidewater Rock and access to its resources and strategic position for that time period. In addition, Lady Smythee is nothing if not traditional, and gives her new spouse a dowry upon their marriage—her *farglass* and her late husband's “iron shirt” (see area **B12**)—though in the event of a divorce, she expects them back, of course. Sergeant McCleagh has his own feelings for the Lady of the Rock, but he is nothing if not loyal, and reluctantly accepts the marriage arrangement. He is not above giving the PC hard looks as the masters of the Rock retire to their apartment of an evening, however.

If the PCs have not yet amassed enough Infamy to elicit an offer of marriage from Lady Smythee, she hints that she might be willing to agree to an alliance once they have made more of a name for themselves. In this case, the PCs can return to Tidewater Rock once they have reached a high enough Infamy threshold, and thereby secure an alliance with the Lady of the Rock.

Treasure: If the PCs loot Tidewater Rock, they can collect only 2 points of plunder, due to the keep's current financial state.

Story Award: If the PCs succeed in taking Tidewater Rock, award them 1,600 XP, in addition to the XP for any foes they defeated. Entering into a marriage with Lady Smythee counts as “cracking” Tidewater Rock since it gives the PCs effective control of the castle for as long as the marriage lasts. Regardless of their approach, the PCs gain a 1 point of Disrepute and Infamy as word of their exploit in “cracking the Rock” gets around the Shackles.

Development: Anyone using Lady Smythee's *farglass* (see area **B12**) to watch the shipping lanes can see passing targets of opportunity (such as those described in **Event 7**). If the PCs attack such a ship, the PCs' pilot gains a +2 bonus on initiative checks for any ship-to-ship combat that occurs due to their early knowledge of the other vessel's position.

EVENT 16: RAID FROM THE DEEPS (CR 8)

This event occurs only after the PCs have become masters of Tidewater Rock. This encounter assumes that the PCs entered into an alliance with Lady Agasta Smythee and left the garrison of Tidewater Rock relatively intact. If this is not the case, you will need to modify this encounter to fit the circumstances of your campaign.

After returning to the Rock from a foray upon the Fever Sea, the PCs find that the island was attacked by sahuagin

RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA

on the previous night. One of the garrison's guards is dead and Mardus Siggs (or another NPC if Mardus was slain or joined the PCs' crew) languishes from a horrific wound to his thigh from a barbed sahuagin trident. Mardus's wound was treated, but the jagged barbs of the weapon caused a great deal of damage to the bone as it was extracted, and Mardus now suffers from a major infection that will kill him in 1d4 days if not cured. A DC 20 Heal check or *remove disease* spell cures the infection, but the bone must be set properly and healed with another DC 20 Heal check or cure spell or his speed is permanently reduced to 10 feet.

Questioning the Rock's inhabitants reveals that a small group of sahuagin came upon Mardus in the evening as he was with his goats. The goatherd was surprised, but the guard happened to come along to summon him back to the castle for dinner. The guard held off the sahuagin while Mardus hobbled back to the castle to get help. When the rest of the guards arrived, the sahuagin were gone—apparently back into the sea—and the guard had been torn to shreds. A somber funeral service is held for the slain guard and if the PCs helped Mardus, they are warmly praised.

Creature: The danger has not passed, however, as another assault force of sahuagin is preparing to strike Tidewater Rock on the very night that the PCs have returned. Shortly before nightfall, when the tide has ebbed, the last of the castle inhabitants are returning from their routine chores (filling water barrels, cutting peat, and the like) so that the door can be shut for the night. As the door is opened for the approaching group, eight sahuagin burst from the surf 30 feet away and charge for the door. They ignore the workers and any guards in order to get inside the castle. The PCs may be serving as guards for the incoming group or waiting within the castle. The garrison's guards assist the PCs in repulsing this attack. The sahuagin fight to the death.

SAHUAGIN (8) **CR 2**
XP 600 each
 hp 15 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 239)

EVENT 17: A MIGHTY FORTRESS (CR 8)

This encounter occurs at 2 A.M. on a moonless night approximately 1 week after **Event 16**, at a time when the PCs are at Tidewater Rock. In their brief careers as pirates, the PCs have already made enemies—including a tribe of sahuagin on a remote island in the Shackles. When the PCs fought the sahuagin in **Event 11**, they killed the son of the tribe's chieftain, Krelloort, and likely gained possession of his totem necklace. The sahuagin now seek to recover the necklace and get their revenge. A small scouting party was dispatched to test the defenses of Tidewater Rock in **Event 16**, but now Krelloort has sent a human ally, the pirate Isabella "Inkskin" Locke and her ship *Thresher*, to destroy the PCs.

Ship Combat: The *Thresher* maneuvers into the mouth of the harbor under cover of darkness and prepares its ship's weapons to batter the PCs' ship in case it tries to sail out to assist the castle. Have any characters on watch make an opposed Perception check against the *Thresher's* Profession (sailor) check. If successful, that character gets a brief glimpse of a dark ship with black sails through the night mists. Just before the ship slips again into the concealing gloom, the character catches sight of the pirate flag upon its mainmast.

Once in position, the *Thresher* lowers two longboats full of buccaneers into the water. Captain Isabella Locke goes with the boats, leaving her first mate Knuckles Grype in command of the ship. It takes the longboats 5 rounds to quietly row to the front of the castle. If the *Thresher* was not previously spotted, guards can again make opposed Perception checks against the sailing checks of the buccaneers in the longboats to see the boats as they approach shore. The longboats get a +4 bonus on their opposed checks because of an *obscuring mist* spell cast by Isabella Locke.

This encounter contains elements of both ship-to-ship combat and normal combat. The *Thresher* only engages the PCs' ship if it enters the fray, remaining at the entrance to the harbor. Once the *Thresher's* longboats reach the castle, the focus should shift to the battle there.

THRESHER **CR 6**

Shackles junk (junk) (*Skull & Shackles Player's Guide* 23)

Init +2

DEFENSE

AC 10, touch 2; **Hardness** 5

hp 900 (sails 360)

Save +10

OFFENSE

Ranged 10 light ballistae +4 (3d8/19–20), standard catapult +7 (6d6)

CMB +16; **CMD** 26

Ramming Damage 8d8

CREW

First Mate Knuckles Grype (CE male human fighter 7 [see page 38]; Profession [sailor] +11; +1 on sailing checks to gain the upper hand)

22 buccaneers (see page 14) (minimum 10)

EQUIPMENT

Gear 10 light ballistae with 100 bolts (port and starboard), standard catapult with 20 stones (aft), narrow hull, rapid-deploy sails, silk sails

Cargo 1 point of plunder (ship's arsenal and stores)

THRESHER'S LONGBOATS (2) **CR 1**

Ship's boat (*Skull & Shackles Player's Guide* 25)

Init +2



DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 9; **Hardness** 5

hp 120 (oars 60)

Save +4

OFFENSE

CMB +5; **CMD** 15

Ramming Damage 1d8

CREW

Coxswain (CN human fighter 2; Intimidate +4)

14 buccaneers (see page 14)

EQUIPMENT

Cargo see Treasure below

Creatures: Each of the *Thresher's* longboats carries 15 buccaneers, and Isabella Locke is aboard one of them. It takes the longboats 5 rounds to reach the castle. During this time, Isabella casts *obscuring mist* to hide the boats' approach. Starting 2 rounds before the boats reach shore, Isabella attempts to blast open the front gate with *lightning bolts*. If the gate is still secured once the boats reach the steps, the buccaneers in the lead longboat attempt to batter it open with their boarding axes while those in the second boat fire their shortbows at any guards upon the battlements or behind arrow slits. Once through the gate, the buccaneers attack any defenders. The pirates press the attack as long as they think Isabella lives.

In general, the castle's garrison (and perhaps some of the PCs' crew) should fight the buccaneers in the background while the PCs battle Isabella. Her tactics are described in her stat block on page 50. If the PCs defeat Isabella, the castle's defenders are assumed to defeat the buccaneers as well, as in shipboard combat following a boarding action.

BUCCANEERS (30) CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 19 each (see page 14)

ISABELLA "INKSKIN" LOCKE CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 66 (see page 50)

Moto CR —

Sea snake familiar (variant viper) (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 133)

N Tiny magical beast (augmented animal)

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 18 (+3 Dex, +6 natural, +2 size)

hp 40 (9 HD)

Fort +2, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7

Defensive Abilities improved evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee bite +9 (1d2–3 plus poison)

Space 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks deliver touch spells, poison

TACTICS

Before Combat Isabella casts *false life* and *invisibility* on Moto before combat.

Morale If reduced to 20 hit points or fewer, Moto retreats back to Isabella and assumes his tattoo form.

STATISTICS

Str 4, **Dex** 17, **Con** 8, **Int** 10, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 12 (can't be tripped)

Feats Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff –1, Fly +15, Intimidate –1, Perception +9, Profession (sailor) +8, Stealth +15, Swim +15

Languages speak with master, speak with reptiles

SQ empathic link, hold breath, share spells

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 9; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Con; *cure* 1 save.

Treasure: One of the *Thresher's* longboats has a watertight compartment under the tiller in which six *potions of water breathing* have been hidden. Even if the pirates' longboats were sunk, their wreckage can be recovered and searched when the tide recedes.

Development: If the buccaneers in the longboats are repelled at the castle, Knuckles Grype quickly flees in the *Thresher*, leaving Isabella and any surviving pirates stranded at Tidewater Rock.

If Isabella is killed, make sure that her body is recovered. A DC 15 Knowledge (local) check reveals the map tattooed on her back to be a copy of the map to Cyrus Wolfe's lost treasure hoard at Mancatcher Cove. A DC 20 check is enough to remember the legend of Captain Wolfe as described in the Adventure Background on page 7. If none of the PCs take note of the map on her back, Lady Smythee or some other resident of the Rock recognizes it for what it is. She can also relate to them the legend. See Part Four for further details on the map and where it leads.

PART FOUR: THE TREASURE OF MANCATCHER COVE

Part Four of the adventure can occur anytime after the PCs have recovered the strange map tattooed on the back of Isabella "Inkskin" Locke (see **Event 17**), if and when they decide to go in search of the legendary treasure of Mancatcher Cove.

THE TREASURE MAP

The map tattooed on the Isabella Locke's back depicts the outlines of several small islands. A stylized half sun sits to the right of the islands, while simple images of a monstrous eye and the face of an aged, bearded king are to the left. Beneath the map are five lines of crude verse:

RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA

From blue bight's embrace
 Spy the Grave Lady's prize tooth
 With the Dawnflower's first kiss
 Climb the Captain's wayward orb
 To claim old king's hoard

The map shows the way to Mancatcher Cove, the site of Cyrus Wolfe's fabled hidden treasure, but it must be deciphered first. Several skill checks are listed below that can be used to identify some of the map's markings, but many of its details and instructions will not become clear until the PCs are actually present at Mancatcher Cove. Also listed below are the specific encounter locations referenced in the clues, as depicted on the map on page 40.

A DC 20 Knowledge (geography) check reveals the islands to be an unnamed archipelago in the Shackles north of the Ushinawa Isles and west of Besmara's Throne. Using charts of the Shackles (perhaps those owned by the former captain of the *Man's Promise*) grants a +4 bonus on this check. These islands lie 110 miles northwest of Tidewater Rock as the albatross flies, but the PCs will likely have to sail a bit farther through the numerous atolls and archipelagos of the southern Shackles.

The stylized sun could represent either a sunrise or sunset, though its position to the right (east) of the islands hints that sunrise is the proper interpretation. The monstrous eye represents the Beast of Mancatcher Cove, recognizable with a DC 15 Knowledge (history) or Knowledge (local) check. The strange king's image is merely reference to the root system of a tree that vaguely resembles a bearded monarch, under which Wolfe buried his treasure. The means of finding this burial place from Mancatcher Cove is revealed in the enigmatic lines of verse.

"Blue bight's embrace" means to begin the treasure hunt from within Mancatcher Cove itself (area C1).

The "Grave Lady" is the goddess of death, Pharasma, also known as the Lady of Graves, recognizable with a DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check. This line refers to a rock formation that resembles a death's head when seen from the correct angle in the correct light. Her "prize tooth" refers to a deposit of pyrite in the rock that glitters like a gold tooth in the skull's mouth when the light hits it (area C2).

"Dawnflower's first kiss" refers to the goddess of the sun, Sarenrae, called the Dawnflower, whose identity is hinted at by the stylized image of the sun on the map. A DC 10 Knowledge (religion) check also identifies the goddess. This line indicates that the PCs must be within the cove at the first light of dawn in order to see the skull-like formation and its "gold tooth," which indicates the location of the treasure.

"Climb the Captain's wayward orb" is an instruction to climb the rock formation into one of the caves that form the skull's eyes. A DC 17 Knowledge (local) check reveals that

Captain Wolfe was known to have lost an eye in battle; a DC 25 check reveals that it was his right eye. Therefore, his "wayward orb" is his right eye, and the PCs must enter the right eye of the skull formation to find the treasure (area C4).

The "old king's hoard" is another reference to the tree's roots, which look like a bearded king, designating the proper place to dig within the cave (area C5).

Let your players decipher as many of the clues as possible beforehand with the skill checks listed above. NPC allies, such as Ambrose Kroop, Sandara Quinn, or Lady Smythee, can assist them in this task if they're having trouble. Once they arrive in Mancatcher Cove, the PCs can revisit the clues in the context of the cove itself. If the players have trouble interpreting the clues on their own, you may allow appropriate skill checks to keep things from bogging down, such as successive DC 25 or 30 Linguistics checks. Likewise, NPC allies can provide ideas and thoughts to hint at the clues' meanings. While some who have found the map in the past have successfully located Mancatcher Cove, the real challenge is surviving it.

EVENT 18: LYING IN WAIT (CR 6)

Following Isabella's tattoo map eventually brings the PCs' ship to the small unnamed island in the southwest Shackles wherein lies Mancatcher Cove. The island is actually a series of small islands composed of carbonate platforms atop ancient reefs, forming a rough crescent open to the north. But another ship has come to Mancatcher Cove before them—Isabella Locke's ship, the *Thresher*.

After fleeing Tidewater Rock in **Event 17**, Captain Locke's first mate, Knuckles Grype, found himself the new captain of the *Thresher*. With Isabella's fate unknown, Knuckles realized that he would need to get the ship squibbed if he wanted to strike out on his own, but he lacked the funds to do so. However, the treasure of Mancatcher Cove would easily pay for a squibbing and more. Knuckles sailed the *Thresher* back to Mancatcher Cove, but not being allied with the sahuagin himself, he couldn't just sail in and take the treasure. Instead, he decided to wait offshore and see who came after him. If Isabella escaped and came looking for him, Knuckles would capture her and force her to hand over the treasure. If the PCs came instead, following Isabella's map, Knuckles would let them deal with the sahuagin first. If the PCs defeated the sahuagin and took the treasure, he could attack them as they left; if they failed, then perhaps the sahuagin would be weakened enough for him to claim the treasure himself.

Ship Combat: When the PCs first arrive at Mancatcher Cove, Knuckles tries to hide the *Thresher* behind one of the small islands to the east. The PCs (or any lookout on their ship) can make an opposed Perception check against Knuckles' Profession (sailor) check. If the PCs spot the



Thresher, a second DC 10 Perception check recognizes it as the vessel that attacked Tidewater Rock. The *Thresher* takes no aggressive action at this point, leaving it up to the PCs to decide whether or not to attack, though Knuckles responds in kind if attacked. If the PCs don't spot the *Thresher*, or choose not to attack at this time, Knuckles waits for the PCs to leave the cove. Once the PCs put back to sea, the *Thresher* sails out to blockade the northern entrance to the archipelago and attacks the PCs' ship.

THRESHER CR 6

Shackles junk (see page 35)
hp 900 (sails 360)

Creatures: The *Thresher's* new captain is Isabella Locke's former first mate, Knuckles Grype, an ugly plug of man who was a pit fighter before joining her crew. While the *Thresher's* buccaneers fight the PCs' crew, Knuckles takes on the PCs himself.

KNUCKLES GRYPE CR 6

XP 2,400
Male human fighter (brawler) 7 (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* 44)
CE Medium humanoid (human)
Init +2; Senses Perception -1

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+7 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 71 (7d10+28)

Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +1; +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +2

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 spiked gauntlet

+13/+8 (1d4+11 plus poison) and
+1 spiked gauntlet +13 (1d4+9 plus poison)

Special Attacks close combatant* (+2/+4), close control* +2, menacing stance* (-1/+4)

TACTICS

Before Combat Knuckles applies bloodroot poison to his spiked gauntlets before combat.

During Combat Knuckles wades into melee with his spiked gauntlets. He attempts to charge the enemy captain on the first round of combat, using his Charge Through feat to force his way through, if necessary.

Thereafter, he attempts to bull rush opponents overboard. **Morale** Knuckles has more bluster than courage, so if he is reduced to 25 hit points or fewer, he calls for parley, offering to surrender the *Thresher* to the PCs and join their crew as a loyal follower.

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 12

Base Atk +7; CMB +11 (+15 bull rush; +13 drag, overrun, and reposition); CMD 23 (27 vs. bull rush; 25 vs. drag, overrun, and reposition)

Feats Charge Through**, Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun, Power Attack, Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (spiked gauntlet), Weapon Specialization (spiked gauntlet)

Skills Climb +12, Intimidate +10, Profession (sailor) +8, Swim +9
Languages Common

Combat Gear bloodroot poison (4 doses); Other Gear +1 breastplate, +1 spiked gauntlets (2), belt of giant strength +2

** See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

C. MANCATCHER COVE

Once the PCs sail into the archipelago of small, nameless islands of Mancatcher Cove, the cove itself is easy to locate, piercing the eastern flank of the westernmost isle, which is also the archipelago's largest. The islands are surrounded by nearly sheer rock cliffs with few beaches, and are buried under a shroud of prolific jungle growth. They are a haven for birds and sea mammals, and have small populations of both rodents and snakes. The largest island has a sizeable population of spider monkeys that keep up a cacophony throughout the day. There are no large predatory land beasts on the islands, as none have been transplanted there, and anything larger than a monkey would quickly fall prey to the island's primary guardian (see area C1). The cliffs of the islands range between 20 and 60 feet high and require DC 25 Climb checks to scale the craggy heights, which are slick with sea spume. The jungle growth is dense, with the average height of the tree canopies reaching 60 to 70 feet.



Knuckles Grype

RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA

C1. BLUE BIGHT'S EMBRACE (CR VARIES)

Mancatcher Cove forms an almost perfectly round bowl in the side of this jungle-cloaked island. The water in this circular bowl is an almost indigo hue compared to the turquoise of the waters surrounding the island, hinting at the extreme depth of the cove. Cliffs surround the bowl on all sides except the entrance, and a few small beaches have formed where the water meets the rock face. The jungle grows thickly atop these cliffs, the massive trees spreading their branches out and over the cove. From these trees a series of interlaced vines have grown like a loose net canopy 100 feet above the water, giving the cove a cavelike quality in the shadows of predawn or twilight. More vines, creepers, and roots extend down the cliffs, creating a dense maze of twisting tendrils that shroud numerous dark hollows in the rock.

The cove is actually a natural formation called a blue hole, where erosion in ancient epochs gouged a sinkhole into the soft carbonate rock that makes up these islands. This particular blue hole is approximately 300 feet wide and over 600 feet deep. Its bottom is white sand (which reflects as dark blue from the extreme depth) and is littered with the wrack of ships and the bones of sailors who attempted to locate the treasure of Mancatcher Cove and failed. Below a depth of 400 feet, the water in the hole is anoxic due to its poor circulation, so no creatures reside in these wrecks and even normal water-breathing magic does not function. These wrecks were thoroughly looted before being scuttled, so nothing of value remains among them.

The cliff walls of the cove are rough and covered in jungle growth, so they only require a DC 15 Climb check to scale them. They are pocked with scores of naturally occurring shallow caves. Treasure hunters might assume that the treasure is hidden in one of these crevices, but without a map, a systematic search would require weeks, and thus far, no one has survived the dangers of the cove for that long.

Anyone exploring the depths of the cove discovers a number of caves in the wall of the hole 160 feet down. One of these is the entrance to the sahuagin's lair (area D18).

Creatures: Despite the legends of a beast summoned by Captain Wolfe to protect the cove, there is no such thing. In fact, all he did was transplant an exotic plant cutting that he found aboard the Katapeshi treasure ships. The small cutting has now grown into a symbiotic plant creature called a canopy creeper that lurks in the jungle canopy around and above the cove. Though the waters of the cove itself teem with sahuagin and hammerhead sharks, they rarely breach the surface for fear of the creature's attacks. Instead, they prefer to render ships immobile by destroying their rudders from below while the canopy

creeper picks off crew members from above. The sahuagin then hack through the hull and scuttle the ship, looting it as it slips beneath the waves toward the dark depths below.

The sahuagin beneath the surface spot a ship as soon as it enters the cove. A patrol of three sahuagin riding three sharks then approach from beneath the ship and attempt to quietly disable the rudder. Anyone aboard the ship during its first hour in the cove can hear the sounds of the sahuagin disabling the ship with a DC 23 Perception check (DC 13 if belowdecks), though the perpetrators remain out of sight below the ship. Anyone who enters the water must face this patrol. After an hour, the sahuagin successfully disable the ship's rudder. They then keep watch from a distance until the canopy creeper has dealt with the ship's crew. Once the ship has been disabled, anyone on deck who succeeds at a DC 12 Perception check notices a number of shark fins in the waters of the cove, and anyone who succeeds at a DC 25 check catches a glimpse of a sahuagin watcher peeking its head above the water from 50 feet away before disappearing again.

The canopy creeper is quiescent during the day (though it does defend itself if attacked), but it attacks anyone on the deck of a ship that is in the cove during the hours of darkness.

CANOPY CREEPER CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 150 (see page 80)

SAHUAGIN (3) CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 15 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 239)

SHACKLES HAMMERHEADS (3) CR 2

XP 600 each

Sharks (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 247)

hp 22 each

Development: Once the ship's rudder has been disabled, an additional shark or sahuagin (50% chance of either) arrives every 3 rounds to help scuttle the ship, up to a total of six sahuagin and six sharks. Once the canopy creeper has killed most of the ship's crew, the sahuagin begin the job of breaking through the ship's hull and scuttling it.

Repairing the ship's rudder requires a DC 15 Craft (carpentry) or (ships) check and 20 gp worth of raw materials, or it can be repaired with magic. Any repairs must be made in the water or in a boat next to the rudder.

C2. GRAVE LADY'S PRIZE TOOTH

When the morning sun shines into the cove from the east, it illuminates a section of the cliff wall that marks where



the treasure lies. The rest of the day and night it looks just like the rest of the cove. When the PCs are within the cove as the first light of day shines in from the east, read or paraphrase the following.

As the first light of dawn peeks into the darkened cove from the east, the jungle cliffs come alive with patterns of shadow and light in a thousand fanciful, ever-shifting shapes. When the sun is fully up, the cliffs will return to their normal appearance, but for these few moments they are almost magical with this display of shadow art. In the shadowy half light, a group of caves and crevices on the cliff face takes on the appearance of a grinning skull. As the morning sun illuminates the shadow that resembles the skull's mouth, a previously unseen glint of gold sparkles brightly in the sunlight, as if the skull has a gold tooth.

The PCs can easily take positions to note the location of this shadow image so they can locate it again when it disappears a few moments later as the sun rises. A search for the "prize tooth" quickly locates a large deposit of pyrite, or "fool's gold," that has been set within a crevice so that it reflects the light when hit by the morning sun. It is obviously not a natural feature of the island. Thirty feet above the beach, two caves open into the cliff face where the skull's eye sockets would be. Ascending to these caves reveals the rotten stub of a wooden boom (invisible

from below) that was likely used to hoist heavy loads up to the caves.

C3. THE WRONG ORB (CR 7)

The right eye socket of the "skull" is the "Captain's wayward orb," but, of course, that is the leftmost cave from the perspective of the PCs. If they enter the right-hand cave instead, read or paraphrase the following.

A cave opens here beneath a screen of honeysuckle. A few large bees buzz around the fragrant blossoms.

The bees pose no threat, and beyond the vines is a dry earthen cave with a fairly level floor and a ceiling ranging from 8 to 10 feet in height.

Trap: Although this cave seems the more inviting of the two, it comes to a dead end shortly after a turn in the passage, and Captain Wolfe left a trap behind for would-be treasure seekers. When anyone enters the square marked on the map, a heavy log embedded with wooden stakes falls from a cleverly concealed hollow in the ceiling. It swings down the tunnel, striking anyone in the passage that leads out to the mouth of the cave.

SPIKED LOG TRAP **CR 7**
XP 3,200
 Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** none

Effect Atk +15 melee (6d6 damage, plus 1d4 spikes for 1d4+2 damage each); multiple targets (all targets in a 15-foot line)

C4. THE CAPTAIN'S WAYWARD ORB

The left-hand cave (the skull's right eye) is the true cave referred to in the map.

A narrow earthen opening ascends into the cliff above. The cave mouth is a tight fit behind the screening vines and roots, but it looks accessible with a little effort.

Medium creatures must squeeze to enter the cave mouth, but the passage soon widens. The cave extends upward at a fairly steep slope (DC 5 Climb check) with an 8-foot ceiling. There are no tracks or other signs of passage within.

C5. OLD KING'S HOARD

The tunnel climbs to a point just below the island's surface. Sunlight filters faintly through a rent in the earth above, where a gargantuan tree grows down into the rocky soil, its prodigious root system blocking any further progress ahead. The fissures and crevices in the bark of the tree's trunk, just visible at the roof of the tunnel, vaguely resemble a wrinkled human visage with a craggy crown upon its brow, while the spread of roots below seems like the hoary growth of an ancient beard.

This is the "old king's hoard" referred to in the map, marking the spot where the treasure was buried. Anyone searching among the roots finds further confirmation in a humanoid skull tangled among the root tendrils, its hollow eye sockets directed toward the earthen floor.

The ground here is rocky soil that must be laboriously excavated with spades and picks. After descending 10 feet, the PCs reach the bedrock of the island and hit a 6-inch-thick layer of wooden planks laid across the pit bottom (hardness 5, hp 60, Break DC 23). Breaking through this wooden barrier reveals a dark shaft looking down into area D1.

D. SAHUAGIN TUNNELS

Since Cyrus Wolfe visited Mancatcher Cove, a tribe of sahuagin has taken up residence in the natural caves in the wall of the blue hole. They discovered Captain Wolfe's treasure and relocated it to their own treasury, and use these tunnels as a base to prey upon shipping in the Fever Sea.

The tunnels lie in the bedrock of the island, where water has dissolved the calcium content and left behind natural fissures and hollows. There is some evidence of work to enlarge chambers and tunnels, but they have otherwise been left in their natural state. The chambers and tunnels are all strikingly similar in appearance, so no read-aloud

text is provided for most of these locations. Unless otherwise noted, all of the chambers are underwater and are considered aquatic terrain with non-flowing water. Navigating these tunnels requires swimming and water breathing of some sort. See pages 432–433 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* for rules on underwater adventuring. The tunnels are generally tubes 10 feet in diameter, and rooms are roughly ovoid with ceiling heights averaging 20 feet. Remember that underwater is a three-dimensional environment for combat and maneuvering.

There are no light sources and no doors or furnishings within these tunnels, but curtains of seaweed have been cultivated in several places to block openings. These curtains of seaweed provide total concealment and require a move action to move through. They are fibrous and tough (hardness 3, hp 20, Break DC 23), but they can be cut with slashing weapons, which ignore their hardness. In addition, many of the passages are steeply inclined with slopes of 45 degrees: for every 10 feet of horizontal distance, they drop 10 feet as well.

D1. RANSACKED CACHE

The following description assumes that the PCs have entered from area C5 above.

The removal of the wooden planks reveals a sinkhole descending into the rock. It drops thirty feet to the still, dark surface of water below. The broken remnants of a wooden platform and stair cling to the wall, but the structures themselves have long since rotted away and dropped into the inscrutable depths.

The sahuagin discovered this chamber and removed the treasure before destroying the platform. The sinkhole descends another 20 feet below the water level, where a sloping tunnel exits to the southwest. There is no sign of Captain Wolfe's treasure here.

D2. AMBUSH POINT (CR 7)

Creatures: If the sahuagin are aware of the PCs' presence in the cove, then they have prepared an ambush here. A total of six sahuagin await their entry, three in the tunnel to area D3, and three in the tunnel to area D4. They attempt to catch the PCs in a pincer attack. If they have not been alerted to the PCs, then these sahuagin are in area D4.

SAHUAGIN (6)

CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 15 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 239)

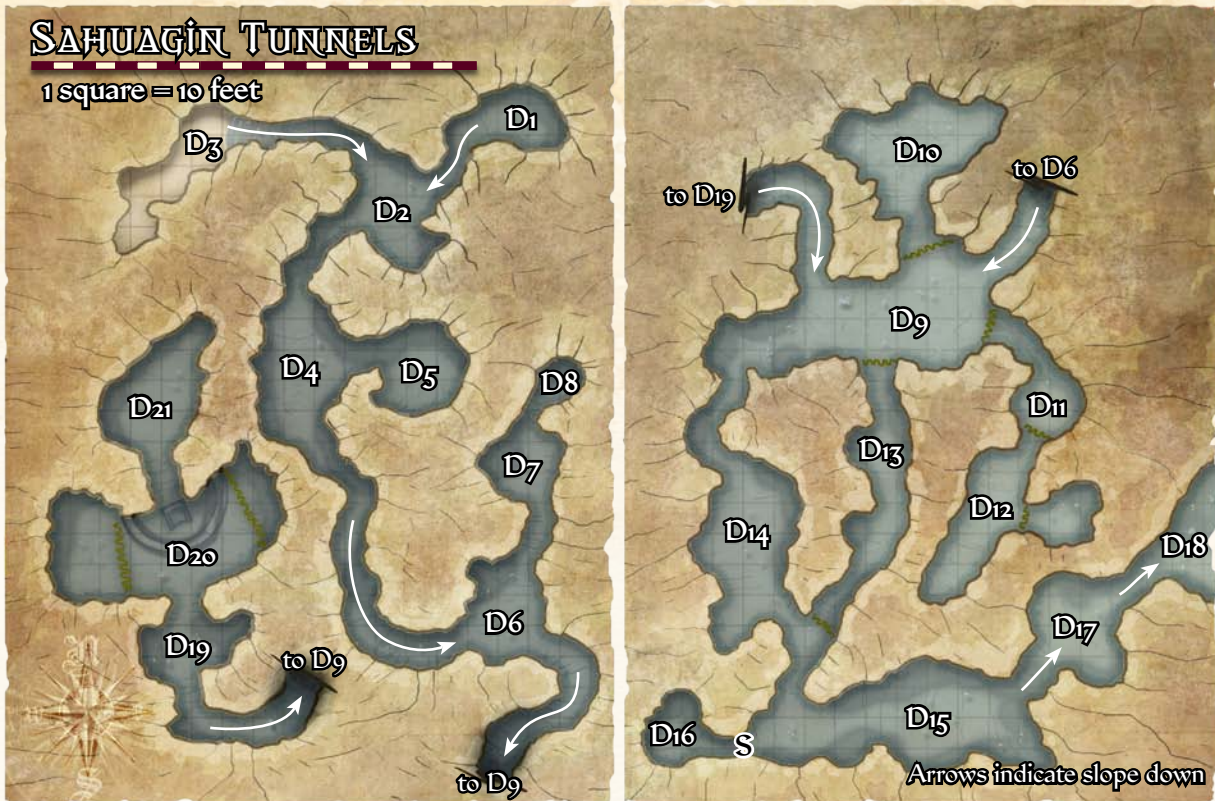
D3. ISABELLA LOCKE'S CHAMBERS (CR 5)

The tunnel rises above sea level here, creating an air pocket in this series of chambers. The floor is sand and a few items



SAHUAGIN TUNNELS

1 square = 10 feet



of furniture are scattered about, including a table, a poorly repaired chair, a bed with a sagging frame, and a crude fence of driftwood in the rear of the chamber. The entire cavern is overgrown with vines bearing tiny violet flowers that fill the room with a cloying fragrance.

Isabella Locke uses this chamber on her infrequent visits to the sahuagin tribe. She has left few personal effects in the chamber, though beneath the bed is a large glass jar filled with alcohol that holds the preserved, severed head of a vicious-looking Tian man with pock-scarred cheeks, a tattoo of a kraken on his forehead, and all his teeth broken out. A DC 25 Knowledge (local) check reveals the head to be that of the Tian pirate Soshimira, captain of the *Dragon's Dishonor*, who disappeared on the Fever Sea decades ago.

Creatures: To keep the air within her chamber fresh, Isabella cultivated a number of xtabay plants in the rearmost chamber, keeping them penned in with a small fence of driftwood and feeding them regularly. Unfortunately, a sahuagin fingerling recently wandered in here and broke the fence before succumbing to the xtabays' soporific pollen. The plants devoured the young sahuagin and have since managed to reproduce and spread throughout the chamber. There are now eight xtabays living in the cavern; they immediately attempt to anesthetize and devour any creature entering the room.

XTABAYS (8) CR 1/2
XP 200 each
 hp 8 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 289)

Treasure: Hidden in the bed covers (DC 12 Perception check to find) is a *wand of web* (37 charges) that Isabella left here. Beneath the bed, a small coffer holds three *potions of water breathing*.

D4. AUXILIARY BARRACKS

Normally unused, this chamber serves as an auxiliary barracks for the sahuagin.

Creatures: If the sahuagin have not been alerted to the PCs' presence, then the ambushers from area D2 are quartered here instead.

D5. OLD ARMORY (CR 4)

This chamber, once used as an armory for the auxiliary barracks, has been abandoned by the sahuagin.

Creature: A giant rock crab has taken up residence in the armory. It attacks if cornered.

GIANT ROCK CRAB CR 4
XP 1,200
Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 50
 N Large vermin (aquatic)
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17 (+8 natural, -1 size)

hp 42 (5d8+20)

Fort +8, Ref +1, Will +1

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee 2 claws +6 (1d6+4 plus grab)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (1d6+4)

STATISTICS

Str 19, Dex 11, Con 18, Int —, Wis 10,

Cha 2

Base Atk +3; CMB +8 (+12 grapple);

CMD 18 (30 vs. trip)

Skills Perception +4, Swim +12

SQ water dependency

Treasure: A single masterwork trident with the broken condition rests on the floor, half buried in silt.

D6. GUARDROOM (CR 5)

This guardroom defends the approaches to the breeding hatchery (area D7) and the lower level of the sahuagin tunnels.

Creatures: Two sahuagin guards and a hammerhead shark occupy this chamber. They assume that the PCs are another rescue party for the captive in area D8, and fight to the death to prevent them from rescuing the captive held there.

SAHUAGIN (2)

CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 15 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 239)

SHACKLES HAMMERHEAD

CR 2

XP 600

Shark (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 247)

hp 22

D7. BREEDING HATCHERY

Numerous strange, organic filaments fill this chamber, running from floor to ceiling like columns. Fist-sized pink ovoids float from the filaments, bobbing in the lazy current.

Closer inspection reveals the ovoid spheres to be slightly translucent and to contain small tadpole-like creatures twitching within. A DC 25 Knowledge (local) check identifies the spheres as locathah eggs. There are a total 47 eggs within the room, all still at least a week away from hatching. The captive locathah matriarch in area D8

laid the eggs. When the eggs hatch, the sahuagin plan to eat the majority of the locathah hatchlings and raise the rest as captive slaves.

D8. CAPTIVE QUEEN (CR 1)

Rusty shackles scavenged from a shipwreck hang from the wall of this small cave.

Creature: The sole occupant of this room is a locathah matriarch, a fishlike humanoid with crested fins and an orange coloration, shackled to the far wall. The matriarch is queen of a migratory locathah band that the sahuagin successfully raided. The sahuagin savagely removed the creature's legs, crudely stitching them up with ragged scars, and carved crude tattoos into her scaly flesh before forcing her to lay eggs. The matriarch is listless and does not help in her own release attempt, unless her eggs in area D7 were destroyed, in which case she goes into a crazed battle rage, fighting until slain.



Locathah Matriarch

LOCATHAH MATRIARCH

CR 1

XP 400

Female advanced locathah (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 179, 292)

hp 13, currently 2

Speed 5 ft., swim 10 ft.

Development: If freed, the locathah matriarch tries her best to collect all of her eggs in area D7 and escape with them back to her tribe.

Story Award: If the PCs rescue the locathah and help her escape with her eggs, award them 1,000 XP. In addition, her surviving tribe members track the PCs down a week later and reward them with a *helm of underwater action* recovered from a shipwreck.

D9. FEEDING HALL (CR 5)

The water in this cavern is murky with the haze of fresh blood, and gobbets of flesh float in the water.

The sahuagin use this chamber for their feeding frenzies. The current menu is the remains of six locathahs and three giant moray eels, a rescue party sent to recover the matriarch held in area D8.

Creatures: Three sahuagin warriors and eight noncombatants (the elderly, infirm, or young) are currently feeding in this chamber. They are in a feeding frenzy and their Perception checks are treated as if they rolled a 0, so they are relatively easy to surprise. The warriors fight to



the death, while the noncombatants attempt to flee to the common chamber (area **D10**). Noncombatants do not put up any fight and do not grant XP awards.

SAHUAGIN (3) **CR 2**
XP 600 each
 hp 15 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 239)

D10. COMMON CHAMBER

This dismal chamber serves as the quarters for the almost three dozen noncombatant members of the tribe, old or young sahuagin that are little more than slaves for the warrior caste. They anxiously await the hatching of the locathah eggs in area **D7**, as they believe their lives will become immensely easier with a multitude of locathah slaves to bully. They know about the eggs and the layout of the lower tunnels (areas **D9** through **D18**, with the exception of area **D16**) and the secret to safely leaving through area **D18**. They are weak and malnourished (the warriors take the lion's share of the

food) and make no attempt to fight. Do not award the PCs XP for defeating them.

D11. MATRON'S CHAMBER

The Matron of the sahuagin tribe occupies this chamber. She can normally be found in area **D12**, but responds violently to any sounds coming from this room.

Treasure: A DC 17 Perception check allows the PCs to find a loose rock in the floor. Hidden beneath it is the Matron's personal treasure stash consisting of a string of tiny pearls (worth 500 gp) and a small soapstone statuette crudely carved in the likeness of a wide-mouthed sea dragon. A DC 20 Knowledge (religion) can check allow the PCs to recognize the dragon as a depiction of Kelizandri, Elemental Lord of Water, also known as the Brackish Emperor. The crude statuette is worth only 20 gp at most.

D12. HATCHERY (CR 4)

This room swarms with sahuagin fingerlings and newly hatched sahuagin fry. The seaweed curtains in this room are thick enough to generally keep these hatchlings contained and prevent them from wandering loose through the lair where they would be at risk of predation by the other sahuagin, and the tribe's Matron herself keeps an eye over them as well (though she is not above a snack now and again). These immature sahuagin are their own greatest threat, as the larger tend to feed on the smaller. The hatchlings in here range in size from newly hatched fry no larger a human's thumb to fingerlings the size of a human toddler (almost large enough to be allowed to reside with the tribe in area **D10**). Beyond the eastern seaweed curtain is a chamber with muddy walls to which thousands of marble-sized, milky eggs have been attached. There are hundreds of fingerlings in the larger chamber and hundreds of eggs in here, but most will not survive to adulthood.

Creature: The Matron is an ancient sahuagin grown to massive size from age (she is several hundred years old) and the blessings of Kelizandri. The price she has paid for her exceptional age and size is that she is sterile and unable to produce eggs for the tribe. She is responsible for protecting the tribe's eggs and fingerlings from danger and predators (including hungry adult sahuagin). The sahuagin fear her, and she wields exceptional influence in the tribe. She fights to the death to defend the eggs and hatchlings, and if she calls for help, 1d4+1 warriors from area **D14** arrive in 1d3 rounds.

THE MATRON **CR 4**
XP 1,200
 Female advanced giant sahuagin (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 239, 294, 295)
 hp 23



The Matron

RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA

D13. LARDER

These caves hold the tribe's food stores. Currently, the larder holds a recently slain giant moray eel hung on an iron hook; the upper torso, arms, and head of a locathah (part of the rescue party described in area D9); a dead sahuagin (killed by the rescue party); and the slightly bloated corpses of three large mackerel floating near the ceiling. Any PCs or members of their crew who fell victim to the sahuagin in Mancatcher Cove (area C1) will also be found here, along with all their equipment.

Treasure: Stacked in one corner are seven locathah longspears, four light crossbows, and cases holding 47 bolts. A DC 18 Perception check allows the PCs to find a *wand of produce flame* (41 charges) jumbled among the crossbow bolts in one of the cases.

D14. BARRACKS (CR 8)

This chamber serves as the primary barracks for the warriors of the tribe. The room is completely choked with seaweed from the dozens of beds that grow throughout the room from floor to ceiling. The entire room is considered difficult terrain, and the seaweed provides concealment beyond 5 feet and total concealment beyond 10 feet.

Creatures: Those sahuagin who are not out patrolling, feeding, or otherwise on duty can be found here relaxing. There are currently eight sahuagin warriors in this chamber. Unless the lair has been alerted, there is a 50% chance that the warriors are asleep. If the sahuagin become aware of intruders, they remain in this chamber and attempt to ambush the PCs as they enter. If hard pressed, they retreat to area D15 to regroup with their hammerhead sharks.

SAHUAGIN (8) CR 2
XP 600 each
 hp 15 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 239)

Treasure: An assortment of sahuagin crossbows, cases of bolts, tridents (including one masterwork trident), and battle harnesses are scattered about this chamber. In addition, several nuggets of raw gold and silver ore worth a total of 270 gp can be collected with a DC 21 Perception check. Finally, a DC 24 Perception check discovers a decomposed human hand wrapped in seaweed like a sushi roll, still wearing a *ring of animal friendship*.

D15. SHARK CORRAL (CR 6)

The tribe's trained hammerhead sharks swim about in the chummed waters of this chamber when not on duty elsewhere. The secret door to the west is actually a crevice in the wall that has been almost completely buried behind an accumulation of sediment. A DC 25 Perception check

allows the PCs to notice the narrow opening in the wall. It can be dug out with 2 hours of labor.

Creatures: There are currently four sharks in this room fighting over the remains of a locathah. They attack any non-sahuagin that enter. The sharks do not leave this room unless accompanied by a sahuagin.

SHACKLES HAMMERHEADS (4) CR 2
XP 600 each
 Sharks (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 247)
 hp 22 each

Development: If any of the PCs is wearing the strange deep platinum necklace found in **Event 11**, that character feels drawn toward the western end of the cavern, and receives a +4 bonus on Perception checks to find the secret door there.

D16. HIDDEN CRYPT (CR 6)

Neither Captain Wolfe nor the sahuagin were the first to discover the blue hole of Mancatcher Cove. A hundred years before Wolfe's time, a foul captain of the Shackles was overthrown by his mutinous crew. The mutineers fed him a *potion of water breathing* and chained him here to his ship's anchor to await the expiration of the potion.

Creature: Near the back wall of this darkened cave, a ship's anchor has been driven into the ground. Its heavy chain has been coiled about the skeletal remains of the murdered captain. The rotten remains of a captain's coat still hang from the skeleton's frame, and a silvery pendant dangles from the captain's neck. Who this betrayed captain was and why he was left here remains a mystery, as well as why his pendant was left with him. He plays no further part in this Adventure Path beyond this encounter, but his story can be fleshed out for your own campaign as you see fit.

The ancient mariner is no longer dead and is no longer bound by the anchor chain. He has risen as a mummy of the deep, and can free himself from the chain as a move action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. He waits to activate his aura of despair until he has revealed himself to be animate. The creature's cursed waters are so foul that its curse of the deep ability works even if its victim has the ability to breath underwater.

THE ANCIENT MARINER CR 6
XP 2,400
 Male advanced mummy of the deep (*Tome of Horrors Complete* 439)
 NE Medium undead (aquatic)
Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12
Aura despair (30 ft., paralyzed for 1d4 rounds, Will DC 16 negates)



DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 20 (+10 natural)

hp 67 (9d8+27)

Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +8

DR 5/—; Immune undead traits; Resist fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee slam +12 (1d6+7 plus grab)

Special Attacks curse of the deep

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +10)

1/day—control water

STATISTICS

Str 21, Dex 10, Con —, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 15

Base Atk +6; CMB +11 (+15 grapple); CMD 21

Feats Great Fortitude, Power Attack, Skill

Focus (Perception), Toughness, Weapon

Focus (slam)

Skills Disguise +10, Perception +12, Stealth +10,

Swim +18

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Curse of the Deep (Su) On a successful grapple check, a mummy of the deep presses its lips against an opponent's and regurgitates sea water into the opponent's lungs. Each round thereafter, for the next 10 rounds, the victim must succeed at a DC 16 Fortitude save or be dazed and take 1d4 points of damage that round. Three consecutive successful saves means the victim has coughed up enough water to shake off the effects of the attack and takes no further damage. When a victim reaches 0 or fewer hit points, it falls unconscious. In the next round, it drowns. Holding one's breath does not prevent drowning (water is already in the lungs). A *remove curse*, *heal* spell, or DC 20 Heal check halts the damage if applied before the creature reaches 0 or fewer hit points. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Despair (Su) All creatures within a 30-foot radius that see a mummy of the deep must succeed at a DC 16 Will save or be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds. Whether or not the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by

that mummy of the deep's despair ability for 24 hours. This is a paralysis and mind-affecting fear attack. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Treasure: The pendant around the ancient mariner's neck is made of deep platinum (see the sidebar on page 22) with queerly shaped blue-and-black whorls. The pendant is cast to resemble a chaotic cluster of tentacles and fluke tails, and though it does not radiate magic, anyone who examines it for a full round must succeed at a DC 15 Will save or be shaken for 1d4 rounds (this is a mind-affecting fear effect). The pendant tends to subtly draw those who possess other samples of the tainted platinum into its general vicinity, which probably explains why the sahuagin tribe chose to occupy these tunnels. It is somehow connected to the deep sea vents from which it originated and the strange denizens of that benthic region, but how exactly is left up to you. The pendant is worth 2,000 gp.



D17. LOWER GUARDROOM (CR 6)

Creatures: Two sahuagin and a tojanida are stationed in this chamber to guard the lower entrance to the sahuagin tunnels. The tojanida was originally drawn to Mancatcher Cove by the deep platinum pendant in area D16, though it does not know what drew it here. The Matron believes the tojanida is an emissary of Kelizandri, and the tojanida has done nothing to dissuade her of that notion. In exchange for fresh food and occasional conversation, the tojanida has agreed to help guard the sahuagin's home.

The sahuagin guards here do not react to alarms elsewhere in the lair, as they are under orders to defend the lower entrance at all costs. The guards have also been ordered to listen for the sound of the conch horn from area D18. If they hear it, they send the tojanida down the tunnel, where it expels its ink cloud to temporarily disperse the jellyfish swarm. If faced with intruders, the sahuagin send the tojanida into battle first while they try to pick off spellcasters with their crossbows.

SAHUAGIN (2) CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 15 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 239)

The Ancient Mariner

RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA

TOJANIDA

CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 51 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 270)

D18. LOWER ENTRANCE (CR 6)

This tunnel opens into the wall of the blue hole 160 feet below the surface of the cove. Set in a niche in the wall of the blue hole 30 feet away is a conch shell (DC 18 Perception to spot).

Creature: The sahuagin seed the area with plankton in order to keep a jellyfish swarm happily immobile there, blocking entry to the caves. When the sahuagin need to enter the lair, they blow on the conch to summon the guards and tojanida from area **D17**. The jellyfish dislike the tojanida's ink cloud and disperse until the cloud dissipates, at which point the swarm reforms in its habitual spot in front of the entrance. If a PC blows on the conch, the tojanida in area **D17** disperses the swarm, assuming the summons must be from returning members of the tribe.

JELLYFISH SWARM

CR 6

XP 2,400

hp 54 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 170)

D19. UNOCCUPIED QUARTERS (CR 4)

This room served as quarters for the sahuagin chieftain Krelloort's son, who also served as Krelloort's bodyguard until he was slain by the PCs in **Event 11**. A simple seaweed bed grows near one wall.

Creature: Krelloort's own pet hammerhead shark now guards the room and attacks any intruders until reduced below 15 hit points, at which time it retreats to area **D20** to defend the chieftain.

GREAT HAMMERHEAD SHARK

CR 4

XP 1,200

Advanced giant shark (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 247, 294, 295)

hp 38

D20. THRONE ROOM (CR 8)

Curtains of golden seaweed block either end of this room. A crudely chiseled dais sits against the back wall, supporting a stone throne of massive proportions. The throne's eroded appearance, darkly stained stones, strange runes, and images of one-eyed beasts make it evident that it had sat in the slime at the bottom of the sea for long ages before being dragged up and placed here.

This chamber serves as the throne room for Krelloort, chieftain of the sahuagin tribe of Mancatcher Cove. Beyond the western seaweed curtain is Krelloort's personal bedchamber, containing a seaweed bed, a few personal

items, and a long iron rod that once served as a handle for a capstan. Behind the eastern curtain are the chambers for Krelloort's two favored concubines.

A DC 23 Perception check reveals that a hollow space lies beneath the throne. The throne can be moved with a DC 30 Strength check (use of a proper lever, such as the iron capstan rod in Krelloort's bedchamber, grants a +10 bonus on this check), revealing a passage leading to area **D21**.

Creatures: The chamber is currently occupied by Chief Krelloort, a mutant four-armed sahuagin monstrosity, and his two concubines, massively muscled female sahuagin with vile tattoos covering their bodies. They fight to the death to defend their chieftain.

KRELLOORT

CR 7

XP 3,200

Male four-armed sahuagin mutant fighter 4 (see page 84)

LE Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic)

Init +6; **Senses** blindsense 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft.;

Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 20 (+5 armor, +2 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 67 (6d10+34)

Fort +10, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 60 ft.

Melee *Zul* +13/+8 (1d8+10), bite +9 (1d4+2), 2 claws +11 (1d4+5) or

bite +11 (1d4+5), 4 claws +11 (1d4+5)

Ranged *Zul* +10 (1d8+8)

Special Attacks blood frenzy

TACTICS

During Combat Krelloort closes in to concentrate his attacks on those who are less armored, delighting in watching his opponents slowly turn into coral from his magical trident's attacks. If hard pressed, Krelloort enters a blood frenzy and tries to take down as many opponents as possible.

Morale If Krelloort survives his blood frenzy but finds he still has substantial opponents remaining, he attempts to flee out of the lair through area **D18** and down into the depths of the blue hole. He hopes his high Constitution score will allow him to survive in the anoxic waters until his pursuers have succumbed to suffocation. If pursuers instead wait for him above the anoxic level, he eventually swims upward to meet them, fighting to the death to defeat his foes.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 15, **Con** 18, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 23

Feats Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Multiattack^B, Power Attack, Toughness^B, Weapon Focus (trident), Weapon Specialization (trident)



Skills Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +8, Perception +10, Ride +5, Stealth +9, Swim +15

Languages Aquan, Common, Polyglot; speak with sharks

SQ armor training 1, multiweapon mastery

Combat Gear *potions of cure moderate wounds* (2); **Other Gear** masterwork scale mail, *Zul* (+1 human bane trident, see page 57), eel leather and coral war harness (worth 75 gp), deep platinum necklace worth 3,000 gp (see the sidebar on page 22)

KRELLOORT'S CONCUBINES (2) CR 3

XP 800 each

Advanced female sahuagin (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 239, 294)
hp 19 each

Treasure: Among the personal items in Krelloort's bedchamber is gold-plated conch shell engraved with images of sea elves and hippocampi (worth 1,200 gp) that holds a selection of putrid fish and humanoid livers (a sahuagin delicacy), a gilt tattooing kit that he uses on his slaves and concubines (worth 50 gp), and a burnished brass

hand mirror (worth 20 gp). In the seaweed bed there is also a gold Varisian music box (no longer functional) that holds the ivory image of a dancing harrower (worth 400 gp). Inscribed on the underside of the lid are the words "For my darling Isabella."

The massive stone throne is an artifact of the ancient cyclops empire of Ghol-Gan and can be identified as such with a DC 25 Knowledge (history) check. It was discovered at the bottom of the blue hole by the sahuagin. Unknown to Krelloort, the throne bears a potent curse from the ancient days of lost Ghol-Gan. Anyone who sits upon the throne must succeed at a DC 15 Will save or be seized by the lust for empire—the desire to conquer and subjugate all neighboring kingdoms at any cost. If the creature fails the save, it acts on these plans (often provoking it to rash acts of hostility) for 1 week, after which a new save is allowed. If the save is successful, the creature is immune to the effects of the throne for 1 week. Krelloort has failed his save many times, prompting his campaign of overt attacks on shipping and the surrounding peoples, which has increased the risk of discovery and assault on his own tribe. The curse cannot be removed short of destroying the throne (hardness 8, hp 1,020, Break DC 80), but if the 8,000-pound chair can be transported, it could be sold to certain antiquities buyers with megalomaniacal tendencies for up to 5,000 gp.

D21. TREASURE CHAMBER (CR 8)

The chamber hidden below the great throne is empty save for two chests. One is a iron-banded chest decorated with skulls that seems to have held up remarkably well considering its immersion in seawater. The other is a stone box with the image of a fish-headed demon carved onto its lid, whose seams appear to have been sealed by lead.

The two chests hold the sahuagin tribe's treasure, and the trap that protects the hoard. The stone box is watertight with a seal of soft lead around its lid. It has been cemented to the floor, so it cannot be moved without actually breaking the chest. The lead seal can be removed with a little effort (hardness 3, hp 20, Break DC 23). If the seal is broken or removed, the box can be opened, but doing so activates the trap.

Trap: The stone box is itself a trap, and is difficult to disable. If its seal is broken and the lid removed, a blood-red cloud issues forth from the box and immediately diffuses throughout the entire room. This cloud is a derivative of several rare sponges and functions as an inhaled variety of sassone leaf residue that affects any water-breathing creature (including those breathing magically). The diffusion does not spread beyond the room, and the cloud clears after 3 rounds.



Krelloort

RAIDERS OF THE FEVER SEA



POISON CLOUD TRAP

CR 8

XP 4,800

Type mechanical; Perception DC 25; Disable Device DC 30

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; Reset none

Effect poison cloud (inhaled sassone leaf residue); multiple targets (all targets in room)

Treasure: The locked sea chest is a *captain's locker* (see page 56). The lock can be opened with a DC 30 Disable Device check, but a DC 28 Perception check allows the PCs to discover the key hidden in a concealed hollow in the wall. Within is what is left of Cyrus Wolfe's hoard, as well as the tribe's own treasures. Besides the variety of luxurious silks, fine furs, exotic spices, raw gold and silver ore, and other plundered pirate booty worth a total of 10 points of plunder, the treasures include a ship's figurehead called *Besmara's Bones* (see page 56), two *fan feather tokens*, *slippers of spider climbing*, an ornate crown with undersea motifs crafted of deep platinum (see the sidebar on page 22) worth 5,000 gp, and a jeweled box (worth 500 gp) containing assorted jewelry worth 2,500 gp, as well as 2,083 gp, 18,900 sp, and 25,050 cp.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

By the completion of this adventure, the PCs should have created a new identity for their stolen ship, gained control of a secure base of operations in Tidewater Rock, and engaged in some successful piracy upon the Fever Sea. If the PCs successfully braved the Beast of Mancatcher Cove and recovered the lost treasure of Captain Wolfe, they gain 1 point of Disrepute and 1 point of Infamy from the boost to their reputations. If the PCs still need to acquire more plunder and Infamy, you can use the encounters in Part Two as the basis for additional encounters to challenge them.

Once the PCs have acquired an Infamy score of 20 or more (thus reaching the "Despicable" Infamy threshold—see pages 63–64 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #55), they are infamous enough to sail into the well-traveled waters and ports of the Shackles as respected, perhaps even feared, pirates. To be truly recognized as Free Captains, however, the PCs must present themselves to the Hurricane King of the Shackles in Port Peril. The PCs' quest for this recognition, as well as their continuing lives of piracy, are the topic of the next volume in the *Skull & Shackles Adventure Path*, "Tempest Rising."