



THE PRICE OF INFAMY

PART ONE: BLOOD IN THE WATER

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

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PART TWO: ISLANDS OF THE DAMNED

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

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PART THREE: THE BLACK TOWER

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

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PART FOUR: HARRIGAN MUST DIE

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

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ADVANCEMENT TRACK

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

11 The PCs begin this adventure at 11th level.

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

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

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ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

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

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

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

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

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

ADDITIONAL RULES

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

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

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

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

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

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

PART ONE: BLOOD IN THE WATER

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

THE PIRATE COUNCIL

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



FIREARMS IN THE PRICE OF INFAMY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE PRICE OF INFAMY

VOTING PIRATE LORDS

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

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

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

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

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

VOTING

Influence DC 28

Initial Votes 4 aye/7 nay

REPERCUSSIONS

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

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

ISSUE #2: USE OF SARGAVAN TITHE FOR PUBLIC WORKS

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

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

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

VOTING

Influence DC 32

Initial Votes 10 aye/1 nay

REPERCUSSIONS

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

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

ISSUE #3: DECLARATION OF RIGHTS OF SALVAGE

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

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

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

VOTING

Influence DC 20

Initial Votes 6 aye/5 nay

REPERCUSSIONS

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

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



ISSUE #4: DECLARATION OF SCAGS ROTGRAM AS AN OUTLAW

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

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

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

VOTING

Influence DC 22

Initial Votes 5 aye/6 nay

REPERCUSSIONS

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

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

ISSUE #5: FUNDING AND SUPPORT FOR CHELISH INVESTIGATIONS

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

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

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

VOTING

Influence DC 30

Initial Votes 4 aye/7 nay

REPERCUSSIONS

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

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

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

TESSA'S WARNING

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

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

BUILDING A FLEET

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

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

MERCENARY SQUADRONS

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

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

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Player Handout

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

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

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

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

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

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

—Tessa

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

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

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

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

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

MERCENARY SQUADRON

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

Commodore Mercenary Captain (Profession [sailor] +10, Charisma modifier +0)

Hits 9; **Morale** 3

Defense Value 20

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

Morale Check –2

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



RECRUITING ALLIES

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

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

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

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

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

DRALE'S EAGLES

Configuration 3 sailing ships

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

Hits 9; **Morale** 7

Defense Value 22

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

Morale Check +2

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

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

LUCKY GAMBLE SQUADRON

Configuration 6 longships

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

Hits 18; **Morale** 3

Defense Value 21

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

Morale Check +3

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

QUEEN BES'S OWN SQUADRON

Configuration 5 warships

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

Hits 20; **Morale** 3

Defense Value 24

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

Morale Check +2

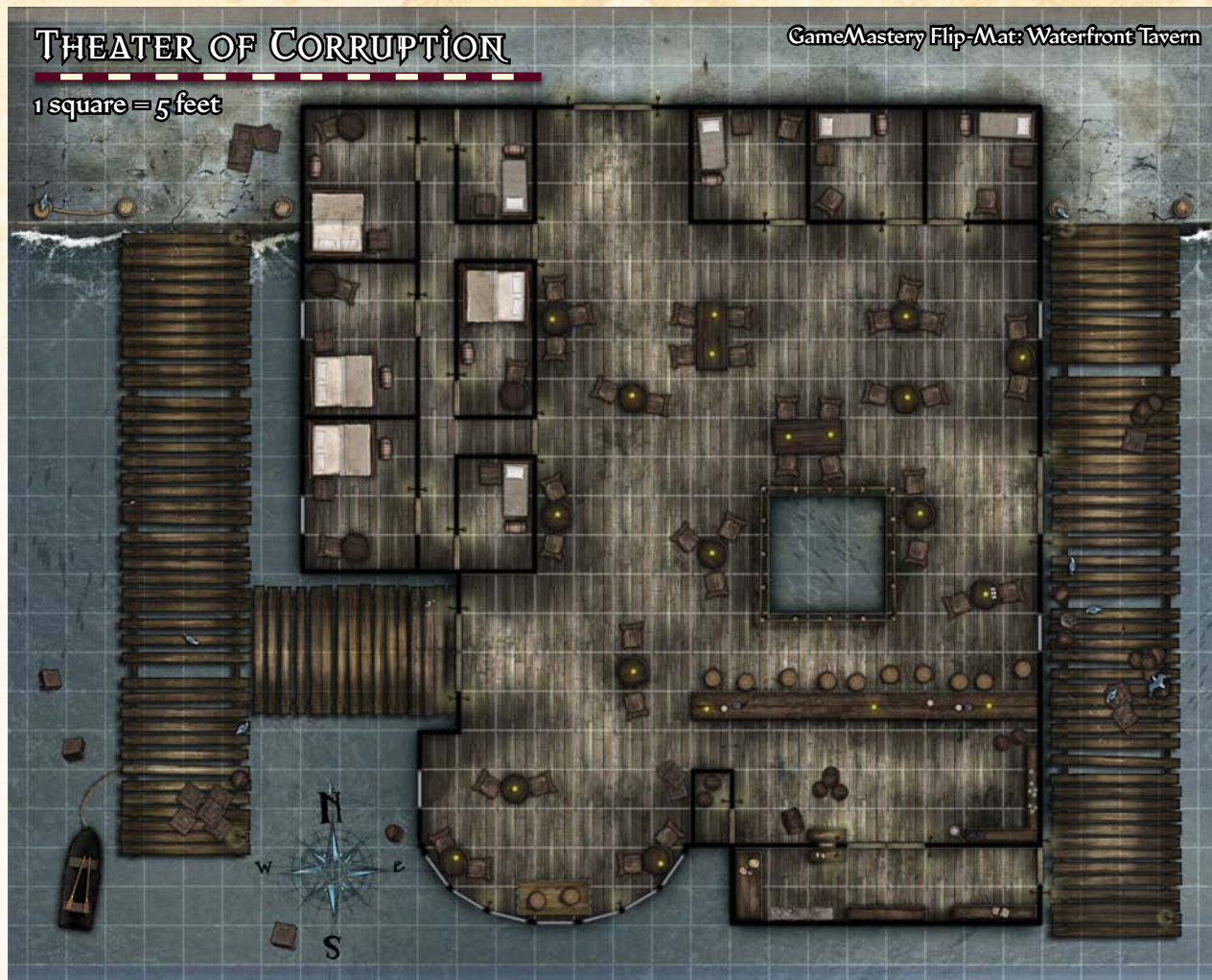
Story Award: Award the PCs 4,800 XP for successfully recruiting an ally's fleet.

CLEARING ENDYMION'S NAME

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

THE THEATER OF CORRUPTION

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

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

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

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

A DEVILISH DECEPTION (CR 11)

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

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

BARBED DEVIL

CR 11

XP 12,800

hp 138 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 72)

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

THE TROUPE (CR 13)

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

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

THE PRICE OF INFAMY

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

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

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

ISAWYN

CR 10

XP 9,600

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

Isawyn



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

DEFENSE

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

hp 108 (10d8+60)

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

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

TACTICS

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

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



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

STATISTICS

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

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

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

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

Languages Common, Gnome, Goblin, Infernal, Polyglot

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

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

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bardic Performance—Devastating

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

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

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

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

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



Lady Nightshade

LADY NIGHTSHADE

CR 10

XP 9,600

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

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

DEFENSE

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

hp 107 (11d6+66)

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

Resist cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +6 (1d4/19–20)

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

1/day—*death knell* (DC 11)

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

At will—invisibility field (11 rounds/day)

7/day—blinding ray

Illusionist Spells Prepared (CL 11th;

concentration +15)

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

5th—*persistent image* (DC 19),

quicken shield, *summon monster V*

4th—*dimension door*, *greater*

invisibility, *phantasmal killer* (DC 18),
summon monster IV (2)

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

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

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

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

Opposition Schools enchantment, necromancy

TACTICS

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

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

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

THE PRICE OF INFAMY

STATISTICS

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

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

Feats Combat Casting, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Mobility, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Toughness
Skills Disable Device +5, Disguise +10, Fly +17, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (local) +8, Knowledge (planes) +8, Perform (act) +7, Sleight of Hand +16, Spellcraft +18

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

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

Combat Gear *wand of grease* (48 charges);
Other Gear masterwork dagger, *cloak of resistance* +2, *ring of protection* +2, *ring of the ram* (17 charges), spellbook, spell component pouch, ivory statuette of herself worth 1,500 gp, 328 gp

GOREBEARD TRENCH CR 10

XP 9,600

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

CE Medium humanoid (human)

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

DEFENSE

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

hp 143 (1d12+66)

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

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

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

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

Ranged improvised weapon +13 (1d4+9)

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

TACTICS

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

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

Morale Gorebeard fights to the death.

STATISTICS

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

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

Feats Dodge, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Power Attack, Stunning Fist, Throw Anything, Toughness
Skills Acrobatics +15 (+19 when jumping), Intimidate +13, Perception +15, Perform (act) +10, Swim +22

Languages Common, Polyglot

SQ fast movement

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



Gorebeard Trench

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

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

MADSHANK'S MARAUDERS

Configuration 5 warships

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

Hits 20; **Morale** 3

Defense Value 25

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

Morale Check +2

PART TWO: ISLANDS OF THE DAMNED

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



THE VANISHING OF SCAGS ROTGRAM

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

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

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

SCAGS’S FATE

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

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

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

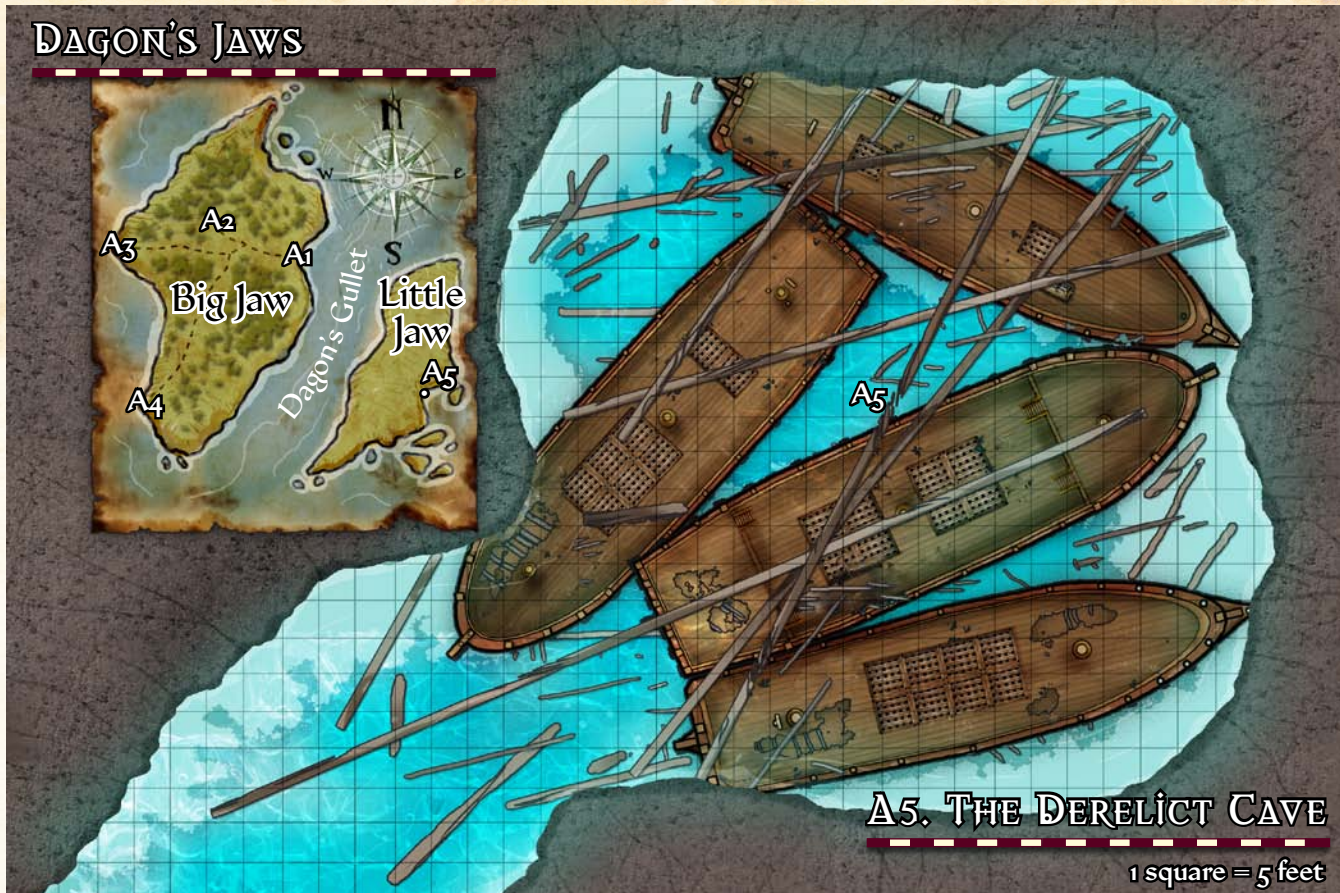
The brykolakas struck soon after the *Devilish Duchess* entered the strait. As the undead swarmed up over the sides of his ship, Scags swiftly realized why Dagon’s Jaws had earned their reputation, as well as just how outclassed and outnumbered he was. Determined to save his crew, Scags desperately attempted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

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

EXPLORING DAGON’S JAWS

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

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

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

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

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

THE DROWNED DEAD (CR 12)

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

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

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

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



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

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



Elder Brykolakas

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

ELDER BRYKOLAKASES (3) CR 9

XP 6,400 each

Variant brykolakas (*Tome of Horrors Complete* 85)

CE Medium undead (aquatic, shapechanger)

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

DEFENSE

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

hp 123 each (13d8+65)

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

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

Weaknesses water dependency

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 40 ft.

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

Special Attacks create spawn, death throes

TACTICS

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

Morale A brykolakas fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

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

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

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

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

Languages Common

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

SPECIAL ABILITIES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A1. THE BEACH (CR 11)

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

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

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

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

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

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

A2. THE SACRED SPRING

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

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

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

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

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



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

A3. THE CROWN (CR 11)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ALISE GROGBLUD

CR 7

XP 3,200

Female human rogue 8

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +10

DEFENSE

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

hp 71 (8d8+32)

Fort +4, **Ref** +9, **Will** +1

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

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

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

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

Special Attacks sneak attack +4d6

TACTICS

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

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

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 23

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

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

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Languages Common

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

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

PIRATE CASTAWAYS (8)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

Human fighter 2/rogue 3

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; Senses Perception +9

DEFENSE

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

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

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

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

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk cutlass +9 (1d6+3/18–20)

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

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

STATISTICS

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

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

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

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

Languages Common

SQ rogue talents (combat trick), trapfinding +1

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

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

A4. THE DUSK WATCHERS (CR 12)

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

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

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

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



Alise Grogblud



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

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



Dusk Watcher

LAKORIAN-KRISS CR 12

XP 19,200

Kolyarut inevitable (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 163)

hp 150

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

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

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

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

A5. THE DERELICT CAVE (CR 13)

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

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

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

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

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ELDER BRYKOLAKASES (4)

CR 9

XP 6,400 each

hp 123 each (see page 20)

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

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

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

RESCUE AND REPAIRS

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

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

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

THE LOST SQUADRON

Configuration 4 sailing ships

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

Hits 12; **Morale** 3

Defense Value 20

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

Morale Check +1

PART THREE: THE BLACK TOWER

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

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

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



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

ISLE OF THE BLACK TOWER

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE BLACK TOWER

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

B1. THE CROWN

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



THE BLACK TOWER

1 square = 5 feet



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

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

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

B2. ENTRANCE HALL (CR 11)

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

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

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

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

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



Eye of Dagon

EYE OF DAGON

CR 11

XP 12,800

Type magic; Perception DC 32; Disable Device DC 32

EFFECTS

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

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

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

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

B3. HALL OF CANDLES (CR 12)

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

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

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

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



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

CURSE OF THE FLESHEATERS **CR 12**

XP 19,200

Type magic; **Perception** DC 30; **Disable Device** DC 30

EFFECTS

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

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

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

B4. CRUMBLING ANTECHAMBER (CR 12)

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

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

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

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

YELLOW MOLD **CR 6**

XP 2,400

Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook 416

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

NYOGOTHS (2) **CR 10**

XP 9,600 each

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

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

B5. BREATH OF DAGON (CR 12)

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

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

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

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

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

BREATH OF DAGON

CR 12

XP 19,200

Type magic; Perception DC 30; Disable Device DC 30

EFFECTS

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

Bypass rotate heads to face away from each other

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

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

B6. THE SHAFT

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

B7. PORTAL CHAMBER (CR 14)

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

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

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

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

SHROUDED QUEEN

CR 14

XP 38,400

Augnagar qliploth (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 219)

hp 203

TACTICS

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

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

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



Shrouded Queen

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

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

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

AIGER'S HEIR (CR 13)

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

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

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

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

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

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


CAPTAIN VALERANDE "BARRACUDA" AIGER **CR 12**
XP 19,200

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

CE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

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

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

hp 76 (13d8+18)

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

Defensive Abilities evasion, uncanny dodge, unflinching*

OFFENSE
Speed 30 ft.

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

Special Attacks sneak attack +6d6 plus trip

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

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

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

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 28

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

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

Languages Common, Elven, Osiriani

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

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

SPECIAL ABILITIES
Pirate Tricks (Ex) Barracuda gains a +1 competence bonus on attack rolls with a cutlass, rapier, or short sword. He can hold his breath for 36 rounds before risking drowning. He does not lose his Dex bonus to AC when climbing. If he damages a foe with sneak attack, he can try to trip that foe as an immediate action. He gains a +2 bonus on Climb checks when using ropes, and when he does so, climbs twice as quickly as normal.

 *See *Ultimate Combat*.

BARRACUDA'S OFFICERS (6) **CR 4**
XP 1,200 each

Pirate castaways (see page 23)

hp 51 each

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

Captain "Barracuda" Aiger

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BARRACUDA'S RAIDERS

Configuration 3 sailing ships

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

Hits 9; **Morale** 3

Defense Value 25

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

Morale Check +0

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

PART FOUR: HARRIGAN MUST DIE

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

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

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

THE BATTLE OF EMPTY EYES

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

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

HARRIGAN'S FLEET

XP 19,200

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

Flagship *Wormwood*

Significant Characters

Adelita Doloruso (*Wormwood*, Arcane Artillery)

Kipper (*Wormwood*, Swift to Battle)

Riaris Krine (*Wormwood*, Vengeance)

Patch Patchesalt (*Wormwood*, Swift to Battle)

SQUADRONS

Duskwyrn Squadron

Configuration 6 warships

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

Hits 24; **Morale** 3

Defense Value 25

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

Morale Check +5

Zura's Kiss

Configuration 7 sailing ships

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

Hits 21; **Morale** 3

Defense Value 23

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

Morale Check +6

Reefspider Squadron

Configuration 5 galleys

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

Hits 20; **Morale** 3

Defense Value 21

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

Morale Check +4

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

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

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

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

BOARDING THE WORMWOOD (CR 14)

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

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

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

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

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

ADELITA DOLORUSO

CR 12
XP 19,200

hp 126 (see page 54)

KIPPER

CR 8
XP 4,800

Male human rogue 9

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 shield)

hp 89 (9d8+45)

Fort +6, **Ref** +11, **Will** +6

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

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk short sword +9/+4 (1d6+2/19–20)

Ranged +1 *flaming composite longbow* +11/+6 (1d8+3/x3 plus 1d6 fire) or
light ballista +9 (3d8/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +5d6

TACTICS

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

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

Morale Kipper fights to the death.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 22

Feats Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (light ballista), Iron

Will, Lightning Reflexes, Shield Focus, Shield Proficiency, Toughness, Weapon Focus (composite longbow)

Skills Acrobatics +14, Bluff +11, Climb +13, Craft (alchemy) +12, Knowledge (engineering) +9, Perception +13, Profession (sailor) +13, Stealth +14, Swim +13

Languages Common

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

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

PATCH PATCHSALT

CR 7
XP 3,200

Female gnome fighter 5/rogue 3

CE Small humanoid (gnome)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 size)

hp 82 (8 HD; 5d10+3d8+37)

Fort +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +5; +2 vs. illusions, +1 vs. fear

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

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 *human bane short sword* +12/+7 (1d4+5/19–20)

Ranged mwk dagger +13 (1d3+2/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6, weapon training (light blades +1)

TACTICS

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

Morale Patch fights to the death.

STATISTICS

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

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

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Toughness, Weapon Focus (short sword), Weapon Specialization (short sword)

Skills Acrobatics +11, Bluff +11, Climb +9, Perception +11, Profession (sailor) +11, Stealth +16

Languages Common, Gnome

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

Gear +1 *leather armor*, +1 *human bane short sword*, masterwork dagger, 554 gp

RIARIS KRINE

CR 7
XP 3,200

Female human fighter 8

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +9



DEFENSE

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

hp 80 (8d10+32)

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

Defensive Abilities bravery +2

OFFENSE

Speed 15 ft.

Melee +1 boarding pike +14/+9 (1d8+8/x3) or

mwk dagger +12/+7 (1d4+4/19-20)

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

Special Attacks weapon training (polearms +1)

TACTICS

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

Morale Riaris fights to the death.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +8; CMB +11; CMD 24

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

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

Languages Common

SQ armor training 2

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

WORMWOOD OFFICERS (7) CR 4

XP 1,200 each

Pirate castaways (see page 23)

hp 51 each

TACTICS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Riaris Krine

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PLANNING REVENGE

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

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

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

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

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

GANNET ISLAND REEFS (CR 12)

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

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

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

SEA SERPENT

CR 12

XP 19,200

hp 187 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 244)

TACTICS

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

Morale The sea serpent fights to the death.



GANNET ISLAND FEATURES

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

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

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

C. SEA CAVE (CR 13)

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

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

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

DEEP TIGER ANEMONE

CR 13

XP 25,600

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

N Colossal vermin (aquatic)

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

DEFENSE

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

hp 275 (19d8+190)

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

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

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft.

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

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

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

TACTICS

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

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

STATISTICS

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

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

Feats Whirlwind Attack^B

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

SQ anchored, sightless

SPECIAL ABILITIES

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

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

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

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

D1. SENTRY TOWER (CR 12)

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

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

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

SMUGGLERS (6)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

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

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; Senses Perception +11

DEFENSE

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

hp 63 each (8d8+24)

Fort +5, Ref +11, Will +5

Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

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

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

Special Attacks sneak attack +4d6

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

3/day—*detect magic*

2/day—*disguise self* (DC 12)

TACTICS

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

FORTRESS DEFENSES

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

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

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

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

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

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

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +6; CMB +5; CMD 20

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

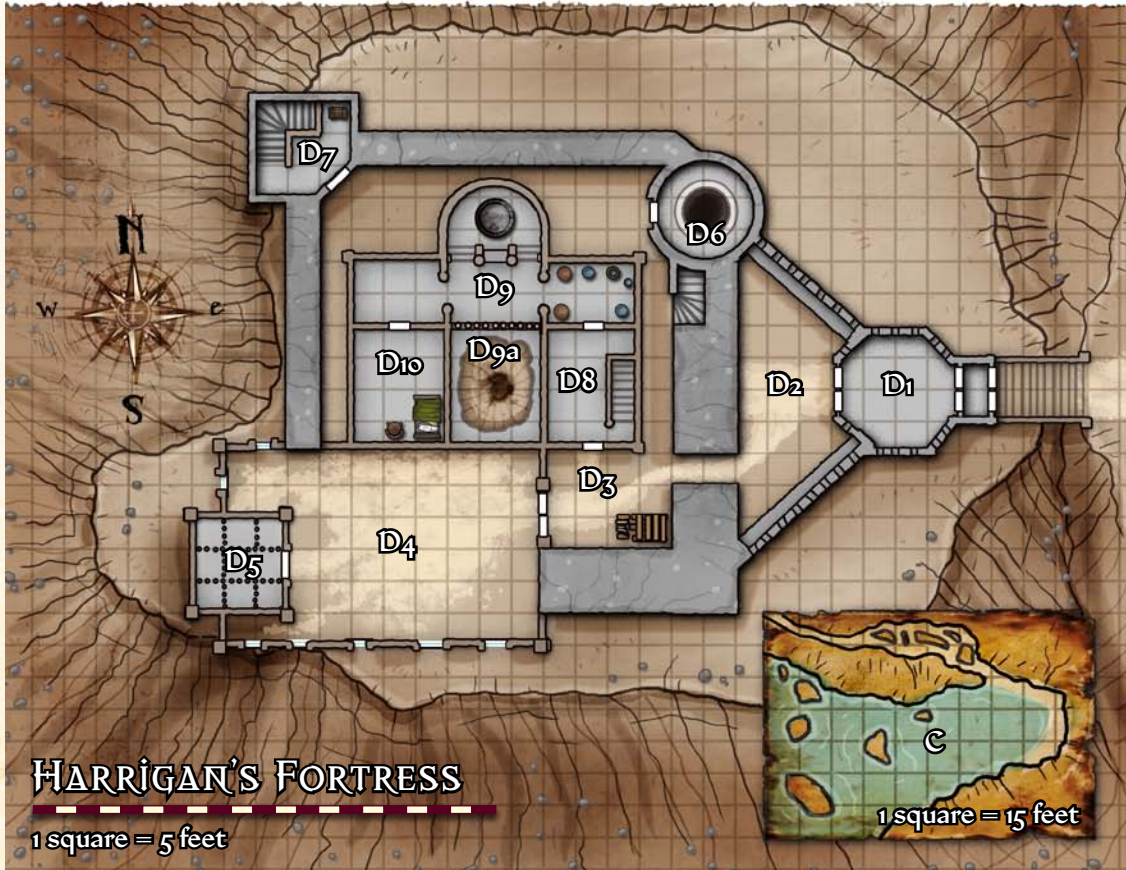
Skills Acrobatics +15, Bluff +13, Diplomacy +13, Disable Device +15, Disguise +13, Knowledge (engineering) +12, Perception +11, Sense Motive +11, Sleight of Hand +19, Spellcraft +9, Stealth +15



GANNET ISLAND



1 square = 5 feet



HARRIGAN'S FORTRESS

1 square = 5 feet

1 square = 15 feet

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Languages Common, Polyglot

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

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

SPECIAL ABILITIES

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

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

D2. OUTER YARD

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

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

D3. LIFT

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

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

D4. SCRAG PEN (CR 12)

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

TO ARMS!

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

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

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

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

SCRAG SAVAGES (4)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

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

CE Large humanoid (aquatic, giant)

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

DEFENSE

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

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



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

OFFENSE

Speed 25 ft., swim 40 ft.

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

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

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

TACTICS

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

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

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

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 29

Feats Double Slice, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting,

Intimidating Prowess, Iron Will, Two-Weapon Fighting

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

Languages Giant

SQ amphibious, marine terror*, savage sailor*

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

* See *Ultimate Combat*.

D5. PRISON

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

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

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



Scrag Savage

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

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

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

D6. TORTURE PIT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

D7. TOWER STOREROOM

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

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

D8. ENTRANCE HALL

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

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

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



D9. SHRINE OF NORGORBER (CR 13)

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

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

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

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

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

NORGORBER CULTISTS (4) CR 6

XP 2,400 each

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

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

DEFENSE

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

hp 63 each (7d8+28)

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

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 *short sword* +7 (1d6+1/19–20)

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

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

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

Spells Prepared (CL 7th; concentration +11)

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

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

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

invisibility^D, *silence* (DC 16)

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

divine favor, *sanctuary* (DC 15)

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

D Domain spell; Domains Evil, Trickery

TACTICS

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

Morale The cultists are fanatic and fight to the death.

STATISTICS

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

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

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

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

Languages Common

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

MR. CLACK

CR 12

XP 19,200

Advanced spiny eurypterid (*Pathfinder* #37 78)

N Huge vermin (aquatic)

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

DEFENSE

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

hp 184 (16d8+112)

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

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

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., swim 40 ft.

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

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

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

TACTICS

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

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

STATISTICS

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

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

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

Skills Swim +18

SQ amphibious

SPECIAL ABILITIES

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

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

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

D10. MISTRESS OF REVELATIONS (CR 12)

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

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

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

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

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

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

LUCCARIA

CR 11

XP 12,800

Female human cleric of Norgorber 12

NE Medium humanoid (human)

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

DEFENSE

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

hp 117 (12d8+60)

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

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

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

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

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

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

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

Spells Prepared (CL 12th; concentration +16)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



TACTICS

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

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

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

STATISTICS

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

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

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

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

Languages Common

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

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

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

NORGORBER CULTISTS (2)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 63 each (see page 46)



Luccaria

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

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

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

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

THE PRICE OF INFAMY

E1. FORTRESS BATTLEMENTS (CR 11)

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

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

SMUGGLERS (4)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 63 each (see page 41)

E2. WATCHPOST (CR 9)

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

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

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

SMUGGLERS (2)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

hp 63 each (see page 41)

E3. BARRACKS (CR 12)

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

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

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

JAKAW RAZORBEAK

CR 10

XP 9,600

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

NE Medium humanoid (tengu)

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

DEFENSE

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

hp 120 (11d10+55)**Fort** +10, **Ref** +10, **Will** +5**Defensive Abilities** evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.**Melee** +1 scimitar +15/+10/+5 (1d6+5/18–20), +1 kukri +15/+10/+5 (1d4+5/18–20), bite +12 (1d3+4)**Ranged** mwk shortbow +15/+10/+5 (1d6/x3)**Special Attacks** favored enemy (aquatic humanoids +2, elves +2, humans +6)**Ranger Spells Prepared** (CL 8th; concentration +10)3rd—*greater magic fang*2nd—*barkskin*, *bear's endurance*1st—*charm animal* (DC 13), *longstrider*, *resist energy*

TACTICS

Before Combat Jakaw casts *barkskin*, *bear's endurance*, *greater magic fang*, and *longstrider* if the alarm is raised.**During Combat** Jakaw uses his hunter's bond to grant bonuses to the smugglers in the area on the first round of combat, while declaring the toughest-looking human enemy as his quarry. If the alarm is raised, Jakaw can establish one of the PCs as his quarry early by watching them from afar if he gets the chance. Jakaw leaps into battle with a cackle once he's established quarry and granted his companions his hunter's bond, focusing his attacks on his quarry before moving on to other humans or elves if possible.**Morale** If reduced to fewer than 40 hit points, Jakaw attempts to retreat to Harrigan's side (area **G3**) to report his failure and then help protect his captain. He fights to the death otherwise.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +11; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 30**Feats** Dodge, Double Slice, Endurance, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Toughness, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (scimitar), Weapon Focus (kukri)**Skills** Acrobatics +13, Bluff +10, Intimidate +13, Linguistics +6, Perception +16, Profession (sailor) +16, Stealth +18**Languages** Aquan, Common, Elven, Osiriani, Polyglot, Tengu**SQ** favored terrain (urban +2, water +4), gifted linguist,

hunter's bond (companions), quarry, swift tracker,

swordtrained, track +5, wild empathy +10, woodland stride

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



SMUGGLERS (3) **CR 7**
XP 3,200 each
hp 63 each (see page 41)

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

E4. OFFICE

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

Stairs lead up from this chamber to area F above.

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

E5. WAREHOUSE (CR 12)

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

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

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

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

DERGHODAEMON **CR 12**

XP 19,200
hp 161 (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 66)

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

E6. TREASURY (CR 13)

The stout iron door to this room is kept locked at all times (hardness 10, hp 60, Break DC 28, Disable Device DC 40). Harrigan has the only key.

Those without the key must force the door or pick the lock, but doing so activates a trap on the door.

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



Jakaw Razorbeak

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POISON SPIKES

CR 13

XP 25,600

Type mechanical; Perception DC 35; Disable Device DC 35

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; Reset automatic

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

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

F. THE TONGUE (CR 12)

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

The stairs lead down to area E4.

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

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

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

GILBROK THE TONGUE

CR 12

XP 19,200

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

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; Senses Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10

hp 74 (13d6+26)

Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +12

OFFENSE

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

Melee mwk quarterstaff +5/+0 (1d6–2)

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

Witch Spells Prepared (CL 13th; concentration +19)

7th—*heal*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Patron water

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

TACTICS

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

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

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



Gilbrok the Tongue



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

STATISTICS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

G1. GUARD ROOM (CR 11)

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

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

ERINYES DEVILS (3)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 94 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 75)

G2. WAR ROOM (CR 8)

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

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

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

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

ERINYES DEVIL

CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 94 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 75)

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

G3. HARRIGAN'S BEDROOM (CR 15)

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

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

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

CAPTAIN BARNABAS HARRIGAN

CR 15

XP 51,200

hp 204 (see page 58)

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

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

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

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

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

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

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