Advanced Dungeons & Dragons
2nd Edition

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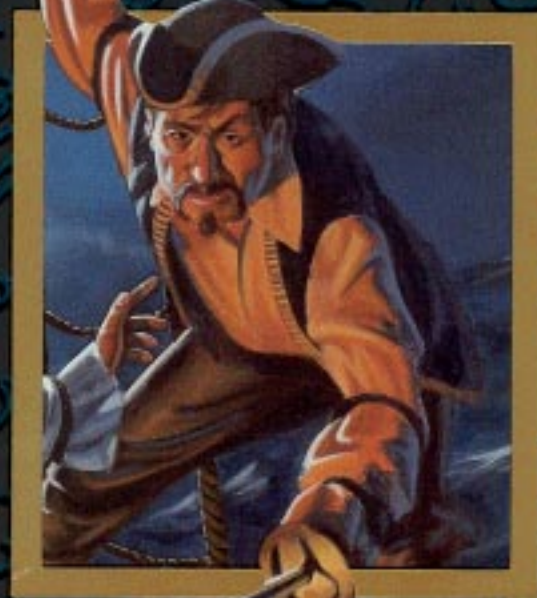
Forgotten Realms

Official Game Accessory

Pirates of the Fallen Stars

by Curtis Scott

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PIRATES OF THE FALLEN STARS

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by Curtis M. Scott

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In Which the Reader Meets A Former Pirate

"Arr, yer all alike, you adventurers. You gambles on the turn of a sword or the toss of a spell; some of yers fight fer king and country, ithers of yer think of nuthin' but whar the gold fer yer next ale's a-comin' from. And you got the gall to sit here in my inn and tell me pirates is different from yerselves? HA! There's them what's heroes, and there's them what's villains. Hang around Alaghon long enough, and you'll meet 'em all, I promise yer that.

"I met plenty of 'em durin' my time on the sea. Not that I was one, mind ya, but I was in the wrong place at the right time more than once in my life. There was the time I was stowed away on the *Dragon's Claw,* and she was boarded by a crew of cutlass-swingin' madmen; and the captain was a *woman!* Can you believe that? A flame-haired vixen, with eyes like cornflowers and a ruby at her throat the size of a hummin'bird! All the crew jumped ship rather'n be kilt by the pirates, and I was the only one left; a striplin' of seventeen winters, no more, cowerin' in the hold behind a pile of furs. The captain found me down there, and 'offered' me passage on her ship. Well, I ask ya, what would you do? 'Course, I went with her. Showed her a thing or two, too, I did, like how to play chess . . .

"What do ya want ta know? Pirate secrets? What their coves are, and where? How this got the name 'Sea of Fallen Stars?' I c'n tell yer that, and more. I c'n tell yer how they live out there, in the Pirate Isles; how they pick their captains, even how you c'n join up if ya want. 'Course, things is different in Dragon Reach than they are in Turmish. If yer plannin' to travel around here much, you'll be wantin' to know who likes pirates and who don't, so you'll know whose side yer on.

"I kin even tell yer about some of the most famou—er, notorious pirates on the Inner Sea. I kin tell about their ships, their crews, what makes the captains do what they do; yep, I kin tell yer all about the life o' piracy."

Jomo "the Cutlass" Shanbaeren, retired pirate turned tavern-owner

You are about to discover how to create pirate PCs, rules for building ships, and rules for simulating naval battles. New uses of magic on the sea are here, too. There is even an introductory adventure your pirate PCs (and your non-pirate PCs) can experience to show them life on the Inner Sea.

Pirates of the Fallen Stars presumes that you're using the AD&D® 2nd Edition game rules for Weapon Proficiencies and Non-Weapon Proficiencies. Many of the rules presented in this book depend on use of the proficiencies. If you haven't been using them so far in your campaign, we highly recommend that you familiarize yourself with them and introduce them into your playing.

Here's a special note for those of you who are using this book with your first edition AD&D game instead of the new second edition: This supplement occasionally mentions chapters and headings from the *Player's Handbook* and *Dungeon Master's Guide.* The citations are for the second edition, not the first; you'll need to locate the relevant sections in your own books.

In Which We Explore the Piratical Mentality and Lifestyle; and Wherein Are A History of Pirates of the Fallen Stars And A List of Known Organizations

What is Piracy?

In simple terms, piracy is the act of unlawfully robbing a vessel on the high seas, or the act of making a similar attack upon coastal holdings made from the sea. Within this broad definition, however, there are several sub-groups.

Pirates rob ships at sea for personal profit. Many of the pirates of the Inner Sea, including most of the most infamous pirates, fit this mold well. Such "true" pirates are unwelcome in any civilized land, and can move their ill-gotten gains only through thieves' guilds or unscrupulous intermediaries, as they cannot openly sell their booty in port.

Pirate attacks can take various forms. Some pirates steal only cargo, freeing the ship and its crew to travel on safely. Some sink the ship, offering membership to those able-bodied sailors who will accept it, and killing the rest (or freeing them at the nearest neutral or friendly port). Others murder all aboard, so that the crime goes forever unreported.

Privateers, such as the Cormyrean Freesails, raid on the high seas at the behest of one government, generally against pirates or targets owned by another government. Privateers are "legal" when within their own home waters, but are outlaw in those countries who suffer their depredations. Many countries of the Inner Sea, particularly along the Dragon and Easting Reaches, employ privateers.

Privateers raid economic targets during time of peace (often with no more than silent approval of their governments), but in war they act as a supplementary navy, engaging both economic and military targets.

Privateers typically possess a document or other sign that they are servants of their government. These documents, called letters of marque, provides privateers with legitimacy within their homelands' waters.

Both privateers and pirates rely heavily on seamanship and navigation to locate their targets. They often wait along sea lanes for days or even weeks at a time before locating a victim who is sufficiently close (and sufficiently slow) to catch.

Raiders, on the other hand, attack coastal villages and cities. Their raids depend upon their ability to flee to sea before significant opposition can be raised, hauling away as much treasure as they can seize. They typically rely on strong warriors aboard, rather than naval prowess, as once they have raided their only goal is to flee to safety. Raiders rarely carry letters of marque, as their targets are usually economic gain rather than military victory.

Smugglers deal in goods which are either heavily taxed or forbidden. Rather than dealing in violence, smugglers use stealth to avoid military patrols and deliver their valued contraband to its purchasers.

Most smugglers maintain legitimate shipping businesses. It helps when. you need work done on your ship if you have a legal reason for owning it. Also, much smuggling is done as part of legitimate trading journeys, as some ships have false holds or secret compartments where contraband can be concealed from the customs officials.

Some countries classify smuggling as a form of piracy. The legal justification for this is that smuggling represents theft of money from the government, and thus the smugglers are thieves. In fact, however, the real problem is that many smugglers are also pirates, as it helps to solve the problems of fencing their goods.

Where Is It Practiced?

The incidence of piracy depends upon how much plunder is available. The sealanes of the northern Inner Sea, particularly those running from the Lake of Dragons (Suzail, Teziir and Westgate) to Procampur, and from Procampur to Thesk, are commonly considered pirate-infested. (Many of these pirates are actually unacknowledged privateers, quietly fighting the economic wars which frequently arise among the city-states of the Inner Sea.) Not surprisingly, both of these sea lanes are within the reach of the fleets of the Pirate Isles.

There are other active pirate areas. Raiders either in the employ of Thay or seeking Thay's approval frequently attack the coastal cities of Aglarond. The Zulkirs of Thay occasionally send raids across the Alamber Sea into Murghom, Threskel, and Chessenta, seeking some of the an-cient magics of these lost lands. Even so, the majority of the pirate activity is still in the north.

The pirates themselves come from every nation of the Inner Sea, and quite a few others that have no shore there. Almost all the pirates are human, although there are considerable numbers of half-orcs, orcs, and ogres. Elves and half-elves are rare, but most are spellcasters, as their ability to wear armor while spellcasting (thus being less vulnerable during archery attacks) is highly valued aboard.

Life Aboard

The life of a pirate is not an easy one. The trials of piracy test not only their swordsmanship, but their seamanship and endurance as well.

A typical pirate ship carries twice as many crew as does a merchant ship of similar size. This is primarily because the

pirate ship carries no cargo, but instead is designed to deliver a viciously overwhelming force to a target.

As a result, shipboard conditions tend to be crowded and unhealthy. The food tends to be of poor quality, often consisting of hard bread, pickled fish, and water or rum. True dry rations are too expensive for most pirate captains, particularly when feeding 30-40 men, so the quality of the food that is bought is low, and pirate crews must frequently return to port (every week or so) to take on new supplies or begin to suffer deprivation.

A typical watch consists of 16 hours of labor, interrupted only by a meager midday meal, followed by a nominal 8 hours of sleep. Ships at sea require constant maintenance to avoid decay and loss.

The traditional positions available aboard a sailing vessel of any kind include:

Captain: The captain is the overall leader for the ship. His orders are to be obeyed absolutely; disobeying the Captain is mutiny, which most pirate captains punish by swift and immediate death. Captains may be seamen themselves, or they may count on their first mate (see below) to provide this knowledge, maintaining their position through prowess as a warrior or charisma. The idea of an "owner-aboard," a captain who leads by virtue of owning the ship, does not exist in pirate groups where such distinctions as legal ownership are considered insignificant.

First Mate: The first mate is responsible for carrying out the captain's wishes. When the captain is asleep or otherwise unavailable, the first mate is in charge of the ship. While not all captains are excellent seamen, there are few first mates who do not know nearly everything about being aboard ship.

Pilot/Helmsman: Often also the first mate, the pilot is responsible for steering the ship. Pilots are also give the orders which control the speed of the oars (for a galley) or the set of the sail (for a sailing ship).

Navigator: While the pilot's job is to steer the ship, the navigator's job is to pick the route the pilot will follow to reach the destination. Navigators should have the Navigation proficiency, and may also require special equipment such as a sextant and compass. Often, the captain is also the navigator. This reduces the chance of a mutiny at sea, as the crew is unlikely to mutiny if they cannot find their way home.

Quartermaster: The quartermaster cares for the ship's tiller, compasses, lamps, and flags. Unlike the land military, the quartermaster aboard ship is not responsible for food or other supplies. These are the responsibility of the mess steward and the boatswain.

Mess Steward (Cook): The mess steward is responsible for preparing meals, buying food, and otherwise ensuring that everyone aboard gets enough to eat and drink. As mentioned above, "enough" may not be very much, particularly on a longer voyage.

Boatswain (Bosun): The boatswain is responsible for the rigging of the ship, including the sails, oars, anchors, and ship's boats. The boatswain often has several helpers, particularly on a large ship. These are referred to as "bosun's mates."

Master Armorer: The master armorer and his men maintain and man the ship's weapons (typically ballistae and catapults), and he is responsible for providing all warriors aboard (on a pirate ship, the entire crew) with melee and missile weapons.

Lookout: The lookout occupies a position on the ship with as unrestricted a field of view as possible. On ships with a crow's nest (a seat on top of the mast), a single lookout can have a clear view completely around the ship. On larger ships, or on

ships without crow's nests, lookouts are often stationed in the bow and stern. (In game terms, a lookout in a crow's nest can see 1½ times farther than one on deck.)

Oarsmen: For ships with oars, the oarsmen provide the motive power for the ship. Few oarsmen are slaves, as slave oarsmen have a disconcerting habit of slowing down when the ship most needs speed, in hopes of being freed by the attackers.

Warriors: The rest of the men aboard a pirate ship are cutthroats, there to provide a strong sword arm and a ready back in time of trouble.

History of the Pirates

According to legend, the first great pirate leader was Immurk "the Invincible." In those days, war vessels were rare, as the nations of the Inner Sea were still growing within their own territories, and merchant traffic had not been threatened.

In those days, a sailor's life was difficult. Storms and sea monsters claimed the lives of many, while others suffered cruel punishments from ship captains more concerned with profits and order than with justice. Captains had the authority to whip or execute a man for offenses real or imagined, acting as judge, jury, and (sometimes) executioner. Crews rarely received a share in the profits of the ship, instead being paid low wages which were often in arrears. *Rething,* the pressing of men into involuntary servitude on a ship, was common. Food aboard was generally poor, especially for galley-oarsmen.

In this environment, it was easy for Immurk to gather disaffected sailors to his crew, offering them a chance at plunder in return for total loyalty. The fat merchant vessels of the Inner Sea, crewed by demoralized men, would be easy pickings for those willing to risk their lives in the pursuit of personal gain.

Immurk began his career of piracy (so legend says) in 1164 DR, raiding a merchant-ship of Procampur and capturing the coronation crown of Cormyr's new king Palaghard I. The crime was so bold, say chroniclers, that the new king nearly declared war on Procampur, as he was sure that no one would be brave enough for such a crime and believed the jewelers of Procampur were cheating him.

From this start, Immurk began a wave of raids against merchant ships and unwalled towns. He stole from Cormyr, Sembia, Procampur, and Impiltur, always returning to his secret base on the Dragonisle. Within a few years, he had gained a following of nearly a dozen ships (mostly converted merchant ships from the northern nations of the Inner Sea), each raiding in the name of Immurk.

The nations of the Inner Sea did not take this lightly. Almost immediately, they began building their own warships, seeking to defend their merchant fleets and to hunt the pirates in their lairs. Shipwrights from Amn and Tethyr designed fleets of long-lined ships with the speed and strength to pursue these raiders. The kings and councils of the Inner Sea looked to the day when these unfortunate incidents would be forgotten.

Unfortunately, this was not to be. The shipbuilding efforts were plagued by shortages, loss of workers, some sabotage, and even occasional raids by Immurk's pirates to capture newly-built ships. Crews (and even some captains) turned pirate once the war galleys were in their grasp, putting those who would not join them over the side-sometimes without a boat. The people of the time held that Immurk, via his extensive network of spies, traitors, and informants, was responsible for these failures.

Whether or not this was true at first, by the end of his days Immurk had become a

fixture of Inner Sea shipping. Nine separate expeditions were launched to bring the pirate to justice, and every time Immurk either could not be found, or he overwhelmed the warships with expert seamanship and a knowledge of the Pirate Isles, driving their galleys onto the jagged reefs.

Immurk is also blamed for the rash of border clashes, diplomatic incidents, and general tensions at the time among the coastal nations of the Inner Sea. Immurk's spies fostered dissent here, raided under false colors there, and otherwise acted as a spur in the region, keeping military attention focused away from the pirates while increasing sea trade (and thus his booty).

Despite the legends, Immurk's pirates were not wholly a scourge on civilization. Immurk's pirates were first to bring gold and silver from Mulhorand, Unther, and Chessenta to the ports of Cormyr, opening up a slow and unsteady trade with these wealthy nations. In 1182, the crown-prince of Lyrabar fled the court of his senile father and his unscrupulous advisors and found sanctuary with Immurk on the Dragonisle until his father passed away and he could return to take the throne. Finally, the mutinies which developed with the Dragonisle as a safe refuge forced many ships to provide better conditions and better pay for their men.

In 1201 DR, Immurk died at the helm of his ship the Sea-Scorpion, fighting a Sembian warship. While piloting through a reef-filled passage, a sudden crosswind threatened to toss the *Sea-Scorpion* aground, leaving Immurk at the mercy of the Sembites. Bellowing orders and cursing the sea-gods, he twisted at the tiller to hold the course. His strength and skill carried the Sea-Scorpion through the reefs unharmed, but as the ship passed beyond the danger he slumped to the deck, his heart burst.

The Pirate Wars

By 1201 DR, the pirate fleet of the Dragonisle numbered over 100 ships. Without Immurk's strong leadership, the rough coalition he had formed came apart. Half a dozen pirates declared themselves Immurk's successor, each with his own following of ships and captains, and the attentions of the pirates turned from raiding to internal warfare.

Several of the most vicious pirates of legend arose during this period. Black Anzil, a Turmish pirate, dipped his enemies in pitch and set them alight. "Lord" Chazdan, a Procampan noble turned pirate, would force his prisoners to drink quarts of alcohol until they died. Respitil, a pirate-mage of the period, was known to bind captives to the mainmast and use *summon swarm* spells to bring a cloud of biting, stinging insects to devour them alive. Urdogen "the Red," the pirate who eventually won dominance over the Dragonisle, forced his victims to devour their own ears, nose, and lips, then set them free as examples.

Urdogen, "a red-haired hot-blooded bear of a man," eventually came to dominate the Dragonisle. While he did not have the banner of all of the pirates, he had accumulated enough support so that none dared challenge him. He seized Immurk's Hold, the large harbor on the Dragonisle, for his own, allowing those who had not joined him to harbor on the lesser isles of the archipelago.

Once the internal warfare was over, these pirates raided brutally. Where Immurk had spread the depredations of his pirates out, gathering maximum booty while avoiding angering the coastal nations, Urdogen and his fellows began a systematic plundering of coastal villages and ships which could not be ignored. The rising Inner Sea kingdoms—Cormyr, Sem-

bia, Impiltur, and the Vilhon Reach-united on the seas against the pirates.

The great fleet which these nations raised numbered nearly 200 ships. This fleet poured forth in three parts, approaching the Dragonisle from the north, east, and west.

The northern fleet, which had the shortest distance to travel, came from the Sembian city of Selgaunt and comprised primarily Sembian warships and mercenary vessels. It was also the smallest fleet, with only 50 vessels, but still represented a substantial force. The northern fleet's task was to feint at the Dragonisle to bring Urdogen's fleet out of harbor, then hold them at sea until the other forces arrived.

The eastern fleet came from Procampur and Lyrabar, and comprised Impilturan and mercenary forces, as well as a small contingent sent by Aglarond (whose rulers at the time were the Gray Sisters, the sibling queens Thara and Ulea). This force of 75 vessels waited along the northern edge of the Pirate Isles (near Kelthann) for the western fleet to drive Urdogen to them.

The western fleet, sent from Suzail, comprised forces from Cormyr (including over a dozen of the new Cormyrean Freesails) and the Vilhon Reach. This fleet of 70 vessels was nearly the downfall of the entire plan. According to the agreement, the western fleet was to drive the exposed pirate fleet east, so that the three combined fleets could eliminate the pirate menace. However, unfavorable winds from the north-northeast delayed their passage through the Neck by nearly 12 hours.

The battle began shortly after dawn, Eleint 11, 1209 DR. Urdogen's fleet sailed out to meet the northern attackers with 90 ships, a clearly dominating force. The northern fleet began its slow retreat, drawing Urdogen away from the Dragonisle and toward the rendezvous with the western fleet. When it reached the rendezvous,

however, the western fleet did not arrive, and the northern fleet was forced to engage with the pirates, hoping even though outnumbered to stall until the western fleet arrived.

By the following dawn, only 15 of the Sembian ships remained. The pirates had taken a few losses, but even with the western fleet the battle was only once again even in ships, although the western fleet was not yet battle-weary.

Fortunately, the commander of the eastern fleet had been monitoring the progress of the battle through a crystal ball provided by the Gray Sisters. When he perceived that the delay in the western fleet was going to destroy the Sembites, he set sail for the western rendezvous, arriving from the southeast (cutting off all retreat) only slightly after the western fleet. The battle then became one of attrition, as pirate vessels struggled to escape the net formed by the 160 attacking ships.

Some pirates fled, while others were sunk by the rams and arbalests of the combined fleets. Others ran aground on hidden reefs as they tried to escape; Urdogen himself, aboard the *Raging Tears,* may have suffered this fate. The pirates' stronghold had been broken.

Not long after the victory, the allies once again separated. Sembia, which lost most of its own warships as well as having to pay mercenaries for the other ships lost, blamed Cormyr for the delay in the western fleet. Procampur and the city-states of Impiltur claimed a greater share of the prizes due to their heroic rescue of the other force, while Sembia demanded restitution for their heavier losses and Cormyr demanded a greater share due to the greater distance they had had to travel to reach the battle! The Grey Sisters' representative, faced with petty bickering, returned to Aglarond. A chance for a unified nation of the Inner Sea faded into nothing.

Methlas and His Successors

For nearly 100 years the Dragonisle remained empty. Although a few pirates survived the great battle, the pirates as a force had been broken. Occasional renegades were quickly hunted down by the efficient navies of the Inner Sea, and the few attempts at reviving Immurk's stranglehold were met with swift and overwhelming force.

In the late 1280's, Methlas, a merchant from Marsember, quietly gathered a small fleet of corsairs, crewed with sailors who had left greater navies. Although this fleet was initially established as a merchant fleet, Methlas' ships quickly became involved in various swindles and dodges, with double manifests, "deck cargo losses," and false deliveries being common. Many of the cargoes in these vessels were stolen at sea, but Methlas was careful to ensure that the owners never found out what happened to them. With these cargoes he outfitted his fleet, and by 1294 DR had amassed nearly 40 ships in the southern harbor of the Dragonisle.

In 1294 DR, Methlas was murdered by his lieutenant, Thevren. Methlas had sought to build 50 ships before embarking on open piracy; Thevren was not as patient. Before Methlas had grown cold, Thevren launched simultaneous raids on the Sembian cities of Selgaunt and Saerloon.

The Sembites were caught totally by surprise by the raids, having no idea that a force of this size sailed the Inner Sea. Within three days, Thevren's fleet left the harbors laden with booty and several ships to the good, as the pirates had seized (or sunk) every war vessel in the two harbors.

Although the Sembians wanted immediate retribution, their own fleets had been decimated in the attack. Appealing to Cormyr for assistance, the message to Sembia's ambassador to Suzail was somehow garbled in a stroke worthy of Immurk himself. Instead of requesting the Cormyrean King's help in destroying the pirates, the ambassador accused the Cormyrean Freesails of mounting the attack, and demanded immediate reparation. Cormyr of course denied the charges, but the resulting confusion prevented any significant force from being mustered against the pirates.

Although this attack assured Thevren's fame, he did not long enjoy his victory. His mistress, Thilana, had been mistress to Methlas before his death. When Thevren, drunk after celebrating his victory, came to her bed she poured him poisoned wine and he died.

Thilana's plans extended beyond petty revenge. Assuming the leadership of the pirate band, she resumed Methlas' plan, reviving Immurk's system of informants. Thilana's network included many of the seaport taverns of the Inner Sea, where she had many friends. The power of the pirates grew, as careful strikes were made against targets whose defenders were distracted and thus unlikely to exact retribution. A ship here and a small convoy there soon led to an extensive hoard.

Thilana did not captain any vessel, although as leader of the pirates she could if she wished. Instead, much of her time was spent maintaining her spy network, using her personal charms to reach those sources of information unlikely to visit a seaman's tavern, and selecting the targets her pirate captains would pursue. Indeed, she is rumored to have given birth to the man who founded the present ruling dynasty of the forest land of Gulthmere.

It was these journeys to the mainland that ended Thilana's career. One of her female captains, Laershala of the Emerald Eyes, had gathered some support from those pirates who wanted more raiding for ever more gold. Laershala was herself a

captain of considerable talent, and many of the pirates chafed under the leadership of someone with little seamanship, despite all her cunning. One night in Tantras in 1305 DR, Laershala strangled Thilana and claimed leadership of the pirates of the Dragonisle.

Laershala's control of the pirates was not the same as that of her predecessors. Pirates who agreed with Thilana were angry that Laershala had killed her, and refused to follow her. Others saw the disintegration of the pirate leadership as an opportunity to strike out on their own. By 1314 DR, when Laershala died in battle with a Cormyrean Freesail, the pirates had divided into a dozen factions, each vying for control of the Inner Sea.

The Pirates Today

Today, pirate factions make war and mount intrigue much like the great courts of the south, uniting only against naval attacks on the Dragonisle. Each faction strives to be seen as the most successful, the most daring, and the most intelligent, as it is through these battles of reputation that pirate leaders gain the allegiance of the pirate captains and crews. In these battles, there are no rules; the diplomat and the dagger are both active tools in the fight for support. Two or three of the most powerful pirate leaders seek Immurk's place, but none has the support to assure that he or she will not be quickly overthrown. The pirates are brutal, but they know their own history.

There are at least two hundred active pirate vessels (and probably many more) hidden in the Pirate Isles and around the coasts of the Sea of Fallen Stars. The Dragonisle alone can hold a hundred and seventy vessels within its fortified harbors. With such a large pirate force and without someone in Immurk's place, it is only a matter of time before someone breaks ranks and brings the anger of the Inner Sea nations down on the pirates' heads.

The Dragonisle has become a neutral ground for the pirates, with no single pirate lord claiming control of the island. A few pirates scurry about the lesser islands of the archipelago, but most remain within the safe harbors of Earthspur.

During the Time of Troubles, Umberlee herself wandered the Pirate Isles, bringing the destruction of the storms to all the pirates she found. Several pirate vessels were sunk at sea, while many others were driven onto the rocks, marooning their crews. Portions of the sea were impassable for almost a year due to the storms, but by the spring of 1359 DR the Sea of Fallen Stars had returned to its normal state.

Timeline

- 150 DR	Mutual Fall of Narfell and Raumathar
1 DR	Founding of Cormyr
1163 DR	Founding of Pirate Base on Dragonisle?
1164 DR	Immurk Captures Cormyrean Crown
1180 DR	Sembia Loses Fleet in Pirate Isles
1182 DR	Crown Prince of Lyrabar Flees to Pirate Isles
1186 DR	Crown Prince Returns to Lyrabar; Becomes King
1189 DR	Palaghard II King of Cormyr
1192 DR	Foundation of Order of Freesailors
1201 DR	Death of Immurk
1204 DR	Rise of Urdogen
1209 DR	Destruction of Urdogen's Pirates
1282 DR	Azoun IV King of Cormyr
1286 DR	Methlas Begins Building Pirate Band

1294 DR	Death of Methlas; Rise and Death of Thevren; Rise of Thilana
1305 DR	Death of Thilana; Rise of Laershala
1314 DR	Death of Laershala
1320 DR	Simbul Queen of Aglarond
1357 DR	Time of Troubles; Umberlee Attacks Pirate Isles
1359 DR	The Present Day

Pirate Customs

The life of a pirate consists of raiding forays of 1-2 months during the spring, summer, and fall. As the Pirate Isles are centrally located within the Inner Sea, travel to any portion of the region is relatively quick. A pirate vessel under full sail can go from Earthspur all the way to the tip of the Vilhon Reach in less than a tenday—if it is willing to risk the deep sea crossing. The winter storms over the Inner Sea make sea travel dangerous, so winters are spent ashore on the Dragonisle (or one of the other pirate isles).

Raids consist primarily of either haunting the sea-lanes, searching for a likely target, or (for captains with better information networks) interceptions of particularly tempting targets. Rare forays against land targets are usually carefully planned, and often involve several ships.

A code of rough justice governs the pirates among themselves. "Crimes" such as desertion or murder aboard ship were punished by death or marooning on one of the many tiny islands of the Inner Sea. Many of these islands have no food or drinkable water, so marooning was often a death sentence unless another ship came along-and was willing to take on someone thus abandoned.

In return for this justice, most pirates share in the wealth they capture. In a typical pirate's agreement, the captain receives three shares, other officers receive two shares, and the remaining "private gentlemen of fortune," as the pirates like to refer to themselves, receive one share each. On privateers, half the booty is typically owed to the crown issuing the letters of marque, with the remainder divided among the crew as established above. Specific ships may change the split among the crew, particularly if some officers and crewmen are exceptionally skilled (e.g., one share per level, with one share to 0-level characters).

Pirate captains are elected by the crew. Elections are usually held when the previous captain dies, although there are recorded cases of pirate crews putting their current captain over the side and electing one of their number to replace him. The captain appoints the other ship's officers, decides which raids to make, and gets first pick of the treasure.

Pirate Organizations

The following groups represent the limits of organization within the pirates today. Most of these are loose-knit, with no significant hierarchy of control. Nevertheless, membership in these organizations characterizes some of the types of pirates which can be found on the Inner Sea.

The Brotherhood of the Red Tide

The Brotherhood of the Red Tide is a warrior cult (although rogues are welcome to join). Its tenets are leadership through strength, with no mercy to the weak.

The captaincy on Brotherhood vessels is determined by trial by combat. Anyone aboard, crewman or captive, can challenge the captain to single combat to the death. Should the challenger win, he becomes captain, although if a captive makes the challenge, he may be immedi-

ately challenged by a legitimate crewman before he has had time to heal his wounds.

These challenges are not always fair. Combatants can only use those weapons they have to hand; a captive is thus likely to have to fight unarmed against an armed foe. Should the crew perceive that the challenger is losing, they may trip up the challenger or otherwise hinder him, turning the duel into a form of torment culminating in death.

Ships of the Brotherhood are vicious raiders, sometimes giving no quarter, instead massacring all aboard the vessels they attack. In general, members of the Brotherhood are indifferent seamen, preferring to concentrate on their lust for battle. Thus, they often raid towns, as they do not have the patience to lie in wait on the sea lanes for a more nimble prize.

Ships of the Brotherhood rarely cooperate with one another, except occasionally to make a mass raid on a walled town. Oc-casionally, a captain will have sufficient prowess to gather a small fleet but there is always the danger of one or more of the captains striking out on his own, knowing that he will be forced to fight once the original captain catches up to him.

Immurk's Band

Immurk's Band is a secret society which extends from the Pirate Isles into the ports of the Inner Sea. According to tradition, the Band was formed by Immurk himself as his network of spies and informants, and has continued to the present day. Considerable historical evidence exists, however, that the current band was founded by Thilana nearly a century later.

Regardless of its historical origins, the Band is now a fairly effective if loose-knit group of pirate supporters, sympathizers, and smugglers. Some members of the Band actually sail with the pirates, while

most are shore-bound, supplying the pirates with political information and fencing their goods.

The Band is organized into Circles, with First Circle being the outermost (lowest), and rumors of individuals with membership as high as Tenth Circle. Passwords are traditional at the lowest circles, but beyond Second Circle each city establishes its own passwords, and knowledge of the Band from one city rarely does more than provide a simple introduction in another.

Bands within different cities rarely communicate, and there is no hierarchy across cities. Theoretically, all of the Bands owe allegiance to the leader of the Dragonisle, but with that post empty for several years the Bands have developed a degree of autonomy which the new leader (if one should arise) is going to have to deal with.

Immurk's Band is illegal in Cormyr, Sembia, Procampur, and Impiltur. In Westgate, on the other hand, membership in the Band is viewed as a mark of status, where the traditional First Circle password ("Red moon tonight, brother") has replaced "Well met!" as the standard greeting. Other ports have varying views of the Band, depending to a great extent on their views of the pirates (see Chapter 4: Nations of the Inner Sea).

The Alliance of Freesailors

The Alliance of Freesailors is an association of Cormyrean Freesails and other privateers. Founded by Palaghard II as The Royal Freesailors, a battle order for those who fought against Urdogen "the Red," the Freesailors quickly became a mutual aid society. Membership in the Freesailors, is only available by invitation, but most Cormyrean, Sembian, and Impilturan privateers are members.

Freesailors must aid one another in time of crisis, but (as would be expected with privateers) are not expected to avoid attacking one another should their respective governments so require. Freesailors are also required to follow the laws of the sea, and may not turn true pirate and remain within the order.

Captains of Freesails (ships manned by Freesailors) must always turn the Crown's portion of loot (50%) over as soon as they make port, and must divide any remaining booty they take equitably. The precise terms of this "equitable" division have received considerable discussion over the years, and a complex system of evaluation has formed, in which each man's share is determined by his skill, his years of service, and his valor. (For game purposes, this can be abstracted to one share per level, with one share given to zero-level characters.)

The Cormyrean Freesails (the ships of this order sponsored by the King of Cormyr) are chartered by King Azoun to attack pirates on the Inner Sea, to come to the aid of any legitimate vessel, and to defend the coast and waters of Cormyr against invasion. As a result of the diligence (and eagerness) of the Freesailors, piracy has almost come to a total stop in Cormyrean waters, although they have not had much of an effect on the remainder of the Inner Sea.

The initiation ritual to the Freesailors also traditionally includes an oath of allegiance to Cormyr's King, but this is quietly omitted for foreign initiates.

There is no formal rank system within the Freesailors, although the Lord High Admiral of Cormyr is nominal head of the order. On specific ships, of course, there are officers, but within the context of the Freesailors they are all equals.

The Cult of the Dragon

Unconfirmed rumors continue of linkages between the Pirates of the Inner Sea and

the feared Cult of the Dragon. This cult, which is sometimes referred to by outsiders as "The Followers of the Scaly Way," serves as a communications network between members of evil dragonkind throughout the Realms, and directly aids and enriches the creatures of their veneration.

The sign of the Cult, used as a way-marker or recognition signal among members, is a claw grasping a crown: the crown representing rulership of the Realms, and the claw representing the dragons revered by the Cult. There is also a gesture used by Cult members to identify themselves to colleagues and allies: extending a hand, palm down, from one's chin directly outward and forward, fingers held straight out and together, and blowing on these extended fingers. ("Not 'zackly a subtle move," sneers Jomo.)

Cult members include many powerful evil mages, fighting-men of all levels of skill, and a few evil clerics. Most of the more powerful Cult members can converse in one or more evil dragon tongues (most commonly red or blue).

Within the Inner Sea, the Cult is thought to have agents throughout the northern ports, particularly in Westgate, Procampur, and Marsember. Only Suzail is believed free of their influences, and this is primarily due to King Azoun's efforts. A Cult meetinghall is reputed to reside on the Dragonisle, and tales are told of a secret retreat for Cult members on the Isle of Ilthan.

Pirate Faiths

The pirates of the Sea of Fallen Stars worship a variety of deities, depending upon their national origin and personal inclinations.

Assuran of the Three Thunders, who is worshipped as Hoar the Doombringer elsewhere in Toril, is the demigod of revenge and retribution. His worship is not extremely common among the pirates, but as many pirates came to this life after suffering injustice of their own, his shrine on the Dragonisle is well-attended.

Auril is not commonly worshipped on the Inner Sea, as only a small portion of the water along the northern shores ever freezes. Only those pirates originally from the Moonsea region (particularly Mulmaster) worship the Frostmaiden.

Cyric is worshipped actively by many pirates, particularly those with reputations for cruelty. Most Cyric worshippers once served Bane or Bhaal; Myrkul's power among the pirates has never been great. Cyric's temple is one of the largest on the Dragonisle, and there are several smaller shrines on other islands in the archipelago. Cyric is the patron deity of the Brotherhood of the Red Tide (q.v.).

Gond has a small following among the pirates, particularly among the armsmasters of the various vessels. A small contingent of Krii (clerics of Gond) has made its way to the Dragonisle, which has the only Thayvian bombards outside of Thay. Their presence there is a great secret, however, as they are trying to determine whether the bombards can be used with Lantanna smoke powder, breaking Thay's monopoly on the precious powder used to fire these weapons.

Helm is worshipped by some privateers, particularly those of Impiltur who defend the coastal cities from attack by sea. His worship has fallen off since the Time of Troubles.

Istishia, the Water Lord, is not specifically worshipped, but petitions to this Elemental Lord to placate Umberlee feature prominently in the traditional ship-launching rituals of the Inner Sea.

Leira, Lady of the Mists, is popular among those pirates with a flair for stealth. Leira's worshippers are not easily trusted even by

the pirates, but their abilities at double-dealing make them excellent spies-if their reports can be trusted. Due to their inherent duplicity, however, Leira worshippers are barred from the higher circles of Immurk's Band.

Loviatar has long been worshipped by pirates. Urdogen the Red himself was reputed to serve the Lady of Pain. There is a small temple to Loviatar on Earthspur, but the services are led by worshippers, as none of her priestesses have wanted to suffer the exile of piracy.

Malar's following among the pirates is also strong. The Beastlord's tenets of the hunt are the basic credo of many pirates; in some sense all piracy is a form of hunt. Perhaps most serious, there are rumors of a secret cult of lycanthropes (wererats or seawolves) who use pirate raids to mask their feedings.

Mask worshippers are not common among the pirates themselves, but they appear among the pirate's allies. Many Mask worshippers act as in-port spies or agents, while others are smugglers or fences for the pirate goods. Many members of Immurk's Band are Mask worshippers.

Selune is worshipped by all sailors for her boons to navigation. However, Selune's ethos is not compatible with the innate cruelty of piracy. There are some Selune worshippers among the good-aligned privateers, particularly among the Cormyrean Freesails.

Shar, Mistress of Night, is not commonly worshipped even by the pirates of the Inner Sea. There are a scattering of worshippers throughout the pirate crews, but her worship is not a significant force among the pirates.

Talona is also not worshipped, but her servants are often welcomed by the pirate lords, as poison is one of their most potent weapons against one another, and the lords prefer to have Talona's priests both to protect themselves and to use against their enemies.

Talos the Destroyer is also propitiated by the pirates. Since the Time of Troubles, some worshippers of Bane who have rejected Cyric have turned to Talos, but his worship is still rare.

Tempus is worshipped by many raiders and pirates. His priests do not wear plate mail, as the danger of drowning is too great, but otherwise they may be found at least as often among the pirates as they may anywhere else in the North.

Tymora is worshipped by many pirates and privateers, and is the patron deity of the Cormyrean Freesails. Her worship is quite common, and pirates with at least some friendly ports can often be found in her temples.

Umberlee has a mixed position among the pirates since the Time of Troubles. At that time, she came to the Pirate Islands, raining savage storms and destruction on all the pirates she could find. With such an immediate demonstration of her power, most pirates are eager to soothe her with sacrifices. In the wake of this new piety, the Temple of Umberlee on the Dragonisle has grown to be the largest in the Pirate Isles. However, many pirates feel that they had been sacrificing enough before the Time of Troubles, and that Umberlee had not kept her part of the bargain. These pirates, though few in number, actively reject any further sacrifice to the Bitch Queen. It is yet to be seen whether these apostates will survive their own willfulness.

Waukeen, Goddess of Trade, is worshipped by some pirates. They petition to be her agents of ruin, should she choose to remove her boons from a merchant. In this way, these pirates see themselves not as rapacious plunderers, but as agents of a goddess' will. Most other pirates (and merchants for that matter) consider such explanations hypocrisy.

In Which Are Presented Rules Pursuant Thereto; And Also New Magical Spells

Most pirate characters are either warriors or rogues. (Players with access to the *Complete Fighter's Handbook* or the *Complete Thief's Handbook* should consult the Pirate/Outlaw kit in the former volume and the Buccaneer and Smuggler kits in the latter.) Some mages and priests (particularly those of evil deities) work with the pirates, but the majority of the characters should be non-magical. The pirates do not have access to the great libraries, the temple hierarchies, and the centers of learning which are important to mages and priests.

Second, pirates can have almost any personality. While it is traditional to think of pirates as patch-eyed, peg-legged, parrot-toting berserkers, consider the possibilities in a few other character concepts:

- A happy-go-lucky warrior who perceives piracy as great fun.
- A "tragic hero" pirate who strikes out against society because he lost his most precious possession to unfair taxation (or whose love was killed by the evil lords' warriors).
- A priest of an evil deity (such as Malar or Umberlee) who performs pirate raids as a kind of sacrifice.

More sample pirates (along with their unusual motivations) can be found in the *Rogues' Gallery* chapter.

Finally, most pirates are of neutral or evil alignment. A distinct exception are the privateers, such as the Cormyrean Freesails, who fight the evil nations of the Inner Sea (and the pirates) and are usually of good alignment. The DM should determine (and then make it clear) from the outset whether this is a "good guy" or "bad guy" campaign.

Good-Guy Pirates

In a "good-guy" campaign, the characters are heroes but misunderstood. They may have been framed for crimes they did not commit. They may be privateers who have gained an undeserved reputation, or who are hunted by an evil power. They may be enemies of the new ruling power (e.g. a wise old ruler dies and is replaced by an oppressive and unfair new ruler).

In such a campaign, the characters are wanted by the law, but it's the law that's wrong. The characters will capture innocents and take their money but they'll offer no insult to victims who deserve none, and will release such prisoners unharmed. On the other hand, victims who are their true enemies tend to be humiliated and embarrassed before being released also usually unharmed.

The goal of a "good-guy" pirate campaign is the restoration of the status quo (restoring the true crown prince, proving that the frame is false) and receiving pardon or amnesty for the crimes they committed while they were outlaw.

Bad-Guy Pirates

In a "bad-guy" campaign, the DM and players must define the goal. It could be the general acquisition of treasure, finding Immurk's lost hoard, or robbing the Cormyrean treasury at Suzail.

In such a campaign, the characters are neutral or evil, and most suitable to players who want to play in a nasty fashion for a while. Their characters don't have the ethics of the good-guy pirates. They rob everyone. Prisoners may be released, imprisoned for ransom, or executed for the sport of the crew, depending upon the characters' mood that day.

This is a dangerous environment and campaign. Since the PCs are as scummy as

their worst enemies, there probably won't be any DM sympathy to keep them alive in bad situations. The PCs will be competing on equal terms with the nastiest of villains (e.g. the Red Wizards of Thay), and you can expect a high body count.

Proficiencies of the Sea

For those AD&D® game players using the nonweapon proficiency rules (found on pages 54-64 of the AD&D 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook),* application of these abilities to the surface world of the sea can be a challenging task. Some nonweapon proficiencies seem entirely eliminated, while others need expansion. This section discusses those proficiencies in the *Player's Handbook* which are affected by life at sea; and some additional proficiencies for pirate characters.

Animal Lore: The aquatic creatures of the Inner Sea have habitats and lifestyles which do not lend themselves to easy study. Characters with this proficiency suffer a -2 on proficiency checks to use this proficiency on aquatic creatures.

Animal Training: Characters wishing to take this proficiency for aquatic animals should also have swimming proficiency, as it is difficult to train such animals without being able to enter the water with them.

Also, pirate characters should note that parrots, monkeys, and war dogs are traditional pets of the pirates of the Inner Sea.

Appraising: Characters with this proficiency can evaluate the amount of cargo a ship is carrying by how the vessel sits in the water. (A heavily laden vessel sits lower in the water and is less prone to rocking.) With a proficiency check, the character can determine the weight (but not the value) of any cargo or men aboard. As with other uses of this proficiency, a failed check indicates that the character cannot tell how much the ship contains,

while on a roll of 20 the character wildly misreads the load.

Boating (New Proficiency): A character with this proficiency is needed to guide a boat down a rapid stream or to reduce the dangers of capsizing a canoe or kayak. In addition, a character with boating proficiency can propel a boat at its maximum speed.

Note that this proficiency is distinct from Navigation and Seamanship, which apply to ships on oceans and seas, rather than small craft on smaller lakes and rivers.

Fishing: Fishing is an important skill for survival in the Inner Sea, as fish are among the few reliable sources of food for the pirates. Fishing is especially good in the spring and fall, and is poorest in the winter, but as the Inner Sea is land-locked there are no great fish migrations within its waters.

Forgery: Letters of marque are fairly common documents, but they require the signature of the king or other ruler issuing him (or an official designated by the ruler). Thus, forging convincing letters of marque require a proficiency check with a -2 modifier.

Heraldry: A character with heraldry proficiency can make a proficiency check to identify the personal banners of pirates and privateers. With a successful proficiency check, the herald can identify the owner of the banner, and provide some information about the character, such as the name of his ship, his country of origin, whether he is a pirate, and if he is how vicious he is reputed to be. On a failed proficiency check, the character cannot identify the banner; a roll of 20 indicates that the herald identifies the banner incorrectly.

Information Gathering (New Proficiency): This proficiency represents the ability to gather information from the underworld. A character with this proficiency, in appropriate circumstances, will be aware of any major rumors circulating around the lowlife of an area. With a successful proficiency check, specific information about a person or place can be gathered. (The DM must decide how specific the information is.) The character's reaction adjustments (based on Charisma) should benefit or penalize the roll, assuming contact with people is involved in the search.

Since this proficiency depends upon a network of informants and contacts, the character will be at a disadvantage trying to use it in an area other than his own territory (home port). Outside his territory, the thief does not hear rumors automatically (a normal proficiency check is required), and proficiency checks to gather specific information suffer a penalty of at least -3.

Finally, any time a proficiency check is required to gain information, a small expenditure (1d10 gp) for bribes is required. This expenditure is lost whether or not the desired information is found; the DM may choose to sell some information (e.g. the map of the secret passageway into the gilded halls of Saerloon) for a much higher price.

Intimidation (New Proficiency): This is a talent for bending people to your will by scaring the living daylights out of them. It is a common tactic of pirates, who prefer not to damage their prizes too badly (it reduces the possibilities for ransom). NPCs who are intimidated are quite likely to do what they are told, out of fear. On the negative side, they are also likely to harbor resentment against the character that intimidates them—which they will act upon when the first chance arises.

Intimidation may be attempted with one of two abilities: Strength or Charisma. If Strength is used, the thief is threatening immediate, personal bodily harm. If Charisma is used, the intimidation consists of

more subtle threats, which need not be physical. If successful, the NPC is convinced that the character is ready and capable of making his life miserable—if not immediately, then in the near future. Note that NPCs with high morale (e.g. warriors) may choose to do something about the intimidating character, rather than continue to live under threat.

Player characters are never forced to submit to intimidation, as this would detract from the players' freedom to roleplay.

Local History: The pirates of the Inner Sea are considered a single region for the purposes of this proficiency. Thus, a scholar could purchase Local History: Pirates of the Inner Sea as a proficiency.

Looting: This proficiency represents a knack for grabbing the best loot in the shortest time. For instance, a pirate enters the captain's cabin on a sinking ship. He has about two minutes to fill his backpack so he can escape before the ship goes under. If his proficiency check succeeds, he is able to recognize and stuff into his pack the most valuable combination of items that is feasible, given his limitations of time and space.

Navigation: The navigation proficiency in the *Player's Handbook* provides some simple rules for handling navigation. However, in a pirates campaign such a skill may be crucial in some situations, so the following optional rules are proffered.

Characters at sea with navigation proficiency gain the following abilities:

• A character with the navigation proficiency can make a proficiency check each day to determine whether he is navigating successfully. A successful proficiency check indicates that the character is aware of his current position, and there is no chance of his becoming lost (so no check should be made). Should the character fail the proficiency check, make a check for the character to become lost (per the *DMG,* p. 128).

•A character who has become lost despite navigation proficiency but still has his rutter (navigation logbook) may attempt to determine where he made his error. Note that this check cannot be made until it has become clear that the character is lost: e.g. the island he is looking for is not where he thinks it should be, or instead of finding a harbor he finds a reef-barred coastline. At that point, the character may take one day to go over his rutters and make a single proficiency check to determine just where he went wrong. Success indicates that the character knows the mistake he made, and can approximate his current actual position. Failure indicates that the character is still hopelessly lost.

• The character can determine his latitude (north/south location), but not his longitude, by studying the clear sky for a night and making a successful proficiency check. Such a determination may be made at any time, even after teleporting or other transportation which leaves the character without any knowledge of where he is.

• The character may use his own rutter (or someone else's, if he can decipher it) to reduce his chance of becoming lost. To do this, the rutter must describe a journey similar to the one being undertaken; a rutter describing a transit from Suzail to Procampur is of no use in the Vilhon Reach. If the character wrote the rutter himself, the rutter acts as a local guide providing a -30 to the character's chance of becoming hopelessly lost (see p. 128 of the *DMG).* Another navigator's rutter will provide a lesser bonus; the DM must determine the percentage, and a misleading or cryptic rutter may even add to the character's chance of getting lost!

Note that any use of a rutter requires that the character have Reading/Writing

proficiency in the language of the rutter. DMs may wish characters to make Reading/Writing proficiency checks to use a cryptic rutter.

Religion: A character with religion proficiency knows the sacrifices which must be made to Umberlee before sailing on the Inner Sea. These sacrifices (generally of gold or precious jewels) are made by all ships before embarking on any journey. A proficiency check is not required to perform the sacrifices, but only characters of neutral or evil alignment will do so.

Riding, Sea-Based (New Proficiency): The character is trained in handling a swimming mount. The particular creature must be chosen when the proficiency is chosen. Additional proficiency slots can be used to learn how to handle other types of mounts. A character must have this proficiency (or ride with someone who does) to handle an aquatic mount. In addition, a proficient character can do the following:

• Leap onto the saddle of the creature (when it is on the surface) and spur it into motion in the same combat round. This requires no proficiency check.

• Urge the mount to leap over obstacles in the water, so long as the obstacles are less than 3' high and 5' wide. There must be water on the opposite side of the obstacle, or the mount takes 1d6 damage from the impact. If the character wants to roll a proficiency check, the mount can be urged to leap obstacles up to 5' high and 10' wide. Success means that the mount has made the jump. Failure indicates that the mount has balked, and the character must make another proficiency check to see if he retains his seat or falls from the saddle into the water.

• The character can spur his steed on to great speeds, adding 2d6 feet per round to the animal's movement rate for up to two turns. This requires a proficiency check each five rounds to see if the mount can be pushed this hard. If the initial check fails, no further attempts can be made, but the mount can move normally. If the second or subsequent check fails, the mount slows to half speed and will be unable to bear the rider for a full turn. In any event, after two turns its movement drops to 2/3 its normal rate until the mount is allowed to rest for at least one hour.

• The character can attempt to control the mount if it panics. Under ordinary circumstances, aquatic creatures who take damage from an attack from above the water will dive below the surface unless they make a morale roll. Should the mount fail the roll, it will attempt to dive below the water, where it will remain for 1d10 rounds. The character (who, if he was riding the horse, may thus be in danger of drowning) may try to force the mount to the surface with a proficiency check. However, the character is considered to be exerting himself for purposes of avoiding drowning (see Holding Your Breath in the *Player's Handbook).* A successful check will bring the mount back to the surface. Characters who fail their proficiency check may repeat it each round until successful, or until further action becomes impossible.

Rope Use: Rope use is the stock in trade of the boatswain (bosun). Characters with rope use can construct rigging, cargo nets, and other common useful items without a proficiency check. Note also that the +20 to climbing checks when using a rope also applies to scampering about the rigging of ship (cf. Mountaineering).

Seamanship: Seamanship is the stock-in-trade for sailors and pirates everywhere. Any character wishing to work as a crewman aboard a ship must have this proficiency.

At sea, a successful crew proficiency check (see the naval combat rules) adds 25% to the speed of ships at sea. Also note
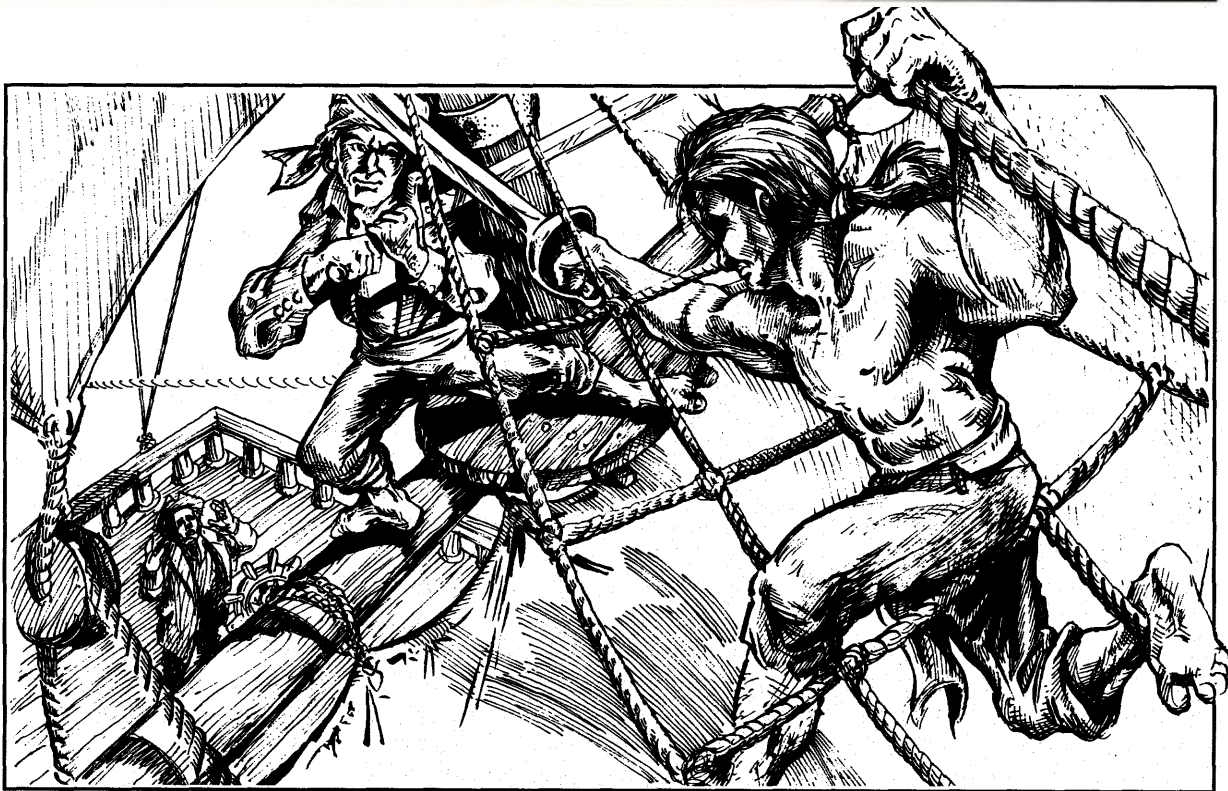
that the quality of a crew in combat is determined in part by the average seamanship proficiency level.

Characters with the seamanship proficiency have a base climbing percentage of 65% when climbing rigging aboard ship. This percentage does NOT apply to other sorts of climbing (walls, mountains, etc.); in such areas a sailor is assumed to be untrained and should be treated as such.

The basic modifiers in climbing combat are:

• A climbing character loses all Armor Class bonuses for Dexterity and shield.

• A climbing character suffers a -2 penalty on attack, damage, and saving throw rolls.

• A character attacking from above gains a +2 bonus on his attack roll.

• A character attacking from below suffers a -2 penalty on his attack roll.

Other modifiers that often come into play are:

• An off-balance defender is attacked with a bonus of +2.

• A rear attack (e.g., against a character trying to climb up a rope) gains a +2 bonus.

Losing and Regaining Balance: Any character engaged in combat on ropes runs the risk of losing his balance.

A character who is struck by a weapon, or attempts to climb in the course of combat, must make a climbing check or lose his balance.

Lost balance means that the next round the character must either fall voluntarily or attempt to regain his balance. In either case, the character can perform no other action. A successful climbing check means that the character has regained his balance. A failure means the character has fallen (and, of course, may suffer falling damage). Don't forget, all attacks against an off-balance character are at +2.

Shipwright (New Proficiency): The

character is knowledgeable regarding techniques for ship construction and repair. He can design and build ships of all types, with a proficiency check only being required for an unusual feature. The character can perform routine maintenance on sailing vessels or galleys, including repairing sails and caulking the hull, without a proficiency check. A shipwright need not have other workmen to finish small vessels, but vessels of any size require large crews of shipwrights and other laborers to build or repair.

Survival: The islands of the Sea of Fallen Stars are considered "tropical" for the purposes of this proficiency. However, the Inner Sea itself is "ocean" terrain. Ocean terrain consists of any large body of salt water with no significant land. Survivors know how to extract fresh water from rain water (or from condensation), know which seaweeds and other sea life are edible, and knows how to protect himself and others from long-term exposure to the sun.

Swimming: Swimming proficiency, while highly useful to the seafaring character, is not a required proficiency. Many experienced sailors never learn to swim. Some develop a morbid fear of the water, knowing that they will drown if their ship is sunk; others take it philosophically, preferring drowning to a lingering death as a castaway.

The swimming rules in the *Player's Handbook* (p. 121) state that a character wearing metal armor cannot swim. In a pirates campaign, the question of exactly what is metal armor may come up.

Characters without swimming proficiency cannot dog-paddle in any armor except padded or leather. As stated in the *Player's Handbook,* if weighed down with enough gear to reduce their movement rate, they sink like stones, unable to keep their head above water.

Characters with swimming proficiency can swim in leather or padded armor with no significant reduction in ability (although the weight of the armor and other gear may still reduce their movement rate). Padded armor counts as double weight for purposes of determining encumbrance and movement rate, because it tends to absorb water quickly.

Proficient characters wearing studded leather, ring mail, or hide can swim with a successful Strength check. This check must be repeated each hour in addition to the Swimming proficiency check; failure indicates that the character has suffered an additional hour's worth of strain from bearing the armor. Characters wearing such armor also suffer double penalties to their attack rolls and Constitution scores.

Swimmers who try to increase their speed by making a proficiency check suffer a further 1/2 penalty if wearing one of the above armors. Thus a character with Strength 16 who tried to double his movement would normally have to make a Strength check against half his Strength (8); if wearing, ring mail, however, the character would have to make a check against a value of 4.

Characters wearing heavier armors (banded mail, brigantine, chain mail, plate of any type, or splint mail) cannot swim, although they can walk across the bottom at 1/3 movement rate, as described in the *Player's Handbook*. Enchanted armor is treated identically to normal armor in this respect (see "Equipment (Encumbrance)" in the *Player's Handbook).* Characters with shields must drop their shields before they can swim.

Tightrope Walking: Tightrope walking proficiency allows a character to fight while balanced on the spars or rigging of a ship. The movement of a ship at sea makes such antics even more difficult than normally, so that characters suffer an additional -2 penalty on attack rolls, sav
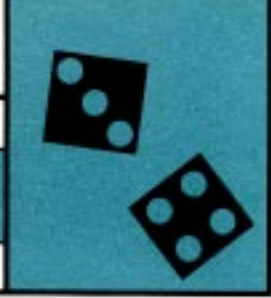
ing throws and proficiency checks, in addition to the -5 penalty normally assessed on attack rolls.

Tracking: Tracking ships at sea is an extremely difficult task. Ships leave no permanent trail on the surface of the water; wakes generally fade within a few minutes, and the disturbance of fish and seabirds generally passes within two turns. However, there are those who maintain that it is possible. DMs wishing to allow tracking on the open sea should apply a - 12 terrain modifier to such tracking proficiency checks.

Note also that each ship in a group is considered one "creature" for the purpose of determining a tracking bonus. The seamen aboard are not individually counted.

Weather Sense: Weather sense is a common and useful proficiency aboard ship. In addition to the obvious benefits (e.g., not sailing out of port into the teeth of a storm), a navigator making successful Weather Sense and Navigation proficiency checks can adjust for the effects of adverse winds (see Table 79: Weather Conditions in the *DMG),* reducing the penalty for these winds to only ¼ the ship's movement.

Table 1: Proficiency Costs for New Proficiencies

Proficiency	Group	# of Slots	Relevant Ability	Modifier
Boating	General	1	Wisdom	+1
Information Gathering	Rogue	1	Intelligence	0
Intimidation	Rogue	1	Special	Special
Looting	Rogue	1	Intelligence	0
Riding, Sea-Based	General	2	Dexterity	- 2
Shipwright	Priest	1	Intelligence	- 2

Magic of the Inner Sea

Existing Spells

Jump: This spell may be used to allow quick transfer from one ship to another—particularly during boarding. It is thus often used by pirates as a method of getting one (or a small group) of men aboard a target vessel quickly.

Spider Climb: This spell provides the target with the ability to scramble around ship's rigging without having to make climbing rolls (see the Proficiency section above).

Wall of Fog: Walls of fog are often used to conceal pirate ships. Although at low levels the wall is distinct and thus easily spotted, at high levels or during foggy weather it can be an effective camouflage either for concealing an attacker or covering a retreat at sea.

Bind: This spell can be used by a mage with seamanship proficiency to manipulate the lines which control the sails aboard a sailing ship, thus allowing him to manage the lines alone on a ship which would ordinarily be too large to allow a single person to control it. Note, however, that the short duration of this spell makes this technique impractical except in emergencies.

Flaming Sphere: The fireball formed by this spell can be used to set a ship's rigging alight, although it must be left in place for at least two rounds to actually ignite the ship's timbers.

Fog Cloud: Even more so than *wall of fog* (see above), *fog cloud* can be used to conceal a ship on the open sea.

Levitate: An individual with this spell cast upon them can move about the rigging of a ship quickly, as the ropes which support the rigging can be used by the subject so he can move horizontally as well as vertically. Note the danger, however, of losing hold of the ship's rigging and finding oneself in the middle of the air with the ship sailing out from under you!

Summon Swarm: Note that at sea only flying insects or bats can be summoned by this spell, as the crawling creatures cannot usually come to the caster. On some ships, rats may be available.

Whispering Wind: This spell is often used by pirates of the Inner Sea to carry messages to one another. Certain areas of Immurk's Hold on the Dragonisle are specially set aside for those who seek to receive such messages.

Gust of Wind: The gust provided by this spell is equivalent to a strong wind.

New Spells

Few of the pirates of the Inner Sea are mages. Nevertheless, some spells have become identified with the lords of Earthspur, and these enchantments are described here.

First Level Spells

Oilskin **(Abjuration)**

Range: 0
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 2 turns/level
Casting Time: 2
Area of Effect: One creature or small object
Saving Throw: None

This spell prevents fog, rain, waves, hail, and other forms of precipitation from touching the person or small object it is cast upon. Precipitation comes within an inch of the person's body, but strikes an invisible barrier and does not penetrate to the clothes or skin. The spell is also effective against wetting by waves. The barrier does not affect any kind of missile or other object, however.

A person under this spell can see more clearly than most in driving rain because none gets into his eyes. If struck by a wave, he remains dry, but if immersed in the ocean the mass of water is sufficient to overcome the barrier and he will become wet. Once out of the ocean, however, the spell will still work against precipitation.

The material component of this spell is a small square of cloth which has been treated with oil so that it has become water-repellent.

Sea Legs **(Reversible] (Priest)**

Range: 0
Sphere: Healing
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1 hour/level
Casting Time: 1 round
Area of Effect: One creature
Saving Throw: None

This spell stops the effects of oncoming sea sickness in the target. If unable to do so before, that person also gains the ability to balance and maneuver easily even on a violently heaving deck, just as the most experienced sailor will do. At DM's discretion, a person under the effect of this spell need not make Dexterity checks for shipboard actions in stormy weather that could easily be done in calm weather.

This spell can be reversed. The reversed spell, *land legs,* causes the target of the spell to make a Dexterity check to move or attack. Failure of the check means the character falls down, and a second check is required to stand up again.

Weathertell (Divination)

Range: 0
Components: V, S, M
Duration: Instantaneous
Casting Time: 3 rounds
Area of Effect: Special
Saving Throw: None

This spell enables the caster (who must be able to see the sky and listen to the winds) to predict the general weather conditions for the upcoming 1 hour per level of the caster. These are the *natural* weather conditions at the caster's current location (and probably the nearby area) assuming that no magical manipulation occurs. Thus, this spell could predict the natural rain shower which will be coming in three hours, but could not predict the magically created storm tomorrow morning.

Upon casting this spell, the caster discovers the general wind speed and prevailing direction of the wind which will be extant for the indicated time period. Specific timing of gusts and wind shifts is not available, however.

Similarly, the caster discovers whether it will be raining (or snowing), and approximately how hard any precipitation will be. Exceptional weather patterns (such as tornadoes) are revealed to the caster, but he cannot predict their path with any accuracy.

Second Level Spells

Immurk's Distraction (Enchantment/Charm)

Range: Touch
Components: V, S, M
Duration: Special
Casting Time: 1 turn
Area of Effect: Special
Saving Throw: Special
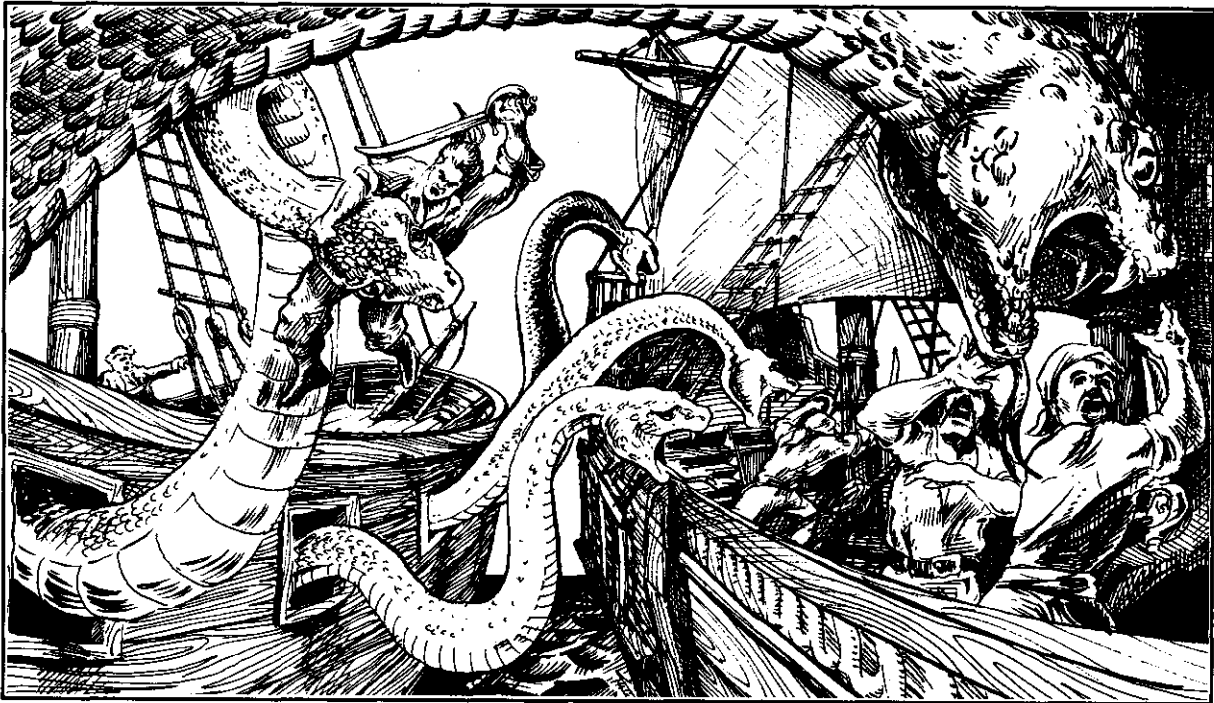
When this spell is cast on a concealed item, it clouds the mind of anyone seeking the item who is within 50' of it, so that they will not find the hidden item. The caster may exclude specific individuals from the effect of the Distraction (who must be specified at the time of casting); all others must make a saving throw vs. spells or else they will not act to reveal the item. If the item is concealed under a blanket (for example), it simply will not occur to the affected individual to look under that blanket.

If specifically directed to look (for example, by someone outside the area of effect), they will do so, but in such a fashion as to keep the item concealed. Thus, for example, if digging for a buried chest based on paced-off directions, the affected individual will make just enough mistakes so that he digs in the wrong place.

An item in plain sight is not protected. Similarly, an individual who is not looking for the affected item is not affected by the spell, and may thus stumble across the item accidentally. Once the item is touched by someone (other than one of the individuals specified to be immune), the dweomer is canceled.

A character who makes his save *may* choose to look for the item in the correct place, but success in the save does not guarantee successful discovery. Unless the individual makes the save *and* looks in the right place, the item remains hidden.

The caster must chant and gesture while casting the spell, scattering a mixture of sand and diamond dust (from a diamond of at least 500 gp value) over the protected item.

Immurk's Distraction is said to have been researched for Immurk by Seldzen, a mage of Procampur.

Mass Jump (Alteration)

Range: 0
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1d3 rounds +1 round/level
Casting Time: 2
Area of Effect: 10' radius
Saving Throw: None

This spell confers the ability to leap once per round for the duration of the spell on all creatures within the area of effect. Leaps can be up to 30 feet forward or straight upward or 10 feet backward. Horizontal leaps forward or backward have only a slight arc + about two feet per 10 feet of distance traveled. The *mass jump* spell does not ensure safety in landing or grasping at the end of the leap.

The *mass jump* spell is used as part of a magical boarding action. It allows several pirates to arrive on the deck of an attacked ship before the two ships are fully grappled, thus offering some chance of surprise. However, on the Inner Sea this tactic is common enough to not be totally surprising to experienced sailors.

The material component of this spell is a grasshopper's hind leg, to be broken by the caster when the spell is cast.

Third Level Spells

Dispel Fog (Abjuration)

Range: 0
Components: V, S
Duration: Permanent
Casting Time: 1 round
Area of Effect: 10'/level radius circle
Saving Throw: Special

This spell eliminates normal and magical fog from the area of effect. Only fog and mist is affected, not bodies of water, rain, or other precipitation. The fog dispelled is gone permanently, but the empty volume may be filled in again with new fog if there
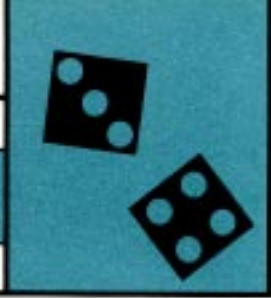
is sufficient quantity in the area. However, a dispelled area stays clear for 1 turn/level regardless of other conditions.

Creatures in fog or mist form (such as vampires) who are in the area of effect must make a saving throw vs. spell. A successful save indicates that the creature must transform to a form other than fog or mist; failure indicates that the creature takes 2d10 damage.

Preserve Wood (Abjuration)

Range: 10 yards/level
Components: V, S
Duration: Permanent
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Area of Effect: Special
Saving Throw: Special

This spell protects an item made of wood (such as the members on a ship) from being deformed by magical (e.g., warp wood). Only *warp wood* spells cast by a higher level caster may affect wood so protected, and then only if the appropriate roll is made (see the *warp wood* spell, *Player's Handbook,* page 208).

The caster may protect up to 100 pounds of wood per level, but only one structure (such as a ship or a palisade) per casting. Separate wooden items must be protected separately.

Watery Form (Alteration)

Range: 0
Components: V, S
Duration: 1 turn/level
Casting Time: 8
Area of Effect: Caster only
Saving Throw: None

When affected by this spell, the caster and anything he wears turns into what appears to be a puddle of water. This form cannot be absorbed or divided into smaller parts. It has the same hit points and

strength as the spellcaster and moves at + his movement rate on land or in the water.

While in this form, the spellcaster blends undetectably with a body of water, wet spots on deck, etc. The form does not drown in water and can swim at any depth the spellcaster chooses. If desired, the form can flow out of the ocean, up the side of a ship, and onto the deck. This is as exhausting to the spellcaster as if he had climbed that distance in his regular shape.

If the form is attacked it remains in one piece but the spellcaster suffers damage. Weapons and spells inflict normal damage, and other objects injure as determined by the DM.

Wind Servant
(Conjuration/Summoning)

Range: 10'/level
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1-6 turns +1 turn/level
Casting Time: 1 turn
Area of Effect: Special
Saving Throw: Special

This spell conjures a weak form of air elemental. This creature is incapable of entering combat, as it has no effective attacks against corporeal creatures, nor can it be affected by normal (non-magical) weapons.

The wind servant's only power is to generate a strong wind over a localized area. A wind servant can make any one of the following changes:

● Increase or decrease wind speed by one category (e.g., from Light Breeze to Favorable Winds, or from Gale to Storm)

● Change the wind direction by one "step" (e.g., from North to Northeast, or from Northeast to Southeast). Any such effect on the wind applies to only one vessel. The wind servant is too small to create widespread weather effects, instead changing the weather by filling the sails of

the affected vessel with its own essence.

The caster can order the wind servant to do more than one of the above tasks, but at a cost. For each round that an additional task is ordered (i.e., changing the wind direction by two points, or affecting wind speed and wind direction), the number of rounds which the wind servant must stay is decreased by one. Thus, for example, a mage ordering a northerly breeze when the current winds are southerly reduces the wind servant's tenure by three rounds for each round of such activity.

Wind servants are lazy and disobedient, although not hostile. The caster must give the wind servant continual guidance or the creature allows normal wind conditions to resume. On the other hand, the caster may change his direction to the wind servant at any time, and the wind servant will respond in 1-3 rounds. (For the purposes of the naval game, such a shift takes effect at the start of the next turn.)

Although wind servants cannot be struck by corporeal weaponry, they can be affected by magic. A wind servant who takes more than 30 points of magical damage flees back to the Elemental Plane of Air, abandoning the caster.

The material component of this spell is a lit block of incense worth at least 50 gp.

Fourth Level Spells

Ball Lightning (Conjuration)

Range: 180'
Components: V, S
Duration: 1 round/level
Casting Time: 1 round
Area of Effect: 1 or more balls of lightning
Saving Throw: ½

This spell creates one ball of lightning for every 5 levels of the caster. Each ball can be sent to a different target. A ball of lightning flies through the air to strike its target. Once there, it moves rapidly (120'/round) along surfaces in random directions: up masts, along the deck, down stairwells, etc.

A ball of lightning inflicts one point of damage per level of the caster each time it touches a living creature. There is a 10% chance that each ball will come to rest at a certain spot, such as the top of a mast or at the end of a yardarm. If so, the lightning starts a small fire on a roll of 5 or 6.

Sargasso (Alteration)

Range: 10 yards/level
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 5 rounds/level
Casting Time: 9
Area of Effect: 10 square feet/level
Saving Throw: Special

This spell calls up a region of thick seaweed from a body of water which is difficult to sail through. Ships sailing through the sargasso have their speed diminished by 2 mph if they are sail-powered, or 3 mph if they are oar-powered. Ships whose speed is reduced to or below zero as a result of this speed loss are considered to be entangled (as the spell) in the sargasso, and will be unable to move. Note that for a ship's movement to be affected at least half of the ship must be in the sargasso region to be affected. A large ship may thus not be affected by a small sargasso region, even if it sails right through.

Swimming creatures are also affected by the sargasso, with their movement rates reduced by 6. Air-breathing creatures who are thus immobilized may be trapped beneath the surface unless they make a saving throw vs. death.

The material component of this spell is a small amount of seaweed and a handful of live brine shrimp, which must be tossed into the water.

Fifth Level Spells

Calm Water (Abjuration)
Reversible

Range: 360 yards
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1 turn/level
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Area of Effect: 20' radius/level
Saving Throw: None

This spell reduces wave action in the area of effect to the equivalent of calm seas. Chop, whitecaps, and violent storm waves are eliminated, although there might be a noticeable swell in the calm water if the sea itself is storm-tossed.

Ships within the area of effect need not make seaworthiness rolls due to weather, even if the type of weather otherwise calls for it.

The reverse of this spell, *churn water,* creates waves within the area of effect that are up to 1' tall/level.

The material component of the calm water spell is a bottle of oil (worth 100 gp) poured onto the waves. The material component of *churn water* is a silver wire framework (costing 100 gp) which is swirled in a circular motion before being tossed into the sea.

Calm Wind (Abjuration)

Range: 360 yards
Components: V, S
Duration: 1 turn/level
Casting Time: 2 rounds
Area of Effect: 20' radius/level
Saving Throw: None

This spell creates an "eye of the storm" effect, reducing even gale force winds to a breeze within the area of effect. Ocean waves are unaffected by this spell, and storm-tossed waters will continue to batter a ship even though the wind has ceased. The spell has no effect on fog or precipitation, only on the wind that accompanies it.

Any ship sailing in the area of effect is treated as if the winds were "light breeze" rather than their current wind speed, although the direction remains unchanged. Exception: if the wind speed were "becalmed," it remains "becalmed."

Sixth Level Spells

Oars to Snakes (Alteration)
Reversible

Sphere: Plant
Range: 50 yards
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 3 rounds/level
Casting Time: 9
Area of Effect: 1 oar/3 levels
Saving Throw: None

This more powerful variant of the *sticks to snakes* spell transforms the oars aboard a ship into giant sea snakes. These serpents remain within the oarlocks of the vessel which bore them, but may attack those off of the ship who are nearby (such as boarders). Thus, this is primarily a defensive spell, as the caster can transform the oars of his own vessel into defenders. Each serpent can attack one boarder (THAC0 11) for 3-18 damage each round.

The serpents remain until the spell expires or they are slain (AC 5, 10 HD). While the spell continues, the ship does not have use of those oars, and thus may have reduced speed (see the Combat chapter). They then turn back into usable oars, although those which were killed are broken and useless.

This spell may also be cast offensively. In this mode, the oars become serpents, but rather than attacking outside the ship, their poisonous heads are aimed within the ship, attacking the oarsmen and de-

stroying the ship's ability to maneuver.

The material components of this spell are a small piece of wood and the scales from a sea snake.

Seventh level Spells

Whirlpool (Alteration)

Range: 10 yards/level
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1 turn/level
Casting Time: 1 turn
Area of Effect: 25 foot radius/level
Saving Throw: None

This spell creates a swirling region of water which can consume ships and swimmers within its grasp. Any creature in the water within the *whirlpool* must make a saving throw vs. spells or be drawn 10 yards toward the center of the whirlpool. In addition, any creature within the area of effect takes 1d6 damage each round from the buffeting effect of the water. Creatures reaching the center of a *whirlpool* must make a saving throw vs. death or be sucked beneath the waves never to return.

Ships are also affected by a *whirlpool.* Each ship within a whirlpool must make a seaworthiness roll every turn to avoid capsizing and sinking. Also, every ship moves 1-6 hexes toward the center of the whirl-pool, and 1-6 hexes counterclockwise around the whirlpool in addition to any other movement each turn. Beings and ships outside the area of effect of the whirl-pool are not affected.

The material component for this spell are a cup of sea water and a jeweled stick (worth at least 5,000 g.p.). The stick is swirled in the cup while the spell is chant-ed, and then broken in half and tossed into the sea to start the *whirlpool.*

Ninth Level Spells

Tidal Wave (Alteration)

Range: 0
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1 turn/level
Casting Time: 3 turns
Area of Effect: 100' long wave/level
Saving Throw: None

This spell brings up a huge wave of water from a sea or other large body of water. This wave can destroy ships and harbors in its path, and is one of the most powerful attacks in the Forgotten Realms.

The tidal wave is 75 feet high (regard-less of the caster's level), and 100 feet long per level of the caster. The caster may start the wave traveling in any direction, but it may not be turned once started. It travels at 50 yards per round, devastating all in its path.

Any ship caught before the tidal wave must make a seaworthiness roll (at a -30) in order to avoid swamping. Rolls which succeed by less than 20% indicate that the ship is driven before the tidal wave, and must continue to make seaworthiness rolls each round until they are swamped or manage to crest the wave. Rolls which succeed by 20% or more indicate that the ship successfully crested the wave, and is out of danger.

Swimmers may ride over the wave by making a saving throw vs. death magic. Failure of the saving throw indicates that the swimmer takes 9d6 damage; survivors are washed out of the wave on the other side.

When the wave drives up on shore, it causes 10d6 damage to everyone within 50 yards of shore along its path (and also to any ship driven on shore ahead of it; see above). Thereafter, the damage dimin-ishes by 1d6 each round until it ceases to exist 500 yards inland.

This spell is so exhausting that after casting this spell the caster is unable to cast magical for 1d4 days after casting this spell due to the magical energies involved.

The material component of this spell is a wooden plank, which is struck forcibly across the surface of the water in the direction the tidal wave is to form.

New Magical Items

As stated above, the Inner Sea is not well known for its mages, particularly those who are of a high enough level to create magical items. However, a few items have been created which carry the flavor of the sea.

Pouch of Winds

This looks like an ordinary leather pouch, tied tightly shut and bulging at the seams with its contents. It weighs no more than the leather it is made of, for the *pouch* contains enchanted air. Once the *pouch* is opened, a magical wind escapes that does one of three things.

A *fair breeze* blows a steady wind in the direction the user wants to travel. This wind is considered *favorable* (see Movement and Combat), and blows for one 24 hour period after it is released.

A *contrary wind* blows a steady, if weaker wind, in the opposite direction from whatever the ship's heading might be. This is treated as an *adverse light breeze,* and lasts until the ship puts ashore and waits one day before continuing its voyage.

Finally, a *storm wind* immediately surrounds the vessel with gale force winds lasting 1d6 hours. These winds will require the vessel to make seaworthiness checks each hour, as described in Movement and Combat.

In all cases, the *wind* only affects the user's ship. However, other ships within 30 yards (one hex) of the user's ship may benefit (or suffer) from the effects of the *wind,* if they remain at that distance.

The content of the *pouch* is determined randomly, in accordance with the following table:

d6 Roll	Type
1-3	Fair breeze
4-5	Contrary wind
6	Storm wind

Flask of Vapor

This looks like a simple, stoppered brass flask, similar to an *efreeti bottle* or an *eversmoking bottle.* When opened, fog pours out until the *flask* is sealed once more. The flask creates a disk of fog that is 100' across and 10' high. Once that volume is filled, the *flask* stops emitting fog, but if wind or magical clears the mist away, the *flask* once again pours forth vapor until the volume is obscured.

Oil of Stillness

This is a one-pint flask of oil. When the enchanted *oil* is poured onto water, it stops violent seas and reduces wave action around one ship to the equivalent of calm water for one hour. This effect applies to normal waves as well as magically-agitated water. During this time, the ship need not make seaworthiness checks due to weather (although checks required for other reasons are still required).

In Which Is A Description of All Affected Nations; Their Defenses; and A Chronicle of Recent Piratical Activity and Smuggling-As Told by Jomo Shanbaeren, Chronicled (and Clarified) by Alyssa of Ravens Bluff

"Look at yer map," Jomo Shanbaeren instructs you, pointing to the faded parchment. "Make believe yer on a sailin' ship, startin' at Cormyr—here— and moving eastward around the coast. Pay attention, mates! I'm only tellin' ya this once!" He lifts his eyepatch, revealing a jagged, x-shaped scar. "I seen more with me one good eye than most men do with both o' theirs." He lets the patch fall back into place. "And what I seen, I don't tell just any leather-wearin', sword-bearin' dandy what comes in here! So give me yer ears, and I'll fill 'em with the learnin' of many long years at sea-and with what my spies tell me . . . " He glances sideways toward the door. "Jomo wouldn't steer ya off course, y'know!"

Cormyr

Suzail, the capital of Cormyr, lies on the northern coast of the Dragonsmere, just east of the Storm Horn mountains.

Suzail boasts three harbors. The first is the Basin, a deep harbor (dredged to open-sea depths) where ships can deposit their cargos close to the shops which surround the city's Market. Twenty ships can load or unload here simultaneously, making this a busy harbor, while the nearby shipyards are the primary producers of the brigantines which have become the trademark vessel of the Cormyrean Freesails. The activity here supports Saszesk, a young human reputed to be a member of Immurk's Band. Saszesk's smuggling operation is not well known, as King Azoun has sought to make Suzail safe from the depredations of such "thieves' guilds."
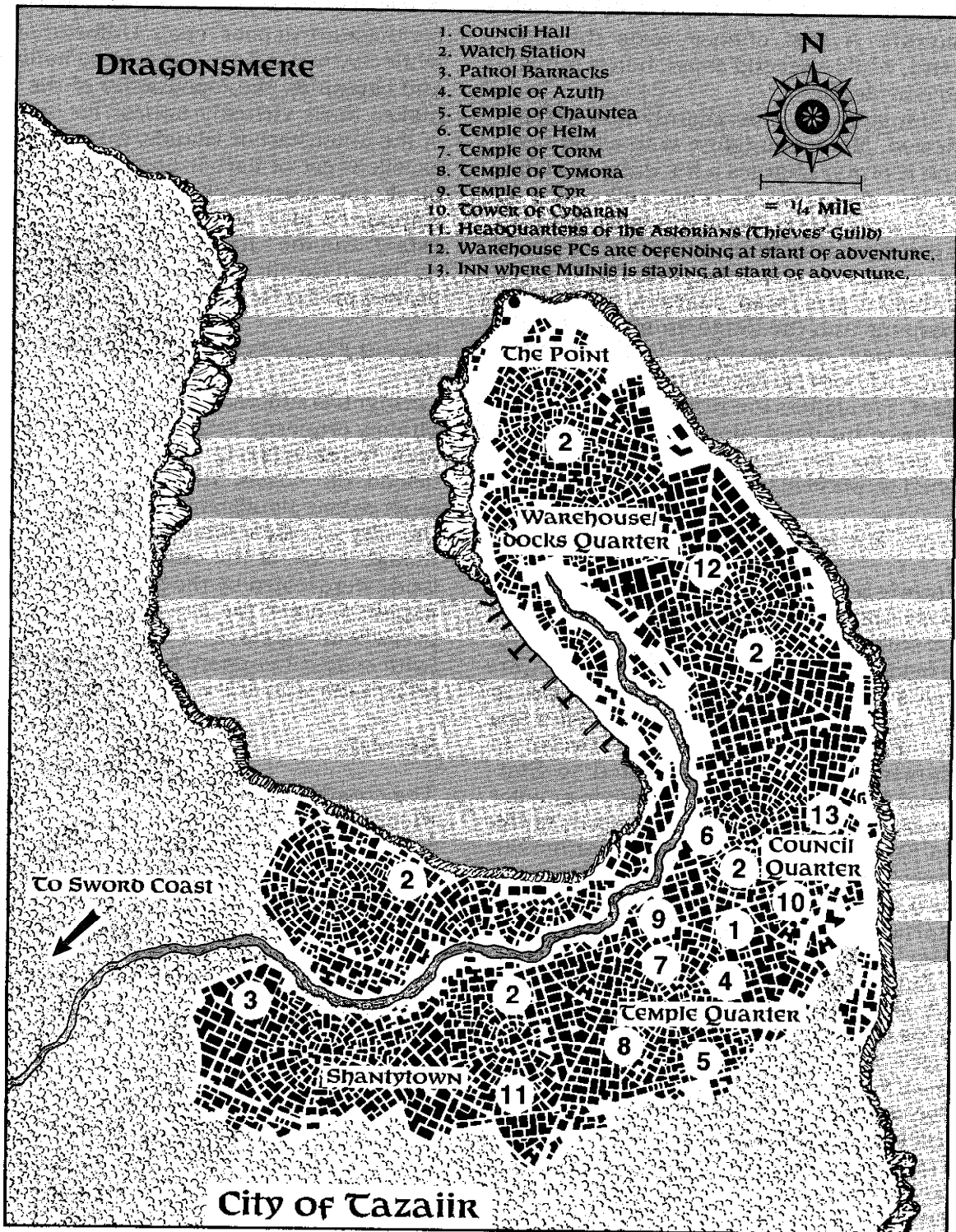
The second (central) harbor is also a commercial harbor, although its wharves are accessed only via a series of royal warehouses. Customs inspections here can be painstaking, particularly if the local watch believes that smugglers are about, and little contraband (or piratical goods) makes it through. On the other hand, the Cormyrean Freesails pay their tribute to King Azoun at these warehouses. As many as thirty ships can be docked here, along with many smaller vessels.

The easternmost harbor contains the Royal Docks and the Harbor Tower. Cormyr's Imperial Navy (see below) has its main home port here under the personal command of Admiral Hazen Kelafin, Royal Admiral of Cormyr. Admiral Kelafin's marines are housed within the nearby Citadel of the Purple Dragon.

Cormyr's low, rolling, misty coastline stretches east to the River Lurlar. Most of the coastline has extensive shallows, and few villages offer harbors large enough (and deep enough) for ocean-going vessels. Outside of Suzail only Marsember (with its archipelago of harbor-islands connected by bridges) offers any substantial harbor. Marsember's harbor is the busiest in Cormyr, and while some smuggling goes on, the Harpers and the War Wizards actively root out and destroy any actively dishonest groups. The Harpers use Marsember as a safe port, and take care to keep it that way.

Pirates and Cormyrean law

King Azoun has sworn that Cormyr will not become a pirate haven (his beloved Cormyrean Freesails not withstanding). Those convicted of piracy here are treated

DRAGONSMERE

1. Council Hall
2. Watch Station
3. Patrol Barracks
4. Temple of Azuth
5. Temple of Chauntea
6. Temple of Helm
7. Temple of Torm
8. Temple of Tymora
9. Temple of Tyr
10. Tower of Cybaran
11. Headquarters of the Astorians (Thieves' Guild)
12. Warehouse PCs are defending at start of adventure.
13. Inn where Mulnis is staying at start of adventure.

N

= ¼ Mile

The Point

2

Warehouse/docks Quarter

12

2

To Sword Coast

2

6

13

Council Quarter

2

10

9

1

3

7

4

2

Temple Quarter

8

5

Shantytown

11

City of Tazaiir

harshly. A first offense costs the right hand, while a second conviction is punishable by death.

Smuggling is only slightly less harshly viewed. Most smuggling is to avoid taxation (Cormyr charges a 5% duty on all imported goods) or to bring collections of weapons ashore. Cormyr's laws preventing mercenaries from gathering have been extended to merchants (particularly those without Cormyrean charters) who bring weapons into the kingdom in any quantity, as such caches can quickly find their way to otherwise innocent-appearing warriors. Smugglers are fined triple the value of the contraband (along with confiscation of the goods); repeat offenders are punished as pirates.

Naval Forces and Shore Defenses

Cormyr's Royal Navy (boasting thirty caravels and over 5,500 men) is responsible for patrolling the seacoast for smugglers, providing aid to ships in trouble in Cormyr's waters, and to provide support to the army in time of war. Fourteen ships are posted to Suzail, another twelve to Marsember (specifically posted to Starwater Keep), and the remainder in smaller ports along the coast. Most recently, Admiral Kelafin's fleet (assisted by Cormyrean Freesails) conveyed King Azoun's army across the Dragon Reach to speed their journey to Thesk during the recent Horde War.

Supplementing Cormyr's Royal Navy are the Cormyrean Freesails, privateers chartered by King Azoun to patrol Cormyr's waters and hunt down and destroy pirates. Many of Cormyr's trading vessels also carry charters as Freesails, and Suzail and Marsember both have some shore defenses. Since the most recent pirate incursions, Marsember has established some harbor chains, but like much in Marsem-

ber these are in poor repair. Unfortunately, while Starwater Keep has several ballistae and catapults, the topography of the city makes these virtually useless for defense of the outer harbor islands. Suzail has an excellent set of harbor chains which can block the narrow channel to the Basin (supported by a deployment of three ballistae), and the Citadel of the Purple Dragon has an excellent brace of four catapults trained on the Royal Harbor area.

Recent Pirate Activities

Cormyr has suffered little harassment from pirates, primarily because its own Cormyrean Freesails (along with the Royal Navy) defend the coasts and waters well. The most recent significant pirate raid was on the city of Marsember in 1344 DR. Although a few of the outermost harbor islands were looted by the pirates, they were unable to enter the city proper before an overwhelming force of Cormyrean ships (with magical support from the War Wizards in the city) drove the pirates away.

Sembia

The coastline of Sembia extends from the River Lurlar east to the mouth of the Dragon Reach, and from thence north to the city of Yhaunn (and, some say, even as far as Scardale). Over a coastal expanse of over 400 miles, the coastline varies from a rocky 50' cliff (as along the stone prominence between Saerloon and Selgaunt) to a marshy shore (as can be found west of Urmlaspyr). Although the best harbors are occupied by Sembia's wealthy trading cities, the coast boasts many small coves and harbors which could allow a ship to be hidden from view.

Pirates and Sembian Law

Sembia's merchant rulers treat piracy more severely than murder. Piracy carries an immediate death sentence in Sembia (which the navy is empowered to carry out at sea if necessary), and more than once clashes have arisen between Sembia and Cormyr over Sembia's overzealous execution of a Freesail crew.

Smuggling, on the other hand, is viewed as at worst an embarrassment. Fines are not steep, representing only triple the taxes owed, but the smuggled goods are returned to their owners (after the tax and fines are paid), and can often be sold at a reasonable profit despite the smuggling costs.

Naval Forces and Shore Defenses

Sembia has one of the largest standing navies on the Inner Sea, with over ninety ships and 15,000 men on active duty. It is strange, therefore, that they have been so unsuccessful in reducing the amount of piracy which their traders suffer. However, when it is considered that even such a large navy leaves only one vessel for each five miles of coastline, and that most of that navy is concentrated in the seaport cities of Selgaunt and Saerloon, it may not be so surprising.

Also note that most merchants of Sembia do not view pirate pursuit as a noble cause (unlike the Cormyrean Freesails, who make up nearly half of the ships with Cormyrean registry). Where the Cormyreans have banded together against the pirate menace, the Sembian attitude is that piracy is ill luck when you suffer it, but it is good luck when your competition suffers it.

Recent Pirate Activities

Piratical activities in Sembia are near-constant. Sembia's ships represent the most profitable targets for piracy in the northern Inner Sea. The most difficult problem facing a pirate captain is avoiding the patrols of the thinly-spread Sembian navy. In fact, during some disputes between mercantile houses, pirates may be hired to attack the shipping of a rival. Although this is illegal, it is sufficiently common to have given rise to the expression "honest as a Sembian pirate." Smuggling is rampant, with nearly all Sembian vessels doing some. Because of the light punishment for the crime, however, and due to Sembia's relatively liberal laws regarding what is contraband, smuggling is not viewed as a problem in Sembia.

The Dalelands

The coast of the Dalelands extends along the western edge of the Dragon Reach from Yhaunn north to the mouth of the River Lis. The coast is rocky, with steep cliffs near Scardale and north of Harrowdale. The only significant ports are those two Dales; of the two, Scardale, which lies at the mouth of the River Ashaba, has the more extensive harbors.

Scardale was once a busy port town, but in 1350 DR its new lord, Lashan Aumersail, began a campaign to build Scardale into a great power, taking over the remainder of the southern Dales in the process. Although he quickly conquered Harrowdale, Featherdale, and Battledale, his military successes forced an alliance of Cormyr, Sembia, Zhentil Keep, Hillsfar, and the remaining Dales against him. Lashan was quickly overcome.

Scardale has fallen on hard times. Sembia briefly occupied the Dale, but it is now divided into small subsections, each garrisoned by one of the invading forces. Port Ashaba and Scar Harbor are by convention neutral territory, although skirmishes are still fought between Scardale citizens and

the occupation forces (as well as between the garrisons of the various nations).

Pirates and Daleland Law

The pirates have been quick to seize on the opportunities available in a war-torn city like Scardale. Smuggling is rampant (in part because different items are contraband in different sections of the same port), and Scardale has become a safe harbor for pirate ships operating in the Dragon Reach. Cormyr and Sembia have both attempted to close down the harbor, but the minimal garrisons (12 men each) maintained by each have been unable to overcome the combined resistance of the people of Scardale, the Zhentil Keep garrison, and the pirates. Although piracy is officially a capital offense in Scardale, in practice pirates use the port essentially as they please. Harrowdale, on the other hand, has little pirate traffic. Piracy is a capital crime there as it is in all the Dales, but the simple farmers of Harrowdale have little to interest the pirates, and the harbor is too far north (and thus too far from the shipping lanes) to be of much use.

Naval Forces and Shore Defenses

Neither Harrowdale nor Scardale maintains much of a navy As part of their occupation, the Sembian navy patrols the southern coast of the Dalelands, but they rarely travel as far north as Harrowdale. They have had some success suppressing piracy near Scardale through a vigorous naval presence, but unless a vessel is accused of piracy in Sembia, or commits an act of piracy in the presence of a Sembian warship, there is little the Sembian navy can do.

Scardale did have some harbor defenses, notably siege engines ensconced in Harborwatch Keep and a harbor chain which could be drawn at the Anvil Bridge. However, in the wake of the occupations, many of these defenses have been destroyed while the remainder have been claimed by one of the factions which now control this city.

Harrowdale's port is much less extensive than that in Scardale. Its defenses consist primarily of a town militia which has a standing watch for repelling raiders. There are a few fishing vessels which can act as a first line of defense, but essentially Harrowdale's defenses are designed to stop raiders from taking the city, not to prosecute pirates.

Recent Pirate Activities

As mentioned above, in the last few years Scardale has become a pirate haven and a smuggler's den. Pirates come to Scardale to fence their booty and hide safely from Sembian patrols. Little actual piracy occurs near the port, as there is little trade on which to prey and the Sembian navy maintains an almost constant vigil nearby.

The Moonsea

The Moonsea lies to the north of the Dragon Reach, the two connected by the River Lis. The Moonsea is a shallow, freshwater sea with a varied coastline, low and accessible along the western side, a rocky bluff to the south, hilly to the north, and mountainous to the point of inaccessibility in the east, where it abuts against the Galena and Earthspur mountain ranges.

Pirates and Moonsea Law

Although the pirates of the Inner Sea rarely travel so far from their islands, there is still much here that affects their lives. The city-state of Hillsfar, once an open port where even the most notorious cargos could be

traded, has become as tight and as defended as Zhentil Keep and Mulmaster.

Officially, piracy is illegal throughout the Moonsea. In practice, it is common, with privateers and raiders from Zhentil Keep and Mulmaster preying on one another's shipping. While these pirates have little to do with those on the Inner Sea, some pirates first learned the trade on the Moonsea, while others use the area as a hideout, offering their ships and crew to the highest bidder.

Punishment for pirates varies among the cities. Zhentil Keep typically sentences pirates and smugglers to service in the Zhentilar armies or, if not deemed worthy of that honor, to death in the arena. Lord Maalthiir of Hillsfar has not yet punished anyone for piracy, although the old law of death by hanging is still "on the books." Mulmaster's punishment for piracy is both specific and gruesome: the offender is lashed to a stone and thrown into the Moonsea to drown.

Naval Forces and Shore Defenses

Hillsfar is a walled city perched at the top of a rocky bluff overlooking the south shore of the Moonsea. A small. village at the base of the bluff (known as the Docks), handles the naval traffic and possesses a small drydock. While the Docks are not well defended, there is rarely anything of value here, as in the case of a raid the people withdraw into the well-defended walled city. Hillsfar's new First Lord, Maalthiir, has begun to improve the drydock and shipbuilding facilities at the Docks, but has not made significant effort to either secure the port or develop a navy of any size.

Zhentil Keep has a large harbor capable of holding over 250 vessels. The harbor is guarded by the Keep's powerful navy, along with ballistae and catapults set up on the Force Bridge and Tesh Bridge, which flank the harbor mouth on the River Tesh. It is said that it is impossible to enter the harbor at Zhentil Keep without the permission of the appropriate authorities —and it is even harder to get out!

Mulmaster's harbor is smaller than that of Zhentil Keep, but much better defended and developed than the Docks of Hillsfar. A series of canals and harbor areas provides Mulmaster with docks for nearly two hundred vessels. The canals can be individually blocked by harbor chains, and many are guarded by ballistae, as the narrow canals make the imprecise catapult useless. Mulmaster also once boasted a navy of over seventy warships. In the recent Battle Between Storms, however, more than forty vessels were sunk by the forces of Zhentil Keep, and Mulmaster is struggling to rebuild its forces.

Recent Pirate Activities

The constant sniping between Zhentil Keep, Mulmaster, and Hillsfar is termed piracy by some, privateering by others, and open warfare by some outsiders— particularly those who have never seen Zhentil Keep truly at war. Most Moonsea piracy is limited to raids on ships at sea, as land-based raiding is fruitless given the well-defended city-states of the region.

Tantras and the City-States

The city-states of Tantras, Calaunt, Ravens Bluff, and Procampur can be found on the eastern shore of the Dragon Reach. Each of these cities presents a different view to the pirates of the Inner Sea. Each is independent, maintaining its status through differing combinations of diplomacy, tolerance, and military might.

Overall, the shoreline they share is rocky and high, with few accessible ports

and many rocky reefs which make settlement of this coastline difficult. North of Calaunt, where the Earthspur Mountains' southernmost bluffs abut the Reach, and again between Raven's Bluff and Procampur at the foot of High Haspur, the coastline is impassable, with cliffs so sheer that only the most expert climbers can scale them, and movement of any kind of cargo is impossible.

Tantras is the largest of these city-states. A prosperous, wealthy, and proud city, its shops offer a variety of goods far greater than otherwise available in this part of the Dragon Reach. Dominated by the worship of Torm and the entrepreneurial diligence of its merchant families, Tantras is a place of bustling industry.

Tantras was heavily involved in the recent Time of Troubles, and has not yet fully recovered from the destruction which occurred as a result. The destroyed buildings and parkways have almost completely been restored, although many of the trees in Tantras are now mere saplings. More serious is the enormous magic-dead area to the north of the city, and the occasional pockets (now mostly repaired) of dead or wild magic which dot the nearby landscape.

Procampur is the next largest city. Like Tantras, Procampur is hostile to the pirates, and its harbor is well defended (see below). Its ruler, the Thultyrl, like all the others of his line, has sworn eternal vengeance on any pirate who dares attack Procampur's harbor or raid the city's ships. However, his mage-advisor Hamayarch has encouraged him to more leniency and conciliation toward the pirates, and a few pirates whose crimes are not too heinous (and who have not been accused by Procampan captains) have been allowed to use this fabled port.

Although Calaunt's harbor is excellent and it would seem to be an ideal pirate haven, Calaunt has an evil reputation with the pirates. Some believe it is due to the stranglehold that the local Thieves' Guild, the Shadowcloaks, have on all fencing and smuggling in the city. Others maintain that the creatures which haunt the River Vesper can visit bad luck on a sailor who crosses them. Still others point to the stranglehold which the dukes of Calaunt have on the squalid city, and say that such is bad for business. Whatever the reason, pirates rarely put into Calaunt, and this is even less frequent since the occupation of Scardale (q.v.).

Ravens Bluff does not suffer Calaunt's ill reputation, and indeed is viewed as the most hospitable of the three cities. There is an extensive smuggling trade via the sewers (which are actually the ruins of the city of Sarbreen), and Ravens Bluff turns away no one—so long as they have gold to spend.

Pirates and Dragon Reach Law

While avatars and wild magic are a problem the High Council of Tantras have yet to fully solve, pirates are well understood. Tantras punishes piracy with death by drowning: convicted pirates are lashed to heavy stones and tossed into the Dragon Reach. The judges are not known to be lenient, but even so Tantras does not concern itself with piracy unless one of its own ships is involved. Smugglers suffer a penalty of confiscation of the smuggled goods plus a fine equal to their value; repeat offenders are usually executed.

Procampur's judges are quick to convict pirates, and the punishment is usually banishment for first offenders, with death by hanging for those who defy the ban. Smuggling is also not tolerated, with fines equal to the value of the goods (plus confiscation) suffered by those who evade the Thultryl's tax collectors. Slavery is illegal

in Procampur, and slaves brought here are considered free.

Calaunt punishes pirates and smugglers swiftly and mercilessly, unless they have permission to operate from the Shadowcloaks (who charge one-third of the value of the goods as a tithe). The sentence for violating their monopoly is invariably capital, but the punishment may come formally from a Court Executioner or informally as a dagger in the back in the night.

Ravens Bluff concerns itself little with affairs outside its walls. Known pirates (convicted in a court of law) are banished, but those with only evil reputations are tolerated, so long as they obey the laws of the Living City while they are in town.

Naval Forces and Shore Defenses

Tantras' harbor is defended by ballista batteries set up on the outer shore and along the mouth of the harbor. The narrow harbor mouth can also be blocked by a harbor chain. Tantras' own naval forces are limited, as the city has no great territory to defend, but may still send forth a force of nearly a half-dozen warships should the need arise.

Procampur's navy is comprised of sixteen major warships, each with an excellent crew. On more than one occasion, the city's very survival has depended on the skill of these crews, and the Thultryl has made quite an investment in them.

Procampur's harbor is not as well defended, in part because it extends a considerable length without an easily controlled harbor mouth. However, about a quarter of a mile inland, Procampur maintains a high city wall with well-defended gates. On several occasions, raiders have managed to pillage the harbor section, but they have never managed to penetrate into the main body of the city.

Calaunt's docks are perhaps the least defended of all, with no significant fortifications aimed at the river mouth. The city also maintains no formal navy, although the pirates who have arrangements with the Shadowcloaks have been known to act as such occasionally (usually as a matter of vengeance). The city's defenders, the Teeth of Calaunt, are not as well trained as many pirate crews, but fear of the Shadowcloaks (and the conciliation of their free trade with accepted pirates) keeps Calaunt from being the target of many pirate raids.

Ravens Bluffs defenses are limited, as the city is some distance from the waterline. As with other independent cities, Ravens Bluff supports only a small navy, and the thriving underground smuggling trade is rarely hindered.

Recent Pirate Activities

The Dragon Reach is a favored haunt of pirates. Calaunt and Scardale (q.v.) provide a safe harbor in the northern reaches of the Inner Sea, and the pickings from Procampur and the wealthy cities of Sembia are a constant temptation. Only Procampur makes any attempt at policing the eastern Dragon Reach, and its ships remain close to home (and to the commercial sea lanes) rather than roving through the less traveled areas.

Impiltur

Impiltur possesses the coastline from Lyrabar east and north to the northern tip of the Easting Reach. Its coastline is less forbidding than most along the Inner Sea, with many small harborages in addition to the harbors of its cities, and few dangerous points to disturb seafarers.

Pirates and Impilturan Law

Impiltur is attempting to build its strength, trading the copper and silver which is mined here for the manufactured goods of the more advanced civilizations of Sembia, Cormyr, and Thesk. Unfortunately for Impiltur, this makes their ships more frequent targets of pirates than those of most other nations, as the chance for gaining great wealth in ingots or coin is greater in Impilturan ships.

Impiltur has thus enacted severe punishments for piracy. Accused pirates are hung, and their ship confiscated by the rulers of the city in which they are tried. Smuggling is also not tolerated (a switch from much of the northern Inner Sea), being viewed as a crime against the state. Smugglers are treated as thieves, with hanging common for repeat offenders.

Naval Forces and Shore Defenses

Impiltur's navy is small but hardy. A dozen small warships guard her ports and her treasure fleets, but every man aboard is hand-picked for loyalty, bravery, and skill. Their ports are also well-defended, with stone walls, ballistae, and even catapults (in Lyrabar and Songhal) guarding from raiders.

Recent Pirate Activities

Pirates avoid Impiltur. The Impilturans do not take piracy lightly, and even the temptations of the treasure fleets keep the pirates away from the coastlines. Their ships at sea, on the other hand, have a reputation for attracting pirates; there are tales of a second pirate attacking an Impilturan treasure ship before the first pirate to arrive had managed to strike the colors.

Telflamm

The city of Telflamm and its subject towns lie on the eastern shore of the Easting Reach, from the tip of this region in the north to the Aglarond peninsula in the south. This region suffered great destruction at the hands of the Tuigan Horde, and has not yet recovered.

The harbors along this portion of the Reach are small, with none able to hold more than two dozen ships. (A notable exception is Telflamm, with an excellent harbor capable of holding over forty ships.) However, there are many one and two-ship harbors, and every village along the coast boasts an anchorage where traders may come.

Pirates and Telflamm Law

Before the Horde War, Telflamm made its living from the valuable goods which flowed along the Golden Way from far Kara-Tur. However, the region had never been wealthy, able only to take a small tithe from the wealth flowing between the East and the wealthy nations of the western Inner Sea. Piracy against the ships of Telflamm was common, but Telflamm itself was unable to do much.

If anything, the situation is now worse. The embargo imposed by Yamun Khahan, leader of the Tuigan, against cargo being shipped across the Great Waste damaged the Telflamm economy, and the flood of refugees from neighboring Thesk finished the job. Telflamm and its subject cities have become somewhat lawless, as refugees have created overcrowding and some shortages.

The pirates of the Inner Sea have taken advantage of the situation, establishing black markets for food and shelter in Culmaster, Ethdale, and Nyth. Only Telflamm, whose rulers have made every

effort to keep the pirates out, has not developed a thriving underworld.

Theoretically, piracy and smuggling in Telflamm are crimes punishable by death (for the former) and confiscation and fines (for the latter). The disorganized state of the nation has made these punishments rare, as many Telflammans view these pirates (who import necessities at prices far above those found anywhere else on the Inner Sea) as saviors rather than opportunists.

Naval Forces and Shore Defenses

Telflamm has little in the way of defenses. The militia can be called out to defend against raiders, and most cities maintain a guard force large enough to stop all but a true military invasion, but the higher forms of defense (such as siege engines and harbor chains) are not available.

Their navy, such as it once was, has turned to disaster relief, with all available ships importing necessities rather than acting for the nation's defense. Several of these vessels have fallen into pirate hands, delivering their cargo of food and clothing to overcrowded villages who pay outrageous prices for the goods, then curse the rulers of Telflamm (who had intended the goods to be distributed free) for their avarice. Should this situation continue for any length of time, rebellion may bring the rulers of Telflamm down.

Recent Pirate Activities

As mentioned above, pirate activities are increasing along the Telflamm coast. Cormyrean relief ships have been openly attacked, and Culmaster has become something of a pirate haven. The government is so shaken by the events of the last few years that they can do nothing to stop this.

Aglarond

Aglarond lies along the northern shore of the Aglarond peninsula. Its coastline, like much along the eastern portion of this sea, is dotted with small harbors, most of which have small towns or even cities. These settlements trade with one another (and rarely with the rest of the Inner Sea), but the wealth of Aglarond is in its raw materials, not its trade.

Pirates and Algarondan law

The Simbul (who rules Aglarond) has no tolerance for any who interfere in Aglarond's affairs. Her small navy of coastboats aggressively pursues pirates who come near the peninsula, and even those pirates who trade with Thay give Aglarond a wide berth.

Captured pirates are put to death immediately as agents of Thay. The Red Wizards are known to trade with pirates, and Aglarond's primary enemy and most pressing problem are the aggression of Thay. The Simbul has given direction that any suspected of cooperating with Thay be put to death immediately, and her people see the necessity of such draconian measures.

Naval Forces and Shore Defenses

Aglarond's naval defenses are few, consisting primarily of the small navy of coast-boats which their warriors use on their raids. While a single coast-boat is little threat to an ocean-going vessel, such ships attack in swarms of 5-10, grappling the larger vessel, boarding it, and putting all aboard to death without mercy.

Recent Pirate Activities

As might be easily understood, almost no piracy occurs in Aglarond.

Thay

The coastline of Thay extends from the River Thazarim in the east to the city of Delthuntle in the west. Only a few of the intermediate cities maintain even a pretense of independence, and those are under attack by Thay.

The coastline is rocky, but supports many small harbors as well as three major harbors: Delthuntle, Laothkund, and Bezantur. It is most foreboding in the east, and becomes almost inviting in the west, with rolling hills and attractive harbors.

Pirates and Thayvian Law

Even the pirates of the Inner Sea are unlikely to tug the beards of the Red Wizards. Legends clearly warn of the danger of stealing from the Red Wizards, and even trading with these powers can bring magical disaster down onto the outsider.

Should a pirate be so bold as to commit an act of piracy against Thay, the normal punishment for piracy is enslavement. However, if the pirate were particularly notorious or accomplished, the penalty would be death—in a fashion as gruesome and painful as the Tharchioness of Bezantur can imagine.

However, piracy in the Alamber Sea is not uncommon. These pirates live in small, secluded villages on the coast of Thay and Mulhorand, and on the smaller islands to the south of Ardor. They prey on the smaller coastal trading vessels and occasionally surprise the crews of larger vessels who bring their ships into shore to camp for the night or make emergency repairs. When the Thayvian navy finds and raids one of the pirate villages, the pirates attempt to pass themselves off as fishermen. Sometimes they are successful, sometimes they are not, and sometimes the Thayvian marines don't really care and enslave the population anyway—even if it turns out to really be just a fishing village.

Visitors to the Alamber Sea should also take note of Aleaxtis, the so-called Kingdom of the Sahuagin. Settlements of this kingdom under the sea dot the bottom of the Alamber, primarily north of the volcanic island known as the Ship of the Gods. The greatest concentration of sahuagin in the area is Vahaxtyl, a sahuagin city some 13,000 strong.

The sahuagin of Aleaxtis will sink any ship in the Alamber Sea, be it Mulhorandi, Untheric, Thayvian, or pirate. They also raid the Untheric cities of Messemprar and Mourktar. The Thayvians pay tribute to Aleaxtis in hope of reducing their depredations (so far, it hasn't worked), while the priests of Set and Tiamat in Unther have approached them about an alliance (also without success). The sahuagin are the most predatory nation in the region, and are widely feared even by the pirate chiefs and the Red Wizards.

Naval Forces and Shore Defenses

Thay maintains a small navy of magically-powered ships, operated from the Isle of Aldor. These ships are rarely seen outside of Thayvian waters (except during rare invasions of Aglarond or other neighboring lands), but they patrol the nearby seas like looming mountains of darkness, blasting any suspicious vessel with magical fire.

If the ships of Thay are dangerous, the port defenses are worse. The western ports have limited defenses, but Bezantur itself is defended with the full might of the Zulkirs. Any adventurer foolish enough to assault such a fortress will not long survive.

Recent Pirate Activities

The pirates of the Inner Sea do not raid the ships of Thay. They have learned to avoid

any ship flying the red-and-gold-flame-on-black banner of a Red Wizard—unless their spies have indicated that the banner is a ruse.

However, they do trade with the Tharchioness of Bezantur for the fire-fluid which powers the Thayvian bombards which guard the Dragonisle. Thay has not yet recognized the threat to their monopoly posed by the smoke powder of the priests of Gond. When they discover the situation, the pirates may have earned a terrible enemy.

Mulhorand

Mulhorand lies along the eastern coast of the Alamber Sea. Its coast is lined with cliffs, spotted with high falls which dash dramatically into the Alamber Sea. This wall, combined with Mulhorandese isolationism, has made Mulhorand one of the great mystery ports of the Inner Sea.

Pirates and Mulhorandese Law

Only licensed merchants may enter Skuld harbor; others are turned away. Piracy is illegal, but the traditional punishment (death by being pressed between great stones) has not been inflicted in years. Mulhorand's own ships never leave the harbor, and Thayvian captains do not leave their vengeance to the priests of the City of Eternity.

Naval Forces and Shore Defenses

Mulhorand's single major port is Skuld, said to be the oldest city in the Forgotten Realms. Were it not for the Road to the Dawn, Skuld would be as isolated as the rest of Mulhorand. However, this highway to Kara-Tur ends in this City of Shadows, and Thayvian merchants carry the caravans from Skuld west to the remainder of the Inner Sea.

Skuld harbor houses Mulhorand's navy (said to consist of only twenty ancient, rotting galleys) and the small amount of merchant traffic which visits this nation almost all of which comes from Thay. The harbor and low-lying portions of the city are protected from tidal waves and storm surges by a single huge seawall, set nearly three miles out into the Alamber. This wall was built millennia ago during Mulhorand's years of greatness, and is now in sad need of repair.

Recent Pirate Activities

Despite the Thayvian near-monopoly on trade, some smuggling has begun, particularly given the increased interest by Mulhorand in events outside their "paradise" land. Several smuggling rings have sprung up in Gheldaneth, Skuld, and Neldorild; the priests of Mulhorand have either not discovered them yet, or are using them as an early foray into more open contact with the outside world.

Unther

Mulhorand's traditional rival is Unther, a theocracy ruled by Gilgeam the Great, a manifestation of an extra-planar Power. Although the nobility of this land has as much interest in the outside world as the priests of Mulhorand, they have allowed trading companies to spring up along the well-watered western shore of the Alamber Sea.

Pirates and Untherian Law

Piracy under the ancient law of Enlil was punishable by banishment, the accused being set adrift in a small boat with no food or water. However, since the rise of Gilgeam and his priests, this has been re-

placed by a more arbitrary response, ranging from execution by torture to entertainment at the noble palace!

Smuggling is also common. Taxes and duties are destined for the priests of Gilgeam, but a high payment to the temple can often be avoided by a smaller bribe to a lower functionary. Under the ancient law of Enlil, smugglers were enslaved to the state (presumably to pay their debts to society), but this result is more a matter of caprice than law in modern Unther.

Naval Forces and Shore Defenses

Unther's navies were once the terror of the southern Inner Sea, with nearly one hundred warships (primarily biremes and triremes). However, battles with the pirates over the last several years have destroyed these vessels, most of which were poorly crewed and captained. Unther's "navy" now numbers but five ships, all of which may be found in the harbor at Unthalass.

The priests of Gilgeam now scheme to recover the Galley of the Gods, a great magical galley which can travel at amazing speeds, fly, and even breathe fire from its multiple-headed dragon prow. This galley was stolen in a daring raid by the pirates of the Alamber Sea, and Unther is rebuilding its navy so that they may recover this most sacred artifact.

The ports of Unther have decayed to the point of collapse. Messemprar rebelled two years ago (with some support provided by the city of Mourktar and carried by the pirates of the Inner Sea), and the army devastated the city before ending the rebellion. Unthalass has been destroyed by flood, and the port district has only recently been repaired after a daring pirate attack. Shussel is perhaps the most distressing; the city has become nothing but slums, and its ruler, Lord Ekur, has all but given up on encouraging trade through his shoddy port. All of these cities maintain a small garrison, but nowhere can a real modern port defense be said to exist.

Recent Pirate Activities

Piracy requires prey; Unther has declined to the point where true piracy is barely worthwhile. Some raiding of coastal cities continues, but the primary trade in this area travels between Mulhorand and Thay, and it is this that the pirates pursue. Since its recent destruction, the ruins of Messemprar have become a pirate haven, but the large Untheric military presence in the city has kept it from becoming a major center for piracy.

Chessenta

The city-states of Chessenta, which lie along the Bay of Chessenta to the east of Unther, house a people of passion, belying the dour nature of its stony coast. These warlike people, of all the traditional nations of the Inner Sea, are perhaps spiritually closest to the pirates. They understand taking what one needs, as opposed to asking for it. They themselves are seafaring people. They give no quarter, and ask for none. Thus, pirate raiding against Chessenta is less frequent, at least as far as the pirates of the Pirate Isles are concerned. However, piracy within Chessenta is a problem all its own. The Chessentan coastline has many small harbors and quays where sea-going vessels can come ashore, except within the Adder Swamp. Most are occupied, and many have some form of fortification. Merchant vessels carry cargo from city to city, with travel on the Bay of Chessenta having replaced surface travel for all but the inland cities.

Pirates and Chessentan Law

Piracy in Chessenta is punished harshly, primarily because most pirates in the area are themselves Chessentan. Different cities have different laws, but the death penalty is common, as is confiscation of the vessel. Recognize, however, that many of these pirates are actually privateers, carrying letters of marque from their home city-state. Given the constant internecine warfare within Chessenta, such men may be "staunch allies" one day, and pirates the next.

According to the laws of Chessenta, anyone convicted of a capital crime has the right to defend himself before a jury, which must render a unanimous verdict. Unfortunately, not all of the cities in Chessenta follow this code. Sentencing in mad Luthcheq is decided by the whims of the Karanoks (the ruling family of Luthcheq). Sentencing in the military dictatorship of Akanax is decided by a (biased) military tribunal. However, in Reth, Airspur, Cimbar, Soorenar, Mordulkin, and Mourktar, the law is applicable.

Smuggling is also a serious crime, although not a capital one. Most of the tax revenue Chessentan cities gather comes from export taxes. Convicted tax evaders have their goods confiscated, and must pay a severe fine; repeat offenders may be banished.

Naval Forces and Shore Defenses

The Bay of Chessenta itself is guarded at Watcher's Cape. As with everything else in Chessenta, the naval complement of the cities varies wildly. Airspur, which recently sustained heavy losses in war, has but a single customs vessel, while Cimbar, Chessenta's "capital," has nearly a dozen naval vessels and marines. Chessentan vessels tend to be biremes and triremes; they do not often use sailing vessels, in part because the Bay of Chessenta rarely has favorable winds, and often goes calm for days at a time.

Soorenar and Mourktar use wizards rather than navies to guard their ports, with a swift *fireball* the usual response to a raiding incursion. Luthcheq, on the other hand, executes any wizard who comes into port, burning him at the stake.

Recent Pirate Activities

Piracy is an integral part of Chessentan warfare, and warfare is an integral part of Chessentan life. Thus, pirate incursions are constant, with the intent being more to disrupt commerce and damage the enemy's ability to wage war rather than to steal treasure. One reason that the broad-sailing pirates of the Pirate Isles avoid Chessenta is the great odds that an outsider will be caught between two warring factions.

Chondath

The nation of Chondath lies along the southern shore of the Vilhon Reach. Chondath's coast is low, with large estuaries at the mouths of the River Arran and the River Nun. The shore has little in the way of protected harbors, and the waters are often shallow, limiting deep draft sea vessels to a few carefully selected harbors of Hlath and Arrabar.

Pirates and Chondathan Law

The kingdom of Chondath is essentially lawful, and abhors piracy. Pirates are punished by flogging for the first offense, and death for the second. Smuggling is uncommon, due to the lack of adequate ports, but it is also not viewed as a serious crime, with confiscation and a small fine being the only penalties.

Naval Forces and Shore Defenses

Chondath's ports are fairly well defended, with some ballistae at Arrabar, and a catapult and harbor chain at Hlath. The smaller ports are not well defended, and are occasionally raided.

Chondath's navy is small and thinly spread. Chondath is recovering from a terrible war with an evil mage named Yrkhetep. The resulting casualties have devastated both the army and the navy, leaving Chondath virtually defenseless. As the pirates (and Chessenta) recognize this, Chondath may find itself fending off invasion.

Recent Pirate Activities

In the wake of the war with Yrkhetep, pirate activity is on the rise. The military is weak, but the nature of the war was such that there was little economic cost, so the cities of Chondath still have much to be looted.

Turmish

The nation of Turmish runs along the northern shore of the Vilhon Reach, then northwestward to the city of Telpir. A mountainous region, Turmish lies along a rocky coast along the Reach, which softens somewhat north of Alaghon. Although the Reach coastline is rocky, the Reach itself is quite deep on the northern side, allowing ships to come to shore almost anywhere along the coastline.

Turmish itself is a somewhat fragmented country politically. A rural area, it has an extensive population of demi-humans (particularly dwarves in the Orsraun mountains and gnomes in the lowlands) and goblinoids.

Pirates and Turmish law

The human law of Turmish was extracted from the ancient code of Enlil, which was once used by the ancient empire of Chessenta. Under this law, piracy is considered a severe crime. However, the loose nature of the Turmish enforcement system makes punishment unlikely. Similarly, officially smuggling is a severe crime, but Turmish maintains no extensive customs patrols.

Among the demi-humans, on the other hand, these things are taken very seriously. The gnomes will punish pirates and smugglers whenever they are found, and will not always wait for the niceties of the Turmish legal system. The goblinoids are worse; if they aren't getting a cut of the smuggling, they have been known to execute "unauthorized" smugglers.

Naval Forces and Shore Defenses

Turmish maintains a "militia navy": privately owned ships are commandeered on an as-needed basis to prosecute piracy. As a result, enforcement is poor and piratical acts are often ignored.

Raiding, on the other hand, is not viewed with as much languor. The people of Turmish have something of a frontier spirit, and a raider hitting a Turmish settlement quickly discovers that instead of facing a lackluster militia, they are facing an armed populace with one united thought: drive out the invader.

Recent Pirate Activities

Turmish also participated in the war against Yrkhetep. However, since the nation is so spread out, the losses from that war have had little effect in Turmish. Instead, the normally lax enforcement has become even more so, with pirate raids happening literally within sight of major

settlements without reprisal from the Turmish government.

Westgate and Teziir

The cities of Westgate and Teziir lie on the southern shore of the Lake of Dragons. These two independent cities represent opposite poles in their treatment of the pirates and in their handling of their own ports.

Westgate has fulfilled the role of trading link between the Inner Sea and the Sword Coast for as long as humankind have been in the Inner Sea area. Once a simple stopover and stockyard, Westgate has diversified into shipyards, wagonmakers, and other sideline industries.

Teziir, on the other hand, is a small trading town which is trying to replace Westgate on the Inner Sea-Sword Coast route. By providing caravans with earlier embarkment onto the ships of the Inner Sea, Teziir hopes to route more of the cargo through their own harbor. Unfortunately, for nearly half the year the Neck (the narrow portion of the mouth of the Lake of Dragons) is frozen, preventing any ship traffic from entering or leaving Teziir. Thus, Westgate still remains preeminent in east-west shipping.

Pirates and Teziirad/Westgate Law

Both Teziir and Westgate deal with pirates. However, while Teziir sees these dealings as a necessary evil, the Night Masks of Westgate (who rule most of the underworld of the town) revel in the slave trade and contraband brought through their ports.

To be convicted of piracy in Westgate, you must raid a ship in Westgate harbor. The Lords of Westgate consider any other area outside their jurisdiction. Thus, they can deal with pirates without the legal entanglements which would otherwise arise.

Teziir extends its influence throughout the Lake of Dragons. However, as the only traffic entering the lake is primarily going to Suzail, Teziir has also not involved itself with the pirates much.

Naval Forces and Shore Defenses

Westgate's docks are open, but in time of need mercenaries can be called to defend the shore. Westgate mounts no navy, as pursuit of pirates is rarely a problem for them.

Teziir, on the other hand, does not even have a wall around the city. The docks are relatively defenseless, and the only thing which has prevented their being raided so far is the generous protection of the Cormyrean Freesails, who despise the wanton evil of Westgate.

Recent Pirate Activities

Westgate, as mentioned above, is a pirate haven. As such, one of the benefits is that it does not fear pirate raids. Teziir is defended only by Cormyr, and is generally held to be ripe for raiding. It is said that the Lords of Teziir are seeking to hire mercenaries to defend the city until the walls can be erected, but without the trade that Westgate is diverting, it is not clear how the Lords will pay.

In Which The Reader Finds A Geographic and Socio-Political Description of Said Isles

> Jomo Shanbaeren picks up a mug and absent-mindedly polishes it with a rag that's not quite as greasy as the one tucked into his belt. "After I was released from the piratin' life, I came here to Alaghon—fer some peace and quiet, y'know. From that seventeenth summer until my forty-fifth, I was shuffled from ship to ship, always unwillingly, I promise, and from island to island there in them Pirate Isles. I seen 'em all, some more'n once. They're all pretty much alike, 'cept fer who lives on 'em o'course. Set back in them chairs, now, and hark ta my words. If yer planning on bein' here for any time at all, ye'll need ta know what I'm gone ter tell ya."

The Pirate Isles are fifteen islands (and many smaller islets) which lie in the central Inner Sea, south of the Dragon Reach. These islands have been pirate havens since the days of Immurk, and much of the piracy which plagues the Inner Sea is spawned in this region.

The islands themselves are rocky, resembling craggy mountaintops poking through the surface of the sea. There is some vegetation, particularly on the lower shores, but the highest points of these islands tend to be barren.

The climate is semi-tropical, with hot and humid summers and temperate winters. The winters also bring strong storms which form on the open waters of the Inner Sea and smash against this archipelago almost continuously during the winter months. These storms tend to come from the southeast, and some believe that they are sent by powerful mages of Mulhorand to drive the pirates from the Isles.

There is no one "pirate lord" who rules all of the Pirate Isles. Even at the peak of Immurk's power, some islands were not controlled by the pirates, while others held rebel pirates who sought freedom from Immurk's control. Now, with Earthspur itself divided, each of the islands conceals its own independent inhabitants—and its own secrets.

The Waterways

The sea which surrounds the Pirate Isles is shallow, with many tidal islands (islands which only poke out above the water during low tide) and reefs. The shallow sea is a haven for sea-life, making fishing in the islands easy and productive.

The shallow sea also acts as a protective barrier for the pirates. It is difficult to sail the waters around the Pirate Isles without a pilot who knows the many hidden reefs and sandbars which dot this area, and it is suicide to sail here quickly without expert guidance. Only in certain areas is any kind of open-sea sailing possible.

The free-sailing waterways of the Pirate Isles thus become highways, allowing swift travel between the islands for those who know the routes. Traveling off of these waterways greatly increases the chance of running aground.

The largest area of free-sailing is the Bowl, an area of relatively deep sea roughly bounded by Ming Isle, Bulta, Ilthan, and the reefs southeast of Sumbar. The Bowl allows access to all of these islands, as well as Oresk and Paldir.

Adjacent to the Bowl is Wyrm Bay, a roughly circular area of open sea lying inside the eastern curve of the Dragonisle. Wyrm Bay is named for the dragon turtles that infest it (which also, incidentally, give the Dragonisle its name). These huge undersea creatures are extremely territorial, and even though the water is clear within

the Bay, sailing here is treacherous. A dragon turtle can capsize even the largest vessel, and those who fall into its jaws are doomed to a gruesome death. Fortunately, the area has enough dragon turtles that these creatures fight one another as often as they attack ships. Ships which make appropriate tribute, either in treasure or meat, can usually pass safely.

The northeast edge of the Bowl marks one end of the Windrace, a strait running from the Bowl to Alphar Isle and beyond. The Windrace is so named because it lies along the lines of the prevailing winds, allowing swift travel from the Bowl to Alphar Isle. In the other direction, however, travel is extremely slow, requiring tacking back and forth across the strait in order to make headway. Disputes between captains are often settled by a race from Mirg Isle, across the Bowl and up the Windrace to Alphar harbor, with the winner gaining victory in the challenge. It is said that just such a challenge cost the life of King Verovan of Westgate, who challenged the Red Wizards of Thay to a race from Alphar harbor around Mirg Isle and back again. According to the legend, Verovan was winning the challenge, but was betrayed by the Thayvian artifice of substituting his whip with one braided with cockatrice feathers, thus tricking Verovan into turning all of his oarsmen into stone.

Two other straits bear mentioning. One, known as the Jaws, runs south of the Dragonisle beneath the high peak of Earthspur, to the islands of Teltar and Sarr. The other, known as the Spoon, runs along the southern edge of Alphar Isle to the eastern shore of Ilthan and then south into the Bowl. The Spoon is not as wide as the Windrace, and it has a few sharp twists in it, so it is not as popular an accessway into the central Pirate Isles.

All of these waters (except Wyrm Bay) are inhabited by the nomadic locathah.

These creatures travel throughout the Pirate Isles, and lair in undersea caves on almost every island in the region. The locathah tribes and the pirates have an arrangement, in which the locathah are paid for steering pirate fishing fleets to the best fishing waters, allowing these islands to support many more people than would otherwise be possible. In addition, the pirates do a considerable trade in locathah coral carvings, and nearly every pirate wears a ring or earring of locathah coral.

The Dragonisle

Jomo wipes his nose on the edge of his coatsleeve, and snuffles loudly. He spits into a brass spittoon, and shouts "Aye! A hit!" when the gobbet lands squarely in the urn. He's obviously had years and years of practice. Turning to your group, he changes countenance rapidly and snarls, "Teldar, that reprobate! He lives in Immurk's Hold, named after the only man ever worthy of the title Pirate Lord. Thinks that livin' there makes him better'n the rest of them poor sea dogs what *works* fer their livelihoods. What a fop, always wearin' them lacey cuffs and fancy-schmancy turned-down boots. I dunno how he's managed to 'ang on all these years, and not get himself killed by a challenger what's younger'n more leaderly-like. Did I tell yer about the time we took on him and the *Kissing Maiden? . . . "

The Dragonisle is the largest of the Pirate Isles, haven to Immurk, and the home base for any pirate lord (or aspirant to that position). The island is also called Earthspur, although that name properly belongs to the mountain on the southern end of the island.

The Earthspur is a huge spear of land

thrusting 8000' above the sea. Above about 1000', however, it is bare, windswept rock, stripped clean by winter storms, with only lichen and an occasional nesting seabird living above. The mountain shoots up from the southern end of the island, with the northwestern part of the island forming a protected peninsula lying in the shadow of the huge peak. The Earthspur can be seen on a clear day from nearly 100 miles away, making it a landmark for navigation throughout much of the central Inner Sea.

The lower portions of the Dragonisle are more hospitable. The Dragonisle has three protected harbors, the largest of which (on the northwestern side of the island) can hold over one hundred ships. Moreover, the land on the western side slopes gently to the foot of the Earthspur, providing over seventy square miles of land within an easy climb of the harbor. This main harbor is the site of Immurk's Hold, the main settlement on the Dragonisle. The harbor is defended by several measures, including:

- *harbor chains* —huge chains which can be raised from the bottom to block the harbor mouth. When raised, the harbor chains prevent any ship from entering or leaving the harbor. The chains are raised primarily to keep out attackers, although in a few instances they have been used to trap unwary captains in the harbor during the periodic factional wars which sweep Immurk's Hold.
- *breakrocks* —artificial reefs set in the harbor at strategic points just below the waterline. Only an experienced pilot who is familiar with the harbor at Immurk's Hold can hope to sail a vessel of any size through the harbor without running onto one of these reefs. Thus, any invader who breaches the harbor chains must' still find his way through the maze of underwater hazards before he can come ashore.

- *ramships* —light galleys crewed by ten men (usually slaves or prisoners). These ships are little more than rams mounted on oared platforms; their mission is to ram enemy ships in the harbor. A loyal pirate is usually aboard, piloting the vessel and exhorting the oarsmen to the requisite speed. Although these ships are small, their low rams and high speed make them a threat to all but the largest ships. In desperate circumstances, they are loaded with combustibles, driven swiftly toward a target ship, and set aflame just before arrival.

All of these defenses are coordinated from a large fortress set 80' high in the cliff along the western side of the harbor entrance. This fortress is also the site of the *Thayvian bombards,* mystical devices which fire a flaming projectile at enemy ships. The fortress has four of these monsters, which may fire at any target in their line between 120 yards and 480 yards away. Closer targets may not be struck, as the bombards cannot be lowered to aim at them, while the projectiles fall before reaching more distant targets. The bombards fire huge hollow stone balls filled with fluid purchased from the Red Wizards of Thay that, placed in the bombard, ignites and carries the flaming stone ball to its target. These bombards are wonders of the age, but are hampered by their size (each is larger than a manor-house in Waterdeep), the required fluid (which the Thayvians part with at a dear price), and their lack of accuracy.

The other two harbors lie along the southern and northeastern edge of the island. Both are formed by natural crevices in the Earthspur. The southern harbor can hold nearly sixty ships, and is protected by a curving arm of the Earthspur which forms a natural barrier. The narrow mouth of this harbor is guarded by a fort with another four *Thayvian bombards,*

harbor chains and other defenses, much like the northern harbor. Trails connect this harbor to Immurk's Hold, and the overland journey can be made in less than four hours. The southern harbor is thus a popular docking point for ships who have little or no cargo to unload. Despite the protection offered by the Earthspur, however, the winter storms push the waves through the entrance (which has no seawall), driving ships trapped in this harbor onto the unforgiving cliffs of the Earthspur. This harbor is thus evacuated through much of the winter months, the ships scattering to other, smaller harbors throughout the Pirate Isles.

The northeastern harbor lies within a grotto of sea-caves which can hold nearly a dozen ships. The sea-cave entrance is open at all times, but at high tide and during storms it is not possible to sail in and out of the entrance. Also, the caves have an evil reputation, with rumors of contact with various subterranean inhabitants, including pathways to the Underdark itself! Nevertheless, the twisting caverns are a favored hiding place for pirates who have made one too many enemies, and are also rumored to hold the hidden treasure of more than one pirate-living and dead.

Immurk's Hold

Immurk's Hold is the closest thing to a city anywhere in the Pirate Isles (at least above the water). With a population numbering near 5,000, this pirate town is the worst den of iniquity on the Inner Sea (with the possible exception of Westgate). In a town of criminals, power is law; edicts of pirate captains are enforced by roving bands of pirates, who are often as much seeking the pleasure of violence as to enforce any "laws" they happen to conceive.

Some traditions, however, are widespread enough to have gained the force of law. Many of these are embodied in Immurk's Code, a code of conduct reputedly set down by Immurk himself. Although various individuals vary in the exact wording and intent of the code, the following elements are common:

- The city of Immurk's Hold shall be open to all pirates, so long as they do not prey on other pirates (this effectively bars the privateers).
- As a pirate's life is governed by the will of the gods, no god shall be barred and no interference with worship shall be tolerated (this has made Immurk's Hold a haven for many sects—such as Loviatar and Talona—which are not otherwise popular with the pirates).
- In time of war or attack, everyone in the Hold must fight for its defense. Every man must be trained to fight, and must maintain his own weapon (this has been extended to women and even children over the years).
- When pirate captains fight, they must do so outside the Hold, as the Hold is more important than any one captain (this was originally intended to protect the Hold from intrigue and civil war, and is mostly honored in the breach).

Immurk's Hold supports nearly any trade associated with the sea. There are shipwrights and a yard, with a dry dock able to bear nearly any seagoing vessel. Coopers (barrel-makers) and stevedores (cargo-handlers) repackage ill-gotten cargo and move it to more legitimately-flagged vessels for fencing in the other ports of the Inner Sea. Warehouses provide temporary storage for the goods, while moneychangers and usurers manage the huge sums which the pirate trade brings in.

The city is currently divided into three factions. Teldar of the Kissing Maiden is ostensibly the most respected pirate. An older, capable veteran, Teldar lacks great

leadership ability. Were he a more dynamic leader, or were he able to sway the pirates with the force of his personality, he would have been declared Pirate Lord a decade ago. However, he is generally perceived as too weak to hold such a post against all challengers. It is interesting to note, however, that several other aspirants to that post have come and gone: Teldar is still here.

One of those aspirants is Vurgrom "the Mighty," a fat, brawling giant of a man who is said to hail from the Moonsea. Although Vurgrom is large, his bulk belies his grace and speed in a fight. He rose to the captaincy after slaying his previous captain (a not uncommon occurrence among the pirates), and kept the post after three successive challenges, all ending in the death of his opponent. Vurgrom has been currying favor among the younger pirates, many of whom have come to piracy after losing their homes to the Time of Troubles or the invasion of the Tuigan Horde. Vurgrom urges greater aggressiveness, pointing out that the recent calamities have weakened even the most powerful nations on the coasts of the Inner Sea, and the newer pirates, many of whom have personal grudges against their old rulers, are eagerly accepting his word. More experienced pirates remember the reprisal fleets assembled by Cormyr and Sembia, and do not wish to suffer the concentrated attention of the wealthier and more powerful land nations again. They also fear that Vurgrom, who has only been with the pirates for eight years, may actually be in the employ of Zhentil Keep. The pirates have served the masters of that place before, always to their own detriment, and many distrust Vurgrom's motives now.

Another recent arrival in the Pirate Isles who has gained much favor is Gasteban, a deposed Chessentan noble who fled to the Isles with three ships almost a decade ago. Gasteban has also announced dreams of unifying the pirates into an army, although his goal is more personal-he seeks reinstatement into his ancestral lands in Chessenta. His following is weaker than Vurgrom's, but it is growing, particularly since he gained the support of the well-known intriguer Crammar (who has long been viewed as talented but too weak to hold the lordship). Gasteban is more politic (and, many say, wiser) than Vurgrom; conflict between Vurgrom and Gasteban is inevitable, as they both seek the same power base: Teldar appears to be standing back and waiting for them to destroy one another.

Alphar Isle

"Aye, Immurk started at Alphar, but he didn't stay there long. Too easy for Procampur and Tsurlagol to strike at. Strange place, now, with that Selshin fella in charge. They say he wants to go straight, to clean up the place and keep out the pirates! Think of that, in the Pirate Isles! It's a man's right to pirate if'n he wants to, and a woman's too I guess. . . " His eyes mist over a bit, and you're quite sure he's remembering the flame-haired vixen with the ruby at her throat. "Not that I'd ever've done it by my own choice, y'know; I was forced, I tell ya!"

According to pirate tradition, Alphar Isle is the sight of Immurk's first pirate hold. The island boasts several harbors, each capable of holding between ten and thirty ships, and still maintains a thriving settlement of nearly 5,000 people at its largest harbor (on the western coast) which is widely visited by the pirates, but as the number of pirates grew this harbor dimin-

ished in prominence as the Dragonisle became the primary pirate hold.

Although Alphar Isle is nearly as large as the Dragonisle, with more usable land area, it is in fact less desirable as a pirate haven. It is within easy raiding distance from Procampur and Tsurlagol, so it suffers from the occasional patrols of these city-states. Its harbor is less defensible, and cannot hold as many ships as the harbors on the Dragonisle. Further, it is considerably farther from the profitable trading lines with Thay, Mulhorand, and Chessenta, while the Dragonisle is nearly as conveniently located to these as it is to the northern tradelines. Thus, if Immurk did begin here, it is clear why he would move to the Dragonisle.

Today, Alphar Isle is still a haven for those pirates who have angered one or more of the powerful factions in Immurk's Hold. The "citizens" of Alphar Isle hold to Immurk's traditions as an open port, so nearly anyone on the Inner Sea (except privateers) is welcome in Alphar without reprisal. However, the town will not tolerate raiding from its harbor, as it is too close to the vengeance of the northern nations to tolerate the reprisals.

Unlike Immurk's Hold, the town has its own government separate from the pirates, with Selshin Toshant, a forty-year-old ex-pirate, currently holding the post of Alphar's leader. Selshin has made some effort to "clean up" Alphar harbor, pushing to ban wanted pirates and to open more active trade with Impiltur, Procampur, and Sembia. However, the nations of the northern Inner Sea are not eager to build up ties to a port with such strong associations with the pirates. Selshin's efforts are also being resisted by the residents of Alphar (whose pirate traditions run deep), and observers speculate that if Selshin continues this tack, he will soon find himself removed from Alphar's leadership.

Alphar maintains a militia and its harbor has some breakrocks, and it once had a harbor chain which has now decayed away, but it does not support the kind of defenses available at Immurk's Hold. Because of this, Alphar is much more susceptible to direct attack, and it has been sacked twice in the last fifty years by reprisal fleets from the nations of the Inner Sea. The people of Alphar view these attacks philosophically; when invaders arrive, they retreat to the wilderness areas of their island, returning when the invaders have gone and rebuilding. Lesser invaders (such as raiders) are treated much more harshly; the skeletons of the ships of those who have fallen to Alphar's militia lie smashed along the breakrocks.

Bulta

"Ooh, that's a weird 'un! Teeny efalants, and teenier folk—not more'n a few inches high! Teldar claimed to have caught one once, and called her Tinklechime; said she could glow in the dark, and told him things. I always said he was a strange one. Anyhow, stay away from Bulta; leave it for the harvesters. Nothin' much ya kin do with a foot-high efalant, anyways. . . "

Bulta is a small island in the lee of the larger island of Oresk. Bulta is not inhabited by men, but its unique climate has given rise to a habitat for some of the most unusual creatures in the Realms: the minimals.

These half-sized breeds of otherwise normal animals were presumably created by means of spells similar to those used to create giant reptiles, insects, and the like. Their environment, too, has been somehow magically affected; trees and other plants are but half their normal height, and the animals range over domains

which are similar in size and terrain—once you consider their size difference.

The pirates of the region occasionally visit Bulta to "harvest" a sampling of the local fauna. These are then brought to the other pirate holds, where they have become quite common as domesticated animals. Minimal bulls, elephants, and stags are particularly popular, although a variety of wildlife exists (including some minimal carnivores) on Bulta.

There are persistent rumors of sightings of tiny winged humanoids who live in the deep forests of Bulta. These creatures seem in scale with the minimals. They have only been glimpsed, and none of them have ever approached a human. A few search parties have been sent into the deep forest to locate these inhabitants, but the explorers either returned empty-handed or did not return at all.

There are legends among the natives of the region that the island of Bulta was once much larger than it is now. It is possible, therefore, that rather than simply providing a preserve for these miniature animals, some powerful enchantment was used to reduce the entire island. Minimals removed from the island do not return to "normal" size, so this is more of a theoretical question than a practical one. However, an enchantment powerful enough to affect an entire island might also have powerful effects if dispelled; most pirates visit Bulta only rarely, and try to disturb as little as possible.

Fang Rocks

Jomo leans over the bar, his sour, stale breath overpowering the mouth-watering aromas coming from the kitchen. "Keep away from 'em. They're nothin' but danger. Never mind the rumors about the entire Sembian fleet

The Fang Rocks are a cluster of natural reefs lying to the northwest of the Pirate Isles, and are not themselves islands (except at very low tide). They cover a roughly circular area nearly ten miles in radius, with several irregularly-spaced reefs, some of which extend above the waterline, while others lie just below. However, they are notable as a natural breakrock for the islands, lying on the primary route between Sembia and the Pirate Isles, and for their part in the establishment of the legend of Immurk "the Invincible."

In 1180 DR, Sembia sent an enormous fleet of twenty warships into the Pirate Isles to capture Immurk himself. These warships were armed not only with ballistae and catapults, but also with special magical devices purchased from the wizard-king of Aglarond to allow the warships an easy victory against Immurk's ragtag fleet of pirates. This fleet swept forward at flank speed, hoping to catch Immurk at sea, as even then the harbor on the Dragonisle was formidable.

The fleet never reached Immurk. They had only limited intelligence about the lay of the Pirate Isles, the area never having been commercially viable, and made their course directly through the Fang Rocks. Twenty warships entered the Fangs; three left, including the flagship, the admiral on his deck weeping at the destruction of his fleet before ever encountering the enemy. The remaining ships turned about and returned to Sembia, the fleet broken.

This tale has some modern aspects. First of all, sailors of Sembia view the Pirate Isles as cursed as a result of this incident, and are reluctant to sail into its waters. Second, the magical items which the Sembians purchased from Aglarond were never recovered, and are believed lying in the sunken ships which to this day dot the bottom of the Fang Rocks region. Several groups have tried to explore these ships (using *potions of water breathing),* but have been thwarted by the ixitxachitl which inhabit the Fangs. These evil creatures have been known to devour divers, tearing them apart in sacrifice to their evil deities. These ixitxachitl are rumored to be ruled by a vampiric ixitxachitl of enormous age and magical power, who views the Fang Rocks as his personal domain, and who considers the Sembian magical treasures as his by right, even though he cannot use them, as he has no hands. The exact nature of the magical treasures are not known, but they are believed to include a *staff of swarming insects, a horn of blasting,* and a *bowl of commanding water elementals.* This last may have been appropriated by the ixitxachitl ruler for his own use (as it requires only the speaking of a command word to be used), representing further danger to those seeking the treasure.

Hawk's Isle

Hawk's Isle is a pleasant, fruitful island with nearly a dozen small harbors, each of which can hold no more than a half-dozen ships. The upper slopes of the island are covered with forest, and birds and other wildlife have been spotted.

Hawk's Isle is named for the pirate Hawk, who sailed the Inner Sea during the last days of Immurk's reign. Hawk was a rebel against Immurk's leadership, and refused to subject his piratical raids to the restrictions or tithe of Immurk and his spymasters. He established Hawk's Isle as a competing pirate haven to Immurk's Hold, and for nearly a decade tried to draw dissatisfied captains from Immurk's banner to his own. He was most successful with the orcs, goblins, and gnolls who had disliked Immurk's reserved, slow approach to raiding, but many human captains and crews moved to follow him.

As might well be understood, Immurk could not let this continue. As Hawk's power grew, Immurk became more and more annoyed with the upstart. Hawk was using several of the harbors on Hawk's Isle, making it difficult to mount an attack which could bottle all of his ships in simultaneously, and a sea battle would cost Immurk too many of his own ships, but Immurk developed a plan which would allow him to destroy the rebel pirate.

Immurk sent small boats into each of Hawk's harbors with one job: sink the pirate vessels. Before the pirates on Hawk's Isle realized what had happened, all of their ships had been holed and set afire, and the pirates were forced to flee to shore. With all of Hawk's men trapped ashore, Immurk completed the remainder of his plan. He had bribed a priestess of Talona, Lady of Poison, to create a vicious plague among the pirates on Hawk's Isle. This plague killed over half of the pirates, and few totally escaped its disfiguring, debilitating scourge.

Immurk then declared Hawk's Isle to be totally embargoed and quarantined, threatening death to any who came to the island. The few survivors attempted to build ships to replace their lost vessels, but each time Immurk sent men in to burn them. Eventually, the last of the pirates died, leaving descendants who had lost the knowledge of seamanship, and were left only with the vague descriptions of their forefathers.

The descendants of the survivors of Immurk's assault have degenerated. The disease which the priestess of Talona created has long since run its course, but the inhabitants of Hawk's Isle are so deformed and twisted that they have lost all real relationship to their ancestors, becoming mongrelmen. They have lost sea-craft, except as applies to the canoes and other small craft they use to attack passing ships. An alert sailing ship can manage to evade them if the wind remains favorable, but in unfavorable winds the canoes can swiftly bring a swarm of mongrelmen boarders to all sides of the attacked vessel who quickly overwhelm even the most valiant crews. Captives and provisions are brought back to the island, from whence they are never heard from again; the ships are sometimes also taken, but are usually set adrift to be carried off empty by sea currents.

Ilthan

Ilthan is a commonly visited island, at least in part because of its strategic location at the join of the Windrace and the Bowl. There are several harbors, each with a small community of pirates. Most landings here tend to be temporary, pulling out during winter to return to the Dragonisle. The buildings are temporary, as the winter storms often wash the settlements away and they must be rebuilt in the spring.

Most of the harbors are along the southern edge of the island. The northern edge is inhabited by cyclopskin, who herd sheep and goats. The cyclopskin live in caves on the high cliffs of the southern

shore. Some keep minotaur lizards as pets and defenders, and there are rumors that the cyclopskin are subservient to a small band of ettins. In any case, the few meager harbors on the northern shore have not made it worthwhile for the pirates to drive these cruel but stupid creatures out.

Legend tells that the cyclopskin are actually true giants, firbolgs, or other powerful creatures cursed by Umberlee for their refusal to acknowledge her control of the vicious winter storms. Some travelers to the cyclopskin lands (always a dangerous undertaking) tell of a ruined stone city in the northern highlands, proportioned for creatures larger than either humans or cyclopskin. According to legend, the inhabitants of this city once dominated the Inner Sea; there are even hints in the records of the Elven Court at Myth Drannor that the "Great Ones of the Inner Sea" disappeared in a cataclysm not of their own making. The truth of any of these rumors lies within the enormous walls of the ruined city of Ilthan Isle.

Kelthann

"A smuggler's haven, it is. Nothin' permanent, you understand, but lots of business goes on there-more than in Waterdeep itself, I hear. Did I tell you about the time Teldar tried goin' there in disguise as a smuggler, and almost got himself sworn to Grumbar in the deal? No? Here, have another ale. It's a grand tale, aye. . . "

Kelthann is one of the largest and most exposed islands within the archipelago known as the Pirate Islands. Gateway to Sembia, this island has not been popular amongst the pirates, as its harbors are too easily raided by the fleets of the nations of the northern Inner Sea.

Where one group sees difficulty, another sees opportunity. Kelthann has become a common smuggler's trading point, where ships of one registry can exchange cargo with those of another without the watchful eye of one or another harbormaster. The island has several protected harbors, and the sea-traffic here during peak season sometimes rivals that at Westgate or Procampur!

Because of the possibility of raids, there are no permanent settlements of smugglers on Kelthann. However, there are some native fishermen, as well as a small colony of halflings who reside on this island. The Kelthanni are a taciturn and unfriendly people, and tolerate the smugglers primarily for the gifts the smugglers bring. They are followers of Grumbar, Boss of Earth, and claim that their worship keeps Kelthann and the rest of the Pirate Isles from sinking beneath the waves. It is this rivalry between Grumbar and Umberlee, explain the Kelthanni, that brings the vicious storms every winter, as Umberlee tries to wash the islands from "her" sea. The recent visit of Umberlee during the Time of Troubles only strengthened their faith, as she attempted several times to wash the Kelthanni off their island and was unsuccessful.

The Kelthanni reside in rough houses of unworked stone, which have been built for them by earth elementals. All villages, and much of the rest of the island, are protected by high dikes and stone barriers to keep the sea out. Each Kelthanni village is led by a priest of Grumbar of at least 7th level, who supervises the building of homes and seawalls (through his ability to summon an earth elemental), and who decides all legal claims within the village.

The Kelthanni tolerate the smugglers because their activities are irrelevant to the Kelthanni way of life. In payment for the use of Kelthanni harbors, however, the

smugglers offer some of the earth's bounty (generally gold or silver) to be placed on the island to strengthen Grumbar's hold. Additionally, the Kelthanni require that any ship which uses Kelthanni harbors swear an oath to not bury anyone aboard at sea. The Kelthanni will accept the body of any being for burial in their catacombs, but they claim that burial at sea strengthens Umberlee. Violators of the oath are told that the earth will reject their bodies, and they will be forced to serve Umberlee as zombie slaves for all eternity. It is a small enough thing to the smugglers that the oath is rarely broken.

The Kelthanni have some coastal sailing vessels, but nothing capable of making it to the mainland. However, the smugglers will often provide transportation for natives who wish to see the wider world.

Lith

Lith, a tiny island east of Hawk's Isle, has a dangerous and evil reputation on the Inner Sea. Boats which have landed on this island (there are no harbors for ships) either return having found nothing, or never return at all. As there are no harbors, and little enough land, the island has never been settled, but it still holds some fascination for the pirates, and many adventurers have traveled to the island to uncover its secret—never to return.

Lith's secret is the origin of the mysterious other name for the Inner Sea: the Sea of Falling Stars. Sages of three centuries ago observed a cloud of swirling shooting stars high above the Inner Sea. One particularly bright star shot down from the sky straight into the Inner Sea: this star was bright enough to be seen and noted in both Suzail and Skuld. The image was sufficiently impressive that several sages
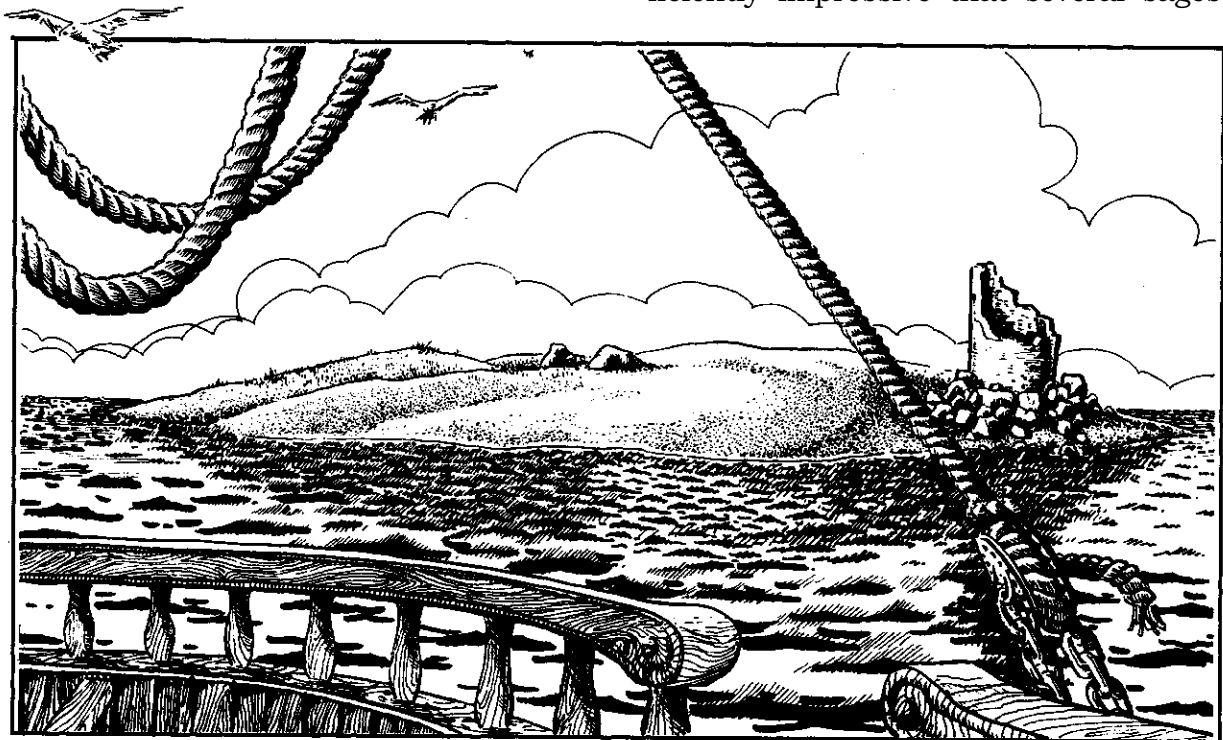
quested for the landing spot of the star; none ever reported finding it, although many gave up after a time and a few were never seen again. The quests and the tales quickly brought the Sea its poetic name.

The truth is as insidious and horrible as can be imagined. A battle between a neogi broodship and a Shou Lung dragonship eventually led to the destruction of the neogi ship. However, rather than simply being destroyed in space, the ship crash-landed on the island of Lith, and its Great Old Master (having only barely survived the crash) was able to crawl free just before hatching time. After the traditional cannibalistic frenzy, the surviving neogi brood numbered five, and they quickly set to feasting on the animals on the tiny island.

Over the years, several generations of neogi have been born, each quickly spreading across the tiny island. Usually, the last meal of the Great Old Master are his sibling neogi, and thus each generation starts anew. There are no umber hulks on the island, and the neogi seem unable to swim, so for the moment the creatures are confined to Lith. They have managed to survive their confinement, although the pull of Toril's gravity is severely damaging, forcing them to remain dormant in the late spring, summer, and early fall, hiding in underground burrows. Their natural ability to enslave umber hulks has extended to much of the remaining animal life on the island, and the neogi can send animals in battle against those who land on their island.

Thus far, any visitors to Lith have become food for the insatiable neogi colony, unless they arrived during one of the periodic dormant phases. However, it is possible to communicate with the, neogi (although these creatures, being isolated from their society, do not speak common) if they were met just at the end of their hibernation, before their ravening hunger

set in. If the neogi colony were contacted by those who would exploit it, these vicious slavers could be spread across the Forgotten Realms.

Lurath

> "I dunno which one's worse, Bulta or Lurath. One's got them teeny critters on 't, the other's got—well, giants. Great big lizards! Them elves what live there must be dotty, not to be fearin' fer their lives every minnit. It just ain't natural!"

Lurath lies along the western edge of the Windrace, across from Ilthan. Lurath is a medium-sized island, about twenty square miles in area. However, unlike most of the islands in this region, it has very little lowlands. Its shoreline is comprised of a great cliff which surrounds the island.

The cliff is actually the outside edge of a sealed circular valley. A few sailors have been forced by shipwreck or have intentionally managed to penetrate this valley wall, to find a tropical paradise populated by happy, friendly elvish primitives.

Although the valley's inhabitants are friendly, the region is not without risk. Not only are the humans in the valley from an earlier time, but the creatures in the valley are dinosaurs. The villagers live in cave-cliffs above the jungle floor within the valley; below, gargantuan lizards battle for dominance of a small and fragile land.

Adventurers entering the valley can discover the physical circumstances, but the reason behind the existence of this valley is even more mysterious. The valley is not merely out of its own time; travel through the labrynthine caves which riddle the cliffs transports the traveler back in time to the days before men. Adventurers who try to leave the valley by any way other than the caves (for example, by hitching a

ride on a pterosaurus) will discover that they have left their own world completely behind.

The primitive world they are now in is ruled not by men or elves, but by dragons. Escapees from the island of Lurath may quickly find themselves facing Alhazmabad, the venerable copper dragon of the mountain range which is (in the characters' time) the Pirate Isles. Alhazmabad is aware of the time-piercing portals in the Lurath valley, but has no way to close them and they are too narrow for him to penetrate. Should characters encounter Alhazmabad, they may be able to pilfer some potent draconic magic from his hoard—if they survive.

Mirg Isle

Mirg Isle is the second strongest pirate hold in the Pirate Isles, with the Dragonisle itself the only one more powerful. It is ruled by the iron fist of Xenz, a pirate lord who dares anything to achieve his aims, and dares the Dragonisle to stop him.

Xenz's ship, the Beauty's Eye, is a well-known pirate vessel. Few survive from the ships she captures, and his land raids are equally vicious; not only is the target village sacked, but its entire populace is captured and enslaved, turning the place into a ghost town. The few who escape his clutches seem to have their memories wiped out, overwhelmed by the fear of Xenz. Each of them describes the vicious pirate differently, and it is thought that he uses illusion magic to avoid being identified. Nevertheless, his crews are always obedient; there are no ex-crewmen from the *Beauty's Eye.*

Perhaps most serious, it is rumored that Xenz is in league with Zhentil Keep, and may be planning a coordinated attack against the Dales or even Sembia. Should such an event occur, the nations of the Inner Sea would have no choice but to turn their attentions to stamping piracy out again in the region.

As Xenz's fame has grown, various other captains have gone to join him. His original force of but a few ships has grown to a fleet of nearly forty; it is said that only his failure to occupy Immurk's Hold keeps Xenz from taking the crown as pirate lord. Despite the increase in size, there have been no defections. Captains who join with Xenz seem to fit perfectly into their new subordinate role, with no friction with Xenz himself or the other captains (at least, not in public). Even some of the smugglers have begun to join him, seeing an opportunity to make more profit by moving more merchandise.

While Xenz risks bringing another reprisal fleet on the islands, none of the other pirate captains has enough support to challenge the renegade. As discussed above, none of the three contenders for the crown of "pirate lord" is able to command enough force to stop Xenz, and by temperament they are unlikely to cooperate unless the Dragonisle is in imminent danger.

The gossips of Immurk's Band have begun to whisper about Xenz. There is some concern that his control may be magical; two captains who were bitter enemies before joining his band have become the best of friends, to everyone's mystification. The fact that he never comes to the Dragonisle is also considered suspicious by many. Should he continue to increase tension in the region, the Band itself (which owes no loyalty to any of the claimants, although it favors Gasteban) may have to act against Xenz: a task for which outsiders would be more than welcome.

Oresk

> "Aaah, Azla! What a woman! The only one who could ever make me forget that flame-haired vixen"—you struggle to keep from mouthing the words along with Jomo, for fear of offending him— "with the ruby at her throat. And the only woman who makes that pig Vurgrom worry about his pride!" It's clear to all of you that this is one woman Jomo admires deeply, and not only for her feminine pulchritude.

Oresk is the third of the great pirate holdings. This one is ruled by Azla, a young woman who attained the captaincy after her lover, the previous captain died. Azla herself is a "witch of a fighter" but initially was viewed with some hostility by the remaining pirate captains. Rather than working within the system, supporting one or another of the factional candidates for "pirate lord," Azla set out to establish herself first as an independent. Now, after three years, some are even seeing her as a viable candidate for pirate lord.

Azla's early raids were simple one-ship affairs, as she was unable to secure the cooperation of any of the other captains. However, as she came back from cruise after cruise laden with wealth, a few of the hungriest captains approached her about some joint ventures—with themselves in charge, of course. She declined, but offered instead to cut them in on some profitable treasure ships if they would aid her. Two cruises later, she had six captains eager to sign up.

Unfortunately, however, her new-found success attracted the attention of Vurgrom the Mighty When word got out that she was looking for several ships for her next cruise, and a few of Vurgrom's captains considered going, Vurgrom swore neither he nor any captain of his would ever follow a woman, and that for her impertinence he'd have to kill her. Realizing that life in Immurk's Hold was a dwindling proposition, Azla went to Oresk to reside with some other minor independent pirates.

Now, three years later, every pirate in both harbors of Oresk follows Azla's lead. She seems not only to have excellent contacts in the mercantile houses of Sembia and the shipping organizations of Cormyr and Impiltur, she also has an excellent tactical sense, and a generous hand at distributing taken wealth. Nearly forty ships support Azla from Oresk, but her support on the Dragonisle is still weak, primarily due to Vurgrom's influence. A showdown between these two aspirants is also brewing; Vurgrom may well find himself trapped between Azla and Gasteban.

Paldir

> "Sure, I know what carved them cliffs. I'm the only one who knows that secret, and I'll not be tellin' it while I'm alive." Jomo's eyes shift from side to side, as if he were looking for spies from Procampur or Sembia. "Lots o' folks wanna know how them were made, but I'll not spill the beans! No, no, not Jomo Shanbaeren! Now Teldar, he'll tell ya he knows, too, and he'd sell the information to yer fer a bit o' gold . . . the shiftless ingrate. . . "

The small island of Paldir is inhabited only by a small population of ex-pirates and fortune seekers. Its shores are not adequately protected from storms, and the central mountain is so large that there is not enough land area to support a large population, so most of its inhabitants evacuate to one of the larger islands each winter.

Paldir would thus be ignored in this text

and by the pirates were it not for the huge stone reliefs which can be found in the cliffs leading to the summit of its central mountain. These carvings, some of human-like figures, others merely of heads, are as tall as 1000', and from a distance appear to be perfect representations of some kind of warrior culture. The reliefs seem to tell a story of conquest and victory, or possibly describe the termination of a war. There are glyphs with each picture, but they have baffled scholars and resisted any attempt to magically read them.

A closer look is even more bewildering. Despite the great height and isolation of the carvings, there is no sign that footholds and handholds were carved into the rock. Thus, it is a mystery how such huge, complex carvings could have been created, even by a giant-sized race. Yosten of Procampur, a sage who has studied the carvings, speculates that the carvers began at the top, carving footholds into virgin stone, then overcarving them with the actual features of the reliefs so that all traces of the holds was destroyed. Asdezel, a sage of Aglarond, offers the explanation that the carvings were done by a race of creatures who could naturally fly, even though the carvings do not depict anyone with wings or who is apparently magically flying. Ezdush, a sage who served Immurk, told his lord that the carvings were done by magic in a single day. The truth or falsehood of any of these explanations can only be conjectured.

There are legends, however, which indicate that the carvings hold the key to a secret treasure, possibly placed by the Great Ones of the Inner Sea (as they are referred to in the records of Myth Drannor). Fortune-seekers have studied the carvings, and many have gone so far as to scale the walls themselves, looking for some kind of secret entrance to a treasure trove. So far no one has found such a trove (or if they have, they are not telling), but if the legend is true, it is only a matter of time until someone does.

Sarr

The tiny island of Sarr lies at the far southern edge of the Pirate Isles. This island, bare as it is to the ravages of prevailing storms, is ignored by most of the pirates, except as a landmark and occasional fair-weather anchorage. However, the island conceals a secret which has yet to be discovered by the pirates.

A lone ruined lighthouse stands at the far eastern tip of Sarr. This lighthouse has collapsed long ago, its upper portion lying in a heap of rubble half-sunk into the rocky surf at its base. The bottom of the tower has sunk into the sand, so that the ground-level entrance to the tower is long buried. Within the hollow base of the tower, the staircase which once led to the top of the tower has long ago fallen into decay.

At the interior of the base of the tower, which can now only be reached by scaling the exterior and climbing inside, there lies a trap door half-buried in sand blown in from above. Below lies a magical artifact of the god-kings of Mulhorand: the magical Beacon of Light which can shine across the sea for miles through clouds and rain, providing a clear signal to any ship regardless of weather.

The Beacon, a golden cube with silver cylinders extending from the top at the four corners, can be activated by stating the command word, and with another word can be deactivated again. The Beacon may only be activated for six hours each day, but that would provide assured safety to any port in the Realms during the worst of storms.

Analyzing the Beacon (with *identify* or other magic) indicates evocation magic, but nothing more. However, *legend lore*

reveals the purpose of the device and the command words used to control it. Such a device would be valued in any port on the Inner Sea.

What *legend lore* will not reveal, however, is that the device is sacred to the god-kings of Mulhorand and the temple of Anhur. Adventurers locating the device who do not return it to the city of Skuld will be pursued by agents of the temple of Anhur, which could include Chessentan mercenaries or even the Statues That Walk. Eventually, the quest for the Beacon of Light should involve the adventurers in the power struggle between the temples of Anhur and Horus-Re in Mulhorand.

Sumbar

> "I visited that oracle once. Asked what my life's callin' was. Got some mumbo-jumbo about 'man's greatest failing' and 'weeping and wailing.' It's all hooey, if'n yer ask me, and I knows ya didn't but I'm a'tellin' ya anyways. Threw my best throwin' dagger down that slimy ol' well, too, I did, and couldn't get it back neither." He harrumphs disgustedly, and lurches through the swinging doors into the kitchen. He returns, following much banging and crashing, with some dried venison and more ale. "Shoulda tossed ol' Teldar in there—maybe then I'd 'a got an answer!"

The island of Sumbar is the contact point for a powerful and mysterious oracle. This being, known as the Sumbar Oracle or the Oracle of Nasmen, will answer a single question for each querent who comes. Often, the answer will be unclear, but no one has ever found the Oracle to lie, once the prophecy was understood.

To use the Oracle, one must first reach Sumbar. This is more difficult than it would first appear, as the island is surrounded by treacherous reefs which move between visits so that no one has ever been able to plot a permanent safe course through them. Once ashore, the querent must make his way to the ridge from which the oracle (which takes the form of a large well) may be addressed.

Before addressing the Oracle, it is customary to toss a valued item down the well as a sacrifice. The more valuable the item, the more accurate and clear the reading, according to legend; no one has ever confirmed or denied it. After the sacrifice, the querent simply calls his question down into the well; a voice drifts up from below, conveying the response.

The Oracle tends to respond in riddles and poetry which are not clear until after the fact. It also tends to mislead, providing answers with two possible interpretations —at least initially.

For game purposes, treat the Oracle as a *contact other plane* spell for an outer plane entity with an Intelligence of 20. If the Oracle does not know, it will give a misleading or ambiguous answer. Only if the Knowledge and Veracity rolls are both made will the oracular prediction be at all clear.

The Chance of Insanity has a very special meaning for this Oracle. Rather than giving the chance that the character will go insane after the reading, instead it gives the chance that the character himself will act as a result of the prophecy in precisely the way to bring himself the greatest doom. The Oracle will word its prediction in such a fashion that the querent will respond with an action which fulfills the most horrible interpretation of the prophecy.

Regarding the sacrifice, any of the following may be true at the GM's discretion:
- The sacrifice is irrelevant; the Oracle will answer the question regardless of whether or not a sacrifice is made.
- The sacrifice is required, but its value is

irrelevant; if the querent asks a question without sacrificing something, even if it is a single copper piece, an imp will fly up from the well to attack the querent.

- As above, but the value of the sacrifice is significant. For each 1,000 gp value of the sacrifice, the intelligence of the entity is increased by one. Thus, a 2,000 gp sacrifice is treated as if the entity had an Intelligence of 22.

Tan

The island of Tan sits on the eastern edge of the Pirate Isles, just beyond the isle of Oresk. Tan, like many of the Pirate Isles, has an evil reputation, but this one is more justified than most.

The central mountain of the island ends in a circular crater, from which smoke issues regularly. Additionally, the ground occasionally rumbles, and the few inhabitants flee outside for their lives, as the caves and houses which are built are quickly shaken to the ground. Visitors are reminded of the Firepeaks and Sentinelspire in the southern portion of the Endless Waste of the Tuigan.

Recently, the island's sounds have been getting louder. The inhabitants (who are primarily native fishermen) have considered various rituals to quiet the mountain, including reviving their custom of human sacrifice. However, they are loath to do this unless they are sure it will help.

In fact, it won't. The island is not a volcano, despite the symptoms. Instead, it is the home of a great wyrm, Eshcaz the Red, a dragon which has laired in this island for nearly 1,000 years. Eshcaz is nearly 350' long from his nose to the tip of his tail, and frighteningly powerful. His hoard includes literally hundreds of thousands of gold pieces worth of treasure, as well as dozens of magical items. Fortunately, he has been resting comfortably (with only occasional turning over) for over 150 years.

Recently, however, the Cult of the Dragon has discovered Eshcaz's whereabouts, and is making an effort to waken the dragon. While they could do so simply by stealing some of his valued hoard, they want to talk to him afterwards (rather than being immediately consumed in flames), and thus are trying to gently prod him awake without angering him. The recent disturbances on Tan island have been the dragon shifting about, getting closer and closer to awakening. Should the Cult manage to waken this creature, it could devastate much of the eastern Inner Sea. Should the Cult turn such a fearsome beast into a dracolich (a form of undead dragon), the Realms would suffer a devastating scourge for hundreds (if not thousands) of years.

Telfar

Jomo shudders and runs his hand over the filthy kerchief covering his matted hair. "That's one o' the most evil places I know of, and I know quite a few. Full moons mean death to any in that harbor, I tell ya true, and don't you go tryin' to disprove me. Even them what don't believe in were-things stay away from Telfar when the moon rides high in the sky."

Telfar is a smaller island in the southern portion of the Inner Sea. Telfar is the first stopping place for many returning pirate ships, as it carries an excellent natural harbor on its western shore with abundant food and water. Due to the ever-present storms, no one lives on the island, but otherwise the island is a lovely place to be.

However, pirate lore states that the island is to be avoided on nights of the full

moon, as entire ships have been known to disappear on such nights as the moon passes overhead. Some explain the disappearances by postulating that the island is inhabited by lycanthropes, whose bestial forms destroy all vestige of human life on the island on the nights of the full moon. Others postulate a huge sea-creature sleeping at the bottom of the harbor; when the full moon rises, the creature surfaces, attracted by the light, and destroys all it finds there. Still others scoff at all explanations — but they do not disturb Telfar's sanctity on those nights.

The truth is stranger than any of those. Although Telfar's harbor is excellent, it is formed in such a fashion that tides in the harbor are extremely high. Nights of the full moon have the most severe tides here, so that the water literally rushes from the harbor in a whirlpool, sucking down everyone and everything in the harbor. Any ship afloat in the harbor is immediately dragged to the bottom and pounded to fragments by the force of the whirlpool. So far, no one has witnessed this devastation; any who did would be likely to believe the great sea monster explanation, as tides (except for their timing) are something of a mystery themselves to the sailors of the Inner Sea.

Ulgar Isle

Ulgar Isle, of all the islands in the Pirate Isles, is truly haunted. The undead rule this island, led by an ancient vampire from the empire of Chessenta: Ulgar.

Ulgar the Undying was made vampire during the height of the Chessentan Empire nearly 2,000 years ago. After preying upon that empire for over two centuries, he was trapped. Although he could not be destroyed (at least as far as the Chessentans knew), they shipped him to this island in the middle of the Sea of Fallen Stars, there to live out eternity.

Ulgar remained undisturbed, trapped within a sealed coffin for nearly two millennia. Then, during Immurk's time, a band of pirates who were searching for a new lair came across Ulgar's coffin and opened it. Starving for blood, he drained them all dry before his thirst was sated. He then went out to the ship, but found that he did not have the knowledge of modern sailing craft, and so was still marooned.

Other vessels visited the island, each falling under Ulgar's trap, until finally one of the ships managed to flee with someone still alive to tell of what occurred. The island was declared uninhabitable, and all on the Inner Sea were warned to avoid it.

Like many such items, however, there are always those who would tempt fate. Supposedly, Ulgar possesses secret magics known only to the Chessentan Empire which are otherwise unavailable. Several expeditions to gather Ulgar's secrets have landed on the island; most have failed.

Ulgar now has over fifty vampire servants. Most of them are sealed in coffins of Ulgar's making, waiting for victims to feed upon, as even a vampire of Ulgar's age cannot control fifty starving vampires. Those who did not become vampires have been raised as zombie servants, and these patrol the island, bringing all intruders to Ulgar so that he may feed.

In Which The Reader Meets Nine of the Most Notorious Pirates of the Sea of Fallen Stars

Teldar (Human Thief 14)

Str 11; Dex 17; Con 12; Int 17; Wis 16; Cha 14

Armor Class: 2
Move: 12
Hit Points: 43
Number of Attacks: 1
Damage: By weapon type
THAC0: 14
Alignment: NE
Thievish abilities: PP 70, OL 70, FT 80, MS 75, HS 60, DN 80, CW 80, RL 80
Weapon Proficiencies: Short sword, Dagger, Light Crossbow, Two-weapon Style Specialization, Ambidextrous
Nonweapon Proficiencies: Blind-fighting, Direction Sense, Disguise, Local History, Rope Use, Seamanship, Tumbling
Languages: Common, Elvish, Orcish
Magical Items: *ring of spell turning, necklace of missiles, cloak of elvenkind, serpentine owl, leather +2, potion of human control, potion of levitation*
Ship: Kissing Maiden (galleon)
Crew: 100 trained
Special Features: 1 small catapult, 2 medium ballistae

Teldar is an older man, thin and tall, with a thick streak of grey through his otherwise jet-black hair. He is clean-shaven, and his face is wrinkled and brown from overexposure to sun and spray. It is said that Teldar served as a lieutenant under Laershala, the last of the pirate lords of Earthspur. Teldar neither confirms nor denies this rumor. ("He did, I seen him."—Jomo Shanbaeren)

Teldar is considered by many to effectively be the leader of the pirates. Although many do not follow his banner, he has held his place for so long among the pirates that few (save Vurgrom) consider toppling him.

Teldar maintains a posture of quiet competence. His own raids over the years have given him a record of success unequalled by any of his younger brethren. He has never formally sought the leadership of Immurk's Hold, but has always been willing to offer counsel and assistance to those who live the pirate life.

Although Teldar is not the best warrior on the Inner Sea, he has fought his share of battles and has distinguished himself well. In addition to his own prowess, however, he has accumulated a supply of magical items which has been the end of more than one upstart over the years. His last use of his *necklace of missiles* ended the career of Cheves the Scourge, who had determined to kill Teldar to prove his worthiness to lead Immurk's Hold. No one knows how many of the fiery gems he still has, but as he has rarely used this potent weap-

on, it is presumed he still has enough.

Those who have watched Teldar the longest believe that he is the Lord of Immurk's Hold. His protestations, they say, mask the reality of his rule. "What better way," they ask, "to conceal the identity of the true ruler?" Those who speak thus openly, however, tend to disappear.

Vurgrom "the Mighty" (Human Fighter 12)

Str 18/84; Dex 13; Con 17; Int 9; Wis 13; Cha 13

Armor Class: 3 (ring mail +2, medium shield +1)

Move: 12

Hit Points: 99

Number of Attacks: 3/2 rounds

Damage: By weapon type +4 (1d8 + 8 with Battle Axe + 2)

THAC0: 7 (9 with missile weapons and shield punch, 4 with Battle Axe +2)

Alignment: CE

Weapon Proficiencies: Battle Axe (specialized), Cleaving/Crushing Weapons, Weapon and Shield Style Specialization, Crossbow, Dagger/Dirk

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Blind-fighting; Navigation; Rope Use; Seamanship; Swimming; Survival (Tropics)

Special Abilities: Shield punch

Languages: Common, Pirate's Argot

Magical Items: *Ring mail +2, shield +1, battle-axe +2, 5 + 1 crossbow bolts, ring of truth, potion of extra-healing, potion of speed*

Ship: Maelstrom (caravel)

Crew: 40 trained

Special Features: The Maelstrom is usually armed with two medium ballistae. Sometimes, however, when raiding, one of the ballistae is replaced with a fire projector.

Vurgrom "the Mighty" is a fat, brawling giant of a man with tufts of wild red hair and a thick, ill-kept beard. His strength is legendary among the pirates, and his fighting prowess is acknowledged by all who ply the Inner Sea.

Vurgrom commands a strong fellowship among the young of the Pirate Isles. Vurghom's exploits have been somewhat successful, but his ability to weave an exciting tale in his booming, rough voice has expanded his reputation among those easily swayed by such rhetoric.

Vurgrom's boasting would make him seem the best pirate since Vurgrom himself. Although perhaps he is not *that* capable, he has still developed an excellent reputation for successful raiding and piracy. Ports from Cormyr to Chessenta offer large rewards for him, dead or alive.

Many credit his success to his quiet ally, Zensil of Westgate. Zensil is an 9th level enchanter who has on occasion *charmed* small schools of vicious sea-creatures to aid Vurgrom in his raids. His attacking horde of men (on the four ships who follow him) is thus often assisted by crocodiles, giant crabs, or even (once) a giant sea snake. While mostly these creatures have little practical effect on the combat (as Zensil rarely challenges one of the *true* horrors of the deep), the presence of such bizarre warriors both heartens Vurgrom's allies and terrifies his opponents. Because of the temporary nature of the *charm monster* spell, Zensil appears to locate his "allies" just before a raid and release them soon afterward, to prevent these magically-controlled creatures from someday turning on him.

Vurgrom has pursued the leadership of Immurk's Hold since his rise to captain's status upon the death of his former captain from a sudden separation of the two halves of his head. Several times Vurgrom's captaincy has been challenged, but no one has yet bested him in the combination of hand-to-hand combat and

skulduggery which is the contest for the mast.

Vurgrom has set his sights for most of that time on Teldar of the *Kissing Maiden* (see above), who is still considered the strongest contender for Immurk's Seat. Teldar has avoided direct confrontation within the Hold, and the Kissing Maiden is too strong a vessel for even Vurgrom and his four ships to take. Also, whenever Vurgrom's strength allows him to consider directly challenging Teldar, Vurgrom has been suddenly and unexpectedly engaged by a lesser contender. His most recent clash was with Crammar, a soft-spoken dispassionate "master of intrigue." Vurgrom's ship met Crammar's on the high seas, and when the encounter was complete Crammar's ship followed Vurgrom. Crammar has not been seen since.

Vurghom has recently come into possession of a *ring of truth.* He is aware of the ring's ability to detect lies, but wears it only rarely, as he does not yet trust its magical abilities. He has thus not yet discovered its effect on himself, though with his usual level of bluster it is likely he will do so soon, possibly in embarrassing circumstances.

Azla (Half-elven Fighter 9)

Str 16; Dex 17; Con 16; Int 13; Wis 11; Cha 14
Armor Class: -1
Move: 12
Hit Points: 94
Number of Attacks: 3/2 rounds (2/1 with scimitar; 3/1 with scimitar and dagger, 2/1 with short bow)
Damage: By weapon type +1
THAC0: 12 (9 with own scimitar; 10 with own spear)
Alignment: LN
Weapon Proficiencies: Scimitar (specialization), Dagger/dirk, Two Weapon Style Specialization, Short bow, Spear

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Animal Handling, Blind-fighting, Bowyer/Fletcher, Heraldry, Navigation, Rope Use, Seamanship, Tracking
Languages: Common
Magical Items: *scimitar +2, spear +2, chain mail +3, 10 arrows +1*
**Ship:** Black Champion (caravel)
Crew: 25 average
Special Features: 1 medium ballista

Azla is a very young woman to be a pirate captain, having risen to the post (in the traditional fashion) before her thirtieth birthday. She is tall and slender, with silky dark hair which is hacked off just below her shoulders. She only arrived on the Inner Sea five years ago, and immediately made her mark as an excellent fighter. She has been quite secretive about her origins, and rumor has it that she fled from the Blades of Mulmaster.

The facts are perhaps stranger yet. Azla was an officer in the Cormyrean army, a
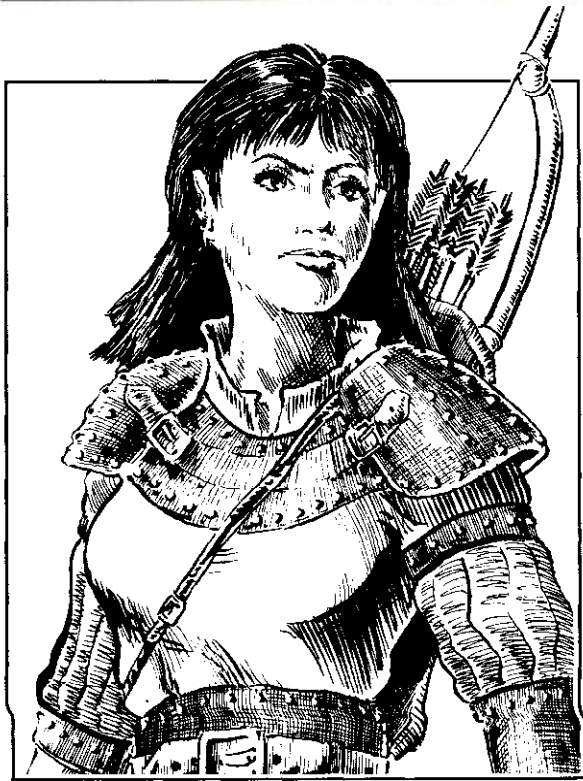
member of one of the most prominent noble families of Cormyr, and part of the deployment responsible for defending its northeastern quarter. It was from her family that she received the magical weapons and armor: family heirlooms which had defended her ancestors for centuries.

Her force was attacked by a raiding party from Zhentil Keep. Badly outnumbered, surprised, and far from reinforcements, her command was decimated. Azla, in the face of certain death, ran.

She has never forgiven herself. Her family and superiors in the military believe her slain in the attack, her body carried off by the Zhentarim raiders. She made her way to the shore, determined to join the pirates and somehow bring about her own death.

Instead, she thrived. Initially, she was not generally acknowledged as a leader, primarily because of her age and her lack of a strong political base. That lack of a base did not stop Azla from pursuing a position of leadership, all the while hoping someone would defeat her and end her torment. After attaining her own captaincy, she established her credentials in a series of lightning raids against Sembian targets. She freely shared in her information about Sembian cargo routes (although she would never reveal her sources), and, faced with the prospect that death would not easily come to free her from her shame, began the slow process of consolidating her momentary popularity into a permanent power base.

At that time, a series of events occurred whose origins are still somewhat unclear. In a series of apparently coincidental clashes, Azla was cast in opposition to Vurgrom "the Mighty." Although initially she thought the coincidences were Vurgrom's way of gaining justification for his assault on her, it is generally held that the two were pitted against one *another by* outside factions who saw Azla (whose training as a leader and warrior prowess had allowed her to rise so quickly) as dangerous to the established order.

In any case, six months ago Azla found herself in desperate need of another place to be. Fleeing with only her own ship, she retreated to the safety of Alphar Isle, where she has been since. Here she bides her time, making only occasional raids (and those far from the militia of Alphar harbor) to maintain her crew's morale. Some say her spirit is broken, and she will never try for the position of pirate lord again; others (including, it should be noted, those who know her best) say she is only waiting until the right moment to strike.

Wessalen Arturia
(Human Paladin 9)

Str 16; Dex 13; Con 14; Int 13; Wis 15; Cha I7

Armor Class: 2
Move: 12
Hit Points: 55
Number of Attacks: 3/2 rounds
Damage: By weapon type +1
THAC0: 12
Alignment: LG
Weapon Proficiencies: Long sword, Javelin, Punching and Wrestling, Weapon and Shield Style Specialization,
Nonweapon Proficiencies: Ancient History (Chessenta), Endurance, Etiquette, Healing, Running, Seamanship, Weaponsmithing
Languages: Common, Untheric
Magical Items: *Scale mail +2, shield +1, long sword +1, 3 javelins of lightning, potion of speed, potion of extra-healing, glvoes of missile snaring*
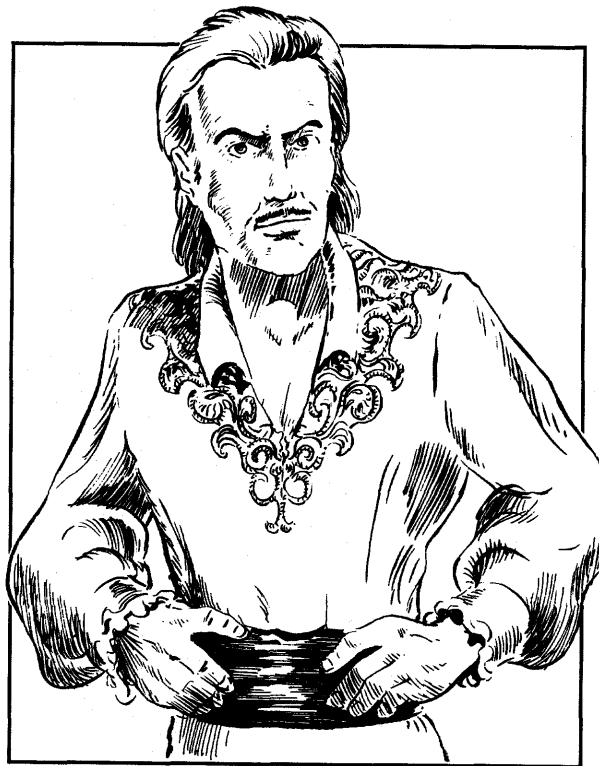**Ship:** Argosy (Longship)
Crew: 70 crack
Special Features: None

Wessalen Arturia is a Chessentan nobleman devoted to the service of Lathander, the Morninglord. In Chessenta, Lathander represents the perfect athlete, and Wessalen is tall, lithe, and strong, with curly blond hair and a well-muscled physique.

Like many others in this temple, Wessalen has sought to restore the land of Chessenta to its former glory, reuniting it into an empire which would lead the Inner Sea to a new period of unity and prosperity.

Like many who seek such goals, Wessalen has not taken enough time to determine the amount of suffering such a new empire would cause. He does not justify this suffering in terms of the higher goals; he simply hasn't thought of it.

Currently, Wessalen is seeking an ancient Chessentan artifact which was lost on the Pirate Isles during the time of the last Chessentan Empire. Wessalen discovered records in his temple in Cinbar which indicated that the artifact was crucial to the spread of the Chessentan Empire, and was lost during the collapse. However, the records say little of the device or its origins, and thus Wessalen is not exactly sure what he is looking for—he trusts the Morninglord to tell him when he has succeeded. Currently, Wessalen is seeking the artifact throughout the Pirate Isles, visiting each island and searching for ruins of ancient Chessentan settlements.

While he has not sought violence, Wessalen has also not explained his presence in the region, much to the distress of the inhabitants. Thus, he has had several violent encounters, and has begun to approach ships with a more openly hostile (if still defensive) attitude.

If contacted in a friendly manner, Wessalen will be cordial, although he would

prefer not to discuss the nature of his business. (He knows that some people would value the artifact for personal profit, and does not wish to give away some critical clue which would allow someone less scrupulous to find the artifact first.) During an evening's conversation, Wessalen is likely to offer a friendly contest of wrestling (a sport with a strong following in Chessenta). If attacked in earnest, he will not hesitate to defend himself.

Dalvar Corzon (Human Ranger 7)

Str 14; Dex 15; Con 15; Int 12; Wis 14; Cha 16
Armor Class: 4
Move: 12
Hit Points: 43
Number of Attacks: 3/2 rounds
Damage: As weapon type
THAC0: 14

Alignment: NG
Weapon Proficiencies: Long sword, long bow, spetum, Two-handed Weapon Style Specialization, One-handed Weapon Style Specialization,
Nonweapon Proficiencies: Animal Lore, Animal Training (Seagulls), Direction Sense, Fishing, Rope Use, Seamanship, Swimming, Weather Sense
Languages: Common
Magical Items: *long sword +2, ring mail +3, scroll of protection from magic, potion of flying, potion of extra-healing, potion of superheroism, potion of ESP*
Ship: Gullswing (caravel)
Crew: 18 average
Special Features: 1 medium ballista, gulls (see below)

Dalvar Corzon is an up-and-coming Cormyrean freesailor who has recently risen to the captaincy of the Gullswing by order of King Azoun of Cormyr. He is in his early thirties, blond, slender and cleanshaven, with the firm physique of the professional warrior.

Dalvar has spent much of the last few years working with the seagulls of the Cormyrean coast, trying to train them to carry messages like the carrier pigeons used near Waterdeep. While he has had only minimal success, his combined techniques of careful training and repeating messages on multiple birds have been able to deliver some messages, a few of which were particularly critical to Cormyr's success during the recent Time of Troubles and the Horde War.

Dalvar's devotion to the land has made him a strong force against the depredations of pirates in Cormyrean waters. He has developed an uncanny sense of their activities, and is developing a reputation among the pirates as a skilled and uncompromising opponent.

The priests of Mielikki have told Dalvar that his exploits defending Cormyr's

coastal lands have come to the attention of the goddess herself, and if he stays his course he will soon be granted the right to cast Mielikki's own magics as the priests do. This pressure to succeed in Mielikki's eyes, combined with his recent recognition by King Azoun, has made Dalvar a bit too ready to do battle. He has never yet suffered a serious defeat, but he increasingly risks tougher and tougher foes, counting on the beneficence of Mielikki to protect him. Some in Suzail feel that the young captain needs to be taken down a peg-for his own good.

Jezgar Skentzin (Greater Seawolf)

Armor Class: 5
Move: 9, Sw 27
Hit Points: 56
Number of Attacks: 1 or 2

Damage: 3-12 or 1-2 and by weapon type
THAC0: 11
Alignment: CE
Hit only by silver, cold iron, or +1 or better magical weapons
Ship: Umberlee's Get (caravel)
Crew: 19 average (seawolves; see "Lycanthrope, Seawolf" in the Monstrous Compendium)
Special Features: Two arbalests

Jezgar Skentzin was one of the fiercest pirate captains to ever sail the Inner Sea. He was a man unfrightened by force, and his raids were well known for the high death toll both among his victims and his own crew. Over time, only those pirates with an unquenchable taste for blood and a death wish joined his crew.

Jezgar's exploits include many tales told among the pirates, but his most important is a complete secret. On one voyage, he took on a shipwreck victim he found floating at sea. The victim turned out to be a seawolf. Jezgar slew the creature, but not before it had infected him and his crew.

The extent of Jezgar's evil was so great that he became one of the dreaded greater seawolves. He and his crew plied the sealanes as reavers, now truly seeking blood rather than booty.

Despite the occasional rumors of a seawolf-pirate, Jezgar has cleverly hidden his affliction. He and his men are occasional visitors to Immurk's Hold or Alphar Port, although they are always gone again before nightfall. By day, they sail as pirates. At night, they swim the seas, feeding. If their numbers are depleted in battle, they add to their crew in the traditional fashion—they bite their victims to make new seawolves.

Quelzur Naismen (Human Mage 11)

Str 9; Dex 14; Con 12; Int 16; Wis 8; Cha 11

Armor Class: 3
Move: 12
Hit Points: 26
Number of Attacks: 1
Damage: By weapon type
THAC0: 17
Alignment: LE
Weapon Proficiencies: Dagger, Dart, Staff
Nonweapon Proficiencies: Ancient History (Mulhorand/Thay), Astrology, Etiquette, Gem Cutting, Heraldry, Navigation, Reading/Writing, Spellcraft, Swimming
Languages: Common, Old Mulhorandic
Magical Items: *censer of summoning air elementals, bracers of defense AC 4, potion of healing, potion of fire resistance, scroll of protection from mammal control, ring of protection +1, scroll of Mordenkainen's Lucubration, Mordenkainen's Magnificent Mansion, and Incendiary Cloud*
Ship: Wind's Despair (caravel)
Crew: 17 average
Special Features: Commonly propelled by an air elemental (see below); two medium ballistae

Quelzur Naismen began his career as one of the infamous Red Wizards of Thay. While he showed considerable prowess in his early years, he failed to develop the appropriately humble demeanor before his superiors in the Thayvian hierarchy, and quickly gained a reputation as a malcontent and a troublemaker (not an entirely bad thing in Thay).

Unfortunately, despite his magical competence, Quelzur was no better at fending off the backstabbing politics of Thay as he was at making friends. By the time he was thirty, although already an accomplished

mage, Quelzur displeased the powerful Zulkir Szass Tam, and decided that voluntary exile was preferable to eternal servitude as a zombie under the Zulkir of Necromancy.

Being a Red Wizard, Quelzur had fewer friends outside Thay than he had inside. Quelzur also felt, having been raised in Thayvian society, that as a wizard he was inherently superior to any mundane non-Thayvian. Thus, though he easily bested his first "captain" (a single lightning bolt burned the man where he stood), he has had difficulty inspiring loyalty in his crew. He constantly acts superior to them, lording over them like a minor godling.

Quelzur would long ago have died in his sleep at the hands of his crew were it not for a valuable item he "acquired" on his way out of Thay. This item, a *censer for summoning air elementals,* has given Quelzur the most maneuverable vessel on the Inner Sea. Whenever his ship enters

battle, Quelzur uses the device to summon an air elemental who is devoted to providing the Wind's Despair with a full sail and the wind at their backs-whatever way they decide to travel. (In game terms, the Despair is always considered to be traveling *with the wind* in a *strong favorable wind.* See the Combat chapter for details.)

Quelzur still wears the bright red robes of his Thayvian heritage, and maintains the shaved head and beard so characteristic of the Red Wizards.

Huzza (Hill Giant)

Armor Class: 3
Move: 12
Hit Points: 66
Number of Attacks: 1
Damage: 1-6 or by weapon (2-12 +7)
THAC0: 9
Alignment: Chaotic evil
Hurls rocks for 2d8 damage; hurls gob-

lins (see below)
Ship: Ship (Longship)
Crew: 70 green (goblins)
Special Features: None

Huzza is a hill giant. He was living near the Earthspur Mountains at the end of the Dragon Reach in a small valley he had learned to call home. There was plenty of food, and Huzza had even found a tribe of goblins to help guard Huzza's valley and bring Huzza food. Life was good.

One day, some humans came in a long ship and landed on the coast near Huzza's valley. Huzza's goblins came to Huzza and told him, so Huzza went down to see what they wanted.

The humans weren't very nice. When they saw Huzza, they made loud screaming noises. They threw sharp things at Huzza. Huzza got mad. Huzza ate them.

After dinner, Huzza went into the ship the humans had come in. It was big enough for Huzza to ride in, and needed lots of little people to move it. Huzza didn't worry about it; he just went home.

The next day, Huzza went back to the valley, just to make sure he'd eaten all the humans. Huzza looked at the ship again. The goblins would probably fit where the humans used to go; Huzza could ride in the back.

Huzza looked in the back of the ship. The humans had had gold. There must be gold in the sea. Huzza liked gold. Huzza decided to go get more gold.

Huzza is now one of the strangest ship captains on the Inner Sea. Huzza and his crew of goblins raid other ships they come upon, but they have essentially no planning, no idea about where to find ships, and the goblins really cannot row as fast as humans (cut the ship's movement rates in half).

Huzza has found a way to make ships stop, however. Whenever he sees a ship he wants to visit, he throws goblins at it. (For

game purposes, he can throw a goblin as far as he can throw a rock—up to 200 yards.) Sometimes the goblins miss; then they drown. Sometimes they hit; then they get into the ship's riggings and cut them, so the other ship slows down. When he catches the ship, they usually have lots of food aboard (some of which is even still alive!).

Unfortunately, this technique is hard on the goblin supply. Huzza has convinced a few other tribes of goblins to join him, but they have also slowly succumbed to Huzza's unusual attack methods. The goblins aren't too happy with Huzza, but they don't know what to do about him. If they attack him, he'll just eat them; he won't let them leave.

Urdogen "the Red" (Spectre)

Armor Class: 2
Move: 15, Fl 30 (B)
Hit Points: 59
Number of Attacks: 1
Damage: 1-8 + Energy Drain
THAC0: 13
Alignment: Lawful Evil
Ship: Raging Tears (spectral caravel)
Crew: 40 crack (spectres)
Special Features: Can fly, moves as if strong favorable winds regardless of true wind direction

Urdogen "the Red" was a hot-blooded pirate, successor to Immurk and scourge of the Inner Sea. His raids against the nations of the Inner Sea brought the most powerful of the rising Inner Sea kingdoms —Cormyr, Sembia, Impiltur, and the Vilhon Reach—to a united assault against him and the Dragonisle.

Urdogen fought for a week, slaughtering ships and men wherever he, went. When the forces against him were too great, he fled, raging against the gods themselves and swearing eternal vengeance against his one-time victims.

As he fled, a strange mist arose around him and his ship. When the mist disappeared, he found himself in the dimension known as Ravenloft. Under the evil influences there he quickly became a spectre, converting all within his crew to the unlife which drove him.

Urdogen spends most of his time there, terrorizing the inhabitants and acting as one of Ravenloft's least powerful lords. However, his oath of vengeance brings him back on moonless nights when the fog is high, to pursue all the ships he finds on the Inner Sea. Each time he comes, he is drawn back by the power of Ravenloft before the dawn, but while he sails the Inner Sea no living man is safe.

In Which Is Presented a Gallery of Galleys and Galleons Common to the Sea of Fallen Stars

The ships of the Inner Sea include all types of vessels from the ancient-style galleys of Mulhorand and Chessenta to the late Renaissance galleons of Cormyr and Sembia. With such a variety of vessels on the water, it is important to understand the basic principles of how ships work and move in order to understand how and why different types of vessels are chosen.

The oldest type of vessel is the galley, or oared ship. Galleys move by rowing, pushing their oars through the water, and have no sails. Galleys move in any direction at essentially the same speed; it does not depend on the wind (or lack thereof) to make it go. Second, an oared vessel is more maneuverable, and is able to turn more quickly.

However, galleys have problems as well. First of all, in order to move a ship of any size, you must have a large number of rowers. These rowers take up space, and (more importantly) food and water for such a large crew also takes up space. Thus, either the galley must remain close to shore, so that it can be frequently resupplied, or it must devote a large amount of its cargo space to food and water, making it less efficient at carrying cargo.

Also, an oared vessel requires either a larger loyal crew (who must all be paid with a share of the profits of the voyage) or a slave crew (whose rebelliousness at an inopportune moment may lead to disaster).

For these reasons, other seamen experimented with the use of sails, large cloths which could push the ship ahead of the wind. A sailing ship needs a small crew, and can go somewhat faster than an oared vessel in a strong wind. However, in poor winds, the ship is slow and difficult to maneuver, and in any case it was not practical to travel any direction except where the wind was blowing. To overcome these problems, many ships were built which carried both sails (for normal operation) and oars (to provide movement in case the ship became becalmed). As sails became more controllable, and as seamen learned more about sailing, the use of sails overwhelmed the use of oared vessels on most oceanic ships.

An alternative type of vessel which exists on the Inner Sea and the other seas of the Forgotten Realms is the towed vessel. Rather than having sails, such vessels use either swimming or flying creatures outside the ship to provide the motive power. While even the flying creatures are not strong enough to actually lift the ship, they can provide reasonable motive power. For a more extensive discussion of towed ships, see the section below.

Ship Architecture

Ships have a number of attributes and statistics that describe their performance and capabilities. Below is a short overview of common terms.

A ship's **base movement** is the average speed of the vessel in miles per hour under a light breeze (for sailing ships) or under favorable conditions (for oared ships). Where two numbers are separated by a slash, the first is the speed under sail and the second is the rowing speed. Base movement can be converted into movement in yards per round by multiplying by 30. Thus a caravel, which has a base movement rate of 4, moves at a base speed of 120 yards per round, or a character movement rate of 12.

Emergency move is the top speed of the vessel in emergency or combat conditions. For sailing ships, emergency speed is gained by putting on every yard of sail possible. Galleys and other oared ships re-

ly on the strength of their rowers. This speed can only be maintained for a short period of time; too long and rowers will collapse, and masts, yards, and sails will break.

Each ship has at least two **crew numbers.** The first is the number of individuals needed to run the ship under normal circumstances. The last is the maximum number of individuals that the ship can carry and remain seaworthy.

The middle number, if present, indicates the number of individuals required to operate the oars. If the vessel is not carrying that many individuals, it is limited to sail motion only.

Seaworthiness rates the vessel's ability to remain afloat in dangerous situations, notably storms, hidden shoals, extended voyages, huge monster attacks, and rams. Seaworthiness is rated as a percentage value. Anytime there is a chance of sinking, the DM rolls percentile dice. If the roll is equal to or less than the seaworthiness rating of the ship, it remains afloat, although bailing or repairs may be necessary. If the roll is higher than the seaworthiness rating, the ship suffers critical damage.

In addition to seaworthiness, there are many attacks that can force a ship to make a saving throw (such as a *disintegrate* spell cast on the bow) which will cause the ship to save or be damaged or destroyed. In general, use the Item Saving Throw chart (on page 39 of the DMG) for determining effects. Most ships are "Thick Wood" for general saves.

Power type defines the type of motive force that causes the ship to move through the water.

Armament varies from ship to ship. In a typical ship description, the standard armament (SA) is provided. Additional armament may be provided, though this cuts down on cargo space (the room that would normally be used for cargo is instead used to provide space for large weapons and their ammunition). This initial armament number reflects the number of armaments that can be built directly into the ship. Further additions can be made with each weapon eating up ten tons of cargo space. Additional armament cannot exceed one-quarter of the ship's total cargo capacity. This limitation allows some room for the crew's needs and ensures that the ship does not become topheavy and capsize.

Armament falls into an number of categories:

Catapult:	blunt stone thrower
Ballista:	extremely large crossbow
Ram:	punches holes in ships
Bombard:	cannon; very rare, expensive, and dangerous to use

Fire Projector: shoots liquid flame

Further information about each of these weapons is given under the individual entries.

Cargo space is the amount of stuff the ship can contain. The remaining interior space is needed for crew, armament, and other necessities. For each large weapon added to a ship over and above its standard ordnance, ten tons are subtracted from the total amount available for cargo (the weapons and ammunition occupy that space).

Keel length (KL) is the long dimension of the ship, usually but not always measured along the ship's keel.

Beam length (BL) is the width of the ship, measured at the ship's widest point but not counting any oars or yardarms that may widen the ship without effectively contributing to its tonnage.

Armor rating (AR) for a ship is similar to the Armor Class of a character. Armor reflects the difficulty that an attacker has
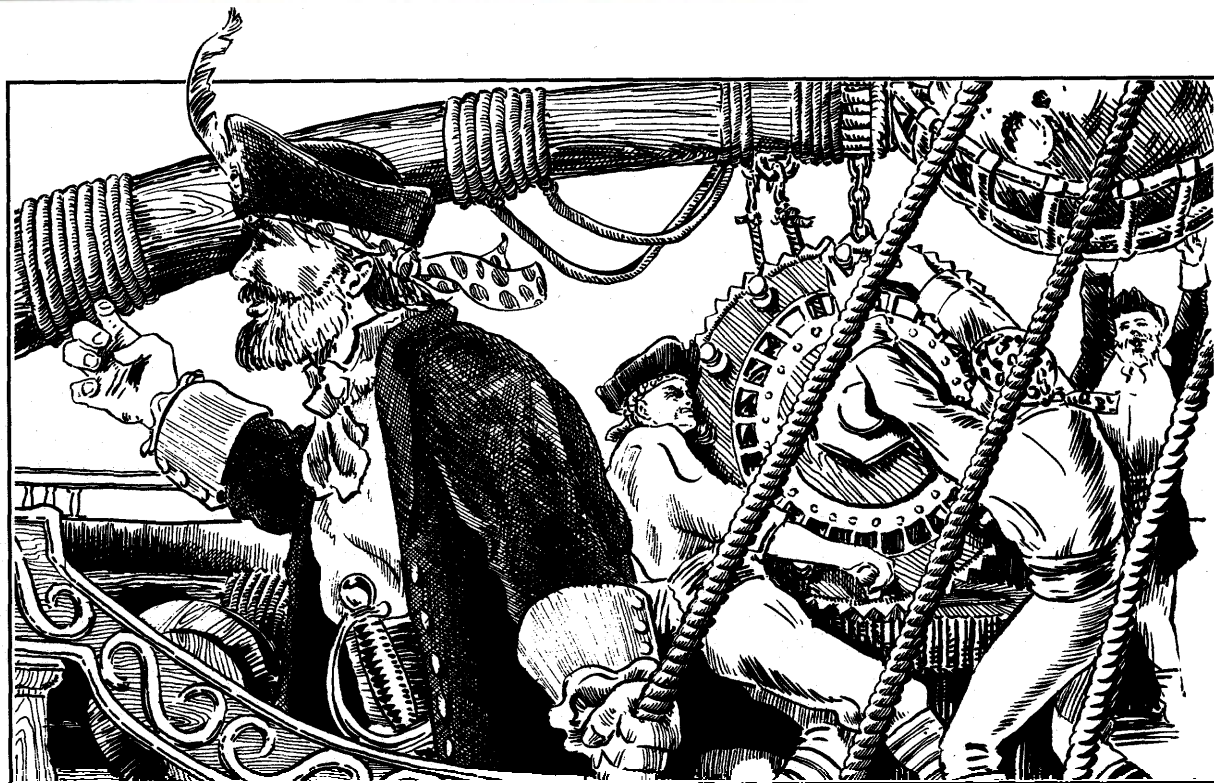
in causing significant damage to the ship because of its construction. In general, small, light ships have poor ARs while large, heavier-built ships have excellent ARs, trading speed for protection.

Ships

The majority of the ships of the Inner Sea are based on a small set of standard hulls which are used and reused. These hulls represent the foundation on which the custom portions of the ship are built. The following section describes of the standard hulls of the Inner Sea; DMs are encouraged to construct their own hull designs using these as examples.

Caravel
Cost: 10,000 gp
Base Movement: 4
Emergency Move: 5
Crew: 15/50
Armor Rating: 9
Seaworthiness: 70%
Saving Throw: Thick wood
Power Type: Sail
Cargo Tonnage: 180 tons
Keel Length: 70 feet
Beam Length: 20 feet
Standard Armament: 1 large weapon
Ram: Not allowed

The caravel is used by the nations of Cormyr, Sembia, and Impiltur extensively, and is somewhat less common in Turmish and Chondath. It normally has two masts and square sails; no oars are used. The normal crew is from 30 to 40 men.

Coaster
Cost: 5,000 gp
Base Movement: 3
Emergency Move: 4
Crew: 12/40
Armor Rating: 9
Seaworthiness: 50%

Saving Throw: Thick wood
Power Type: Sail
Cargo Tonnage: 100 tons
Keel Length: 60 feet
Beam Length: 20 feet
Standard Armament: 1 large weapon
Ram: Not allowed

Also called a round ship, this is a small merchant ship that hugs the coast. This sailing ship is fitted with two masts and triangular sails, with the rudder hanging from one side. Normally there is only a small sterncastle. A coaster is slow and not tremendously seaworthy, but it can carry large amounts of cargo with a smaller crew than a galley's.

Coasters are common in Turmish, Chondath, Chessenta, and Aglarond.

Cog
Cost: 10,000 gp
Base Movement: 3
Emergency Move: 4
Crew: 10/25
Armor Rating: 9
Seaworthiness: 65%
Saving Throw: Thick wood
Power Type: Sail
Cargo Tonnage: 180 tons
Keel Length: 85 feet
Beam Length: 20 feet
Standard Armament: 1 large weapon
Ram: None

The cog is a larger, improved version of the coaster, able to make ventures into the open sea. Like the coaster, it is a sailing ship with two masts, but the cog employs square sails. There is normally one deck and fore- and sterncastles.

Currach
Cost: 500 gp
Base Movement: 2/3
Emergency Move: 3/10
Crew: 2/4/10
Armor Rating: 10

Seaworthiness: 55%
Saving Throw: Leather
Power Type: Sail and Oars
Cargo Tonnage: 5 tons
Keel Length: 20 feet
Beam Length: 8 feet
Standard Armament: None
Ram: Not allowed

The currach is an early, primitive vessel made from thick hides stretched over a wood and wicker frame. It is used by the people of Aglarond and Turmish for local fishing.

Drakkar
Cost: 25,000 gp
Base Movement: 2/4
Emergency Move: 3/12
Crew: 20/60/250
Armor Rating: 7
Seaworthiness: 50%
Saving Throw: Thick wood
Power Type: Sail and oars
Cargo Tonnage: 40 tons
Keel Length: 100 feet
Beam Length: 20 feet
Standard Armament: 1 large weapon
Ram: None

The largest of the Northmen's longships is known as a drakkar or dragonship. Although a single mast can be raised, oars provide the main source of power. The minimal crew rows, while the remainder are carried for boarding and raiding.

Due to its great size, the drakkar is not very seaworthy. This combined with the fact that there is no space on board for many supplies (certainly not enough for 240 men) or sleeping quarters keep the drakkar close to the coast where it can put in for the night. Because of its cost and limited use, the drakkar is not a common vessel on the Inner Sea.

Dromond

Cost: 15,000 gp
Base Movement: 2/9
Emergency Move: 3/12
Crew: 200/400
Armor Rating: 9
Seaworthiness: 40%
Saving Throw: Thin wood
Power Type: Sail and Oars
Cargo Tonnage: 90 tons
Keel Length: 175 feet
Beam Length: 15 feet
Standard Armament: 3 large weapons
Ram: Allowed

This ship is the largest of the Chessentan galleys. Although it boasts one or two masts and triangular sails, the main power comes from the 100 oars, 50 to a side. These oars are divided into an upper and lower bank, with one man per oar on the lower bank, and three men per oar on the upper bank.

A dromond can be used for both shipping and war. (The above configuration is the war configuration.) As a warship, a ram projects from the front just above the water line. Castles are built fore, aft, and amidships as firing platforms. The cargo space is occupied by marines. With such numbers of men, it is a very dangerous ship to attack.

A dromond is not a seaworthy craft, however, and usually sails in sight of shore. They beach at night like all galleys, since supplies and sleeping accommodations are limited.

Dromonds are commonly from Mulhorand or Chessenta; both these nations have a long tradition of sea-battles with these mighty galleys.

Galleon

Cost: 50,000 gp
Base Movement: 3
Emergency Move: 6
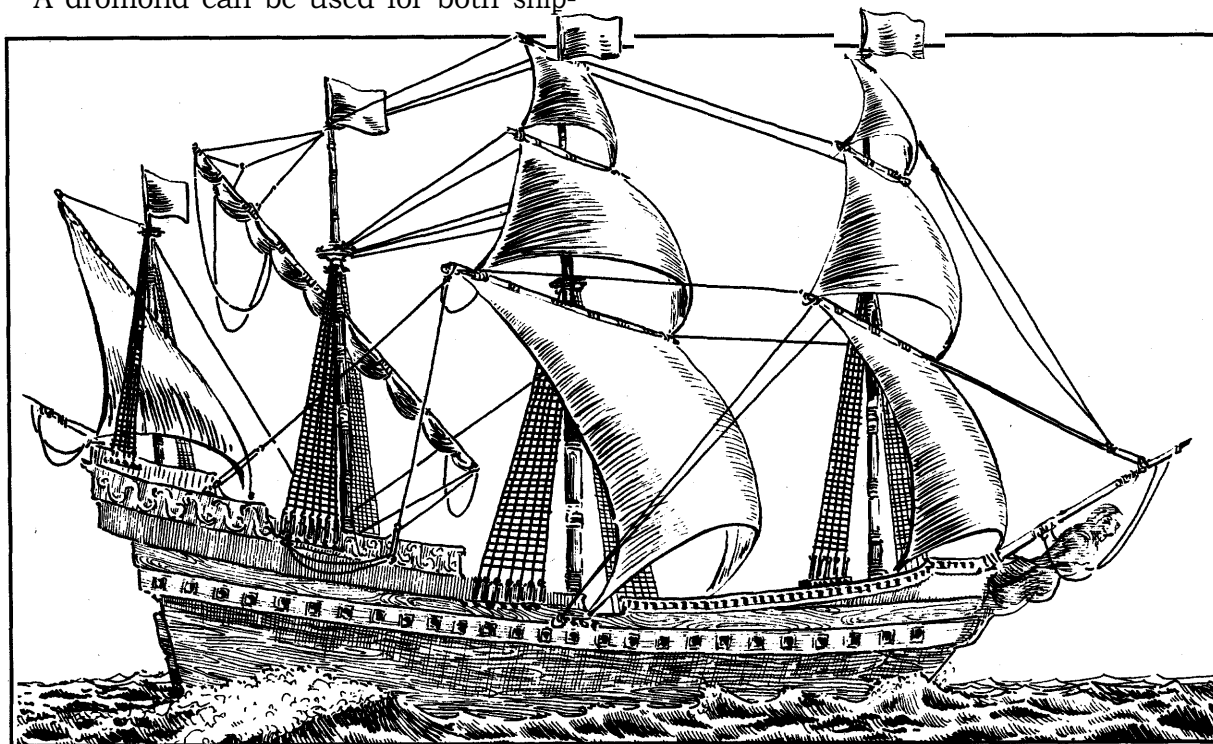
Armor Rating: 7
Seaworthiness: 75%
Saving Throw: Thick wood
Power Type: Sail
Cargo Tonnage: 500 tons
Keel Length: 130 feet
Beam Length: 30 feet
Standard Armament: 3 large weapons
Ram: Not allowed

The galleon is the largest and most advanced sailing ship on the Inner Sea. It is a sail-driven ship with three masts. There are normally three through decks (running the length of the ship), while the castles fore and aft have two decks.

Galleons are most frequently used in Cormyr, Sembia, and Impiltur. However, they are not common even there.

Great Galley
Cost: 30,000 gp
Base Movement: 3/6
Emergency Move: 4/11
Crew: 40/140/200
Armor Rating: 7
Seaworthiness: 45%
Saving Throw: Thick wood
Power Type: Sail and Oars
Cargo Tonnage: 150 tons
Keel Length: 130 feet
Beam Length: 20 feet
Standard Armament: 3 large weapons
Ram: Allowed

The great galley is an improved version of the dromond. It is slightly smaller than the dromond, and its main power comes from its 140 rowers and its three masts; this combination gives it better speed and handling. When outfitted as a warship, the front end is built as a ram and marines are carried instead of cargo. Like all galleys, the great galley is a coastal vessel, rarely venturing into open water.

This ship, like the dromond, is most common among the southern lands of Mulhorand and Chessenta.

Knarr
Cost: 3,000 gp
Base Movement: 4/2
Emergency Move: 5/12
Crew: 8/14
Armor Rating: 9
Seaworthiness: 65%
Saving Throw: Thin wood
Power Type: Sail and oars
Cargo Tonnage: 40 tons
Keel Length: 60 feet
Beam Length: 15 feet
Standard Armament: None
Ram: Not allowed

The knarr is a small cargo ship which is used in the northlands. It has a single mast and a square sail. In times of poor wind, a few oars at the bow and stem can provide more power. The ship is relatively seaworthy, and can be used to make long (if not comfortable) sea voyages. Its flat bottom makes it useful for sailing up rivers and estuaries, and it can be beached easily.

Longship
Cost: 10,000 gp
Base Movement: 5/2
Emergency Move: 6/13
Crew: 40/200
Armor Rating: 8
Seaworthiness: 60%
Saving Throw: Thin wood
Power Type: Sail and Oars
Cargo Tonnage: 50 tons
Keel Length: 75 feet
Beam Length: 15 feet
Standard Armament: 1 large weapon
Ram: Allowed

This is the standard Northmen's warship. It is more substantial than the knarr but not nearly as massive as the drakkar. A typical longship has 20 oars per side, each worked by a single man. There is also a single mast and square sail. A longship is fairly seaworthy and can sail across the open sea when necessary.

Ship Improvements

Armaments

Ship weapons are the descendants of siege machinery. In addition to the wide variety of personal weapons and magical abilities, there is a collection of catapults, ballistas, trebuchets, and scorpions available to ship captains, as well as a variety of rams.

All of the standard ships are capable of carrying a base number of large weapons. The weapons themselves are not included in the cost of the ship—these are merely places where the owner can install weapons without eating up living or cargo space. For each weapon added beyond that, some cargo space must be sacrificed. Some weapons count as two or three for this purpose, and these are noted accordingly.

A ship can have only one ram. It must be bought and installed. (Ships with the "Not allowed" entry under "Ram" cannot have them attached under any conditions.)

Damage for each of the weapons is listed in terms of hit points. The rate of fire (in number of shots per round) assumes a full crew manning the weapon. A "1/2" rating means that the weapon fires one shot every two rounds. For every man less than the required minimum manning a weapon, reduce the rate of fire to the next slower level. For example, a medium catapult with a crew of three and a rate of fire of 1/2 would have a rate of fire of 1/3 with a two-man crew and 1/4 with a single crewman trying to operate the weapon. A weapon cannot fire without at least one crew member.

Catapults: Catapults are large stone-throwing devices operated by springs and cranks.

Catapults are fixed in position once mounted and can fire in only one direction.

Catapults can be loaded with stone shot instead of large rocks. Stone shot is most effective as an antipersonnel weapon and will not affect a ship. It inflicts the listed damage on every target within a 10-foot radius of the spot where it hits (make a separate attack roll against each target in the area).

Light Catapult
Cost: 500 gp
Range: 15/30
Damage: 2d10 hit points
Crew: 1
Rate of Fire: 1/2
THAC0: 16
Critical hit on 20

Medium Catapult
Cost: 700 gp
Range: 18/30
Damage: 3d10 hit points
Crew: 3
Rate of Fire: 1/2
THAC0: 17
Critical hit on 19 or 20

Heavy Catapult
Cost: 1,000 gp
Range: 18/36
Damage: 3d10 hit points
Crew: 5
Rate of Fire: 1/3
THAC0: 18
Critical hit on 18, 19, or 20
Counts as two large weapons for installation

Ballistae: Ballistae include all devices which throw large bolts, javelins, and spears with greater force than possible by human (or inhuman) strength. Most are built along the lines of the crossbow, and are mounted on pivots on the ship's deck to fire at any targets.

Light Ballista
Cost: 400 gp
Range: 1/27
Damage: 2d6 hit points
Crew: 1
Rate of Fire: 1/2
THAC0: 16
No chance for a critical hit

Medium Ballista
Cost: 600 gp
Range: 3/30
Damage: 3d6 hit points
Crew: 2
Rate of Fire: 1/3
THAC0: 14
Critical hit on 20

Heavy Ballista
Cost: 800 gp
Range: 6/36
Damage: 3d10 hit points
Crew: 4
Rate of Fire: 1/4
THAC0: 12
Critical hit on 19 or 20

Rams

The effects of ramming are covered in combat. They depend on the relative sizes of the ship doing the ramming and its target.

Ram
Cost: 10 gp per cargo ton of ship

A ram is a long, sharp prow used to break open and break apart an enemy ship. This type of attack is likely to sink the attacked ship, as the ram is usually mounted near the waterline. An attack with a ram can sometimes result in the two ships being locked together.

Fire Projectors: These devices shoot a thin stream of flaming, explosive liquid. Though they can be devastating in combat, they are not popular because of the chance of the liquid catching fire or detonating on the launched ship. Only the galleys of Mulhorand make extensive use of these devices.

Projectors affect the target and all other targets within a 5-foot radius. A successful save against Breath Weapon halves the damage.

Ships carrying fire projectors are more vulnerable to critical hits, and ships attacking them add +1 to their die roll to determine whether a critical hit occurs. For example, a medium catapult causes a critical hit with a modified attack of 19 or 20. Against a ship carrying a fire projector, a medium catapult causes a critical hit with a roll of 18, 19 or 20.

Fire Projectors:
Cost: 1,000 gp
Range: 18/40
Damage: 3d 10 hit points + Fire
Crew: 3
Rate of Fire: 1/4
THAC0: 16
Critical hit on 18, 19 or 20

Defensive Improvements

Castles
Cost: medium 500 gp, large 1,000 gp per cargo ton
A common sight on many warships are armored castles or towers. These provide protection for marines, platforms for archers to fire down onto enemy vessels, and ramps for boarding. Most are fitted with crenelations and arrow slits.

One castle can be fitted for every 50 feet of keel length on the ship, typically allowing only one or two. A single castle will be mounted amidships; if there are two, they are at bow and stem. A small castle is 10 feet tall and provides protection for ten

men and a firing platform for five archers. A large castle is 15 to 20 feet tall and provides protection for twenty men, plus a firing platform for ten archers. The protected men may use a drop-away gangplank, fitted with hooks to hold the enemy ship, in a boarding action.

All ship's hulls come with a standard Armor Rating (AR), determined by the ship's shape and construction. A hull's armor rating can be improved by increasing either the thickness of the hull or by plating the hull with other materials (usually metal). The options and costs are:

Increased Thickness

Cost: 10 gp per cargo ton of ship

Increasing the thickness of the hull improves the ship's AR by 1 (from 7 to 6, for example). However, this thickening also reduces available cargo space by 20 percent. A ship can have its hull thickness increased only once.

Plating

Cost: 30 gp per cargo ton of ship

Also called barding, plating a ship consists of covering it in metal plates or scales. This improves the AR of the ship by 1 (from 3 to 2, for example) but downgrades the speed of the ship by one third.

Further, it is obvious to anyone looking at it that the ship is plated. Plating can only be performed once on any given ship. A plated ship still uses its original saving throw type (thick wood or thin wood).

Netting

Cost: 3 gp per 10 cargo tons of ship

Ships with large, open decks are often covered with thick, twisted ropes bound into a net. These nets serve to partially protect the crew from catapult fire and boarding from other ships. Attacks coming from above must destroy the nets first

before hitting crew members.

Ships with netting gain a +2 on saving throws for their crews against missile weapons or magical which creates solid objects.

In addition, the presence of netting allows those personnel hit by catapult stones a saving throw against death magical to avoid the effect of being hit by such weapons.

The netting is destroyed once it is hit by a heavy catapult shot, or two medium catapult shots. Fire projectors destroy the netting in two rounds. Light catapults and ballistas cause no damage to netting.

In a boarding action, boarders must cut through the netting before they can attack the enemy crew. Netting can be cut the same as grappling lines; it has five hit points and AC 10. Defenders under the netting can attack boarders above the netting if the defenders are armed with piercing (P) type weapons.

Speed Improvements

Rigging

Cost: 10 gp per cargo ton

A ship owner can add to the existing sails and oars (rigging) to improve his ship's speed and handling. A ship with this additional maneuvering equipment is "topped out" and requires additional manpower and cost.

Rigging the ship beyond its standard results in an increase in the ship's speed, by +3 (a speed of 15 becomes 18, 12 becomes 15).

Additional rigging also means there is more for the crew to do. The minimum crew required to operate the ship increases by half (50%). If it normally takes 10 crewmen to operate the ship, when the ship's rigging is increased, it requires a crew of 15.

Rigging can be added only once per

ship. It can be used to offset the effect of plating.

Stripping

Cost: 10 gp per cargo ton

Removing nonessential weight can increase the speed of a ship by +3 (see "Rigging," above). This results in dropping the armor rating by 2 points (from 4 to 6, for example). A ship is considered to have the same cargo tonnage despite the loss, and the missing pieces are not obvious to the casual observer.

Crews

Seafaring in the Forgotten Realms is a labor-intensive process. Galleys need oarsmen, sailing ships need crew to manipulate the rigging and to maintain the ship, and all ships with weapons need someone to operate them.

Crews are divided into four classifications: green, average, trained, and crack. Their costs per man per month are below:

Green:	2 gp
Average:	4 gp
Trained:	6 gp
Crack:	6 gp

Payment is usually in advance for the first two months, with any extra money accrued payable upon landfall. In addition, crews going into hazardous situations (such as when hired by adventurers) may demand an additional "crew's cut" of plunder-a share equal to that of the leaders to be distributed among the surviving crew. Such an arrangement will not improve their sailing ability but will affect their morale in combat situations.

Green sailors are those who could be picked up anywhere. They barely know the difference between a hawser and a ballista. They are warm bodies to fill the ranks, but little else.

Average sailors are usually found around large ports. They have had sailing experience before, and are competent to run a ship fairly well. In any city of, respectable size (such as Suzail or Procampur) they can be found in sufficient numbers to crew a vessel.

Trained sailors are the veterans of many voyages, often on a number of ships. They are numerous, but that does not mean they are easy to find. In any large city, 3d10 trained sailors can be found for hire. Of course, arrivals of new ships and ship crews mutinying or abandoning people may change that number.

Crack sailors are not so much rare as very specialized. They are the best at what they do for a particular captain and aboard a particular ship. Taking a crack crew from one ship and putting it on another with a different captain reduces it to trained status.

Initial Crew Status

Initially a crew has the rating of the majority of its members. A crew of 10 with one trained, six average, and three green recruits is considered average while one with two trained, and eight green members is considered green. This is for determining the initial crew rating only, when a ship is just starting out in play.

Increasing Crew Status

A green crew becomes average after one month of travel. This reflects one month of total travel, so that two days of travel, a week of hanging around in port, and two more days of travel add up to only four days of travel. Thirty days are needed to break in a green crew. For this reason, many captains begin with relatively safe, simple training runs to get the crew above this minimum competence; this is known as a "shakedown cruise."

An average crew becomes trained after two more months of travel. A trained crew

becomes crack after three more months, including at least one battle with another ship (known as "blooding the crew"). If during all three of these months the crew served under one captain, they attain crack status.

Decreasing Crew Status

Crew members may be lost through the normal wear and tear of combat and travel. As long as at least 20% of the original crew is still on board, the ship's crew status stays the same.

For example, if a ship with a trained crew of 10 men loses eight to a kraken and then hires eight green replacements at the next stop, the ship still has a trained crew. The oldtimers teach the ropes to the newcomers.

The exception to this is crack status. If a crack crew loses more than 50% of its members, it slips to trained status until the new crew passes through the three-month process to regain its status.

Effects of Crew Status

Crews, regardless of their status, can man large weapons. The status of the crew does not affect their combat ability.

However, a crew that works together smoothly can increase the speed at which the ship reacts to enemy maneuvers. This has no effect on the ship's maneuver rating, but does modify its initiative rolls and morale.

Table 2: Effects of Crew Status

Crew Status	Initiative	Morale
Green	+1	-1
Average	Unmodified	Unmodified
Trained	-1	+2
Crack	-2	+4

Weapon Teams

Any crewman can operate a large weapon such as a catapult or ballista. There are specialists who have been trained in their use, however, and they tend to be more valuable in combat. If the captain wishes to invest, it may be possible to get special hirelings for these shipboard positions.

Any good-sized city will have a few large-weapon specialists available for hire. (A large weapon specialist is an individual who has expended a weapon proficiency to become an expert user of a ballista, catapult, or fire projector.) One to 10 will be available in any standard month, and their hiring rates are usually the same as for trained or crack crewmen (6 gp/month/specialist).

A single specialist will affect the firing of one large weapon, adding a +1 to hit as long as the specialist can communicate with the crewmen operating the weapon. Further, the weapon team may lose one member (besides the specialist) and continue to operate with no decrease in its rate of fire. The specialist must be dedicated to that weapon, and cannot fulfill any other role aboard ship to gain these effects.

Multiple specialists are needed to maintain multiple weapons. A weapon specialist can help repair and operate any weapon, but he can only work on one weapon at a time.

Most weapons specialists are familiar with only one type of Weapon: ballista, catapult, or fire projector. Five percent of those encountered will be knowledgeable in two weapons, and five percent of those will be well versed in three.

Towed Ships

Any type of ship, whether oared or sailing, can be converted to a towed vessel. The
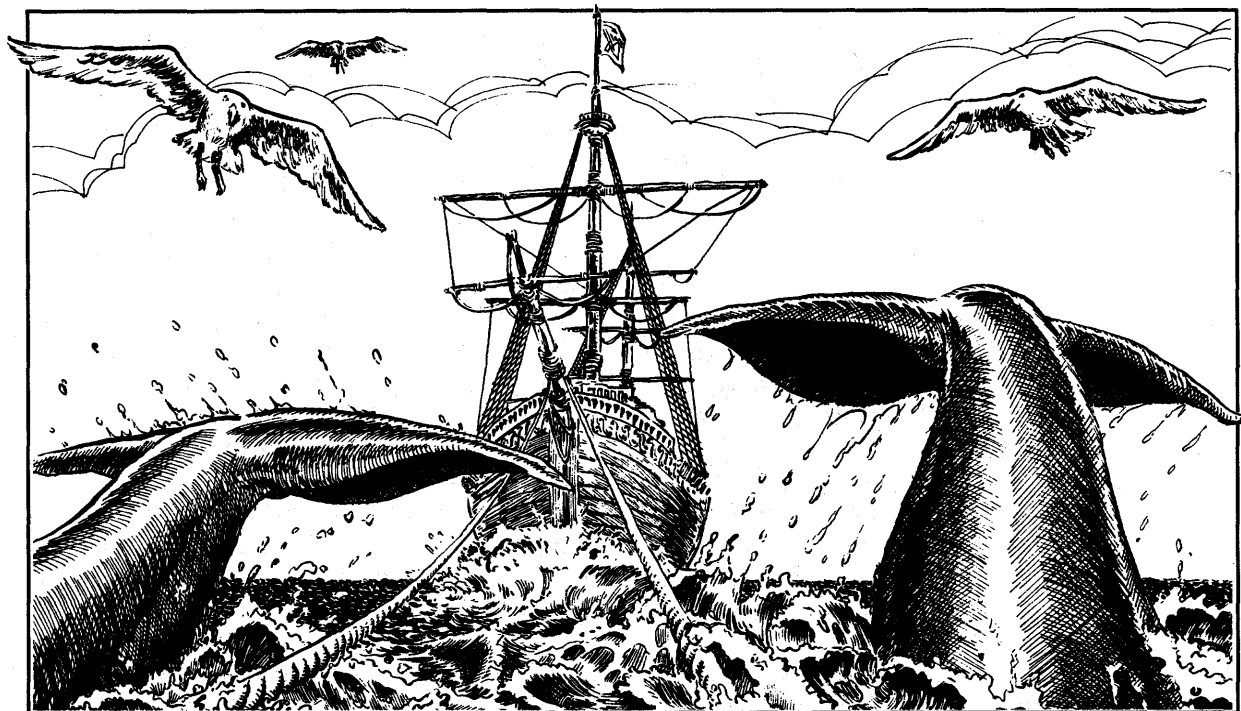
rigging changes involved cost 10,000 gp per vessel; for some vessels, this may be more than the cost of the ship.

Additionally, ships must be rigged for a specific type of creature; a ship which is designed to be towed by giant seahorses, for example, will not have the proper rigging to be towed by sharks. Rigging can be modified to be used with a different type of creature with a successful shipwright roll, subject to the following limitations:

- The old and new creatures must either both be swimmers or both be flyers.
- Both old and new creatures must be the same size (M, H, or G).
- The shipwright must have an example of the creature to be fitted.

The following list describes some of the creatures which could be used to tow a vessel. Along with each creature is its method of locomotion—swimming (Sw) or flying (Fl), an assessment of the size of ship (in cargo tons) that this creature could tow, and its normal towing speed.

If the ship's tonnage is greater than the capability of the creature to tow it, multiple creatures can be used to take up the load. If there are not enough creatures to tow the entire ship's tonnage, but there are at least enough to tow half the tonnage, the ship will move at half the listed rate. Similarly, if there is towing capacity available to tow twice the ship's tonnage, the ship will move at double the listed rate.

Any of the creatures below can also be exhorted to travel at emergency movement rate. This rate is double its normal movement rate. However, each full turn that a creature is forced to move at its full movement rate, it must make a morale check or stop (or try to escape, if the DM wishes).

Table 3: Towing Creatures

Creature	Movement (Fl, Sw)	Towing Capacity (Cargo Tons)	Normal Towing Speed
Aerial Servant	Fl	20	3
Ascallion	Sw	15	3
Asperii	Fl	10	6
Bat, Huge	Fl	5	2
Catfish, Giant	Sw	20	2
Crayfish, Giant	Sw	2	1
Crocodile, Giant	Sw	10	1
Dinosaur, Archelon	Sw	8	2
Dinosaur, Mosasaurus	Sw	30	2
Dinosaur, Nothosaurus	Sw	5	3
Dinosaur, Plesiosaur	Sw	3	2
Dinosaur, Pteranadon	Fl	10	2
Dinosaur, Pterosaurus	Fl	15	2
Dinosaur, Tanystropheus	Sw	15	3
Dolphin	Sw	2	4
Dragon, Black*	Sw	25	1
Dragon, Black*	Fl	15	4
Dragon, Blue	Fl	25	4
Dragon, Brass	Fl	15	4
Dragon, Bronze*	Sw	40	1
Dragon, Bronze*	Fl	25	4
Dragon, Copper	Fl	20	4
Dragon, Gold	Fl	35	5
Dragon, Green*	Sw	30	1
Dragon, Green*	Fl	20	4
Dragon, Red	Fl	30	4
Dragon, Silver	Fl	30	4
Dragon, White*	Sw	20	1
Dragon, White*	Fl	10	4
Dragon Turtle	Sw	30	1
Eagle, Giant	Fl	5	6
Eel, Giant	Sw	5	1
Elemental, Air**	Fl	50	5
Elemental, Water	Sw	50	4
Gar, Giant	Sw	15	4
Gargoyle	Fl	3	2
Margoyle	Sw	3	2
Genie, Djinn	Fl	10	3
Genie, Dao	Fl	8	2
Genie, Efreeti	Fl	15	3
Genie, Jann	Fl	8	4
Genie, Marid*	Fl	20	2

Creature	Movement (Fl,Sw)	Towing Capacity (Cargo Tons)	Normal Towing Speed
Genie, Marid*	Sw	20	3
Griffon	Fl	3	4
Hippocampus	Sw	30	3
Hippogriff	Fl	10	4
Ki-rin	Fl	10	6
Kuo-toa	Sw	1	2
Locathah	Sw	1	1
Lycanthrope, Seawolf (Lesser)	Sw	1	1
Lycanthrope, Seawolf (Greater)	Sw	2	4
Manticore	Fl	10	3
Merman	Sw	1	2
Naga, Water	Sw	2	2
Octopus, Giant	Sw	2	1
Owl, Giant	Fl	2	3
Pegasus	Fl	10	6
Ray, Manta	Sw	20	3
Roc	Fl	40	4
Sahuagin	Sw	2	3
Sea Horse, Giant	Sw	3	3
Sea Lion	Sw	8	3
Selkie	Sw	1	5
Shark, Giant	Sw	30	3
Snake, Sea, Giant	Sw	35	1
Sphinx, Androsphinx	Fl	3	3
Sphinx (other)	Fl	2	3
Squid, Giant	Sw	40	1
Squid, Kraken	Sw	70	1
Triton	Sw	2	2
Troll, Saltwater (Scrag)	Sw	3	1
Umber Hulk, Vodyanoi	Sw	10	1
Whale, Common	Sw	40	3
Whale, Giant	Sw	60	3
Whale, Killer	Sw	20	4
Whale, Leviathan	Sw	100	3
Whale, Narwhal	Sw	15	3
Wyvern	Fl	20	3

Note that having a ship capable of being towed by a creature is no guarantee that the creature is available, or that it can be controlled. Animal training, magical enchantments, or bargaining may be required to get a proper team for a towed vessel.

In Which Are Revealed the Methods Employed by the Fearsome Pirates and Their Law-Abiding Foes

Ship movement can be classified in two categories: long range and tactical. Long range movement is used for traveling from port to port across the Inner Sea; tactical movement deals with shorter ranges between combatants.

Long Range Movement

Ocean travel is measured in hours. Each of the basic hull types has a base movement rate specified in miles per hour. These represent a typical travel rate given normal travel conditions—a light breeze.

More than other methods of travel, however, ships (especially sailing ships) are subject to the whims of wind and weather. While it can be assumed that sailing weather is generally good, there are times when storms, favorable winds, or freak currents can increase or decrease a ship's speed.

The weather conditions which prevail for a day's travel can be determined by rolling on the Weather Conditions table found in the **Time and Movement** chapter of the DMG.

Once the weather conditions have been determined, the base and emergency movement rates of the ship are modified in accordance with the Sailing Movement Modifiers table found in the **Time and Movement** chapter of the DMG.

Ships being towed by flying creatures use the Sailing Modifier column of the table referenced. Ships being towed by swimming creatures use the Rowing Modifier column.

Adverse winds are determined by rolling 1d6. On a 5 or 6, the winds are unfavorable. When adverse winds exist, all of the above modifiers are halved for sailing ships and ships being towed by aerial creatures (rowed ships and ships being towed by swimming creatures are not affected).

When adverse winds are storm strength or greater, a ship will be blown off-course by half its movement, regardless of its method of propulsion.

Encounters

Ship encounters bear only minimal similarity to land encounters. At sea, there are few obstructions to use for cover, and generally ships can see one another at a distance of miles, rather than feet.

However, it is still possible for one ship to see another first, and for the first ship to attempt to fade back into the horizon so that it will not be seen. For this reason, rolls are still required to determine when such observations are made.

Once the two ships are within visual range of one another, each ship makes a roll each turn to determine whether it sees the other. This roll can also be used to indicate sighting land, large sea monsters (at the horizon), or other items of significance. The d20 roll made is determined by the quality of the crew as shown in the following table.

Ship Sighting Table

Crew Quality	Roll required
Green	16
Average	13
Trained	10
Crack	8

The maximum range at which one ship can see another is a function of the weather conditions.
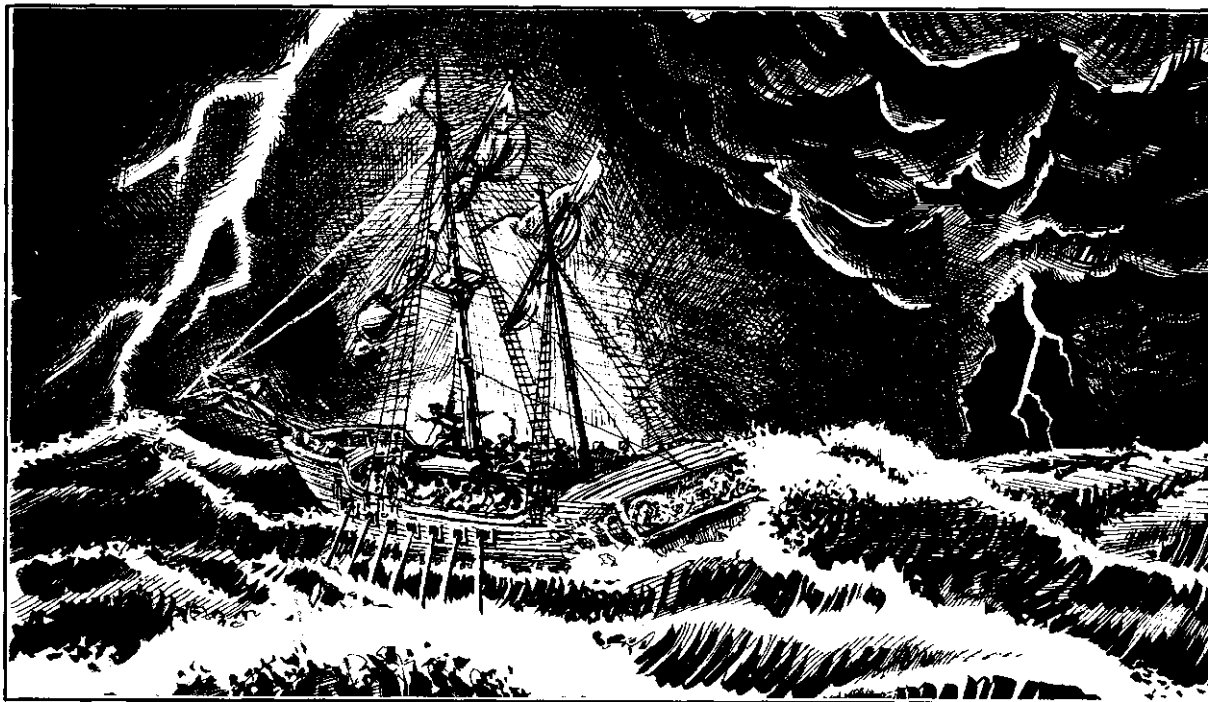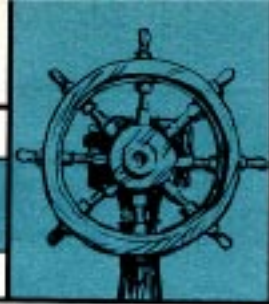
Viewing Distance Table

Weather	Range (miles)
Clear	8
Cloudy	3
Gale	2
Hurricane	1
Foggy	1 or less

Obviously, any obstruction (such as an island) will provide additional cover which may reduce this distance.

Ship Combat

A simple combat system is given below, providing a very abstract system for resolving movement. A round of combat is the same as a standard round-one minute.

Players and referees will do well to remember that this product is intended for use as a role-playing aid, not a boardgame of ship-to-ship combat. It provides a framework for playing the AD&D® game at sea. The game will be far less interesting if played without the personal involvement of the player characters aboard ship.

Ship-to-ship combat includes the following steps:

1. The DM decides what actions the opposing ship will take. Actions which a ship can take are listed below.
2. The players indicate what they will do, including any attacks they may make, and how their ship will maneuver.
3. Initiative is determined.
4. The relative positions of the ships are resolved.
5. Attacks are taken in order of initiative.

These steps are followed until the combat ends—one side is defeated, surrenders, or runs away.

NPC/Monster Ship Determination: In the first step, the DM secretly decides

what the opposing ship and its crew will do—attack, flee, maneuver for position, etc. He does not announce his decision to the players.

Player Determination: Next, the players give a general indication of what their characters are planning to do, and how their ship will maneuver. This does not have to be perfectly precise and can be changed somewhat, if the DM decides that circumstances warrant.

Initiative: In the third step, dice are rolled to determine initiative. This is done exactly as specified on page 93-96 of the *Player's Handbook* (pages 55-57 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide).* It is recommended that group initiative be used; should individual initiative be used, a separate initiative roll should be made for the ship itself. Note that the group initiative or ship's initiative is affected by crew quality as described above.

Decide relative ship positions: Based on the speeds of the ships, their actions, and their initiative rolls, determine the relative positions of the ships as specified in the section appropriate to the type of combat selected.

Resolution: In the last step, PCs, NPCs, and monsters make their attacks, spells occur, and any other actions are resolved according to the order of initiative.

The above sequence is not immutable. Some situations demand the application of common sense. In these cases the DM's word is final.

Quick Combat

This quick combat system is designed to allow gamemasters to resolve the ship-to-ship aspects of ship combat quickly. It is not intended to necessarily be a realistic combat, just a dramatic one. It is specifically designed to represent a battle between two ships, one run by the DM, one

by the players. Larger battles will use the tactical combat system.

Entering Quick Combat

Before two ships enter quick combat, the DM must determine the following pieces of information:

- Relative range of the two ships
- Which ship currently has the advantage

Each of these is described below.

In quick combat, there are six possible ranges between ships:

Very distant: The ships can see one another, but cannot attack. They are more than 500 yards apart.

Distant: The ships are just barely close enough to attack one another. Only weapons with a range greater than 250 yards can be used.

Normal: The ships are within range for most large weaponry and even bows, but are generally too far apart for the use of magic. Any weapon with a maximum range greater than 100 yards can be used.

Close: The ships are very close together. Weapons with a range of 50 yards or less can be used; this includes all bows and even some thrown weapons (such as javelins). Spells with a range of 50 yards or more can also be used.

Very close: The ships are within 20 yards of one another. Large ship-based weapons can no longer be used, but any missile weapon (including short-range thrown weapons such as hand-axes) can be. Most spells (except those with very low ranges) can also be used.

Boarding: The ships are touching. Melee weapons, normal missile weapons, and spells can be used.

Normally, ship combats will begin at either normal or distant ranges; the DM
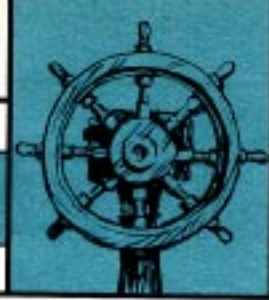
should make the final determination based on common sense and the circumstances. For example, in a heavy fog bank, two hostile ships might encounter one another at a "close" distance, while a ship spotted on the horizon is considered "very distant."

In normal ship combat, neither ship will begin with an advantage. However, due to surprise, favorable winds, or other circumstances the GM may wish to start one of the ships (either that run by the PC or that of the NPCs) with an initial advantage. An advantage is used in maneuvering to determine the results of the two ship's maneuvers.

Quick Combat and Initiative

In the Quick Combat System, an abstract *positional advantage* is used to indicate such intangibles as having a better wind position or having made a quick and clever maneuver.

The initiative difference determined in the initiative step determines which ship gains a *positional advantage* in Quick Combat. If the ship which currently has the advantage loses the initiative by 3 or more, it loses positional advantage. If any ship gains the initiative by 6 or more, it gains positional advantage. The effects of positional advantage are listed below.

Maneuvering in Quick Ship Combat

The quick combat system does not use a map and counters to denote the relative positions of the two ships. Instead, it attempts to determine their relative locations qualitatively, taking into account the range, intent, and initiative of each ship.

Each ship must adopt one of the following maneuvering postures each turn:

Charge: Head directly for the opposing ship, getting as close as possible. (-5)

Approach: Get closer to the opposing ship. (-3)

Maintain Distance: Maintain the current distance from the opposing ship. (0)

Gain Room: Try to increase the distance from the opposing ship. (+3)

Flee: Run directly away from the opposing ship. (+5)

The numbers for each posture are modified as follows:

Faster ship	+ / - difference in speed
Initiative	+/-1
Oared	+/- 1
Positional advantage	+/- 1

After picking a posture, the modified number ratings are added together. A d10 is then rolled and added for a grand total. The resulting value is applied according to the following table:

Value	Result
-5 or less	Ships approach by two range categories
-4 to 2	Ships approach by one range category
3 to 8	Ships do not change relative position
9 to 14	Ships separate by one range category
15 and up	Ships separate by two range categories

Example: A galleon (emergency move 6) and a longship (emergency move 13) are entering battle. The galleon gains initiative, and wishes to flee the battle site. The longship chooses to charge. Neither has a positional advantage. The longship has a modified rating of -13 (-5 for charge, -1 for being oared, -7 for the speed difference). The galleon has a modified rating of 6 (+5 for fleeing, +1 for initiative). Adding the two ratings results in a -7. The DM rolls a D10, and gets a 7, so the end result

is 0. The two ships approach by one range category.

Ships which approach closer than *boarding* may collide. To avoid a collision, each helmsman must make a Seamanship proficiency check. If both helmsmen fail the proficiency check, the ships collide (see Ramming, below).

Conversely, ships which separate beyond very *distant* are effectively disengaged. The GM must determine when (if ever) such ships re-enter combat.

If ships are not at *boarding* range, they cannot attack (except by missile weapons). However, ships which come from *normal* or *close* range to *boarding* range have several options. In particular, the ship with positional advantage may choose to ram, grapple and board, or make a shearing attack. If neither ship has positional advantage, then either ship may attempt to grapple and board, but neither may attempt to ram or make a shearing attack.

Combat

Jomo strokes the stubble that passes for his beard and looks thoughtfully into the distance. "Aye, fightin' ship to ship is a grand thing. Makes ya feel like a real pirate, aimin' ballistas and catapults and such at the enemy, blastin' great holes in her hull, watchin' 'em flee like rats. . . " His eyes glaze over with memories, and for a moment he looks like a young man again as he relives some of those glory days. "And boardin'! That's the thrill—leapin' from yer own gunwales onto the enemy's deck, cutlass flashin', givin' 'em the ol' hook-and-eye— " he slashes at an invisible opponent with the iron hook that takes the place of his right hand—"drivin' 'em

back to the rails!" It's clear to you that he was a dashing young man, truly enamored of the pirate's life. "Let me tell yer about the time we took on Teldar and the *Kissing Maiden . . . "*

Ranged Combat

The large weapons onboard ship, along with normal missile weapons and spells, can fire at great distances. Therefore it is often a tactic for crews to fire volleys from a long distance before closing to attack.

Large onboard weapons (catapults, ballistae, and fire projectors) all have a typical range and amount of damage they inflict, summarized on the table below. A large weapon inflicts damage to crew (hit point damage) and vessel.

Any weapon attacking the crew (hit point attacks) may attack any character on deck or partially exposed. A player may not simply specify, "I'm attacking the captain," however. If he wants to attack the captain, he must tell the DM how he will identify the captain. If the attacker has no clear idea of what the captain looks like, the DM should assign the shot randomly among the potential targets.

Large weapons (catapults, ballistae, etc.) cannot be used against ships any closer than 30 yards from the attacking vessel.

Large weapons modify their THAC0 by the AC of the target they hit. For crew hits use the AC of the crew member attacked. A target crew member gets a one-point bonus to his Armor Class if the ship's armor rating is better than the target's and the target's ship has the initiative that turn (presumably, the helmsman maneuvers the vessel so that its bulk provides some protection against enemy fire). For damage to the ship, use the ship's armor rat-
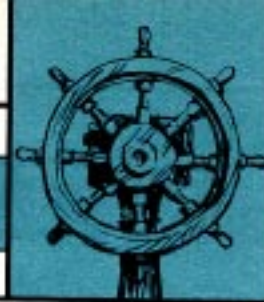
Weapon	Range	Damage	ROF	THAC0	Critical Hit on
Ballista, lt.	1/27	2d6	1/2	16	N/A
med.	3/30	3d6	1/3	14	20
heavy	6/36	3d10	1/4	12	19,20
Catapult, lt.	15/20	2d10	1/2	16	20
med.	18/30	3d10	1/2	17	19, 20
heavy	18/36	3d10	1/3	18	18, 19, 20
Fire Projector	18/40	3d10 + fire	1/4	16	18, 19, 20

ing. A large, weapon (catapult, ballista, etc.) that misses a human target can still inflict damage on the ship.

Hard and soft cover rules, if being used in the campaign, may also affect damage.

Fields of Fire

Not all weapons aboard a ship can attack all targets. Some weapons have a restricted field of fire, particularly if they are not on turrets (and therefore cannot be aimed).

Nonmovable weapons must be designated as to whether they fire forward, aft, to port, or to starboard. Such designation is on a weapon-by-weapon, ship-by-ship basis.

Weapons designated to fire only toward the front (or rear) of the ship may only fire at targets that are within the lines set up by the three frontal (or rear) hexes. They in addition receive a +2 to their THAC0 to hit targets directly in front (for front-mounted weapons) or directly behind (for rear-mounted weapons) due to the stability of the shooting platform.

Weapons designated to fire only to port (or starboard) of the ship may only fire at targets that are within the lines as shown on the diagram. They do not receive any special bonus to THAC0, however.

Ramming

Ramming is a common tactic for damaging or breaking up an enemy ship. Ramming is best performed against other ships that are of roughly the same cargo tonnage or smaller. Towed and sailing ships cannot ram; only oared ships can do so.

A ship must announce its intention to ram before initiative is determined. The process of ramming (steering to hit the opponent's ship, plus securing all the loose gear for the impact) requires time, and is not something that can be done on the spur of the moment.

When ramming, use the helmsman's Seamanship proficiency to determine if the ramming is successful. If his steering was true, the effect of the ram depends on the size of the two ships.

If the ramming ship is more than three times the cargo tonnage of the smaller ship, the target breaks up and will sink in 1d10 rounds.

If the ramming ship is larger than the target (but not three times greater), the target must immediately make a Seaworthiness check at half its normal rating.

If the ramming ship is equal to the target, the target must make a Seaworthiness check at its normal rating. The ramming ship automatically suffers a Ship Shaken critical hit.

If the ramming ship is smaller than the target (but not 50% smaller), both target
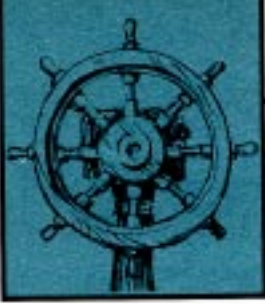
and attacker must make a Seaworthiness check. In addition, the ramming ship suffers a Ship Shaken critical hit.

As a result of failed Seaworthiness checks, a ship suffers critical hits. These are explained on p. 104.

Movement After Ramming

If the ramming ship misses its target or reduces the opposing ship to 0 hit points (so that the opposing ship begins to break up), the ramming ship may continue its movement up to its regular limits. If the ship hits its target without destroying it or is locked or grappled with the target, its movement stops.

Ship crews may grapple in the same round as a ram, if so desired.

Ramming Gargantuan Creatures

In general, living things cannot be effectively rammed (they are too small). Creatures of gargantuan size, however, are large enough that a ram would have an effect. Gargantuan creatures take 1d6 points of damage per 20 cargo tons (or fraction thereof) of the attacking ship (up to a maximum of 6d6).

Shearing Attacks

A shearing attack is a close pass against an opposing ship with the intention of snapping oars or dragging rigging overboard to slow the ship's speed. As with ramming, the attacking helmsman's Seamanship proficiency is used to determine whether the shear is successful. A successful shearing attack causes a Loss of Movement critical hit on the target ship.

Shearing attacks inflict no damage on the target ship's hull, but if a 20 is rolled for the attack, an additional critical hit results.
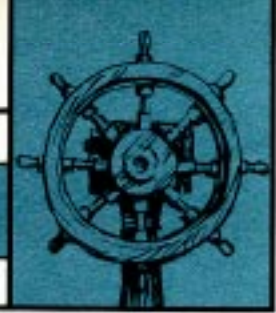
Grappling and Boarding

"It was in that third summer of my forced piracy that the flame-haired vixen taught me about climbin' rigging to throw grapplin' hooks." Jomo lifts a greasy mug to his lips, takes a long quaff of ale, and licks the foam from his mustache. "She sent me and another slip of a boy up into the ropes, draggin' grapplin' lines behind us—we didn't know what we was doin', to be sure, and kept catchin' the hooks in the riggin' an' nearly losin' our footing. Two points for'ard of the port beam, another ship of our fleet waited. Attached to her starboard side was a practice wall, for us to work our grapplin' technique on. That way, we couldn't harm the actual ship, y'see. The wall, bein' attached to the ither ship, would move just like a real enemy's gunwale, so we'd learn to take aim on the run, so to speak.

"We steadied ourselves on the yardarm, and set to grapplin'. Too bad the point wasn't to catch the riggin'—we were real good at that, right from the start! After three hours or so, though, we got the hang of it, and our throws were comin' closer and closer to that phony gunwale. It was slow goin', havin' ta haul the hook back in after every missed throw. Makes yer 'preciate the skills of a perfeshunal!

"Well, it was after noon, comin' on suppertime before the vixen let us stop. Claimed we'd done enough damage for one day—shucks, we only tore part of the mainsail, not all of it. It was a bad throw, I say."

Often it is desirable to take over an opponent's ship without inflicting major damage. (Pirates in particular prefer to do this, as it preserves the valuables they are seek-

ing.) In cases like this, a side with enough manpower can overwhelm the other side by grappling and boarding. Certain types of ramming may also result in a grappling situation.

Either side can grapple, but the moving side has the first opportunity. The purpose of grappling is to bring the two ships together to allow boarding.

The most common method of grappling is a large hook at the end of a long rope or chain. There are also ballista bolts which are similarly equipped and can be fired into the opponent's hull. In either case, once the hooks have caught hold, the two ships can be hauled together.

A grappling hook requires about 5' of space from side to side to be thrown at an adjacent ship. The number of hooks that can be thrown depends upon the length of the ship making the attack and the number of hooks it can bring to bear.

Two ships are considered grappled when 2d6 lines are secure. A grappling attack inflicts no damage but links the two ships together. Both ships are immobilized once they are connected by sufficient grappling lines.

Cutting Grapples. A crewman must make a normal attack roll to hit AC 10, then roll his damage to cut a grappling line. A line has 5 hit points. Grappling chains are AC 4 and have 20 hit points. Grapples may be cut at any time in the defender's turn, but often the ship has been boarded by then.

Combat when boarding is standard AD&D® system combat. A crew (either side) will fight until defeated or it fails a morale check. Player characters and important NPCs (determined by the DM) may fight as long and as hard as they wish, even to the death.

In very dangerous situations, a morale check should be made to see if the crew will board in the first place. For example,

Forward Fire Arc

Right Fire Arc

Left Fire Arc

Rear Fire Arc
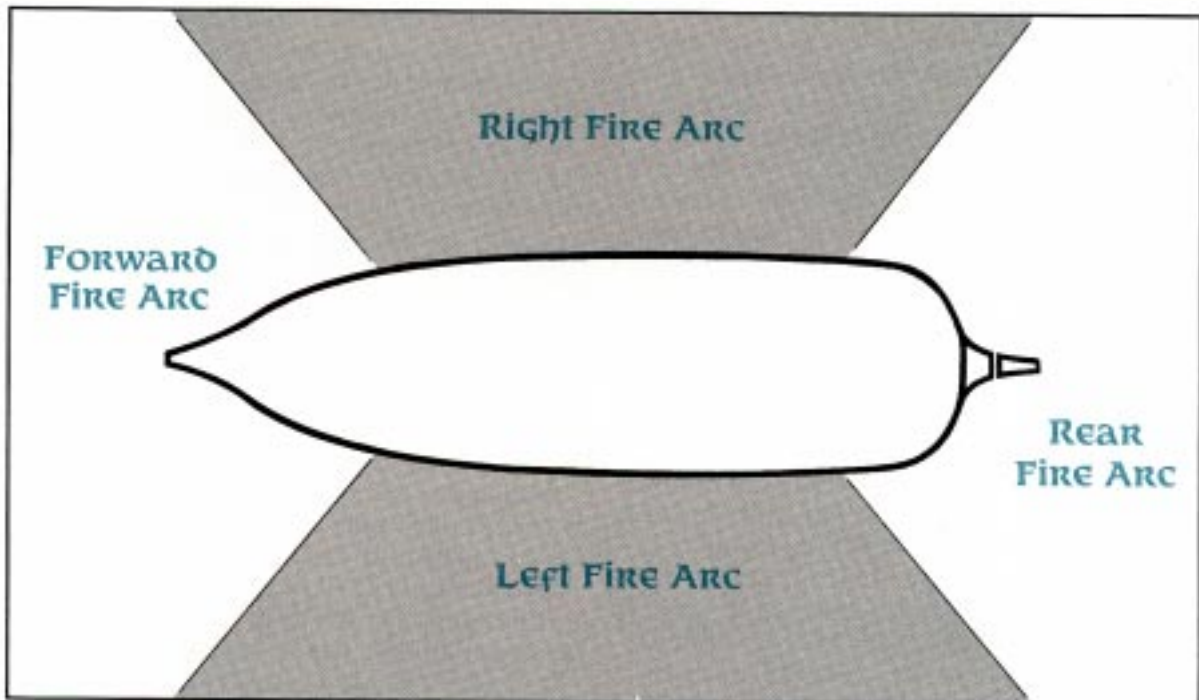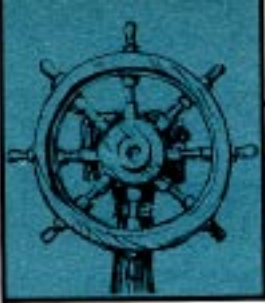
attacking a ship full of mind flayers is a risky proposition under the best of conditions. Such a morale check would be made after the orders are given but before they are carried out.

In case of a failure of morale, the crew will retreat back to its native ship. If the crew is on its native ship, it will surrender (unless it is checking morale to determine whether it will board, in which case the crew just refuses to attack). In certain cases, where capture would be worse than death (such as when fighting the Red Wizards of Thay), they will fight to the death.

Crashes

> "It was a foggy day, the eleventh in a row of sailin' through pea soup without a spoon," Jomo recounts as he leans forward, his elbows poking through the patches on his once-fine captain's jacket. "Couldn't see yer patch in front o' yer eye, heh heh. Couldn't hear nothin', neither, as if yer voice left yer lips and got stuck right off. Lookouts couldn't see nothin', couldn't hear nothin', couldn't do nothin'. Ol' Blind Tom, tho', he was a treasure beyond price durin' that time. Bein' used to listenin' more'n the rest of us, he wuz hearin' things we never'd of caught. It was him what saved our hides from what could'a been a turrible crash.
>
> "It musta been after noontime, tho' one couldna see the sun to tell by, that Blind Tom hollered to the lookout. Ship to starboard!' He'd heard the waves lappin' at her hull, and could tell 'em apart from our own sounds. The first mate come up and stood by Tom, and the three of 'em, the mate, the lookout, and Blind Tom, maneuvered our ship through them cold, gray waters. After a bit we could hear the crew of the other

> ship hollerin' orders, too, to keep from rammin' us broadside. We had some near misses, one I remember where I could see the nameplate on the other'n's hull: *Kissing Maiden.* Figgers, I thought to meself; that Teldar ain't smart enough to have a blind man on crew fer just such a sitiation!"

When two ships come alongside each other, there is a chance that the two ships will collide unintentionally. This impact usually has disastrous results for both ships involved.

The helmsman of the moving ship must make a Seamanship proficiency check to avoid a crash. If the check is successful, the ship can continue to move normally. If not, there is a crash.

If there is a crash, treat the result as if a ram occurred. A ship that is crashed into takes a Ship Shaken critical hit.

Crashing is not a situation many captains look forward to ("Except for that Teldar—by goom, he's a bad 'un!" interjects Jomo), but in combat there is often a need for "fireships" and other suicidal tactics where sacrificing a ship may help turn the battle. The crew of such a ship usually abandons it before the crash, hoping to survive in the sea rather than die in the crash.

Damaging Ships

Whenever a ship is rammed, struck by catapult stones, pierced by a ballista shaft, or partially disintegrated, there is a chance the damage caused will be serious enough to cripple or sink the vessel. This is determined through seaworthiness checks and critical hits.

To determine if a ship-mounted weapon causes damage, the attacking player must first roll a THAC0 against the armor rating
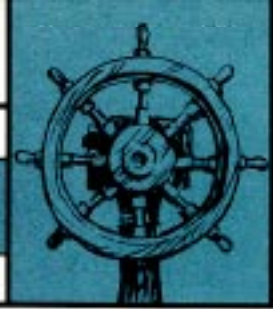
of the ship. A successful roll indicates the stone or bolt has struck the vessel somewhere (crew damage is figured at this time), but not necessarily anywhere that will endanger the vessel. An Item Saving Throw is rolled for the target ship, most often using Crushing Blow (for catapult stones). If this save is successful, the stone causes some damage but not enough to do serious structural harm. Future seaworthiness checks are reduced by 5%, however. If the save is failed, a seaworthiness check is immediately made. Should the check succeed, the 5% penalty is applied to future rolls. If the check is failed, a critical hit occurs.

The procedure is similar for magical spells that cause extensive damage— *disintegrate, fireball, lightning bolt,* etc. The saving throw required by the spell is checked. If successful, future seaworthiness checks are reduced by 5%. If the check fails, a seaworthiness check is immediately made with the result being the same as that for large weapons.

For rams, crashes, and similar attacks, no saving throw is made—it is assumed the ship has suffered extensive damage. Instead seaworthiness checks are immediately made. Again, passing the check causes a 5% reduction in future checks. Failing the check requires a critical hit.

Critical Hits

Critical hits vary from ship-threatening results of combat to less-dangerous situations which impair the functioning of the ship. Only large weapons can inflict critical hits outright, but the DM can rule that sufficient application of small weapons (the dwarf with the battle axe) could weaken a ship sufficiently to cause a critical hit.

When a critical hit is called for, roll on the table below and apply the result (results are listed following the table).

1d20

Roll	Result
1	Roll twice on this table
2	Deck Crew Casualty
3	Interior Crew Casualty
4	Ship Shaken
5	Large Weapon Damaged
6	Deck Crew Casualty
7	Hull Holed
8	Sheared
9	Hull Holed
10	Ship Shaken
11	Fire!
12	Loss of Movement
13	Deck Crew Casualty
14	Large Weapon Damaged
15	Ship Shaken
16	Hull Holed
17	Sheared
18	Leaking
19	Loss of Movement
20	Hull Holed

Deck Crew Casualty. One exposed crew member is struck and suffers the same damage as the ship. Choose the target randomly from exposed crew. All characters within 5' of that individual must make a saving throw against death magic or suffer the same damage.

Interior Crew Casualty. Same as Deck Crew Casualty, but everyone aboard is a potential target, including prisoners and the captain. This reflects not so much the effect of the missile itself, but shattered parts of the ship's interior bouncing around during combat.

Ship Shaken. Ship rings from the blow of the attack. All characters not sitting or otherwise firmly tied down have a chance to fall to the deck, disallowing any attacks or spell use that round. Characters in the rigging will also take the appropriate damage if they fall. NPCs have a flat 40% chance of falling as a result of this critical hit, while PCs (and NPCs important
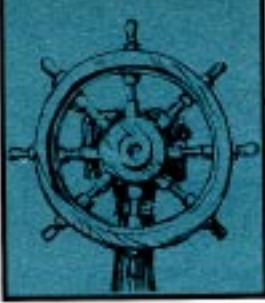
enough to rate their own Dexterity) must make a Dexterity check to maintain their balance. In addition, the ship must make a second seaworthiness check. If the check is failed, the ship suffers the Leaking result.

Leaking. The ship begins to leak as the timbers groan. Such a ship will sink in 2d10 + 10 minutes unless two crewmen are dedicated to bailing.

If this critical is suffered multiple times, each time it occurs the leaks become more severe. As the water flows in faster, five more crewmen must be assigned to keeping the vessel afloat. With enough leaks it will eventually become impossible to keep the ship afloat.

Large Weapon Damaged. One large weapon (chosen randomly) is inoperable until repaired (see Repairs). Its crew is unharmed.

Hull Holed. The attack punches a hole in the ship where there was none before. The hole is below the waterline, and the ship is sinking (see below).

Fire! A fire starts somewhere aboard the ship, determined by the DM. The effects of fire aboard ship are described below. In cases where it is physically impossible for a fire to start (all the lights are magical), go to the next entry. A fire on board as a result of this critical hit (as opposed to that from a fire projector or from magic) inflicts no damage the first round, but may spread.

Loss of movement. The emergency move and base move of the ship drop by 1 point. Weather effects are applied to the modified movement rate. Additional losses are cumulative, to a minimum of a movement rate of 1. If a ship with a movement rate (both base and emergency) of 1 receives this result, go to the next entry.

Sinking and Breaking Up

Jomo is suddenly more animated than you've seen him since you've been in his company, jumping onto a chair and tipping it from side to side. He snatches a pitcher of water from the bar, dashes it over his head, and shouts, "Avast! We're takin' on water! She's holed!" Seeing your astonishment, he stops rocking abruptly. "Just demonstratin' to ya the drama of a sinkin' ship! Not that it's somethin' ya wanna experience right off, now, but it happens to the best of 'em." He adds, almost to himself, "But not to them what deserves it . . . mincin' fop. . ." It's quite clear he's thinking of Teldar. You nearly ask him the cause of their great enmity (which you are fairly certain, by now, is one-sided—something tells you Teldar doesn't even know Jomo), but the venom in his whisper halts your words before they form on your tongue.

"It's not all as frightenin' as ya might think from what I just shown ya," he says apologetically. "I don't wanna skeer yer away from the free life of the sea. But," he leans forward with a serious set to his mouth, "ya better know what yer likely ta get into once ya set out on the Inner Sea; storms kin come up outta nowhere, great waves and winds tossing yer ship about like matchwood, or leviathans kin take a dislike to her keel and set about bashin' it to kindlin'. As if keepin' yer footin' isn't hard enough, without bein' thrown about by a overgrown minnow! And if yer lookout's not sharp-eyed as a eagle, rivals kin sail up to yer stern quiet as fish. Like that time we took on Teldar and the *Kissing Maiden*. . . "
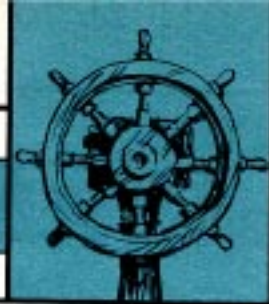
A ship that is sinking will last 1d10 rounds once holed. While the ship is sinking, large weapons (catapults, ballistas, etc.) are considered useless. The deck of the ship is tilting too sharply to properly aim such devices. Attacks using hand-held weapons or spells may still be performed, however.

When the ship sinks, every character aboard must make a saving throw against death or be sucked beneath the water. For this reason, most characters will try to abandon ship, entering the water first to avoid being sucked into the undertow.

Characters tossed into the sea must make a saving throw against death magic to find a piece of debris which they can use to stay afloat. Characters who do not find such debris are subject to the normal Swimming rules (pages 120-122 of the Player's Handbook), and if they are in armor may quickly drown.

A ship that is breaking up or sinking stops moving.

Effects of Crew Losses on Ship Performance

The less manpower a ship has, the less capable it is of fighting and sailing effectively. A ship may still handle itself in "reduced" circumstances, but not with the effectiveness of a full crew.

Large weapons require a minimum crew to fire properly. For each member missing out of a large weapon crew, the weapon takes one round longer to reload and fire. A weapon crewed by three men with a reload rate of 1/3 will have the following reload rates with reduced crews:

Crew	Reload Rate
3	1/3
2	1/4
1	1/5

Men who are lost during reloading are considered to be lost at the start of the re-

loading. That is, if three men start reloading the above weapon and then one man is lost as a casualty, the remaining men will need four full rounds (including those that have already passed) to reload and fire.

Large weapons can be reloaded and fired as long as one man remains available to do so. A large weapon without a crew cannot be fired. If a weapon is partially loaded and the entire crew is slain, the loading must begin again when a new crew arrives.

Fire

Whether as a result of a critical hit, a device such as the fire projector, or spells such as *fireball,* fires sometimes start on ships.

Fires do not threaten the structural integrity of the ship for at least 2d6 rounds. They do, however, threaten the health and safety of those aboard from the round they start. After 2d6 rounds have passed, make a seaworthiness check each turn, with a cumulative -5 applied to each check.

Putting out a fire requires one person for every round the fire has been turning. Translate the number of rounds the fire has been burning to an equal number of points. Thereafter, the fire's intensity increases by one for every five points. For example, if a fire has been burning for three rounds, then three people working with proper tools (assumed to be present) can extinguish the blaze. If not enough people are available to put out a blaze, they can reduce its severity by their actions. If two people fought the three-point fire, then the fire would be reduced to a two-point fire at the end of the round (the fire is reduced by two for the firefighters while increasing by one for spread).

A ship that fails a seaworthiness check from fire suffers a critical hit. If the ship sinks, the debris (if on fire) will continue to
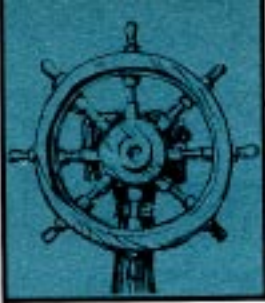
burn and break up until the disintegrating chunks are completely consumed.

Morale

The slapping of the mop on the floorboards slows, and Jomo's breathing comes a little more labored than usual. "The scullery boy isn't in today," he growls. "Something about a halfling holiday—seems like they have 'em every week or so. Always runnin' off to another feast of some sort. You'd think the Food here weren't no good!" He sets the mop in the leaky wooden bucket with a decisive *thump.* "Where was I, then? Oh yeah—losin' yer gumption. Happens to all of us, one time or 'nother.

"S'posin' yer on deck, and the enemy's right there alongside—say on the starboard beam. They's been peltin' yer ship with rocks, and she's been holed but the men down in the hold are bailin' as best they can. Yer mainsail is burnin' thanks to a hit from a fire-thrower, and chunks of mast are rainin' down like hail. Arrows and bolts have took their toll on the crew, too, pinnin' men to the masts or knockin' 'em clean overboard. *Now,* the enemy come leapin' over their own gunwales onto your deck, with blades drawn! What do yer do?

"If yer like most men, in that sitiation, ya jump ship and never mind the captain's temper. I done it meself, more'n once," he admits sheepishly, carefully considering the rusty buckles on his one shoe. "That's how I lost this leg," he lifts the peg attached to his right knee and waves it about weakly, "to a shark layin' in wait fer a tasty morsel like me ta fall inta the water. Enough men fell overboard, bleedin', to stir 'em into a feedin' frenzy." The remembrance of his own weakness in the face of battle seems to have taken the spunk out of him for a bit. "But there's them who never spook, the ones that make names fer themselves fer bravery in the line of danger. Never had the heart fer that, meself." He sits heavily in his captain's chair at the end of the bar, and rests his pegleg on the brass rail near the floor. "There's lots o' things kin scare a man, I tell ya . . . lots o' things."
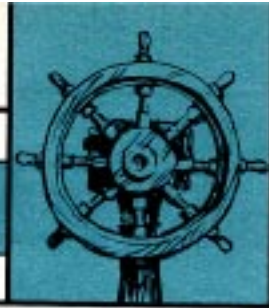
No one likes to die, particularly at sea with a long swim home. Thus, morale can be important in combat. If you can convince a ship's captain (or, more importantly, a ship's crew) to either call off their attack or surrender, you are winning a victory without risking your own ship and crew.

A crew of typical seamen has a morale of 11. Monstrous crews can have higher or lower morale (as specified for that creature in the *Monstrous Compendium),* and other factors (including how well the captain is liked) can also have an effect.

Morale checks are made at the conclusion of a round of battle, after all actions have been resolved. Morale checks are made in accordance with the morale rules under "Combat (Morale)" in the *Dungeon Master's Guide.*

A morale check is required for a ship's crew when:

- The ship suffers a critical hit.
- The ship has only 5 hit points left (unless the ship started with less than 10, in which case ignore this situation).
- The crew has been surprised (but only on the first turn after being surprised).
- The ship is faced by an obviously superior force.
- An ally or crewman is slain by magic.
- 25% of the crew has been eliminated.
- 50% of the crew has been eliminated.
- A companion or crewman is slain af-

ter 50% of the crew has been eliminated.

- All officers desert, are slain, or surrender.
- The crew is fighting a creature they cannot harm due to magical protection.
- The crew is asked to perform heroic (and dangerous) tasks.
- The crew is offered a bribe.
- A member of the crew is asked to use a personal magical device with charges.
- The crew has met the conditions of another morale check and is given the opportunity to surrender.
- It is apparent that the ship cannot escape.
- The ship's captain is slain.

Situational modifiers may also affect the morale check itself:

Ship has taken 25% hull damage . . .	-2
Ship has taken 50% hull damage . . .	-4
Ship has taken 75% hull damage . . .	-6
Captain is slain	-2
Opponent firing has taken 50% damage	+2
Captain is on deck	+4
First officer is on deck without captain	+2
Ship is on fire	-2
Opponent's ship is on fire	+1
Abandoned by friendly ships	-6
Crew losses at 25%	-2
Crew losses at 50%	-2
Crew is receiving a share of plunder .	+2
Crew is fighting hated enemy	+4
Enemy is known to take no prisoners	+3
Enemy is known to treat prisoners well..	-1
Ship's crew was surprised	-2
Crew fighting magical creatures	-2
Defensive terrain advantage	+1
Multiple checks per round	-1
Captain is of different alignment from crew	-1
Most powerful ally killed	-4
Crew favored by captain	+2
Crew poorly treated	-4
No enemy have been slain	-2
Crew outnumbered 3 to 1	-4
Ship outnumbered 10 to 1 in tonnage	-2
Outnumber other crew 3 to 1	+2
Ship outnumbers opposition 10 to 1 in tonnage	+2
Unable to hurt opponent	-8
Magic-using creatures on same side .	+2

The effect of a failed morale check is largely up to the DM, but the most common result is to "Strike the Colors" —that is, to surrender. In some situations, the attacker might let the defender limp away. In others the ship will at least be boarded, a ransom will be levied for the ship's passage or passengers, the ship will be looted of cargo, and/or seized with a prize crew and sailed back to base.

Because morale is checked at the end of the round, it is possible for all ships on both sides of a conflict to strike their colors at the same time. In this case all ships break off and will not resume combat for at least two hours (this is only an average, and can vary according to the availability of healing spells, presence of charismatic leaders, or other factors).

If a ship that has struck its colors has PCs aboard, it is up to the players to decide whether to pursue the fight or not. A ship that has struck its colors will not use its NPCs to fire weapons on board, but the PCs may do so.

However, be warned. A ship that has struck its colors only to attack again is generally accorded no mercy by other ships. An NPC crew will mutiny immediately against a captain or officers who pur-

sue the fight after a surrender, since this only puts their lives at even greater risk (if they are ultimately defeated, the enemy is likely to maroon them or worse).
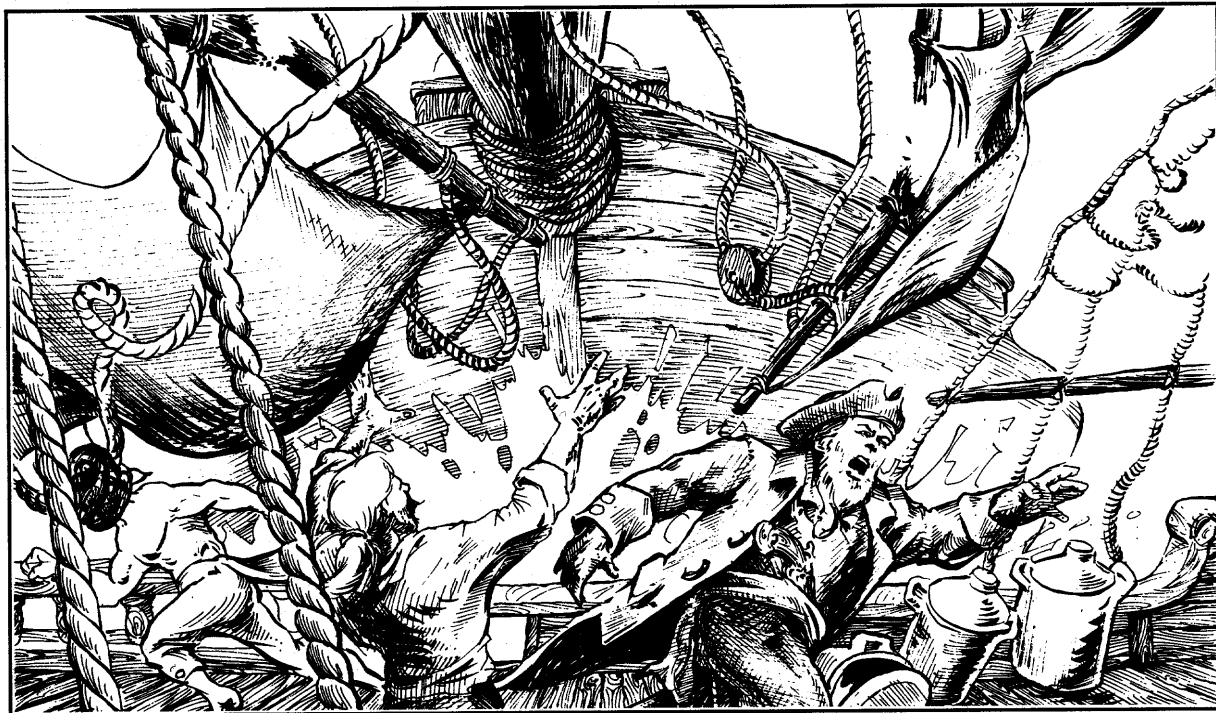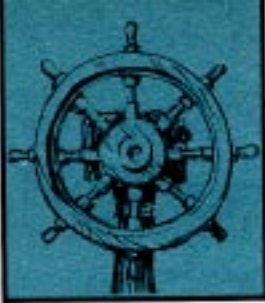
Repair

In most civilized areas, 5 percentage points of seaworthiness can be replaced or repaired at a cost of 2,000 gp in 1d6 days by a crew of ten trained workers.

Poor (or cheap) characters can repair ships themselves. A crew of five individuals, with the correct materials, can repair five percentage points in a month at sea. Materials can be acquired by buying them (at an approximate cost of 50 gp per percentage point worth of material) or just landing at a vacant stand of timber and taking what is needed.

Such repairs are just as good as the expensive ones, provided that at least one member of the crew has shipwright profi-ciency. A successful proficiency check must be made for such improvised repairs to succeed.

Repair of other ship features is handled differently. Repair of a Crew Casualty (whether interior or deck) can only be performed by hiring or otherwise locating a replacement crew member.

In Which The Characters Meet Pirates of the Dragonmere and Learn About the City of Teziir

This adventure introduces player-characters to the pirate problem on the Inner Sea by involving them in a raid against the coastal city of Teziir by a small pirate fleet.

It is designed for 5-8 PCs of 5th to 7th level. However, the difficulty of the adventure can be easily adjusted by increasing or decreasing the number of pirates, and by adjusting the level of the officers.

DM's Information

Teziir's arch-rival is the city of Westgate, a much more populous and wealthy trading city. The Council of Teziir founded the city some 35 years ago to attempt to attract Sword Coast caravans with their quicker, easier access to the sea. They have been partially successful; some caravans (although certainly not the majority) have used Teziir as an access to the Inner Sea. However, the Council of Teziir is caught in a dilemma.

To attract more caravans to the city, the caravans must be assured that there will be ships ready to transport their goods when they reach the port. However, to attract the ships, the ship captains must be assured that there will be cargo for them when they arrive. Teziir has made several attempts to break this dilemma by offering other services (such as a road patrol) to the caravans to build up a backlog of cargo to attract ships, but so far they have been unsuccessful.

In desperation, the Council has made a deal with the Cormyrean Freesails. The Freesails have agreed to service the port at least once per week with a large cog, regardless of whether there is sufficient trade to justify the trip. In return, the Council has agreed to ensure that each

ship will sell at least 50% of their cargo space—even if the Council has to purchase it empty.

With a steady supply of transportation (much of which is going unused, to the Council's distress), some of the caravans have begun to turn toward Teziir. Now, instead of traveling overland for an extra two days, then waiting up to two weeks for an available vessel, caravans going to Teziir are usually able to ship their goods within a few days, cutting their costs and allowing them to make more trips during the relatively temperate summer season.

This tactic has gathered the notice of the Croamarkh of Westgate. The loss of 15% of the season's trade has caused an economic slowdown in Westgate, cutting into the profits of everyone from the council to the Night Masks. He has decided to put an end to Teziir's pretensions by direct assault. Unfortunately, using the Westgate mercenaries would attract unwanted attention, particularly as the presence of the Freesails means that an attack on Teziir could involve Cormyr. With King Azoun's recent militarism since the Horde War, Westgate cannot risk open war.

Thus, the Croamarkh has let it be known (by way of his secret contacts with the Night Masks) that Westgate would be grateful to any pirate willing to make a decisive raid against Teziir, specifically against its warehouse district, to undermine the caravaners' confidence in the newer port. In the face of the challenge, Vurgrom "the Mighty" has stepped forward.

Unbeknownst to either Westgate or Vurgrom, however, the Lords of Waterdeep have chosen this time to ship a gift to King Azoun of Cormyr in thanks for his efforts in the Horde War. The pirates inadvertently steal this gift (whose true value they do not understand), and the PCs must get it back.

Player's Information

Read or paraphrase the following to your players:

Civilization at last! You've been on the road from Waterdeep to the Inner Sea, working a passage as caravan guards for Mulnis Lenz, a porcine little skinflint of a caravan master who promised you your back pay the day you hit town. Well, it's been a day or two, and Mulnis has been a little slow coming up with the cash.

Mulnis claims he can't pay you until his goods are loaded, and the Cormyrean Freesail isn't due in town for another day. After some pressure, he coughed up a few gold pieces to cover your living expenses until the shipment is taken and your pay arrives.

In the meantime, he's employed you to guard his wares from the thieves of the city—for extra pay, of course. Compared to the hill bandits and other scum you fought off on the road, you've had no trouble with the city thieves. A band as large and capable as yours is a bigger bite than they want to chew.

You spend your days sitting in the shade of an awning, trying to stay cool and stay awake. Periodically, one of you makes a quick trip around the warehouse; so far you've seen no activity.

One advantage of your resting space is that you have a good view of the harbor nearly a quarter mile away. A chance organization of warehouses makes an almost straight path from your position to the docks. Thus, you spend some of your time watching out for that Freesail, knowing that when he gets here, so does your pay.

> Thus, this afternoon, you watch as the four ships, sails flapping in the breeze, glides into the port. With four ships, you think, there'll be plenty of room for Mulnis' cargo, and you'll be paid for sure. Then, as the first blast of liquid fire pours from the ship's decks onto the town, you realize these ships aren't here to pick up cargo.

Four ships of Vurgrom's fleet have entered Teziir harbor. They are softening up parts of the shore with fire projectors, while they make a landing near the center of the port.

The PCs have several options:

- They could rush down to the shoreline to help defend against the pirates.
- They could rush to where the fires have begun to help save the town from the fire.
- They could remain at the warehouse to guard Mulnis' goods.
- They could try to track Mulnis down to make sure he isn't killed—and to ensure they get paid.

Each of these cases is handled below.

Fight the Pirates

If the PCs choose to rush to the shoreline to help defend the city, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> The docks where the pirate ships are is in total chaos. Dozens of leather-armed watchmen cross swords with scores of pirates. Everywhere you hear the sound of steel on steel and the moans of the dying.
>
> The four pirate ships are trying to land their troops; their gangways are down and flooded with armed men. At the base of each gangway a knot of 30

> guardsmen slash and hack against the marauding force. Other pirates are diving into the water and swimming to shore, falling on the rear of the guardsmen and trapping them in a vise of steel.
>
> As you run up to the battles, a few of the unengaged pirates see you, and move to keep you from aiding the guardsmen.

Each PC is attacked by two pirates. When those two have been killed, two more step forward. After each PC has fought four enemies, the pirates stop seeking them out. However, the PCs can continue to fall upon the pirates, who will defend themselves.

There are approximately 200 city watchmen on duty who are immediately available in the city's defense; the remaining 300 watchmen will arrive at a rate of 50 each turn. Each watchman is armed with a short sword and shield and is wearing leather armor.

Against this force are over 350 pirates, armored in leather and shield and carrying long swords or scimitars. (In game terms, each is AC 7, 13 hp, THAC0 18). While this force is stronger than the initial watch, it can be confined by preventing the pirates from getting to shore.

It is not intended that the DM run the battle between the guardsmen and the pirates using the standard AD&D® game rules. Such a battle would take far too long and would not involve the PCs significantly in the battle. Instead, use the confusion of such a mass battle to make the PCs' fight interesting.

The DM is encouraged to find interesting fighting situations in which the PCs can become involved. For example:

- While a PC is engaged with two pirates, a third stalks up behind him,

dagger in hand, to stab him in the back. He can be saved by his comrade, who notices the backstabber in time, or he can suffer the surprise attack (double damage).

- The pirates aboard one of the ships turns the fire projector on a group of guardsmen. The PCs must kill the pirate aiming the weapon or see dozens of guardsmen burned to a crisp.

- Just after finishing off a cluster of foes, the PCs are challenged by a huge bearded pirate wearing splint mail and carrying a huge two-handed sword (AC 4, 45 hp, THAC0 16, 1d10+2 damage). He screams and charges the group, inflicting devastating damage. He is a berserk, and never checks morale.

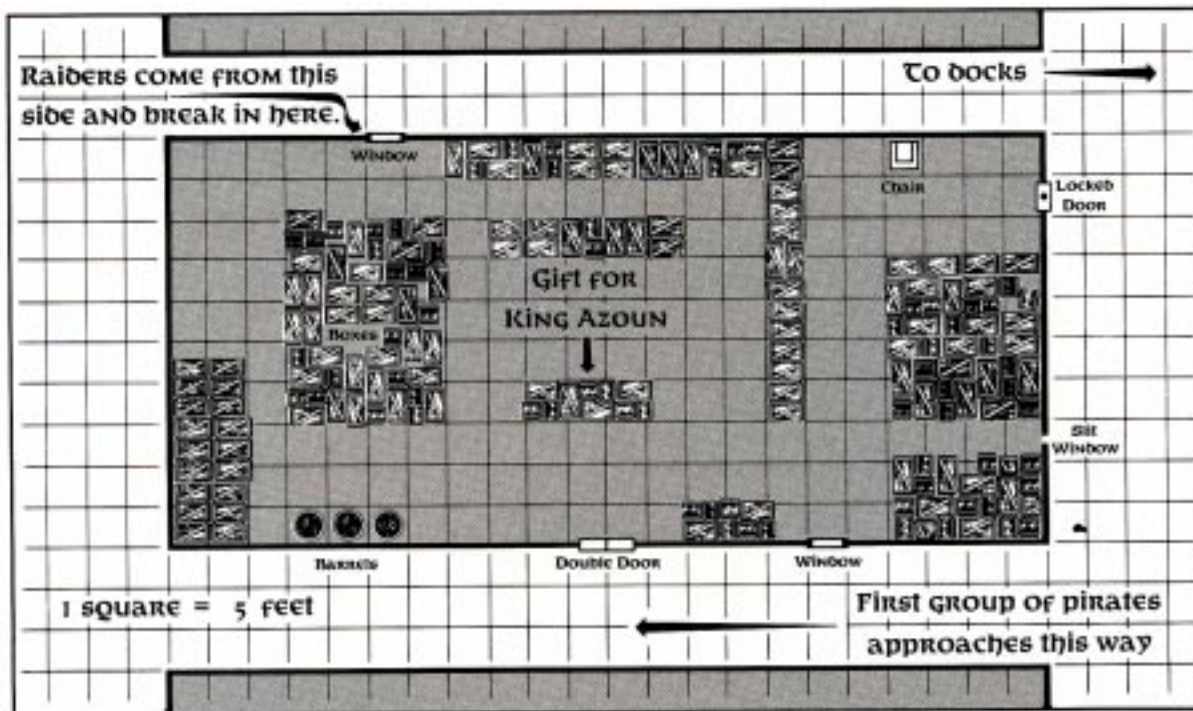- Late in the battle, the raiders are trying to flee. A force of city guardsmen have fought their way up the gangway onto one of the raiders' ships, and are involved in a desperate action to capture the ship from the raiders. One of the pirates, realizing the battle is lost, tries to use a torch to explode the fire projector aboard the ship, killing the guardsmen aboard and possibly many other innocents. The PCs must stop him before he succeeds.

Despite everything the PCs do, however, there are too many pirates to prevent all of them from entering the city.

If the PCs are killed or knocked unconscious during the battle, proceed to **Captured!,** below. Otherwise, they failed to protect the warehouse (which was, after all, their job); proceed to **Hell Hath No Fury.**

Fighting the Fire

If the PCs choose to fight the fire, they are joined by much of the city's population. There are bucket brigades carrying water

Raiders come from this side and break in here.

To docks →

Window

Chain

Locked Door

Gift for King Azoun

Boxes

Slit Window

1 square = 5 feet

Barrels

Double Door

Window

First group of pirates approaches this way

and sand to the fires, and the people of the town work diligently to stop the fires. However, the blazes began too widely spread to totally prevent damage, and much of the town still burns.

PCs who choose this option should be given the chance to be heroes, saving lives and property. A few options follow:

- The PCs see a woman and child trapped at a window on the third floor, with flames blazing behind her. A mage character could cast a *fly* spell to rescue the pair; rogue PCs could climb the hot exterior wall (taking some damage and risking death if the wall collapses); fighter or priest characters could attempt to catch the child (a Dexterity roll) as it falls from the unconscious mother's grasp.
- The PCs are fighting a blaze in a warehouse. The wall of the warehouse suddenly collapses, falling on a small crowd of firefighters, pinning several of them to the ground. The remainder of the warehouse begins to lean, as if it will fall over, burying the firefighters in burning rubble. The PCs can rush into the collapse to save the trapped people before they suffer flaming doom.
- The flames approach a horse corral. The horses panic, kicking the gate out of the corral and stampeding down a street filled with terrified citizens. The PCs must turn the stampede before it kills someone.
- The conflagration attracts a small salamander (40 hp), which begins restarting the blazes the people have extinguished. The PCs must attack the salamander (by injuring it to at least half damage) and drive it off.

In short, all PCs should be allowed to participate in heroic acts to help save the town. Unfortunately, since the PCs abandoned their posts, Mulnis' treasure has been lost, When the fire fighting is over, go to **Hell Hath No Fury.**

Guard the Warehouse

If the PCs are unusually dutiful, they may choose to remain at the warehouse guarding their employer's goods. If so, they need not miss all the fun. Half an hour after the pirates attack the docks, a raiding group of a dozen pirates with scimitars, leather and shield (AC 7, 11 hp each, THAC0 18, 1d8 damage) led by a pirate lieutenant in ring mail, shield, and battle axe (AC 6, 28 hp, THAC0 16, 1d8 +2 damage) will come charging up the road towards the PCs. (Make rolls for surprise as normal.)

These pirates will fall on the obviously armed PCs, and fight until either they lose morale or the PCs are all unconscious or dead. If the PCs lose, go to **Captured!,** below.

While the PCs are fighting this group, a second group (of the same size, but without the lieutenant) is breaking in through a window in the rear of the warehouse, looting. If the PCs have some of their number inside the warehouse, they are attacked by the looters; if all the PCs are outside and engaged in combat, they steal the choicest items from Mulnis' treasure. (Obviously, if the fight is carried into the warehouse, the looters may be caught in the act.) As their final act, the looters set fire to the remainder of the goods.

If the PCs manage to fend off all of the pirates but lose Mulnis' treasure to the looters, go to **Hell Hath No Fury.** If the PCs are knocked unconscious or killed, go to **Captured!** If, on the other hand, the PCs manage to defend Mulnis' treasure without being captured or killed, go to **Mulnis Captured!**

Seeking Mulnis

PCs so totally selfish as to abandon both their duty and the town, instead seeking Mulnis for their back pay, can go directly to **Hell Hath No Fury.** It takes them over an hour to find him; by then the battle is long over.
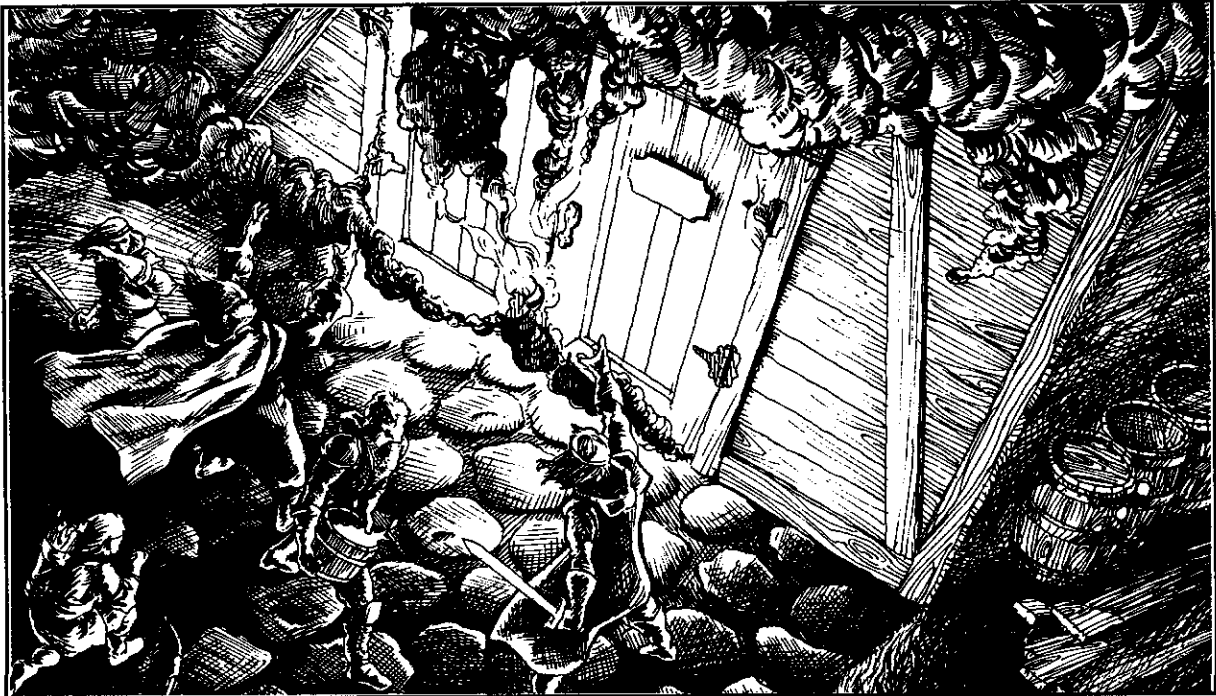
After The Battle

If all the PCs were killed or knocked unconscious in the battle, go directly to **Chased!.** Otherwise, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> As the battle proceeds, the raid quickly turns in favor of the city. Although the raiders were a powerful force, the city watchmen (and certain particularly brave residents) are able to turn the tide of the battle, and within an hour three of
>
> the raider ships are fleeing Teziir harbor, the fourth having been captured by an heroic contingent of city guardsmen and residents.
>
> Nevertheless, the city cannot claim a victory. There are over 100 city guardsmen dead or captured. Several blocks, including important warehouses, residences, and government buildings, were burned to the ground. Valuables from several caravans which were intended for shipment on the next Freesail were captured or destroyed. Worse, two of the caravan masters themselves were captured by the raiders.
>
> Now, the city watch and citizens are putting out the last of the blazes, and beginning the labor of identifying the dead and rebuilding the city. It will be years before the Council of Teziir can rebuild the city's reputation.

What happens after the battle depends on what and how well the PCs did.

- If the PCs were all knocked unconscious or killed, go to **Captured!.**
- If the PCs failed to protect Mulnis' treasure (either by leaving the warehouse or by not stopping the looters) go to **Hell Hath No Fury.**
- If the PCs defended the warehouse, go to **Mulnis Captured!.**

Hell Hath No Fury

Read or paraphrase the following to the players if they left the warehouse to do battle:

> The battle is over. You comported yourselves valiantly, defeating the raiders and driving them out of the city.
>
> With the raiders gone, you return to your post at the warehouse. There you see the doors open, smashed in by raiders' swords. Within, the most valuable of Mulnis' goods have been removed, and the rest put to the torch.

If the PCs did not leave the warehouse, but did not manage to keep the looters from taking the most valuable items, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> The battle is over. You comported yourselves valiantly, defending Mulnis' warehouse against the pirate raiders. Unfortunately, you were outmaneuvered. While you defended the front, other raiders came in the rear and stole Mulnis' choicest parcels. Although you detected the deception, you were too late to prevent the loss of Mulnis' valuables. Worse, before they left the raiders set fire to the remainder; you got the blaze under control, but still more of Mulnis' goods were damaged.

If the PCs left the warehouse to seek Mulnis, read or paraphrase the following:

> The battle is over. Despite your efforts, however, you were unable to find Mulnis to defend him from the raiders. As the battle ended, you decided you'd better return to the warehouse in case you could find him there.
>
> When you reach the warehouse, you see the doors open, smashed in by raiders' swords. Within, the most valuable of Mulnis' goods have been removed, and the rest put to the torch.

In any case, read the following to the players:

> As you absorb the sight of this, you see Mulnis coming down the road. His initial confident strides as he sees you still guarding his warehouse rapidly turn to the dull plodding of a man in shock as he takes in the burnt-out wreck that had been his caravan goods.
>
> "What have you done?" he cries, and bursts into real tears. You knew Mulnis was a skinflint, but this reaction seems much too severe. You try to explain, but he cuts you off.
>
> "You don't understand. Part of that cargo was a gift from the Lords of Waterdeep to King Azoun of Cormyr, in thanks for his defense of the West during the invasion of the Horde. And it's gone!" His initial sorrow rapidly turns to screaming anger. "How could you? You had a simple job: watch the cargo and make sure no one took it. You were paid well enough for it, I'd say." Mulnis goes on, ignoring your protestations that you haven't been paid yet. "You worthless dogs! If this were Waterdeep, I'd have you before the Lords themselves to answer for your crimes." He

> turns back to the shambles of the warehouse, and begins sobbing.

If the PCs are at all aware of duty, they will feel justifiably guilty. Even if they stayed to defend the warehouse, Mulnis will describe their actions in such a way as to imply that the loss is all their fault. If they argue that Mulnis didn't tell them about the royal gift, he will respond: "Do you think I was supposed to tell the likes of you about it? If I were such a fool I'd have lost it long before we made Teziir." He will then be sullen, although from then on he will occasionally raise the question of whether the PCs themselves stole it.

If the PCs ask for a description of the gift, Mulnis describes it as a locked jewelry box, 12" × 6" × 2" high, covered in purple velvet. It was inside one of the wooden crates which is now missing.

After a period of discussion, Mulnis will come to a conclusion. "There's no hope for it. You'll have to go after the gift and bring it back."

Mulnis will not be dissuaded from insisting that the PCs go after the item. If they ask him how to find the pirates, he says that's their problem. If they refuse, he offers them 1,000 gp, then 1,500 gp, then 2,000 gp each to recover the item. If they still refuse, he accuses them of being in on the theft, swears he'll see them hang, and storms off toward the center of town (where plumes of smoke are still rising).

A Little Coercion

Within an hour, the PCs are visited by a tall, thin, silver-haired man. This is Harvas Peltsen, a member of the Teziir City Council and one of the founders of Teziir. After determining who the PCs are and identifying himself, he continues:

> "Your master, Mulnis Lenz, has asked me to speak with you. It seems he believes that your failure to defend his warehouse has caused him to lose a valuable item eventually destined for King Azoun of Cormyr. He is using his position as an emissary of the Lords of Waterdeep to insist on your prosecution. Teziir's very existence is due to the good wishes of the Lords and their willingness to send Waterdhavian caravans through Teziir on their way to the Inner Sea.
>
> "I am aware of the conditions during the raid."

If the PCs participated in the defense of the city, or if they helped put out fires, King Azoun will acknowledge their heroism as well. In any case, continue:

> "I have attempted to calm Mulnis down, but he is implacable. I am afraid that unless you comply with his wishes and pursue the item, I will be forced to accede to his demands. I do not wish this. If you have any loyalty to your master, or if you wish the gratitude of Teziir, I beg you for your help."

Despite the well-known economy of the Teziir Council, Harvas is willing to offer 5,000 gp total in addition to Mulnis' offer as a "finder's fee" for the recovery of the gift and Mulnis. He is also willing to offer the captured raider ship for transportation, along with a crew of city guardsmen including a skilled pilot and helmsman. Should the PCs press, he is willing to go to 20,000 gp as a finder's fee, but he will try to bargain for a lower price.

He is, however, serious. If the PCs absolutely refuse to participate, he orders their arrest. If convicted, they can be enslaved under Teziirian law, and Mulnis would be

their owner. If they flee the city, they will be unwelcome in Teziir again.

Mulnis Captured!

Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> The battle is over. You comported your-selves valiantly, defending Mulnis' warehouse against the pirate raiders. While you defended the front, other raiders came in the rear, but you stopped them as well. Mulnis will be pleased.
>
> You wait for several hours, and Mulnis never arrives. He usually comes by at least once a day and checks his mer-chandise. By nightfall, you are quite con-cerned, and decide to go check on him. Your night watch companions show up on schedule (although they haven't seen Mulnis either), so you proceed to the fan-cy inn where he was staying.
>
> When you arrive at the inn, you dis-cover it was one of the raiders' targets. The door has been smashed in, and some of the upper stories were put to the torch. People are still wandering around in shock, and a city watchman is trying to keep people moving in some semblance of order.
>
> You ask the watchman for permission to enter. He eyes you suspiciously and asks your business. When you mention Mulnis' name, he directs you into the lobby to a tall, slender, silver-haired man in dark clothing with a grim ex-pression on his face. This is not Mulnis.

In fact, this is Harvas Peltsen, a member of the Teziir City Council and one of the founders of Teziir. After determining who the PCs are and identifying himself, he continues:

> "Your master, Mulnis Lenz, was an em-issary from the Lords of Waterdeep to King Azoun of Cormyr. Teziir's very ex-istence is due to the good wishes of the Lords and their willingness to send Wa-terdhavian caravans through Teziir on their way to the Inner Sea.
>
> "Mulnis was believed to be carrying a valuable gift for King Azoun. He was taken from here by the raiders along with a small purple jewelry box which we believe carried the gift. If you have any loyalty to your master, or if you wish the gratitude of Teziir, I beg you for your help."

Despite the well-known economy of the Teziir Council, Harvas is willing to offer 10,000 gp as a "finder's fee" for recovery of the gift and Mulnis. He also offers the captured raider ship for transportation, along with a crew of city guardsmen, in-cluding a skilled pilot and helmsman. Should the PCs press, he is willing to go to 30,000 gp as a finder's fee, but he will try to bargain for a lower price.

If the PCs ask for a description of the gift, Harvas describes it as a locked jewelry box, 12" × 6" × 2" high, covered in purple velvet. It was last seen in Mulnis' posses-sion.

Rush to the Rescue!

In this portion of the adventure, the PCs are going out to sea, to beard the pirates in their own den, and to steal back King Azoun's gift.

Before they go, they can get the follow-ing information from Harvas Peltsen, which he in turn got from interrogating those raiders who were captured:

- All of the ships were out of the Pirate Isles, specifically the Dragonisle. The raid was led by Vurgrom "the

Mighty," one of the most infamous pirates of the Inner Sea.

- The raiders were told when to make the raid, and exactly what to take. Harvas indicates that every incoming caravan in town was hit by the raiders.
- To avoid pursuit, if any, the ships were to split up once they were out of sight of land, and rejoin back at the Dragonisle in one week.
- One of the raiders knows which ship was targeted for Mulnis and his cargo. That ship, the Stirge, is headed for the Dragonisle by way of Alphar Isle.

Harvas suggests that the PCs head directly for Alphar Isle to head the Stirge off. Her captain cannot know for certain that the fourth vessel, the Wind's Slave, was captured, and will be expecting to meet with it at the Dragonisle. The surprise of seeing it at Alphar Isle may allow the PCs to get close enough to snatch back the gift (and Mulnis, if necessary). A surprise attack may be sufficient.

Battle At Sea

When the *Stirge* and the *Wind's Slave* meet at sea, use the combat rules provided in this volume. For game purposes, the *Wind's Slave* and the *Stirge* each have the following characteristics:

Wind's Slave: Caravel; 35 average crewmen (not counting PCs); 1 fire projector

Stirge: Drakkar; 90 average crewmen (includes 60 slave oarsmen); 1 fire projector

It is important to note that the *Stirge* has no reason to distrust the *Wind's Slave.* Therefore, the PCs might get quite close before starting battle, especially if they are cautious and make no obvious hostile moves. This element of surprise may be enough to turn the battle for them.

If the *Wind's Slave* manages to sink the

Stirge, the PCs will have to make a quick dash on board to grab the gift (and Mulnis, if he was captured). This trip may involve fighting some of the *Stirge's* men as the ship is sinking, striving to rescue their goal from the clutches of the sea.

If the *Wind's Slave* is sunk, on the other hand, the PCs will be captured by the *Stirge* and enslaved as oarsmen. See **Captured!** below.

If the PCs manage to board the *Stirge,* handle the fight using the standard AD&D® game combat rules. Since the *Stirge* is a small galley with oarslaves, the PCs and their city watch allies need only fight 26 regular pirates (AC 7, 12 hp, THAC0 19, 1d8 damage), 3 lieutenants (AC 6, 22 hp, THAC0 17, 1d8 + 1 damage), and one captain (AC 4, 35 hp, THAC0 14, 1d10+2 damage). The PCs may also want to free the oarslaves (see **Captured!,** below, for details on the oarslaves). If the PCs conquer all of the pirates (or even just the captain), the *Stirge* (and the treasure) is theirs.

Captured!

Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> When that last blow dropped a curtain of darkness over your mind, you were sure you had breathed your last. As you gasp for air, the smells which assault you make you wish—just for a moment —that you had.
>
> You open your eyes to the half-dim light of a ship's hold. Seated on a bench, a long cylindrical pole lies before you, rocking back and forth in time to the slow beat of a drum. Beside you, two others push and pull at the pole, occasionally glaring at you with a mixture of hatred and fear.
>
> Suddenly, you hear the crack of a

> whip at your back. "Grab that oar and get to work!" Quickly you grasp the oar, and begin pulling in rhythm with your benchmates.

Obviously, the PCs have been captured and made to work as oar slaves. They are aboard the *Stirge,* one of the raiding vessels which attacked Teziir. Their belongings have been stripped from them, save only a loincloth. Each character has only 1 hit point, and under these conditions will only gain 1 hit point per week. Mages and priests lost their spells when they were knocked unconscious; without spell books the mages cannot restore their spells.

Nevertheless, all is not lost. There are several ways the PCs can get free and gain control of the ship; here are a few pieces of information they will probably want.

- The PCs are attached to their benches by chains which are riveted to the deck. A PC could break his chains (or those of another) with a successful Bend Bars/Lift Gates roll. Each character may only try to break a given chain once per day.

  PCs can combine efforts to try to break the chains. If two PCs try to break the chains, they add their Bend Bars/Lift Gates percentage to determine the chance of breaking the chain. No more than two PCs can pull on a chain at any one time.
- Alternatively, a PC may try to weaken the chains by rubbing them against a rough surface. Each day of such effort adds 5% to the chance of breaking the chains by main force. Unfortunately, the ship's oarmaster checks the chains weekly; weakened chains bring a beating (1d6 damage) and new chains.
- Strong PCs may consider breaking off the oarhandle and using it as a weap-

The Spoon

Tan

Oresk

Alphar Isle

Bulta

Paldir

Ilthan

The
Bowl

The Windrace

Mirg Isle

Telfar

Sarr

Lurath

Lith

Kelthann

Sumbar

Ulgar Isle

Hawk's
Isle

N

Jang Rocks

The Dragonisle

The Jaw's Strait

on. Such a feat requires at least 18/91 strength, and should be performed as if opening a locked, barred, or magically held door. Should the PC succeed, however, the oarhandle can be used as a quarterstaff (for 1d6 damage plus strength bonuses). Note, however, that the act of trying to break off the oarhandle is obvious (it requires standing up under the oar and lifting with your shoulders), so any PC trying this risks a beating (2d6 damage) if they fail.

Priests may be able to regain their spells through meditation and prayer. The ship stops every night to allow all on board (oarslaves and crew) to sleep. This sleep will allow the priest to get a night of undisturbed rest. Due to the conditions aboard and the time allowed, however, a priest will have at most half an hour after a restful sleep to recover his spells before the daily rowing begins. Thus, at most three levels of spells may be prayed for in a given day. Additionally, each spell gained requires a Wisdom check, at -1 for each level of the spell, to represent the character's ability to maintain concentration despite the conditions. Finally, only spells without somatic or material components may be cast, unless the priest somehow gains access to the components or frees his hands and legs from the chains.

The PCs' 60 fellow oarsmen are also slaves, and are understandably not very happy about it. However, they have been unable to come up with a plan to free themselves. If the PCs manage to free the oarsmen, they will have a strong and well-motivated (if poorly armed) set of companions.

PCs who pretend to be dead in order to get free of their chains may do so. The oarsmaster cuts the chains from the wood with a hammer (1d2 damage) and chisel (1d3 damage), then two pirates carry the "corpse" up to the side and throw it overboard. Two other armed crewmen monitor this activity, however, and at the first sign of life from the "corpse" they attack. (Obviously, however, if other oarsmen are also free, such a small party can be overwhelmed.)

- The poor food, poor air, and lack of adequate exercise (not counting rowing) has a long-term debilitating effect. Each oarslave must make a Constitution check each week or lose 1 point of Constitution. When the character's constitution reaches 0, he dies of exhaustion. This constitution can be recovered at the rate of 1 point per week in an environment with good food and clean air.

Whenever the PCs manage to escape (and, when all else fails, the old "Guard, he's sick" trick always seems to work), they must battle the crew of the ship. Since the Stirge is a small galley with oarslaves, the PCs need only fight 26 regular pirates (AC 7, 12 hp, THAC0 19, 1d8 damage), 3 lieutenants (AC 6, 22 hp, THAC0 17, 1d8 + 1 damage), and one captain (AC 4, 35 hp, THAC0 14, 1d10+2 damage). If the PCs conquer all of the pirates (or even just the captain), the *Stirge* (and the treasure) is theirs.

Conclusion

Upon acquiring the gift (and possibly Mulnis), the PCs can return to Teziir to get their reward. If the PCs have recovered any of the other goods, the Council of Teziir gives them a bounty of 10% of the value of the recovered goods.

When Mulnis and his gift are safely back in Teziir, the PCs may also be commis-

sioned to take him to Suzail. This journey should be uneventful, but it leaves the PCs in possession of a ship, a good reputation in Teziir, a friend in the court of Cormyr, and an enemy in Vurgrom "the Mighty," would-be lord of the Pirate Isles.

Teziir

Teziir is the largest free city on the banks of the Dragonmere. Teziir is an independent trade city, striving to replace Westgate as the favored port for goods brought to the Inner Sea from the Sword Coast.

Teziir is ruled by a council of merchants (mostly LN), many of whom were responsible for Teziir's founding some 45 years ago. This council represents over 80% of the wealth of Teziir, and they administer the city as if it were their private property (which it essentially is). The council has hired magistrates, watchmen, and other common civil servants, and runs the city like a business—produce or you're fired.

Despite the council's efforts to establish a well-run city, Teziir is still something of a frontier town. The city's growth has been haphazard, with streets merely being wide gaps between buildings near the port which rarely run straight for any distance. Many of the poorer workers live in shacks on the hillsides just outside of town, eking out a living as stevedores or providing some needed (but not necessarily legal) service to the wealthier people in town.

Teziir is still rather small, with less than 40,000 people in its steady population, swelling to near 55,000 in summer. Aside from its use as a trading port, Teziir also maintains a population of miners who mine the nearby mountains for gems and precious metals, so far with only limited and spotty success.

The city watch of 500 leather-armored F1-F2s, armed with clubs, short swords, and daggers. The watch is headed by Commander Alton Mertlin (LN human F7), a skilled fighter who unfortunately has poor organizational skills, so the watch in Teziir tends to arrive shortly after they are needed.

Commander Mertlin has pressed the Council on several occasions to wall the city for its defense, but the council has not yet decided to invest so much money for a questionable return. Mertlin has not pressed any harder because his predecessor (who also wanted the city walled) lost his job over his arguments with the council, and Commander Mertlin does not want to return to the life of a wandering freesword.

There is also a road patrol, providing caravans from the Sword Coast some security from bandits. The Council hopes to use this road patrol as a selling point to encourage caravans to come through Teziir as opposed to Westgate, but as the patrol is generally undermanned and underequipped, the caravan masters have not seen them as a significant factor.

Teziir has never been involved in a war, so it has not historically hired mercenaries. (Also, the Council generally considers mercenaries too expensive for what they do.) However, Teziir has suffered several pirate raids over the years, some of which have done major damage to the city. These raids, while near the intensity of a true war, are over far too quickly for the Council to bring mercenaries in to deal with the problem, and the Council has not yet seen fit to hire a standing army.

Several churches have established temples in Teziir, including Azuth (a small temple), Chauntea, Helm (the strongest in the city), Torm, Tymora, and Tyr. The city does not have an official "state religion," but Helm is worshipped by the majority of the council.

There are few mages in Teziir. The city does not have enough of the amenities of a

larger port (such as Westgate) to attract those mages interested in city life, but it has too many people traveling in and out for a mage who wishes a quieter, rural life. Nevertheless, two notable mages have made their homes here:

- Cydaran (N human W8), a self-serving young man whose father is on the Council. Cydaran has had himself named "Chief Wizard of Teziir," a claim without much distinction.
- Isyio (LN human W9 (Diviner)), a quiet, scholarly man whose true prowess is not common knowledge in Teziir. Isyio spends much of his time on private researches, or teaching the children of the Council the rudiments of magic. In his youth, Isyio studied under the Simbul, but after a series of incidents in which the young Isyio embarrassed the Simbul, she sent him away "until he grew up." The hurt broke Isyio, and he has spent the better part of his life improving his magical prowess to demonstrate his sincerity, hoping that someday he can return to the Simbul's tutelage.

Teziir has an active and growing Rogues' and Thieves' Guild, the Astorians. Their primary activity is petty theft and protection, and it is estimated that nearly 5% of the goods which pass into Teziir pass out through the hands of the Astorians, who wryly refer to this as their "tithe."

With nearly 700 members, the Astorians are a growing force in Teziir. The Council has attempted to mount a campaign to eliminate the Astorians with some success, but they have been unwilling to pay for the number and kind of militiamen who could truly eliminate the threat to the Council's power. Those in the know say that within a generation or two the Astorians will hold the place now held by the Night Masks in Westgate—rulers.
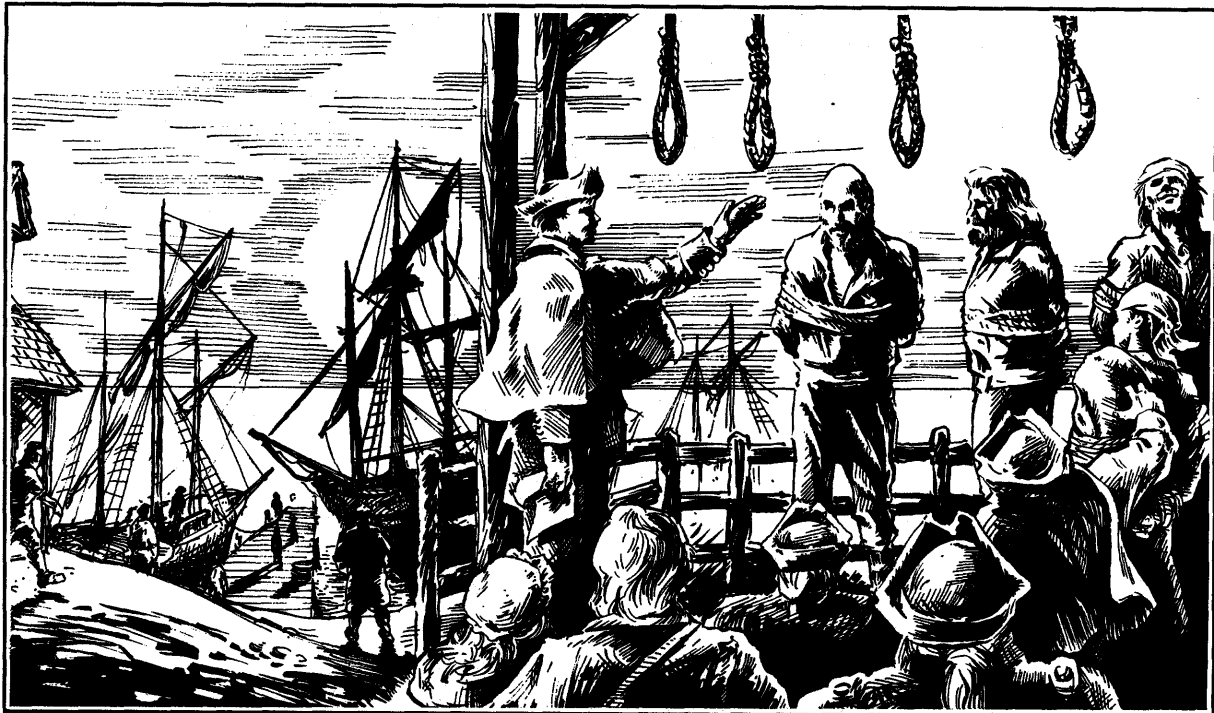
Ship Terminology

Abovedeck: Outside on the top deck of the ship (not in the rigging; see Aloft).

Aft: The direction one is facing when one is on the ship looking at the stern.

Aloft: In the rigging of a sailing ship.

Amidships: In the center of the ship.

Athwartships: Across the ship from side to side.

Athwartships sail: A sail running athwartships (cf. Fore-and-Aft Sail). Athwartships sails tend to be square, and a ship with primarily athwartships sails is said to be *square-rigged.*

Beam: A direction directly to either side of the ship. An object which is directly to the left of the ship, for example, is said to be "on the port beam."

Bireme: An oared vessel with two banks (rows) of oars.

Boat: A small water vessel, either carried by a larger vessel or intended for close-shore work only. Boats are generally not considered seagoing vessels.

Boom: The horizontal spar which runs along the lower edge of a sail, particularly a fore-and-aft sail.

Bowsprit: A spar extending for'ard from the bow of the ship, to which foresails may be attached.

Bulkhead: Walls on the interior of a ship.

Centerline: An imaginary line running down the center of the ship from bow to stem.

Course: The planned direction of travel for a ship.

Dead Ahead: Travelling straight ahead without turning right or left.

Deadlight: A porthole which cannot be opened.

Deck: A floor on a ship.

Fo'c'sle (Forecastle): The cabin farthest forward aboard ship. The fo'c'sle is generally used as crew's quarters. On most warships, the fo'c'sle is a separate structure on the front of the ship, so that the fore-deck (which would be on the roof of the fo'c'sle) is raised, giving archers a better vantage point for firing.

Fore-and-aft Sail: A sail which runs from the bow to the stern (cf. athwartships sail). Fore-and-aft sails are usually triangular, although four-sided sails are used (see Gaff).

Foremast: The shorter mast of a two-masted ship, if it is ahead of the mainmast (cf. Mizzenmast).

Founder: For a ship or boat to fill with water and sink.

Gaff: A horizontal spar used to support a four-sided fore-and-aft sail. A ship with gaffs is said to be *gaff-rigged.*

Galley: An oar-powered ship, specifically one with one bank of oars. Also, the place aboard ship where food is prepared.

Gunwale: The portion of the hull which extends above the main deck. The gunwale on most passenger ships is topped with a liferail.

Heading: The actual direction of travel for a ship (cf. Course).

Headsail: One of a set of fore-and-aft sails set ahead of the forward mast. If only one sail is forward of the forward mast, see Jib.

Headway: Forward movement of a ship.

Jib: A lone sail set ahead of the forward mast.

Keel: The structural center of the hull, running along the bottom of the ship along the centerline from bow to stern. The ship is usually built up from the keel: the first stage of building a ship is *laying the keel.*

Leeway: Sideways movement of a ship.

Length over all: The length of the hull, measured from bow to stern along the centerline.

Letters of marque: A document empowering a ship to raid the ships and ports of an enemy land in the name of the issuing government. Privateers carry letters of marque.

Liferail: An extension of the gunwale which provides a railing to prevent someone falling overboard. On most pirate ships, liferails are uncommon, as they are viewed as appropriate only for passenger vessels.

Lines: Ropes used aboard a ship.

Main deck: The highest deck which extends over the entire boat.

Mainmast: The largest mast on a ship, it is usually found amidships.

Mainsail: The largest sail on a ship with multiple sails. It is usually hung from the mainmast.

Mast: A large spar set vertically into the deck of the ship to support sails.

Mizzenmast: The shorter mast of a two-masted ship, if it is abaft of the mainmast (cf. Foremast).

Oarlock: A hole in the hull of a boat used to put oars through.

Overboard: Off the edge of the ship into the water.

Overhead: The ceiling in a compartment.

Pier: A structure projecting out from the shoreline for the purpose of providing a place to make ships fast: cf. Wharf.

Pitch: Vertical motion of the boat where the bow and stern rise. and fall.

Poop cabin: A cabin set on the main deck at the aft of the ship. The captain's and officer's quarters are traditionally in the poop cabin.

Poopdeck: The deck on top of the poop cabin. The poopdeck is also used as a platform for missile fire.

Point: A measure of angle of approximately 11 degrees. An object at approximately 22 degrees (going clockwise with dead ahead being 0 degrees) is "two points off the starboard bow", while an object at 68

degrees (in the same system) is "two points forward of the starboard beam."

Port: The left side of a ship, when one is standing at the center of the ship, facing the bow.

Porthole: A window aboard a ship.

Portlight: A porthole that can be opened.

Quarter: The rear half of a side of the ship. A point at 7:30 (with the front of the ship at 12:00) is "on the port quarter."

Reef: An obstruction below the waterline.

Rigging: The lines which support the spars and the sails and allow the sailors to control the sails.

Roll: Vertical motion of the boat where the sides of the boat rise and fall.

Rudder: A flat plane which is attached to the ship and inserted into the water near the stern of the ship. The rudder is used to steer the ship. If the rudder is turned so that it points to port, the ship turns to port; if the rudder is turned so that it points to starboard, the ship turns to starboard.

Rutter: A book where the navigator writes a description of his travels. The rutter is used to allow the navigator to retrace his steps, so that he may find his way to the same place again.

Schooner: A ship with at least two masts, where the aft mast is the mainmast. Schooners are generally rigged with fore-and-aft sails.

Sloop: A single-masted ship with two sails: a mainsail and a jib.

Spar: Any framework used to support sails. Spars include masts, booms, and gaffs.

Starboard: The right side of a ship, when one is standing at the center of the ship, facing the bow.

Stay: A line running from the mast to the bow or stem. A line from the bow to the mast is called a *forestay;* a line from the stem to the mast is called a *backstay*

Stem: The back of a ship.

Sterncastle: A structure (such as a poop cabin) built above the main deck in the aft of a ship.

Sternway: Reverse movement of a ship.

Stow: To put away.

Strike: To lower something from above the deck: the reverse of hoist. One can strike the sails, strike one's colors, etc.

Tiller: The place where the ship's rudder is controlled. The term "tiller" is used when the rudder is controlled by a lever at the back of the ship (cf. Helm).

Topside: On the main deck, or at the helm.

Trireme: An oared ship with three banks of oars. Triremes are rare, favored only by Mulhorand in the Inner Sea.

Waterline: The point on the hull where the hull crosses from air to water. The waterline gets higher (and the ship gets lower) when the ship is more heavily loaded.

Wharf: A structure parallel to shore constructed to provide a place to make ships fast; cf. Pier.

Wheel: For ships which do not have tillers, the mechanism by which the rudder is controlled. Most wheels are large affairs with many wooden spokes which extend beyond the rim of the wheel to use as handholds, as the primitive system of pulleys that attaches the wheel to the rudder requires considerable leverage. The wheel is attached so that when the rudder is pointing dead ahead, one specific spoke of the wheel (called the *king spoke)* is pointing straight up. The king spoke is often carved specially so that it is easy to identify by sight or touch.

Yardarm: A horizontal spar used to support an athwartships sail.

Yaw: Motion of the boat where the boat is pushed off course (usually by the action of waves).

Common Commands

Hoist Sail: Increase the amount of sail the ship is using. This will increase the speed. (Note: This command and the next two are often used with a specific sail, e.g. "Hoist the mainsail!".)

Shorten Sail: Reduce the amount of sail the ship is using. This will decrease the speed.

Furl Sail: Take the sail down, roll it up, and secure it.

Steady: Maintain heading and speed.

Full Ahead: Increase speed to maximum.

Five beats: Begin rowing slowly (five strokes/minute)

Ten beats: Row faster (ten strokes/minute)

Fifteen beats: Row as fast as possible. Most oarsmen cannot maintain fifteen beats for more than a few minutes, and some large ships cannot row this quickly at all.

Bear Port/Starboard: Turn slowly to the left/right.

Hard to Port/Starboard: Turn to the left/right as fast as possible.

Fire: Fire one volley of missiles at the target. This command is typically used with ship-to-ship weapons such as ballistae and catapults.

Fire Away: Fire missile weapons at the target at will.

Hold Fire: Stop firing.

Strike Colors: Surrender.

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PIRATES OF THE FALLEN STARS

"Aye, fightin' ship to ship is a grand thing. Makes ya feel like a real pirate, aimin' ballistas and catapults and such at the enemy, blastin' great holes in her hull, watchin' 'em flee like rats . . ." **Jomo Shanbaeren's eyes glaze over with memories, and for a moment he looks like a young man again as he relives his glory days.** "And boardin'! That's the thrill—leapin' from yer own gunwales onto the enemy's deck, cutlass flashin', givin' 'em the ol' hook-and-eye—" **the retired pirate slashes at an invisible opponent with the iron hook that takes the place of his right hand—**"drivin' 'em back to the rails! Let me tell yer about the time we took on Teldar and the *Kissing Maiden* . . ."

Pirates of the Fallen Stars reveals for the first time the details about the Pirate Isles, in the center of the Inner Sea. Here are facts about their societies, their interactions with the Inner Sea nations, their pirate kings, their ships, their style of combat; in fact, here is everything any DM or player needs to know to enjoy a campaign in the Sea of Fallen Stars and its environs.