



# **CCC-BWM-001**





# Howling on the Moonsea

Aristocrats and nobles from all around the Moonsea come to vacation upon the pleasure barge that sets sail from the floating Sokol Sea Palace. However, recent late-night howling and frightening shapes in the dark have discouraged the usual number of customers from boarding the Sokol Sea Palace. Rumors of Zhentarim cargo ships being attacked by unseen monsters in Moonsea have also added to the fear of sailing to the once thriving vacation destination. Now, the Sokol family and their ferryman Karsk are turning to the recent job fair in Phlan to find a group of adventurers to investigate these alarming sounds and sights hoping to return their business to prosperity once more.

## A 4-Hour Adventure for 5-10 Level Characters



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## Introduction

Welcome to *Howling on the Moonsea*, a D&D Adventurers League<sup>™</sup> adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League<sup>™</sup> organized play system and a standalone module written for Bookwyrm 2018, Fresno, California

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 5th** -**10th level characters**, and is optimized for **five 8th level characters**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

This adventure is set in the Moonsea region of the Forgotten Realms, starting in the town of Phlan.

## Adjusting This Adventure

This adventure provides suggestions in making adjustments for smaller or larger groups, characters of higher or lower levels, and characters that are otherwise a bit more powerful than the adventure is optimized for. You're not bound to these adjustments; they're here for your convenience.

To figure out whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the total by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group's APL. To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the following table.

# Determining Party Strength

Party Composition Party	Strength
3-4 characters, APL less than	Very weak
3-4 characters, APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters, APL greater than	Average
5 characters, APL less than	Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent	Average
5 characters, APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters, APL less than	Average
6-7 characters, APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than	Very strong

Some encounters may include a sidebar that offers suggestions for certain party strengths. If a particular recommendation is not offered or appropriate for your group, you don't have to make adjustments.

## Before Play at the Table

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Familiar yourself with the adventure's appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battle maps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

## Playing the Dungeon Master

You have the most important role—facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You provide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life.

To facilitate this, keep in mind the following: *You're Empowered.* Make decisions about how the group interacts with the adventure; adjusting or improvising is encouraged, so long as you maintain the adventure's spirit. This doesn't allow you to implement house rules or change those of the Adventurers League, however; they should be consistent in this regard.

**Challenge Your Players.** Gauge the experience level of your **players** (not the characters), try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to deliver the experience they're after. Everyone should have the opportunity to shine.

*Keep the Adventure Moving.* When the game starts to get bogged down, feel free to provide hints and clues to your players so they can attempt to solve puzzles, engage in combat, and roleplay interactions without getting too frustrated over a lack of information. This gives players "little victories" for figuring out good choices from clues. Watch for stalling—play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience.

## **Adventure Primer**

## Adventure Background

With the death of house Sokol's late scion Egan Sokol and the defeat of their current scion, Barret Sokol in the election for leadership in Phlan, the family has fallen on difficult times. However, there is one Sokol left in the Moonsea who still manages to turn a profit- Maurina Sokol, aunt of Barret Sokol. As reconstruction efforts are in full swing to rebuild the city of Phlan, Maurina spent her entire inheritance to have a floating resort that she so-called, the Sokol Sea Palace, constructed along with a smaller pleasure barge that docks at the sea palace named the Sea Flower. With these two floating attractions created, she has them towed to the middle of the Moonsea where she entertains well-paying nobles and entrepreneurs, giving them exclusive tours of the Moonsea and as much gambling, dining, dancing and debauchery as they would like.

Business on the Sokol Sea Palace and its pleasure barge, the Sea Flower, were doing quite well until recent sounds of frightening howls and the reports of people seeing Kraken tentacles rising from the sea at night began to circulate. Since then, the nobles and aristocrats have mostly been scared away from Maurina's floating attractions. Although she still has enough money and customers to last her for quite a while, she knows that it won't last forever and the Sokol Sea attractions will fail unless these harmful rumors are dispelled.

The first place Maurina went to for help was the city of Phlan, where her family keeps their produce warehouse and business offices. However, in light of the recent elections, the new leader of Phlan, Jhessail Greycastle was reluctant to offer any aid. It wasn't until several members of the Black Fist guard heard that the bard, Banderes was going to be aboard the Sea Flower as a performer, that any aid was given. A quartet of Black Fist guards begged Greycastle to be allowed to go, setting aside their hatred of the Sokol family to get a chance to see the famous bard. Unfortunately for Maurina, these guards immediately became too obsessed with meeting the bard and quickly abandoned their purpose there. Greycastle, amused with this turn of events, refused any further help and stated that the Sea Flower was in the best possible care.

Maurina is now forced to look for help among privately hired adventurers to investigate these allegedly fearsome sights and sounds. Meanwhile, the presence of this loud and gaudy new sea attraction has caused the ire of a marid named, Shahzada. He worships the goddesses of the elemental planes of water and tempest – Olhydra and Umberlee. In conference with these goddesses, they agree that the Sokol sea attractions are a disrespect towards the power and might of the sea. They believe that the sea should be feared and desire to see the cult of Crushing Wave brought back to prominence. Imbued with the blessing of these goddesses, Shahzada corrupted a group of mighty Triton warriors. He bound them to serve the goddesses and hatched a plan to bring about the dominance of the Crushing Wave in the Moonsea.

Initially, Shahzada used the Tritons and their leader Vodos to scare away the aristocrats and nobles with a magical Horn of Howling. Shahzada created the horn and crafted some drift wood to look like tentacles of a kraken. However, Vodos, a formerly innocent and lawful triton, has fully succumbed to the corruption of Olhydra and is overcome with a madness of greedy bloodlust. He has decided that all those not following the ways of the Crushing Wave must be destroyed. He now orders his warriors to loot and pillage the rich aristocrats of the Moonsea.

The adventurers will begin in the city of Phlan where a large job fair is being held. Workers are coming from all around to find a job in the rebuilding city. Most of the good jobs are already taken at this point and only the old ferryman, Karsk, who is working for the Sokol family, is left as a quest-giver to give a job to the adventurers. He is hiring them to help reassure their patrons and to find the cause of the mysterious howling that is driving away the patrons of the Sea Palace and its pleasure barges.

The city of Phlan recently fell to the ancient green dragon, Vorgansharax 'the Maimed Virulence,' and the Cult of the Dragon. During the battles to defend and ultimately retake the city, many of Phlan's historic buildings were badly damaged or destroyed, but champions from all over the land gathered for an epic battle, the city was finally reclaimed for the citizens and nobles of the Moonsea.

## Adventure Overview

Part 1: The characters begin the adventure in the last remaining Inn available in Phlan, The Leaky Eye. The name of this Inn comes from the fact that its only private dining hall has a large round hole over it. It has been patched with tarps and scraps of wood, but the owner doesn't currently have the funds to have it properly fixed. After spending the night in the Inn, the adventurers hear chatter from the patrons in the main dining hall about the Sokol's Sea Palace being haunted and many of the rich nobles not returning there because of it. They also hear old man Karsk argue with anyone gossiping about the Sokol Sea Palace. He's looking for a group brave enough to investigate these false claims. Once the party agrees to set sail with Karsk he immediately takes them to the docks to set sail.

*Note:* This section is intended as an introduction for the characters and is a role play only section. If you are leading a strict four-hour timeslot, it recommended to skip this section and begin the adventure with part two. You may quickly summarize this section or any of the story hooks, if necessary, when the characters reach the setting of part two.

**Part 2:** The group is dropped off on the pleasure barge, 'The Sea Flower,' by Karsk with a mission to calm and assure the patrons by winning some gambling games and lightening the mood.

Encounter 1: As the night's festivities are dying down, there is an attack on the ship as 3 Banderhobbs tear through the bottom of the hull and the rest of the NPCs are attacked by 4 Triton Bandit Captains who have already attacked the barge with magical bombs (only used to blow up the bottom of the ship).

**Note:** After the battle is completed the pleasure barge will be sinking and in tatters. A sailor in a keel boat will be gathering as many NPCs on his boat as he can fit along with the adventurers. This is Captain Tanheel. He reports that his ship, Tymora's Luck has been attacked by more Triton Bandits. He offers to match the amount of gold that the Sokol's are paying them to save his ship and he'll even give them a ride over to the Sea Palace to save Maurina Sokol once they're finished.

**Part 3:** The adventurers will be navigated to the ship, Tymora's Luck, by Captain Tanheel. They will have to climb up 20 feet to get aboard the ship where they will need to battle the corrupted tritons to retake Tymora's Luck. Encounter 2: Once aboard the Tymora's Luck they'll find a group of Triton bandits looting the corpses of the human crew. Battle will begin as soon as characters are on board and they will fight, Keros, a Triton Champion (Vodos' second in command), and 4 Triton Swashbucklers.
Part 4: The Tymora's Luck, now with its captain in command, sails the group back to the Sokol Sea Palace and drops them off at the deck. Captain Tanheel must take the nobles back to Phlan and Hulberg, but leaves behind his keel boat for them, if they need it.

Encounter 3: As the characters enter the Sea Palace they first come to the trading platform, Area 3 has 1 Marid waiting to impatiently for the Tritons to finish their business. Note: It is possible (and even encouraged) for players to avoid battling the Marid if they are able to successfully role play their way around him. Encounter 4: Beyond the entry and at the end of the Sea Palace, stands the Sokol Mansion which is being attacked by Vodos (a Triton Warlord), 4 Triton Archers and 2 Triton Swashbucklers. They haven't yet broken through the Mansion's iron gates, but unfortunately, Maurina's archers have run out of arrow and bolts and her ground troops have all been killed.

**Aftermath:** If the characters defeat Vodos and he's not killed in the final battle, Shahzada (if he's still alive) will claim his body and pull him back into the elemental plane of water, threatening a possible return.

## **Familiar Faces**

This adventure uses many non-player characters (NPCs) that some adventurers may have previously encountered in past adventures in this storyline. Knowledge of these NPCs is not necessary for full enjoyment of this adventure, but the DM is encouraged to read the sidebars accompanying each NPC and the attached Dramatis Personae to understand the past relationship that each may have with the characters. Continuing to develop those relations only serves to further invest players in the storyline.

## **Adventure Hooks**

**General Goals:** If characters don't have a faction, then they'll want to take this as a job as it's the only high paying job left in Phlan. Although, a PC could join a vine clipping crew around Mantor's square where shambling mounds and vine blights still hassle the castle. Or perhaps, they could try to replace the wet wood in the Leaky eye with fresh planks, but both jobs only pay 2 silvers per day (and free stay of course). Or a group of adventurers could receive 1,000 gp to take the job from the Sokol Group to save the Sea Palace.

If you have a character without a faction who isn't motivated by gold, they will have an oracle known as the Seer, who will visit them and tell them that terrible things are going to happen aboard the Sokol Sea Palace if they don't go to help them, or the character themselves will have a similar vision that will come to them in a dream of crashing waves.

Harper Goals: The Harpers have heard that there has been a mysterious Howling sounding in the night. They would like any Harpers agents to learn why people are hearing these odd howls. They're also suspicious, given the Sokol family's history, that they may be messing around with things they shouldn't be and possibly bringing this malady to the Moonsea.

Zhentarim Goals: Several Zhent trading ships haven't made it back to harbor when traveling near the Sea Palace. Pieces of these ships have been found torn to shreds flowing back to the Zhent keep. All Zhentarim members are to explore the area around the South Moonsea (near the Sea Palace) to discover why these ships are being torn to pieces.

**Order of Gauntlet:** Oren Whitesail, a Cleric of Tyr was sent to establish a temple of Tyr aboard the Sea Palace and was asked to protect Maurina Sokol and make sure that her family stays within the beliefs of her ancestors and doesn't turn to worshiping demons, as has been the case with a few of the less reputable Sokol family members. Order of the Gauntlet members are to rescue Oren and find out if he's been successful in spreading the word of Tyr and keeping the Sea Palace from demon worship.

Lord's Alliance Goals: The Lord's Alliance fears that the economy of the Moonsea will be dramatically impacted and the major cities may start clashing against each other if the fear of the Moonsea Howling continues. The leaders of both Phlan and Hulberg are already having conflicts and pointing fingers at the other for recent problems with trade shipments. Lord's Alliance characters are asked to make sure that trade is restored and that the noble denizens of both cities are returned safely.

**Emerald Enclave:** The Emerald Enclave has noticed a disturbance in the behavior of sea creatures in the south bay of the Moonsea who are behaving more aggressively

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than usual or are fleeing the area. Emerald Enclave characters are to find the cause of this disturbance and find the source of the rising tides along the southern coast of the Moonsea.

# Part 1: A Leaky Job in Phlan

"No, I would not want to live in a world without dragons, as I would not want to live in a world without magic, for that is a world without mystery, and that is a world without faith." -RA. Salvatore, Streams of Silver

## Estimated Duration: 30 minutes

The adventure group is in the town of Phlan where a large job fair is going on. Unfortunately, all the good jobs and all the good hotels have already been taken. The classier places to stay like the Velvet Doublet, The Cracked Crown and Madame Freona's Teakettle are completely full. Even the less classier places like the Laughing Goblin and the Bitter Blade are also without an inch of free space. That leaves the Leaky Eye (named for the round hole above its side banquet hall). This is where the adventurers are staying. The food isn't good, the roof isn't dry, and the beds are not comfortable, but the ale is stout enough and they always have a fire that burns hot in the dining hall. It is inside this Inn that the adventure begins. The players have all stayed the night at this Inn while looking for work and they know that they are to meet with a man named Karsk first thing in the morning to talk about the last available job in town.

As you walk down the stairs, from the second story rooms of the Inn, you find that the dining hall of the Leaky Eye is filled with two dozen soggy sailors sitting around tables grumbling to each other about the horrors of the Moonsea. A wispy old man with windswept white hair sits at the bar grinding his teeth in anger as he overhears the conversation. The Barkeep, a portly Dwarf named Burly, tries to reassure the old man. "Don't you mind them Karsk. Sailors are always a superstitious lot." One of the sailors named Dinty, jumps up from his seat and yells, "It's not superstition I tell you! It's those Sokols again. They're doing something out there in that Sea Palace. Each night as I'm sailing home I hear ungodly howlin' nearby there and saw the shape of a Kraken peeking out of the water just behind their pleasure barge. I'm not the only one. Many nobles left the barge 'cause of it."

The old man, Karsk bangs his hand on the bar. "Lies! Maurina Sokol is a fine lady and isn't dabbling with any dark power, let alone a kraken. Ain't no krakens in the Moonsea. It's something else. I'll be hiring some adventurers to investigate it all out. Once it's sorted, you'll see. It ain't nothin'! And you'll have to eat your soggy hat, you will." All eyes in the Inn turn to the group of adventurers who just arrived as if in expectation that you'll be the ones to settle this dispute.

Karsk will tell the characters that he's looking for a fine group of adventurers to sort out what's going on

aboard the Sokol Sea Palace and its pleasure barges, and that he'll pay good money to anyone willing to investigate this matter. If asked any questions, Karsk knows the following:

- The Sea Palace was built earlier this year and is still fairly new. It has docks where many ships from neighboring cities will come to visit and sell supplies. It also has a popular pleasure barge named the Sea Flower that docks at the Sea Palace and takes many wealthy Moonsea aristocrats on gambling cruises around the Moonsea before returning back to the Sokol Sea Palace.
- The Sea Palace has a large fishery in the middle of its open plaza where deep sea fish are caught and stored for sale to merchant sailors around the Moonsea.
- The Sea Palace has a well-guarded mansion where Maurina Sokol lives and manages the Sea Palace.
- Maurina Sokol is willing to pay the party 1,000 gold pieces for them helping to investigate the noises and sights that are scaring away their patrons, and would like them to start on the pleasure barge where the most noise has been heard at night. Karsk will give the party 100 gold to gamble with at the pleasure barge to help complete their mission, but is able to give them up to 500 gp of the total 1,000 gp being offered as soon as they reach the barge if the party barters for it. To barter for additional gold, it will take a DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check to convince him. If the characters try to intimidate Karsk, he'll get angry and even more stubborn and possibly storm out of the room. He'll yell, "Stink-mouthed hobo adventurers ought to respect their elders and betters."

#### DM's Note:

If the characters do successfully barter the entire 500 gp from Karsk at this point in the adventure, they won't be able to barter for it later with Jon Dandy, nor will they be able to steal it from Jon Dandy's office.

- Karsk doesn't believe that there is any real danger near the Sea Palace. He believes it's probably a group of jealous merchants from the city of Hulberg trying to scare away the aristocrats that are spending their money there.
- Maurina Sokol is the widow of one of the wealthy merchants from the Sokol family based

in the city of Hulberg, but the rest of the family treats her as an equal and she has created a great relationship with the nobles in the city of Phlan. It's also quite obvious to anyone who asks about her that Karsk is quite in love with her, even if the old ferryman has no chance with the noble lady.

## Items on the Leaky Eye Menu

- Seaweed Soup
- Baked Bread
- Blue Cheese Wedges (Is that mold or cheese? You'll have to taste it to find out)
- Salty Fisheye Stew
- Catch of the Day (Knucklehead Trout)
- Light Ale
- Stout
- Fish Mead
- Grog (mostly seafoam and dirt, but is very potent)
- Sokol Wine (known for being terrible)

## **Optional Exploration**

If time allows, feel free to hand out the map of Phlan (see Appendix) to the characters and allow them to explore around Phlan. Most places will be either torn down or completely boarded up in various stages of the rebuild of Phlan. Characters can find out any information they missed from Karsk or Burly at the open locations, but there are no side quests at any of these locations. The local armory, smithy and merchants will have items for sale that are listed in the Player's Handbook.

#### **Roleplaying Karsk**

Karsk the ferryman is a frail old sailor who has stayed alive in Phlan for many years due to his skill at selfpreservation. His large eyes, toothless scowl and stringy white hair and beard, make many believe that he's a bit crazy when he tells tales from the sea. Although he is somewhat cranky and bitter from the years of attacks on Phlan, he's not quite crazy. He has less close friends than teeth, and trusts very few people, but is fiercely loyal to those friends that he does have. He knows the Moonsea like the back of his hand. He can navigate safely through the sea's rough waters even in the dark

**Sokol Gold:** Karsk does not have the gold to pay the adventurers right away, nor is the money in his room at the Leaky Eye Inn. He will get the gold for them on the way to the dock from the heavily guarded Sokol office that is located within walking distance of the

Inn, but the players will not know the location of this office. However, Karsk has enough credit at the Leaky Eye Inn to pay for all the characters' rooms at the Leaky Eye Inn and to pay for any drinks or food that the characters may want to eat. Following the introduction of location, the Inn and the quest, allow the players to role-play briefly (or as time permits) prior to spending the night in Phlan. When the players wake in the morning, they'll be greeted by the smell of burning bacon throughout the entire Inn. They'll see Karsk arguing with his fellow sailors and dockhands and waiting impatiently for his requested adventurers to arrive, eager to get on the sea before the waves become too choppy.

Once the players are ready, Karsk will guide them to the docks of Phlan where they'll go with Karsk to his single mast, keel boat. With the help of a few local sailors the ship will quickly push off and he will adeptly sail into the rollicking waves of the Moonsea.

#### Important DMs Note 🕗

If time is no limit, go ahead and play this section as written. However, if you're trying to run this module in 4 hours, skip the Leaky Eye portion of this module and begin the adventure as the players board the Sea Flower, pleasure barge.

# Part 2: Bandits on the Sea Flower

### Estimated Duration: 90 minutes

"The Moonsea is a cold, clear, deep lake the color of dark amethyst, with frequent storms and turbulent weather that mirrors its turbulent past and present. It is a place where unwary adventurers can either make a name for themselves or be buried under the dark, hungry waves."

-John Terra, The Moonsea Reference Guide.

The old sailor toothless sailor, Karsk, stays true to his word and ferries the adventurers onto the Moonsea. Ask the players if any are proficient with sea vehicles and note their responses. The sea is choppy and will most likely cause sea sickness for any adventurer who isn't proficient with sea vehicles (having this proficiency allows the player to automatically succeed against having sea sickness). Have characters make a DC12 Constitution save, if they fail the save they'll throw-up whatever food is in their belly and gain one level of exhaustion from the sea sickness. If the character succeeds, they'll probably be queasy, but no worse for the wear. Karsk on the other hand, seems to be at his best and most comfortable on the choppy sea. He navigates the rough, rocking waters with ease and serenity; singing love songs to the sea as they sail. As they reach the calm portion of the sea, a rectangular barge floats into view.

When they reach the pleasure barge, known as the Sea Flower, Karsk docks the boat at a short quay on its deck. He helps the party up onto it. He quickly reminds them of their task before throwing them their promised amount of gold in an old burlap sack before dipping his oar back into the sea and he departs back to his ferry station in Phlan.

As old Karsk steps back into his boat, he shouts back to the party, "Remember, the Sokol's are paying ya' to not only guard and investigate all the howling hub-bub, but also to calm patrons by showing yourself to have a good time at the gambling tables and reassuring them that everything's okay. The Sokol's ledger man, Jon Dandy, is the one you want to meet. He's the one running the barge. You can't miss him, he's the bloke with peacock feathers in his hat. He'll get you all set up. I'll be back in a few days' time if you need anything. In the meantime, may the luck of Tymora be with you." And with that, the old sailor casts off the mooring lines and gives a short bow as he takes to the helm of his keel boat and begins to sail away.

The thick wooden double doors to the pleasure barge open inwardly and are held in the closed position by a latch that raises and lowers on both sides of the door. The door is not locked. When the characters enter the pleasure, barge read or paraphrase the following:

Inside the rectangular pleasure barge are 8 round unoccupied gambling tables in the middle of the main room. Red velvet covered booths are situated all along the walls. About half of the booths are occupied by various dour-looking aristocrats surrounded by extravagantly dressed strumpets in frilly dresses and tight bodices. An odd-looking man wearing light-blue hose, a shiny green doublet and a velvet hat filled with peacock feathers, paces along the walls hoping to see more activity at the gambling tables.

The smell of gardenia scented candles fills the room from the candlelit chandeliers hanging above the gambling tables. There is also the mustier smell of spilled wine soaked into the red patterned carpet below and a lighter pleasant smell of cooked chicken wafting out from a closed door set into the northern wall. A muffled sound of music also appears to be coming from the behind the northern wall.

## Area 1: Casino Room

This section describes any features in the Casino Room

*Ceilings.* The ceilings are 15 feet high *Light.* Well lit. Candlelit chandeliers hang above the center of the room and table lamps hang along the walls.

**Sound.** distant music coming from another room. Quiet murmurs come from most of the booths, but one of the booths contains a group of hiccupping drunkards who seem to be singing along to which ever song seems to be playing in the room to the north. Snoring can be heard from sleeping gambling dealers at their tables.

*Smells.* Gardenia scented candles are burning from above, old spilled wine smells bitter on the

carpet and the smell of cooked chicken wafts out from the northern banquet room.

Jon Dandy, the ledger man in light blue colored hose, a shiny green doublet and a velvet hat filled with peacock feathers paces along the eastern walls waking sleeping dealers at their gambling tables and encourages groups in the booths to play at one of the tables.

When the characters enter the room, Jon Dandy greets the party and welcomes them to an empty booth. He welcomes them warmly and offers them free drinks. As he and explains their duties aboard the pleasure barge, it is possible to barter with Jon Dandy for the entire half of the 1000 gp that was originally promised by Karsk, but only if Karsk hasn't already been persuaded to give the party the entire 500 gp. With a successful **DC15 Charisma** (**Persuasion or Intimidation**) check, he'll provide up to 500 gp up front (excluding the amount previously given by Karsk), but he expects them to spend some of the money while gambling. If they win more gold in addition to the gold they are given, they're able to keep the additional gold.

A thin human man, dressed in bright garish clothes and a hat filled with peacock feathers approaches the party with open arms. "Oh, I'm so excited to see you! Finally, we have some adventurers that can help bring some life back into our little party on the sea. Come sit with me and let's have a drink as I brief you on your duties here on the Sea Flower pleasure barge." He beckons them to one of the empty booths along the wall. The mission is explained (see below), gold is given and wine is poured for everyone by painted women in frilly dresses.

They are to accomplish 3 tasks every day for 3 days. Succeed with *at least 3 tasks* each day, such as:

- Winning gambling games individually or as a group to get other patrons excited to gamble.
- Or convince the groups of the dour looking patrons that everything is going to be okay and that they should either gamble or join in a dance in the banquet room.

#### DMs Note

Trying to intimidate the patrons will only work *once*, as Jon Dandy will warn the characters after the first time and threaten to cut their pay if they don't treat the patrons nicely. If Jon doesn't witness the intimidation, the patrons will complain to him.

The players may choose to complete all 3 tasks by only gambling, only convincing the dour patrons or a combination of the two. Any of those are fine. Just make sure, for time reasons, to have Dandy take them off of their shift once 3 tasks are complete, to keep the story moving along. However, if time is no limitation, feel free to role play this section for as long as it seems to entertain the players.

Once the players accomplish their 3 tasks, they move on to the next phase of their job:

 Investigating any strange howling noises or odd sights (such as the rumored Kraken sightings) at night and find their source.

However, prior to the ship settling down for the night, they are able to take short break for their dinner and festivities.

#### DM's Note

Accomplishing all 3 of these tasks over a 3-day period is supposed to be the work they must accomplish to get the rest of the payment that awaits them back at the Sokol Sea Palace. The remainder of the gold is not aboard the Sea Flower. The group will not actually be able to accomplish the task over that time frame, but they do not know this. The investigation portion of their job, on the other hand, will be something they can achieve.

Once the characters understand their duties aboard the pleasure barge, Jon Dandy stands up from the table and takes them to their rooms on the upper level of barge so they can change into the appropriate attire:

"Now that you have your tasks, you'll have to decide who is taking what roles. I'll need at least two of you to change into formal attire to do some gambling, while the rest of you can wear what every you choose to help greet guests and get them in the mood for fun. I have a full supply of fancy trousers, delightful doublets and gorgeous gowns. I'll have them taken to your personal quarters in the upper deck. Shall we go?"

The upper deck (see area 5 below) is a series of 12 small rooms, each with four bunk beds each (8 total beds per room). These rooms all contain empty dressers, foot lockers but nothing else of worth. The player won't know which rooms belong to which NPC, but are able to share a single room with the entire party and utilize that room however they see fit. The characters' room is stocked with a variety of

dress clothes that Jon Dandy has brought up from the dressing room.

The party will now have to decide who will take which task. At least two characters must change in to dress clothes which may affect their AC while they're on-duty, but will be able change back into their normal clothes each night at the end of festivities at around mid-night. For 3 player groups that means that only one player will be able to stay in their normal armor, but this should work okay for accomplishing these tasks. For larger parties, you can adjust the amount of successes needed to accomplish these tasks, but that probably won't be necessary. DMs who have less time to role play, may want to have the players put on a fancy robe, cloak or gown over their armor, so that their AC is unaffected and it's an easier transition in the next encounter.

#### **Gambling Games**

**Crown's Dozen:** This game is played with three d12 dice for the dealer, at least one die or token of any type for each player and the Crown's Dozen 'playing board' handout in the appendix. This game can play up to five players at once.

- Step One, Claiming the Board- Each player places their die (or token, it doesn't matter) on one of the 12 numbers listed on the Crown's Dozen player board. Once a number is claimed by a player, no other players can claim that same number for that round. It is possible for a single player to place several different bets in the same round, but they must spend at least 1 gp per bet.
- Step Two, Rolling the Dice- The dealer rolls the 3 d12 dice. If the player's bet matches one of the dealer's dice, they win back their original bet. If the player's bet matches two of the dealer's dice rolls, then player wins double their bet. If the player's bet matches three of the dealer's dice, then the player triples their bet.

**DMs Note:** Each of the dealers d12s are only considered by their individual face value after being rolled. They are not added to any of the other dice.

 Step Three, Declaration- Winners are declared and gold is allocated to each winner. If there are multiple winners in a single round, please note that this only counts as one win for the party's task.

**Threes.** This is a very simple game where each player needs 5d6 to play. This game is best in groups of 3 to 5, but can be played as a 2-player game with just the

dealer. The goal in the game is to have the lowest total sum for your dice. The minimum bet for this game is 3 gold pieces.

- Step One, Rolling the Dice- Each player and the dealer rolls 5d6 at the same, openly on the table.
- Step Two, Presenting the Dice- Each player adds the sum of all 5 of their dice together. Most of the dice are taken at face value, however, "3s" are all counted as zeroes. So, if a player rolls five 3's on their 5d6s, then their total would be zero, and they'd automatically win.
- Step Three, Comparing Scores- When all sums have been counted, the player with the lowest sum wins all the bets. If there is a tie, then all winners split the winnings equally in half, rounding down to the lowest even number (dealer keeps the remainder, if there is any).

**Placing Gambling Bets:** All bets must be 1 gold piece or more. All winnings are based on a double or nothing, payout. In other words, winners double the amount they bet, and losers lose everything they bet and get nothing in return.

#### DMs Note

The players can accomplish their daily task by winning 3 times at any of the games in any combination, even the same game 3 times, if they wish. Use whatever works best at the table. If you'd like to use other quick gambling games at the table instead of these, that's completely fine as well. To conserve on time, it's recommended that the players be allowed to gamble in groups to allow multiple wins in as few gambling sessions as possible to keep the adventure moving along.

#### **XP** Award

Each player that participates in a gambling game is awarded 50 XP.

Here are the five groups of dour patrons who are the options to be convinced to either gamble or dance in the banquet hall:

The Bumbertruckle Group: This group of Halfling farmers are led by Augustus Bumbertruckle and his four associates from the Hulberg farmer's guild. Augustus will claim that his group of farmers have fallen on hard times due to shipping problems and an unseasonal drought. Still, he says that he couldn't stay away from seeing the legendary Sea Palace that everyone is talking about. But since he's been on board, he's been bored out of his mind with the lack of meaningful things to do and is frightened out of his mind at night. Augustus claims that he can't wait for the 3 days to be up so that he can just get back to his farm.

Any character who makes a **DC15 Wisdom** (Insight) check, will notice that Augustus is lying about something. It seems that he has ulterior motives, but they won't know what.

#### DMs Note

Augustus and his friends are planning to rob the boat on the 2<sup>nd</sup> night, but they'll never get the chance. More on that later.

Task: This group can't be persuaded to do any activity, but a **DC20 Charisma (Intimidation) check** will get them to dance in the banquet hall. Keep in mind that using intimidation will result in angering Jon Dandy, who will reduce the overall offered reward by 10%, if they use this tactic more than once.

#### **Optional XP Award**

Each player that helps in discovering that the Bumbertruckle group is planning to rob the Sea Flower and turns them into Jon Dandy is awarded 50 XP.

The Red Plume Group: These five off-duty human soldiers from the town of Hillsfar are led by their commanding officer, Sergeant Cassius Butcher. Ironically, these soldiers who are all off on "shore leave" couldn't wait to try the pleasure barge and the Sokol Sea Palace. The soldiers thought it would help their Sergeant take his mind off of his discovery that his wife had left him when he last returned home. Sergeant Butcher's return to Hillsfar after his yearlong battles in the Underdark was quite unsettling to him and now Hillsfar has greatly changed since he'd last been there. These guys are who they say they are- a group of young soldiers worried for their older depressed captain.

Task: This group can be persuaded with DC15 Charisma (Persuasion) check to either dance or gamble.

The Goblinkicker Group: This is a mixed-race group of business owners from Phlan led the by the Dwarf, Durnam Goblinkicker (the often-traveling owner of the Laughing Goblin Inn). With him is a large red-headed human woman, Imizael and her sun elf fiancé, Vartan Sylvar, along with the human 'Little' Mark Hosslepond, and a twin pair dwarven sisters – Gurdis and Mardred. This group's issue isn't that they're being dour, it's that they're drinking so heavily that they haven't been sober enough to leave their booth. The characters will need to talk this group into putting aside the ale for a minute or two so that they can enjoy some of the other available activities aboard the pleasure barge. Durnam is trying to groom 'Little' Mark to take his recently deceased father, Fat Mar's old spot in running the Laughing Goblin. They agree to go dancing for a bit if any one of the characters can beat Mark in a drinking game.

Task: The character must make Constitution Saves each round they drink with 'Little' Mark. Each round gets progressively more difficult. The first character to fail the Constitution save loses the game and suffers one level of exhaustion. If there are multiple characters drinking with 'Little' Mark, the group wins as long as Mark fails his save before they do. If the characters win, Durnam and the group dances as promised. If there is a tie between Mark and a character, both 'lose,' but Durnam convinces the group to go dancing anyways – thus accomplishing the group's objective.

#### **Drinking Game**

'Little Mark' has +5 to his Constitution saving throw and advantage. Round 1: DC = 10; Round 2: DC = 12; Round 3: DC = 15; Round 4: DC =18; Round 5: DC = 20. If Mark hasn't already failed by round 5, he will fail that round.

The Doverson Group: These five humans (3 male and 2 female) are from the noble Doverson family. They are visiting the Moonsea from Waterdeep to support their cousin Colvin Doverson who is currently in the running to become the next Lord Protector of Phlan. These well-dressed Waterhavians are bragging loudly about how much better things will be in the Moonsea when their family gains control and how terrible everything is on the pleasure barge. Nothing impresses this group and nothing is good enough for them. The group will have to overcome this group's pretentiousness in order for them to care about anything on the boat. They might go to view the dancing and watch the famous bard playing in the banquet hall, but will

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always refuse to gamble – that would be beneath them. Their names are Elliea, Leylin, Darin, and Kevis Doverson and Donal Daoran.

Task: This group won't gamble under any circumstances, but can be persuaded to listen to the Toril-wide famous bard, Banderes play in the banquet hall. The characters will need to make a **DC15 Charisma (Persuasion) check** to convince them. However, if one of the characters thinks to mention that Banderes is rumored to be from Waterdeep, they automatically succeed at this persuasion.

The Banderes Fan Club Group: These four women appear sullen and angry. Two of the four are large muscular women wearing the garb of a Black Guard of Phlan - Keria and Aravele. These two are supposed to be working security aboard the pleasure barge, but are currently distracted from their duty. One of the other two is small blonde-haired woman named Cynthia and the last lady is a half-orc woman named Vola. The group came aboard the barge with the intentions of proposing marriage to the famous raven-haired bard from Phlan, Banderes. He however, ignored them all and when they pushed him to acknowledge them he rebuffed them and told the ladies that he had no time to fraternize with overstuffed patrons. Meanwhile, they noticed that Banderes couldn't take his eyes off the braidedhaired dancer, Ailee and her bronze corset. The group of women were either sitting silently or talking in angry spurts about how to best assassinate the dancer without being caught. The characters will have to convince the women why they should take their attention away from the dancer and the bard and do something else instead.

Task: These women can be easily convinced to dance with a character if they are invited to dance (no check is needed as long as they are invited, they will accept the request automatically). They won't enter the banquet hall under any circumstance unless they are accompanied by a dance partner. They can also be convinced to gamble with a DC18 Charisma (Persuasion) check.

#### **XP** Award

Each character that contributes in convincing any of the above groups to participate is awarded 50 XP. It is encouraged that players be allowed to achieve these tasks in groups to conserve time. The following areas are places for role play and exploration. However, if your game is limited to a four-hour time span, you'll need to skip most of these to keep the pace of the module going. If time is not a factor for your adventure, feel free to allow the players to explore the interesting tidbits, like Jon Dandy's private letters, or even going with Banderes into the storage room to reenact a famous, romantic movie scene.

## Area 2: Banquet Hall

Inside this room are several round dining tables set with red table cloths and topped with crystal goblets, porcelain plates and silver flatware. At the north end of the room is a dance floor and stage. There are about a dozen people in this hall. Most of the patrons are dining and enjoying the music, but there are a few couples on the dance floor. There is a striking looking woman on the dance floor wearing a shiny bronze corset over a shimmering black skirt, with an elaborate braid in her brown hair. Her movements on the dance floor almost appear hypnotic.

However, her dancing is the second most remarkable thing in the room as all eyes are on the bard that plays on the stage in front of two backing musicians, a flute-player and a fiddle-player, who both fade into the background against the handsome features of Banderes the bard. Banderes wields his lute with a confident grace as he sings and plays. His long dark, silky hair is pulled back into a loose cord at the nape of his neck and he wears a simple outfit of matching black and red doublet and trousers. His enchanting music modulates from high energy ballads, to tense dirges and to sensual sonnets from bar to bar. There are many beautiful women in the banquet hall, but Banderes' eyes are only focused on the dancing woman in front of the stage.

## Significant Non-Player Characters:

Ailee (Warlock of the Archfey, Lawful Neutral). One of the main features is a single woman on the dance floor named Ailee. She has extravagant brown braided hair that coils around her head and wears a shiny bronze corset over a shimmering black skirt. Her movements on the dance floor appear almost hypnotic. She is a low-level warlock who specializes in enchantment magic. Unknown to Banderes' admirers, Ailee is his sister who keeps him charmed to keep him out of trouble with groupies.

## DMs Note 🕚

Banderes (Bard, Neutral Good). This bard is playing on the stage with his lute along with flutist and fiddle player accompanying him as he sings and plays. His long silky hair is pulled back into ponytail and he wears a simple black and red doublet and trousers. His enchanting music tends towards high energy ballads, tense dirges and sensual sonnets. While it isn't known exactly where the goldenskinned bard is from, he has travelled many lands and is known as one the finest troubadours in all of Toril. He has many admirers in the audience, but is too hypnotized by Ailee to notice any of them.

## Area 3: Storage Room

This small room holds multiple racks of doublets, dresses, gowns, trousers of all sizes for guests, employees and performers to use. Characters are already free to request and pick out any outfit along with Jon Dandy, but the clothing here is nothing different than what Jon Dandy has already offered.

There are also crates of extra supplies, cooking oils, utensils, repair equipment, tools, etc. Feel free to add-in any items that you feel would make sense or be fun for this room.

The most peculiar item in this room is Banderes' black silk-covered carriage that sits at the back of the room with its wheels removed. If asked about this, Dandy and Banderes will both admit that this is where Banderes brings his most "special," guests. He also surrounds the carriage with paintings of various landscapes portraying the grand city of Waterdeep. These paintings are only worth a few coppers, but are there to help set the ambiance of the room more than anything else.

There is no discernable treasure or valuables worth taking in this room.

## Area 4: Ledger Man's Room

This is the bedroom and study of Jon Dandy who runs the ship.

Inside the study of the ledger man, Jon Dandy, there is a large desk covered in parchment, ink bottles, feathered pens and other writing utensils and ledgers. There is a simple book shelf behind the desk. Most the book shelf is filled with educational books about proper ledger-keeping and managerial rules of etiquette. However, there is also a book of Sonnets by Banderes the Bard. The desk appears to contain more writing supplies and letters. Under the desk there is a small wooden chest. *Items.* At his desk, characters can find parchment, ink bottles, feather pen, seal stamp, red wax, and a large ledger that contains the names of all the ships occupants, who has won at the gambling games lately, supply orders to and from Phlan from the Sokol family, and a letter from Sokol House Scion, Barret Sokol (at the time of this adventure, Barret is still in the running to be elected leader of Phlan). There are no other significant items in the room aside from the treasure (see below).

Letter from Barret Sokol. The letter begs Dandy, to watch over his aunt, but also to help control her lavish spending. With the recent rumors circling around about the sea palace he'd rather that the entire sea palace venture was scrapped than have it tarnish his family's name at this crucial time in the election.

**Treasure.** If the characters haven't bargained for the entire 500 gold pieces from Dandy or Karsk, the remainder of the gold is in a locked check under Dandy's desk. In addition to that remaining gold there is another pouch of 50 gold pieces also in chest. Unlocking the chest requires a **DC17 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check using Thieves' Tool.** Breaking the chest is also possible with a **DC18 Strength (Athletics) check**. The book of Sonnets by Banderes the Bard, with inside cover inscription of "to my brightest fan," is worth 5 gp if sold to a book salesman.

# Area 5: Upper Level Guest Rooms & Kitchen

These are a series of 12 small rooms, each with four bunk beds each. These rooms all contain empty dressers, foot lockers but nothing else of worth. The player won't know which rooms belong to which NPC, but are able to share a single room with the entire party and utilize that room however they see fit.

In the far Northwestern corner of the upper level there is a small kitchen with a stairway leading directly down to the banquet hall.

## A Date with a Dancer

After the party completes their daily mission and have had a decent amount of time to role play aboard the barge, the beautiful Ailee will come to the party and try to entice them to dance with her. Allow the characters the option of going back to their room and changing back into their armor if they were wearing formal wear. Ailee will find one or

more of the characters attractive (ideally the player most likely to interact with her), and she has no gender or racial preference – so all characters are fair game.

Once Ailee chooses a dance partner she invites her partner to the banquet hall and introduces the rest of the party to the famous bard, Banderes.

Ailee smiles warmly as she escorts the group back into the banquet hall. The energy of the room has died down a bit as only the fiddle-player and flute-player remain on stage performing a slow pleasant-sounding ballad. A few couples slow dance out on the floor, while most of the other patrons drink quietly at their tables. The bard, Banderes sits alone at a back table putting new strings on this lute, ignoring at the gawking women at the tables around him. Ailee escorts the group over to Banderes' table.

"Have you all met my client, the most talented troubadour in all of Toril – Banderes? I spend all my time managing him. I used to manage other musicians at one time, but he's gotten so popular that my hands are too full!" She lifts up her empty hands, laughs and turns her attention to her dancing partner. "Come, let's dance while the others have a chance to speak with the famous bard."

The interactions with Ailee and Banderes can be as follows:

**Ailee** – She's willing to dance with multiple partners if there is interest in more than one player. She's a pleasant enough dance partner who will flirt, but will not give any physical affection beyond a hug and/or a kiss on the cheek. Perhaps, there are hints that there could be more to come on subsequent dates, but not on the first date.

- She claims that she is Banderes' manager and has been paid well for a month of performances at the Sokol pleasure barge. A DC12 Wisdom (Insight) check, can see that she is lying about being just Banderes' manager. If a character catches her in this lie, she'll admit in confidence that she's actually Banderes' sister and her primary motivation for traveling with him is to keep him sober and away from groupies. Banderes was almost sentenced to prison time in Baldur's Gate for getting out of hand with too many groupies once and she hopes to stop that from ever happening again.
- She was hired directly by Jon Dandy, who is a big fan of Banderes.
- Although she and Banderes have never been aboard the Sokol Sea Palace, she knows that Dandy talked Maurina Sokol into naming the

main tavern after Banderes' most bawdy songs, the "Trampled Tulip."

• She and Banderes currently live in Phlan at the Laughing Goblin, but are hoping to leave in the next year to tour the Sword Coast again.

#### DM's Note 💮

If time is no limit, go ahead and play this section as written. However, if you're trying to run this module in 4 hours, skip most of this section and just quickly have Ailee invite any player to dance and move along to Banderes' toast.

**Banderes**- The bard is charm personified, but there does seem something odd about his behavior. He doesn't appear to be drunk, but his eyes appear oddly glassy and his mannerisms are too practiced to be natural. His speech is very friendly, but he speaks mostly in slogans rather than engaging in deep conversations. "Life is a tankard and the world is filled with many wonderful ales to try. Let's try them all my friends!"

- When the characters approach, Banderes will immediately wave the characters close to him and say, "Adventurers, I know something very important that I must tell you. This Howling at night. I've heard it. It's no beast. There is a painful music to it, an almost sorrowful tune. I believe it to be the work of a bard." If the characters pursue him further on this topic, he'll shrug and say. "I can just feel it," or "just call it a bard's intuition."
- If asked about Ailee, he will tell the party "She is a powerful rose of a friend with mighty thorns to keep my coins and loins safe from danger." There is a definite love that Banderes holds for Ailee who he always appears to be watching, but the way he speaks of her contains no romantic longing.
- If asked about Jon Dandy, Banderes doesn't remember his name, but if he's described to Banderes he says, "Ah, yes... Peacock-man," and describes him as an odd, but pleasant fellow who never comes up short with his coin. It is always good to know men like that.
- If asked about Maurina Sokol or the Sokol family, he will smile broadly and say, "Maurina... ah, the beautiful widow. The world keeps us apart, but if I had the chance-," Banderes winks and clears his throat. "You know what I mean."

- A DC12 Wisdom (Insight) check on Banderes, will inform a player that there is something affecting Banderes, but it's not chemical or physical. It might be magical.
- A DC15 Intelligence (Arcana) check on Banderes, will confirm that Banderes is under some kind of enchantment magical. If he's asked about it, he'll smile widely and say, "You've got me my friend. Yes, my sister puts the charm on me so my charm is off when I'm traveling. You know what I mean my friends. I am a man of great attraction. My sweet Ailee keeps me out of trouble."

## Frogmen Attack!

As soon as the conversation with Ailee and Banderes reaches a good stopping point, read the following:

Banderes stands and raises his glass to the group at his table and to the room at large, "A toast to my new and exciting friends! May you always thirst for adventure." As the room is about to answers the toast, "...for adventure!" A series of loud blasts drowns out their words. The bottom of the boat rocks as furniture and dishes fly across the room. A trio of explosions blast through the floor of banquet hall as water sprays over everyone and panic ensues. Three giant frog-like forms jump from the newly made holes in the floor and immediately attack the figures around the stage – the two musicians and the dancer Ailee.

#### DM's Note

The Banderhobbs have been given potions of water breathing and assisted in the swimming by the Tritons. Banderhobbs track targets by being given locks of hair. The only locks of hair the Tritons were able to obtain were from Ailee and Jon Dandy. Once the targets are destroyed or out of sight, they will pick an enemy target at random.

**3** *Banderhobbs* burst through the bottom of the ship and jump forward to attack. The banderhobbs have a surprise round, but only attack the two backing musicians on stage and Ailee to start with. The Banderhobb that attacks Ailee will automatically hit with a swallow attack. As it swallows her, it will also attempt to dive back into the sea (an attack of opportunity is possible). If this banderhobb is allowed to leave, it will not return again until the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of combat and Ailee will be digested by that time. Saving Ailee is very improbable, but not impossible.

**4 Triton Bandit Captains** break through the leaking holes and crack them even wider and attack the party on the second round of combat. One of the Triton Bandit Captains has the *Horn of Blasting* in his possession and uses it as soon as he can on as many characters and NPCs as it can. Once the horn is blown it becomes very obvious where the howling sound has been coming from. On the third round of combat, the 3<sup>rd</sup> banderhobb rejoins the combat if he's not already there.

Watery Terrain: Starting on the third round, the ship begins taking on enough water that the entire ship becomes difficult terrain to all characters without a swim speed. After the sixth round, the entire ship is submerged in water and drowning and the suffocation condition (see Player's Handbook page 183) takes effect if the player doesn't exit the ship.

#### Adjusting the Adventure

Here are the recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. The recommendations are not cumulative.

- Very weak party: Remove 1 Triton Bandit Captain,
- Weak party: Replace the 2 Triton Bandit Captains with normal Triton Bandits
- Strong party: Run encounter as written.
- Very strong party: Add an additional Banderhobb after the 3<sup>rd</sup> round.

**NPC Deaths.** Prior to the attack there are about 40 total NPCs aboard the pleasure barge. Only about a little over a dozen of them will survive this attack. They will be running everywhere and being attacked by the monsters and many will drown before reaching safety. Keeping most of their fates "unknown," will probably make the adventure a little less grim if the party is sensitive to that topic. **DM's Note** 

Banderes will not try and fight the enemies, but will do his best to lead other NPCs off of the sinking pleasure barge. If his sister is rescued he'll wait until he can get her away from the attackers, otherwise he'll want to get outside the ship to find the Banderhobb who has her.

**Treasures.** One of the Triton captains has the magical item, **Horn of Blasting** (If the captains were removed, it is on one of the bandits) and a woman's coin purse containing 25 gold pieces.

**Destroying the barge.** There are Tritons swimming underwater beneath the Sea Flower that are sticking explosives to key areas on the bottom of the barge to destroy it and sink its patrons and employees. However, for the sake of giving the players a fighting chance, these explosions do not

damage them direction. The floor and walls will crack and tear during their battle causing a rising tide of water and difficult terrain, but don't use this to make the battle impossible to win.

**Escaping the barge.** There are many ways to escape the ship. There is a door way out to the dock in the back of the casino room. There are also thin windows in the casino that can be broken and used as an escape with **DC10 Strength (Athletics) check**. It is also possible to break through the hull of the barge with **DC18 Strength (Athletics) check**, or attacking the wall, AC 12 with HP of 35. Perhaps the most direct escape would be to exit from the holes that the banderhobbs made to enter the barge. If it's after the 3<sup>rd</sup> round, a **DC15 Strength (Athletics) check** is required to successfully kick away from the sinking ship in a single round. More explosives detonate as the party leaves the boat, creating small pieces of wreckage all around them.

Surviving the Sea. While in the water, the characters must find a way to stay alive in the icecold Moonsea. There are pieces of drift wood floating all around. Each character must find a way to get out of the water in 2 turns to avoid a level of exhaustion. After 3 rounds, the characters must roll a DC15 Strength (Athletics) check to keep swimming and a DC18 Constitution save to avoid another level of exhaustion – this is repeated each round after the 3<sup>rd</sup> round.

**Possible Solutions:** 

- A DC15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check can be used to balance on a large piece of floating wood wreckage.
- A DC18 Wisdom (Perception) check will find one small 2-person emergency boat with no oars and a crack on the bottom that will stay afloat for about 3 rounds.
- A DC15 Strength (Athletics) check will allow a character to gather materials to build a raft while swimming, but this will take a round all on its own and will need a 2<sup>nd</sup> round to make a DC18
   Wisdom (Survival) or Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check to build the materials into a usable raft. Unless fortified, the raft will hold together for 5 rounds.

**Optional Exploration:** 

• A DC18 Intelligence (Investigation) Check will find evidence that round transparent globes

containing explosives from the elemental plane were used to blow up the ship.

#### **XP** Award

Each character that survives the sinking pleasure barge is awarded 100 XP.

# Part 3: Taking Back Tymora's Luck

"For waves, they come in ebbs and flows, crashing some high and pulling some low. Some are drowned and pulled asunder, pushed by sprays and sounds of thunder. Few will dance and take a ride, atop of the sea's roaring ride."

-Banderes the Bard, Ballad of the Ferryman.

## Boarding Tymora's Luck

Floating Among the Wreckage: Once the characters are outside of the ship and are able to find ways to float on the remaining parts of the barge, a captain in a small boat will come to their rescue. As they float along they'll see a lantern coming towards them atop a keel boat that is picking up survivors of the attack. The male elf captaining the small boat will call out to the party and motion them toward his boat.

A small keel boat full of survivors from the pleasure barge moves toward you. The captain of the small vessel is covered in impressive black studded leather gear and has a roguish smile on his lips. "Ah, fellow adventurers, the name's Captain Tanheel, and it looks like I'm not the only one who's hit a spot of trouble this night. It appears that these 'haunting' events have finally come to a head. Please squeeze on to my boat, it's full, but not to bursting." When the surviving passengers don't budge to make space, the Captain snaps his wet leather glove across a few of their noses and shouts. "By the Gods, what have you! Make room you socialites and aristo-rats! These adventurers are truly the valuable ones among us." A smattering of shivers and moans sound out aboard the ship as the party crawls aboard and squeezes in.

Looking around, you can see that almost a dozen soggy patrons is all that remains from the large group that was aboard the barge. "My friends, I'm afraid that we won't be able to sail back across the rough water between us and the shore with this load, but there is another option. Retake my galley ship from the bandits that currently have it and we'll not only have enough room to save this lot (and perhaps more), I'll also match what the Sokols are paying you if you get my lovely lady, the Tymora's Luck, back for me. What say you, friends?"

Captain Tanheel doesn't actually know what amount the Sokol family offered them for their job, but he

doesn't believe that it's actually 1,000 gold pieces. He'll initially scoff and say that 500 gp sounds more like the going rate, but a **DC15 Charisma** (**Persuasion**) check will convince him to pay the entire 1000 gp to the party once they liberate his ship, Tymora's Luck.

Captain Tanheel can share the following information about recent events and the attack against his ship:

- The bandits that attacked appeared to be Tritons, which is strange considering that they are usually a very peaceful people.
- The Tymora's Luck usually does a lot risky shipping jobs and has been getting a lot more work from the Zhentarim since their ships seem to be singled out and destroyed a lot more near the south bay of the Moonsea lately. Captain Tanheel was able to find some of the wrecked ships. It didn't look like the work of a human, nor of Tritons. The ships are torn to shreds by a much mightier force.
- The attack on his ship happened while he was away on the keel boat scouting for the source of the odd howling sound. When he returned, he saw that his entire 10-person crew had been murdered.
- The Tritons that Capt. Tanheel spotted on his ship, Tymora's Luck, were apparently all answering to an unusually strong looking triton champion named, Keros

Survivors from the barge: There were eleven survivors from the barge (not counting characters).

• Banderes – the bard

## DM's Side Note

If Ailee has perished in the battle, Banderes will be mourning the loss of his sister with a single tear down his cheek as three of his fans: Keira, Aravele and Vola, have their arms wrapped him, trying to console him. Otherwise, she is on board as well.

- Durnam Goblinkicker, Imizael, Vartan, & Little Mark Hosslepond
- Keria, Aravele and Vola
- Leylin and Kevis Doverson & Donal Doaran

## DM's Note

If the characters refuse to retake the Tymora's Luck, Captain Tanheel informs them that the boat is too full to make it anywhere that he can dock, including the Sokol Sea Palace and that the characters will have to swim the ice-cold waters on their own if they take that route. Swimming in Ice cold water will take 15 rounds to reach the Sokol Sea Palace and 30 rounds to reach the nearest dock in Phlan. Each round will require a **DC18 Constitution save** to avoid taking a level of exhaustion. After 5 rounds, an additional **DC15 Strength save** is required to continue swimming. If they fail to continue swimming they will begin to drown.

#### Short Rest

If the party is needing a short rest, the break aboard the keel boat, while Capt. Tanheel takes them to Tymora's Luck is an option for a short rest.

**Boarding Tymora's Luck.** If they reach the Tymora's Luck, Captain Tanheel will quietly row the party to the port side of the boat where a net is tied to the hull to hold up a pair smaller docking boats. The group can use the net to board the ship. A **DC15 Dexterity (Stealth) check** is needed to board the ship without being detected. If the party is detected, combat begins immediately

- If any of the characters are still climbing during initiative, they'll need to halve their movement speed before they're able to reach the top, unless they have a climbing trait or feat which would allow them to use their movement to climb.
- Any character hit while climbing will need to need to make a DC13 Dexterity save to stay on the net.

**Encounter 3.** There are 4 main sections to the War Galley, Tymora's Luck: the main deck, the upper deck, the captain's quarters and the lower hold (not used in this adventure). When the players board the ship, they'll see a group of Triton bandits searching the dead bodies of the crew of Tymora's Luck. There are **4 Triton Swashbucklers** are on board this ship. Two of the Swashbucklers will lead the attack on the Main Deck in melee, while the other two will begin their attacks on the Upper Deck with ranged weapons. **Keros, the Triton Champion** is leading the group, but won't appear in combat until his initiative turn and he emerges from the captain's quarters. The tritons will all fight until defeated or killed.

If the players do not manage to climb aboard with stealth, all four Swashbucklers will attack at range as soon as they are spotted. A player who is hit while climbing will need to make a **DC 10 Strength saving throw** or will fall from the netting on the side of the ship.

**Strategy:** While in battle, Keros and the triton Swashbucklers will try to grapple the players and

throw the strongest melee fighting players off of the ship. Tymora's Luck is 20 feet high and players falling into the sea will take **2d6 bludgeoning damage**.

#### Adjusting the Adventure

Here are the recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These recommendations are not cumulative.

- Very weak party: Replace the two Swashbucklers with Triton bandits and lower Keros' hit points to 115.
- Weak Party: Replace the two Swashbucklers with two Triton bandits.
- Strong party: Run encounter as written.
- Very strong party: Add two additional Swashbucklers.

After the battle, if the characters search the deck of the boat, they will find that a set of 8 long pieces of drift wood are aboard the boat carved to look like giant kraken tentacles.

Once the party defeats the Triton bandits read the following:

With signs of the battle ending, the surviving members of the party barge climb aboard the ship, Tymora's Luck, with Captain Tanheel following behind. Most of them are shivering from the cold midnight dip into the Moonsea. Captain Rairdon Tanheel grabs blankets – some to cover the trembling survivors, some to place over the bodies of his dead crewman. However, there is no time to mourn. He throws a scornful glance to the Aristocrats aboard his ship as he stacks the dead to the side of the ship. "This is why common-folk hate the Sokols and those like them! Too often they enter into danger without considering the impact on the ones around them." Durnam Goblinkicker and 'Little' Mark Hosslepond begin helping the captain with ship's rigging and sails – the Phlan businessmen are seemingly familiar enough with sailing to help make-up for the lack of a crew.

As the captain takes the helm he looks to the adventurers. "I'll sail you to the Sokol Sea Palace. There are many there in need of saving. Luckily, our famous bard here has already helped me to find the last few remaining survivors in the wreckage of the barge. These nobles have offered me a handsome sum that I can't refuse, to take them home immediately. So... we'll need to part ways. I do hope that you'll save as many as you can." With that the wood of the large ship creaks as it lunges forward into the night.

## Long Rest

The characters can take an 8-hour long rest aboard Tymora's Luck if they are needing it. If the characters appear to be healthy at this point, they may not need the rest, but this is at the DM's discretion to keep the game challenging and fun.

**Treasures.** Golden Locket worth 100 gp, Ruby Necklace worth 50 gp, Coin Purse with 25 gp, and backpack with a rope ladder and a silver servants tray worth 50 gp. Good to his word, Captain Rairdon Tanheel gives the party his promised amount up to 1,000 gp.

# Part 4: Aboard the Sokol Sea Palace

"The Moonsea, also known as the Sea of Dragons, lies nestled between Thar to the north and the Dalelands and Sembia to the south. These natural barriers prevent casual contact between the two opposing regions."

-John Terra, The Moonsea Reference Guide.

After some time of sailing on the Tymora's Luck, the characters will reach the Sokol Sea Palace. The new day's dawn is just breaking and the sea has calmed to provide the ship a still glide. As they sail near, read the following:

Light from the early morning sun illuminates the fifteenfoot high wooden palisade surrounding the large hulking Sokol Sea Palace. It floats on a series of wooden platforms and pontoons that support the weight of what appears to be small town. A dock extends out from a pair of wooden doors on the eastern side of the Sea Palace with a pair of swinging lanterns illuminating the lightly rocking quay. Captain Tanheel tips his wet, droopy hat to the adventurers. "Tymora's blessing be upon you adventurers, but I must be off in a hurry. Save who you can and if the Sokol's live- you'll get your reward. Spend it well. If they're dead... well, you have this pirate's permission to loot those rich whoresons dry." The captain smiles wryly toward the shocked faces of the aristocrats. "Just a little joke dearies." He turns back to the adventurers and sets a stepped plank down between the ship and the quay of the Sea Palace. "Off you go then. May we all have good fortune this day."

As they step off of Tymora's Luck and onto the Sokol Sea Palace, the bard Banderes begins playing a rousing heroic ballad to the adventurers. The chords of the powerful song ring out over the sea even as the ship sails away.

**Banderes' Inspiring Ballad**: Utilizing the Inspiring Leader feat (pg. 167 of the Player's Handbook), Banderes sings his 10-minute epic ballad which gives the entire party **10 temporary hit points** (8<sup>th</sup> level Bard with a +2 to Charisma). The party feels rejuvenated and inspired to take back the sea palace from its attackers.

# Sokol Sea Palace

## **General Features**

*Light.* There is dim light. The sky is clear and there is early morning sunshine glowing warmly down along with hanging oil lanterns dangling from posts all around the sea palace every 20 feet or so.

*Smells.* Something definitely smells fishy. It's probably all the fish. There is also the smell of fire coming from the western end of the sea palace.

*Size.* The palisade around the Sea Palace is 20 feet high all around. There are multiple two-story buildings around the area that are the same height. The Western most side of the Sea Palace contains a large mansion with 10-foot rot iron fences around it and a 15-foot gate in the front. Surrounding the Mansion are 4, twenty-foot tall look out towers. In the center of the Sea Palace there is a 50-foot-wide and 180-foot-long open area of water where fishermen in the sea palace have set-up fishing poles, nets and baskets.

**Sounds.** Through the eastern door, the sound of clams being cracked open and slurped can be heard. Inside the sea palace, toward the western most end of the palace the sound of shouting can be heard from inside the Sokol family's mansion.

## 1. Deck Section

Read to the following as the characters approach the door to the Sea Palace:

The deck floating along the eastern entrance to the Sea Palace is 15-feet-long and 10-feet-wide. It rocks slightly but it has guiding ropes on both sides and the sea in this area is still calm. The 15-foot double doors leading into the sea palace are wooden, much like the surrounding palisade.

The Doors. The double doors are cracked around the handle area and are swinging slightly and appear to be slightly open. A DC10 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check to look at the doors will reveal that the handles and the lock have been bludgeoned open by some type of smashing force. A DC15 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check or more to *listen* at the door reveals the sound of slurping, cracking and crunching about 10 feet away behind the door. If a character wants to peer through the hole they'll need to succeed at a DC13 Dexterity (Stealth) check to avoid being noticed by the Marid behind the door. If they succeed they'll be able to see the large elemental monster with a fish-like head and the body of a genie. However, this does not grant them a surprise attack against the Marid. It only allows the characters to prepare for the battle.

## 2. Fishery Section

The adventurers entering the eastern door will find the following:

A 16-foot-tall creature with a fish-like head and a fat humanoid body turns to face the adventurers. He is scooping clams from two large barrels that are sitting outside a fishing area. He is sticking the clams into his mouth to remove the shell and meat, hoping to find the pearls beneath. The creature is mumbling between bites, "Stupid Vodos... greedy bandits." Surrounding the 50-foot by 180-foot open water fishing area in the middle of Sea Palace's main dock are fishing poles, traps, cages, hooks, barrels and nets lying about the dock haphazardly. There is a lifeless body floating in the water of the fishing area.

- Dead Fisherman this dead human male floating in the open water area contains no valuable items or significantly identifying features other than a healthy crop of moles on the left side of his face and neck.
- Fenced Fishing Area Although the fishing area is open and the wood around it is definitely wet and slick, it's not likely that a character would fall into the water if approaching it in a normal way. There is a 3-foot-high netted rope fence around the entire area that is secured by a group of wooden poles.
- Fishing Supplies Despite the raid by the Tritons, there are still many functional fishing supplies around this area. Feel free to entertain player ideas of what would feasibly be here. Items like fishing poles, spears, hooks, nets, knives and cleavers are all possibly here and up for grabs if the characters are desiring to search for them.
- Shahzada's Alertness Unfortunately for the characters, Banderes' inspirational ballad to the characters alerted Shahzada, the Marid, to the presence of characters. He already knows where they are and is expecting them. While he may appear to be unware of them if they approach stealthily, he's merely ignoring them until they get close enough to attack.

## Marid Attacks!

As soon as the adventurers move inside the sea palace door, the Marid will notice and will attack if any of the players approach him in a threatening manner. Any attempt to attack the Marid through the door prior to initiative will have disadvantage as the hole isn't big enough for weapons to be aimed properly. However, if a strike does go through (with an attack such as magic missile), then initiative will immediately begin after that. The Marid will fight until defeated, but does not leave behind a body, but rather will disintegrate into a burst of water and sea foam when it reaches zero hit points. This Marid, Shahzada, can't be questioned or interrogated after being defeated by any means, but if the players can persuade him before or during the battle he might offer up some information and let them pass without a fight. He admires clever wit and a sense of humor. If a player offers a humorous or clever quip, allow them advantage on persuasion check. An intimidation tactic will not work to stop the battle. A successful DC15 Charisma (Persuasion) **check** will reveal that he is from the elemental plane of water and initially converted Vodos, the leader of the Triton Bandits, but unfortunately, he has lost control of Vodos who has veered from the Marid's original intent to reestablish the presence of the Cult of the Crashing Wave in the Sword Coast.

Avoiding the Fight: The Marid, Shahzada, will openly admit that he used his powers to corrupt Vodos and his band of triton warriors to become bandits. His attempt to make them obey him failed. He put too strong of a hatred toward those who do not follow Olhydra. If the players are willing to agree that they will defeat Vodos without killing him, the Marid will let them pass. Shahzada does not care if other tritons are killed during the battle to take out Vodos. The Marid is too vain to correct his own mistake and will not join or aid the party in any way.

#### Adjusting the Adventure

Here are the recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These recommendations are not cumulative.

- Very weak party: Lower the Marid's hit points to 175 and lower his Armor Class to 16.
- Weak party: Lower the Marid's hit points to 175.
- **Strong party:** Run the encounter as written.
- Very strong party: Add two Triton Bandit Captains.

*Treasures.* Among the sea foam and the wet gelatinous mess that was once the Marid, Shahzada, adventurers who are investigating will find four

pearls, three white and one pink, Each worth 100 gp. The characters are able to pull the dead fisherman out of the fishing area, but he has no valuables on him.

#### **XP** Award

If the group of players convince the Marid, Shahzada, to let them pass without a fight, award all players 50 XP. (They are also awarded the XP they would have received during the combat as well)

Once the characters defeat the Marid or convince him to let them pass, they are able to see the rest of the sea palace. Read the following:

The inside of the Sokol Sea Palace is like a miniature town. The large fishing area in the center of the floating palace is a 50-foot-wide and 180-foot-long open area of water where fishermen have set-up fishing poles, nets, baskets and barrels. Although the fishing area is open and the wood around it is definitely wet and slick, it's not likely that a character would fall into the water if approaching it in a normal manner. There is a 3-foot-high netted rope fence around the entire area that is secured by a group of wooden fence posts. There are various two-story buildings, such as hotel rooms, a bait shop & market and a tavern that stand over 20 feet tall all along the northern and southern edges of the sea palace against the equally tall wooden palisades. The western most side of the sea palace contains a large mansion with 10-foot rot iron fences around it and a 15-foot gate in the front. Surrounding the Mansion are 4, twenty-foot tall look out towers.

#### DM's Note 🕚

The next several areas are meant to be places where the players can explore and role play. If time is not a limitation, allow the play this section as written. However, if you're trying to run this module in 4 hours, skip most of this section and just quickly have the players reach the last section where they'll encounter Vodos and his men outside of Maurina's mansion.

## 3. The Sokol Luxury Suites

If the characters explore the Sokol Suites that like the southern side of the sea palace, read the following: A group of two-story buildings line the southern edge of the sea palace. A sign hanging at the center of these buildings reads, "Sokol Luxury Suites," in golden paint outlined in red. Much like the suites in the pleasure barge, these two-story buildings contain small rooms to provide guests with comfortable beds, furniture, dressers and storage chests. Although there are many visible broken doors, windows and furniture around the suites there are no dead bodies in sight. Each of the rooms are locked and opened from the outside. There is no common room, but there is a set of stairs and a balcony on the second floor that allows patrons who are staying in those suites to reach their rooms. There are three sets of privies at each end of the building outside of the other rooms. These privies are not locked, and there is a fetid rotten smell that permeates from them.

Everyone in these suites have either evacuated or have been moved.

- Clothes & Luggage While there are no valuables or treasure left behind in these rooms, it is possible that characters will find bits of designer clothing and/or fancily made suitcases. These items can be worn or used, but will be requested by the Sokols to be returned at the end of the adventure.
- Clues A DC15 Intelligence (Investigation) check will reveal that foot prints and streaks of blood appear to be heading toward the west end of the ship where the Sokol Mansion is located. Patrons who escaped the bandits likely sought refuge in the Sokol Mansion.
- **Privy** there are 3 small privies at each end of the building that all patrons shared. There is no treasure to be found here, but the stench caused when opening the door will cause immediate coughing a retching. It smells like someone died in these privies. The reason is that someone did in fact die in these privies and were stuffed inside the latrines as the walls are covered in blood and gore.

## 4. Sokol Tackle and Market

If the characters approach these buildings read the following:

These two, two-story shops situated along the northern edge of the sea palace are both beneath the same large awning, but each with its own room inside. The room to the eastern side of the building is the 'tackle,' portion of the store and the western side of the building is the 'market,' portion of the store. From the broken windows on the outside, it's clearly visible that both stores have been ransacked with all kinds of various goods spread about the floor. Several glass bait tanks lay broken on the tackle store's floor creating a stench of rotting minnows, spoiled chicken liver and worms.

- Fish bait inside the various tanks, baskets and buckets can be found: minnows, worms, crayfish, bleu cheese, and chicken liver.
- Ransacked this room like most of the others has been ransacked and supplies are lying spilled or toppled over with signs of struggles and fighting.
- Dead Body there is a man with three-prongedsized holes in his back laying with his face down in a bucket of fetid chicken livers.

**Treasures?** Sometimes the treasure is what you leave behind, not what you take. But if the characters want to walk away with a pocket full of worms or dirty grain, no one will stop them.

## 5. The Trampled Tulip Tavern

If the characters approach this tavern, read the following:

This large luxurious looking tavern still looks impressive despite the broken panes of colored glass in its ornate windows. A large toppled brass plated door lays on the floor in the entrance of the tavern. The hanging sign above the fallen door remains untarnished – a well-painted, down-turned, yellow tulip with the words, "The Trampled Tulip," painted in scrawling letters above it in common. A quick look inside reveals a small fire flickering in the hearth and a few lamps still burning along the walls. The interior of the tavern is divided into three sections: the stage, the dance floor and the bar. There are several small round tables lying broken and strewn about in front of the long rectangular bar. Like all other areas of the sea palace this area is in disarray with broken furniture and glass shards all over the floor. Three dead bodies lie on the floor, each wearing tabards that proclaim them to be guards of house Sokol. Although there are many broken bottles on the floor, there are still many unbroken bottles and five untapped kegs behind the bar.

Above the hearth there is a painting hanging crookedly on the wall, bearing the visage of Banderes the bard with a wry look in his eye and holding a wilted tulip in his hand.

- The Damage Like many other areas of the Sea Palace this area is in disarray as tables are knocked over, chairs are broken and glass shards are shattered all over the floor.
- The Light the fireplace is still lit and burning and the oil lanterns around the room are still giving off enough light for this room to be at least dimly lit.
- The Bodies there are three more dead bodies here. If the characters inspect these bodies they will find that they are all wearing padded guard tabards that bear the symbol of house Sokol on them. The cause of the death for the three are trident wounds to the stomach, chest and back. No investigation roll is necessary as long as the characters roll the bodies over to inspect them.
- The Bar is a large oiled wooden bar in front of a large cracked mirror. The racks of bottles beneath the mirror are partially broken, but there is still much alcohol remaining intact. A quick investigation will result in finding various types of bottled wine, gin, mead and whiskey. There are also 5 large wooden casks of ale behind the bar. A DC15 Intelligence (Investigation) check will reveal that one of the five ale casks appears to have been open and there is a faint whimpering sound coming from it.
- The Bartender If the characters find him, the gnomish bartender, Levin Gurglebladt, is cowering inside one of the casks of ale. He is clutching a blanket and three bottles. Two of the bottles are *Flamebeard's Brandy* and the other bottle is called *Red Dragon Crush*. He protects these three bottles as if they were his children.
- The Painting The painting of the bard, Banderes is a fine portrait, but as it was painted by an artist without any acclaim or reputation, it is only worth gold to admirers of Banderes like Maurina, Dandy and the members of his fan club (or perhaps Banderes himself), however selling the painting would be very difficult given its large size and current ownership.

If the Bartender's cask is opened read the following:

As the cask is opened a frightened squeak shouts out from it. There is no ale in this cask, only a disheveled gnome with a balding head and a pair of crooked eye-glasses over his crooked eyes. He's hugging a blanket and three unopened bottles to his chest. "I beg ye', leave me be! Take anything in the bar and be about your business, I'll not attempt to stop ye'. I only ask that you leave me and my beauties be."

If Levin Gurglebladt is questioned, he states the following freely:

- The Triton Bandits attacked just after dusk, along with some magical fish monster that broke down the gate door. The Sokol house guards were able to fight off the bandits while most of the patrons got into the Sokol Mansion.
- He saw about 8 bandits looting and killing along the way to the Sokol mansion. They appeared to be fish-like men attacking with tridents with their mad Marid that was at the fishery area.
- Levin was tripped up by the fleeing patrons and wasn't able to escape the bar in time to avoid the bandits, but was able to hide while the Sokol guards fought them.
- The Trampled Tulip Tavern is named after a humorous song sang by Maurina Sokol's favorite bard, Banderes.

#### A DC12 Charisma (Persuasion) or (Intimidation)

**check** will convince Levin to reveal some details about the bottles he's cradling. He will not willing give up any of the bottles and will die to keep them. With a successful check, he'll reveal the following:

- The two bottles of Flamebeard's Brandy were gifts from the north given to him by his cousin, Thwipp. His cousin gave him these bottles as a present when he opened his first tavern. Thwipp told Levin that these were famous and rare bottles and were the best spirits in the North. He does not know, however, that while these bottles of Brandy are a local favorite in Bryn Shander, they are considered by most brewers to be no more than a watered-down version of a better brewer's brandy.
- The Red Dragon Crush wine is an even rarer bottle that was sold to him by two travelers from another realm. These travelers called themselves Vistani. The rarity of this bottle has been confirmed by many master brewers and is highly sought after.

**Treasure?** While it's probably just easier to consume the alcohol for story purposes, it is possible to take a total 10 gp worth of bottles or casks. Killing Levin and taking his bottles will eventually reveal that the two bottles of brandy are worthless and that the Red Dragon Crush can be sold for 100 gp, but it's very unheroic to kill a defenseless gnome.

## 6. The Sokol Mansion

*Light.* There is dim light. The sky is clear and there is moonlight shining down along with hanging oil lanterns dangling from posts all around the sea palace every 20 feet or so.

*Smells.* The smell of fire is heavy in the air as clouds of smoke are billowing around the windows of the mansion.

*Size.* The large mansion has two-stories and is 20foot tall with 10-foot rot iron fences around it and a 15-foot gate in front. Surrounding the Mansion are four, twenty-foot tall look-out towers.

*Sounds.* The sounds of shouting are coming from the inside and outside of the mansion.

Inside Gate. The fence around the mansion has already been penetrated by the Tritons who now have archers up in each of the four look-out towers. Two triton swashbucklers are throwing grappling hooks on ropes at the barred windows of the mansion and are trying to pull the bars off of the windows. When the players come within sight of the mansion, these two swashbucklers will move to hide behind the marble columns connected to the gate. Vodos, the Triton Warlord is standing in front of the mansion's main door yelling at the Sokols within.

As the party reaches the Sokol Mansion, shouting can be heard from the iron clad man standing at the mansion's door. A booming voice yells out toward the front of the mansion. "Come out corrupt nobles! Come out before we drown you all out like rats! The crushing wave beckons you to find peace beneath the leagues of the Moonsea. It is time your crime is drowned from this realm and is replaced by the order of Olhydra!"

The **4** Triton **Archers** in the guard towers are looking out for any intruder that comes near the Mansion. This will cause disadvantage to any adventurers trying to stealth toward the mansion. This roll of stealth with disadvantage will be against the bandit's perception roll. Any characters not using stealth or losing the stealth check within 30 feet of the Mansion gate is immediately fired upon and initiative is rolled. The **4 Archers** will fire from the guard towers until defeated or removed.

As soon as initiative starts the 2 Triton Swashbucklers on the ground and Vodos will hide behind the pillars next to each side of the gate. The gate lock is broken but the bars of the gate are currently barred by a trident stuck into it. Any adventurer that is attempting to open the gate directly, must roll a DC15 Wisdom (Perception) check, or will be attacked with a surprise round by the bandits hiding behind the pillars.

**Vodos** will stay behind cover for as long as he can and comes out to fight the closest adventurer that he can with the lowest Armor Class, preferring to destroy any casters first.

All bandits will fight to the death. An adventurer using a perception check on the bandits during the fight, will notice an odd dark infection around their eyes that was placed there by the Marid who lost control of them.

#### Adjusting the Adventure

Here are the recommendations for adjusting this combat encounter. These recommendations are not cumulative:

- Very weak party: Remove two of the Archers in the archery towers and remove one of the swashbucklers behind the gate.
- Weak party: Remove two of the Archers in the archery towers
- Strong party: Run the combat as written
- Very strong party: Add two additional Swashbucklers behind the gate.

*Treasures.* Maurina Sokol's reward of 1,000 gp (or the remainder thereof) will be given to the party after the conclusion of the battle.

#### **Optional Development:**

If the players managed to convince the Marid to let them pass without a battle and they did not kill Vodos, read the following.

As soon as Vodos is defeated, a large watery hand rises up and pulls Vodos away from the group and toward the form of Shahzada as he materializes in the fishery section of the sea palace.

"Adventurers..." he bellows from the distance. "You have been useful to me. For that you have my thanks and a promise that you will not be harmed by me or my forces this day. But a day will come, where all the Moonsea will kneel before the crashing wave and give worship to the mighty Olhydra! Think carefully upon that and make sure you are on the right side when that day comes." With a spiral of splashing water, both Shahzada and Vodos vanish into the depths of the Moonsea.

## Conclusion

Once the battle is won, Maurina Sokol and her retinue of guards and nobles cautiously amble out of the mansion. Seeing that the threat of the bandits has been ended, she greets the adventurers with thanks and rewards.

Seeing no more signs of danger, Maurina Sokol and her guards exit the mansion. She approaches the party with a tired but grateful face, "I don't know how I can thank you enough. With the losses we've taken here, and the repairs that need to be made, I can only afford the promised amount of gold, but I can make you other offers. For starters, your services will always be welcome with house Sokol. I will make sure my family knows that you are to be trusted, given preferred employment status and well paid for any duties performed. Secondly, I can give you vouchers for a free stay upon my delightful luxury barge, the Sea Flower. While aboard I'll even make sure you receive a private show with the astounding bard, Banderes. I don't know if you had a chance to hear him, but he's truly a wonder to hear and behold." She pulls a black velvet pouch from her pocket and extends it to the party as she has one of her scribes quickly create vouchers for the party. It appears that Maurina does not yet know that the Sea Flower has been destroyed.

It will be up to the adventurers to decide how and if they want to inform Maurina Sokol that the Sea Flower has been destroyed. If they tell her, she'll trash the vouchers and beg them to tell her whether or not Banderes is still alive or not. If he lives she promises that she'll renew her offer to them as soon as the Sea Flower is rebuilt and going again.

A few hours later, Karsk, the ferryman arrives in his keel boat after having found two more survivors from the wrecked pleasure barge- a young Red Plume guard and a badly waterlogged, Jon Dandy. The adventurers are welcomed aboard Karsk's boat and are given free passage back across the Moonsea to the city of Phlan, where more adventures inevitably wait.



## Rewards

Make sure players note their rewards on their adventure log sheets. Give your name and DCI number (if applicable) so players can record who ran the session.

## Experience

Total up all combat experience earned for defeated foes, and divide by the number of characters present in the combat. For non-combat experience, the rewards are listed per character.

## **Combat Awards**

Name of Foe	XP Per Foe
Archers	700
Banderhobbs	1,800
Bandit Captain	450
Champion	5,000
Marid	7,200
Swashbucklers	700
Warlord	8,400

## Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Character
Win a gambling game	50
Convince aristocrats to participate	50
Uncovering the Robbers	50
Survive sinking pleasure barge	100
Convince Marid to not battle	50

The adventures minimum and maximum XP awards are located on the Adventure Rewards document. Note that DDAL adventures award a maximum of the "target XP" award. Only epics may grant the "maximum" amount.

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is **4,500 experience points**.

The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is **7,500** experience points.

## Treasure

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Treasure is divided as evenly as possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

## Treasure Awards

Item Name	GP Value
Rich person's coin purse	25
Strumpet's necklace	50
Silver Servants Tray	25
Merchant's Coin Purse	50
Four Pearls	400
Captain Tanheel's Reward	1,000
Maurina Sokol's Reward	1,000

*Consumable magic items* should be divided up however the group sees fit. If more than one character is interested in a specific consumable magic item, the DM can determine who gets it randomly should the group be unable to decide.

**Permanent magic items** are divided according to a system detailed in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*.

## Horn of Blasting

Wondrous item, Rare

You can us an action to speak the horn's command word and then blow the horn, which emits a thunderous blast in a 30-foot cone that is audible 600 feet away. Each creature in the cone must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 5d6 thunder damage and is deafened for 1 minute. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't deafened. Creatures and objects made of glass or crystal have disadvantage on the saving throw and take 10d6 thunder damage instead of 5d6.

Each use of the horn's magic has a 20 percent chance of causing the horn to explode. The explosion deals 10d6 fire damage to the blower and destroys the horn.

## Renown

Each character receives **one renown** at the conclusion of this adventure.

## DM Reward

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn DM Rewards as described in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* (ALDMG).

# Appendix. Monster/NPC Statistics

## Archer (Triton)

Medium Triton, lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (studded leather) Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30) Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	wis	СНА
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Acrobatics +6, Perception +5 Senses passive Perception 15 Languages Common, Primordial Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Archer's Eye (3/Day). As a bonus action, the archer can add 1d10 to its next attack or damage roll with a longbow or shortbow.

#### Actions

*Multiattack.* The archer makes two attacks with its longbow.

*Shortsword. Melee* Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

**Longbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

## Banderhobb

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor) Hit Points 84 (8d10 + 40) Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	СНА
20 (+5)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

Skills Athletics +8, Stealth +7 Condition Immunities charmed, frightened Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12 Languages understands Common and the languages of its creator, but can't speak Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

**Resonant Connection.** If the banderhobb has even a tiny piece of a creature or an obect in its possession, such as a lock of hair or a splinter of wood, it knows the most direct route to that creature or object if it is within1 mile of the banderhobb.

**Shadow Stealth.** While in dim light or darkness, the banderhobb can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

### Actions

**Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 22 (5d6+5) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 15) if it is a Large or smaller creature. Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the banderhobb can't use its bite attack or tongue attack on another target.

**Tongue.** Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (3d6) necrotic damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Strength savng throw. On a failed save, the target is pulled to a space within 5 feet of the banderhobb, which can use a bonus action to make a bite attack against the target.

Swallow. The banderhobb makes a bite attack against a Medium or smaller creature it is grappling. If the attack hits, the target is swallowed, and the grapple ends. The swallowed creature is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the banderhobb and it takes 10 (3d6) necrotic damage at the start of each of the banderhobb's turns. A creature reduced to 0 hit points in this way stops taking necrotic damage and becomes stable. The banderhobb can have only one target swallowed at a time. While the banderhobb isn't incapacitated, it can regurgitate the creature at any time (no action required) in a space within 5 feet of it. The creature exits prone. If the banderhobb dies, it likewise regurgitates a swallowed creature.

**Shadow Step.** The banderhobb magically teleports up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space of dim light or darkness that it can see. Before or after teleporting, it can make a bite or tongue attack.

## Bandit Captain (Triton)

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-lawful alignment

Armor Class 15 (studded leather) Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20) Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +4, Dex +5, Wis +2 Skills Athletics +4, Deception +4 Senses passive Perception 10 Languages any two languages Challenge 2 (450 XP)

#### Actions

*Multiattack.* The captain makes three melee attacks: two with its scimitar and one with its dagger. Or the captain makes two ranged attacks with its daggers.

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*Trident. Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

**Dagger.** Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

#### Reactions

**Parry.** The captain adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the captain must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

## Champion (Keros)

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

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Armor Class 18 (Plate)
Hit Points 143 (22d8 + 44)
Speed 30 ft.
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STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Saving Throw Str +9, Con +8 Skills Athletics +9, Intimidation +5, Perception +6 Senses passive Perception 16 Languages any one language (usually Common) Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

*Indomitable (2/day).* The warlord can reroll a saving throw it fails. It must use the new roll.

Second Wind (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). As a bonus action, the champion can regain 20 hit points.

#### Actions

*Multiattack.* The warlord makes three weapon attacks.

**Greatsword.** Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d6+5) slashing damage, plus 7 (2d6) slashing damage if the champion has more than half of its total hit points remaining.

**Shortbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 80/320 it, one target. Hit: 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage, plus 7 (2d6) piercing damage if the champion has more than half of its total hit points remaining.

## Marid (Shahzada)

Large elemental, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 17 (natural armor) Hit Points 229 (17d10 + 136) Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft., swim 90 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	12 (+1)	26 (+8)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +5, WIs +7, Cha +8 Damage Resistances acid, cold, lightning Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13 Languages Aquan Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Amphibious. The marid can breathe air and water.

*Elemental Demise.* If the marid dies, its body disintegrates into a burst of water and foam, leaving behind only equipment the marid was wearing or carrying.

*Innate Spellcasting.* The marid's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: create or destroy water, detect evil and good, detect magic, fog cloud, purify food and drink 3/day each: tongues, water breathing, water walk 1/day each: conjure elemental (water elemental only), control water, gaseous form, invisibility, plane shift

#### Actions

Multiattack. The marid makes two trident attacks.

**Trident.** Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) piercing damage, or 15 (2d8 \_ 6) piercing damage if used with two hangs to make a melee attack.

*Water Jet.* The marid magically shoots water in a 60-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, a target takes 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage and, if it is Huge or smaller, is pushed up to 20 feet away from the marid and knocked prone. On a success, a target takes half the bludgeoning damage, but is neither pushed nor knocked prone.

## Swashbuckler (Triton)

Medium humanoid Triton, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (leather armor) Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12) Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	СНА
12 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Skills Acrobatics +8, Athletics +5, Persuasion +6 Senses passive Perception 10 Languages Common, Primordial Challenge 3 (700 XP)

*Lightfooted.* The swashbuckler can take the Dash or Disengage action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

**Suave Defense.** While the swashbuckler is wearing light or no armor and wielding no shield, its AC included its Charisma modifier.

#### Actions

*Multiattack.* The swashbuckler makes three attacks: one with a dagger and two with its rapier.

**Dagger.** Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target Hit: 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.

**Rapier.** Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

## Warlord (Vodos)

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 18 (Plate) Hit Points 229 (27d8 + 108) Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throw Str +9, Dex +7, Con +8 Skills Athletics +9, Intimidation +8, Perception +5, Persuasion +8 Senses passive Perception 15 Languages any one language (usually Common) Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

*Indomitable (3/day).* The warlord can reroll a saving throw it fails. It must use the new roll.

*Survivor.* The warlord regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point but fewer hit point than half its hit point maximum.

#### Actions

*Multiattack.* The warlord makes two weapon attacks.

*Greatsword.* Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d6+5) slashing damage.

**Shortbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, range 80/320 it, one target. Hit: 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

#### Legendary Actions

Legendary Actions (3/Turn). The warlord can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The warlord regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Weapon Attack. The warlord makes a weapon attack.

**Command Ally.** The warlord targets one ally it can see within 30 feet of it. if the target can see and hear the warlord, the target can make one weapon attack as a reaction and gains advantage on the attack roll.

*Frighten Foe (Costs 2 Actions).* The warlord targets one enemy it can see within 30 feet of it. If the target can see and hear it, the target must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the end of warlord's next turn.

# Appendix: Dramatis Personae

**Ailee – (A' LEE)** this human female is a sorceress who specializes in charms and is secretly the sister of the famous bard, Banderes. Although she is from Waterdeep, her current residence consists of following her brother on his musical travels.

**Banderes – (ban'dÂr'es)** this human bard is famous all over the world of Toril. He currently resides in the town of Phlan and plays at both the Laughing Goblin Inn and the Sokol's party barge.

**Burly Thornshield – (bur-LEE)** The dwarven owner of the Leaky Eye, Tavern and Inn in the town of Phlan.

**Captain Rairdon Tanheel – (tan-hEl)** this elf male is the captain of the ship, Tymora's Luck. While he's usually considered a heroic rogue, who deals in trading dangerous goods, some also consider him a bit of a pirate. His ship is the 4<sup>th</sup> most successful trading ship in the Moonsea, only behind the legendary ships: the Mingleblood, the Flotsam and the Purple Star.

**Durnam Goblinkicker – (dÛr'num)** This elderly welltraveled dwarf is the owner of the Laughing Goblin Inn in the town of Phlan. Although the owner of the famous tavern, he's rarely there and often allows others to run the tavern in his place.

**Jon Dandy** – the ledgerman for the Sokol family, who works for Maurina Sokol aboard the pleasure barge that docks at the Sokol Sea Palace.

**Karsk** – (kÄr'sk) An elderly ferryman from Phlan who works for the Sokol family, helping workers and adventurers back and forth from the Sokol properties in the Moonsea.

**Keros – (KÂr'Os)** This man is a Triton Champion and second in command to the band of the Triton bandits.

Little Mark Hosslepond – Son of the late 'Fat' Mar who used to run the Laughing Goblin Inn, and fought to liberate Phlan during the invasion of the Maimed Virulence and the dragon cultists. A statue commemorating 'Fat' Mar stands outside the Laughing Goblin. 'Little' Mark is currently in Phlan making arrangements with Laughing Goblin's owner, Durnam Goblinkicker. Although much more reserved than his father, 'Little' Mark (who's actually quite a bit bigger than his father), he has a good head for business.

Maurina Sokol – (MÔr'Enuh) She is a relative of the noble Sokol merchant family of the Moonsea. Her nephew, Barret Sokol, is the current scion of their house. After her husband died, Maurina returned to her maiden name and took it upon herself to create a new job for herself as the proprietor of the Sokol Sea Palace.

Shahzada – (ShÄ'zÄ'duh) This Marid is from the elemental plane of water who has corrupted Vodos and his group of Triton bandits. Shahzada is a worshiper of the elemental god, Olhydra and seeks to reestablish the dominance of the Crushing Wave cult in the Moonsea.

Vodos – (vO'dO s) This man is the Triton Warlord and leader of the Triton Bandits. He has been corrupted by the Marid, Shahzada, to worship the evil chaotic god, Olhydra, but has also developed a thirst for blood and loot that has undermined Shahzada's goal to rebuild the cult of the Crashing Wave in the Moonsea.



# Appendix: Letter from Barret Sokol to Jon Dandy

## Dearest Friend Dandy,

Thank you for your last correspondence. Having a life-long friend whom I can trust to watch over my aunt brings me continued comfort. Thank you for all the work you do and the wisdom that I'm sure you bring to her.

However, please do your best to caution my aunt's spending. This tourist venture out on the Moonsea has nearly depleted her entire inheritance and I'm afraid it's been a terrible drain on my coffers as well.

Furthermore, the family's reputation is always on such a tenuous balance, due to the decisions of a few our less than honorable family members. Constantly rebuilding and reinforcing this new positive reputation requires a great amount of diligence. I'm afraid that this whole gambling barge situation that my dear aunt is involved in, might not be the most ideal venture for a Sokol. Please do your best to guide her away from such business and onto more wholesome and reputable businesses.

| will always hope for the financial success of my dear aunt, but as much as it pains me to write this - | would rather her entire operation sink into the Moonsea, than to have it tarnish the good family name |'m trying to build.

| know that you'll do your best to guide her, my good friend. | will greatly anticipate your next correspondence, and have the utmost confidence in you that you'll report something to my liking.

Your Sincerest Friend,

Barret Sokol

# Appendix: Crown's Dozen Playboard

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# Appendix: Map of Phlan



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# Appendix: Leaky Eye Inn Map

Level 1, Lower (Tavern)



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## Appendix: The Sea Flower, Pleasure Barge

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# Appendix: Tymora's Luck Map



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Appendix: Sokol Sea Palace Map 2

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