



PERILS OF THE PIRATE PACT™



A PATHFINDER®
SOCIETY™ SCENARIO
By Matthieu Dayon

PERILS OF THE PIRATE PACT™

PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO 17

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The OGL can be found on page 15 of this product.

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PERILS OF THE PIRATE PACT



BY MATTHIEU DAYON

The River Kingdoms are a constantly shifting patchwork of unruly states and territories where borders, like governments, change too fast for any chronicler to keep track. There a motley gang of bandits and ruffians called the Pirate Pact managed to carve out for itself a little domain: a strip of land along the Sellen River, north of Daggermark, near the Numerian border. Pilgrims bound for Mendev and merchants on their way to or from Starfall frequent the waterway the Pirate Pact controls, and the band makes a living out of lucrative protection racket schemes. This business might be in jeopardy as rumors spread that sailing the river isn't safe anymore, and that monstrous giant spiders are preying on travelers. This bodes particularly ill for the Pirate Pact's current leader, the self-appointed Black Marquis, Urdul Bazzak. Behind the pompous name lies a porcine little man who, on the best of days, barely manages to survive the attempts on his life, much less command his rowdy troops. Unless he finds a solution to this crisis soon, Bazzak stands to lose everything—including his life.

As with many things in the River Kingdoms, this latest predicament finds its roots in greed, betrayal, and ambition. Despite his own mastery of the art of deception, the Black Marquis fails to realize the part his trusted second in command, Lady Riverbane, plays in this situation. The woman plots to dethrone him and spent the past months undermining Bazzak's hold on the group. The Black Marquis could only truly rely on a handful of close friends and bodyguards, and Riverbane came up with a plan to get these last followers killed. One month ago, she approached Bazzak with tales of how she stole an ancient manuscript entitled *Memoirs of the Silver Brotherhood* from Istivil Bosk, Daggermark's resident Pathfinder Venture-Captain. She claimed the book held clear directions to a long-lost vault in the nearby Echo Wood—a vault full of great riches waiting to be plundered. With so much gold involved, Bazzak's reaction was predictable. Unwilling to rely on his insubordinate pirate troops, the Black Marquis called upon all of the few rare men he could still trust to accompany Lady Riverbane on a treasure hunt.

In fact, Riverbane never stole any book. She forged a copy of the famed memoirs, fabricating the passage about the crypt and its alluring prize. This counterfeit doesn't point to any gold but marks the location of something much more sinister: an unholy shrine to Mazmezz, demon lord of vermin. This is where the villainous woman led Bazzak's best men and left them to die at the hand of ettercaps and arachnid monstrosities she knew lived there.

Riverbane later came back to the Black Marquis with the story that a pack of giant spiders ambushed the expedition, slaying everyone but herself. Bazzak dispatched scouts to locate survivors, but all they brought back were accounts of Pirate Pact members found dead, dangling in spider webs stretched across the River. With rumors spreading and many brigands overtly challenging his leadership, the Black Marquis realized he must act quickly. He turned to the Pathfinder Society for help. Still convinced Riverbane's book is genuine, he sent a letter to Istivil Bosk offering a deal: the memoirs in exchange for assistance.

SUMMARY

Adril Hestram dispatches the PCs to meet Venture-Captain Istivil Bosk in Daggermark. Bosk in turns sends the party to meet Bazzak with the mission to get their hands on the *Memoirs of the Silver Brotherhood*, a book the Society has long sought. The scenario starts as the PCs are sailing north on the Sellen River. The Black Marquis sent them on one of his own ships captained by Lady Riverbane and with some of his crew to explore the region where his best men died. The party first sees action when buccaneers—river thugs hired by Riverbane to kill the PCs—assault their vessel.

The following day, the party comes across a barge entangled in large spider webs. Closer examination of the wreck triggers an attack from giant spiders. As the PCs resume their search, they find no survivors, only a telltale logbook suggesting that Riverbane ordered the crew to this location.

The expedition navigates ever further into Echo Wood until the next morning when Lady Riverbane anchors

her boat and leads the PCs ashore. She gives them a map indicating where Bazzak's men died and sends them off into the shadowy depths of the forest. Progressing through a maze of bushes, undergrowth, and webs, the PCs run into a number of insidious traps—some still holding corpses of the Black Marquis's men.

The party finally reaches an ancient shrine to Mazmezz where live the ettercap monstrosities responsible for the recent assaults on the river and the death of all but a few of Bazzak's men. Before they can free the survivors trapped in cocoons and learn more about Lady Riverbane's deception, the PCs must confront the aberrations and survive the last of their traps.

When the PCs exit the crypt, they find Lady Riverbane waiting for them outside with some of her loyal crew. The treacherous woman flouts the Pathfinders and boasts of her plans of a hostile takeover of the Pirate Pact before ordering her minions to attack. After the fight, the PCs retrieve the book they were coveting, knowing it now to be a fake. In the end, the Pathfinders return home empty-handed with the practical knowledge that doing business with River Kingdoms pirates is more problem than it's worth.

GETTING STARTED

Read or paraphrase the following to get the adventure underway:

"I have a mission for you," says Istivil Bosk, the Venture-Captain of Daggermark in the River Kingdoms. After receiving the assignment from Venture-Captain Adril Hestram in Absalom, traveling for weeks across the Inner Sea and up the lengthy Sellen River, and with barely an hour to adjust to Daggermark's sights and sounds, the Venture-Captain of Daggermark now paces back and forth across cramped quarters crammed full of maps, books, and adventuring gear.

"Your timing is perfect, friends," explains Bosk, an elderly man with graying hair and a pinched, weathered face. He waves a parchment in his hand. "I received another letter just yesterday." He holds up another stack of letters. "It's from the Black Marquis—I believe his real name is Bazzak—the leader of a band of brigands surreptitiously known as the Pirate Pact. In all of these letters, he claims to need our help and offers us *The Memoirs of the Silver Brotherhood*, a rare text—maybe the rarest—in exchange. The Society tried for years to track it down and now Bazzak's claims to be ready to give it to us. I'm sending you north to Deadbridge near the Echo Wood to meet this Black Marquis and offer him your help with whatever it is he needs. I want this book, and you'll get it for me."

And so the mission travels north along the Sellen River, to the aptly named village of Deadbridge, a rundown hamlet

partially built on wharves. It is there, in a rundown antique manor house where stands Urdul Bazzak, the Black Marquis.

"I rule the Pirate Pact and with it the stretch of the Sellen River between here and Numeria," proudly states the portly little man. "The waterways are the lifeblood of the River Kingdoms, so you must understand that any menace to the river is a menace to the balance of power." The Black Marquis stops and quickly looks to his left and right before leaning in and continuing in hushed tones. "Unless someone deals with this threat soon, I could lose everything. Normally I would rely on my most trusted lieutenants, but ..." Bazzak sits up, regains some composure, and resumes. "The book I'm willing to trade for your service—*The Memoirs of the Silver Brotherhood*—contains information about an Azlanti treasure vault deep within the Echo Wood. That's where I sent my most trusted lieutenants. Only, on their way they were waylaid by spiders and abominations and only one returned alive. Lady Riverbane sent out another ship upon her return, the *Hanspur's Luck*, to search for my men. The *Luck* hasn't returned either." Bazzak points to the only other person in the room, a raven-haired beauty standing in a corner. "Lady Riverbane is my most trusted second, and she will take one of my best ships and guide you back to the Azlanti vault. Rid the river of these monstrous spiders and their abominations, find the *Hanspur's Luck*, and uncover the whereabouts of my men, and the book is yours. Do it quickly, do it quietly, and do it before the rest of the Pact realize I've sent my best men on fools' errands that may have killed them all."

Development: Given Bazzak's mention of a treasure vault, the party might ask for more than just the book. If the PCs demand a share of the loot found in the crypt, have them roll a Diplomacy check before letting the Black Marquis grudgingly agree to give away half of the spoils (since the treasure is a lie in the first place, any deal made here won't change the final monetary rewards for this scenario).

Following the audience with the Black Marquis, the PCs can roam the streets of Deadbridge before heading for the docks; however, there is little they can learn about Bazzak or his lieutenant from the suspicious townsfolk. The PCs eventually rendezvous with the Black Marquis's ship: the *Scrag Fisher*, a 50-foot long, single-masted vessel rigged with a lugsail. When the PCs arrive, Lady Riverbane and several able-bodied sailors are already on board preparing for departure.

Lady Riverbane: Bazzak's second in command serves as captain and guide to the PCs on this trip. This dashing young woman is gifted with undeniable magnetism and a cunning mind. Behind her aura of proud confidence and resolve lies a dark viciousness that earned her the fearful respect of her peers. Having lied, deceived, and murdered

her way to the Black Marquis's right-hand, she's now planning the final stages of a hostile takeover of the Pirate Pact. She sees the PCs as interlopers and schemes their death; yet during the first part of the adventure, she tries not to antagonize the party. To stay clear of any suspicion until the final showdown, the treacherous woman effectively employs her forked tongue and relies on magic. Depending on the tier, she uses a *ring of mind shielding* or drinks a *potion of undetectable alignment* daily. To give more impact to her final betrayal, GMs should do their best to play this NPC as the friendly pirate she pretends to be. At the same time she makes it clear that she's the sole captain on board her ship and that the PCs would be well advised to act as per their assignment if they wish to get the *Memoirs*. (Riverbane's stats are found on page 13.)

The Crew: The six sailors manning the *Scrag Fisher* are all members of the Pirate Pact. Though insubordinate by nature, these buccaneers follow Riverbane's orders without questioning her motives. (These pirates use the same stats as the River Thugs in Act 1.) Their names are Andrezi, Esmerelda, Fox, Thorpe, Tormer, and Viorel.

Mission Notes: Before moving on to Act 1, allow Osirion faction members to make a DC 12 Gather Information check to learn that Zukka Nephmet left a few days ago on a boat—the *Hanspur's Luck*—bound for Echo Wood. By beating this roll by 5 or more, one further learns that the alchemist regularly travels to the forest to gather herbal components. Similarly, with a DC 13 Gather Information check (or by simply asking Lady Riverbane), a Pathfinder from the Cheliox faction may learn that Larkus Lockinvar was part of the ill-fated expedition into Echo Wood.

ACT 1: RIFFRAFF ON THE CRAFT (EL 4 OR EL 7 OR EL 10)

Present the players with a brief description of the *Scrag Fisher* and its crew before moving on to the first scene:

Since it left Deadbridge, the *Scrag Fisher* has been cutting a straight furrow into the lazy waters of the Sellen River, making good speed

thanks to its industrious crew actively manning the ship's sail and ropes. Deadbridge is already far behind when an exclamation rises. "Sail Ho!" One of the robust sailors points ahead while turning toward Lady Riverbane standing at the helm. "It's a cog, Milady. And it flies no colors—should we tender these trespassers?" Looking at the incoming vessel, Lady Riverbane answers in a stern voice: "Nay! Not today, man. We have our mission. We'll stick to it." Without another word, the crew gets back to working the hawser and lanyards. As the two ships draw closer, the other craft's pitiful state becomes obvious. With planks and riggings missing in places, sailors frantically move about the deck and appear to have difficulty steering their ship. As the two ships avoid collision and pass alongside each other, a shout rises—"Now!"—followed by a volley of grappling hocks from the other vessel. The *Scrag Fisher* is under attack!

The other ship is the *Waverender*—the name barely readable on the vessel's verdigris nameplate. A dozen disenfranchised River Kingdoms corsairs sail this worn-down craft. Riverbane contacted the ragged band sometime before the PCs met with Bazzak. Under the guise of One-Eyed Farl, one of the Black Marquis's closest



friends (and a man the PCs might encounter in Act 4), she offered them to join the Pirate Pact if they could prove their worth by killing the PCs in a ship-to-ship battle.

The fight starts with the *Scrag Fisher* solidly secured to the *Waverender* by grapnels and ropes—a five-foot gap separates the two vessels. As soon as the River Thugs can act on round 1, the first River Thug extends a narrow boarding plank between the decks. Some of the River Thugs use this platform to cross between the two ships (DC 5 Balance check), others jump (DC 10 Jump check—assuming they do not get a 20 feet running start), or stay on their ship and fire arrows at the party. If the situation presents itself during the battle, the River Thugs attempt to bull rush PCs into the water. There are a total of six grapnels holding the two ships together—anyone can take a standard action to use a bladed weapon to cut a grapnel line. If all six lines are cut, the ships float apart by five feet each round.

This area of the river is roughly twenty feet deep and the waters are calm. Anyone falling overboard can make a DC 15 Reflex save to grab onto a lanyard before hitting the waterline. Once in the river, reaching the hull of one of the ships and maintaining oneself above the waves requires a single DC 10 Swim check. Climbing back on board takes a DC 15 Climb check.

The River Thugs concentrate their assault on the PCs. In fact, Riverbane immediately orders her crew to retreat below deck and “leave the fighting to the heroic Pathfinders.” She finds herself a vantage point from which to observe the skirmish, waiting for it to turn in the PCs’ favor before using her *wand of magic missile* to finish off any unconscious River Thug—dead men tell no tales.

Tier 1–2 (EL 4)

RIVER THUGS (6)

CR 1/2

Male or Female human warrior 1
CN Medium humanoid
Init +0; **Senses** Listen +0, Spot +0

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12
(+2 armor)

hp 5 (1d8)

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

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee scimitar +1 (1d6/18–20)

Ranged shortbow +1 (1d6/x3)

TACTICS

During Combat Half the river thugs harass PCs with arrows while the other half attack in melee, seeking to provide flanking for each other.

Morale Willing to prove their worth, the river thugs fight until they are down to their last hit point or all of their allies are down.

STATISTICS

Str 11, **Dex** 11, **Con** 11, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +1, **Grp** +1

Feats Athletic, Skill Focus (Profession [sailor])

Skills Climb +4, Jump +3, Profession (sailor) +3, Swim +6

Languages Common

Gear bottle of wine (1 gp value), grappling hook, hemp rope (50 ft.), leather armor, scimitar, shortbow with 20 arrows

Tier 3–4 (EL 7)

RIVER THUGS (9)

CR 1

Male or Female human warrior 2

CN Medium humanoid

Init +0; **Senses** Listen +0, Spot +0

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12
(+2 armor)

hp 9 (2d8)

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

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee scimitar +2 (1d6/18–20)

Ranged shortbow +2 (1d6/x3)

TACTICS

During Combat Five river thugs harass PCs with arrows while the other four attack in melee, seeking to provide flanking for each other.

Morale Willing to prove their worth, the river thugs fight until they are down to their last hit point or all of their allies are down.

STATISTICS

Str 11, **Dex** 11, **Con** 11, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +2, **Grp** +2

Feats Athletic, Skill Focus (Profession [sailor])

Skills Climb +3, Jump +4, Profession (sailor) +3, Swim +7

Languages Common

Gear bottle of wine (1 gp value), grappling hook, hemp rope (50 ft.), leather armor, scimitar, shortbow with 20 arrows

Tier 6–7 (EL 10)

RIVER THUGS (12)

CR 3

Male or Female human rogue 2/fighter 1

CN Medium humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +1

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12
(+2 armor)

hp 20 (1d10+2d6+3)

Fort +3, **Ref** +9, **Will** +1

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee mwk scimitar +6 (1d6+2/18–20)

Ranged shortbow +4 (1d6/x3)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

TACTICS

Before Combat The river thugs all quaff their *potion of blur* before launching the attack.

During Combat Half the river thugs harass PCs with arrows while the other half attack in melee, seeking to provide flanking for each other.

Morale Willing to prove their worth, the river thugs fight until they are down to their last hit point or all of their allies are down.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +2, **Grp** +4

Feats Athletic, Skill Focus (Profession Sailor), Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (Scimitar)

Skills Balance +6, Climb +6, Escape Artist +3, Intimidate +4, Jump +6, Profession (sailor) +4, Search +2, Swim +8, Tumble +4

Languages Common

Combat Gear *potion of blur*; **Other Gear** bottle of wine (1 gp value), grappling hook, hemp rope (50 ft.), leather armor, masterwork scimitar, shortbow with 20 arrows

Development: After the battle, if confronted by the PCs regarding her lack of support, Lady Riverbane declares matter-of-factly that, given the party's reputation, she saw no need to intervene and that finishing off these bandits should've been easily within the means of the PCs.

If any of the river thugs escapes Riverbane's finishing blows and gets captured, he begs pathetically for his life and readily offers to share the little he knows: nothing that can incriminate Riverbane or make sense at this stage of the adventure. The *Waverender* is in an advanced state of disrepair and is of little to no value.

Mission Notes: The captain's cabin hides a set of maps and notes regarding navigation in the River Kingdoms. They can be discovered with a DC 15 Search check. These documents are those needed by Qadiran faction PCs to fulfill their mission.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat all of the river thugs in this encounter, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 1–2:

Give each player 70 gp.

Tier 3–4:

Give each player 81 gp.

Tier 6–7:

Give each player 415 gp.

GOLARION TRIVIA

The ship found in Act 2 gets its name from Hanspur, a minor Chaotic Neutral god of waters, currents, and rats worshiped in the River Kingdoms. You can learn more about Hanspur, the River Kingdoms, and Golarion at large from the *Pathfinder Chronicles Campaign Setting* hardcover, available online at paizo.com or at your favorite local game store.

ACT 2: A SHIP IN THE WEB (EL 3 OR EL 5 OR EL 7)

The *Scrag Fisher* sails on after the altercation with the river thugs and does not come across any other aggressive boats that day. The next morning, low gray clouds smear the sky, and by midday tall trees leaning over the riverbank further obstruct the pale sun. A gloomy mood falls on the pirate crew as the ship enters Echo Wood. A mere hour before dusk, the sailors' misgivings crystallize when the expedition comes across a barge trapped in giant webs. Read or paraphrase the following:

The wind seems to come to a dead still as the *Scrag Fisher* approaches the wreckage of a hulking river barge. "It's the *Hanspur's Luck*, Milady—or what's left of it," grumbles one of the pirates. Like a large bee stuck in a spider's web, the partially sunken boat bulges out of a mesh of sticky tangles, its deck slightly sloping abaft. Slowly turning the wheel, Lady Riverbane orders her ship toward the ensnared derelict, and a minute later the *Scrag Fisher's* moorings are secured to the *Hanspur's Luck*. The captain turns around and says, "Here we are mates. That looks like a good place to start your investigation, wouldn't you say?"

The top deck of this bulky vessel holds nothing of interest. The PCs must cut their way through thick webbing to reach the hatchway and staircase leading inside the ship. The hold is dark, full of spider webs, and its aft section is partially under water (up to 3 feet at the deepest end). Monstrous spiders lie in wait behind the mostly broken crates, bags, and barrels that litter the place. These spiders are of the web-spinners type: they use their webs as weapons and are particularly skilled at hiding (+8 racial bonus on their Hide check). They wait until all of the PCs enter the hold before launching their attack. On the surprise round, one of them throws a web at the ladder to prevent the PCs from escaping.

The map on page 8 shows the location of the hold's main features. Thick sheets of webbing choke some areas—these squares act as the *web* spell. A few large crates hamper movement and can be used as cover. The aft section of the hold is flooded so treat these squares as difficult terrain. A DC 15 Spot check reveals that some

The Hanspur's Luck's Hold



X Explosive Supply

One Square = 5 Feet

of the supplies lying in this hold are highly flammable. These crates explode when exposed to fire—magical or mundane. These bursts behave like alchemist's fire delivering both direct and splash damage.

Tier 1–2 (EL 3)

MEDIUM MONSTROUS SPIDER (3)

CR 1

hp 11 (MM 288)

Tier 3–4 (EL 5)

LARGE MONSTROUS SPIDER (3)

CR 2

hp 22 (MM 289)

Tier 6–7 (EL 7)

LARGE MONSTROUS SPIDER (6)

CR 2

hp 22 (MM 289)

Development: With a DC 15 Search check the PCs find three *potions of lesser restoration*—their contents labeled in Osiriani—in one of the many containers. The fore cabin contains a desk and some papers, including the ship's logbook. That document clearly indicates that the *Hanspur's Luck* was ordered by Lady Riverbane to come to this location and await further instructions. If presented with this finding, Riverbane doesn't deny the evidence, stating that her original plan—before the Pathfinders were called in—was to launch a rescue expedition into the forest with the crew of the *Hanspur's Luck*. The truth is, Riverbane needed a few more Pirate Pact casualties to further destabilize the Black Marquis. She assigned the *Hanspur's Luck* its mission after realizing that the ettercaps from the shrine were now assaulting river-faring travelers. Nowhere on the ship is there any trace of the crew. They have already been eaten or carried back to the ettercaps' nest (see Act 4).

Mission Notes: With a DC 12 Heal or Survival check, PCs from the Taldor faction can extract the venom sack they require from any of the dead spiders (allow one roll per creature—the sack is ruined on a failed check). Osirion faction PCs looking for the alchemist find clear evidence that he was once on board. The majority of the supplies found on board are clearly of Andoren origin. Among the papers found in the cabin are some ledgers with names of smugglers, contacts, and corrupted officials involved in the traffic of Andoren goods. These are the documents needed for the Andoran mission. Unfortunately, they are all written in orc. Unless the PCs speak that language or employ magic, a DC 12 Forgery or Decipher Script check is required to recognize the value of these records.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat every creature in this encounter, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 1–2:

Give each player 79 gp.

Tier 3–4:

Give each player 83 gp.

Tier 6–7:

Give each player 92 gp.

ACT 3: THE VENOMOUS WOODS (EL VARIES)

Following the encounter on board the *Hanspur's Luck*, the expedition resumes its course. The next morning, Lady Riverbane anchors her ship and leads the PCs ashore. She gives them a very simple map meant to lead the PCs to the place where the Black Marquis's men were ambushed. Riverbane's unvoiced intent is for the party to meet the same grisly end. The PCs penetrate the eerie depths of the forest alone, with Lady Riverbane claiming she needs to stay behind with her crew to ensure that it doesn't fall to brigands or abominations—from here on out, the PCs are on their own. The journey from the shores of the Sellen River to the location marked on Riverbane's map takes four hours at normal walking speed. This act is a series of unmapped encounters that pit the PCs against the labyrinth of the ettercaps and their vicious traps while they travel to the shrine.

The forest here is ancient. Dense masses of leafage impose an eerie twilight of dark green while forlorn trees speak of a bygone age where humans wrestled for survival in a land of darkness. Many thick sheets of giant webbing stretch like great shrouds around the gaunt trees and groveling bushes.

Creatures: Two ettercaps claim ownership over these parts of the wood. With their pet spiders, they dwell in an ancient vault half a dozen miles inland. Removed from any frequented trails and settlements, the ettercaps never had any real interaction with humans. This changed three weeks ago when Lady Riverbane ventured onto their territory with a dozen pirates. Being the vicious creatures they are the ettercaps took immense pleasure in the hunt that followed. By the end of it, the creatures had tasted both the fear and the flesh of human prey—and craved for more. They quickly expanded their trapping to the Sellen River and eventually caught the *Hanspur's Luck* in their webs.

Riverbane learned about the ettercap menace and the ancient shrine they inhabit less than a year ago from a wandering adventurer. As part of her convoluted plot to seize control of the Pirate Pact, the perfidious woman led her companions—the Black Marquis's best men—on

a fictitious treasure hunt and marooned them to die an ignominious death among the web-spinning horrors.

The Labyrinth

The ettercaps crafted the area around their lair into a maze of tree trunks, bushes, undergrowth, and webs. Innately talented for building traps, the ettercaps set a number of insidious camouflaged pits throughout this disorienting network of tunnels and passageways. A few minutes into the labyrinth, the PCs run into the first of these traps.

Tier 1–2 (EL 1)

CONCEALED PIT TRAP

CR 1

Type mechanical; Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect fall 10 ft. (1d6); DC 20 Reflex negate

Tier 3–4 (EL 2)

CONCEALED PIT TRAP

CR 2

Type mechanical; Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect fall 20 ft. (2d6); DC 20 Reflex negate; multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares)

Tier 6–7 (EL 6)

CONCEALED PIT TRAP WITH POISONOUS

SHORTSPEARS

CR 6

Type mechanical; Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect fall 20 ft. (2d6); DC 20 Reflex negate; multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares); Atk 1d4 shortspears +10 melee (1d6/x3 plus poison: Fort DC 12 or 1d4 Str/1d4 Str)

If detected, any of these pit traps can be bypassed by either jumping over them (DC 5 Jump check), walking around them (DC 10 Balance check), or disabling them.

Development: Covered in gooey webbing, the broken corpse of one of the Black Marquis's men lies at the bottom of this first pit. As they venture deeper into the maze, the PCs spot a few more dead bodies hanging upside-down in giant spider webs—all members of the ill-fated expedition.

Navigating the labyrinth isn't a simple task, and the party is likely to encounter more of these pit traps. Two

consecutive DC 15 Survival checks are required for the PCs to successfully cross the labyrinth. Failing two of these checks in a row means that the party comes across another trap. Because all of these traps are of similar design, their associated DC Search check gets reduced by 3 each time.

Mission Notes: A DC 10 Spot check notices that the corpse at the bottom of the maze's first pit trap is missing its left hand. For members of the Cheliox faction, this feature identifies the body as that of Larkus Lockinvar. Obviously, the man is already dead, and all that's needed now is to chop off his right hand. This requires first lowering oneself into the pit, and performing a DC 13 Strength check to free the corpse from the webbing.

The Corpse Marionette

The PCs finally make it out of the cramped passageways and into a clearing. The web-covered trees here are still as ominous as they were in the labyrinth and dead leaves cover the ground. A few hundred yards beyond, a low hill bare of any vegetation rises from the sea of green. But what catches the party's attention is a man in tattered clothes laboriously crawling in their direction.

This is yet another elaborate ettercap trap. When the PCs enter the glade, an ettercap is already waiting for them, hidden in the dark foliage of a tree. The sadistic predator took one of the corpses from its den—that of a crewman from the *Hanspur's Luck*—and attached web strings to the cadaver's limbs. The monster plays the corpse like a marionette, making it twitch on the ground like a dying man would. Before this bait is a shallow 10-by-10 foot camouflaged pit trap filled with sticky webs.

PCs are entitled to two separate Spot checks: one to notice the ettercap concealed in the foliage (the creature gets a +4 circumstance bonus to its Hide check) and one to see the translucent threads holding the man's body (DC 18). PCs approaching the corpse marionette risk falling into the trap.

All Tiers (EL 1)

WEB-FILLED CONCEALED PIT TRAP CR 1

Type mechanical; Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect entanglement (effects similar to those of a web thrown by a Medium Monstrous Spider, see MM page 289); DC 20 Reflex negate; multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares)

This booby trap wouldn't be too dangerous if it wasn't for the fact that the ettercaps doused these webs with a special mixture of their pheromones. The very particular

scent released in the air when the trap is triggered calls to the many arachnids in the vicinity—something a DC 18 Knowledge (nature) check immediately reveals. If this occurs, the PCs have three rounds before a rolling carpet of diminutive spiders crawls out of nearby thickets and attacks them.

Tier 1–2 (EL 1/2)

SMALL SPIDER SWARM (1) CR 1/2

hp 4 (MM 239)

NOTES

Low-level parties face an already partially broken up spider swarm, thus the reduced number of hit points it has. This swarm can move across the web at its climb speed.

Tier 3–4 (EL 2)

SPIDER SWARM (2) CR 1

hp 9 (MM 239)

Tier 6–7 (EL 5)

SPIDER SWARM (5) CR 5

hp 9 (MM 239)

Development: The ettercap in this encounter remains hidden for the duration of the encounter. If spotted, it attempts to flee, unwilling to face the PCs directly at this point.

Rewards: There are no rewards for Act 3.

ACT 4: MAZMEZZ'S SHRINE (EL 3 OR EL 6 OR EL 7)

Past the glade, the gaping mouth of a tunnel opens into a bleak, cairn-like mound. Down the dark passageway, the PCs find a grisly scene.

The tunnel opens into a large cavern. Thick layers of sagging webs choke the room from floor to ceiling. Beyond the mass of tangles, jade flames burn about a rough pyramid-shaped dais, bathing the whole chamber in an eldritch green glow. Gruesome carcasses and human-sized cocoons dangle from ghastly strands. In places, walls are covered with worn-out bas-reliefs and faded markings. The air smells of dust, decay, and death.

The PCs are standing in an old temple to the nefarious demon lord of vermin: Mazmezz, the Creeping Queen. A DC 20 Religion check reveals the nature of this unholy place and further tells that, though obviously inhabited by some kind of web-spinning pests, this

shrine hasn't seen any formal worship to Mazmezz in at least a hundred years. In fact, the human cultists who built and maintained this remote crypt died long ago, but the shrine didn't stay deserted for long.

Creatures: The very nature of these unhallowed grounds eventually beckoned ettercaps from the deeper parts of Echo Wood. Today, two of these wicked aberrations call this cavern home. They are lying in wait in the webs (+4 circumstance bonus to Hide check).

Traps: By attaching a large slab of stone to a web rope, the ettercaps constructed a deadly swinging block trap set to go off when someone crosses the room to the altar (its actual effect depends on the tier as detailed below). The monsters remain hidden until the trap is triggered, bypassed, or they are discovered, at which point they slide down to the ground and attack the PCs.

Giant webbing obstructs some areas. The map on this page shows the location of these web patches. Moving across one such square requires a DC 8 Escape Artist or DC 12 Strength check. The ettercaps and their pet spider can freely cross these spaces—a fact the crafty creatures use to their advantage to assault the party's rear. The creatures fight to the death.

Tier 1–2 (EL 3)

DEFECTIVE SWING BLOCK TRAP CR –

Type mechanical; Search DC 20;
Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect This trap is malfunctioning.

When the PCs trigger or disable it, the rope holding the block breaks. This results in the slab of stone falling on one of the two ettercaps originally in the room, instantly killing it.

ETTERCAP CR 3
hp 27 (MM 106)

Tier 3–4 (EL 6)

SWING BLOCK TRAP CR 1

Type mechanical; Search DC 20;
Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect Atk +5 (4d6, stone block)

ETTERCAP (2) CR 3
hp 27 (MM 106)

Tier 6–7 (EL 7)

SWING BLOCK TRAP CR 3

Type mechanical; Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect Atk +10 (4d6, stone block)

ETTERCAP (2) CR 3
hp 27 (MM 106)

LARGE MONSTROUS SPIDER CR 2

hp 22 (MM 289)

NOTES

This monstrous spider is resting in its cocoon nest on the ceiling.

It takes 1 round for it to join the ettercaps in their fight against the PCs.

Development: Once the PCs have dealt with the inhabitants of this dreadful place, they are free to



explore the cavern. The ettercaps' nest suspends from the ceiling. PCs must use magic or perform a DC 15 Climb check to reach this location and find within various shiny objects the monsters collected from their victims: a few gems, pendants, and gold pieces, and a masterwork silver short sword (+1 *silver short sword* for Tier 6–7). The cocoons hanging behind the altar contain a number of human bodies—Lady Riverbane's former companions or crewmen from the *Hanspur's Luck*. A DC 10 Search or Heal check reveals that two individuals are still alive, though unconscious (both are stable at 0 hit points). One is an elderly Osirion man who introduces himself as Zukka Nephmet when awakened. The other is a close friend of the Black Marquis: a pirate named One-Eyed Farl. Once brought back to consciousness, Farl openly talks about Riverbane's treachery which he experienced first hand. Both survivors are infinitely grateful to the PCs. For story purposes, neither of them is in any condition to fight, despite any healing or equipping they might undergo. They are mentally broken and tired from their ordeal.

Mission Notes: If they find him, PCs of the Osirion faction can give Zukka Nephmet the letter, bringing tears of joy to the old man's eye.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat every creature in this encounter and explore the ettercaps' hanging nest, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 1–2:

Give each player 44 gp.

Tier 3–4:

Give each player 53 gp.

Tier 6–7:

Give each player 244 gp.

ACT 5: PIRATE DOUBLE-CROSS (EL 4 OR EL 7 OR EL 10)

When the PCs finally exit the loathsome shrine, it looks like the sun itself decided to celebrate the Pathfinders' victory over the evil denizens of the mound. But the sun didn't come alone: Lady Riverbane and four of her rough pirate flunkies also await the party.

"Well," says the jet-haired pirate woman, lips twisted in a grin. "Shiver me timbers! Look who made it out alive. I hoped the crawling horrors would be the end of you, but I suppose vermin don't eat each other." Riverbane spits on the moss covered ground before continuing. "Why do Pathfinders always have to meddle in what doesn't concern them?" Pulling out an ancient-looking tome from a pouch, she throws it unceremoniously in the mud. "Fools! All this for a book ..." She erupts in laughter. "Bazzak dies tomorrow and you die today! KILL THEM!"

If the PCs rescued them in the previous act, Farl and Zukka retreat inside the tunnel, leaving the fighting to the PCs. The glade where this last skirmish takes place is an open space free of any notable features. *GameMastery Flip-Mat: Basic* should be sufficient for this battle.

Tier 1–2 (EL 4)

LADY RIVERBANE CR 2

Female human rogue 1/sorcerer 1

NE Medium humanoid

Init +1; Senses Listen –1, Spot

–1

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14

(+4 armor)

hp 19 (2HD+9)

Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +1

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee rapier +0 (1d6/18–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack

+1d6

Spells Known (CL 1st)

1st (4/day)—*disguise self*, *grease* (DC 13)

0 (5/day)—*detect magic*, *light*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

TACTICS

Before Combat Riverbane quaffs a *potion of bear's endurance* (already accounted for in the stats).

During Combat Riverbane stays at the back, targeting the PCs with *grease* spells or her *wand of magic missile*. If any of her thugs are still standing when the PCs reach her in melee, she seeks to provide flanking to them.

Morale Rash as she is, Riverbane doesn't admit defeat even when it stares her in the face. She fights to the death.

Base Statistics hp 15 (2d6+5), Fort +1, Con 12, Concentration +4



STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 13, **Con** 16, **Int** 14, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +0, **Grp** +0

Feats Persuasive, Toughness

Skills Bluff +8, Climb +3, Concentration +6, Craft (trapmaking) +4, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +4, Forgery +6, Intimidate +8, Profession (sailor) +6, Sense Motive +3, Spellcraft +4, Swim +4

Languages Common, Elven, Orcish

SQ trapfinding

Combat Gear *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *wand of magic missile* (CL 1) 25 charges; **Other Gear** mithral shirt, *potion of undetectable alignment* (3), jewelry (100 gp value), pouch with 50 gp, rapier

RIVERBANE'S PIRATES (4)

CR 1/2

hp 4 (use stats for Tier 1–2 river thugs in Act 1)

TACTICS

During Combat Rather than seeking to provide flanking for each other, the pirates try to keep PCs busy while Riverbane rains deadly magic on them.

Morale Afraid of Riverbane, the pirates fight to the death, seeking at all cost to protect Lady Riverbane.

Tier 3–4 (EL 7)

As Tier 1–2, but with the following changes:

LADY RIVERBANE

CR 2

Female human rogue 1/sorcerer 1

NE Medium humanoid

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15

(+5 armor)

STATISTICS

Gear +1 mithral shirt, *ring of mind shielding*, *wand of magic missile* (CL 3) 25 charges, jewelry (175 gp value), pouch with 75 gp

RIVERBANE'S PIRATES (8)

CR 1

hp 9 (use stats for the Tier 3–4 river thugs in Act 1)

TACTICS

During Combat Rather than seeking to provide flanking for each other, the pirates try to keep PCs busy while Riverbane rains deadly magic on them.

Morale Afraid of Riverbane, the pirates fight to the death, seeking at all cost to protect Lady Riverbane.

Tier 6–7 (EL 10)

LADY RIVERBANE

CR 8

Female human rogue 2/sorcerer 6

NE Medium humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** Listen –1, Spot –1

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16

(+6 armor)

hp 57 (8d6+27)

Fort +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +4

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee rapier +4 (1d6/18–20) or *shocking grasp* +4 (5d6/20)

Ranged *scorching ray* +6 (4d6/20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

Spells Known (CL 6th)

3rd (4/day)—*suggestion* (DC 16)

2nd (6/day)—*scorching ray*, *mirror image*

1st (7/day)—*disguise self*, *grease* (DC 14), *charm person* (DC 14), *shocking grasp*

0 (6/day)—*detect magic*, *light*, *mending*, *message*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

TACTICS

Before Combat Riverbane quaffs a *potion of bear's endurance* (already accounted for in the stats).

During Combat Riverbane stays at the back, targeting the PCs with offensive spells or her *wand of magic missile* against the PCs. If she gets targeted by a PC, she uses *suggestion* to tell him/her to attack the thugs instead (DC 18), or leave the battle (DC 16).

Morale Rash as she is, Riverbane doesn't admit defeat even when it stares her in the face. She fights to the death.

Base Statistics **hp** 41 (8d6+11), **Fort** +3, **Con** 12, Concentration +9

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +4, **Grp** +4

Feats Persuasive, Combat Casting, Silent Spell, Toughness

Skills Bluff +16, Climb +4, Concentration +11, Craft (trapmaking) +4, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +8, Escape Artist +6, Forgery +7, Intimidate +10, Profession (sailor) +7, Sense Motive +4, Spellcraft +12, Swim +2

Languages Common, Elven, Orcish

Combat Gear *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *wand of magic missile* (CL 5) 25 charges; **Gear** +2 mithral shirt, rapier, *ring of mind shielding*, jewelry (500 gp value), pouch with 150 gp

RIVERBANE'S PIRATES (4)

CR 3

hp 20 (use stats for Tier 6–7 river thugs in Act 1)

TACTICS

During Combat Rather than seeking to provide flanking for each other, the pirates try to keep PCs busy while Riverbane rains deadly magic on them.

Morale Afraid of Riverbane, the pirates fight to the death, seeking at all cost to protect Lady Riverbane.

Development: The book Riverbane tossed to the ground is indeed a counterfeit *Memoirs of the Silver Brotherhood*. Albeit authentic-looking, its content is worthless to the Society. A DC 12 Appraise check will immediately reveal it as a cheap fraud.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat Riverbane and her men, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 1–2:

Give each player 275 gp.

Tier 3–4:

Give each player 1,054 gp.

Tier 6–7:

Give each player 1,482 gp.

CONCLUSION

With Riverbane dead or captured, the PCs are free to return to the *Scrag Fisher*. Two pirates still on board plead ignorance of their captain's conspiracy and readily offer to bring the Pathfinders back to Deadbridge. Following an uneventful return trip, the PCs meet again with the Black Marquis. The man listens to their tale with great interest and thanks them profusely (having pieced things together, he can clarify any aspects of the story still elusive to the PCs). Being the greedy pirate he is, Bazzak refuses to reward the Pathfinders beyond letting them keep what they looted. "Such is the way of the River Kingdoms," he declares. "If nothing else, your involvement in this affair helped free the region of a dangerous ettercap menace. Hopefully, that's worth a quick mention in a Pathfinder Chronicle. No?" As for Istivil Bosk, he is certainly disappointed by the turn of events but doesn't hold it against the PCs.

FACTION MISSIONS

Andoran Faction: Pathfinders from the Andoran faction who collect the ledgers from the *Hanspur's Luck* earn 1 Prestige Award.

Cheliox Faction: Bringing back Larkus Lockinvar's right hand earns Cheliox faction members 1 Prestige Award.

Osirion Faction: PCs from the Osirion faction who save Zukka Nephmet and deliver the letter to him earn 1 Prestige Award.

Qadira Faction: PCs from the Qadira faction who acquire the maps and logbooks from the *Waverender* earn 1 Prestige Award.

Taldor Faction: Extracting a venom sack from a dead monstrous spider earns Taldor faction PCs 1 Prestige Award.

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Andoran Faction Handout

Champion of Democracy

Your bravery makes you an example for those oppressed by our enemies. And now I hear you are being sent to the River Kingdoms. I have no doubt that during your travel you will embody the virtues that we promote in this land where freedom doesn't mean equality and justice.

I have reasons to believe that Andoran goods are being smuggled through the River Kingdoms and are finding their way into Numeria where they help support Kevoth-Kul's tyrannical reign. This very thought appalls me. This cannot go unchecked. While in the River Kingdoms, I would like you to gather solid evidence regarding such smuggling so that those responsible might be stopped, convicted, and properly sentenced.

I have all confidence in your ability to come back to me with the documents we need.

Capt. Colson Maldre

With Honest Gratitude,

Captain Colson Maldre



Chelax Faction Handout

All Glory to the Majestrix and Her Most Dedicated Servants,

It is an undeniable fact that House Thrune has brought prosperity and order to our great nation. The weak gangrened old nobility was weeded out to make room for people of true puissance and excellence. But there are those who refuse progress and cling to the past, individuals like Larkus Lockinvar. His family once held land and titles but proved unfit to rule and was justifiably deposed two generations ago. Larkus has been a rebellious dissident his whole life. We managed to capture him a few years ago, but like the cockroach he is, the man refused to die and even managed to escape confinement. We lost track of him for a while, but agents of mine recently located him in the River Kingdoms where he now serves as lieutenant to the Black Marquis. When you're there, you will easily identify Larkus by the stump of his left arm—a memento from our torturers.

For the glory of Chelax, find Larkus Lockinvar, kill him, and bring me back his right hand. None defies the Majestrix and lives.

Zarta Draldeen

Paracountess Zarta Draldeen

Osirion Faction Handout

Honored Liegeman of the Ruby Prince,

May this missive find you in favorable spirit. The wind tells of your mission to the distant land of the River Kingdoms.

The land of many rivers is home to outlaws of all caliber, but it also shelters many who seek escape—people like Zukka Nephmet. For numerous years, this man of science served the Ruby Prince as an alchemist of the court. Seven years ago, an embarrassing affair forced our lord to send Nephmet into exile. This great mind is now wasting away in the village of Deadbridge, north of Daggermark. But his sojourn is coming to an end. In his infinite grace, the Ruby Prince is showing forgiveness and welcomes Nephmet back to Osirion. Find him and give him this letter. Tell him he can come home.

Lavishing my Deepest Thanks,



Amenopheus

Amenopheus, The Sapphire Sage

Qadiran Faction Handout

Honorable Son of Qadira,

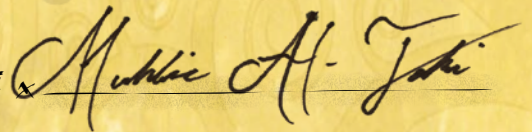
You know, like every Qadiran does, how valuable maps and nautical charts can be to commerce—our commerce. Now imagine the problem posed by a region where trade routes change with every season, and where a wrong turn is certain to deliver you into the hands of highwaymen. Such is the issue we face with the River Kingdoms. This region of the world suffers from an acute case of anarchism and banditry. The Sellen River is an invaluable commercial road, and the nature of the land should not prevent us from conducting our business.

That's where you come in. While on mission in these unruly states, look for any current maps, records, or logs indicating which areas of the River Kingdoms should be avoided and which ones could be safely traveled. This information will probably only be valid for a few months, but we'll make sure to get the most out of it.

You are a Pathfinder. Truly earn that name by finding a path through the River Kingdoms for us. Do so and be assured that your good deeds will be mentioned in the highest spheres.

May the Sun Always Light Your Way,

Pasha Muhlia Al-Jakri



Taldor Faction Handout

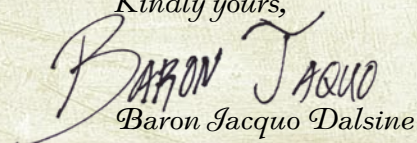
Greetings to You, Agent of the Grand Prince,

We Taldans rightfully deserve our title of most sophisticated nation of the world.

Where others brutishly send armies clashing, we know how to get similar results with a single dagger—planted in a general's back. Assassination is an art, not unlike painting. To create a true masterpiece it is essential for one to have access to the right pigments and the clearest oil.

You are heading for Echo Wood, in the River Kingdoms. It just so happens that monstrous arachnids with some of the nastiest venoms inhabit this forest. While you are there, collect for me the venom sack from a giant spider. The empire knows of a few artists who could use such an ingredient, and of a few enemies of the state who could become their masterpieces.

Kindly yours,



Baron Jacquo Dalsine





SCENARIO 17: PERILS OF THE PIRATE PACT

This Chronicle Certifies That

Player Name _____ A.K.A. _____
Character Name _____ Pathfinder Society # _____ Faction _____

Has Completed This Scenario.

Items Found During This Scenario

TIER

1-2

Mithral shirt (Cost: 1,100 gp)
Potion of lesser restoration (Cost: 300 gp)
Potion of undetectable alignment (Cost: 300 gp)
Wand of magic missile (CL 1) - (25 charges) (Cost: 375 gp)

TIER

3-4

+1 Mithral shirt (Cost: 2,250 gp)
Ring of mind shielding (Cost: 8,000 gp)
Wand of magic missile (CL 3) - (25 charges) (Cost: 1,125 gp)

TIER

6-7

+2 Mithral shirt (Cost: 4,250 gp)
Wand of magic missile (CL 5) - (25 charges) (Cost: 1,875 gp)

Items Sold / Conditions Gained

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

TOTAL VALUE OF ITEMS SOLD
Add 1/2 this value to the "Items Sold" Box

Items Bought / Conditions Cleared

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

TOTAL COST OF ITEMS BOUGHT

Scenario Chronicle #

TIER	
1-2	468
TIER	
3-4	1,271
TIER	
6-7	2,233

MAX GOLD

EXPERIENCE

Starting XP

+1 XP

Final XP Total

Prestige Award

Starting PA

_____	GM's Initial
-------	--------------

PA Gained (GM ONLY)

Final PA Total

GOLD

Start GP

+	_____	GM's Initial
---	-------	--------------

GP Gained (GM ONLY)

+	_____
---	-------

Items Sold

=	_____
---	-------

Sub Total

-	_____
---	-------

Items Bought

=	_____
---	-------

Sub Total

-	_____
---	-------

Gold Spent

=	_____
---	-------

Sub Total

For GM Only

EVENT

EVENT CODE

DATE

Game Master's Signature

GM Pathfinder Society #