



THE SEA WITCH

A short adventure for four
10th-level player characters

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INTRODUCTION

The Sea Witch is a short adventure for four 10th-level characters. The difficulty of the adventure can be adjusted by changing the level of main antagonist (Black Molly, the sea hag pirate) or by altering the number of her ogre servants. To tailor the encounter to groups of different levels, refer to table 4-1 in Chapter 4 of the *DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE*. The adventure is set off a lightly populated coastline known as Misty Bay, but adapts easily to any coastal region in existing campaigns.

A map of a lighthouse suitable for this adventure is available for download at: http://www.wizards.com/dnd/images/mapofweek/Jan_9x4L3c.jpg. Also useful is the online map of Misty Bay, available for download at: <http://www.wizards.com/dnd/images/mapofweek/2MistyBay.jpg>. These maps are reprinted here for your convenience.

The sea hag known as Black Molly is a notorious pirate who has plagued the coastal cities for the better part of a decade. A successful Knowledge (local) check (DC 15) will reveal that Molly and her ogre crew have a filthy reputation as merciless killers who delight not only in plundering vessels for their riches, but also in destroying the ships themselves and sending all hands to the bottom of the sea.

Now the villain and her followers have seized control of the Old Lighthouse of Misty Bay located off a lightly populated coastline. For generations the lighthouse beacon has protected the fishermen of this region, warning them of the dangerous rocks that lurk just below the level of the high tides. Recently, the hag has put out the beacon, darkening the lighthouse; misery and destruction are sure to follow as ships start to blunder into the rocks. Blackmail is apparently Black Molly's aim in this venture: She conveyed a message to the nearest shore community, the fishing village of Poison, demanding the princely sum of 50,000 gp. Until she receives this ransom, she intends to hold the lighthouse and its beacon hostage. The fate of the human keepers who tend the lighthouse is unknown to the seaside communities at this time, but they fear the worst.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The Sea Witch is ostensibly a rescue mission: The PCs are pitted against the evil of Black Molly and the brawn of her savage ogre crew. It is the heroes' task to retake the lighthouse and, if possible, free its captives from the clutches of their jailer. What neither the PCs nor the shore communities yet realize is that while she

would be pleased to have the gold, Black Molly is in fact after bigger treasure. Molly has no intention of giving up the lighthouse — at least, not until she finds what her master sent her here for. Lying on the sea floor practically at the base of the rock on which the lighthouse sits is the wreck of the war galley *Flying Cloud*, which according to popular legend was captained by a cleric who wore around his neck an *amulet of the planes*. Black Molly wants this prize, but so far she hasn't been able to find it. She's scoured the wreck without finding any sign of the magic item. Now she's trying to determine where to search next, for the item might well be somewhere near the wreck. If she can't find it, she'll start torturing her captives to find out if they have any useful knowledge about the *amulet*.

PREPARATION

You, the Dungeon Master (DM), need a copy of the *Player's Handbook*, the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*, and the *Monster Manual* to use this adventure. If you plan to set the adventure in Faerûn, you'll need a copy of the new *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*.

Monster and NPC statistics are provided with each encounter in abbreviated form or, where appropriate, the *Monster Manual* is referenced.

Should you wish to develop the adventure beyond what is presented here, the best opportunity for doing so is to focus on the shipwreck of the *Flying Cloud* and the elemental vortex in the caves below.

CHARACTER HOOKS

This is a good side trek adventure — it's easy to insert it into an existing campaign any time the player characters (PCs) are traveling in a coastal region where fishing and shipping are major industries. Alternately, Black Molly can be the central antagonist in a longer story that you devise. Use the following hooks and rumors to draw the PCs into the encounter.

- The PCs are in the village Poisson when they learn that the lighthouse at Old Captain's Rock has suddenly ceased to shine its light. Fearful of what this occurrence may portend, the village holds its breath. Then they receive Black Molly's ransom message, and pandemonium erupts because even by combining their resources the fishing villages cannot hope to meet the hag's demand. The community's elders appeal to the PCs for assistance, offering a small but heartfelt reward for their help.

- Because the lighthouse is vital to the health of shipping (not to mention sailors) in the region, a group of merchants with marine interests raises the ransom. They hire the PCs to deliver it to Black Molly, but offer them a hefty bonus if they can manage to dispatch the sea hag and return home with the ransom intact.
- The PCs hear a local legend that tells of a fabulous treasure lying at the bottom of the sea near the lighthouse. According to this tale, a war galley named the *Flying Cloud* went to the bottom during a violent storm over a decade ago, taking all hands with it. These stories speak of a great treasure that sank along with its captain, who went down with his ship.

The Lighthouse Construction

The Old Lighthouse sits atop a sliver of rock, known as Old Captain's Rock, that juts only a few yards above the surface of the ocean, approximately a eastward from Poisson. Nearby, barely hidden by the restless waves, more rocks wait to tear open the hulls of vessels that stray too close — which is exactly what happens when the lighthouse does not function properly. The structure stands approximately 75 feet high. It's a hollow cylinder, constructed of sandstone blocks on a granite foundation, with its exterior encased in a thick layer of mortar. There are four floors: ground, first, second, and lookout loft, all connected by a central stone stair.

The outside walls of the lighthouse were once a brilliant white, but are now a dull, weathered gray from constant exposure to the elements. The exterior surface of the lighthouse is pitted and scarred with innumerable holes and cracks left by the rough handling of the sea and its intermittent storms. From the lighthouse base to the lower eaves of the lookout loft (room 1, above) is a relatively easy climb (DC 20). Scaling the overhang of the loft and getting from there up to and over the balcony is somewhat more difficult, requiring a Climb check (DC 25).

There is but one door offering ingress and egress, located on the ground floor and opening into room 13.

The Sea

Presume that for the purposes of this encounter, the sea is relatively calm but that the skies are overcast. If you wish to add a greater sense of urgency to the encounter, you can determine that the skies are threatening and that a storm is on the way.



Black Molly's Precautions

Black Molly, like most sea hags, is not prone to subtlety — she prefers direct methods whenever possible. But she isn't stupid, either: she's posted guards to alert her to the approach of any would-be interlopers or rescuers. Her sentries have orders to alert her immediately if they spot any intruders, at which time the pirate will utilize her *bowl of commanding water elementals* to summon a Huge water elemental and order it to destroy her enemies. If intruders gain the islet and are detected, the pirate's standing orders are for the ogres to close up the structure's only door and use their ranged weapons to fend off attackers from the windows, while she tries to utilize her supernatural appearance-based powers (**horrific appearance** and **evil eye**). If she thinks that the fight is lost — if, for example, her forces take over fifty percent casualties — Black Molly tries to escape by reaching the sea and swimming away, hiding among the wrecks or caves below, or getting to the *Harridan* and sailing off. She will not hesitate to leave members of her crew to die if she can save herself.

The *Harridan*

Black Molly's sailing ship, the *Harridan*, is anchored approximately 100 yards off the lighthouse. The vessel is a normal sailing ship that has been slightly modified to accommodate its oversized crew. Use the statistics for the sailing ship that appear in Chapter 5 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

When the adventure begins, a skeleton crew of eight ogres is aboard the *Harridan* (the vessel requires a crew of at least 15 to sail it properly). Should they spot trouble or find themselves summoned by their captain, the ogres onboard can weigh anchor and sail the ship to the lighthouse in 20 rounds.

Molly and her attendant ogres reached the lighthouse in two of the *Harridan's* three skiffs, both of which are now anchored on the north side of the lighthouse.



LAYOUT OF THE LIGHTHOUSE

Topmost Floor

1. Lookout Loft (EL 9)

The stone staircase that rises through the entire height of the lighthouse ends here, in this perch from which the keepers can look out over the tossing waves. The loft is essentially an iron cage encased in thick glass panels, built to hold and direct the light of the beacon. The beacon's light comes from a series of 12 very large oil lamps arranged in an octagon atop a sandstone platform in the center of the room. The light shines out over the darkened ocean in a 360-degree angle, directed and strengthened by 6 circular reflectors constructed of beaten and polished copper. The lamps are fed by oil cisterns, located in room 5 (below). From an elevated position on land, its light can be seen at a distance of approximately 20 miles. In order to put out the light, Black Molly has simply prevented the beacon from being lit. She has not — so far — destroyed this costly apparatus, but she may be inclined to do so as a means of negotiating with powerful intruders.

There is a brass bell hung from the wall of the loft, part of a warning system that the keepers use to alert one another to danger. The pull-cord runs from the bell down into small, circular hole in the floor, and connects to other bells in various rooms. Pulling on the cord rings all the bells so connected, attracting the attention of everyone in the structure.

A single door leads from the light-room out onto a narrow encircling balcony. Hanging from iron rings from the balcony are a pair of large bells, meant to warn ships in foggy weather; Black Molly's ogres have also silenced these, by lashing them tightly to the balcony so that they cannot swing free. Four of the pirate's ogre crew members are on lookout duty here at all times, day and night. From this vantage point they can see all the way to the mainland in clear weather, and approximately 5 miles seaward as well.

Ogre Rog3 (4); CR 5; Large giant; HD 4d8+8, 3d6+6; hp 42; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 8, flat-footed 16); Atk +10 melee (3d6+7 Huge cutlass) or +3 ranged (2d6 large heavy crossbow); Face/Reach 5 ft. x 5 ft./10 ft. SA sneak attack (+2d6); SQ darkvision 60 ft., traps, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 21, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Climb +4, Hide -8, Listen +10, Search +4, Spot +10; Alertness, Weapon Focus (cutlass).

Sneak Attack: If a rogue's target would be denied his Dexterity bonus to AC (whether he actually has a bonus or not), or when the rogue flanks her target, the rogue's attack deals (+2d6) points of extra damage. If the attack scores a critical hit, this extra damage is not multiplied. Ranged attacks can count as sneak attacks only if the target is within 30 feet. With a sap or an unarmed strike, the rogue can make a sneak attack that deals subdual damage instead of normal damage. She cannot use a weapon that deals normal damage to deal subdual damage with a sneak attack. A rogue can sneak attack only living creatures with discernable anatomies. Any creature that is immune to critical hits is not vulnerable to sneak attacks. The rogue must be able to see the target well enough to pick out a vital spot and must be able to reach a vital spot. The rogue cannot sneak attack while striking a creature with concealment or striking the limbs of a creature whose vitals are beyond reach.

Darkvision: The creature can see in the dark as though in normal daylight.

Traps: Rogues can use the Search skill to locate traps when the task has a DC higher than 20. Finding a non-magical trap has a DC of at least 20, higher if it is well hidden. Finding a magic trap has a DC of 25 + the level of the spell used to create it. Rogues can use the Disable Device skill to disarm magic traps. Disabling a magic trap generally has a DC of 25 + the level of the spell used to create it. A rogue who beats a trap's DC by 10 or more with a Disable Device check can generally study a trap, figure out how it works, and bypass it (with her party) without disarming it.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): The rogue can react to danger before her senses would normally allow her to do so. Dex bonus to AC.

Second Floor

2. Oil Provision Store

A month's supply of oil for the beacon is stored in this room. The oil is contained in large clay urns sealed with wax and protected from blows by thick rope wound tightly around their midsections. Each urn holds 5 gallons of oil, and there are approximately 65 urns sitting on the floor.

3. Sand Provision Store

The lighthouse keepers store a vast quantity of sand, which they keep in a variety of sacks and bins of varying sizes, for use in case of a fire. There are also stacks of

empty burlap sacks lying strewn about the floor, and several shovels leaning against the walls. The three unconscious lighthouse keepers are here, bound and gagged.

Alcom, Gerreth, and Nobar, human lighthouse keepers (3): com2; NG.

4. Library

Keeping watch over a lighthouse is a lonely, and oftentimes boring, task. No keeper has yet been illiterate, because reading is one of the few reliable methods of passing the time out here on the rock. Most of the reading matter here consists of sea charts, maps, and simple historical and fiction texts. There is also a complete set of logs kept by all the chief lighthouse keepers, past and present. If the PCs sneak into the lighthouse undetected, there is a 25% chance they'll find Black Molly here, impatiently combing through all this printed matter (especially the logs) for some clue to the whereabouts of the *amulet* she seeks.

5. Oil Cisterns

Half a dozen great copper cisterns hold the oil that fuels the beacon at the top of the lighthouse. A nest of copper pipes connects the cisterns to the individual lamps in room 1 (above). Each cistern holds approximately 10 gallons of oil.

First Floor

6. Eating Hall (EL 9)

As they have done elsewhere in the lighthouse, the ogres have wreaked havoc here. Four of them have shoved all the splintered benches and smashed tables to one side and claimed the room as their resting quarters while in the lighthouse.

Ogre Bbn3 (4): CR 5; Large giant; HD 4d8+8, 3d12+6; hp 51; Init -1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16 (touch 8, flat-footed 16); Atk +11/+6 melee (2d6+7 huge greatclub); or +4 ranged (2d6/19-20/x2, large heavy crossbow); Face/Reach 5 ft. x 5 ft./10 ft.; SQ darkvision 60 ft., fast movement, rage 1/day, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 21, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Climb +4, Hide -8, Jump +4, Listen +2, Spot +2, Swim +9; Martial Weapon Proficiency (greatclub), Power Attack, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Weapon Focus (greatclub).

Darkvision: The creature can see in the dark as though in normal daylight.

Fast Movement: The barbarian has a speed of (+10 ft. for his race) when wearing no armor, light armor, or medium armor (and not carrying a heavy load). (Also enter double move speed and running speed.)

Rage: The barbarian can fly into a screaming blood frenzy and gain phenomenal strength and durability, though he also becomes reckless and less able to defend himself. The following changes are in effect as long as he rages: (enter data from rage effects below). His fit of rage lasts for (enter data from below). The barbarian may voluntarily end the rage prematurely. After raging, the barbarian is fatigued (-2 Strength, -2 Dexterity, can't charge or run) for the duration of that encounter. He can fly into a rage only once per encounter and only (enter data from left) times per day. Entering a rage takes no time by itself, but the barbarian can do it only during his action, not in response to someone else's action.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): The barbarian can react to danger before his senses would normally allow him to do so. Dex bonus to AC.

7. Kitchen

Apart from ransacking the food preparation area for hidden loot, Black Molly and her ogres have not done anything significant in or to the kitchen.

8. Pantry

The ogres have eaten nearly every scrap of food that this storage area once contained. All that remains are a few crumbs and well-picked bones.

9. Sand Store

The lighthouse keepers maintain a quantity of sand, stored in dozens of sacks and barrels, for emergencies involving the oil stores or cisterns.

10. Sleeping Quarters

The three lighthouse keepers sleep in this room (normally, two sleep here while the third is on watch in the lookout loft). Before the ogres made kindling out of the comfortable wood-and-leather furniture and smashed all the furnishings, this room was as comfortable and homey as the inhabitants could make it.

Ground Level

11. Equipment Store

All manner of maintenance and emergency equipment waits here until it is needed: rope, fishing nets, lumber, sandstone blocks, mortar, hammers, axes, etc.

12. Entry Chamber

The lighthouse door opens into this small room.

13. Provision Store

Containers of foodstuffs that are too large to be carried easily up the stairs remain here. The stores normally include casks of fresh water, sacks of flour, cases of dried meats, and the like.

14. Privy

15. Stranger's Room

Sometimes even the beacon and bells of the lighthouse cannot prevent vessels from going astray in foul weather. When that happens, the keepers do all that they can to help stranded crews, including offering this threadbare chamber to anyone who might require it. The room contains three bunk beds outfitted with warm woolen blankets, two sea chests, two lanterns filled with oil, and a small wooden table with three chairs.

THE WRECK OF THE FLYING CLOUD

The submerged wreck of the war galley *Flying Cloud* lies some 200 feet below the surface, at the base of Old Captain's Rock. There is little left of the vessel now but a rotting hull and foredeck, encrusted with barnacles and coated with algae and other marine plant life. Of the *amulet of the planes*, there is no immediate sign.

THE CAVES (EL 12)

What Black Molly has not yet realized is that by chance the wreck of the *Flying Cloud* came to rest over the entrance to a complex of undersea caverns. Furthermore, she doesn't know that deep within these caves there exists an elemental pocket: A region of the Elemental Plane of Water has erupted into the Prime Material Plane at this point, creating at its center a vortex that links the two planes. The entrance to the caves is guarded by an elder water elemental, which has taken the amulet into his safe-keeping. Those who wish to retrieve the amulet or enter the caves must first defeat this powerful creature.

Sloorawssthas, elder water elemental (1): See *Monster Manual*.


Black Molly: Female sea hag Rog7; CR 10; Large monstrous humanoid; HD 3d8+3, 7d6+7; hp 47; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., swim 40 ft.; AC 20 (touch 12, flat-footed 20); Atk +11 melee (1d4+4, 2 claws); or +13/ +8 melee (1d6+6/18–20/x2, +2 rapier); Face/Reach 5 ft. x 5 ft./10 ft.; SA Evil Eye, Horrific appearance, sneak attack (+4d6); SQ darkvision 60 ft., evasion, traps, uncanny dodge, water breathing; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +13, Will +8; Str 19, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +9, Bluff +6, Diplomacy +4, Hide +8, Intimidate +7, Jump +7, Knowledge (local) +4, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Open Lock +8, Search +6, Sense Motive +6, Spot +9, Use Magic Device +6, Use Rope +9; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative.

Evil Eye (Su): Three times per day a sea hag can cast its dire gaze upon any single creature within 30 feet. The target must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 11). Creatures who fail have a 25% chance of dying instantly from fright; even if they survive, they fall into a whimpering catatonia for three days, although remove curse or dispel evil can restore sanity sooner.

Horrific Appearance (Su): The sight of a sea hag is so revolting that anyone who sets eyes upon one must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 11) or instantly be weakened, taking 2d8 points of temporary Strength damage. This cannot reduce a victim to a negative Strength score, but anyone reduced to Strength 0 is helpless. Creatures who successfully save cannot be affected again by the same hag's horrific appearance for one day.

Sneak Attack: If a rogue's target would be denied his Dexterity bonus to AC (whether he actually has a bonus or not), or when the rogue flanks her target, the rogue's attack deals (+4d6) points of extra damage. If the attack scores a critical hit, this extra damage is not multiplied. Ranged attacks can count as sneak attacks only if the target is within 30 feet. With a sap or an unarmed strike, the rogue can make a sneak attack that deals subdual damage instead of normal damage. She cannot use a weapon that deals normal damage to deal subdual damage with a sneak attack. A rogue can sneak attack only living creatures with discernable anatomies. Any creature that is immune to critical hits is not vulnerable to sneak attacks. The rogue must be able to see the target well enough to pick out a vital spot and must be able to reach a vital spot. The rogue cannot sneak attack while striking a creature with concealment or striking the limbs of a creature whose vitals are beyond reach.



Darkvision: The creature can see in the dark as though in normal daylight.

Evasion (Ex): If exposed to any effect that normally allows a character to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, she takes no damage with a successful saving throw.

Traps: Rogues can use the Search skill to locate traps when the task has a DC higher than 20. Finding a non-magical trap has a DC of at least 20, higher if it is well hidden. Finding a magic trap has a DC of 25 + the level of the spell used to create it. Rogues can use the Disable Device skill to disarm magic traps. Disabling a magic trap generally has a DC of 25 + the level of the spell used to create it. A rogue who beats a trap's DC by 10 or more with a Disable Device check can generally study a trap, figure out how it works, and bypass it (with her party) without disarming it.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): The rogue can react to danger before her senses would normally allow her to do so. Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked.

Water Breathing (Ex): Sea hags can breathe underwater indefinitely, and can freely use their abilities while submerged.

Possessions: +2 rapier, +2 studded leather armor, cloak of resistance (+2), bag of holding (type 1), bowl of commanding water elementals, potion of cure serious wounds, potion of darkvision.

The gp value of Black Molly's possessions exceed that recommended by Table 2-44 (NPC Gear Value) in Chapter 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. This excess value is accounted for by the fact that Black Molly is captain of a pirate ship, and thus has access to greater resources than the typical 7th-level rogue.

It's up to the DM to decide if Black Molly's information was accurate and the *amulet of the planes* lies in the wreck or if there's merely a further clue to its location.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jason Carl has been alternately a freelance and professional writer in the RPG industry for six years, and an avid gamer for much longer than that. He's written for a number of games, most notably DUNGEONS & DRAGONS and White Wolf's *Mind's Eye Theatre*.