

for being a traitor to Dran Enterprises. In combat, Arla's shortsword attacks take the form of either her sharpened leg hook or a retractable blade attached to her arm peg.

Hoffman is backed up by three operatives named Pieter, Marks, and Molley (each a N male halfling), each using the **spy** stat block. The three spies use the mobility afforded by their Cunning Action to change targets, and can be easily goaded into focusing on the characters and ignoring Arla.

TREASURE

The strike team members are dressed in fur cloaks and leathers, and their weapons and armor are well maintained. They have the equivalent of a priest's pack and an explorer's pack between them, plus a total of 180 gp.

Hoffman wears a round metal pin bearing the symbol of Dran Enterprises, and which radiates abjuration to a *detect magic* spell or similar effect. The pin allows passage through the portal doors on the Dran Enterprises ship (see the next section).

INFILTRATING DRAN ENTERPRISES

Dangerous Business is a small sailboat with a single cabin rising from the center of its deck. It is docked alongside two larger sailing ships (named *The Ghost* and *The Rogue*). All three ships are owned by Dran Enterprises, with the two larger ships housing fishers, pirates, and others in the company's employ.

Map 4.1 shows the layout of the docks where the characters make their initial approach to Dran Enterprises headquarters.

RACING AGAINST THE SIX

As the characters seek an approach to *Dangerous Business* and the portals within, they are unaware that they are competing against the Six, who have already infiltrated the ship and are seeking Dran Enterprise's main headquarters aboard *The Maverick*. The Six are initially

THE OTHER KIND OF WINNING

As always in an Acquisitions Incorporated campaign, keep an open mind to alternative ways to advance the story, and don't worry if the characters happen to lose an important fight. The face-off against the Dran Enterprises strike team is a tough encounter, and might not go the way the characters expect.

If the entire party is defeated or surrenders, Hoffman can order the characters to be kept alive and loaded onto a cart to be taken to Dran Enterprises for questioning. This won't see the characters taken directly to the company's main headquarters, but could provide an alternative means of reaching *Dangerous Business*. Once on that ship, one of the spies might mistakenly open the portal door leading to the Far Realm horror, with the strike team members alone dragged into that deadly trap to allow the characters to gain their freedom. See "Infiltrating Dran Enterprises" for more information.



MAP 4.1: THE DOCKS

at no more advantage than the characters are in their search for the headquarters, but the characters' actions might tip that balance one way or the other.

During this part of the episode, you'll track a one-off mechanic called "failure points," which are used to represent the race against the Six and determine which side finds the headquarters first. The resolution of that search is described in the "On Board *The Maverick*" section, but the characters will have opportunities before that to realize they are competing against the Six. When that becomes clear, you can underscore any situation in which the party earns a failure point, letting the players know that accumulating too many points means that the Six will pass through the final portal and arrive at *The Maverick* first.

In addition to you tracking the number of failure points, each time the party earns a failure point, you gain a pool of two **guards**. You can add one or more guards from your pool to any scene within the "Portal Nexus" section of this episode. Whenever these guards appear, they enter the scene aware that Acquisitions Incorporated and the Six have infiltrated their territory, and are actively looking for intruders.

DANGEROUS BUSINESS

This humorously small ship is watched over by four **guards** that stand a silent vigil around the cabin. The ship can be reached from the main dock or the smaller jetty leading out between *Dangerous Business* and *The Rogue*. A single door opens up into the cabin.

The area of the docks around the three ships is patrolled by two groups of Dran Enterprises operatives,