

The Seven Provinces

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Characters: Admiral de Ruyter, Sailor 1, Sailor 2, Cabin Boy, Messenger, Look-Out,

Aboard the Dutch ship 'The Seven Provinces', sat at the mouth of the Thames Estuary, Admiral de Ruyter is awaiting news of his invasion plans...

De Ruyter: If our plan is a success, these English fools will curse the day they ever tried to take on our mighty Dutch fleet!

Sailor 1: Here, here sir!

Sailor 2: I'll drink to that!

De Ruyter: Cabin boy! Pour the wine!

The cabin boy pours wine into each of their goblets.

Sailor 1: A toast to Admiral de Ruyter, leader of the greatest navy in the world!

They raise their glasses and drink wine.

Messenger: *(running in)* Sir! Sir! I come with news from the Isle of Sheppey!

Sailor 2: Good news I hope...

Sailor 1: Of course it's good news, how could we possibly have failed?

Cabin boy: You can never be sure...

De Ruyter: Quiet you fools! *(Turning to the messenger)* What news do you bring?

Messenger: When I left our fleet, they had invaded the port of Sheerness.

De Ruyter: And? How fiercely did the English battle against us?

Messenger: Not fiercely at all, sir. In fact, after only one of their men was killed, the whole lot of them ran away!

Sailor 1: Ran away?! Hahaha!

Sailor 2: The English are such cowards!

(They laugh together)

De Ruyter: Quiet you imbeciles! *(To the messenger)* And what news of Queenborough?

Messenger: The last I saw of our fleet they were moving swiftly towards the harbour where the mayor had already raised the white flag of surrender.

Cabin Boy: That means they should be arriving there any time now!

Sailor 1: But the white flag could be a trick! What if the English army have already arrived and are waiting?

Sailor 2: Our men wouldn't stand a chance against a sudden attack like that!

- De Ruyter:** *(Calling up to the Look-Out)* You boy! Can you see as far as the Guildhall at Queenborough?
- Look-Out:** Only just sir, it's a long way in the distance...
- De Ruyter:** What colour is it??
- Look-Out:** It looks white from here...
- Sailor 1:** That's the flag of surrender!
- Look-Out:** But I can see red as well...
- Sailor 2:** Red and white? That's the English flag! It was a trick after all! Their army has won and raised their flag in victory!
- Look-Out:** No, wait! I can see blue! The flag is red, white and blue!
- Cabin Boy:** That's our flag! The flag of the Dutch!
- Messenger:** Then we have won! Our fleet have taken possession of Queenborough! It belongs to us!
- De Ruyter:** Gentlemen, this is a great day in Dutch history; our navy has successfully invaded England! Queenborough is now ours. Now let us sail on towards London where we shall be victorious once again!
- All:** Hurrah!