Pathfinder® Adventure Path™

Curse of the Crimson Throne

CURSE OF THE CRIMSON THRONE

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Dedicated to Mike McArtor.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 4
WELCOME TO CURSE OF THE CRIMSON THRONE! THE INTRODUCTION INCLUDES A CAMPAIGN SUMMARY AND DETAILS ON CAMPAIGN TRAITS FOR NEW PLAYERS.

CHAPTER ONE: EDGE OF ANARCHY 10
A NEW BAND OF HEROES RISES FROM THE CHAOS AND RIOTS THAT ENGULF KORVOSA AFTER ITS KING'S SUDDEN DEATH.

CHAPTER TWO: SEVEN DAYS TO THE GRAVE 68
A HIDEOUS PLAGUE STRIKES KORVOSA! CAN THE HEROES FIND A CURE BEFORE THE CITY SUCCUMBS TO THE EPIDEMIC?

CHAPTER THREE: ESCAPE FROM OLD KORVOSA 132
KORVOSA'S OLDEST DISTRICT IS QUARANTINED, BUT WITHIN LIE SECRETS THE HEROES MUST DISCOVER IF THE CITY IS TO BE SAVED.

CHAPTER FOUR: A HISTORY OF ASHES 190

WITH KORVOSA UNDER MARTIAL LAW, THE HEROES MUST TRAVEL BEYOND THE WALLS OF THE CITY TO SEEK ITS SALVATION.

CHAPTER FIVE: SKELETONS OF SCARWALL 256

THE HAUNTED CASTLE KNOWN AS SCARWALL HOLDS THE KEY TO DEFEATING QUEEN ILEOSA.

CHAPTER SIX: CROWN OF FANGS 332

NOW ARMED WITH POTENT MAGIC, THE HEROES MAKE THEIR FINAL STAND AGAINST QUEEN ILEOSA.

APPENDICES 392

WAYS TO CONTINUE THE CAMPAIGN, A GAZETTEER OF KORVOSA AND BEYOND, NEW CLASS OPTIONS, NPCS, AND MONSTERS AWAIT WITHIN THESE APPENDICES.

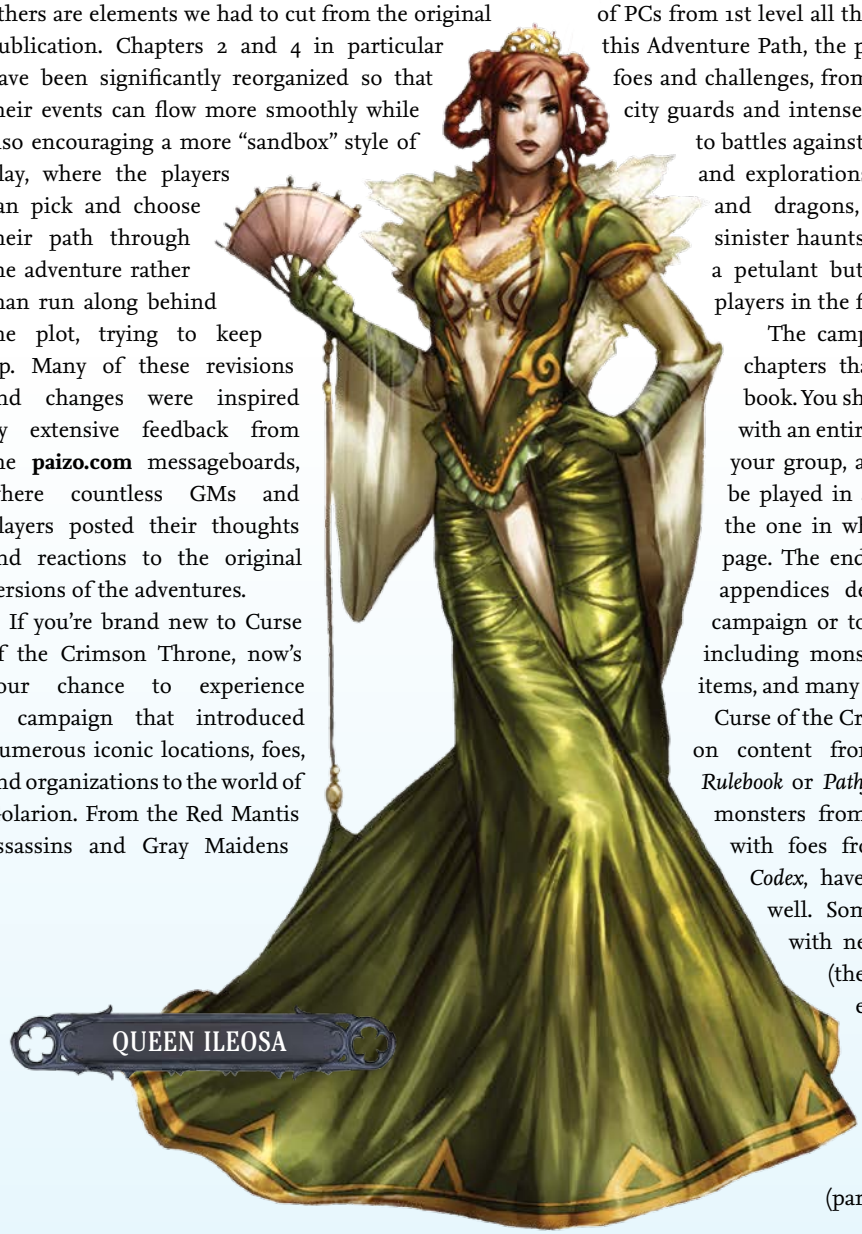
Long Live the Queen!

Korvosa, the Jewel of Varisia, has long sparkled on the shore of Conqueror's Bay. Established just over 300 years ago by Cheliax at the height of that empire's expansion, the city now commands its own destiny. A line of Korvosan kings and queens emerged to rule the city, establishing an infamous seat of power—the Crimson Throne. Rulers have sat upon the Crimson Throne for more than a century, and the city has flourished; yet the monarchy always seems on the brink of disaster. The Crimson Throne is not a prize to be won—it is a curse. No monarch of Korvosa has died of old age, and none has produced an heir while ruling. Even though King Eodred II controls Korvosa more fully than any previous monarch, that control remains tenuous, and many secretly count the days until their latest king falls to what they call the Curse of the Crimson Throne.

Welcome to the expanded and revised hardcover edition of Paizo's Curse of the Crimson Throne Adventure Path! This campaign originally appeared in print in volumes #7–12 of the Pathfinder Adventure Path line, and while those who have played through that version of this campaign will find familiar elements, much has changed. For the most part, these changes are additive—we've expanded greatly on the contents of Castle Scarwall (including the addition of a new and flavorful method of helping player characters learn more about the haunted fortress's tragic history), and an entirely new section has been added to the fourth chapter, allowing player characters to take on the Gray Maidens and the Red Mantis directly. Some of these additions are the result of feedback from those who played the previous incarnation, while others are elements we had to cut from the original publication. Chapters 2 and 4 in particular have been significantly reorganized so that their events can flow more smoothly while also encouraging a more "sandbox" style of play, where the players can pick and choose their path through the adventure rather than run along behind the plot, trying to keep up. Many of these revisions and changes were inspired by extensive feedback from the **paizo.com** messageboards, where countless GMs and players posted their thoughts and reactions to the original versions of the adventures.

If you're brand new to Curse of the Crimson Throne, now's your chance to experience a campaign that introduced numerous iconic locations, foes, and organizations to the world of Golarion. From the Red Mantis assassins and Gray Maidens to unforgettable NPCs such as Gaedren Lamm and Laori Vaus, from the immense havero to the insidious chained spirit, from the mysterious Star Tower of Castle Scarwall to the haunting expanse of the Mushfens' Sunken Queen, many of the elements of this campaign have gone on to be legends in their own right.

So have your players gather their blades and prepare their spells! Korvosa is about to hit some rough times, and without a new band of heroes to save it from the edge of anarchy, Varisia's largest city may well be doomed to suffer the effects of the Curse of the Crimson Throne!



QUEEN ILEOSA

USING THIS BOOK

The Curse of the Crimson Throne Adventure Path is a complete Pathfinder campaign designed to take a group of PCs from 1st level all the way up to 17th level. During this Adventure Path, the party will face a wide range of foes and challenges, from confrontations with corrupt city guards and intense rooftop pursuits of fugitives to battles against powerful undead spellcasters and explorations of legendary castles. Devils and dragons, assassins and anarchists, sinister haunts and immense monsters, and a petulant but powerful queen await your players in the following pages!

The campaign is presented in the six chapters that make up the bulk of the book. You should make sure you're familiar with an entire chapter before running it for your group, as parts of many chapters can be played in an order quite different from the one in which they're presented on the page. The end of this book contains seven appendices designed to help expand the campaign or to present new rules elements, including monsters, significant NPCs, magic items, and many other options.

Curse of the Crimson Throne relies primarily on content from the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* or *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, but many monsters from *Bestiary* volumes 2–5, along with foes from the *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex*, have significant roles to play as well. Some NPCs have been updated with new, more appropriate options (the folk hero Blackjack, for example, just screamed to be rebuilt as a vigilante from *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Intrigue*), and some of the elements from the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* (particularly the chase rules, but

also the stat blocks for cities) have been adopted as well. The above rules can all be found online for free as part of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Reference Document at **paizo.com/pathfinder/prd**. And while everything you need to know about the city of Korvosa to run this campaign appears in the relevant chapters or in Appendix 2, GMs who wish to add more flavor to their game should seek out a copy of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Guide to Korvosa*, which is available online in PDF format at **paizo.com**. Finally, this campaign assumes you're familiar with the world of Golarion, as detailed in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide*.

In addition, this book references content from numerous other sources—consult the list of additional supplements in the sidebar on page 9 for more information.

Campaign Synopsis

Curse of the Crimson Throne begins as a group of diverse characters are drawn together to seek revenge on Gaedren Lamm, a man whose destructive influence has impacted each of their lives in different ways. Yet with revenge against the aged crime lord complete, the PCs find their city plunged into chaos: the king has died, and the queen, a petulant, spoiled schemer named Ileosa Arabasti, now rules Korvosa!

Recruited by the Korvosan Guard, the PCs work to bring stability back to the city. During the course of several missions, they begin to uncover evidence that Queen Ileosa may not have the best intentions for Korvosa, but it isn't until a devastating disease called blood veil breaks out in the city that these rumors become fact. After helping to save Korvosa from the virulent plague, the PCs discover direct links between the queen and the troubles afflicting Korvosa, yet her plans remain nebulous.

A trip to a quarantined portion of the city reveals several awful truths, foremost among them that Queen Ileosa has acquired a powerful artifact, the *Crown of Fangs*, crafted from the teeth of an ancient dragon named Kazavon. The PCs must travel beyond Korvosa's walls into the dangerous wilds of the Cinderlands. There, after earning the trust of that region's natives, the Shoanti, the PCs learn the truth: Queen Ileosa has assumed the mantle of the long-dead Kazavon, and only the sacred blade that originally slew the dragon so long ago can secure the mad queen's defeat.

After recovering the magical sword from the depths of a legendary and devastatingly haunted fortress, Castle Scarwall, the party returns to Korvosa to face Queen Ileosa. Pursuing her to an ancient pyramid called the Sunken Queen, they must confront Ileosa and her most powerful minions before she can employ an artifact used by one of the runelords of ancient Thassilon to sacrifice thousands for her own immortality!

Curse of the Crimson Throne Campaign Traits

Korvosa, like any city, has its share of undesirables. Cutpurses, thugs, thieves, burglars, assassins, and lowlifes of every sort can be found in waterfront slums, creeping in the sewers, or hiding in the tangled rooftopscape known as the Shingles. The Korvosan Guard does what it can to keep the city's criminals from causing too much harm, but the cold reality is that crooks will always outnumber the law. And that means some crimes go unpunished and some criminals see great success.

The worst of these, perhaps, are the city's crime lords. Dozens of them operate in Korvosa today, from the scheming leader of the Cerulean Society all the way down to the Varisian Sczarni thugs who preside over a gang of a half-dozen friends and cousins. These minor crime lords are often, ironically, the ones who do the most damage to Korvosa's law-abiding citizens, as larger organizations have little need to bother commoners. One such undesirable is Gaedren Lamm, a despicable wretch who missed his chance at being somebody big in Korvosa's murky underworld. Well past his prime, the decrepit thief abducts orphans and forces them to support his parasitic lifestyle with petty crime. Many members of Korvosa's lower class have had dealings with Lamm, and even a few of the city's middle class and nobility have had their lives complicated by this foul old man. Yet no matter what he does, he always seems to slip away from the guards and avoid answering for his crimes.

Gaedren Lamm's luck is about to change, though. For among those his actions have recently touched are men and women destined to become some of Korvosa's greatest heroes—the PCs of the Curse of the Crimson Throne Adventure Path!

Before your Curse of the Crimson Throne campaign begins, provide your players with the list of campaign traits presented on the following pages to choose from. These traits detail how the PCs have been wronged by Gaedren Lamm, and the campaign begins as these desperate, angry, and outraged heroes-to-be come together to do what the city guards cannot (or will not) do: see that Gaedren Lamm answers for his terrible crimes, be that in a court of law or at the edge of a vengeful blade.

The campaign traits all tie Gaedren to a PC, and represent historical snippets that explain how this detestable crime lord has affected each PC in the past. Each trait is categorized into one of six unique themes with two separate choices for each campaign trait. In addition to selecting one of these campaign traits, each player should select an additional character trait; see *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* for more rules on character traits.

Betrayed

You were hardly a model citizen as a child or young adult. Your reasons for turning to a life of crime may be varied, but what matters is that you eventually fell in with a certain well-connected and notorious crime lord named Gaedren Lamm. His reputation as a snake and a treacherous scoundrel was known to you, but for reasons of your own, you chose not to turn him down when he offered you a chance to work for him. You may have assumed you were an exception, or that you'd be able to handle him, or perhaps even planned to betray him. As it worked out, though, Gaedren got the upper hand and took you down you first. You may have served time in jail, may have been beaten by his thugs and left for dead, or could simply have had your profits stolen out from under you. Whatever the cause, Gaedren wronged you, and you are eager for the chance to get revenge.

Choose one of the following benefits.

Hungry for Revenge: You've never forgiven Gaedren for his betrayal, and have vowed to make him pay for what he did. Whether that's seeing him rot in jail or a shallow grave, you hope to taste vengeance someday. Whenever you deal damage with a melee weapon on a creature that is flat-footed, you gain a +1 trait bonus on the damage roll.

Reformed Criminal: You've given up the life of crime, and managed to talk your way out of any repercussions such as jail time or fines. You've told yourself that you would rather leave your past behind, yet the concept of seeing Gaedren Lamm pay for his crimes still appeals to you. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Diplomacy checks, and Diplomacy is a class skill for you.

Drug Addict

Someone you know has become addicted to shiver, a drug distilled from the venom of tropical arachnids known as dream spiders. The drug induces sleep filled with vivid dreams, during which the user's body shakes and shivers, giving the substance its street name. You've always thought of shiver as a problem of the lower class, but then someone you know overdosed on the stuff. You've done a bit of investigating and have learned that the villain who got your friend addicted in the first place was a crime lord named Gaedren Lamm. Unfortunately, the guards seem to be focused on the bigger dealers. They don't have time to devote many resources to what they've called "a bit player in a beggar's problem." It would seem that if Gaedren's operation is to be stopped, it falls to you.

Choose one of the following benefits.

Addicted Friend: The addict is a friend or lover who might or might not have survived the overdose. Your research into the drug scene and local politics has given you a respectable education in street knowledge. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Knowledge (local) checks, and Knowledge (local) is a class skill for you.

Personal Addiction: You were the addict. You blame Gaedren for your brush with death and hate how his drugs are causing similar problems among other youths. Fortunately, your body recovers quickly from toxins, and you gain a +1 trait bonus on Fortitude saving throws.

Framed

Someone you know and love was accused of murder. A supposed eyewitness account from a local fisherman seemed to be enough to seal the case, but the accused had enough alibis that sentencing wasn't immediate. Someone confronted the fisherman and discovered he was intimidated into providing false witness and forced into planting the murder weapon by the actual murderer—a local crime lord named Gaedren Lamm, whose thugs killed the fisherman before he could recant his testimony. Although this removed the key witness and resulted in the accused being set free, the stigma was enough to badly damage the accused's reputation. If you can find Gaedren, you're sure you can find evidence that ties him to the murder and can clear the accused's name.

Choose one of the following benefits.

Dropout: You were the one accused of the murder. Although you were eventually freed when a friend confronted the fisherman and got the truth, the damage had been done. You were forced to leave your school or church. As a result, you were forced to self-train and promised yourself you would become better at your chosen profession despite the spurning of your peers. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Spellcraft checks, and Spellcraft is a class skill for you.

Family Honor: The person who was framed was a family member, perhaps a father or sister. You managed to trick the fisherman into revealing the truth with your skilled tongue. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Bluff checks, and Bluff is a class skill for you.

Love Lost

Someone you loved was knifed to death in a dark alley one night. You were called to the scene by the Korvosan Guard to identify the body, and as rough as that was for you, you also noticed a ring was missing from your loved one's finger. Whoever murdered your loved one stole that ring—you're convinced of it. You've done some investigation on your own and recently found the ring for sale at a local merchant's shop. To your great frustration, you can't yet afford the 500 gp to buy it back, but the merchant did tell you from whom he purchased the ring: a man named Gaedren Lamm. It seems likely this criminal killed your loved one, or at the very least, he knows who did. The only problem is finding him.

Choose one of the following benefits.

All Alone: The murder victim was a lover. With your lover's death, a part of you died as well, leaving you haunted, grim, and prone to dark musings. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Intimidate checks, and Intimidate is a class skill for you.

Orphaned: The murder victim was your only surviving parent. You had to work hard to make ends meet for yourself and any siblings, and often had to scavenge for food. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Survival checks, and Survival is a class skill for you.

Missing Child

You suspect that a child you know has been abducted by Gaedren Lamm. Whatever the relationship, you've heard rumors about "Lamm's Lambs," and of how the old man uses children as pickpockets and agents for his crimes. You've even heard rumors that the child you're looking for has been spotted in the marketplaces in the company of known cutpurses and pickpockets. Although the Korvosan Guard has been understanding of your plight, it has its hands full with "more important" matters these days, it seems, and has not yet been able to learn anything more about Gaedren. No one else is interested in bringing Gaedren down and rescuing his victims—that task falls to you. Yet where could the old scoundrel be hiding?

Choose one of the following benefits.

Missing Sibling: The missing child is a brother or sister. Although everyone else has given up hope, you believe your sibling still lives. Your constant search for the missing sibling has developed into great skill at rumormongering and finding out information from others. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Sense Motive checks, and Sense Motive is a class skill for you.

Missing Son or Daughter: The missing child is your own son or daughter, a niece or nephew, or a child you were charged with protecting. The child was abducted during a trip to the market or other daily event. Your stubbornness and long hours spent searching for rumors grant you a +1 trait bonus on Will saves.

Unhappy Childhood

You spent a period of time as one of Gaedren Lamm's enslaved orphans, doing all manner of dirty work for him. Maybe you were abducted from your parent's home or during a trip to the market. Perhaps the irresponsible matron who ruled your orphanage traded you to him in return for a desperately needed financial loan. Or perhaps you, like most of Gaedren's slaves, were merely a child of the street who succumbed to his promise of regular meals and a roof in return for what he said would be "a little light work." Whatever the case, you spent several years of your life as one of "Lamm's Lambs" before escaping. You've nursed a grudge against the old man ever since.

Choose one of the following benefits.

Religious: Today, while on a job for Gaedren, you found a holy symbol of the god you worship, and intrigued by it, you snuck off to attend services. When Gaedren found out, he beat you to within an inch of your life and broke your holy symbol. Your faith let you block out the pain, and you escaped his control and took shelter in the church, where you spent the rest of your youth. You gain a +2 trait bonus on concentration checks and Constitution checks to stabilize at negative hit points.

Tortured: After you made one too many errors, Gaedren tortured you and left you for dead in a garbage heap. Your scars and memories have motivated you to hone your reaction speed and make you rather jumpy. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Reflex saves.

Campaign Trait XP Rewards

Early in the campaign, the PCs have opportunities to see closure to certain aspects of their campaign traits. These are called out in the text—as the PCs accomplish these goals, they'll earn the entire party additional experience points. Each PC who accomplishes a campaign trait goal earns the party 400 XP. If all PCs accomplish their goals, the party earns the maximum potential reward of 400 XP per player.

Book References

This book refers to several other Pathfinder Roleplaying Game products using the following abbreviations, yet these additional supplements are not required to make use of this book. Every effort has been made to include all pertinent rules information to minimize the amount of books you'll need to reference during play at the table. Yet if you wish to dig deep into the stat blocks or expand upon the encounters, events, and options presented in this campaign, you can use the following references to do so at your whim.

Advanced Class Guide	ACG
Advanced Player's Guide	APG
Bestiary 2	B2
Bestiary 3	B3
Bestiary 5	B5
The Inner Sea World Guide	ISWG
Occult Adventures	OA
Ultimate Combat	UC
Ultimate Equipment	UE
Ultimate Intrigue	UI
Ultimate Magic	UM

EDGE OF ANARCHY

BY NICOLAS LOGUE

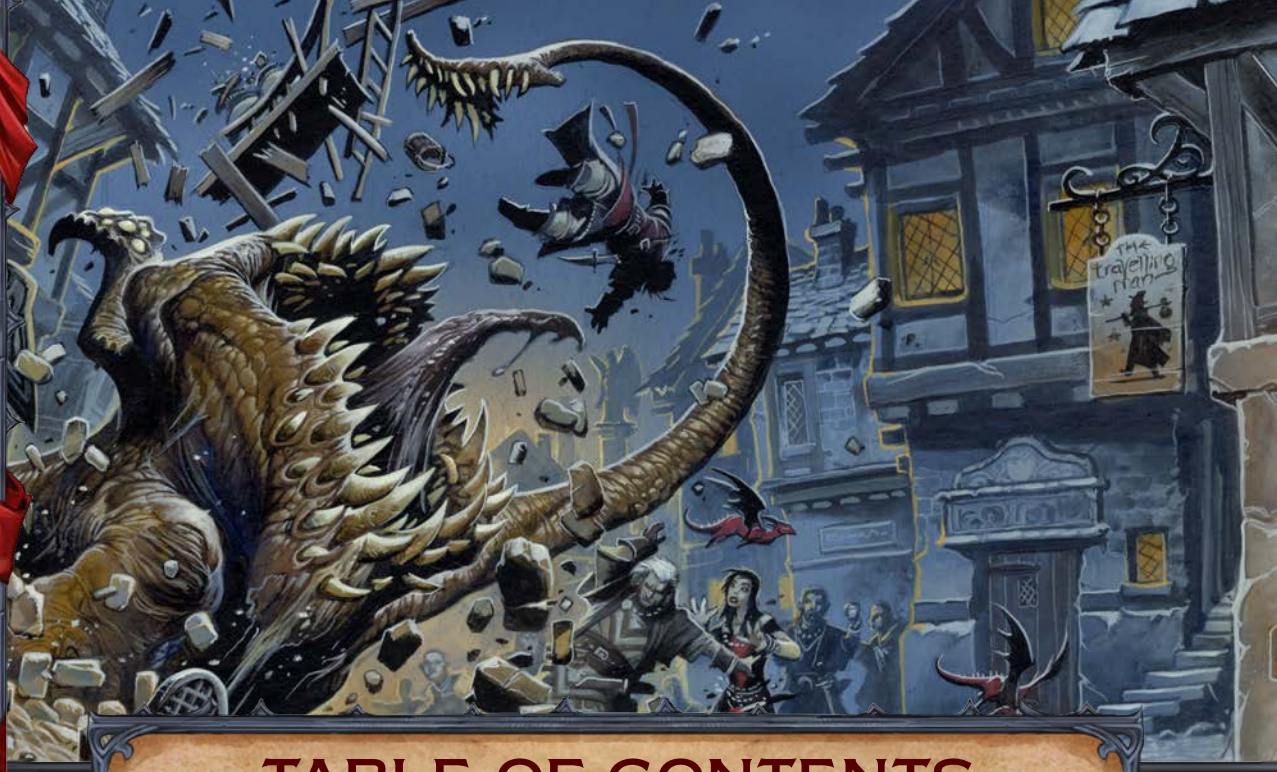
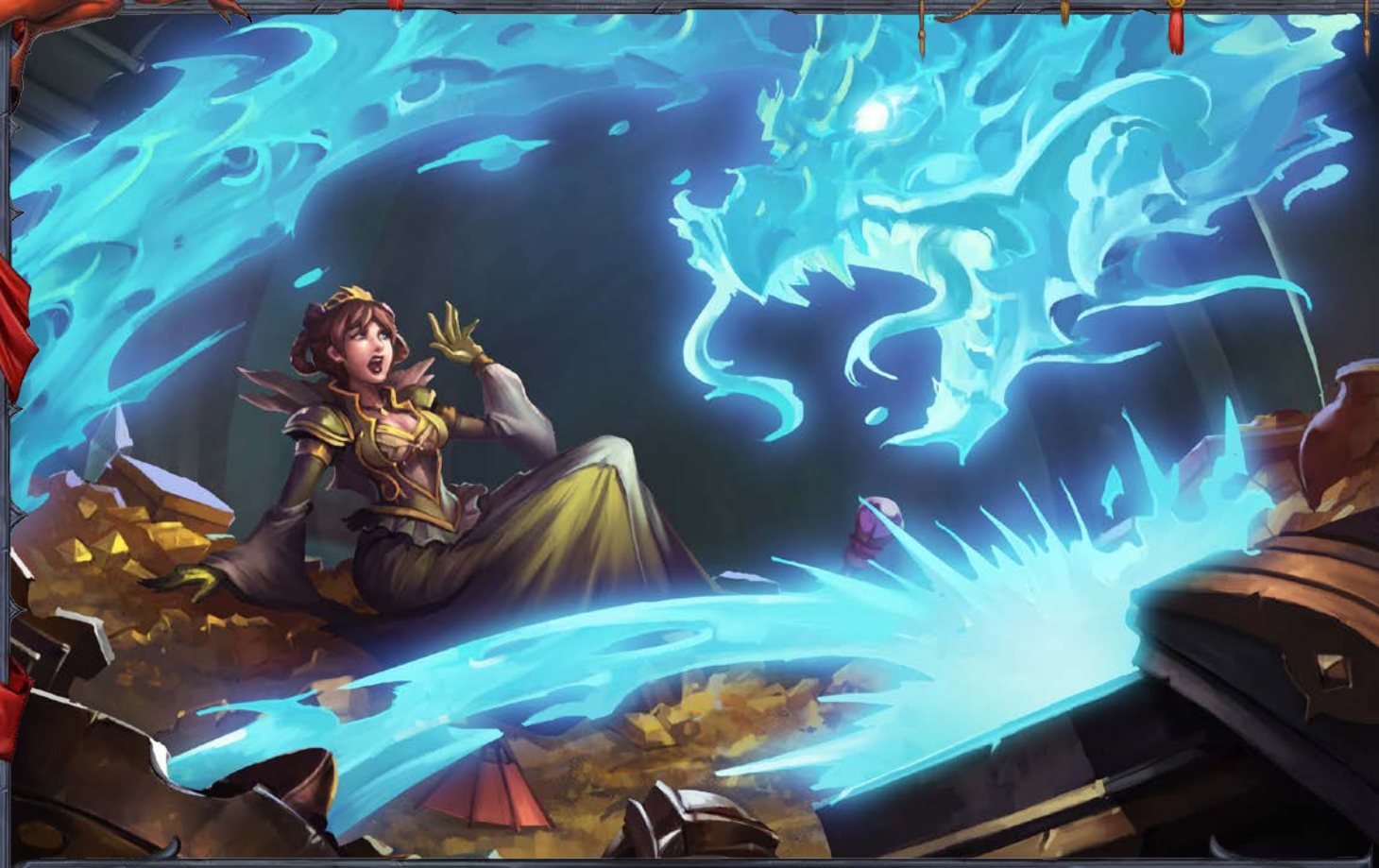


TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER BACKGROUND 12
PART 1: HAUNTED FORTUNES 14
PART 2: A CITY GONE MAD 28
PART 3: BLOOD AND BONES 44
CHAPTER CONCLUSION 66

MAPS

OLD FISHERY 17
ALL THE WORLD'S MEAT 45
EEL'S END 51
THE DEAD WARRENS 58



CHAPTER BACKGROUND

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

Characters begin the campaign at 1st level, and each character should have one of the campaign traits presented on page 8–9. Curse of the Crimson Throne plays best with four PCs and using the fast XP track for advancement.

2 The PCs should reach 2nd level after dealing with Gaedren Lamm in the old fishery.

3 The PCs should reach 3rd level before investigating the situation at Eel's End.

3 The PCs should reach 4th level before exploring the Dead Warrens.

The PCs should be well into 4th level by the end of the chapter.

The city of Korvosa was founded in 4407 AR when the empire of Cheliax expanded north into Varisia. Here, the Chelaxians found a Shoanti tribe living around an immense pyramid on the shores of a deep bay—a perfect site for a city. Much bloodshed eventually left the Shoanti defeated, driven back to the harsh Cinderlands. Yet as Korvosa flourished, few bothered to ask why the Shoanti had dwelt here. None of Korvosa's citizens, from beggars to the king, realized that the Shoanti were guardians. Deep below Castle Korvosa hid a great and terrible evil: the fangs of Kazavon, a relic of one of Golarion's most powerful and deadly dragons. For the past 300 years, Korvosa has grown, unaware that the city's rests on a foundation of evil and cruelty.

Today, Korvosa's reigning king, Eodred Arabasti II, is feared by all the right people. To date, however, he has produced no heir to the throne, the latest in a line of rulers affected by this facet of the so-called curse of the Crimson Throne. Whispers of his taste for scandalously young companionship have dogged the king throughout

his rule, and when he finally wed late in life, it was no surprise that his bride was barely a third of his age. Queen Ileosa was a woman of breathtaking beauty, and some of Korvosa's nobles worried of the dangers of placing a "trophy wife" within reach of the Crimson Throne, but Ileosa's interest in the city seemed secondary to her desire for the life of luxury it afforded—and with the more-than-competent seneschal Neolandus Kalepopolis currently guarding Castle Korvosa's interests, these noble families now feel they have little to worry about.

They are about to learn how wrong they are.

On one of her recent visits to Castle Korvosa's treasury (visits that required surreptitiously "borrowing" the key from the seneschal), the queen discovered a secret door. Believing she had found a hidden vault, she investigated the room beyond, but was disappointed to find only an old stone coffer on a pedestal. She didn't understand the Shoanti warning runes carved on the walls, nor did she feel the menace and evil in the air. She opened the coffer, and her life was changed forever. For inside rested the fangs of Kazavon, and their evil had been waiting for this day. It was but the smallest fragment of Kazavon's spirit that burst from his fangs and infused the young queen, but even that small shard of cruelty and blind ambition was enough. Ileosa closed the coffer, resealed the secret door, and returned to her chambers in the castle above, her mind changed for the worse. Gone were any shreds of caution, replaced by ambition. Gone too were any fragments of self-doubt, replaced by a cruel imagination capable of envisioning all manner of depravities. In a way, Queen Ileosa died that fateful day, only to be reborn as something new—something wholly evil.

Queen Ileosa made plans for a personal guard of warrior women, the eradication of Korvosa's poor and undesirable citizens, dramatic increases to her wealth, and even a method to preserve her beauty and youth forever. But none of these plans could begin before she had full control of Korvosa. First and foremost, Eodred II had to go. Ileosa desired that he die swiftly, yet that death needed to come from what appeared to be natural causes, or at least the anarchic cruelty of an outside source. The legacy of the curse of the Crimson Throne would help somewhat in explaining a Korvosan king's sudden demise, yet his death couldn't look like murder. Ileosa needed a period of mourning where she could capitalize upon Korvosa's well-wishes and pity to put her true plans into motion, and charges of regicide would endanger that. To aid in laying her plans, she surreptitiously allied with two dangerous groups—the cult of Urgathoa and the Red Mantis assassins—yet neither group could or would aid directly in the king's death. If Eodred II was to die, it had to be at her own hands.

So she turned to Venster Arabasti, the king's deformed tiefling stepbrother. Venster had long nurtured a deep streak of hidden jealousy for the successes of his younger brother Eodred II. For his part, Eodred II allowed his stepbrother to remain in Castle Korvosa for fear that Venster could not survive on his own. Now and then, when Eodred II was seized with pity or boredom, he visited Venster to play cards, even though the visits generally ended in arguments and insults.

Ileosa found an opportunity in Venster. She played upon his hidden envy and convinced him to take part in Eodred II's murder. To this end, she gave Venster a vial of fool's leprosy (see page 432), an ingenious venom invented by the Red Mantis. The poison mimics the effects of a rapid form of leprosy, but as a poison, it resists treatments that cure diseases. With Ileosa's aid, Venster coated the upper half of his playing cards with the poison, so when Eodred II (among other things, a compulsive nail-biter) played, he unknowingly coated his fingers and nails in the stuff, ensuring a slow but steady exposure to the poison. It took little prodding from the young queen to convince Eodred II to visit his brother, which exposed the king to her horrid toxin.

His usefulness nearing an end, Ileosa refused Venster's further requests for companionship, compelling the stepbrother to threaten to reveal to the seneschal the true nature of the king's "illness." Because Venster was relatively feeble, it was an easy matter for Ileosa to murder him and hide the crime by walling up his corpse in the castle dungeon, yet his disappearance was noticed by Neolandus Kalepopolis, the castle seneschal. He had long suspected Ileosa was up to something, and when Venster vanished, his suspicions were confirmed. But the seneschal had made fatal mistakes: he confronted the queen privately, gave her the benefit of the doubt, and underestimated what she had become. She responded by sending the Red Mantis after him. Neolandus survived the assassination attempt, but only barely. He went into hiding among contacts in Old Korvosa, afraid and powerless to move against the queen as long as her Red Mantis allies remained strong in the region.

As this Adventure Path begins, King Eodred II still lives, but the fool's leprosy has wreaked havoc on his health. He has spent the last several weeks in seclusion in Castle Korvosa, and, despite the efforts of his staff, rumors of his ill health have spread. Queen Ileosa has taken advantage of this time to become more of a ruler in the public eye, but recently flaws in her plans have begun to manifest.

Queen Ileosa worries about Neolandus. Her Red Mantis allies have promised her that Neolandus will die soon, yet he is not her only worry. For her plans to progress more quickly, she has been secretly lacing the tea Eodred II drinks with poison, speeding his death sentence. The king is about to die, and Korvosa is about to plunge over the edge into anarchy.

PART 1

HAUNTED FORTUNES

Curse of the Crimson Throne provides the PCs with a shared nemesis from the start: local crime lord Gaedren Lamm. The introduction to this book presents campaign traits that your players should choose for their characters—these traits grant small bonuses to their stats and give the PCs an in-game reason to ally. Each PC has been wronged by Gaedren Lamm, so each PC should have a built-in reason to reply to the mysterious harrow card that appears in his or her life as this chapter begins.

ZELLARA ESMERANDA

The PCs aren't the only ones who have been wronged by Gaedren. Among his plentiful other victims is a Varisian woman named Zellara Esmeranda, a fortune teller who lost a valuable family heirloom, an exquisite harrow deck, to one of Gaedren's pickpockets a year ago. When he learned of the theft, Zellara's son Eran took it upon himself to get the deck back. He was murdered by Gaedren's thugs and his head and hands were returned to Zellara in a box as a threat. Zellara went to the Korvosan Guard, but although sympathetic, they had little additional time or resources to devote to the crime lord.

Frustrated, desperate, and harboring a growing need for revenge, Zellara took it upon herself to track down Gaedren. She sold most of her belongings, purchased a new harrow deck, and called upon the cards for aid. Her latent magical skill, combined with her persistence and obsession, gave her results—yet as she would soon learn, not all harrowings point to triumph. She discovered the location of Gaedren's current hideout, but was seen when she attempted to infiltrate the old fishery where he dwelled. Gaedren's thugs grabbed her and brought her below to stand before the master. The crime lord was impressed that she'd gone through so much trouble to find him, but when she spat on him and cursed him, his anger got the better of him and he ordered her killed. He fed her body to his alligator, but he saved her head, keeping it in a box in his lair alongside her original stolen harrow deck. These cards, bloodstained and discarded, became the focus for Zellara's anguish and despair. Her spirit infused and haunted them, and now she intends to use her newfound supernatural power to bring down Gaedren Lamm.

Yet Zellara isn't a true ghost. Her spirit manifests more like a complex haunt, splitting its presence between the heirloom cards now sealed away in a box in Gaedren Lamm's hideout and her run-down home in Korvosa's Midland district. These are her links to the living world, and through them she can sense the anguish and despair of all those in Korvosa whom Gaedren's evil has touched and hurt. She casts her mind outward, and before long narrows her search to a small group of those in whom she senses the greatest honor, the greatest strength, the greatest potential, and the greatest anger. She senses the PCs.

Through this shared anguish, Zellara can manifest phantasms in the PCs' minds to create visual and tactile illusions. Using this power, she manifests a short message for the PCs on the backs of harrow cards that match the characters' personalities and strengths. Each card appears in some place only the corresponding PC is sure to notice it. A wizard might reach for his spellbook to see a card sitting atop its cover. A cleric might find the card resting atop an altar she has been tasked with cleaning. A rogue could find the card in a pocket (either hers or a stranger's), while a fighter might find the card inside his favorite tankard. Each harrow card represents one of the 54 possible combinations of ability score and alignment. Choose the card each PC receives according to that PCs' alignment and highest ability score—if a character has equally high ability scores, choose the score most closely associated with her class. The card image itself is unmarred, but written in bold ink on the back is a short message. This message is identical for each PC—see Handout #1–1 on page 15.

A character who makes a successful DC 12 Knowledge (local) check or spends 1d3 hours asking around about the address given on the card automatically learns that it is the home and fortune-telling shop of a Varisian woman named Zellara.

ZELLARA'S HOME

Read or paraphrase the following as the PCs enter the fortune teller's home.

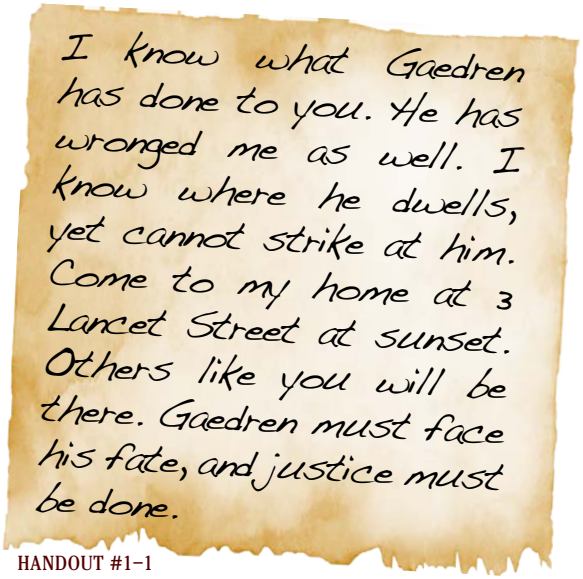
The interior of this small, humble home consists of a single cozy chamber filled with a fragrant haze of flowers and strong spice. The aroma comes from several sticks of incense smoldering in wall-mounted burners that look like butterfly-winged elves. The smoke gives the room a dreamy feel. The walls are draped with brocaded tapestries, one showing a black-skulled beast juggling human hearts, and another showing a pair of angels dancing atop a snow-blasted mountain. A third tapestry on the far wall depicts a tall, hooded figure shrouded in mist, holding a flaming sword in a skeletal hand. Several brightly colored rugs cover the floor, but the room's only furnishings are a wooden table covered by a bright red throw cloth and several elegant, tall-backed chairs. A basket covered by blue cloth sits under the table.

The first PC to arrive at Zellara's home finds a simple note on the table, weighed down with a stone paperweight. The note's contents appear in Handout #1–2.

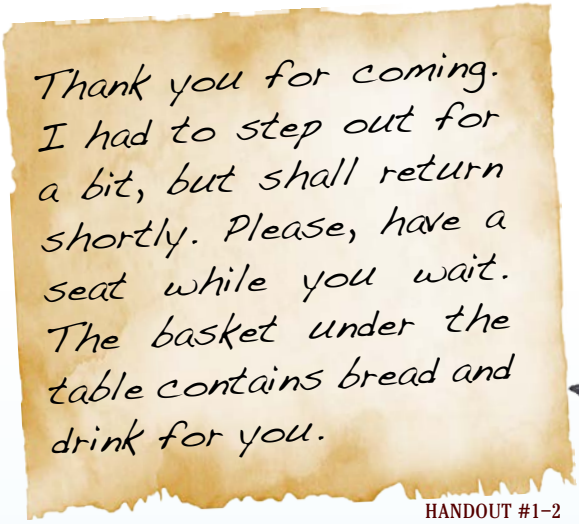
The food and wine in the basket, the note, and all of the furnishings in the room are partially real and partially illusion manifested by Zellara's spirit to create the impression that the place is occupied. This was her home for many years, and the echoes of her life here function as foci for her in the same way that the PCs' shared grief and anger does. The bread is a little stale but is filling, and the wine, while not fine, tastes good enough.

If a player expresses doubt about the food and furnishings, allow him to attempt a DC 25 Will save to see through the powerful (if minor) illusions. Note that succeeding at this Will save still allows the player to observe the illusions—he just perceives them as more ghostly and ephemeral rather than solid reality. The entire area radiates moderate illusion magic if *detect magic* is used. Likewise, *detect undead* reveals a moderate aura of undeath. As Zellara was neutral in life, spells like *detect evil* or the like reveal nothing more about the room's auras. While this initial encounter assumes the PCs don't immediately realize that they're dealing with a haunt, if they do figure things out, roll with it. Zellara's need for their aid doesn't change, and she's not evil—all the PCs miss out on by recognizing the haunt is the later revelation that the woman who hired them was already dead. The fact that she can tell them where Gaedren lives doesn't change, and her reasons for being unable to take action herself should suddenly make sense. In the end, Zellara's only real purpose is to bring the PCs together in the first place—this is already done, so it isn't a big deal if your PCs are curious and persistent enough to figure the mystery out early.

In any event, allow the PCs to arrive at her home in any order (perhaps in order of initiative checks if you wish), giving them time to introduce themselves to each other and perhaps compare their identical messages on very different harrow cards.



HANDOUT #1–1



HANDOUT #1–2

Despite the note, Zellara is in fact present when the PCs first arrive. She wants to let the PCs talk among themselves for a bit, both to set themselves at ease and so she can be sure they are who she needs. When she's sure (and more importantly, when you're ready to start the campaign), she manifests out of sight on the street outside. She enters her home with a smile, thanks the PCs for coming to visit, and takes a seat at the table.

Zellara appears as she did in life—as an attractive middle-aged Varisian woman with long, dark hair. She allows the PCs to introduce themselves as she produces a harrow deck from a pocket, idly shuffling the cards. Her skill with the deck should be obvious to anyone who watches how the cards seem to float and dance through her fingers. With a nod of her head, she indicates that the PCs should sit at her table if they have not done so

already—conveniently, there are exactly enough chairs for the entire party. Once the PCs are seated, she speaks in a soft but clear voice. Read or paraphrase the following.

"Thank you for coming, my friends, and for putting up with my unconventional method of contacting you. I have reason to remain hidden, you see—a vicious man would see great harm done to me if he knew I was reaching out for help. This man has done something terrible to each of you as well. I speak, of course, of Gaedren Lamm, a man whose cruelty and capacity to destroy the lives of those he touches are matched only by his gift for avoiding reprisal. You see, a year ago, his thieves stole this, my harrow deck, from me. It is important to me, an heirloom passed down through a dozen generations, and also my sole means of support. When Lamm's pickpockets stole it, my son Eran tracked them down and returned my deck to me. But Gaedren had him followed, and soon after he left my home, Gaedren's thugs murdered him.

"I sought help from the Korvosan Guard, but they turned me away. And so I asked around. I paid bribes. I consulted my harrow deck for advice. And recently, I was rewarded—I found out where Gaedren dwells. He can be found in an old fishery north of here, at Westpier 17, where he trains abducted children to be pickpockets and counts his stolen treasures.

"But I need your help. I cannot hope to face this man on my own, and the Guard moves so slowly that if they were willing to help, Gaedren would certainly know of their coming well in advance. And even if they arrested him, what guarantee would I have he would be punished? This criminal has evaded the law for decades. But you know of these frustrations as well, for word on the street has it that Gaedren has wronged each of you, too. So there we are. It is time for him to pay."

Once her tale is done, Zellara tells the PCs that she can perform a harrowing for them to help prepare them for the task of seeking out Gaedren in the Old Fishery—she doesn't wait for agreement, but immediately proceeds to deal cards to the PCs. These cards represent the harrowing's choosing.

At the beginning of each chapter of this campaign, the PCs have a chance to participate in additional harrow readings akin to the one Zellara performs for them now. When you perform these readings, you should take a moment to foreshadow events to come in the adventure. There's no need to reveal concrete spoilers about what's coming, but in this first harrow reading, you should warn the PCs of a coming time of unrest and violence in the streets, and that they are in some way fated to become heroes of Korvosa. Full details on how to perform these harrowings appears in Appendix 3, beginning on page 416.

Zellara exists primarily as a reason to draw together the PCs and to send them against Gaedren Lamm, so they discover the queen's brooch the old man has stolen and keeps in his room. By portraying the fortune teller as a helpful but desperate woman, not as a sinister or suspicious force, you should be able to keep your players focused on Gaedren. Once she finishes the harrowing, she urges the PCs to move quickly to confront the crime lord—if they wait too long, he may well uproot and shift to a new hideout, after all. If the PCs insist on learning how she knew about them and their connection to Gaedren, she replies cryptically that she listens to the music of the city, and that her harrow cards tell her more than they tell most.

If the PCs return to Zellara's home after this first meeting, they're in for a shock—see page 30 for more details on what the home looks like when Zellara's spiritual presence is not in residence.

A OLD FISHERY

As with all of Gaedren Lamm's hideouts through the decades, the old fishery he now dwells in is a forgotten echo of someone else's dreams. Gaedren chooses these lairs not only to give him and his gang a place to hide, but also for their current ownership (or lack thereof), preferring buildings whose owners have died and left behind no heirs. Under Korvosan law, a building abandoned in this manner immediately reverts to the city and is held in escrow for 2 years, during which time any rightful owner who can prove a claim can regain control of the building. After the 2 years, the city claims the building, yet even then, the government is slow to handle the structure's eventual fate. Gaedren has found that by choosing the right building in the right location, one can effectively live for free for years at a time.

The old fishery is no exception. Its previous owner died when a devilfish attacked his boat, and now Gaedren uses it as a hideout and a base for a moneymaking scheme to augment what his gang of children pickpocket. The fishery is a place where desperate anglers can sell off their less fetching catches (fish caught 3 days dead in the nets, or freakish specimens unfit for sale, for example) and where fishmongers dump their old sun-tainted wares that reek with the first hints of decay. Gaedren's little workforce of enslaved orphans toil among the guts and slime, creating a foul-smelling slurry that can then be resold as bait, fertilizer, or the main ingredient for what are known as "dock-dumplings," a local favorite among poorer dock workers who can't afford fresh fish. Gaedren himself lounges in his secret chambers in the fishery's underbelly, accessible only by braving the scum-slick narrows beneath the structure itself. (Despite his age, Gaedren is quite adept at scrambling along the walkways and through the decks of the old ship *Kraken's Folly* to reach his den.) Here, he plays for hours at cards with his thick-witted companions, counts his coins and examines his stolen goods, and hurls buckets of chum to his beloved alligator, Gobblegut.

Old Fishery Features

The old fishery is a creaking, decrepit building, yet it remains solid—it will be a few years yet before its floors start to give way and its roof begins to crumble. Gaedren fully intends to have moved on well before then, and in the meantime, the building serves him and his thugs well as a base of operations. All external windows are boarded shut but have ample slits between the planks to allow those within to peer out. The wooden doors are mottled with mold and grit, but remain solid (hardness 5, hp 10, break DC 15). The fishery is perched atop a steep embankment, with most of the structure extending out over the Jeggare River on wooden pilings. The embankment drops 13 feet into the river below; the sides are slippery but can be scaled with a successful DC 10 Climb check. The fishery's external walls extend almost all the way down to the river, leaving only a few feet of space between the floor of area **A8** and the water. The floor of areas **A13** and **A14** are a little higher, but the pilings supporting this portion of the structure are closely packed, leaving only a few inches of room between them. A Small creature could conceivably squeeze between these gaps from the river into the pool below area **A13**, but doing so requires a successful DC 30 Escape Artist check and puts the intruder well within the hunting grounds of that area's hungry guardian.

The encounters in the fishery assume the PCs visit during the day. At night, the fishery shuts down—all external and internal doors are locked (Disable Device DC 20) and Gaedren's accomplice, Yargin, retires to area **A5** for a full night's rest. Gaedren's other two thugs, Giggles and Hookshanks, swap out semi-regular patrols through the fishery—one at about 9:00 at night, one at midnight, and one at 3:00 in the morning, mostly to ensure that the orphans aren't getting up to trouble, but also to check for intruders. The majority of nighttime security is handled by Bloo, Yargin's mangy cur, who is allowed to wander through area **A8** as he sees fit. His barks are quick to rouse the entire fishery.

Special note should be made of the orphans Gaedren "employs." Known to his thugs as "Lamm's Lambs," these little charges are tough kids, made rough as leather by Gaedren's quick hand and life on the street. They hate the crime lord, but they fear him more than Asmodeus himself. The urchins infest the fishery, toiling away under the cruel ministrations of Gaedren's fellow scumbags, with "street duty"—when they're sent out to fleece and cut purses—as a reward for good behavior. Kindhearted PCs are likely to take an interest in the urchins' well-being or make attempts to rally the kids against their taskmasters. Indeed, befriended orphans can prove to be a font of information on Gaedren and his thugs. They might even lend the party a quick hand in battle. In any of the following areas where the urchins toil, a PC who attempts to rally them against their taskmasters must succeed at a DC 15 Diplomacy check (Intimidate checks won't work—the kids are too inured to this tactic to turn against Gaedren). See the Orphans

sections in several of these encounters for ideas on how the kids might lend a hand if this Diplomacy check is successful. Conversely, if the party takes no interest in the kids, the orphans might aid their brutal masters against the PCs (for fear of what kind of repercussions they'll face if they do not). The orphans have no knowledge of any area past **A9**, since those sent below for punishment by Gaedren never emerge again.

Although there are only nine orphans to be found in the fishery during the day, many more are out in the city streets. At night, all 26 of Gaedren's Lamm's Lambs can be found in area **A8**, sleeping in their hammocks. If the PCs invade the fishery at night, the orphans are too confused and frightened to aid in combat, despite any threats from the thugs, and instead attempt to escape into the surrounding slums as soon as their oppressors are dead.

Use the following statistics for an orphan as needed.

LAMM'S LAMB **CR 1/3**

XP 135

Young human expert 1

N Small humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11 (+3 Dex, +1 size)

hp 5 (1d8+1)

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

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dagger –1 (1d3–2/19–20) or pitchfork –7 (1d6–2)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with pitchfork)

TACTICS

During Combat Typically an orphan spends the first round of combat in shock and surprise, although once a few battles have broken out in the fishery, feel free to have the orphans react more quickly. The orphans prefer to attack with the long pitchforks they use to load and unload fish (these pitchforks function as improvised weapons with reach), but they switch to daggers if anyone is able to get inside their reach.

Morale An orphan who takes any damage attempts to flee to area **A8**, unless all of Gaedren's thugs are either dead or out of sight, in which case the orphan abandons the fishery entirely into the surrounding slums.

STATISTICS

Str 7, **Dex** 16, **Con** 11, **Int** 11, **Wis** 6, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +0; **CMB** –3; **CMD** 10

Feats Skill Focus (Acrobatics), Skill Focus (Sleight of Hand)

Skills Acrobatics +10, Bluff +4, Climb +2, Escape Artist +7, Perception +2, Sleight of Hand +10, Stealth +8

Languages Common

Gear dagger, pitchfork

Story Award: Once Gaedren is out of the picture, the orphans are quick to flee into the surrounding slums, making it difficult for PCs to gather them up and relocate them into a proper orphanage, but if the PCs manage to do so, grant them 135 XP for each orphan so rescued (to a maximum XP award of 1,350 in all). In addition, if any PC has the Missing Child campaign trait, one of the orphans encountered here should be that child—getting the child to safety provides a happy ending for that character and earns the party an additional 400 XP.

A1 Front Door

The reek of brine and the stink of week-dead fish hang thickly in the air here. The old double doors in the side of this weathered building are tightly closed, with a drooping signpost hanging above. The sign it once displayed is long gone, leaving behind only a single short length of rusted chain.

The main doors to the fishery are kept locked (Disable Device DC 20), since most of the business going through the place is handled at area **A7**. Knocking on the door (or open attempts to pick the lock) brings an immediate response from Yargin (see area **A6**).

A2 Loading Dock

A fifteen-foot-wide loading dock abuts the side of the building here. A few carts sit nearby, partially loaded with large, tar-caked barrels marked with a fish-shaped splotch of red paint on the side. Double doors to the immediate south of the loading dock's ramp provide access to the building's interior, while a rickety flight of stairs descends ten feet to a point just three feet over the river's surface, where a simple door provides a secondary entrance.

During the day, the double doors into area **A7** are kept ajar or even wide open, but the door to area **A8** is always locked (Disable Device DC 20). The demand for cheap fish slurry keeps the fishery busy, and it ships out one or two wagons of the foul stuff each day, generally near evening. The orphans in area **A7** do the heavy lifting while Hookshanks oversees.

A3 Back Alley

A slippery boardwalk clings to the side of the fishery, held together by barnacle-encrusted pilings that have had half of their thickness worn away below the waterline twelve feet below.

The door to area **A6** is kept locked (Disable Device DC 20).

This boardwalk is about 13 feet above the water as it winds along the building's south wall, but slopes downward as it approaches the ship to the east, where it stands about 10 feet above the river. The dock is slippery—as long as someone navigating it moves no more than her speed per round, there's no chance of disaster. As soon as anyone takes a full-round action to move (or fights or runs on the slippery boards), she must attempt a DC 10 Acrobatics check. Failure by 5 or more indicates a fall into the water below. In addition, the old wood can't support much weight beyond a typical Medium creature. A larger creature, a character wearing heavy armor, or two or more Medium creatures who attempt to traverse the planks while remaining within 5 feet of each other cause the wood to creak and groan alarmingly. If such a PC (or PCs) remains in one spot on the pier for more than 1 round, the wood collapses, dropping the PC (or PCs) into the water. A fall into the water results in no falling damage (the water is deep enough and the fall short enough), but swiftly attracts the attention of the shark that swims below (see area **A12**).

Despite the boardwalk's decrepit condition, it remains Gaedren's primary method of coming and going from his den (area **A13**). He tends to spend days or even weeks at a time downstairs (so as to minimize his time in public) and uses this route only a few times a month.

A4 Front Room (CR 1/3)

A single desk sits in the middle of this room, with a moldy chair pushed up against it. A small pile of ratty furs and straw is heaped under the desk.

This room isn't used too often—in theory, this is where Yargin meets with new customers to set up delivery schedules, but new customers are something of a rarity. Any significant noise in this room quickly brings both Yargin and Hookshanks to investigate.

Creature: Yargin's grizzled dog, a foul-tempered cur named Bloo, spends most of his day sleeping on the disgusting, makeshift bed under the desk. Bloo reacts quickly (and noisily) to any perception of intrusion into this room by someone whose scent he doesn't recognize. The dog is fearless and attacks strangers on sight, no matter how big they are. The orphans of the fishery fear Bloo greatly, and as long as the dog is present, a thug receives a +4 bonus on Intimidate checks to bully the orphans to fight.

BLOO **CR 1/3**

XP 135

Dog (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 87)

hp 6

A5 Barracks

A pair of bunk beds sit against the far wall of this room on either side of a boarded-over window.

Gaedren's thugs—Yargin, Hookshanks, and Giggles—share this room. The fourth bunk is unused. The three thugs don't trust each other, and keep no valuables here.

A6 Yargin's Office (CR 1)

Squeezing through the partially blocked western door from area **A4** into this room is possible with a successful DC 20 Escape Artist check—the room's occupant normally enters this room via the eastern or southern door.

A wooden desk sits in one corner of this room, its side preventing the western door from opening all the way. The table is heaped with dozens of slate boards covered with chalk scrawls, while to the east a cabinet slouches against the wall.

This is the fishery's office. The slates on the table are covered with transaction records, addresses of customers, and other accounting notes. Every month, these notes are compiled (messily) onto scrolls that are then stored in the cabinet. In theory, this paperwork would be used in the event of a surprise investigation by the Guard to prove that there's nothing more sinister going on here than slurry.

One of the floorboards behind the chair in the northeast corner of the room is in fact a cunningly hidden trap door—a PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Perception check spots it. The door is wedged shut and barred from below, and must be smashed open from above (break DC 15) unless the wedge is removed. Once opened, the trap door reveals a 1-foot-square hole that opens directly into area **A13**. It's a 10-foot drop to this lower chamber, but a Medium creature would need a successful DC 30 Escape Artist check to wriggle through the hole (a Small creature needs only a successful DC 15 Escape Artist check to do so), so there is little threat of falling in. A rope and pulley system used to transport meals and other supplies between the two rooms makes clambering down from the hole once one squeezes through easier (Climb DC 5).

Creature: Gaedren's right-hand man and his longest-lived accomplice is Yargin Balko, a bitter human alchemist who's served variously as Gaedren's accountant, advisor, assassin, and fence for nearly a decade. Yargin is a perpetually sour-faced man with short blond hair and a fondness for expensive clothing. As the public face of the operation here, he takes pride in his appearance even though his taste in clothes always seems to be at least 2 decades out of style. Yargin is also the man responsible for seeing that Gaedren gets regular shipments of food,

water, and entertainment through the hidden trap door, since the old man abhors going out in public and spends so many days shut into his den below. When Yargin is ready to send supplies, he knocks three times, then once, then three times on the trap door to alert Gaedren, who then removes the wedge from below so Yargin can make the delivery.

Yargin's true obsession is acid—he carries several vials of the stuff with him wherever he goes. He has even concocted a weak acid that plays a key part in the rendering of fish into slurry (and is sometimes used to punish wayward orphans).

YARGIN BALKO **CR 1**

XP 400

Male human expert 3

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +5

DEFENSE

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

hp 16 (3d8+3)

Fort +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dagger +2 (1d4/19–20)

Ranged light crossbow +4 (1d8/19–20)

TACTICS

During Combat Yargin prefers to use his *wand of acid splash* in combat, but since he needs to roll at least a 12 to activate it with a Use Magic Device check, it occasionally fails—each time it does, he erupts into a loud burst of profanity and shakes the wand in frustration. Once he fails to use the wand a third time, he gives up and switches to thrown vials of acid or his crossbow. He is deathly afraid of melee combat, and fights with his dagger only if cornered.

Morale Once he has used up his acid and his wand has failed him three times (or as soon as he takes any melee damage at all), Yargin shrieks in panic and attempts to flee to Gaedren's side to warn him. That he might inadvertently lead Gaedren's enemies right to him doesn't cross his mind in his panicked state.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 11, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 8

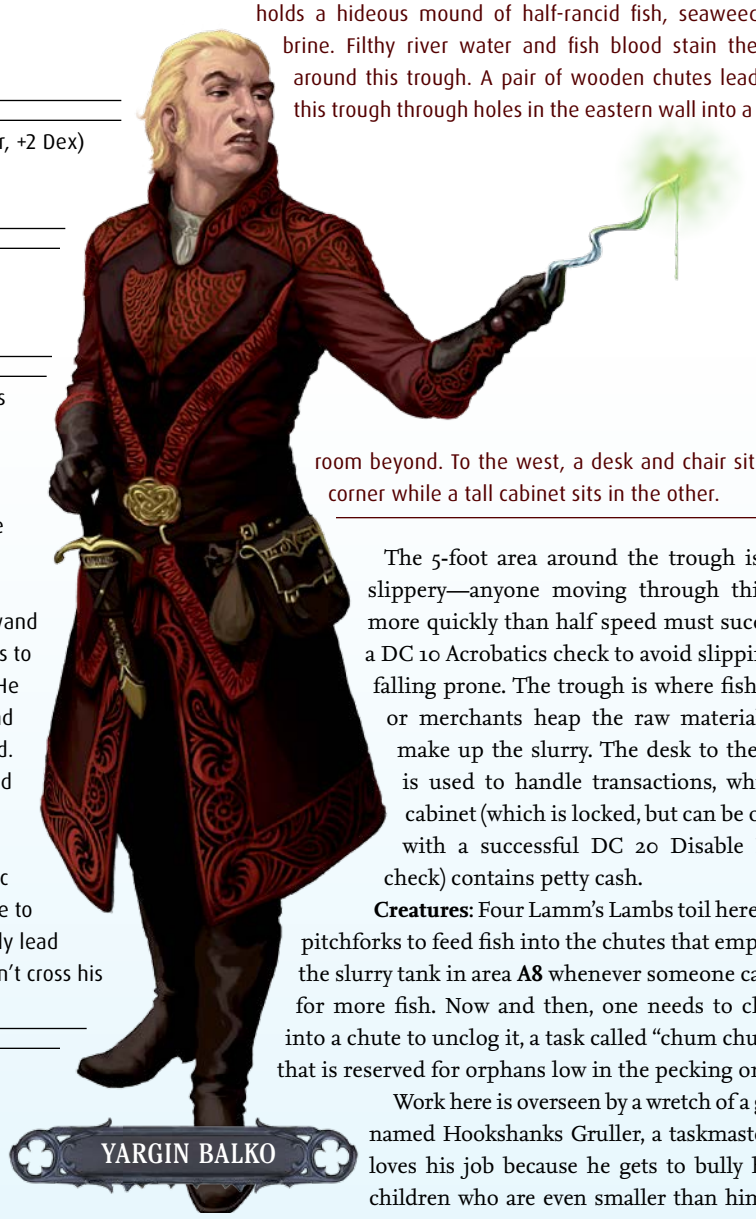
Base Atk +2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14

Feats Persuasive, Point-Blank Shot, Skill Focus (Use Magic Device)

Skills Appraise +4, Craft (alchemy) +6, Diplomacy +5, Disable Device +5, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Linguistics +5, Perception +5, Spellcraft +6, Use Magic Device +8

Languages Common, Gnome, Varisian

Combat Gear *wand of acid splash* (28 charges), acid (3), thunderstone; **Other Gear** leather armor, dagger, light crossbow with 10 bolts, brass key (unlocks all doors in the fishery), iron key (unlocks the cabinet in area **A7**), garnet amulet worth 100 gp



A7 Upper Workroom (CR 2)

The stink in this room, a mixture of fish and sweat, is enough to make the eyes water. To the east, a large wooden trough holds a hideous mound of half-rancid fish, seaweed, and brine. Filthy river water and fish blood stain the floor around this trough. A pair of wooden chutes lead from this trough through holes in the eastern wall into a larger room beyond. To the west, a desk and chair sit in one corner while a tall cabinet sits in the other.

The 5-foot area around the trough is quite slippery—anyone moving through this area more quickly than half speed must succeed at a DC 10 Acrobatics check to avoid slipping and falling prone. The trough is where fishermen or merchants heap the raw materials that make up the slurry. The desk to the south is used to handle transactions, while the cabinet (which is locked, but can be opened with a successful DC 20 Disable Device check) contains petty cash.

Creatures: Four Lamm's Lambs toil here, using pitchforks to feed fish into the chutes that empty into the slurry tank in area **A8** whenever someone calls out for more fish. Now and then, one needs to clamber into a chute to unclog it, a task called "chum chucking" that is reserved for orphans low in the pecking order.

Work here is overseen by a wretch of a gnome named Hookshanks Gruller, a taskmaster who loves his job because he gets to bully human children who are even smaller than him (well,

some of them, anyway). Hookshanks is quick to berate the orphans and threatens to "feed them to the dog"—even the kids bigger than the gnome have learned to shut up and follow his orders as a result. Hookshanks often dresses the part of an orphan himself and appears to be one unless a PC successfully opposes his Disguise check with her Perception check (gnome PCs get a +5 bonus on this check).

HOOKSHANKS GRULLER **CR 1**

XP 400

Male gnome rogue 2

NE Small humanoid (gnome)

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +1 size)

hp 18 (2d8+6)

Fort +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** –1; +2 vs. illusions

Defensive Abilities defensive training, evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk kukri +4 (1d3+1/18–20)

Special Attacks hatred, sneak attack +1d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 2nd; concentration +4)

1/day—*dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *prestidigitation*, *speak with animals*

TACTICS

During Combat Hookshanks orders the orphans to attack the PCs (they do so if Hookshanks succeeds at a DC 9 Intimidate check), then moves to open the door to area **A4** to yell out an alarm and let Bloo enter the fray. He prefers to use his kukri in melee combat against intruders.

Morale If reduced to 4 hit points or fewer, Hookshanks attempts to flee into the slums. If caught, he begs for his life and promises to tell the PCs everything about the fishery in return for mercy. He knows more or less everything about the place except for what's in Gaedren's den (area **A14**).

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13

Feats Deceitful, Martial Weapon Proficiency (kukri)

Skills Acrobatics +1, Bluff +9, Climb +5, Disguise +11, Knowledge (local) +5, Perception +6, Sleight of Hand +6, Stealth +10, Swim +5

Languages Common, Gnome, Sylvan

SQ gnome magic, rogue talent (combat trick), trapfinding +1

Gear studded leather, mwk kukri, disguise kit, key to cabinet, 7 gp

LAMM'S LAMBS (4) **CR 1/3**

XP 135 each

hp 5 each (see page 18)

Orphans: If the party wins over the kids, an older boy named Kester (whose brother was knifed to death by Hookshanks last week) hurls a pitchfork full of rancid fish at Hookshanks' face with surprising accuracy, blinding the gnome for a round. In the following round, the orphans gleefully join in the fight against Hookshanks unless Bloo shows up, at which point they try to flee.

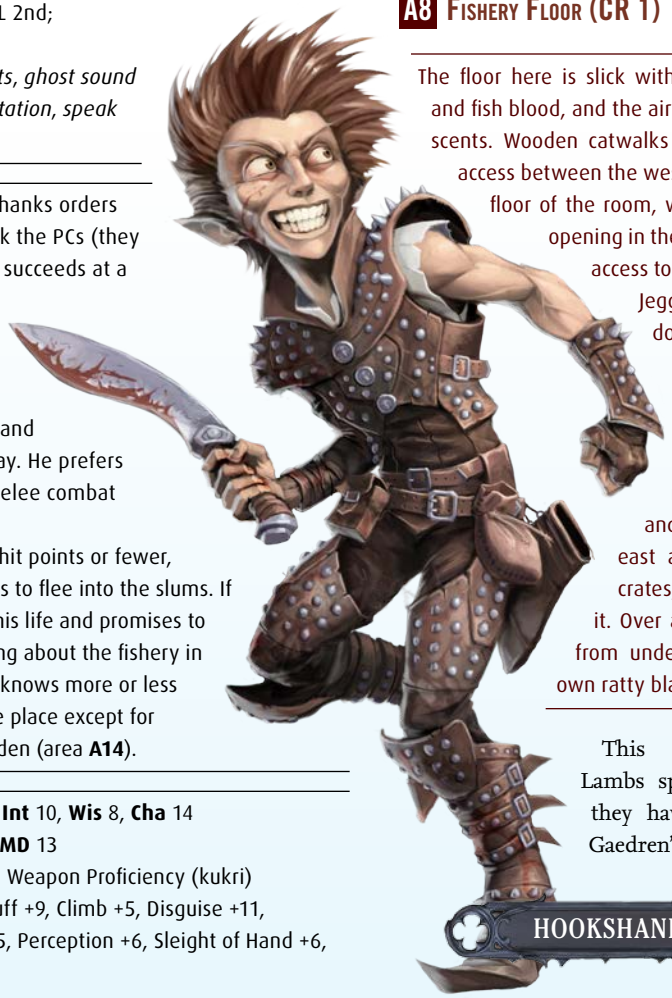
Treasure: The cabinet is locked (Disable Device DC 20). It holds six small pouches, four of which contain 50 cp each, and two of which contain 50 sp each. Yargin has the key.

Story Award: Award the PCs 135 XP for each orphan who survives the fight.

A8 Fishery Floor (CR 1)

The floor here is slick with river water, bits of seaweed, and fish blood, and the air is thick with the accompanying scents. Wooden catwalks to the north and south allow access between the western part of the fishery and the floor of the room, which is ten feet lower. A wide opening in the floor to the south allows direct access to the sloppy, muddy water of the Jeggare River a further three feet down, while to the northwest stands an immense eight-foot-tall wooden vat, its sides caked and waterproofed with tar. Inside is a foul-looking mixture of chum, river water, and who knows what else. To the east are stacked many barrels and crates, each with a fish painted on it. Over a dozen small hammocks hang from under the catwalks, each with its own ratty blanket and pillow.

This room is where Lamm's Lambs spend much of their days if they haven't yet earned enough of Gaedren's trust to go on pickpocketing



HOOKSHANKS GRULLER

excursions in the city. The immense vat is filled with a foul combination of river water, seaweed, fish, and a weak acidic mixture. During the day, a pair of Lamm's Lambs use long oar-like stirring rods to keep the mixture churning, working from atop the two catwalks. Every hour or so, some of the orphans harvest buckets of slurry and fill barrels for that evening's shipment, while other kids refill the vat with more water drawn up from the bay to the south and call out for additional fish from the bin in area **A7**.

Working conditions here are abysmal, and many orphans die from disease and mistreatment at the hands of the thugs. A typical work day is 12 hours long, with a single 10-minute lunch break in the middle of the day and a dinner break just before bedtime. Meals almost always consist of gritty bread and dock dumplings, but Gaedren rewards the "good kids" with sweet pastries every Sunday. These pastries are pretty much all the poor orphans have to look forward to—many of them have taken to eating only a tiny bite of their pastries each day to stretch them out over the week.

Creatures: Five orphans toil in this chamber during the day, watched over by an unforgiving taskmaster named Giggles, a half-orc brute who titters as he beats children who aren't working fast enough. Giggles lost an eye to a devilfish several years ago, and his face still bears several angry pucker-shaped scars from the creature's suckers. He wears his scars with pride. If no one has raised the alarm, Giggles does so when he spots the PCs and then attempts to force the orphans (Intimidate DC 9) into attacking them.

GIGGLES **CR 1**

XP 400

Male half-orc fighter 2

CE Medium humanoid (human, orc)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 21 (2d10+6)

Fort +5, **Ref** +1, **Will** +1 (+1 vs. fear)

Defensive Abilities orc ferocity

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee flail +6 (1d8+3)

Ranged composite longbow +3 (1d8+3/×3)

TACTICS

During Combat Giggles lives up to his name in combat, chortling and snickering at anything remotely funny (and often at things that aren't funny at all). He focuses his attacks on whoever struck him most recently in a combat. Giggles uses his Bludgeoner feat to deal nonlethal damage with his flail at first, hoping to catch the PCs alive for later interrogation, but if he's reduced to 15 or fewer hit points, he starts dealing lethal damage instead. He drinks a *potion of cure light wounds* whenever he's reduced to fewer than 5 hit points, if he can disengage from melee.

Morale Giggles fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 16

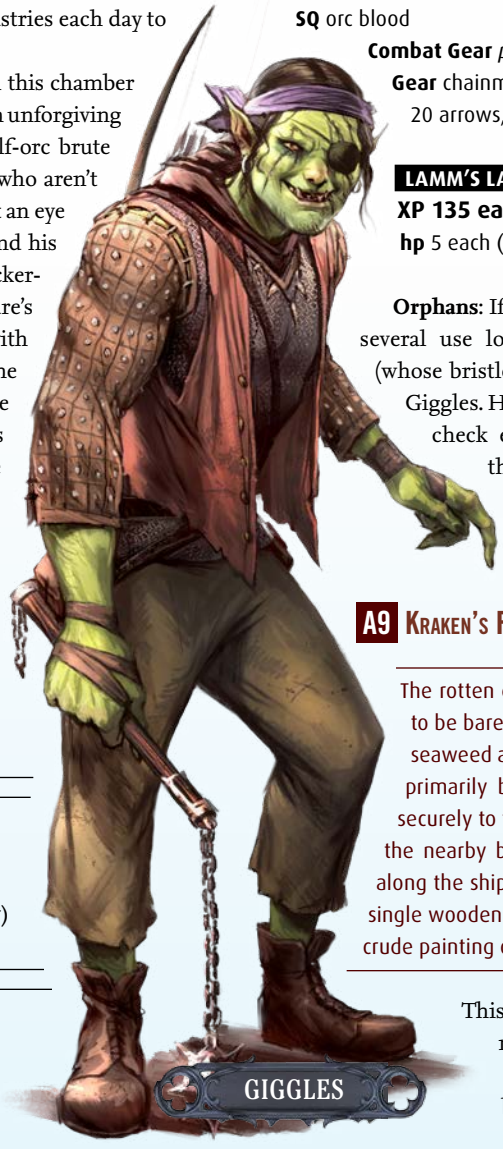
Feats Bludgeoner[UC], Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (flail)

Skills Acrobatics –3, Intimidate +6

Languages Common, Orc

SQ orc blood

Combat Gear *potions of cure light wounds* (3); **Other Gear** chainmail, composite longbow (+3 Str) with 20 arrows, flail, 72 gp



GIGGLES

LAMM'S LAMBS (5) **CR 1/3**

XP 135 each

hp 5 each (see page 18)

Orphans: If the PCs win the urchins' favor here, several use long-handled wooden push brooms (whose bristles are filthy beyond reason) to jab at Giggles. He must succeed at a DC 10 Acrobatics check each round to avoid tripping over these brooms.

Story Award: Award the PCs 135 XP for each orphan who survives the fight.

A9 Kraken's Folly

The rotten deck of this ancient sailing ship seems to be barely intact; its hull is worn and thick with seaweed and barnacles. The ship is held together primarily by the layers of old rope that lash it securely to the pilings that support the fishery and the nearby boardwalk. The rickety walkway leads along the ship's starboard, a foot below its railing. A single wooden door leading into the aft cabin bears a crude painting of a red fish on its surface.

This derelict, the *Kraken's Folly*, was moored here by the fishery's previous owners, and over the years it has become a part of the building—it is

no longer seaworthy. Gaedren has little use for the ship other than as a way to come and go from his den.

With the exception of the deck within 10 feet of the stern, the surface of the ship is quite weak. Any Medium or larger creature that walks upon the rotten wood toward the bow breaks through, falling into area **A11** and taking 1d6 points of damage from the fall unless it succeeds at a DC 12 Reflex save.

A10 Spider Nest (CR 1/4)

The air in this room is thick and musty. Thick sheets of cobwebs hang from the walls and mounds of blankets, cushions, and straw clutter the floor. To the south, a narrow flight of stairs leads down into the ship's hold.

Creature: This filthy cabin has become the lair of a dark brown long-legged spider the size of a cat—one of Korvosa's notorious drain spiders. While such creatures are normally sewer inhabitants, this spider is part of a larger nest in the hold of the *Kraken's Folly*. Highly aggressive, the spider lunges to attack the first person to enter the room. This spider and those dwelling in the hold below can't stand the scent of the vermin repellent Gaedren keeps on hand in his den, and they automatically fail their Fortitude saves to resist the effects of this alchemical paste.

DRAIN SPIDER **CR 1/4**

XP 100

hp 4 (see page 477)

A11 Kraken's Folly Hold (CR 1)

Dark and dank, the ship's hold smells of mildew. Several barrels, crates, and other containers lie stacked here and there. Dust and grime cover the floor, except where river water has collected in puddles.

Gaedren had a secret door built into the hull of this ship, allowing access to area **A12** and beyond. The door can be spotted with a successful DC 20 Perception check, and if the PCs notice the faint trail of Gaedren's tracks leading to and from the door through the filth on the floor with a successful DC 15 Survival check, they gain a +10 circumstance bonus on attempts to spot the secret door.

Creatures: Four drain spiders dwell in this long-abandoned hold—they're quite aggressive, and move to attack anything that enters this area unless they smell the pungent odor of vermin repellent.

DRAIN SPIDERS (4) **CR 1/4**

XP 100 each

hp 4 each (see page 477)

A12 Underpier (CR 1)

A narrow space exists under the fishery, with about three feet of room between the floor of the eastern side of the building and the languid, foamy river water below. Wooden pilings support the building, and thick mats of moss and cobwebs hang from ropes and rusted chains between them. A wooden walkway floats on the river's surface, winding along the inner wall of pilings that supports the building's frame above. The walkway leads from the sodden ship to the east all the way west to a small two-and-a-half-foot-square door that leads into an understructure below the fishery's land-bound half. The pilings below this understructure are densely arrayed, leaving only narrow gaps into the water below that area.

When an orphan outlives her usefulness, it usually falls to Giggles to lower the poor child through the hole in the floor of area **A8** into a skiff below, so she can be sent to area **A13** to speak to Gaedren. Such orphans are never seen again, having been fed to Gaedren's pet alligator.

Creature: The waters under and surrounding the fishery have become the territory of a jigsaw shark that scavenges the food scraps that drift out from area **A13** or leavings cast aside from the operation in area **A8**. (Gaedren's thugs enjoy dropping scraps through the hole there to encourage the shark's presence, delighting in how the sight of it frightens the orphans.) It isn't above attacking anyone who falls into the water, but only leaps out to attack those on the underpier if it is attacked and damaged first.

Jigsaw sharks are a breed common to the waters off Varisia's southern coast, particularly the Mushfens. Known for their distinctive jagged markings, mottled hide, and fierce temperament, jigsaw sharks are capable of living in freshwater as well as salt water, and often swim far up rivers or into the depths of the Mushfens in search of food.

JIGSAW SHARK **CR 1**

XP 400

Pathfinder Adventure Path #57 85

N Medium animal (aquatic)

Init +6; **Senses** blindsense 30 ft., keen scent; Perception +6

DEFENSE

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

hp 11 (2d8+2)

Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed swim 60 ft.

Melee bite +3 (1d6+3)

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 1, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15

Feats Improved Initiative

Skills Perception +6, Swim +10

A13 Gaedren's Playground (CR 4)

The door to this area from the underpier is 2-1/2 feet square and kept locked (Disable Device DC 20), but the brass key Yargin carries can unlock it. The strange size of the door makes it somewhat awkward for Medium creatures—as a result, it takes a move action for a Medium creature to pass through this door unless the creature succeeds at a DC 20 Escape Artist check.

The air in this large room is chilly and stinks of the river, thanks to a huge opening in the floor that drops away to the river shore three feet below. Several pilings emerge from the waters to support the roof eight feet above the floor, with mossy ropes slung between them. In two places, rusty manacles hang from the ropes over the water. Two five-foot-wide walkways cross the hole to the other side of the chamber, where a collection of old cabinets, lockboxes, and piles of clutter are strewn about. Chipped porcelain plates, a cracked goblet, badly rusted silverware, an old wooden shield with a crossbow bolt embedded in it, the odd dinged helm, and other "treasures" litter the floor of this side of the chamber. Three tables heaped with clutter stand amid this mess. In the southwest corner, a wooden door provides access to a walled-off section.

Creatures: Gaedren Lamm—a twisted thieving snake, a plague on Korvosa's forgotten children, and all-around despicable wretch—can be found here. The foul man usually spends his time sitting at one of his tables and sorting the previous day's haul, painstakingly examining, appraising, and cataloging his loot. Every sunset, Gaedren's little pickpockets return from a day on the streets and turn their takings over to Yargin, who then lowers the daily haul through the trapdoor in area **A6** down to this room. Most of what the Lamm's Lambs steal ends up being classified as junk and tossed aside, while the true finds go into Gaedren's lockbox in area **A14** to be fenced by Yargin every month or so. Every few weeks, Gaedren loads all the refuse back into a few crates in a skiff and has one of his thugs dispose of it by sinking the crate out at sea—the amount of clutter currently in the room means such a trip will happen soon.

Gaedren uses the rusty manacles hanging from the ropes to feed his pet alligator, Gobblegut, who dwells in the waters below. Typically, he has Giggles hang a doomed orphan by the ankles and then slowly lower the child down into Gobblegut's snapping jaws, stringing out the torment for his own twisted entertainment by making the

child answer impossibly complex questions and having Giggles drop him a few inches each time the orphan fails to answer.

Gaedren Lamm is a jaundiced and bent corpse of a man, his eyes yellowed and skin speckled from age. His left leg has a pronounced limp as he shuffles about. His old skin can no longer stand the chafe of armor more significant than padded armor, but the gray suit of armor he does wear is magical. On his rare trips outside, he also wears a tattered wide-brimmed sun hat to protect his bald head from sunburn.

Gaedren is well-schooled in the credo "secrets can kill," and the miserable cur hasn't survived to become the nasty old man he is now by letting people get the drop on him. Yet he's also a proud and bitter man, used to fighting tooth and nail to keep what's his. In his youth, a more cautious Gaedren would have pulled up roots and fled his lair at the first sign of trouble, abandoning all of his thugs to their fate. Today, Gaedren doesn't take this route—he elects to stay and fight, not out of any loyalty to his thugs but simply because he's grown too greedy to give up what he thinks of as his. As such, if the PCs take more than one foray to reach this point, they still find the cantankerous old man here, stubbornly clinging to what is fated to be his final hideout.

Of course, Gaedren recognizes each of the PCs when they enter to confront him. Depending on his prior relationship to them, his response can vary from an outflow of profanity and threats ("I should have fed you to Gobblegut the moment you showed up snot-nosed on my stoop!") to job offers ("I know you! I always thought you'd make a good partner—what say you shiv these other fools for me? The pay'll be more than fair.") to panic ("You! How the hell did you find me?"). Try to ensure that Gaedren personally threatens or insults each PC at least once, if not before combat begins, then certainly during a fight with the old man. Anyone who mentions Zellara's name to Gaedren gets a snicker and the following cryptic response, "Yes, I remember her. Such beautiful eyes and silky hair! I couldn't bear to feed them to my pet—she's in the next room if you'd like to speak to her..."

GAEDREN LAMM **CR 2**

XP 600

Male old human expert 4/rogue 2

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 20 (6d8–10)

Fort –1, **Ref** +5, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities evasion

Weaknesses limping gait

OFFENSE

Speed 15 ft.

Melee *+1 dagger* +6 (1d4–2/19–20)

Ranged mwk hand crossbow +6 (1d4/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

TACTICS

During Combat Although he is much higher level than the PCs, Gaedren's age has all but crippled him. He's aware of his flaws and limitations, but his bitter and cruel personality gets the better of his judgment. His first act in combat is to fire a crossbow bolt at Gobblegut—assuming he hits, the sudden pain drives the cantankerous alligator into a frenzy. Gaedren then turns his crossbow on the PCs, remaining away from the edge of the pool and hoping that Gobblegut takes care of the PCs. He switches to his dagger only if confronted in melee.

Morale Although unwilling to give up his latest home, Gaedren knows when he's in trouble. If reduced to fewer than 6 hit points, he tries to escape to one of the skiffs tied to the hidden walkway in area **A12** to row away. Of course, if Gobblegut is riled up, navigating the walkway around the alligator's den might just be the last thing Gaedren does. It's unlikely that Gaedren can escape the PCs, but if he does, they may well have secured a significant recurring enemy—see What If Gaedren Escapes? on page 27 for more details.

STATISTICS

Str 5, **Dex** 13, **Con** 7, **Int** 16, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13

Feats Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Bluff), Weapon Finesse

Skills Appraise +12, Bluff +15, Disguise +11, Handle Animal +12, Intimidate +12, Linguistics +11, Perception +11, Sense Motive +11, Sleight of Hand +10, Stealth +10, Swim +6

Languages Common, Dwarven, Gnome, Goblin, Halfling, Infernal, Orc, Shoanti, Varisian

SQ rogue talent (finesse rogue), trapfinding +1

Gear *+1 padded armor*, *+1 dagger*, mwk hand crossbow with 10 bolts, brass key (unlocks all doors in the fishery), rusty iron key (unlocks the strongbox in area **A14**)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Limping Gait (Ex) Age has not treated Gaedren well. Although his mind remains sharper than ever, his body is failing. The most significant manifestation of Gaedren's long life of crime is his limp; an old wound to his left leg reduces his base speed to 15 feet. This, combined with the way his old age reduces his physical ability scores, reduces his overall CR to 2.

GOBBLEGUT **CR 2**

XP 600

Alligator (use the statistics for crocodile; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 51)

hp 22

TACTICS

During Combat If enraged (such as if shot by Gaedren), Gobblegut bellows and snaps at anyone within 5 feet of the edge of the pool. The alligator has to succeed at a DC 20 Swim check to surge out of the water high enough to bite at someone that close to the edge, and even then the cover provided grants his target a +2 bonus to its AC. If there's more than one target, roll randomly to see who Gobblegut tries to bite—even Gaedren could be a target, as the old man's treatment of Gobblegut has hardly been kind over the years. Anyone who the alligator successfully grabs is automatically pulled down into the water below, but the alligator doesn't perform a death roll on a victim if any other potential targets remain in area **A13**. Instead, the alligator drops the grabbed victim in preference for continuing to attack more targets on the ledges above.

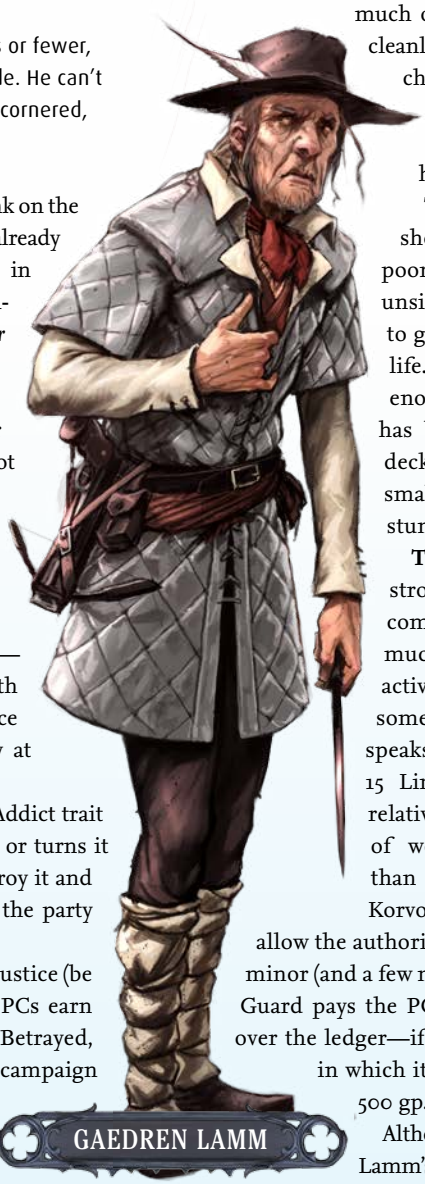
Morale If he's ever reduced to 7 hit points or fewer, Gobblegut retreats into the water to hide. He can't escape the pool below this area, and if cornered, fights to the death.

Treasure: Very few of the trinkets or junk on the tables are worth much—Gaedren has already stashed the valuables in his strongbox in area **A14**. Still, seven applications of foul-smelling vermin repellent (*Pathfinder Player's Companion: Adventurer's Armory* 11) can be gathered from the table. Finally, one cabinet contains a darkwood coffer worth 100 gp. The coffer is latched but not locked, and contains 20 doses of shiver that Gaedren hasn't yet sold to addicts. The drug is currently worth 25 gp per dose on the street.

Development: Take note of what the PCs do with Gaedren's body if he's killed—if they leave it here, Gaedren's son Rolth finds the body soon after and they'll face an undead version of their old enemy at this chapter's end!

Story Award: If any PC has the Drug Addict trait and the party either destroys the shiver or turns it over to the city watch (who in turn destroy it and reward the PCs 500 gp to boot), award the party 400 XP per PC with this campaign trait.

In addition, for bringing Gaedren to justice (be it by his death or imprisonment), the PCs earn 400 XP for each character who has the Betrayed, Love Lost or Unhappy Childhood campaign trait, as these characters finally have the opportunity for some measure of closure.



GAEDREN LAMM

A14 Gaedren's Den

This foul-smelling room seems to be a combination bedroom and study. A wooden bed with a lumpy mattress stands against the east wall, while a round table heaped with dirty plates, bread crusts, stained goblets, fruit rinds, and scuttling cockroaches sits nearby. At the foot of the bed sits a large strongbox; a slightly rusted lock secures it and a moldy ledger with pages rippled from moisture sits atop its lid. A sagging dresser filled with moth-eaten clothes well past their glory days is in one corner. What appears to be a wooden hatbox surrounded by a small cloud of flies sits atop this dresser.

This is Gaedren's home and castle, the place where he sleeps and eats. The old man's personal habits are very much on display—he has little interest in cleanliness. Bedbugs infest the sheets, a chamber pot pushed under the bed is badly in need of cleaning, and the bits of food heaped on his table have attracted many roaches.

The hatbox contains something shocking—Zellara's severed head, poorly preserved and decorated with unsightly makeup in a crude attempt to give her dead flesh the semblance of life. A successful DC 10 Heal check is enough to note that the fortune-teller has been dead for weeks. Her harrow deck (see Treasure below) sits in a smaller wooden box under the ragged stump of her neck.

Treasure: The ledger on top of the strongbox contains a remarkably complete and concise accounting of much of Gaedren Lamm's criminal activities, although the entries are somewhat coded. A character who speaks Varisian and succeeds at a DC 15 Linguistics check can decipher the relatively simple code after a few hours of work. This ledger is worth more than Gaedren's death or capture to the Korvosan Guard, for it contains notes that allow the authorities to close the books on dozens of minor (and a few major) unsolved cases. The Korvosan Guard pays the PCs a bounty of 250 gp for handing over the ledger—if the PCs provide a key for the code in which it is written, this reward increases to 500 gp.

Although the vast majority of the loot Lamm's Lambs bring in is fenced relatively

quickly, the old man has a habit of sorting through each batch for bits of finery that catch his eye, which he adds to his collection of treasures kept in the footlocker at the foot of his bed. The locked footlocker can be opened with the rusty iron key Gaedren carries or a successful DC 20 Disable Device check. Each of these treasures is individually wrapped in a cloth that's tied shut with twine. The treasures include a narrow teak cigar case inlaid with tiny bits of jade (worth 25 gp,) a 2-pound gold ingot bearing the Cheliax coat of arms (worth 100 gp), a miniature gold crown (worth 350 gp), a fist-sized scrimshaw carving of a kraken with garnets for eyes (worth 200 gp), a silver ring bearing the inscription "For Emmah—the light in my nights" (worth 150 gp), a highly realistic and highly scandalous ivory figurine of two entwined succubi (worth 450 gp), a masterwork shuriken, an adamantine arrowhead, a masterwork dagger with a strange blade shaped almost like a key bearing the inscription: "For an inspiration of a father" (worth 750 gp), an abalone-shell holy symbol of Shelyn (worth 300 gp), a glass tube containing a dose of *oil of keen edge*, an obsidian *wand of magic missile* (23 charges), a crystalline vial (itself worth 50 gp) containing a dose of *silversheen*, and a bejeweled brooch with a broken clasp.

QUEEN'S BROOCH

Even to an untrained eye, this brooch is obviously the most valuable object in the entire collection. The circular gold brooch depicts a house drake and an imp coiled around each other in an almost yin-yang pattern. The pseudodragon's eye is an amethyst, while the imp's eye is an emerald. The brooch itself is worth 2,000 gp, but more importantly, a PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (nobility) check recognizes it belongs to Queen Ileosa herself. It was pickpocketed from a thief who stole it from a jeweler who was contracted by one of the queen's handmaidens to repair the clasp—Gaedren hoped some day to use the brooch's return as leverage with the queen should he ever be arrested.

One last item of value remains in the room: *Zellara's harrow deck*. It remains haunted by Zellara's spirit even after Gaedren is defeated. This spirit grants the deck several helpful powers and is effectively an intelligent magic item (see page 437 for more details). Zellara's spirit can sense great destinies in the PCs, and her guidance through this haunted harrow deck becomes a key element in later chapters.

Development: The strange, key-shaped dagger is in fact a gift from Gaedren's estranged son Rolth, a man the PCs are destined to confront in the next chapter. Rolth is also one of Korvosa's most notorious killers, a man who slaughtered over 15 dozen victims between 4690 and 4697 before his killing spree mysteriously ended. A character who studies the curious blade and makes a successful DC 20 Knowledge (history or local) check recognizes the style of blade as one used by the notorious killer. (More information about Rolth and the Key-Lock Killer can be found on page 452.) A spell like *object reading*[OA] or the psychometry occult skill unlock[OA] used on this unique blade gives a glimpse of Rolth's appearance as he looked 2 decades ago or perhaps an unsettling glimpse of the murder of a young woman in her home, but time has dulled the psychic impressions on the blade. At most, this should foreshadow Rolth's appearance in the next chapter.

Story Award: The PCs earn 800 XP for recovering *Zellara's harrow deck* and discovering her fate. In addition, if the PCs recover the ledger and break its code, proof that Gaedren orchestrated the murder from the Framed campaign trait surfaces; award the party 400 XP for each PC who has this trait.

WHAT IF GAEDREN ESCAPES?

The combination of Gaedren's advanced age (which reduces his speed) and the likelihood of his own abused pet alligator getting revenge on him make it unlikely that the criminal will escape the PCs, but if he manages to flee the old fishery (perhaps with the aid of surviving NPC minions, who slow pursuit down), Gaedren makes his way into the back alleys of Korvosa to lie low. If you want him to make a reappearance, consider the following options.

Gaedren's Son: Although Gaedren has sired several children in his long life, only one still lives, and that son is arguably a worse human than his father. Rolth Lamm is destined to cross paths with the PCs in the next chapter, but if Gaedren escapes, he may well seek his son out. Whether Rolth accepts his father's return and allies with him (in which case you can have the PCs encounter Gaedren again at Rolth's Side in Chapter 2), or Rolth simply murders the old man and hands him over to his derro ally Vreeg (see the end of this chapter) is left to you to decide.

Into Old Korvosa: Alternatively, Gaedren may make his way to the tangled alleys of Old Korvosa to cash in on some old favors. He might seek shelter in Eel's End, finding common cause with Devargo Barvasi as a fellow shiver peddler, or perhaps he lies low until Chapter 3, when the PCs can encounter him once more as an advisor to the Emperor of Old Korvosa.

PART 2

A CITY GONE MAD

At some point during the PCs' final foray into the fishery, word swiftly spreads of King Eodred II's sudden death. Time this development so that the PCs have no notion of it until they emerge from the fishery with Ileosa's brooch and Zellara's haunted harrow deck in their possession. As they step out onto the streets of the city, be it day or night, it should be immediately obvious that something major has happened, for parts of Korvosa are in flames!

The sight of smoke rising on the horizon or (if the PCs emerge at night) the flickering glow of fires is impossible to miss. The frantic clang of alarm bells sing out in harmony with a multifarious cacophony of screams, the clash of steel on steel, shrieks of terror, and even the periodic detonation of arcane power. A wing of Sable Company hippogriff riders swoops overhead, angling toward Castle Korvosa at a breakneck pace. One of the badly wounded hippogriff mounts rains blood down on the street around the PCs before it succumbs and crashes headlong into a statue, taking its rider and itself to a messy, bone-crunching demise. The others in the flight do not pause to check on their fallen ally. Amid the chaos, the voice of a Korvosan herald cuts through the din: "The king is dead! Long live the queen!" only to be shouted down by ragged cries of "Hang the queen!" or "The usurper must die!" The city has gone mad while the PCs battled Gaedren in his lair.

EODRED ARABASTI II

THE KING IS DEAD

Eodred II's demise takes the city by surprise—true, his health had been declining (due to the secret regimen of poison in his diet), but his sudden turn catches most of the government and citizenry off guard. Rumors spread quickly that he suffered from some disease beyond what even the priesthoods of Sarenrae and Abadar could cure. Some say that even Asmodeus's disciples were summoned from their pentacle temple in the deep of night to try their hand at restoring the king. With the king's death, Queen Ileosa ascends the Crimson Throne, much to the displeasure of most Korvosans, who view her as a petulant gold-digger at best. Worse, the castle seneschal has vanished, supposedly slain in one of the initial riots that broke out at the base of Castle Korvosa when the grim news of Eodred II's death was proclaimed.

Desperate citizens already stifled by Eodred II's spendthrift reign—salty dock workers, soot-covered smiths, and all manner of artisans and laborers—roar at the thought of Ileosa taking the throne. Stevedores abandon the seafront wards and caravan guards leave Northgate. Frustrated merchant ships and wagon convoys turn around when they find no one to offload their goods, much less buy them. The movement of food and other staples into the city slows to a trickle, and thousands vie for the last sack of flour or bundle of firewood in the market. Riots erupt throughout the streets. Those who do not rove the streets with cudgel and torch in hand instead lock their doors against the gathering mob. The Bank of Abadar closes its gilded gates, and a contingent of the Coin's Faithful stand at the ready, armed with crossbows to repel would-be looters. The world-famous (some would argue infamous) institution of learning known as the Acadamae closes its doors as well, shutting students and professors within its walls until order can be restored. In the space of a dozen hours, all of Korvosa's oppression and anger explode into chaos. The city perches on the edge of anarchy.

Ill-equipped for this level of civil calamity, the military arm of the city falters, and even the hippogriff-mounted marines of the Sable Company are pushed beyond their limits. The Korvosan Guard does the best it can to quell the riots, yet its members are cut off from each other and forced to operate on their own. Several junior officers, thrust into the harrowing responsibility of command, break under the pressure and abandon their posts, or worse, become part of the problem by attempting to institute martial law.

Korvosa is in desperate need of heroes to bring order—if someone doesn't step in soon, the city might very well tear itself apart.

At this point, you should use the Korvosa (Anarchy) statistics for the city, as presented on page 399 of Appendix 2.

INVESTIGATING THE QUEEN

At some point during this campaign, the PCs will cross paths with the woman destined to become their primary antagonist—Queen Ileosa. Wise characters will do a little digging on the queen early on, perhaps once they learn they've recovered her brooch or after they hear a particularly intriguing rumor about her (see page 403 in Appendix 2 for several rumors relating to the queen).

Some of the queen's history is relatively common knowledge; a PC who succeeds at a DC 12 Knowledge (nobility) or a DC 20 Diplomacy check to gather information recalls this lore. Korvosa's new queen was born Ileosa Arvanxi in the Chelish city of Westcrown in 4687 AR. Most expected her to marry into a more powerful Chelish line, yet she scandalized her family by abandoning Cheliax and sailing to the city of Korvosa.

As a politically savvy aristocrat, Ileosa learned much about Eodred II's tastes and desires before she arrived. When she presented herself to him, she was able to coax him to fall in love immediately. The two were wed after a scandalously short courtship, and, perhaps the most shocking move of all, Eodred II spurned his numerous previous lovers in favor of his new queen. Barely 17 years old when she took Eodred II's side, Queen Ileosa has managed a minor miracle in the past several years—she's single-handedly shifted the citizens' dislike and disapproval away from King Eodred II to herself with her open distaste for Korvosa (a city she's been heard to call "a backwater colonial village" more than once).

Ileosa's true feelings about the city she now rules are suspected by many, yet confirming the following information should be difficult for the PCs this early in the campaign. Ileosa herself certainly bore no true love for Eodred II—he was nothing but an endurance test to her, a necessary stepping stone on her path to becoming the ruler of Korvosa. For while she continues to loathe the city, she does not loathe its riches. When they married, Eodred II was, in her eyes, an old man, but it soon became apparent that he was not as old as she anticipated—his health remained good and no sign of the Crimson Throne's curse seemed evident. As the months turned to years, Ileosa began to fear that Eodred II would be the first of Korvosa's kings to die of old age, and as her patience wore thin, her thoughts turned more and more to regicide. Yet the young queen was also wary and self-doubting, a combination that kept these murderous thoughts nothing more than idle fancies. It was only when she discovered the Kazavon's fangs in the Castle Korvosa dungeons that she would find the ruthlessness and determination to act on her murderous plans.

HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

That the king is dead and won't be coming back is an important part of this campaign's plot. The players may be intrigued or confused as to how a powerful noble who had been in ill health could die so suddenly, when *remove disease* spells can be had aplenty—likewise, they may wonder at why the king simply isn't restored to life via *raise dead*.

Of course, the real reasons behind this are that Ileosa simply won't allow it. The poison she used to murder him is a cunning design by the Red Mantis assassins meant to mimic the symptoms of a sickness, so that attempts to cure it via spells like *remove disease* simply fail. Put plainly, no one realized the king was suffering from poisoning and not a disease, and while a *neutralize poison* or *heal* spell could have saved him, the queen helped ensure that no one got a chance to try such a tactic.

The ravages of the poison mimicked a fast-acting form of leprosy, and once Eodred II is dead, the queen has his body sealed away in the royal crypts below the castle. Word that the body was in no shape for public viewing certainly sparks rumors of conspiracy, yet still the king is given no significant public funeral. His body crumbles quickly, leaving very little to communicate with via *speak with dead*. *Resurrection* or more powerful magic could, in theory, restore him to life, but by the time the PCs (or any other significant NPCs) have the resources to attempt this, Eodred II's soul has been judged and he is beyond the power of mortal magic.

The PCs may learn answers to some or all of these mysteries in time as the campaign plays out, but for now, they should remain just that—mysteries.

CITY IN TURMOIL

After the PCs emerge from Gaedren's fishery to find Korvosa in chaos, their fate is in large part left to them to decide. You can use some of the descriptive text detailed above to impress upon the PCs how quickly things have gone bad, and if they really want to strike out on their own, Appendix 2 has a wealth of information on the city. Yet two options in particular are more likely than anything else the PCs might try to do, and it is these two options that trigger the Curse of the Crimson Throne Adventure Path: returning to Zellara's home and researching the curious brooch they found in Gaedren's lair. Beyond these two events, the PCs will certainly

THE KORVOSAN RUMOR MILL

As Curse of the Crimson Throne progresses, the PCs should have ample opportunities to overhear gossip and rumors; some may have little to do with the campaign's actual plot, but others might directly lead the PCs to investigate key portions of the Adventure Path on their own. A large table of rumors for the PCs to stumble across is presented on page 403 of this book in Appendix 2. Note that many of these rumors point to mysteries and events that the PCs may well have a hand in exposing; if you roll up a rumor that the PCs have already addressed in such a way, you should adjust the rumor to account for that. Having the PCs hear a growing number of rumors about how they solved a problem is a great way to give them in-game feedback about their growing success.

Regardless of how often the PCs hear rumors, before **Event 11** begins, they should hear rumors about the city's growing discontent with Ileosa and gossip that the king didn't die of natural causes at all, but was deliberately killed by infection or dark magic.

encounter other set pieces during the course of this chapter—the remainder of this part presents several complex and often dangerous encounters for you to use throughout "Edge of Anarchy."

Korvosa remains in turmoil for much of this chapter, with things finally starting to calm down only when the PCs begin the final part of this chapter. Present the events below according to the time frame provided, but in whatever order best fits the PCs' adventures. You can certainly have some of the later events take place once order is more or less restored—pockets of chaos and anarchy remain in Korvosa for some time to come, after all.

No maps are provided for any of the following events. This is because they are intended to occur organically as your PCs explore and travel—the location of each event will depend entirely on when you time it to occur. The PCs might encounter the drunken guard in a run-down tavern or staggering through a wide street, for example, and Otyugh Uprising could occur in a narrow alley, broad thoroughfare, or even in the basement of a shop where the PCs happen to be. Paizo produces a wealth of flip-mats and map packs for use in urban environments, and it might be handy to have some of these on hand for use in these encounters as your PCs explore the city. Alternatively, you can use some of the other street and building encounter maps spread throughout this book as needed for the encounter.

The amount of time that passes during this chapter is likewise left vague. There is no schedule the PCs need to adhere to in order to succeed—they can blaze through this chapter's encounters in the space of a week if they wish (and if they have the luck, resources, and skill to do so without tragedy), or they can take their time, spending weeks or even months at a time solving the various problems that come before them. This Adventure Path assumes that the events of "Edge of Anarchy" take about a month to play out between the death of King Eodred II and Queen Ileosa's attempted execution of her chosen scapegoat, as detailed in the Chapter Conclusion on page 66, but the exact amount of time that passes is left to you and your party.

Event 1: A Return to Zellara's Home

This event occurs if the PCs return to Zellara's home at any point.

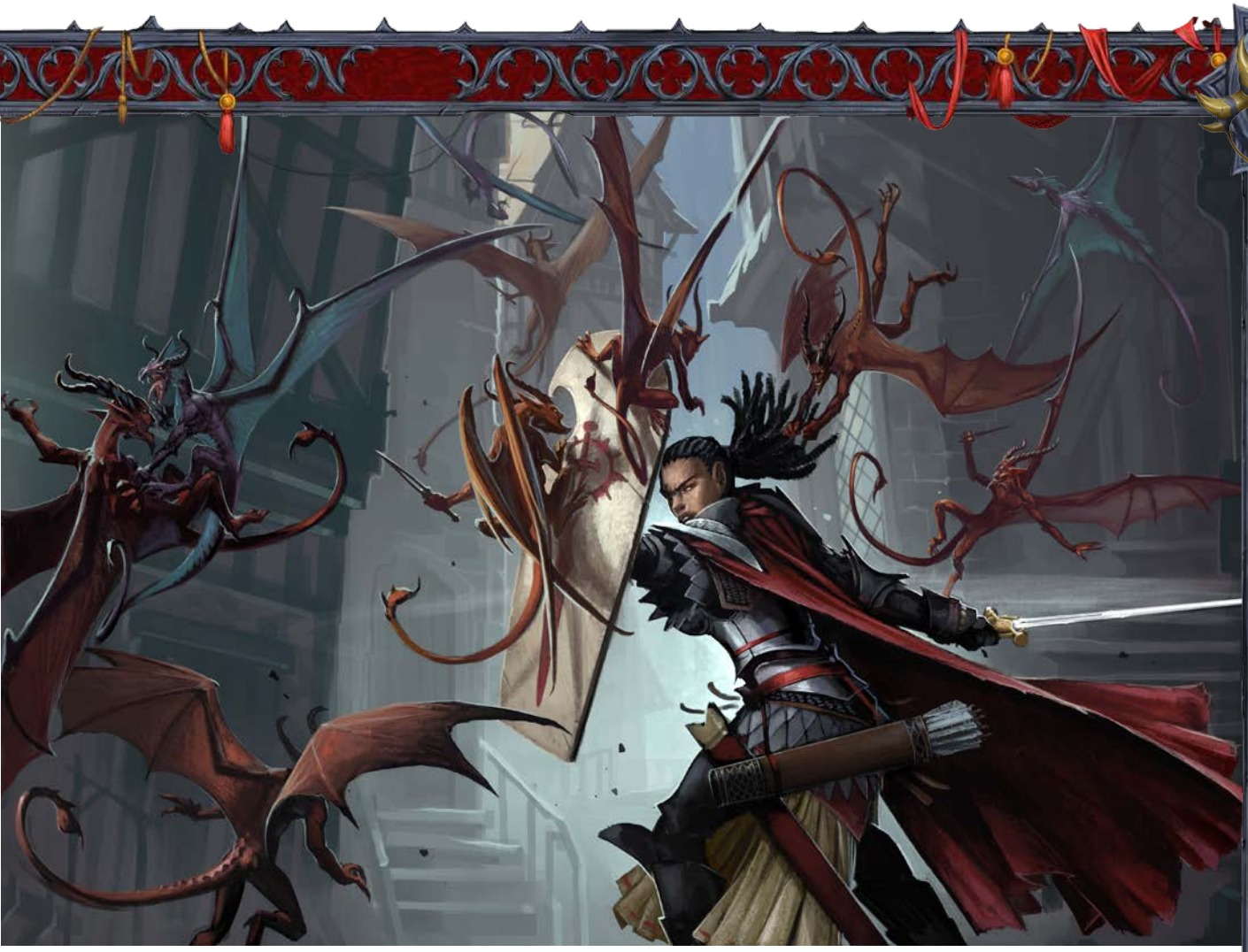
After defeating Gaedren, the PCs should discover Zellara's severed head, at which point it should be obvious that the woman has been dead for some time. Even if they don't discover her grisly remains, she's the one who sent them on their mission to the fishery, and thus it is logical to report back to her on the mission's success. When the PCs return, they find Zellara's home abandoned, and showing clear signs of having been empty for weeks. No sign of the food, the wall hangings, the rugs, or Zellara herself can be found—the furniture is in pieces, scattered throughout the room under a thick layer of dust disturbed only by the footprints and evidence the PCs left themselves on their prior visit.

If the PCs have *Zellara's harrow deck* at this point, now would be an excellent time for Zellara to use the deck's *major image* power to manifest before the PCs and tell them the truth, and explain how she can help them in the dark times ahead (revealing the various powers of her harrow deck). If the PCs didn't find her deck, Zellara's link to her home of 30 years remains strong enough that she can manifest one final ghostly image of herself to steer the PCs back to the fishery to find it. In any event, there is little guidance Zellara can provide the PCs at this time, and nothing left in her home they can use. Going forward, she can manifest her power only through the haunted harrow deck.

Event 2: The Mysterious Brooch

This event occurs when the PCs turn their attention to the expensive but mysterious brooch they find in Gaedren's stash of treasure.

As mentioned in area **A14**, it takes a successful DC 15 Knowledge (nobility) check to recognize it as one of the queen's possessions. Even if none of the PCs recognize the source of the expensive brooch from Gaedren's treasure, the first merchant they take it to for appraisal certainly does. The merchant excitedly informs the PCs that the



brooch belongs to the queen, and furthermore, that it's been registered with the Korvosan Guard as stolen property. The queen has even offered a reward for its return. Certainly, the merchant doesn't want to risk her job by purchasing jewelry stolen from the queen, even in these doubtful times. She advises the PCs to return it to Castle Korvosa and claim the reward of 1,200 gp. When the PCs follow up on this, proceed with **Event 8** on page 34.

Event 3: Mad Prophet (CR 1)

This event should occur not long after the PCs first start traveling through the streets of Korvosa.

Creature: The death of King Eodred II brings doomsayers and end-of-the-world lunatics out of the woodwork. The majority of them are relatively harmless prognosticators content to lurk on their street corners and preach about the end of the world. A few are more sinister, shouting, "The Eye of Groetus has turned from the Boneyard to look upon Korvosa!" and similar strange, obscure threats. In this encounter, one wild-haired and sick-looking lunatic fixates on one of the PCs, convinced that the character appeared to him in a dream. He screams that the PC will near death during a time of great sickness and peril during Korvosa's darkest hour, and that this event will usher in a new age of writhing doom. The insane prophet's ravings are without real basis, but the disease he carries certainly isn't. If the PC he's obsessed with lets the mad prophet grapple her (the mad prophet has a CMB of +1), that PC is exposed to filth fever (*Pathfinder Core Rulebook* 557).

MAD PROPHET **CR 1**

XP 400

N human commoner 1/rogue 1 (use the statistics for a beggar; *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 300)

hp 13

Event 4: Imps and Dragons (CR 4)

This event can occur at any point as the PCs are traveling the streets of Korvosa.

A student at the Acadamae is required to undertake several dangerous steps in order to graduate, one of which is the summoning of an imp. Many students opt to take imps as familiars, but just as many fail and let those imps get loose. As a result, imps are a constant problem in Korvosa. Nests of them lurk in the eaves of the city's Shingles, often attempting to ally with or manipulate city gangs. Fortunately, the indigenous house drake population, tiny dragons evolved from the pseudodragons

who dwelled in the region before Korvosa was founded and adapted readily to the city's advent, are quite adept at keeping Korvosa's imp population under control.

Creatures: Two or three times per year, the imps and house drakes take to flight in the skies above Korvosa to engage in mass battles, and the recent events in the city trigger more conflicts between them. In this event, a pair of imps swoops down to attack the PCs, seeing them as easy sources of gold and targets for mayhem. On the second round of combat, four house drakes swoop in to attack the imps, likely saving the PCs from being savaged by the tiny outsiders. The house drakes generally avoid contact with humanoids and don't stick around long after the fight is over, but at your discretion, if a PC saves one of the creatures, it might stay long enough to use its healing magic on the PCs as a reward.

HOUSE DRAKES (2) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 19 each (see page 474)

IMPS (4) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 16 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 78)

Development: As the chapter progresses, you can repeat this encounter as often as you wish—feel free to increase the number of imps or to delay the arrival of the house drakes if the PCs are able to handle them with ease!

Event 5: Meet the Mob (CR 3)

This event can occur at any point as the PCs are traveling the streets of Korvosa.

Creatures: Bands of rioting laborers run in mobs, battering anyone dressed in finery with snarling yowls of "Die, dandy!" and "Death to the false queen!" You can use encounters with these angry mobs as a way to steer the PCs along Korvosa's streets if you wish, or simply to remind them of how bad things have grown in the city in the aftermath of the king's demise. If you want to throw the PCs a bit more into the action of a riot in progress, though, have them come across the edge of a riot where a mob of thugs wielding shovels, chair-legs, and other club-like weapons surround Amin Jalento, a beardless young nobleman. One of the laborers, a burly woman with greasy strings of hair framing her rotund face, jeers and addresses the young man in a booming voice, "Bet'cha never worked an honest day's wage in your life, eh, Queen's Man? M'brother had his arm crushed by a barrel on the docks when he was younger than you. Never raised a mug of ale with that wrist again. Wanna know what it feels like?" If the PCs don't swiftly intervene, the mob attacks Amin. With a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check or DC 20 Intimidate check, a PC can disperse the mob long enough to let Amin escape to safety—otherwise, the PCs might find themselves in a fight against six 1st-level human commoners.

RIOTERS (6) **CR 1/3**

XP 135 each

Human commoner 1

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; **Senses** Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10

hp 9 each (1d6+6)

Fort +4, **Ref** +0, **Will** +0

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee club +1 (1d6+1)

TACTICS

During Combat Rioters attack the closest target unless an obvious well-to-do socialite is present, in which case a rioter focuses her attacks on the apparent noble.

Morale A rioter flees combat as soon as she takes any lethal damage.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 11, **Con** 14, **Int** 8, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 11

Feats Great Fortitude, Toughness

Skills Perception +4, Profession (laborer) +4

Languages Common

Gear club

AMIN JALENTO **CR 1**

XP 400

Human aristocrat 3

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +5

DEFENSE

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

hp 19 (3d8+6)

Fort +1, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk rapier +5 (1d6+1/18–20)

TACTICS

During Combat Amin has never been in a real fight and this encounter with the rioters convinces him that fighting is not his thing; he fights defensively if he has no chance to flee combat.

Morale Amin flees from combat as soon as he can.

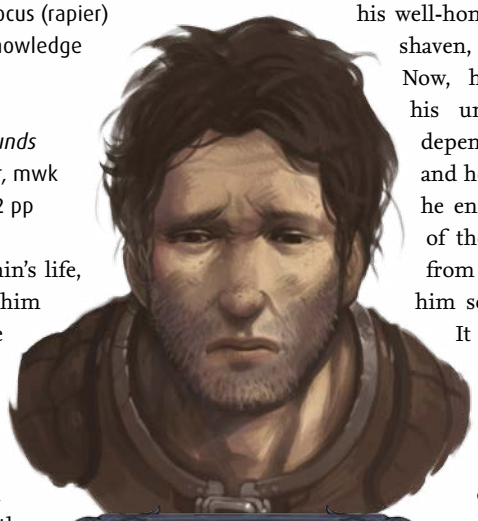
STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 8, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 11
Base Atk +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15
Feats Iron Will, Toughness, Weapon Focus (rapier)
Skills Acrobatics +5, Diplomacy +6, Knowledge (nobility) +5, Perception +5
Languages Common
Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds* (2); **Other Gear** mwk leather armor, mwk rapier, noble's outfit, signet ring, 12 pp

Story Award: If the PCs save Amin's life, award them XP as if they'd defeated him in combat. In addition, he offers the PCs a gold ring worth 250 gp as thanks for their aid.

Event 6: Drunken Guard (CR 5)

This encounter can take place on the street, in a tavern, or anywhere the PCs might run across a drunken soldier. It should occur at some point before they're sent after Trinia (see **Event 11** on page 38).


GRAU SOLDADO

Creature: The drunken soldier in question is a man named Grau Soldado. Born in Sandpoint over on Varisia's west coast, Grau fled an alcoholic and abusive father at an early age. He wound up here in Korvosa where, after a failed pickpocketing attempt, he was taken in by one of Korvosa's most talented fighters, a man named Vencarlo Orisini. Vencarlo got the boy an apprenticeship with a good-natured smith, and when Grau wasn't working, the swordmaster tutored the young man free of charge in the art of swordplay. But ill fate intervened. Grau was not Vencarlo's only star pupil. A young woman named Sabina Merrin caught his interest as well. Though he fought against it, Vencarlo found himself wildly attracted to the beautiful Sabina—as did Grau. The fact that Sabina herself was more interested in women complicated matters even further, eventually resulting in a three-way confrontation of frustration and misunderstanding, with Grau successfully engineering a duel between Vencarlo and Sabina, a duel that resulted in the loss of two of Vencarlo's fingers and a scar on Sabina's cheek. Sabina abandoned her lessons with Vencarlo and joined Korvosa's Castle Guard. When Vencarlo discovered Grau's hand in the events soon thereafter, he expelled him in a rare rage. The loss of his teacher and the end of his unrequited love was too much for Grau, and he increasingly took to drink. Still, his skill at swordplay remained and he swiftly found a place among the Korvosan Guard, rising quickly through the ranks to Watch Sergeant. With the advent of the king's death and the following riots, Grau abandoned even these responsibilities and now spends all his waking hours drunk and despondent.

Grau used to be a lean man, with steely muscle on his well-honed physique. He was always clean-shaven, with bright piercing green eyes. Now, he's a mess—he hasn't changed his uniform in days (perhaps weeks, depending on when you time this event), and he reeks of stale sweat and ale. When he encounters the PCs, he mistakes one of them for an old friend named Neffi from Sandpoint and insists on buying him several drinks at the closest tavern. It doesn't take Grau long, though, to bemoan what he believes will be the end of Korvosa—the king's death hit him hard, but the riots hit him harder. If the PCs don't commiserate with him (which requires either a successful Bluff check opposed by Grau's Sense Motive check or a successful DC 21 Diplomacy check), he becomes convinced that one of the PCs (perhaps even the one he thinks of as Neffi, or another PC who reminds him of Vencarlo or Sabina) is the reason why he's fallen on hard times, and he draws his sword and demands a duel.

With a successful DC 18 Knowledge (local) check, a PC recognizes him as the well-liked watch sergeant he was before the king's death. The right thing to do for Grau is to escort him to Citadel Volshyenek, where his fellow guards restore his sobriety and clean him up. Alternatively, a *lesser restoration* spell can bring him back to being sober, at which point he thanks the PCs greatly and realizes what an ass he's been making of himself—he returns to Citadel Volshyenek on his own in this event to make amends.

If the PCs agree to a duel with Grau, he's ready to fight there and then. If the PCs fight in public, the Korvosan Guard arrives in 3d6 rounds to try to break things up, but Grau agrees to relocate to a more private area (such as a back alley) if the suggestion is made.

GRAU SOLDADO **CR 5**

XP 1,600
Male human fighter 4/rogue 2
N Medium humanoid (human)
Init +4; **Senses** Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 17 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 shield)
hp 63 (6 HD; 2d8+4d10+28)
Fort +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** –2 (+1 vs. fear)
Weaknesses drunk

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *+1 mithral longsword* +6 (1d8/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

TACTICS

During Combat Grau's sword is a masterful piece of work—the only thing of any real value he still owns. It represents the talent he once had, but as long as he's drunk, he makes poor choices. He always uses Power Attack and more or less ignores any opportunity to set up a sneak attack. He limits his attacks to the PC whom he challenged to a duel, but if any other PC enters the fight he sputters and cries out "Foul! You'll pay for that, varlet!" and from that point on attacks random PCs each round, to the extent that he may well provoke attacks of opportunity as he moves from foe to foe.

Morale If Grau is reduced to fewer than 10 hit points, the fight goes out of him entirely; he drops his sword and breaks down in tears of self-loathing.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 14, **Con** 18, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +4 (+6 sunder); **CMD** 19 (21 vs. sunder)

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Acrobatics), Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills Acrobatics +8, Bluff +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (local) +4, Perception +6, Sense Motive +6, Sleight of Hand +2

Languages Common, Varisian

SQ armor training 1, rogue talent (resiliency), trapfinding +1

Gear mwk chainmail, light steel shield, *+1 mithral longsword*, 32 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Drunk (Ex) As long as Grau remains drunk, he functions as if he were sickened—these penalties are included in the statistics above.

Story Award: If the PCs manage to get Grau back to the Korvosan Guard more or less intact, award them XP as if they'd defeated him in combat.

Event 7: Otyugh Uprising (CR 4)

This event should occur at some point as the PCs explore the streets of Korvosa and after they've reached 3rd level.

Creature: A rumble issues from below, and a moment later the city street cracks apart and long fissures run across the bricks. The road bursts upward, casting chunks of rock into the air and raining bricks on the surrounding area. The stench of sewer filth and garbage belches forth, heralding the approach of a loud and hungry otyugh, drawn by the chaos and noise of the world above. Korvosa uses otyughs as a method to keep the sewers under Old Korvosa clean and flowing, but now and then some of them, like this one, escape their pits and find their way into the city's main sewers. The otyugh is as hungry as it is curious about all the noise up top, and focuses its attacks on the PCs if they swiftly engage—otherwise it starts snatching up shrieking commoners and biting them. The monster flees back into the sewers if reduced to 10 or fewer hp.

OTYUGH **CR 4**

XP 1,200

hp 39 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 223)

Event 8: Long Live the Queen!

This event takes place as soon as the PCs decide to return the brooch they found in Gaedren's lair to the queen. This event triggers much of the rest of this chapter, and you should strive to have the PCs deliver the brooch soon after its recovery at the end of Part 1.

The initial civil unrest and outbreaks of riots are quelled quickly, thanks to swift action by the Korvosan Guard, the Sable Company, and the Hellknights. By the time the PCs decide to approach Castle Korvosa to return the queen's brooch, the streets should once again be relatively safe to walk, but a thick tension remains in the air. For the remainder of this chapter, riots, fires, looting, and similar events continue to erupt, and certain small parts of the city remain out of control. As a result, when this event begins, stop using the Korvosa (Anarchy) statistics for the city and use the Korvosa (Unrest) statistics on page 399 instead.

Castle Korvosa's long shadow looms over the city as a terrifying testament to the power of whatever mighty overlord ruled this land thousands of years ago. A magnificent achievement of architecture, the castle walls and spires rise high into the sky above. The entire structure looms even higher because of its ancient foundation—a Thassilonian monument in the shape of an immense flat-topped pyramid. Although one corner of this impressive foundation has fallen into ruin, the additions built onto the sides by eager and talented Korvosan masons have created one of the most recognizable landmarks in all of Varisia.

Castle Korvosa can be approached from all four directions—ramps and stairways allow access up the sides of the pyramid to the courtyard surrounding the

central structure. Normally, petitioners to the monarchy (such as PCs seeking to return a stolen brooch) would approach from a broad ramp, wait in a public courtyard to speak to the Korvosan Guards on duty, and hope for a chance to be heard. In these frantic times, the Castle has been locked tight and bristles with swords and crossbows. Guards demand to know the PCs' business as they approach, then converse among themselves quickly at the answer. As long as the PCs provide a reasonable answer, the nervous guards don't immediately chase them off. Mentioning that they wish to return the queen's missing brooch certainly gets things moving a little faster, as does a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check.

Before too long, one of the guards nods at the PCs and indicates that they should head up the stairs to the courtyard. Weapons must be left with the guards at the base of the stairs—no obvious weapons are allowed in the queen's company. Characters who refuse to part with their weapons are not allowed to see the queen, but those who acquiesce have no need to fear—their weapons are returned as soon as their business with the queen is done.

The invitation to ascend to the castle isn't one extended out of respect for the PCs or even allowed so they can return the stolen brooch in person—Queen Ileosa has told her guards that any group of trustworthy-seeming adventurers that approaches for work should be allowed into the castle to introduce themselves. The Korvosan Guard finds this an unwise decision, but the queen's orders are orders. If she wants to trust mercenaries to aid in keeping the city's peace, it's the Korvosan Guard's duty to help her realize the plan.

A group of obviously nervous guards armed with heavy crossbows and swords escort the PCs up to the castle. Feel free to refer to the map and encounter locations described in Chapter 6 of this book as needed, keeping in mind that the castle as presented at the end of this campaign is in many ways a different place then than it is now. As the PCs reach the top of the pyramid and the wide stairs curling up to the castle's third floor, where the Crimson Throne awaits, they are greeted by a stern-looking woman dressed in magnificent full plate armor—the queen's handmaiden, bodyguard, and closest companion: Sabina Merrin (see page 454).

Sabina nods curtly at the PCs as they approach, then says, "Greetings. They tell me you've something that belongs to the queen. Is this correct?" If the PCs show her the brooch, Sabina smiles and steps aside, holding out a hand to welcome the PCs to Castle Korvosa. As the guards make to follow, she steps in: "You may return to your posts. These heroes pose no threat to the queen." Sabina hopes to engender a bit of trust in the PCs by doing so—she certainly isn't threatened by them and is confident she can handle any trouble they might have planned.

Sabina Merrin is not much for mincing words. She curtly asks the PCs how they'd like to be introduced to the queen. As they answer, she continues to appraise their trustworthiness and skill, and more importantly, their eagerness to please the queen. As they round the corner, she announces their arrival with a loud, clear voice, then steps aside to allow the PCs to enter the throne room.

Queen Ileosa sits upon the Crimson Throne. She is a vision of beauty despite the black mourning dress and veil she wears in honor of her husband's death. A small silver coffer sits in her lap. The throne room itself—an open area with a vaulted ceiling, stained-glass windows of past kings and queens looking down from the eastern wall, and crimson tapestries hanging along the others—is pristine but strangely empty. An immense fireplace offers additional light and heat to the hall, and a silk carpet provides a gently arching path to the throne's base. Sabina takes the brooch from the PCs, hands it over to her queen with a flourish, and then takes up a position at the throne's left side as Ileosa addresses the PCs.

"This brooch was stolen from me some time ago—I had not expected to see it again, truth be told. And yet, here on my darkest day, you come before me with kindness. The return of this brooch is much more than an honorable deed. It is inspiration. It is hope.

"I love Korvosa, as my husband did before me. His death has shocked the city as it has me, but I will not see his legacy destroyed in death, and I shall not see my city torn apart. All Korvosa stands at the precipice of a disaster wrought by her citizens—these riots cannot continue. You have already done my heart a great service in returning this precious heirloom to me on this dark day, and you shall be rewarded. Yet perhaps you can serve your city more.

"The Korvosan Guard is stretched thin, and it could certainly use the aid of heroes such as you. If you so choose, I shall have Sabina see to it that you have an escort of guards when you leave here—they can see to your safe journey to Citadel Volshyenek. I shall send word ahead of you to Field Marshal Cressida Kroft to let her know you are on the way. Now, I need to retire to my chambers—my grief has drained me. Again, I thank you for the kindness you have shown me, and I hope your days of serving the crown are only just beginning."

With this, the queen directs Sabina to hand over the reward for returning the brooch. The bodyguard swiftly does so, handing the small silver chest (itself worth 50 gp) to the PCs. Inside the red-velvet-lined interior rest 12 gold ingots imprinted with the royal seal of Korvosa—each bar is worth 100 gp.

At this point, Queen Ileosa excuses herself. With a whirl of the hem of her mourning dress, Queen Ileosa is gone from sight. Sabina escorts the PCs back out of Castle

Korvosa and, if they wish, assigns them an escort to the Citadel before bidding them farewell also.

Of course, Queen Ileosa is playing the PCs this whole time. The only truly honest emotion she shows is her delight at getting back her brooch. Yet the PCs should, at this point, have no reason to suspect the queen of deception. She's currently under the effects of a *misdirection* spell, and any attempt to read her aura instead reads Sabina's aura, indicating that Ileosa is a lawful neutral human. This is the primary reason Ileosa never lets Sabina wander far from her side in public—she needs the woman to shield her true nature from prying divinations.

CRESSIDA KROFT

If the PCs accept Sabina's offer of several Korvosan Guards as escorts, they should be able to make the journey to Citadel Volshyenek without trouble—continue at this point with **Event 9**, below.

Story Award: In addition to the monetary award, grant the PCs 800 XP for meeting the queen and returning her recovered brooch.

Event 9: Welcome to the Guard

Citadel Volshyenek is located in Midland, overlooking Jeggare Harbor, where it serves as the base of operations for the Korvosan Guard. The Citadel currently operates on a skeleton crew, as almost all available guards are hard at work in the city, desperately trying to keep order. Two nervous guards stand at the entrance to the yard, but as the queen promised, the PCs are expected. The guards wave the party through, and one escorts the PCs into the central keep, where a harried and tired-looking woman rises from her desk to greet the PCs—this is Field Marshal Cressida Kroft, an attractive, dark-haired human woman dressed in red armor. She introduces herself and asks for the PCs' names as she bids them to sit. Since Eodred II's death, Cressida hasn't slept, yet she bears her exhaustion well, in no small part due to regular visits from a priest of Abadar who casts *lesser restoration* on her to help in fighting back fatigue. She sighs deeply as she speaks to the PCs. (See page 442 for Cressida Kroft's statistics and additional information about her personality and background.)

"Ah, yes—you are the ones sent by Queen Ileosa. Greetings! My name is Cressida, and heroes of your caliber are exactly what Korvosa needs now. You've been on the streets. You know better than me how bad things are out there. It's breaking my heart to see Korvosa tear itself apart like this. Every little bit of aid we can get from upstanding citizens like you helps. If you're willing, I'd very much like to retain your services as agents of the Guard. You will, of course, be well compensated for these services."

Assuming the PCs agree to hear her out, Cressida continues. Read or paraphrase the following.

"Korvosa's got enough troubles as it is without my own guards losing their way. Many have deserted their posts, more concerned about friends and family than the city. I can understand this, yet not all of the deserters have family—some of them are simply using the riots as an excuse for personal gain. One such man is Verik Vancaskerkin. Worse than a lone deserter, he's convinced a small group of fellow guards that Queen Ileosa is going to ruin the city. Whether she does or doesn't isn't the point—right now, we've got a city-wide crisis on our hands, and I need all of my guards working with me to see us through. A deserter is worse than a lost resource—it's an infection. I can't afford to pull any of my other patrols off duty to deal with Vancaskerkin, and I'd rather not expose any of them to him anyway, since I don't want Vancaskerkin to infect more guards with his talk of secession, nor do I want some overly patriotic guard killing Vancaskerkin outright. I need impartial, skilled talent. Talent like you.

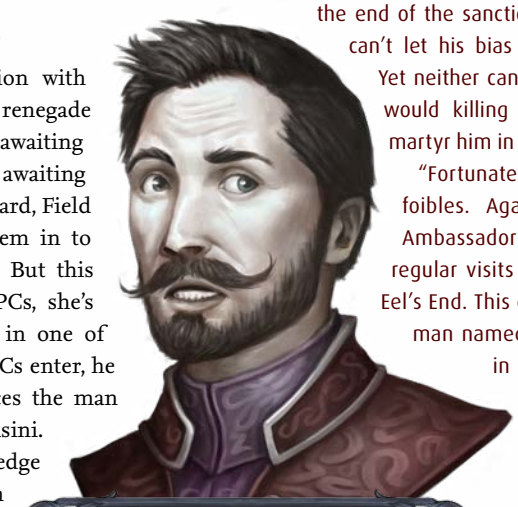
"Vancaskerkin and his followers have holed up in an abandoned butcher's shop up in Northgate—a place once called 'All the World's Meat.' I need you there. Try to avoid killing any of the deserters if you can, but if you must, they brought it upon themselves when they threw in their lot with Vancaskerkin. I'd really prefer it if you could capture Vancaskerkin alive and return him to me for interrogation, but if he makes that impossible, I'll accept his body as well. Finally, see if you can find out why Verik deserted—if there's more to it than simple personal politics, I need to know immediately. Bring me Verik alive, and there's a five hundred gold in it for you. Dead, he's worth only half that."

Cressida offers the PCs a spot in the Citadel barracks if they need somewhere to stay the night or to rest. This gives the party not only a place to sleep and eat while they're in the service of the Guard, but also a place to retreat to for safety between adventures. Cressida has worked with adventuring parties before and knows how to treat them well. She's destined to become one of the PCs' stronger allies during Curse of the Crimson Throne, so make an extra effort to see that the PCs see her as a friend and supporter.

Once the PCs head out to investigate All the World's Meat, continue with that encounter location in Part 3, starting on page 44.

Event 10: The Ambassador's Secret

After the PCs resolve the situation with Verik Vancaskerkin (with the renegade guard either behind bars and awaiting trial for desertion or in a coffin awaiting burial) and have collected their reward, Field Marshal Cressida Kroft invites them in to her office with another job offer. But this time, when she meets with the PCs, she's not alone. A handsome man sits in one of the chairs at her desk, and as the PCs enter, he rises and bows. Cressida introduces the man as an old friend—Vencarlo Orisini. With a successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) check, a PC recognizes him as one of Korvosa's most respected and renowned teachers of the honorable arts of fencing and swordplay. Vencarlo is a charming man, and he bows deeply as he's introduced (see page 462 for his statistics and details on his history and personality). Cressida explains that although Vencarlo himself has always been an outspoken critic of Korvosa's government, she has always valued him as a friend and advisor. Particularly in these dark times, his input about the temperament and morale of the citizens of Korvosa is invaluable to the field marshal, who's desperate to get the city back under control. Vencarlo is complimentary and polite to the PCs, congratulating them on their successes and noting that "If Korvosa had more fine folk like you, we'd already be out of this mess." He pays particular attention to attractive female PCs, going as far as to kiss the backs of their hands and offering one of them his chair. The man is gregarious, and you should strive to present him as a gentleman and philosopher capable of carrying on intelligent discussion on a variety of topics, but before he can really get to know the PCs, Cressida gently cuts him off.



DARVAYNE GIOS AMPREI

"As much as I would enjoy continuing the conversation, I fear we just don't have time. Vencarlo has learned something that could degrade into sanctions, embargoes, or even war against Cheliax if we don't act now. This problem is a man named Darvayne Gios Amprei, an ambassador from Cheliax whose disdain for Korvosa is well documented, though he's taken great pleasure in what our city has to offer. Even before this recent unrest, this man was ready to recommend to his government a sanction on trade, or perhaps even an embargo. Vencarlo has learned through his own considerable sources that Ambassador Amprei's actual goals are to undermine Korvosa's economy to the point where he can buy up large portions of the city from desperate landholders. He plans to establish himself in a position of power here before advising the end of the sanctions with his allies in Cheliax. We can't let his bias or personal plans hurt Korvosa. Yet neither can we take drastic action—not only would killing him be wrong, but it'd simply martyr him in Cheliax's eyes.

"Fortunately, the ambassador has his foibles. Again, Vencarlo has learned that Ambassador Amprei has been making fairly regular visits to a place in Old Korvosa called Eel's End. This den of vice is run by a dangerous man named Devargo Barvasi, better known in Korvosa's alleys as the King of Spiders. I'd love to put Devargo out of business, but he pays his vice taxes regularly and never causes any problems—in fact, since he keeps his business constrained entirely within the five ships moored at Eel's End, he's actually one of the least of my worries. Truth be told, I can't decide whether Devargo is a stirge or a kraken. He seems like a bloodsucking pest most days, but sometimes I fear just how far his tentacles have wormed their way into our great city. In this case though, his insidious web stretching across Korvosa's underworld might be to our advantage.

"Devargo would never let someone he recognizes as an ally of the Guard into Eel's End, but your group's a different case. I'd like you to pay a visit to Eel's End and secure an audience with Devargo. Find out what he knows about Amprei, get proof of any illicit goings-on the ambassador might be involved with, and bring that proof to me. I can use it to undermine any forthcoming attempts by him to get Cheliax to cut us off. Devargo might not be willing to part with his information easily. I'll supply you with some gold to bribe him, and whatever's left over you can keep for yourself. Remember: Devargo is dangerous, but so are you—if things get violent, I wouldn't mourn his passing."

Cressida hands one of the PCs a small pouch filled with 1,000 gp—their funds for bribing Devargo. With a successful DC 25 Diplomacy check, the PCs can convince Cressida to increase this amount to 1,500 gp. As she prepares to give the PCs the address of Eel's End, Vencarlo steps in, saying he was heading back up to his academy in Old Korvosa anyway, and that he'd love to escort the PCs as far as Old Korvosa whenever they're ready.

Continue with Eel's End on page 49 when the PCs depart with Vencarlo on their way to Old Korvosa.

Development: When the PCs return to Citadel Volshyenek and hand over the scandalous letters to Field

Marshal Cressida Kroft, she blushes as she reads them and quickly passes them to a clerk for safekeeping, stating that they should work perfectly should the need for some leverage against the ambassador ever come up. She thanks the PCs again, rewarding them with a further 500 gp over and above the bribe money she gave them earlier to pay Devargo. If she's received word that the King of Spiders is dead, she seems even more pleased but can't, legally, award the PCs any more gold for something she'd rather not admit to knowing about. Instead, she tells them that, "for going above and beyond in Korvosa's service," she'd like to award each PC the drake's mark, a medal that symbolizes a character is a champion of Korvosa. These medals are worth 400 gp, but more importantly, they grant a +2 circumstance bonus on Diplomacy checks made against citizens of Korvosa if worn openly.

Event 11: The Queen's Scapegoat

Once the PCs have dealt with Eel's End, Devargo, and the ambassador's secret, a startling new rumor starts to filter through the streets—at your discretion, the PCs may even hear of this rumor first while they're still at Eel's End. At this point, the whispers that Ileosa was in some way responsible for Eodred II's death begin to shift, with new rumors suggesting a local artist was responsible for his demise. Shortly after hearing these rumors, the PCs should receive an urgent summons from Cressida Kroft regarding this new information (if they're not already on their way back to report to her on their mission to Eel's End).

With these rumors riling the city up, once again use the Korvosa (Anarchy) statistics for the city (see page 399).

The gossip about the king having been murdered by Queen Ileosa, of course, is correct. As soon as Queen Ileosa learns of these rumors, she realizes that she needs resolution as swiftly as possible, theorizing that the people of Korvosa don't want to see her hang for regicide as much as they just want someone to pin the blame upon. She decides to find a scapegoat for the king's death, and she has just the right person in mind—a pretty young artist named Trinia Sabor who painted a portrait of the king not half a month before his death. Eodred II's chamberlain secured the girl's services, hoping that regular visits from the artist would improve his health and spirits. Trinia spent hours in private audience with the monarch while Ileosa seethed with jealousy. Trinia's innocent eyes, golden hair, and lithe frame set many of the castle guards gawking and murmuring as she came and went, and Ileosa even swore she caught Eodred II gazing wistfully at the girl on more than one occasion.

Ileosa's selection of Trinia as the scapegoat is not random—fueled by Kazavon's wrath, Ileosa's natural jealousies and prejudices are amplified. Her jealousy of potential rivals is the same emotion destined to fuel one of Korvosa's most dangerous new organizations—the Gray Maidens. Even as she engineers Trinia's capture and execution, Ileosa has already begun forming this soon-to-be notorious faction of guards.

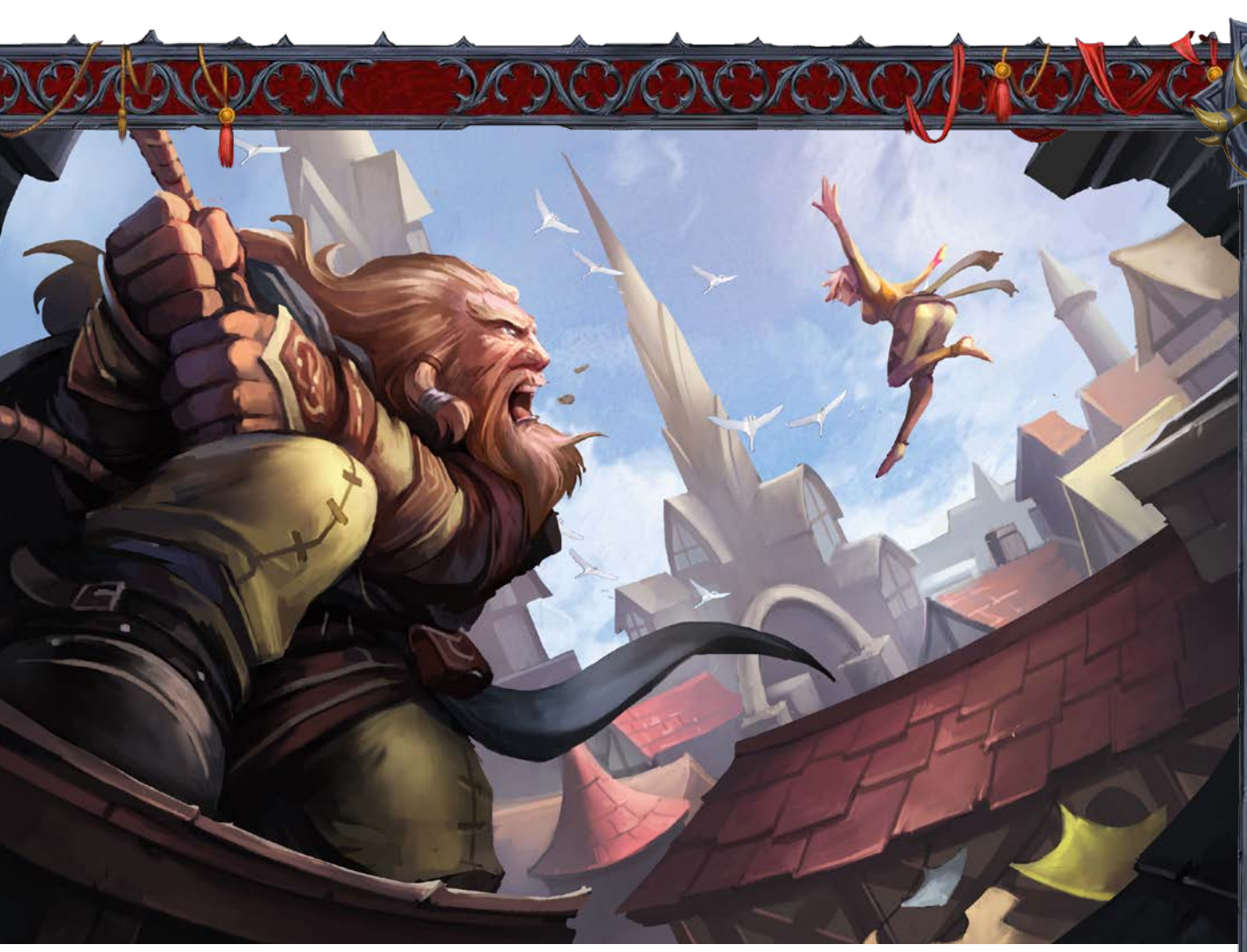
As regards setting up her scapegoat, Ileosa's first act is to question the guards she saw gawking at Trinia. With Sabina's aid, Ileosa coaxes eye-witness (but fabricated) accounts of Trinia behaving oddly during her trips to the Castle. Eventually, working on her own, Ileosa wrenches a false confession from one guard who, under the duress of agonizing torture, swears he was part of the young painter's plot and saw her slipping a specially prepared poison powder into Eodred II's tea the night he took ill and her portrait of him was completed.

This confession, repeated in the presence of Sabina and several Korvosan Guard officers (including Cressida Kroft, who alone among those gathered silently suspects the reliability of the confession), triggers a city-wide hunt for the young artist. Word of the confession spreads rapidly, and the guard's apparent suicide (a leap from one of the towers of Castle Korvosa—a leap, in truth, propelled by Sabina, who was in a rage that the guard hadn't come to her earlier with the news) cements Korvosa's anger. In no time, Trinia's name becomes a household word, and once again riots threaten to erupt in the streets. This time, however, the cries are not for the queen's death, but the death of the king's "true" murderer, Trinia Sabor.

Such is the state of things when Cressida Kroft contacts the PCs with a third mission, taking them into the solitude of her office to speak to them alone, without the prying ears of other officers. Cressida suspects there's more going on than meets the eye and wants the PCs to verify the truth behind the accusations if they can.

"You've doubtless heard the stories that the king's killer has been named. Yet there's something more going on here, I'm afraid. Queen Ileosa could have quietly had this Trinia Sabor arrested at any time, yet the way in which she revealed the information to the city seems to me like she wants the riots to come back. With the city the way it is, the girl doesn't stand a chance of a fair trial. They'll lynch her the moment they catch her. Even if she did kill the king, mob justice isn't the way. Worse, if she's innocent, the real killer—if indeed the king was murdered at all in the first place—can use this distraction to throw us off the trail forever.

"Before Trinia is captured and executed, I need to be absolutely sure she's guilty. And that means we need to catch her before someone else does. I've managed to determine her last known address—a flat in Midland at 42 Moon Street—but soon, so will the rest of the Guard, and the mob itself, for that matter. These rumors have riled up the locals something fierce, and there's even bands of Hellknights of the Order of the Nail patrolling the streets looking for her. On top of all



this, word is that Queen Ileosa's not satisfied with what the Korvosan Guard's been doing to address the situation, and that she's preparing to disband the Sable Company and reveal a newly founded order of specialized guards to help bring order to the city. For now, I've still got a fair number of Korvosan Guards who are loyal to me, but the problem is that I've got them at work keeping things from getting any worse—and if I were to send them into Midland, they'd trigger a riot.

"I'm sure you can see where this is going. I need you to get into Midland, find Trinia, and bring her back to me so we can deliver her, safe and sound, to somewhere she can be interrogated—preferably with magic, so we can be absolutely sure about her role in Eodred II's death. Get in there, catch her, and get out without letting the mob or the Hellknights or the queen's guards get their hands on her. I'll have loyal agents and officers nearby to take her into custody. If you can get her to one of them, we'll be in the clear. Any questions?"

Cressida does her best to answer any questions the PCs might have, but she is clearly worried—she'd like the PCs to be off as soon as they can. She promises them a reward of 1,000 gp if they can deliver Trinia safe and sound to a member of the Korvosan Guard and points out that every minute they delay is 1 more minute for the mob in Midland to grow. Once the PCs agree to take on this latest task, proceed with **Event 12** below.

Event 12: Into the Shingles (CR 4)

This event occurs once the PCs travel to Midland to seek out the suspected killer Trinia Sabor.

Although the PCs might worry that finding Trinia will be difficult, entering Midland without arousing suspicion is relatively easy if they take pains to avoid the main streets. An encounter with rioters along the way (see page 32) would certainly help build tension if you want, but the PCs should be able to arrive at 42 Moon Street soon enough. They find the address in a densely built section of the city, a place where, at ground level, direct sunlight is a rarity. Above, jury-rigged catwalks, overhanging roofs, lines of laundry, and homemade bridges of rope and boards create a cluttered tangle, a multi-level mess of gutters, upper floors, and rooftops. This is the slum above—a sprawl known as the Shingles (see page 410 in Appendix 2 for more details).

This is where Trinia lives, and this is why the mob hasn't found her yet. Still, the woman is frightened. Her neighbors remember how excited she was when she was hired to paint the king's portrait, and how generous she was with the gold she took away from the commission,

SHINGLES CHASE OBSTACLES

The following obstacles lie in wait for Trinia and the PCs in the chase through the Shingles.

Card	Obstacle	Skill and DC
1	Cluttered rooftop	Acrobatics DC 10 or Climb DC 15
2	Crumbling rooftop	Climb DC 15 or Acrobatics DC 20
3	Gap in wall	Escape Artist DC 15 or Climb DC 20
4	Hidden shortcut	Perception DC 15 or Escape Artist DC 20
5	Narrow hole in wall	Climb DC 20 or Escape Artist DC 25
6	Narrow rooftop leap	Acrobatics DC 15 or Climb DC 20
7	Burst of stirges	Intimidate DC 15 or Perception DC 20
8	Tightrope shortcut	Acrobatics DC 20 or Climb DC 25
9	Very hidden shortcut	Perception DC 25 or Climb DC 30
10	Very steep roof	Climb DC 10 or Acrobatics DC 15
11	Avoid drain spider nest	Survival DC 15 or Knowledge (nature) DC 20
12	Surly rooftop vagrant	Intimidate DC 10 or Bluff DC 15
13	Jagged nails	Perception DC 10 or Acrobatics DC 15
14	Cranky rooftop tomcat	Handle Animal DC 10 or Sense Motive DC 15
15	Tangle of debris	Disable Device DC 10 or Strength DC 15

which is why they haven't yet turned her over to the crowd. They simply can't or won't believe that such a friendly, unselfish woman could have done something as terrible as killing a king. While her neighbors and friends have begun to distance themselves, they haven't abandoned her completely. As she hides out in her third-floor flat, hoping and waiting for the mob to die down so she can try to flee the city, her neighbors do their best to divert the mob away from her. When it becomes obvious that the PCs know where she lives, these neighbors send up an alarm to let Trinia know she's been found out. Only if the PCs are incredibly stealthy or manage to convince the 2d6 neighbors they encounter on their way up to Trinia's flat (each of whom can be won over with a successful Bluff check against a Sense Motive with a +3 modifier) do they have a chance to catch the woman in her home—otherwise she has a head start on the PCs in the resulting rooftop chase (see Shingles Chase on page 41).

The building Trinia's been living in is an old tenement, three floors high and containing two dozen flats, many of which are homes to artists, singers, students, and artisans. Trinia's flat is on the third floor in the southwest corner, and the PCs' directions lead them here with little problem. However, the door is barricaded by several chairs Trinia has pushed up against it from the inside (the tenement doors have no real locks). A successful DC 16 Strength check is needed to push the door open—an act that should give Trinia at least a round or 2 to get a head start on her flight through the Shingles. When the PCs gain entry to her 15-foot-by-15-foot flat, proceed to Shingles Chase after reading or paraphrasing the description of her home as follows.

This one-room flat combines all the amenities of a bedroom, a kitchen, and a painter's studio, leaving little space for much else. A stack of cheese and bread sits on the counter next to several full waterskins, while the easel in the opposite corner holds a half-completed painting of an imp and a house drake fighting atop a church steeple. A single window looks out over the tangled rooftops of the city; just under it sits a low bed.

Creature: Trinia has never been good with money—she's already spent all of what she was paid to capture Eodred II's likeness in portrait, and there's nothing in her flat of value. Certainly, there's no evidence to be found here to indicate that she killed the king. Of course, the PCs probably don't have much time to look through her flat when they first arrive. Chances are great that she's been warned of the PCs' approach by her neighbors or by the sound of the PCs fumbling at her barricaded door, in which case she's taken the time to cast *minor image* to make it appear that she's sleeping in her bed. She ceases concentrating on the illusion as soon as the PCs enter the room, so it persists for 2 rounds before vanishing. During this time, she slowly creeps away across the rooftops below her window. She must attempt a Stealth check each round, and all characters in her flat can attempt Perception checks to notice her. Anyone who looks out the window gains a +5 bonus on the check. If 4 rounds pass before she's spotted, she manages to make it over the next building's roof and around the corner and effectively escapes the PCs (only to be caught by the Sable Company a short time later).

If the PCs manage the unlikely event of reaching her flat without her neighbors giving her advance warning, the amount of time it takes the PCs to smash through

her door indicates how much time she has to escape. She's slept in her gear, but takes time to grab her dagger and *wand of daze monster* as well before leaping out her window. In this event, she doesn't bother with *minor image*, and a successful DC 5 Perception check is all the PCs need to notice her fleeing across the rooftops.

If the PCs manage not only to get to her flat without raising the alarm but also to get into the room without smashing down her door, they find her just waking up from a fitful sleep; in this case she leaves her dagger and wand behind as she immediately leaps out the window and flees into the Shingles.

TRINIA SABOR **CR 4**

XP 1,200

hp 36 (see page 460)

Shingles Chase: Once the PCs spot or hear Trinia, she abandons stealth and flees at top speed across the Shingles. If the PCs want to catch her, they must give chase across the cluttered, tangled, and dangerous rooftop slums. Trinia has the advantage of familiarity with the area, but the PCs have the advantage of numbers—by attempting dangerous leaps from rooftop to rooftop, scrambling frantically up walls, and navigating narrow walkways, they have a good chance of catching her.

The Shingles are a tangled, confusing maze consisting of multiple levels, interconnected bridges, ropes, and cluttered swaths of rooftops. Vagrants, thugs, imp nests, stirges, weakened rooftops, and even the odd choker make the place even more dangerous. Catching Trinia is not a simple matter of being faster or cutting her off at a corner. Neither is it necessarily efficient to provide a map of the area—tracking the movement of a full party of PCs to every detail would compromise the excitement and fast pace of the chase.

The best way to run this encounter is to use the chase rules detailed on pages 232–233 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*. The chase covers 15 chase cards—you can select 15 appropriate cards from one of Paizo's Chase Card decks, or you can use the 15 obstacles listed in the Shingles Obstacles sidebar on page 40. If the PCs manage to completely surprise Trinia, the chase has a sudden start and all the PCs and Trinia start on the first card. If the PCs alert her beforehand but don't give her time to create an illusion of herself in the bed, Trinia has a three-card head start. If her neighbors give warning and she creates the illusion of herself, she has a five-card head start, plus one additional card per round that passes between the PCs entering her flat and realizing she's not home.

There's an additional danger in this chase beyond simply falling behind. If a character becomes mired on a card, this indicates he or she has fallen to the street below and takes 2d6 points of falling damage. Such a character has two choices to get back into the chase: either succeed at a DC 15 Climb check to return to the Shingles (and to the card in which he became mired) or wind through alleys and over fences and through mobs to continue the chase by succeeding at a DC 15 Strength or Dexterity check (his choice) to move one card. A fallen character cannot attempt to move two or three cards until he climbs back up into the Shingles.

Trinia generally moves only one card at a time as long as she maintains at least a three-card lead over the PCs. She uses her *wand of daze monster* against the closest PC in an attempt to slow down pursuit and always chooses Acrobatics checks whenever she can, taking risks to move three cards when a PC is within two cards of her position. If a PC is on her same card, she uses *hideous laughter* in an attempt to shut him down for a few rounds.

If a character ends his turn on the same card as Trinia, he can attempt a single grapple check to grab and restrain her. Once Trinia is pinned, unconscious, or killed, the chase ends. Likewise, the chase ends if Trinia manages to move off of card 15.

If the PCs catch Trinia, she breaks down in tears, sobbing that she's been set up, that she didn't kill the king, and that she doesn't want to die. She's telling the truth, but it's up to the PCs to decide whether they believe her and what to do about it. If they turn her over to the queen's guards, she's carted off to Castle Korvosa to await her fate. If they make sure to turn her over to Cressida, the field marshal keeps the capture quiet and intends to pursue a fair and balanced interrogation, but unless the PCs help, word gets out and guards who are loyal to the queen intervene, forcing Cressida to hand Trinia over to Queen Ileosa.

If the PCs decide to let Trinia go, or if she escapes them in the chase, she doesn't escape the law. Not long after her escape she's spotted by a patrol of Hellknights who round her up and hand her over to the queen for a nice reward.

Only if the PCs take pains to provide Trinia with a place to hide in the city, perhaps with Cressida's direct aid, does she have a chance to escape capture. If the PCs hide her themselves, it's up to you to decide whether the deception is enough to keep her safe until the end of the chapter—see the Chapter Conclusion for more details. If Cressida is involved, she calls upon her friend Vencarlo, who within 30 minutes arrives and bustles Trinia off to a safe place in Old Korvosa to hide; in this case, you can assume she's automatically safe for the remainder of the chapter. In this case, the queen still needs a scapegoat, and one day after the chase word spreads that the assassin has been captured after all, and that she has been imprisoned in Castle Korvosa pending a closed-to-the-public trial. The PCs may be concerned in this case, but checking up on Trinia reveals she's still safe and sound. Whether or not

the rumors of the captured assassin are legitimate or not (and if they are, who might be unfortunate enough to play the role of "captured assassin") remains a mystery for the moment, for in the meantime, Cressida has a more important matter for the PCs—continue with **Event 13**.

Once this event resolves, things in Korvosa calm. Use the Korvosa (Unrest) statistics on page 399 for the remainder of this chapter and the start of the next.

Story Award: If the PCs catch Trinia, award them experience as if they had defeated her in combat (even if they ultimately decide to hide her or let her go).

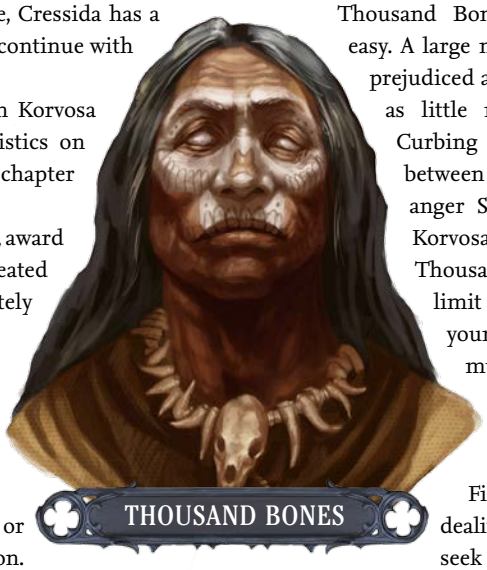
If the PCs catch Trinia and turn her over to Cressida, Cressida pays the PCs 1,000 gp as a reward. If they let her go or put her in hiding, Cressida agrees with their choice but points out that this is not the time or place to be public about such a decision. Furthermore, she would prefer not to pay the PCs now so as to avoid a money trail, should the situation be investigated later by their enemies. She promises to pay the PCs 2,000 gp at a later date once things have settled down, and she's true to her word, adding the 2,000 gp to the reward fee for recovering Gaekhen's body (see **Event 13**), so that, to outward appearances, the PCs are being paid for that service instead of something subversive.

If the PCs catch Trinia and decide to turn her over to the queen themselves, Ileosa is pleased with their choice but somewhat dismissive of their actions. With a wave of her hand, she indicates that Sabina should hand the PCs a silk pouch containing 200 pp as a reward, but also invites the PCs to attend Trinia's execution when the time comes—she makes no mention of a trial. See the Chapter Conclusion for more details.

Event 13: A Missing Body

This final event occurs soon after Trinia either is captured or goes into hiding. As news that the assassin has been apprehended spreads (even if Trinia is still in hiding and the "assassin" is merely another scapegoat selected by the queen), the mood in Korvosa once again calms down. Yet during the recent mob fervor and riots revolving around the queen's announcement that the king was assassinated, a group of racist thugs took the opportunity to use the unrest to fuel their own agenda.

Tensions between Korvosa and the Shoanti have simmered since the city's foundation some 300 years ago, but in recent years those Shoanti who continue to dwell in Korvosa have sought a more peaceful accord. Led by a visionary known as Thousand Bones, a large group of Shoanti have been in talks with the Korvosan government for years now, hoping to find a way their two peoples can coexist in peace.



THOUSAND BONES

Thousand Bones's mission is anything but easy. A large number of Korvosa's citizens are prejudiced against the Shoanti and see them as little more than violent barbarians. Curbing and moderating the violence between these racists and the quick-to-anger Shoanti who dwell in and near Korvosa is a constant battle for the man. Thousand Bones's patience reaches its limit when one of his grandsons, a young warrior named Gaekhen, is murdered by a mob that uses the unrest in Korvosa as a feeble excuse for vigilantism.

When the PCs next visit Field Marshal Cressida Kroft after dealing with Trinia (perhaps even to seek Cressida's aid in getting Trinia a safe place to hide), they find Citadel Volshyenek's guards unusually agitated and nervous. If questioned, the guards explain, "One of those Shoanti kids went and got himself killed, and now the rest of them are all worked up—if it's not one riot about to erupt, it's another! Field Marshal Kroft's in her office now, trying to talk some sense into the Shoanti ambassador. In fact, she mentioned that she's looking for you all to help with the situation."

Cressida Kroft isn't alone when the PCs arrive at her office; with her is an elderly Shoanti man of 60 winters. This is Thousand Bones (see page 458 for more details). He regards the PCs sternly while Cressida introduces him, telling the PCs that he's a shaman of the Skoan-Quah, the Clan of the Skull. Cressida bids the PCs sit, tells them about the situation with the mob violence and the murdered Shoanti man, then turns the floor over to Thousand Bones. The old shaman speaks with a deep voice, his words carefully chosen but delivered with a barely restrained anger.

"My people have worked hard to understand those who dwell in Korvosa, yet it seems each day we see new examples of how this city's people work just as hard to foster old hatreds. My grandson is dead, beaten to death by cowards in your city street. I do not blame you, yet still Gaekhen is dead, and my son and his kin are not so forgiving as I. They wish to return to the Skoan-Quah in the Cinderlands, to join with the Sklar-Quah and rally to war against Korvosa. This would be disastrous, for both our peoples. Amends must be made.

"Our ways are not as yours. If a body does not go whole to the fires of the ancestors, the smoke of a warrior's spirit cannot rise to the Great Sky. If I could send Gaekhen's body to

the Great Sky with honor and dignity, his father and brothers would listen to me and stay their wrath—the talks of peace between my people and yours could continue. But he was not just murdered. His body was taken from the scene of his death, sold by a peddler of corpses to a necromancer known as Rolth, a criminal to both our peoples. I have spoken with the spirits, and they have revealed to me that Gaekhen's body has been taken to a place below this city's graveyard, a place the spirits call the Dead Warrens.

"With this knowledge, I could surely lead a group of my finest warriors into your graveyard to retrieve Gaekhen's body, but this would be seen as an act of aggression by your people. No, it falls to you to make amends for what has been done. You must bring me Gaekhen's body, lest we be forced to recover him ourselves. And although it pains my heart to say it, we will not be gentle if it comes to this."

Thousand Bones then rises, nods curtly to Cressida, and leaves the room to return to his people and await the delivery of his grandson's body. If the PCs seem taken aback, Field Marshal Kroft apologizes for the man's brusqueness, but makes it clear she agrees with his assessment. Someone tied to Korvosa needs to find the dead Shoanti's body and return it to his people as a gesture of good will, or things will quickly go from bad to worse. If the PCs can help her, there's also another 1,000 gp reward in it for them. Cressida would like the PCs to begin immediately, but she can certainly answer a few questions the PCs are likely to have.

Who is Rolth? "Ahh... Rolth Lamm has long been a thorn in my side. A failed Academae student, Rolth's a monster of a man who was expelled after the true nature of his experiments were revealed. He was butchering vagrants, stray animals, and anything else he could get his hands on to try to build some sort of golem from their collected parts. The Academae didn't press charges because it didn't want to cause a scene—it just quietly expelled him and the man's been trouble ever since. Personally, I suspect he's responsible for a large number of additional murders over the past decade, each involving mutilation to the body, but he's a slippery one and I've never been able to find any evidence against him. He might or might not be in the Dead Warrens, but anything you can find there that could lead to his arrest would be greatly appreciated." If the PCs express shock at hearing the man's last name, Cressida can confirm that Rolth is said to be the only surviving son of local crime lord Gaedren Lamm, who she may or may not know has recently gone silent. If the PCs reveal to Cressida anything about their history with Gaedren, she congratulates them and thanks them for dealing with one of the city's more notorious thugs, but apologizes that she can't officially reward them for this task since she can't officially condone vigilantism. She warns the PCs that Rolth may well know what hand the PCs had in Gaedren's fate, and she tells them to be exceptionally wary in their dealings with the son as a result.

What are the Dead Warrens? "Korvosa's graveyards, in the Gray District, are riddled with underground chambers, some of them burrowed by ghouls or other monsters, others remnants of ancient Shoanti burial grounds. Some of these warrens are patrolled and kept clear of monsters by the church of Pharasma, yet the Gray District is a large place and the tunnels below are vast and tangled. The Pharasmins focus on containing the problems with undead and necromancers, but as soon as they wipe out one, it seems as if two are ready to spring up in its place. The problem's particularly vexing in Potter's Ward, where the bodies of the poor and homeless are buried. According to Thousand Bones, the Dead Warrens were one of his people's burial vaults. You can find the Dead Warrens in the chambers that lie under Potter's Ward."

How do we enter the Dead Warrens? "We have the man who sold Gaekhen's body to Rolth in custody: a simpleton named Elkaris. He spilled everything when we told him what was going on and how much trouble he was in. In any event, Elkaris says he delivered the body via wheelbarrow to a partially collapsed mausoleum deep in Potter's Ward, near the southern edge. A toppled and headless statue of a sword-wielding gargoyle lay in the dirt near the mausoleum's entrance—he was told to leave the body behind the gargoyle. This location matches where Thousand Bones believes the Shoanti burial grounds called the Dead Warrens are located, so that's the best place to start the search."

How will we recognize Gaekhen's body? "Thousand Bones described Gaekhen as about 18 years old with short brown hair and a distinctive scar from a firepelt's claw on his left cheek. Furthermore, Gaekhen had several large and distinctive Shoanti tribal tattoos on his arms and torso. It's unlikely that any other freshly killed Shoanti are in the Dead Warrens today, so that should be a dead giveaway."

Event 14: A Lovely Day for an Execution

The final event of this chapter, the attempted execution of the queen's scapegoat, takes place once all other plots and encounters in this chapter have concluded. Once the scapegoat (be she Trinia or another) is in custody, you should set the date of the execution so that the PCs have enough time to finish off the last bits of this chapter (which should, in theory, just be the exploration of the Dead Warrens), but if the execution occurs before this chapter is concluded, that's fine—there's plenty of wiggle room in the timing between chapters to let the PCs finish up here before the plague begins to spread in Chapter 2.

Full details on the execution itself are presented in the Chapter Conclusion section on page 66.

PART 3

BLOOD AND BONES

Although things start to settle down in Korvosa after the king's death, it swiftly becomes obvious that the city has changed significantly during its brush with anarchy. City guards have shirked their duties to become part of the problem. Established dens of criminal activity ironically become some of the safest places in Korvosa. And those who have preyed upon the weak and unfortunate of the city find new opportunities to bring misery to their victims.

This part of "Edge of Anarchy" includes three expanded encounter areas the PCs are sent to investigate over the course of the chapter: an abandoned butcher's shop called All The World's Meat, a shady bazaar of vice called Eel's End, and a dangerous dungeon of traps and monsters called the Dead Warrens.

B ALL THE WORLD'S MEAT

Sergeant Verik Vancaskerkin is not brilliant by any stretch of the imagination, but he has always been opportunistic. The sergeant probably should have hung his ambitions up the first time he was contacted by a woman named Meliya Arkona, but the sensuous prodigal daughter of the powerful Arkona family proved most persuasive.

The Arkonas are one of Korvosa's oldest noble families, and thanks to their strong ties and regular trade with the distant country of Vudra, they're one of Korvosa's wealthiest. Rare and exotic imports from Vudra guarantee the Arkonas' continued wealth, and it was on this foundation that the family rose in power to become the de facto rulers of Old Korvosa, the large island just north of the city proper. The family's own open acceptance of all manner of vice has certainly influenced the growth of Old Korvosa, yet it nevertheless keeps things under relatively tight control, so the Arkonas are viewed as heroes by much of Old Korvosa's lower class and as troublemakers by most of the rest of the city. But the Arkonas' true secret is one of Korvosa's best kept—the leaders of this family are rakshasas.

One of these rakshasas is a woman named Vimanda, and it is in her guise as Meliya Arkona that she's been stealthily infiltrating dozens of organizations and families throughout Korvosa, building a network of contacts she hopes to some day use to her advantage. Her chosen contact among the Korvosan Guard was a man of high enough rank to wield some power, but not so high so as to be the center of attention—Verik Vancaskerkin.

It was through Vimanda's contacts and her pulling of strings that Verik blazed through the lower ranks to make watch sergeant. With little more going for him than a fit physique, piercing eyes, and a winning smile, Vancaskerkin has done well for himself, but he has set his sights higher, and he definitely doesn't know when to quit.

Right after Queen Ileosa ascended the throne, the Arkonas saw the end of the current monarchy blowing in the wind. With the right moves, they hope to topple Ileosa and claim the throne for themselves by installing a puppet prince. When the protests, strikes, and violence began, Vimanda quickly contacted Verik (who believes her to be nothing more than his secret Vudrani lover, Meliya) and convinced him to gather his closest friends, forsake the Guard, and claim control of an old butcher's shop. As the Arkonas suspected, food has quickly become a source of contention in Korvosa, with regular shipments of meat and produce from outlying farms cut off. Already, Vancaskerkin and his thugs have gathered a sizable following throughout Northgate, and when that following is large enough, the Arkonas plan to step in and mobilize an army.

Vancaskerkin is in his early twenties. He escaped early from the streets of Riddleport to seek his fortune elsewhere, leaving behind several siblings, but the only one he misses is his older brother, Orik, a strong role model in Verik's younger years. Last Verik heard, Orik had been forced to flee Riddleport as well, after some scandal involving a tiefling prostitute and an alchemist. Verik hopes some day to take the time to return to Riddleport and track down his brother, but for now, his secret duties to Meliya increasingly keep his attention.

The previous owner of All the World's Meat was arrested for tax evasion and soon thereafter died in prison. His shop remained in escrow with the government for nearly a year, boarded over and empty until Vancaskerkin moved in. Verik has taken to sleeping in the small upstairs office. His four accomplices spend most of their time here as well, sleeping wherever they can find someplace comfortable. The shop is located at 22 Stirge Street.

Should the PCs ask around on the street about Verik and his boys, with a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check to gather information, they learn that the five have taken to calling themselves the Cow Hammer Boys, and that their program of free meat during the time of unrest is keeping many families from going hungry. Furthermore, the PCs also hear that the Cow Hammer Boys hire out as mercenaries—if one wishes to hire them in this manner, one must simply ask about "the night's special cuts."

B1 Shop Front (CR 1)

A sign bearing the image of a fat, smiling cow hangs above the entrance to this shop. Inside, a long counter runs over half the room's width, beyond which a door stands ajar. A low bench sits against the east wall, while to the north a marble-topped table displays cuts of meat before a wide, grimy window. A few flies circle in the air above the meat.

This room is where Verik's thugs hand out fresh meat to locals in search of food. The meat on display in the window is replaced daily, but by the end of the day the flies are present in force. This doesn't dissuade the ex-guards from handing out these aged cuts to the day's last customers, of course.

Traffic in and out of the building is heavy for the first hours of the day, as locals arrive in large numbers for free meat. Stragglers wander by now and then throughout the rest of the day, but the free meat goes fast and most of those who arrive after noon leave empty-handed. Once the sun sets, the doors into areas **B1** and **B6** are locked, but lights burn in the windows of areas **B4** and **B7** for several hours before going out. Livestock (usually skittish-looking cattle or pigs) is brought into the pen (area **B6**) every morning just before the shop opens. The animals are butchered after dark and the meat is stored in area **B3**. Based on the number of animals that pass through the pen, a PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Perception check or a DC 15 Profession (butcher) check confirms that there is an unexpectedly large amount of meat coming back out.

Creatures: The butcher's shop is staffed by four self-important ex-guards who are more impressed with Verik's rebellious nature than the concept of feeding hungry locals. They've taken to calling themselves the Cow Hammer Boys, and they enjoy the power of deciding which families eat at night. They've been talking among themselves about methods to use their newfound power to get rich, though they haven't quite decided yet if they're going to let Verik in on their plan. During the day, one guard stands at the entrance to the building, one staffs the shop front and hands out meat, and the other two handle the actual preparation of the meat in area **B4** or tend to whatever animals they've got in the pen.

Two guards stand at attention here: Baldrago (a tall man with bushy eyebrows that merge into one just above his large, flat nose) and Malder (a wheezy man whose chainmail doesn't quite fit his ample frame). Unless the PCs are disguised as down-on-their-luck locals, both guards have little interest in handing out meat to them and gruffly ask them to "kick off." Mentioning "the night's special cuts" brings an immediate end to their hostility, and Malder nods to Baldrago, who closes the front door to allow a little privacy. The Cow Hammer Boys hire themselves out for petty thuggery—they ask no questions of those who hire them, only demanding a payment of 50 gp per person to be beaten. Although the guards never openly admit that those they beat are almost always killed, they certainly imply that fact by offering guarantees that after they visit the mark, their client need never worry about the victim again. What they never allude to at all is how they dispose of the bodies.

At no time do the Cow Hammer Boys let anyone up to talk to Verik. The reason for this is simple—Verik doesn't know about the renegade guards' side business as thugs for hire, and they worry that if he found out how they've been getting rid of the bodies, he'd do the same to them. If anyone attempts to push through them into the back room (or if anyone blatantly refuses to leave the shop after being told to do so), both Baldrago and Malder raise their longbows and call out to area **B4** for help. They don't attack first unless a PC successfully makes it further into the building. If a fight breaks out, the Cow Hammer Boys open with shots from their longbows, switching to melee only if their enemies close to do the same. A Cow Hammer Boy reduced to 4 or fewer hit points attempts to flee into the city, and if at least two are killed, the others abandon Verik and flee as soon as they see proof of the other two's deaths.

COW HAMMER BOYS (2) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 each

Male human brigands (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 266)

hp 15 each

B2 Hall

The stairs in this hallway lead up to area **B7**.

B3 Meat Locker (CR 3)

The air in this room is stale, stinking of day-old meat and blood. Straw litters the floor, scattered to catch the drips from the meat as it hangs. Meat hooks are affixed to the walls and ceiling on metal rods. To the north is a low blood-stained table and two barrels of salt, while double doors stand in the wall to the south. An iron bar extends through a narrow hole at the top of the doors; the bar runs along the ceiling for five feet before ending at a vertical pole running floor to ceiling.

Meat butchered in the early evening is salted and then stored overnight in this room; by noon, it's all gone. If the PCs enter this room while meat is being stored, the majority of it consists of pork and beef, but at least a half-dozen cuts are harder to identify. A closer examination and a successful DC 20 Heal or Knowledge (nature) check reveals that these cuts don't come from animals at all, but from humanoids.

B4 Killing Floor (CR 1 and 4)

The floor of this grim chamber is strewn with blood-stained straw, and the reek of slaughter is almost overpowering. The room is a killing floor. Meat hooks dangle from a metal track affixed to the ceiling that allows the hooks and their gory loads to be moved easily around the room. In the northwest corner, a large hammer sits on the floor amid a permanent bloodstain. To the south, a bloodstained grill covers a wide hole in the floor. Just north of the grill sit two large vats of water, one boiling and one cold. Two large butcher blocks stand to the east next to barrels of salt, and in the southeast corner sits a reeking vat of cast-off meat and bones.

This is where the Cow Hammer Boys slaughter animals (and victims of their under-the-counter mercenary work), preparing them to be the next day's handouts. Animals are killed in the northwest corner of the room after being led in from the holding pens, then hung from hooks and hauled along the track over to the grate to be bled and skinned. The blood and the majority of the entrails are allowed to slop through the grate into the pit below. Once the animal is prepared, it is soaked in the boiling water and then the cool water to clean the carcass and slow decay, and is then hauled over to the blocks to be butchered.

The rusty grating in the southwest corner can be bashed through or pried up out of the ground (hardness 10, hp 15, lift DC 18, break DC 22) to allow access between the filthy tunnel below and area **B4**. The area below is a disused sewer tunnel that runs due east into the river, although the tunnel narrows down to a 4-foot-wide, mostly flooded passageway for much of that length. The Cow Hammer Boys dispose of the grisly leftovers through this grating, but anyone who drops into the tunnel below finds the half-flooded chamber to be relatively clean of debris—thanks to the scavengers who dwell there (see Creatures).

Creatures: During the day, there's a 75% chance of encountering the remaining two Cow Hammer Boys here. Parns, a broad-shouldered man with long sideburns, worked as a butcher before joining the Guard and meeting Verik; his skills made him the key recruit to Verik's plan. Parns welcomed the opportunity since the Korvosan Guard simply wasn't as exciting a job as he'd hoped. Now his job as a butcher and mercenary provides a perfect outlet for

his sadism. The other man found here is Karralo, a thin and jittery man with a sallow complexion. Of the four renegades, Karralo is the most unsure—he doesn't mind beating up folk for money, but butchering them to dispose of the evidence has made him increasingly nervous.

If Parns and Karralo aren't here during the day, they're instead in area **B5** or **B6** tending to the day's livestock. For several hours after sunset, the two are busy butchering animals in here. When victims of their mercenary work arrive, the unfortunates are smuggled into this room already unconscious or dead and wrapped in sacks. Parns particularly enjoys butchering humans, but Karralo has increasingly begged off this duty. Such grisly work typically takes place after midnight, but doesn't occur every day—usually the renegades "process" three or four victims a week in this manner.

Characters who choose to investigate the sewer tunnel below are quickly attacked by the three reefclaws that have moved in. The spiny aberrations are the only reason the room hasn't overflowed and the drainage hasn't clogged, but even then, the monsters are barely keeping up with the grisly offerings. Well-fed, the creatures attack only if they think intruders are attempting to steal their food—by searching through the remains, for example.

REEFCLAWS (3) **CR 1**

XP 400 each

hp 13 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 234)

COW HAMMER BOYS (2) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 each

Male human brigands (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 266)

hp 15 each

Treasure: A successful DC 20 Perception check in the sewer below results in a disturbing discovery: a human finger wedged in a crack between two stones just above the waterline. The reefclaws haven't yet gotten to the finger, which still wears a mithral ring set with tiny slivers of obsidian. The ring is worth 500 gp.

B5 Holding Pens

Two foul-smelling animal pens take up the majority of this room. Each pen is defined by a wooden fence set with a gate. Inside each is a long water trough and heaps of filthy hay. The floor here is hard-packed earth.

These southern pens are meant to hold animals ready for slaughter, but the Cow Hammer Boys have taken to bringing in livestock directly from the yard (area **B6**).

Treasure: Under the water trough in the southernmost pen, the Cow Hammer Boys have dug a small hole in which they hide their earnings from their mercenary work. Discovering the secret stash requires a successful DC 20 Perception check. The stash consists of several bags, which contain a total of 450 gp and 740 sp, as well as 800 gp worth of assorted pieces of jewelry and gemstones.

B6 Cattle Pen

This large cattle pen is open to the air, and the stink of manure, mud, and animal is strong, despite the breeze that wafts through the stockade's wooden fence. To the south stands a roofed shed containing a straw-filled wagon.

Every morning, a delivery of 1d6–3 cows and 1d4–2 pigs arrives here, brought by ranchers brave or desperate enough to make the trip into the city despite the rising tensions. On some days, no livestock arrives at all, forcing the Cow Hammer Boys to gather their own meat or turn away needy customers. The animals found here are skittish but relatively harmless.

B7 Break Room

A round table sits in this room, surrounded by four wooden chairs. A stack of cards sits on the tabletop. A cabinet to the southwest hangs open, revealing a tangle of dirty clothes and blankets. Four thin bedrolls lie rolled up against the north wall.

This room is where the Cow Hammer Boys come to relax every evening. They typically play cards late into the night, then unroll their bedrolls and flop down anywhere there's space when the urge to sleep hits. The stairs descend to area **B2**.

B8 Slaughterhouse Office (CR 3)

A single large desk stands in the eastern part of this large office, transformed into a makeshift bed by a bedroll and several blankets and pillows. A chamber pot sits under it. A table and three chairs sit to the west; several papers lie strewn over the table's surface. One of the papers is pinned to the tabletop by an exquisite silver dagger.

Creature: This room has been claimed by Verik as his personal quarters. He's been living here ever since he fled the Guard when the king died, emerging less frequently as his paranoia that the Korvosan Guard might try to track him down grows. He spends an increasing amount of time each day drinking and sleeping, leaving the day-to-day running of the operation to his four accomplices (which incidentally gives them a lot of leeway to conduct their mercenary work on the side). Verik hasn't seen his lover Meliya since the riots began. He entertains thoughts

of making the trek to Old Korvosa to call on her, but he hasn't yet worked up the energy to do so.

Vancaskerkin is a handsome man who still wears his Korvosan Guard livery and armor, even though he abandoned everything it stands for by organizing his gang. If he hears fighting or calls for help from his thugs below, he doesn't immediately react—he assumes the Korvosan Guard has come for him, and spends several rounds trying to decide whether to make his rebellion official by joining the fight or to clamber out a window to escape. In the end, he decides to join the fight, likely arriving just as the confrontation with his thugs below comes to an end.

Verik's initial attitude is hostile. He refuses to surrender unless he's defeated in combat or his attitude is adjusted to friendly (this requires a successful DC 36 Diplomacy check or DC 13 Intimidate check—but if intimidated, he attempts to flee at the first opportunity if he's not bound or otherwise restrained). If confronted with hard evidence that his thugs have been murdering locals on the side for pay (the stash of treasure from area **B5**, the severed finger from area **B4**, or a confession from one of his thugs would all work), his spirit breaks. Realizing how much harm he's actually been doing, he drops his weapons and allows the PCs to arrest him. He won't reveal Meliya's role in the affair unless made helpful, in which case he finally admits that it was her idea to leave the Guard and form a gang to help feed the locals. He's quick to point out that her plan isn't bad—people need to eat, after all—but can't give a good reason why one of the Arkonas would want him to do this. In any event, Meliya cannot be contacted at this point and the Arkonas have no interest in discussing her current location or any supposed links to Vancaskerkin. If the PCs do try to make contact, the Arkonas begin keeping an eye on them. This is unlikely to have any immediate repercussions, but Meliya's brother Glorio (himself a rakshasa named Bahor; see page 440) certainly begins to plot the uses the PCs might one day provide for him.

VERIK VANCASKERKIN

Verik is not the only one of Vimanda's agents in this room. The silver dagger on the desk, a gift to him from the lovely Meliya Arkona, is in fact a raktavarna rakshasa, a spy of sorts bound to Vimanda's mind and soul. In the form of the silver dagger, the raktavarna has been keeping an eye on Verik, and if it sees him captured, it immediately shifts its observation to the PCs. The creature hopes to be claimed by one of them as treasure so it can report on the PCs to Vimanda at a later date. It radiates magic if *detect magic* is used, although an attempt to identify it reveals no powers. The raktavarna remains with the PCs as long as possible—it can be sold as a normal silver dagger (and if it is, it attempts to escape its new owner to return to the PCs as a different object) but doesn't function as either magic or silver for the purposes of creatures' damage reduction.

If the raktavarna is discovered for what it truly is, it reverts to its true form and attacks for 1d3 rounds, at which point Vimanda decides the spirit has outlived its usefulness and severs her link with it, leaving it to fight to the death on its own. Confronted with the dagger's true nature, Verik is startled. He admits that the dagger was given to him by Meliya, but claims he didn't know it was some sort of "snake spy."

VERIK VANCASKERKIN **CR 3**

XP 800

Male human fighter 4

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception –1

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +3 Dex)
hp 34 (4d10+8)
Fort +5, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2 (+1 vs. fear)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee mwk spear +8 (1d8+4/×3)
Ranged mwk composite longbow +9 (1d8+6/×3)

TACTICS

During Combat Verik prefers to fight with his longbow. He switches to his spear only if someone manages to engage him in melee.
Morale Verik surrenders if brought below 6 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 16, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 13
Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 20
Feats Iron Will, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (longbow), Weapon Specialization (longbow)
Skills Handle Animal +8, Intimidate +8, Ride +7
Languages Common
SQ armor training 1
Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds* (3); **Other Gear** mwk chainmail, mwk composite longbow (+3 Str) with 20 *+1 arrows*, mwk spear, 28 gp

RAKTAVARNA RAKSHASA **CR 2**

XP 600
hp 22 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 229)

Story Award: If the PCs manage to bring Verik back alive without resorting to combat, award them 800 XP.

C EEL'S END

When Cressida Kroft initially asks the PCs to investigate Eel's End to learn more about the Chelish ambassador, Vencarlo Orisini is present and offers to accompany the PCs on most of the trip, since he's headed home to Old Korvosa himself. If the PCs accept the invitation, continue with A Walk with Vencarlo below; otherwise, skip ahead to the Eel's End encounters, which start on page 50.

A Walk with Vencarlo

Vencarlo Orisini leads a dual life: many know him as an outspoken critic of the government and an advocate of the lower class, but perhaps even more know him in his alternate persona as Blackjack, Korvosa's most loved (and hated) folk hero. Of course, very few living realize that Vencarlo and Blackjack are one and the same. As the PCs head north on their walk with Vencarlo, take time to develop him into a likable character—the PCs' fates will bring them back to him several more times over the course of Curse of the Crimson Throne. He pays particular attention to attractive female PCs or any PCs who remind him of himself in youth (brash, skilled at swordplay, and humorous). Although his interest might seem little more than gentlemanly politeness, Vencarlo's true goals are in fact much greater, for as he grows older, he has become increasingly aware of the fact that Blackjack will soon need an heir.

If the PCs met Grau in **Event 6** and managed to handle the situation well, Vencarlo thanks them for how they dealt with his former student. He admits that Grau was once one of his most promising pupils, at which point a PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (local) check recalls hearing something about some scandal involving Grau, Vencarlo, and Sabina. If asked about Sabina, Vencarlo's eyes grow sad for a moment and then he smiles, saying only, "She found her true calling. I just hope that it's something that deserves her attentions." He has little more to say about his ex-students at this time, and instead tries to shift the topic of the conversation back to the PCs, using flattery and compliments as his primary weapons.

Since losing both Grau and Sabina as students, Vencarlo has seen little to inspire him among his new pupils, and it doesn't take long for the PCs to intrigue him. From Cressida, he knows of the party's exploits to date, and their heroism rekindles something he thought long dead inside his soul. Things had been pretty good in Korvosa for the last several years—despite what many might have said about King Eodred II, his rule was just and balanced. Now, though, Korvosa is more in need of heroes than ever, and Vencarlo is fresh out of proteges. He attempted to groom a successor in Grau or Sabina, but those attempts failed. In the PCs, he sees heroes he might be able to trust with Blackjack's tradition. Vencarlo suspects the best way to find the next Blackjack is to pick someone already half in the mindset rather than attempting to instill that mindset himself. The best nomination among the PCs for the new Blackjack is a chaotic good rogue, swashbuckler, or vigilante, but really, anyone who exhibits a love for Korvosa and isn't a blind slave to the law works. Vencarlo isn't tied to the traditional image of Blackjack; a hero of any race or gender will do in his eyes, as long as the will to protect the city and the city's downtrodden is present.

By this point in the adventure, you should have a good grasp on the personalities of your PCs. Vencarlo knows that adventurers lead dangerous lifestyles, so he initially picks any PCs who even vaguely meet his requirements as possible successors. Over the course of the chapters to come, he keeps his eye on these PCs to determine which of them would best fit the demands of becoming Blackjack. These characters should be nonlawful, nonevil characters initially, and should prefer an urban life over a rural or wilderness life. For now, he keeps his plans to himself,

but in time he will approach his chosen successor with this offer (see page 463).

When the PCs finally cross the Narrows and enter Old Korvosa, Vencarlo tells them they can find Eel's End to the east, on the first pier after the last bridge over the Narrows. With a swift bow, he spins on a heel and is gone.

Eel's End Features

A sprawl of light and sound marks the first (or last, depending on your orientation) pier of Old Korvosa. Glowing lanterns in the shape of dream spiders and coiled eels hang from pilings or lampposts, flickering through all hours of the night. During the day, Eel's End is quieter, yet the place never truly sleeps, catering to the vices and base needs of Old Korvosa at all hours.

The pier itself is 70 feet long, although its last 30 feet widen into a large square platform on the water. A ship and four smaller vessels are permanently moored to the pier; the ship is the *Eel's End*, a warship that serves as the stronghold of Devargo Barvasi and the administrative center of his entire operation. The four vessels are owned by various peddlers and captains, and they pay regular rent for the honor of attaching to Eel's End. Those who fail to pay or abide by Devargo's laws find their ship cut loose in the middle of the night, often in flames or infested with deadly spiders.

Eel's End (the name applies both to the warship and the entire collection of moored ships) is open and welcoming of nearly everyone. The enforcers and merchants here are naturally suspicious of well-dressed visitors, but their suspicion quickly caves to greed as they try to fleece these hopefully naive patrons. Only characters who are obviously affiliated with the Korvosan Guard, the Hellknight Order of the Nail, or the Sable Company (or, in short order, the Gray Maidens) aren't welcome on Eel's End. Since Devargo pays his vice taxes and polices Eel's End well enough that trouble here never impacts the city at large (including a strict policy of handing over anyone he realizes is trying to use Eel's End to hide from the law), the Korvosan Guard rarely has any cause to send members out to visit Eel's End. As a result, the PCs should find little problem entering.

Ironically, Eel's End is actually one of the safer, more stable locations in Korvosa these days. The riots haven't touched the place, and in fact, the increased need for escapism from the horrors of reality means that business is booming.

How the PCs get the information they seek from Eel's End is up to them—this chapter makes no assumptions about the methods used. Certainly, the safest route is to please Devargo with bribes and entertainment. A group could also sneak below decks to steal the information from Devargo's quarters, or could even fight its way in to claim its prize (although this is a dangerous proposition for low-level PCs).

What's not as important is Devargo's fate. He's certainly a villain and an evil man, and many groups might feel ill at ease allowing him to continue to rule Eel's End. Full details on his floating stronghold are provided, even though you're unlikely to need them at this time if the PCs use Diplomacy to get what they need. If the PCs are (rightfully) sickened by Devargo's cruelty, they could well come back to finish him off at a later time in the campaign.

While his mastery at playing the system might frustrate those who feel he should be in jail, Devargo's effective immunity to the law has unwittingly removed a layer of protection. If the PCs attack and kill him, the Korvosan Guard does not press charges (in fact, several guards privately thank the PCs for handling the embarrassing situation). Setting the barges on fire is a riskier proposition, since that not only destroys the evidence the PCs need, but also results in criminal prosecution for arson and perhaps even murder, as the city's ambivalence toward Devargo's fate does not extend to endangering the public.

C1 Eel's End Pier (CR 6)

The sound of carousing booms from the elegantly painted barges moored to this long pier. Large signs painted in several languages are nailed to pilings and hang from ropes slung between barges. The closest barge to the east bears a sign that says, "The *Twin Tigers*—Take the Tiger by the Tail and Try Your Luck!" Opposite that, to the west, a boat's sign says, "Welcome to the *Goldenhawk*—No Safer Stay in Old Korvosa!" Further to the southeast is "*Dragon's Breath* Corridor—Dream the Dragon's Dreams at Affordable Prices!", while opposite that is the "*House of Clouds*—The Caress of Our Lovelies Will Take You Straight to Heaven!" Only the largest vessel, an old warship to the south, bears no signage at all. Short rope bridges or gangplanks provide access to the decks of these ships from the pier and from the decks of other ships.

Eel's End is a rough place, where no one takes notice of armed or armored characters unless they're obviously agents of the Guard. Apart from being propositioned by prostitutes or accidentally shoved by drunkards, the PCs should have little problem exploring this area unless they attempt to sneak below deck on the *Eel's End*.

Creatures: Among the services Devargo offers to his renters is security. He employs a dozen human enforcers, all of whom started their careers as mercenaries, soldiers, or sailors but lost their jobs due to laziness, theft, or incompetence. Once they came to work for Devargo, though, they quickly learned the value of remaining alert and sober while on the job—those who disappoint the King of Spiders feed his ravenous pets in the hold of the *Eel's End*.

The enforcers bunk in hammocks hung under sails on the aft of the *Eel's End*; during storms, they're allowed to spend their nights in rooms set aside on the *Goldenhawk* (area **C3**). Once per week, an enforcer gets a day of shore leave, but at most two guards are on leave at a given time, and there are always 10 enforcers in Eel's End, ready to respond to an alarm. Of these, four patrol the pier and the decks of the five ships, two stand guard on the deck of the *Eel's End*, and four sleep in their hammocks.

EEL'S END ENFORCERS (4) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

Human fighter 2/rogue 1

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 29 (3 HD; 1d8+2d10+10)

Fort +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3 (+1 vs. fear)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk sap +7 (1d6+3 nonlethal)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

TACTICS

During Combat The enforcers call out an alarm if a fight starts. Their goal in a fight is to chase trouble onto land or to force the miscreants into the waters below. Killing visitors brings too much paperwork and investigation from the Korvosan Guard, so if they drop a foe, an enforcer typically ignores him and might even try to bandage him if she gets the chance.

Morale The enforcers fear Devargo and his uncanny mastery over spiders almost as much as they value the money he pays them. As a result, they fight until reduced to 2 hit points or fewer, only then attempting to flee to safety.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 13, **Con** 15, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 16

Feats Intimidating Prowess, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Toughness, Weapon Focus (sap)

Skills Intimidate +11, Perception +7, Sense Motive +7, Stealth +7, Swim +9

Languages Common, Varisian

SQ trapfinding +1

Gear *+1 studded leather*, mwk buckler, mwk sap, 19 gp

C2 Eel's End Deck (CR 7)

The large ship tied off to the pier bears the name *Eel's End*; its figurehead is a coiling eel with a woman's head. Several drunkards, sailors, and revelers dance and drink on the large open main deck here, while the aft deck is relatively clear. A pair of large double doors bearing a complex painting of a spider allows entrance into the stern section of the main deck.

Only the aft deck is clear of carousers; here, four enforcers sleep in hammocks strung in the rigging above. The two additional enforcers who stand guard before the doors to area **C7** stop anyone attempting to enter, saying that unless they're expected, the King of Spiders has no interest in visitors. A successful Bluff check is enough to convince the guards that Devargo is expecting the PCs, as is a successful DC 29 Diplomacy check or DC 13 Intimidate check (although with the Intimidate route, the guards nervously accompany the PCs into area **C7**). If the PCs indicate that they're here on Korvosan Guard business but that their interests lie not with Devargo but with a man who might be hiding out here, the PCs gain a +15 bonus on any Diplomacy checks to gain entry to the *Eel's End*.

EEL'S END ENFORCERS (6) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 29 each (see page 51)

C3 Goldenhawk

This small ship has seen countless crude repairs—its seaworthiness is dubious, but lashed as it is to the pier, it seems stable enough. The nameplate proclaims it to be the *Goldenhawk*.

Here, those whose endurance has been taxed by wild cavorting at Eel's End's can retreat to sleep it off. The *Goldenhawk*'s rates are good, only 4 sp a night, but the bunks stuffed into the lower hold are lumpy and cramped. Still, with Devargo's presence, nights spent here are relatively safe. A lisping gnome named **Tuggins** (CN male gnome expert 3/rogue 1) presides over the floating inn. Tuggins has a walleye and a patchy beard, wears a crumpled hat, and has an extensive collection of keys (though he has no idea what most of them open). If a fight breaks out on Eel's End, he hides under one of the bunks below decks.

C4 Twin Tigers

Two hut-like structures sit atop this barge, raucous laughter and periodic roars of victory sound from within.

The *Twin Tigers* is a gambling hall. Inside of each of the structures on the main deck, tables are packed with gamblers. Dice clatter, cards are dealt, wheels spin, and coins aplenty dance and jangle to the fickle whim of fate—knivesies is a particular favorite (see the sidebar on page 53). One of the four enforcers assigned to patrol is always found here, for fights break out more often on the *Twin Tigers* than anywhere else in Eel's End. Brawlers are typically thrown over the side, and on lucky nights they don't have to worry about jigsaw sharks or reefclaws in the water.

The masters of the *Twin Tigers* are two dark-skinned human brothers wrapped in red veils. These are twin Vudrani men named **Anpugit** (N male human expert 4) and **Rajeek** (CN male human expert 2/rogue 1), entrepreneurs always looking for new games to add to their offerings. Of the two, Anpugit is the more garrulous and does most of the talking while Rajeek quietly hangs back and watches for cheaters or opportunities for him to skew a game in the house's favor.

C5 House of Clouds

A single long structure sits atop the main deck of this barge—the double doors always hang open to reveal a large room decorated with throw rugs, large pillows, and air thick with incense and lit by red paper lanterns. The scent of anise, rosewater, and cinnamon pours forth from smoking bronze braziers set on silver stands, which are carved in the likenesses of slit-eyed serpents and proud hunting birds. Several scantily clad men and women loiter about the barge's deck.

The *House of Clouds* is a brothel run by a madam named **Halvara** (CN female half-elf expert 5). A patron talks to the men and women who work here until he finds one who strikes his fancy. The patron then pays a 5-gp fee, and the two retire to one of several private rooms in the ship's lower deck for 15 minutes of low-cost bliss. Halvara herself has been known to personally entertain wealthier customers (she charges 100 gp for her time, though). Rumor holds that she is Devargo's sometimes lover. Whether or not this is true, the rumor is enough—few patrons ever even think about causing trouble here.

C6 Dragon's Breath Corridor

This once-proud vessel, the *Dragon's Breath*, has been painted in gaudy red. A sign at the aft entrance reads simply, "Pass into the Dreams of the Dragon."

Thick, pungent smoke assails the nose below deck, the open interior of which is partitioned with silken curtains and filled with large beds and couches. Glossy-eyed patrons loll about and mewl, their minds burning with shiver, pesh, flayleaf, and other exotic drugs. A skinny, short man named **Bezzeraty** (CN male human expert 3) wanders languidly about the smoky room, wheeling a large hookah to and fro on a cart and muttering "Get smoked!" at anyone who enters the establishment. Many people mistake 3-foot-tall Bezzeraty for a gnome or halfling, an error sure to incite his shrieking anger and bring several enforcers running. Likewise, he starts shrieking if visitors

KNIVESIES

The ever-popular knivesies is the game of choice among the steeliest pirates, brigands, thieves, and scallywags in Riddleport. Its increasing popularity in Korvosa is in large part due to Devargo's enjoyment of the game.

Knivesies is simple to play. Two contestants stand on top of opposite ends of a long wooden table. Their right hands are bound to their sides with boiled leather straps, belt pouches are fitted to their waists, and a dagger is stuck in the tabletop between them. The game begins after a count of 10, during which time observers can place bets by tossing gold pieces (roll 3d6+20 to determine how many gp land on the table) onto the table and standing at the end of the table where their chosen fighter stands. As the game begins, each contestant rolls an Initiative check.

There are two ways to win knivesies. You can force the other contestant to fall off the table, or you can end the game with more gold than your opponent claimed. Snatching a fistful of 1d10 coins off the table is a standard action that provokes an attack of opportunity. Since each opponent has only one free hand, the first round is typically a mad lunge for the dagger, forcing the slower opponent to make grabs for gold. There aren't any more rules beyond this; most knivesies games devolve into tabletop brawls, with the first person to drop or touch the ground losing.

The game ends once a contestant is unconscious, dead, or knocked off the table; as soon as no coins remain on the table; or as soon as any coin is knocked off the table. When the game ends, an unconscious, dead, or de-tabled contestant is automatically the loser. Otherwise, the winner is determined by which person has the most coins in his pouch. At the end of the game, all money is emptied from the pouches back onto the table. Half the total is paid to the winner, while the remainder is split evenly among all of those who stood at the winner's end of the table.

don't pay him the 5 gp entrance fee to enjoy his wares. Anyone who spends at least a minute in this smoke-filled area must succeed at a DC 14 Fortitude save to avoid taking 1d4 points of Wisdom damage, after which the fumes have no further ill effect for 24 hours. Whenever a patron passes out completely, Bezzeraty rifles through the patron's pockets to find gold to pay for his troubles, and if successful he calls upon an Eel's End enforcer to drag the unconscious body over to the *Goldenhawk*. Otherwise, the patron is quietly stripped of all belongings and dumped in an alley in Old Korvosa.

C7 Throne of Spiders (CR 6)

This large room, once a captain's cabin, has been converted into a throne room of sorts. The walls are thick with spider webs, in which scuttle dozens of spiders, some as large as a fist but most considerably smaller. These spiders seem content to stay in their webs and do not venture into the room itself, which is furnished with two sturdy oaken tables surrounded by chairs. Aft, a wooden stage supports a large leather chair covered with cobwebs and scampering spiders. A narrow door stands to port, hanging ajar and revealing a flight of stairs leading below. An iron birdcage hangs from the ceiling like a chandelier.

A hidden trap door just before the throne can be spotted with a successful DC 20 Perception check. This trap door can be opened by flipping a hidden switch in the arm of the throne (locating it requires a second successful DC 20 Perception check). Those standing on the door when it opens must make a successful DC 15 Reflex save to cling to the sides of the opening as they fall in; otherwise, they're dumped into area **C15** and are attacked by that room's denizens.

Creatures: This is the throne room of Devargo Barvasi, the self-styled King of Spiders. He is a tall, muscular man with shaggy black hair and a fierce glare. He accents his black leather armor with a steel spider-shaped shoulder baldric and a thick chain crisscrossing his chest, linked together in the shape of a spider. His signature weapons—gauntlets fixed with blades over the knuckles—glisten with poison. Now and then, spiders clamber over his skin, but he takes no notice. Whispers say that Devargo has the blood of fiends in him, and that he can communicate with spiders telepathically. In fact, Devargo's secret is an ettercap named Chittersnap, who lives in the chamber below his throne room. Devargo provides Chittersnap with a safe place to live and all the food and treasure he wants, and in return the ettercap allows Devargo to maintain his charade of being able to control spiders, when in fact that control rests entirely with the ettercap.

Once a smuggler from Riddleport, Barvasi crossed the wrong people there and ended up on the run for years before he found a partner in Stanris Sevenfingers (then called Stanris the Swifthand). The two had a murderous falling out shortly after they conceived of Eel's End, and Stanris was one of the first victims offered to Chittersnap when he objected to Devargo's decision to take charge. In the years that followed, Devargo earned his moniker well by collecting the secrets of many powerful personages

throughout Korvosa and using those secrets to bend them to his influence. Key to his success are the regular shipments of shiver he supplies to Arkona family agents; in return, the Arkonas see to it that Eel's End's vice taxes are always paid on time. With an alliance with the Arkonas and no reason for the Korvosan Guard to object too loudly to his operation, Barvasi is living proof that sometimes, crime does pay.

Today, Devargo spends most of his time at Eel's End, entertained by lickspittles and sycophants, all of whom are petty scoundrels and thugs desperate to earn the King of Spiders' favor. An invitation to join Devargo in his throne room is both a blessing and a threat to an up-and-coming thief, since attendance is no guarantee of alliance and often results in torture, torment, and death. Devargo spends the majority of his afternoons and the first few hours of each night here, from noon to a few hours after dusk. He sometimes steps out to get fresh air, to visit the other establishments, or even to meet with Arkona agents or other contacts in Old Korvosa, but should the PCs arrive between noon and midnight, they find him here. After midnight, he retires to his quarters in area **C14** to relax, look over the day's business reports (which are delivered to him nightly on pieces of slate), and eventually sleep—this is the best time to infiltrate Eel's End.

Assuming the PCs first arrive when he's here, Devargo is evaluating six thugs and cutpurses for recruitment into his enforcers. These six thugs are seated at the tables, enjoying a sumptuous meal and loud storytelling. The steel birdcage that hangs from the ceiling holds one of Devargo's latest acquisitions, a house drake named Majenko. The house drake was gifted to Devargo by one of his most recent recruits, and its torment at being caged lifts Devargo's warped and twisted spirits—when bored, he enjoys watching the dragon fight for its life against dream spiders. Devargo has grown fond of tormenting the dragon, and hears nothing of requests to let it go. He will, however, agree to sell the creature to a PC for the measly cost of 5,000 gp. If the PCs enter this room late at night when the chamber is otherwise abandoned, Majenko desperately begs to be set free. Its cage can be forced open (break DC 22) or the lock can be picked (Disable Device DC 25).

Although it's easy to get distracted by Devargo's cruelty and sinister nature, the primary goal of the PCs shouldn't be to kill him. All they really need to do at Eel's End is secure proof of any illicit activities Ambassador Amprei might be involved with. In truth, Devargo has a number of racy love letters to the ambassador from the wife of an important Chelish noble, letters that could end the ambassador's career (and perhaps even his life) if the husband were to read them. Devargo has been making a fair amount of money blackmailing the ambassador and is hesitant to give up so lucrative a deal, so before he can be convinced to expose the ambassador, the PCs must give him a good reason.

As long as the PCs aren't overly antagonistic or insulting in their dealings with Devargo, he's willing to entertain a plea for aid, if only to show to the simpering thugs just how important he is. When he does, he asks one of the PCs to step forward to plead the case (so that this PC stands atop the hidden trap door). Allow the PCs to present their case and make their request to the King of Spiders, then have the character with the highest Diplomacy score attempt a Diplomacy check (Devargo does not respond well to Intimidate, and any such attempt simply starts a fight). Other PCs in the group can use the aid another action to help that PC—each attempt that equals or exceeds DC 10 grants the primary roller a +2 bonus, while each failed check imposes a –2 penalty (Devargo has little patience for fools). Devargo's response to the PCs' request depends on the result of that check, as detailed below.

DC 4 or Less (Anger): Devargo is insulted and offended by the PCs. He triggers the trap door into area **C15** and then attacks.

DC 5 (Impatience): Devargo isn't impressed with the PCs, and he tells them as much, pointing out that information is a commodity and that his time and resources are valuable. If the PCs don't get the hint and bribe him at this point, he grows even more impatient and orders them to leave Eel's End. If they don't leave (and they still refuse to bribe him), he attacks. If the PCs do bribe him, increase the result of the Diplomacy check by 1 for each 50 gp worth of bribe they offer to determine Devargo's new attitude. For example, if the PCs get a Diplomacy check result of 12 and offer him 100 gp, their new score is only a 14 and the King of Spiders indicates that they should keep paying. If they then give him another 600 gold pieces, their new result is 25 and he becomes friendly.

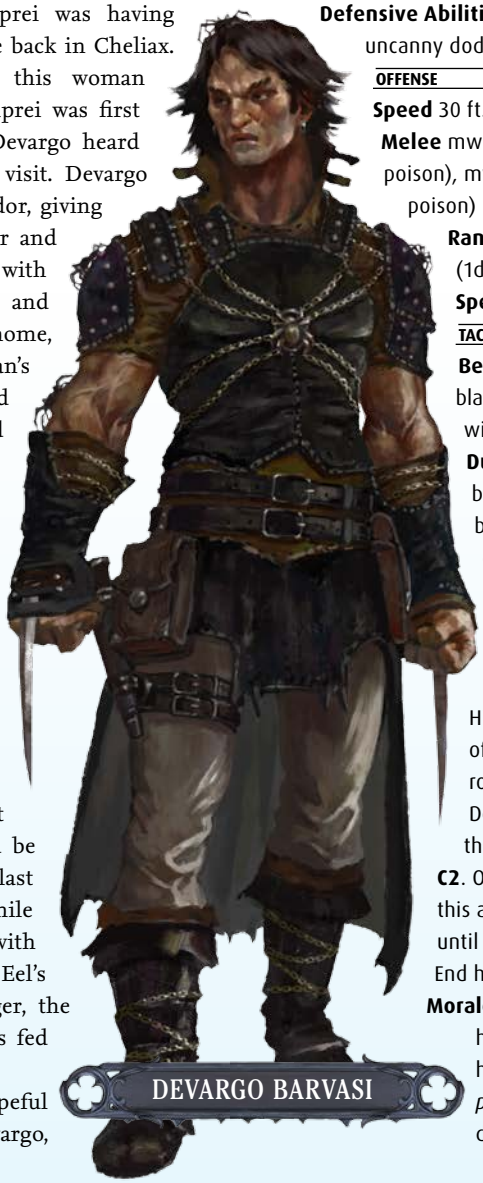
DC 15 (Boredom): Devargo is mildly entertained by the PCs and admits he may know something of a delicate matter that involves the ambassador, but before he agrees to just hand it over to the PCs, he wants something in return. The implication is a payment of gold (see above for how bribes can adjust his attitude), but he also suggests a bit of entertainment. He calls for a game of knivesies (see the sidebar on page 53) between one of the PCs and one of the hopeful thugs in the room. Each time a PC wins a game of knivesies, increase their effective Diplomacy score by 5 until they win enough games to amuse him or they give up. Devargo won't agree to knivesies games between PCs.

DC 25 (Amusement): Devargo reacts as per the result for a successful DC 15 check, but he admits that he does

indeed have the information the PCs seek, and that he keeps it below in his quarters. He also points out that while the letters have brought him plenty of "income," he's sure the ambassador will soon find a way to render the letters useless as blackmail material. He is thus willing to let the letters go for a mere 1,500 gp. With a second successful DC 25 Diplomacy check, a PC can persuade him to lower his cost to 1,000 gp. If the PCs agree to the price, Devargo is delighted (see the result for a successful DC 40 check below).

DC 40 (Delight): If the PCs reach this point, Devargo claps his hands in delight and thanks the PCs for their generosity and entertainment, calls in four of his enforcers to watch the PCs, and asks the characters to wait while he goes below to gather up the information he's promised them. When he returns in a few minutes, Devargo confides in the PCs that he learned of a scandalous affair Ambassador Amprei was having with the wife of an important noble back in Cheliax. Apparently, the ambassador and this woman have been corresponding since Amprei was first stationed here in Korvosa. When Devargo heard these rumors, he paid the man a visit. Devargo attempted to befriend the ambassador, giving him a gift of several vials of shiver and proposing open a line of trade with Cheliax. The ambassador refused and had Devargo escorted from his home, but Devargo pickpocketed the man's house key as he left. He returned later that night to return the key and steal several of the ambassador's letters to his paramour. Devargo has been selling the letters back to the ambassador at the rate of one every few weeks, taking great delight in the man's discomfort whenever he visits Eel's End to purchase one of them. The fact that the ambassador hasn't gone to the Korvosan Guard and is attempting to keep his reacquisition of the stolen letters as quiet as possible says plenty about how dangerous the contents would be to his career. Devargo hands the last two letters over to the PCs with a smile and says, "Pleasure doing business with you!" He expects the PCs to leave Eel's End at once—the longer they linger, the better the chances are Devargo gets fed up and attacks.

If combat breaks out, the six hopeful thugs compete to impress Devargo, and as a result don't fight well together. They might even compromise each other's defenses accidentally by getting in the way of charges or by using each other as cover. Although eager to please Devargo, these thugs are cowards. A thug flees Eel's End as soon as he takes any damage. Devargo's own tactics are detailed below in his stat block.



DEVARGO BARVASI

DEVARGO BARVASI **CR 4**

XP 1,200

Male human rogue 5

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +4 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 41 (5d8+15)

Fort +3, **Ref** +8, **Will** +0

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk spiked gauntlet +7 (1d4+1 plus poison), mwk spiked gauntlet +7 (1d4 plus poison)

Ranged mwk hand crossbow +8 (1d4/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +3d6

TACTICS

Before Combat Devargo coats the blades of both of his spiked gauntlets with medium spider venom.

During Combat Confident and brave, Devargo begins combat by opening the trap door and dumping anyone standing on it into area **C15**. Once the trap door is triggered, Devargo leaps into the battle with his gauntlets, grinning sadistically as he fights. His enforcers are used to the sounds of battle and fights in the throne room and they don't respond until Devargo raises the alarm or until the first hopeful thug flees into area **C2**. Once this occurs, enforcers arrive in this area at the rate of one every round until all 10 enforcers on duty in Eel's End have arrived.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 10 hit points, Devargo calls out for help from his enforcers, drinks his *potion of invisibility*, and then flees downstairs. He drinks his *potion of*

cure moderate wounds as soon as possible and barricades himself in his quarters in area **C14**, hoping his enforcers can finish off the fight for him.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 18, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 18

Feats Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (spiked gauntlet)

Skills Bluff +9, Climb +9, Craft (alchemy) +8, Diplomacy +9, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (local) +8, Perception +7, Sense Motive +7, Sleight of Hand +12

Languages Common, Varisian

SQ rogue talents (lasting poison[APG], swift poison[APG]), trapfinding +2

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of invisibility*, medium spider venom (4); **Other Gear** *+1 leather armor*, mwk hand crossbow with 10 bolts, mwk spiked gauntlets (2), key to area **C9**, key to footlocker in area **C14**, 79 gp

MAJENKO **CR 2**

XP 600

Male house drake

hp 19 (see page 474)

HOPEFUL THUGS (6) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 each

Human brigands (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 266)

hp 15 each

Story Award: If the PCs release Majenko, award them 600 XP. In addition, Majenko offers to serve the PC who let it loose for a year out of gratitude. At your discretion, it could even become a spellcaster's familiar or a leader's cohort, in which case this period of loyalty extends in duration as appropriate. Majenko has countless other house drake friends scattered throughout Korvosa, and as long as it remains a PC's companion, the house drake can be sent out to gather information at any time in the city. Each information-gathering mission takes Majenko only 1 hour to complete; it attempts a Perception check in place of the normal Diplomacy check to determine the success of its information gathering efforts.

If the PCs secure the letters from Devargo without resorting to combat, award them 1,600 XP.

C8 Shiver Lab

Two large wood-burning stoves are built into the curving wall of the ship's hull here. Each is fitted with an iron bar on which dangle several cauldrons. Firewood is stacked to the north in a haphazard mound. Dozens of empty glass vials sit atop the mantle of each stove.

This room is used to brew shiver to supply to the Arkonas. With Chittersnap's aid and his own skill in alchemy, Devargo needs to spend only a few hours each week preparing shipments. The strange, bitter smell in the room comes from the cauldrons, which are boiling down a mixture of alcohol, water, and dream spider venom into several doses of the drug—a process that takes several hours.

Treasure: Among the empty glass vials on the mantles are six not-so-empty vials, each of which contain a dose of shiver (worth 25 gp apiece).

C9 Brig

This foul-smelling room is empty, save for a mound of filthy straw seething with vermin.

Sometimes Devargo doesn't simply throw prisoners or troublemakers to Chittersnap. In unusual cases where he needs to keep someone imprisoned, he stashes the person in this brig. Currently, the room is empty.

C10 Hatch

This opening drops 7 feet into the bilge (area **C16**). A slimy knotted rope hanging over the edge provides clammy access to and from the bilge—a successful DC 7 Climb check is needed to ascend or descend the rope.

C11 Forward Hold

Crates and barrels, and furniture in need of repair are scattered around this cramped hold.

The contents of the crates and barrels here are mostly food, water, and firewood. There is little of actual value.

C12 Privies

Three narrow privies line the wall here. Access into *Eel's End* via the narrow chutes that open into the river is impossible for anything larger than Tiny (and even Tiny creatures must succeed at a DC 30 Escape Artist check to wriggle through the befouled openings).

C13 Meeting Room

A single low desk sits against the wall of this room. A large wooden door marked with a painting of a spider stands in the southern wall.

This room is used by Devargo to meet with more important guests, which doesn't happen often. (He has even moved the two chairs from here up to area **C7** so he can entertain more guests there.)

C14 Devargo's Den

This wooden chamber is clean and dry. A four-poster bed with ornately carved posts and gauzy drapes rests against the far wall, while a single dresser and a round table and chair fill out the rest of the room. A wooden sea chest sits at the foot of the bed.

These are Barvasi's personal quarters; he flees here if things turn bad for him in area **C7** above.

Treasure: The sea chest can be opened with the key Devargo carries or with a successful DC 30 Disable Device check. Devargo keeps his favorite treasures inside: a jasper studded amulet (worth 500 gp), a gold necklace fitted with emeralds (worth 600 gp), a mother-of-pearl horn (worth 50 gp), a *ring of feather fall* with cameo of a dragonfly worked in jade, a *scroll of blur*, an *elixir of love*, two pouches of *dust of appearance*, and six sacks containing 100 gp each.

In addition, the chest contains the last two scandalous letters written to Ambassador Amprei from a woman named Verania Tvastiox, the young wife of one of Amprei's superiors back home in Cheliax. The details in the letters are quite salacious and exacting, leaving little room for misinterpretation. If they were to be made public, Amprei would be disgraced.

C15 The Spider's Web (CR 5)

This dark chamber is riddled with dizzying tunnels and twisting corridors formed by thick cobwebs. The floor is a sticky, lumpy mass of webbing and dozens, if not hundreds, of bones—many of which appear to be from humanoid bodies. Some of the webs seem to shimmer and dance, almost as if reflecting rainbows in their silken forms.

The rainbow-colored strands are in fact dream spider webs, and contact with then can poison certain creatures (see page 477). Every square in this room contains dream spider webs, and any character who moves through the room must succeed at a DC 10 Reflex save each round to avoid contact with them.

Creatures: Here, Devargo Barvasi keeps his greatest secret: the monster that allows him to control the wild menagerie of spiders he so adores. This is a disgustingly bloated ettercap named Chittersnap ("Chitters" for short). The fleshy abomination has made its lair here, enjoying the sport Barvasi provides when he dumps meals down into these dark, web-clogged depths. The gibbering monster has come to see Devargo almost like a father and controls the other spiders on *Eel's End* for him, ensuring they do the King of Spiders' bidding. If the ettercap is slain, the spiders on the floating shipwreck revert to their

primal nature and begin hunting—not even Devargo is safe from them in this event.

Chittersnap is not alone here. He shares this den with an enormous brown spider and a pair of dream spiders (the same ones used by Devargo to brew shiver).

CHITTERSNAP **CR 3**

XP 800

Male ettercap

hp 30 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 129)

GIANT SPIDER **CR 1**

XP 400

hp 16 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 258)

DREAM SPIDERS (2) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 each

hp 5 each (see page 477)

C16 Bilge

Murky water floods this filthy bilge, its surface dark and calm.

The bilge leaks terribly, and were it not for the fact that *Eel's End* is stoutly supported from below by several pilings (once supports for the pier), the ship would have sunk long ago. Water floods the bilge here to a depth of 2 feet. Devargo hasn't used this area for storage for years.

C17 Sodden Hold (CR 1)

This old cargo bay is partially collapsed. Only a soggy section of hull remains in the center of the room.

The floor in this room floats on the water; anything larger than a Small creature walking on it is enough to cause the rotten wood to collapse. Characters can use this area as a way to stealthily enter *Eel's End* if they discover it, although doing so requires a swim under the pier.

Creature: There's a 25% chance that a jigsaw shark is nearby at any time the PCs are using this entrance to come and go from *Eel's End*, in which case the aggressive shark immediately attacks.

JIGSAW SHARK **CR 1**

XP 400

hp 11 (see page 23)

D The Dead Warrens

Korvosa's vast graveyard, a region known as the Gray District, is a mournful place even by day. The district is alone in being a place of quiet and calm in the face of the civil unrest, yet there is an unnatural stillness in the air, almost as if the graveyard were preparing for a vast influx of new dead. Nowhere is this ominous feeling more noticeable than in Potter's Ward, the final resting ground for Korvosa's poor and homeless. Mounds of unmarked

dirt stretch far and wide, indicating sites of mass graves, while crumbling mausoleums from years ago, abandoned by their families as the Gray District expanded to the west, dot the bleak landscape, forgotten and empty. Mourners do not visit here, for the dead buried in Potter's Ward leave behind few who regret their passing.

Locating the entrance to the Dead Warrens is a relatively simple task with Cressida's information in hand. No sign of Gaekhen's body remains in the area, although a successful DC 15 Perception check reveals the presence of a man's tracks and a wheelbarrow trail. More interestingly, several smaller humanoid tracks clutter the site as well. These tracks lead into a mausoleum, where a successful DC 15 Perception check reveals a poorly hidden trap door in the floor that leads down into the dark. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check reveals the tracks to be derro footprints.

While the PCs may expect to confront Rolth in the Dead Warrens, these tunnels are not Rolth's primary lair, but rather one of several laboratory sites he maintains throughout the city. Currently elsewhere in Korvosa securing a key component for the completion of his first flesh golem (a *scroll of limited wish* that fate continues to deny him), Rolth left the Dead Warrens under the watchful eye of a small band of derros whose services he acquired after agreeing to take on one of their number as an apprentice. This apprentice, named Vreeg, is a gifted necromancer himself. Vreeg hopes to use what he learns from Rolth to eventually replace the human necromancer and use Korvosa as his own playground. In addition to Vreeg and his simpering derro kin, several of Rolth's other experiments and creations guard this laboratory, along with a particularly ugly ogrekin Rolth charmed long ago. Although the charm has long since worn off, Cabbagehead (as Rolth calls him) is now quite loyal to the necromancer and enjoys his current job as jailer for the prisoner pit deep in the Dead Warrens where Rolth keeps living stock on hand for his evil experiments.

Rolth is not scheduled to appear in this chapter, even if the PCs end up taking more than a day to complete their mission. Rather, he returns to the Dead Warrens some time after the PCs leave, only to find the place in ruins. It takes the enraged necromancer some time to discover who was responsible, but when he does, the PCs hear from him. More details appear in the next chapter, "Seven Days to the Grave," and on page 452.

Dead Warrens Features

The Dead Warrens are dimly lit by patches of eerily glowing but harmless mold that fills the chambers here with a cold blue light. These patches of mold are cultivated by the derros, who find its radiance soothing and its flavor delicious. The air in the Dead Warrens is musty and damp, with the stink of rotting flesh always present in the background (or in the case of some rooms, quite in the foreground). Several chambers and halls here are ancient Shoanti constructions, while others are natural caves dug by a now-departed tribe of ghouls. Side passages lead from area **D3** and **D9** to other underground complexes under Potter's Ward, but these areas are beyond the scope of this chapter (feel free to describe these tunnels as collapsed if you want to focus the PCs on the encounters presented below). The ceiling height in the warrens remains relatively constant at 6 to 6-1/2 feet unless otherwise indicated—a bit claustrophobic for some Medium creatures but not low enough to constrain mobility significantly.

As the PCs are soon to discover, recovering Gaekhen's body isn't an easy task, since Rolth has already harvested the only part of the body he needs to finish his flesh golem: the head. The rest of the body—the legs, the torso (and attached right arm), and the left arm—are found elsewhere in the Dead Warrens. Fortunately, Gaekhen's body need not be whole for Thousand Bones—but he does need all four parts.

OWLBEAR SKELETON

D1 Ossuary (CR 4)

This large room is supported by four wide pillars of stone. The ceiling above arches in a dome nearly twenty feet high. The walls are lined with skeletons caked into the mud—adult human bones mostly, but here and there smaller bones might be from halflings or perhaps children. Fifteen-foot-square pits sit to the east and west, each filled with a large heap of hundreds of bones. To the south, a crude hole has been gouged out of the wall, providing access to a tunnel.

This area is one of many ossuaries used to store bones. It was abandoned when the church of Pharasma finished construction of its cathedral and moved the primary ossuary into the catacombs below that structure.

Creature: Not content to leave the protection of his lair to the derros alone, Rolth animated several skeletons and posted them in this room. The skeletons lurk in the bone pits—four human skeletons to the west and an owlbear skeleton to the east. All are partially buried in the pile but can be spotted with a successful DC 15 Perception check before they clatter to unlife and clamber up the stairs to attack intruders. The human skeletons pursue foes throughout the Dead Warrens, but not up into Potter's Ward above.

OWLBEAR SKELETON **CR 2**

XP 600

Owlbear skeleton (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 250, 224)

NE Large undead

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +2 natural, –1 size)

hp 22 (5d8)

Fort +1, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

DR 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** cold, undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +6 (1d6+4), 2 claws +6 (1d6+4)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

TACTICS

During Combat The skeletal owlbear treats the narrow stairs as difficult terrain if it clambers up them and must squeeze to press between the pillars. Otherwise it attacks the largest nearby target each round.

Morale The skeletal owlbear fights until destroyed, but unlike the human skeletons, it does not pursue foes out of this room.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 20 (24 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Initiative

HUMAN SKELETONS (4) **CR 1/3**

XP 135 each

hp 4 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 250)

Development: Later in this campaign, the church of Pharasma secretly allies with the growing rebellion against Queen Ileosa and offers the use of the Dead Warrens, particularly this room, as a safe place to meet and plan.

D2 Crawl Spaces

The derros use these tunnels to move quickly from room to room. Each of the secret doors that hide these tunnels can be found with a successful DC 20 Perception check.

D3 Derro Cave (CR 5)

Rank with the stink of sweat and mud, this cavern contains four filthy straw pallets and a low table covered with dice and a miniature maze of carved clay.

Creatures: Vreeg's four derro followers use this room to rest, relax, and eat. At any one time, two can be found here, playing a game of Rat Squish (a complex and cruel game using a rat, a maze, handfuls of stones marked with numbers, a hammer, and a pair of pliers). As soon as the derros notice intruders, they take up weapons and attack.

DERROS (2) **CR 3**

XP 800 each

hp 25 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 70)

D4 Corpse Dump (CR 4)

The majority of this room contains a nasty-looking stretch of mud—a partially collapsed sinkhole—kept damp by rivulets of water seeping from the walls. A patch of solid ground extends into the mud to form an island, on which is heaped a reeking pile of body parts. To the north, a rickety wheelbarrow sits on its side against the wall.

Creature: Rolth lured an otyugh here with promises of a regular diet of delicious discards, which is how the derros dispose of extra body parts. When the PCs first enter this room, the otyugh is enjoying its latest meal as it wallows in the mud. When it notices the PCs, it cries, "Warm food!" in a slobbery voice as it lumbers forth to attack.

OTYUGH **CR 4**

XP 1,200

hp 39 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 223)

Treasure: Among the still-uneaten body parts on the muddy island in the center of the chamber are the

broken legs and hips of a human—both of which are decorated with bold Shoanti tattoos. These legs once belonged to Gaekhen.

The mud here is a few feet deep in most spots, and takes quite some time to sift through in any thorough manner. A determined PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Perception check, though, is rewarded with a few interesting trinkets left over by the otyugh's messy meals: an amber necklace worth 350 gp, a silver dagger, a wax-sealed *elixir of vision* in a metal flask, a *wand of spiritual weapon* (48 charges), and a *ring of swimming*.

D5 Exsanguination Chamber (CR 4)

Three wooden tables stand in the middle of this room, their surfaces stained red with old bloodshed. To the east stands a ten-foot-wide hutch with wicker doors opening into a straw-lined cage.

Creatures: Many of Rolth's necromantic experiments, particularly the construction of golems, work best with body parts that have been completely drained of blood. The hutch in this room contains his blood draining "tools"—a nest of six stirges harvested from the Shingles. As the PCs arrive, a lone derro toils here over the freshly dead body of a vagrant. The derro has just placed a fourth stirge on the body and, when she notices the intruders, she reacts with a shriek. Her first action in combat is to yank open the stirge hutch. The four stirges that are already attached to the dead body are content with their gorging and aren't dangerous, but the remaining two that buzz out of the hutch are hungry and attack the PCs immediately as the derro ducks into the secret tunnel and tries to flee to area **D3** to alert her allies there. If she finds them dead, she abandons her post, fleeing down the western tunnel.

DERRO **CR 3**

XP 800

hp 25 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 70)

STIRGES (2) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 each

hp 5 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 260)

D6 Skull Corridor (CR 5)

The walls and ceiling of this tall hallway are encrusted with dozens of yawning skulls. Their mouths open into dark holes in the walls.

Creatures: Two of the skulls along the walls here are actually the heads of a pair of necrophidiuses—undead creations Rolth crafted from the skulls of two of his older victims from his days as the Key-Lock Killer. These skull-topped skeletal serpents are housed in the walls, one on each far end of the corridor, their jaws wide open but motionless. After the trap in this room (see below) is sprung, they slither out of the walls to strike, gaining surprise against characters who don't hear the telltale rattle of their ribs against the walls as they slither out to attack.

NECROPHIDIUSES (2) **CR 3**

XP 800 each

hp 36 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 196)

Trap: Several of the skulls that adorn the walls here are part of a magical trap. Two rounds after a creature enters this room, the skulls spray acid from their open mouths. All creatures in the hall are targeted by two *acid splash* spells as a result. Rolth and the derros generally avoid the trap by moving from the door into area **D7** to the nearby secret door into area **D2**, entering and exiting the room before the trap triggers.

ACID-SPRAYING SKULLS **CR 1**

XP 400

Type magic; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity; **Onset Delay** 2 rounds; **Reset** automatic (after 10 minutes)

Effect spell (two *acid splash* spells per person; +5 ranged touch; 1d3 acid damage each)

D7 Alchemy Lab (CR 3)

The wooden tables here are stacked with vials, beakers, and other alchemical gear, although the southern one is heaped with broken vials and leans awkwardly on a hastily repaired leg. Three large cauldrons sit against the east wall, one of them upended. Its foul, rancid contents—old rendered fat—have spilled onto the floor.

This room is where Rolth performs his alchemical experiments and refines reagents and components for his necromantic research.

Creature: The fourth and final of Vreeg's derro minions works here at cleaning the place and repairing a table that was crushed when a berserk carrion golem tore through the room earlier in the day (see area **D8**). The derro reacts to intrusions with shock, spending the first round of combat in stammering confusion, unsure whether he should flee and report the intrusion or stay and fight. In the end, he opts to fight, fleeing to area **D3** if brought to fewer than 5 hit points.

DERRO **CR 3**

XP 800

hp 25 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 70)

Treasure: Several valuable items were destroyed by the golem's rampage, but a search of the ruins (which requires 10 minutes of work and a successful DC 20 Perception check) reveals a fair amount of surviving treasure, including enough material to cobble together an alchemist's lab[UE], 3 doses of vermin repellent[UE] (this is the same foul-smelling mixture the PCs may have found in the old fishery—Rolth is his father's source for the stuff), two tanglefoot bags, 4 doses of black adder venom, a *hybridization funnel*[UE], 2 doses of *silversheen*, and a *handy haversack* containing three *potions of cure moderate wounds*, a *potion of lesser restoration*, a *potion of invisibility*, two *scrolls of false life*, and a *scroll of dispel magic*.

D8 Store Room (CR 4)

The door to this room is boarded over, but can be broken down with a successful DC 24 Strength check or can be opened with ease if the boards are removed (a noisy process requiring 1d3 minutes of work).

This room, once a pantry, is in shambles. Broken crates and shelves lie strewn about the place, with the foodstuffs, firewood, and other supplies they once contained scattered across the floor.

Creature: Early in the morning, before the PCs entered the Dead Warrens and as Rolth made ready to leave for the day, his most recently created carrion golem went berserk. The creature tore free from its table in area **D11** and made its way here, smashing a good portion of the equipment in area **D7** before Rolth managed to trap it in this room. Rolth has added all of the alchemical gear the golem smashed to his shopping list. The resulting delay to his outing prevents him from returning to the Dead Warrens until after the PCs are gone.

Rolth intended to let the golem simmer in here for a few days to see if it recovered from its berserk state before he was forced to destroy it. If the PCs open the door, the golem emerges and attacks them at once. It still clutches a severed arm that it snatched when it first went berserk. This arm is marked with Shoanti tattoos—it's another fragment of Gaekhen's body.

CARRION GOLEM **CR 4**

XP 1,200

hp 42 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 136)

D9 Prisoner Pits (CR 3)

This foul-smelling cavern is bordered on three sides by ten-foot-deep pits. From these pits wafts the rancid smell of excrement and decay. Each pit contains a few heaps of moldy straw, a wooden trough containing filthy water, a few rotting body parts, and a couple of still-living prisoners.

These pits are where Rolth keeps living victims until he finds a need for their bodies (or, at the very least, a need for their body parts). Each of the three pits currently contains two frightened, malnourished, and sickly humans, victims who have been imprisoned here for weeks, and the partial remains of a few others.

Creature: This prison is guarded by one of Rolth's more loyal minions, the ogrekin Cabbagehead. Hideously deformed and with a cruel nature to match, Cabbagehead has come to think of Rolth as a father, and wants desperately to please the necromancer by showing him how devoted and observant a guard he can be. His deformed frame makes him unsuitable for public uses, but he has taken to the care, feeding, and torment of this room's prisoners with a vengeance.

CABBAGEHEAD **CR 3**

XP 800

Male human ogrekin fighter 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 204)

CN Medium humanoid (giant, human)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 36 (3d10+15)

Fort +9, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0 (+1 vs. fear)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +9 (1d3+5)

TACTICS

During Combat Cabbagehead shrieks and yells as he fights, saying things like, "Rolth give me big reward for your head, pretty elf!" or, "You go in pit now! Me feed you later. Maybe!" He fights bare fisted, pummeling foes mercilessly.

Morale Cabbagehead fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 13, **Con** 18, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 19

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike)

Skills Perception +7, Swim +11

Languages Common

SQ armor training 1, thick skin, weak mind

Gear *+1 studded leather*

Treasure: If rescued, the human prisoners have little means to repay the PCs apart from their gratitude, but one woman, a somewhat successful cutpurse named **Tiora** (CN female human rogue 2), has stashed a nest egg in her home. Pickpocketing is what got her into this problem in the first place, and she vows to make amends for her life. Within a day of her rescue, she seeks out the PCs and offers them a *wand of cure moderate wounds* (34 charges) as thanks.

D10 Library

Two wide, freestanding bookshelves furnish this room. The shelves are filled with row upon row of carefully arranged tomes and scrolls.

CABBAGEHEAD

Treasure: The books and scrolls are mostly treatises on necromancy or the art of crafting golems, but there's also a surprisingly large number of books about diseases and plagues here as well. Any character attempting a Knowledge check on these topics while using these books as resources gains a +2 circumstance bonus on the check. The collection of books as a whole is worth 300 gp. Of more portable interest are two magic scrolls wedged between the pages of a thick picture book on humanoid anatomy—these are a *scroll of identify* and a *scroll of command undead*.

D11 Stitchery

The nauseating mixture of decay and strange chemicals fills the air of this large room. Glinting saws, pliers, long stitching needles, and other surgical equipment are organized on shelves and benches along the walls. A sturdy wooden table in the center of the room supports a large humanoid shape—a thing stitched together from a patchwork of dozens of different bodies. The thing would stand nearly seven feet tall if it rose.

This chamber is Rolth's workshop, the place where he assembles the bodies of his constructs. He has built several carrion golems over the years (most of which he has sold to interested parties or uses to guard other hideouts), but the nearly completed flesh golem body strapped to the table is his first attempt at such a creature. The head stitched to the body is strangely small for its massive frame—a head crowned with brown hair and bearing a distinctive scar upon the left cheek. This is, of course, Gaekhen's head.

D12 Rolth's Room

This chamber holds a large four-poster bed and a simple writing desk, along with a full-length mirror propped up against one earthen wall.

Rolth uses this room to rest and relax as the need takes him, so he doesn't have to abandon his laboratory between long sessions of work on a project. He has other laboratories elsewhere in Korvosa—as a result, he keeps little of value here.

Treasure: Sitting on the desk is a curious but broken knife with a key-shaped blade. The broken blade itself is of sufficient quality to count as the masterwork component for forging a dagger, and is thus worth 300 gp. The weapon is similar to the one the PCs may have found in Gaedren's lair (see area **A14**), another of Rolth's signature knives. The PCs may not realize the significance of these blades until they finally encounter Rolth in the next chapter.

A successful DC 20 Perception check reveals a hidden niche in the wall behind the mirror (this check is automatically successful if a PC specifically looks behind the mirror). The niche is mostly empty—Rolth keeps his spellbooks here only when he's within the Dead Warren—but a few items of value remain, including a set of masterwork thieves' tools, a pearl and silver snuffbox worth 250 gp that contains a single dose of *dust of disappearance*, and a *sustaining spoon*.

D13 Vreeg's Chamber (CR 6)

This dry, well-kept chamber contains a narrow bed, a relatively empty shelf holding only a few books and some bones and skulls, and a long bench. A man's torso, the chest bearing numerous tribal tattoos, lies on this bench. The right arm is still attached, and periodically thrashes and clutches at the air as if it were alive.

VREEG

The torso and arm belonged to Gaekhen. Vreeg claimed them before Rolth could discard them along with Gaekhen's legs in the corpse dump (area **D4**), and although he hasn't yet learned how to fully animate the dead, the insane derro was still able to infuse a few fragments of negative energy into the torso to give it horrible, twitching life. The torso and arm thrash and claw if handled, making unarmed strikes at the rate of one per round (+0 melee, 1d3+2 nonlethal, 50% miss chance due to blindness). The animating force in the torso is fragile, though, so it has only 2 hp. It can be damaged by positive energy as if it were undead.

Creatures: The derro Vreeg dwells here, where he lives a relatively simple life. When Rolth is present, the derro follows the human around like a lapdog, ready to attend to his every need, but when Rolth is out, the derro's natural inclination toward laziness and cruelty takes control—he spends 2 to 3 hours per day tormenting Cabbagehead and the other

derros and the rest of his time here at rest, tinkering with his own necromantic experiments, or reading books he's borrowed from the library (area **D10**).

Vreeg is attended by a single human zombie, left by Rolth to serve the derro as a bodyguard. If the PCs left Gaedren Lamm's body unattended, this zombie is none other than Gaedren himself, whose body was recovered by his son Rolth and then animated to serve the son in undeath. As a mindless zombie, Gaedren won't recognize the PCs, but his appearance here should unsettle the PCs and provoke concerns over who might have had the desire to restore the old man to unlife in the first place.

VREEG **CR 6**

XP 2,400

Male derro necromancer 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 70)

NE Small humanoid

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 16, flat-footed 18 (+1 deflection, +4 Dex, +2 natural, +4 shield, +1 size)

hp 69 (8 HD; 5d6+3d8+39)

Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +12

SR 14

Weaknesses vulnerable to sunlight

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee mwk dagger +7 (1d3+1/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

Derro Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +8)

At will—*darkness*, *ghost sound* (DC 15)

1/day—*daze* (DC 15), *sound burst* (DC 17)

Necromancer Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +8)

6/day—*grave touch* (2 rounds)

Necromancer Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +8)

3rd—extended *false life*, *fly*, *vampiric touch*

2nd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 16), *scorching ray*, *extended shield*, *spectral hand*

1st—*cause fear* (DC 15), *chill touch* (DC 15), *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 15), *sleep* (DC 14)

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *mage hand*, *ray of frost*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 14)

Opposition Schools Conjuration, Illusion

TACTICS

Before Combat Vreeg casts extended *false life* every morning. If he hears intruders, he also casts *fly* and extended *shield*.

During Combat Vreeg uses flight to remain out of melee combat, casting spells and throwing undead from his *robe of bones* until cornered or forced into melee. At this point, he uses his *wand of ghoul touch* against foes, or makes sneak attacks against a character on whom he has cast *blindness/deafness*.

Morale Vreeg fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 18, **Con** 16, **Int** 16, **Wis** 5, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 19

Feats Combat Casting, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy), Turn Undead

Skills Bluff +13, Fly +11, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Perception +5, Spellcraft +14, Stealth +16

Languages Aklo, Common, Giant, Terran, Undercommon

SQ arcane bond (*wand of ghoul touch*), madness, poison use, power over undead

Combat Gear *robe of bones*, *wand of ghoul touch* (22 charges), blue whinnis (3); **Other Gear** mwk dagger, *ring of protection +1*, 38 gp

HUMAN ZOMBIE **CR 1/2**

XP 200

hp 12 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 288)

Treasure: Vreeg's spellbook sits on the bookshelf. This tome contains all the spells he has prepared, plus every cantrip (excluding conjuration and illusion ones), *command undead*, *darkness*, *feather fall*, *gentle repose*, *scare*, *sleep*, and *water breathing*.

In addition, the derro has stashed a small collection of valuables he has stripped from the dead bodies he has handled. This collection includes two silver rings worth 100 gp each, a gold and pearl bracelet worth 150 gp, a mithral hip flask emblazoned with an etching of a house drake (worth 400 gp), and a *traveler's any-tool*[UE].

Returning Gaekhen

The PCs need only return Gaekhen's corpse to Field Commander Cressida Kroft—she'll handle the delicate prospect of seeing the body is properly handled and returned to Thousand Bones (including seeing to de-animating the torso if needed). This is for the best, as the big news bustling about the city as the PCs emerge triumphant from the Dead Warrens is that Trinia Sabor's "trial" has concluded. Queen Ileosa has announced that the assassin is to be executed at sunset and has invited many of Korvosa's nobles, military officers, and anyone of any real import to Castle Korvosa's public courtyard to witness the event.

Cressida Kroft wants the PCs to be there. Something about the whole affair doesn't sit right with her, and the way things have been going lately in Korvosa, Kroft worries that the execution might trigger another riot. When you're ready to conclude this chapter and present the execution, proceed with the Chapter Conclusion on the next page.

Story Award: If the PCs recover Gaekhen's body and return it to Thousand Bones, award them 1,600 XP.

CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Korvosa has been dealt a serious blow during this first chapter, and as the first chapter of Curse of the Crimson Throne draws to an end, the PCs should not feel that they've solved the city's problems. This last event—the attempted execution of an innocent—serves as a turning point for the PCs in that it gives them, potentially, their first chance to stand directly against Ileosa's growing power. This event, which takes place in a public courtyard in the shadow of Castle Korvosa itself, should play out not as a standard encounter but a sort of interactive "cut scene."

The execution it is not an affair to be missed. The toast of Korvosa is in attendance in garish gowns, fine capes, and enough jewels to blind the common citizen. The overall feel of the event is that of a grand ball or party, not an assassin's public execution.

Queen Ileosa emerges amid a great flourish and pomp as heralds announce her arrival with a fanfare of music and drums. She has fully accepted the mantle of sole monarch now, and carries herself with poise, style, and grace. She wears a green and white silk dress worth thousands of gold coins and is attended by a small army of striking guards. Chief among these is Sabina, although she is not immediately recognizable, clad as she is in a striking brand-new suit of full-plate armor with a closed helm sporting a flowing crimson plume.

Ileosa takes her seat in a high throne-like chair at one end of the public courtyard, while a guillotine stands ominously at the other. The executioner is a towering, muscular man wearing an executioner's hood and idly holding an immense axe. Whispers ripple through the assemblage—admiring comments on the queen's attire, predictions regarding how the traitor Trinia might comport herself, speculations on the identity of the armored guardian who stands at Ileosa's side, and, if you wish, even gossip about the PCs' exploits during the course of the adventure.

Then, as an ominous drum beating begins, the gawkers fall silent. The drum sets the pace for Trinia's procession to the executioner's block. As they reach the block, a guard removes Trinia's shackles and the hood, revealing a very frightened woman who bravely holds back her tears. (If the PCs hid Trinia, the prisoner revealed is a secondary scapegoat—someone who looks superficially similar to Trinia but is equally innocent of the crime. In this case, the following events play out more or less the same, as Blackjack has no intention of letting anyone be falsely executed by the queen.) Trinia is led up to stand before the guillotine, her arms bound behind her back by a leather cord as Queen Ileosa addresses the crowd.

"Fellow Korvosans! You have suffered greatly these past few weeks. Homes have burned, family members have died, and fortunes have been lost. I feel your suffering, for not only have I lost a beloved husband, but with each act of anarchy that followed, my heart bled more. This has been a trying time for us, yet the torment is at an end. Before you is the source of your anguish and pain. Do not be deceived by this murderer's timid nature—she is a black-hearted assassin. I offer you her death as a salve against the hatred and hurt you have suffered.

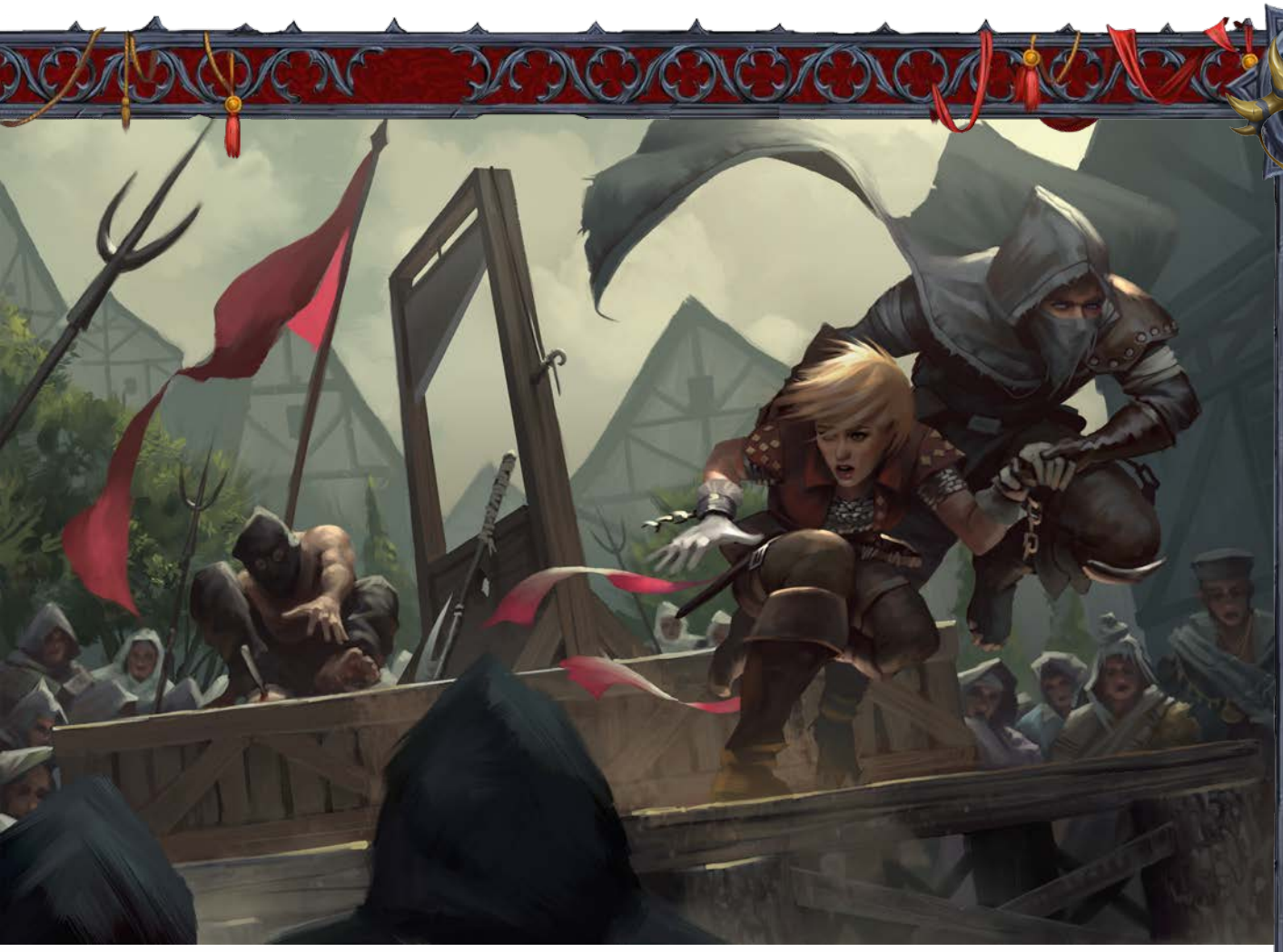
"And so, without further delay, let us usher in this new dawn with justice! OFF WITH HER HEAD!"

Yet just before the executioner forces Trinia into the guillotine, the man cries out in pain as a hurled dagger embeds itself in the back of his hand. As the executioner's grip on Trinia falters, a cry echoes through the crowded courtyard: "By the gods! It's Blackjack!"

An instant later, a man dressed in a hooded cloak and black mask springs up to Trinia's side. Using a dagger, he cuts the bonds on Trinia's wrists and then throws the same dagger down to pin the executioner's left foot to the wood platform. He then turns to address the shocked crowd.

"Yes indeed, my queen! Let us usher in justice, but let that be justice for Korvosa, not this shambles you call a monarchy! Long live Korvosa! Down with the queen!"

Blackjack's words cause the crowd to erupt into action. Some demand that he release the assassin while others call for the queen's resignation. Queen Ileosa stands stunned for a few moments, whispers something to Sabina, and then quickly turns to flee into Castle Korvosa, Sabina and a dozen guards behind her to cover her retreat. The remaining guards in the courtyard move to apprehend Blackjack, but the gathered nobles, thirsty for blood, make it difficult to move. At the same time, the executioner recovers from his wounds and lifts his axe over Blackjack, who seems to have momentarily forgotten the man in his apparent delight at having forced the queen to flee.



INVOLVING THE PCS

What happens here is up to the PCs. Don't run this encounter as a battle, but think of it more as an interactive scene the PCs can take part in. Go around the table and ask the players what their characters want to do.

If their actions would do little to impact the scene, Blackjack notices the executioner in time and ducks out of the way of his axe, dragging Trinia with him. He clambers up a hanging banner to a nearby wall, hauling Trinia up behind him. As the two reach the wall, he swiftly drinks a *potion of feather fall* and bows to the crowd while backlit by the setting sun. Then both he and Trinia leap from the wall to make their escape into the city.

If the PCs help Blackjack, describe how their actions save Blackjack's life. When he reaches the castle wall, his bow is to the PCs in particular, and he even raises his rapier in salute to them before he and Trinia escape.

Although the remainder of this Adventure Path assumes that Blackjack and Trinia escape, it's certainly possible the PCs could attempt to hinder him as well. If the PCs take this route, have them roll attacks as necessary—if they roll relatively low numbers, simply describe how Blackjack and Trinia escape despite their efforts. If, however, they roll high, go ahead and let their actions be the deciding factor. In this case, Blackjack is captured and revealed to be Vencarlo Orisini before being thrown into Castle Korvosa's deepest dungeons, Trinia is executed (although this time in a private chamber in the dungeons below), and things become a bit more difficult for the PCs in the chapters to come as you see fit.

Escaping the chaos after Blackjack's exit should be relatively simple. Even if the PCs' actions help Blackjack to escape, they need not fear any retribution from the Korvosan Guard. This is partially due to the chaos of the scene, but also due to an important shift in Korvosa's attitude. Blackjack has long been seen as a hero of the city, and the fact that he has taken up a position in such direct opposition to the queen causes many of those who supported the monarchy to begin to doubt their convictions. Soon enough, her true nature will be impossible to ignore. After Blackjack's daring rescue of Trinia, Queen Ileosa remains ensconced in Castle Korvosa for several weeks, which gives Korvosa the time it needs to recover from recent events.

Yet however safe the city might seem, its troubles are far from over. Korvosa is in the eye of the storm. Greater wheels are turning, and somewhere not too far from shore, a black three-masted vessel flying the orange lanterns of a plague-ship drifts ever closer to shore. Death follows it.

SEVEN DAYS TO THE GRAVE

BY F. WESLEY SCHNEIDER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER BACKGROUND 70
PART 1: INFECTION 72
PART 2: OUTBREAK 82
PART 3: EPIDEMIC 110
CHAPTER CONCLUSION 130

MAPS

THE DIREPTION 89
WERERAT SEWER DEN 94
LAVENDER AND VENDRA'S APARTMENT 94
RACKER'S ALLEY AND GIOTORRI'S TOYS 94
CAROWYN MANOR 104
HOSPICE OF THE BLESSED MAIDEN 112
TEMPLE OF URGATHOA 112

CHAPTER BACKGROUND

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

The PCs begin Chapter 2 well into 4th level (at least halfway to 5th level, if not more).

5 The PCs should be 5th level after completing their first mission to combat the plague.

6 The PCs should be 6th level before they arrive at Carowyn Manor or Racker's Alley.

7 The PCs should be 7th level before entering the Temple of Urgathoa below the hospice.

The PCs should just reach 8th level by the end of the chapter.

Although the flames of rebellion have been reduced to embers, peace is a short-lived comfort for Korvosa. From the red-tinted windows of Castle Korvosa's galleries and vaults, the increasingly morbid dreams of a new queen drift down upon the crawling, filthy citizenry below. What are mewling masses and simpering slaves to a high-and-mighty monarch? Why bother with the smothering obligations and unending exercises of rule? The life of a queen would be ideal, were it not for her subjects. Her Majesty has long mused on the subtle culling of her city's chaff, and royal coin can buy even the darkest dreams. With help from agents willing to commit any atrocity for gold and the zealots of Golarion's foulest gods, the madness of Queen Ileosa takes form—a form with tattered sails and a hull festering with death.

Even before she gained control of Korvosa after her husband's death, Queen Ileosa was looking to a future where she ruled a city scoured clean of those she deemed undesirable: Varisians, Shoanti, and especially those of the lowest class. She'd already contacted the Red Mantis for

aid in engineering her husband's death, and while she was frustrated to learn of their policy against direct regicide, they could still aid her indirectly, supplying her with the poison needed to do the deed herself.

But her husband's death was not her end goal; it was merely a starting point. She knew even as she secured that first dose of poison that once he was gone and Korvosa was hers, she could spare no time before starting the next insidious stage of her plot. She contacted the Red Mantis again, asking for assistance in how best to take care of Korvosa's rabble—Ileosa wanted a city in her own image, and in order for this to come to pass, those of Varisian descent, Shoanti blood, or simply the poor luck to be among Korvosa's lowest class had to go.

Here, the Red Mantis had the perfect answer, for one of their highest-ranking assassins, a woman named Kayltanya, had long been an avid collector of sinister afflictions. She had recently come into the possession of a sample of fungus infected with a deadly and mysterious disease known as Vorel's phage. A plague, Kayltanya reasoned, would do wonders for fulfilling Ileosa's desires, especially if it could be engineered to target specific ethnicities. Yet Vorel's phage, for all its deadly nature, was difficult to spread and relatively easy to recover from.

And so Kayltanya put Ileosa in contact with a cold-minded sociopath, a Chelish "doctor" named Reiner Davaulus. Reputed to be a "gentleman's killer," his modus operandi forsakes blades and bloodshed, favoring the path of sickbed poisonings and "accidental" deaths. When Kayltanya contacted him, Doctor Davaulus considered the assignment a fantastic challenge, and swiftly came to Korvosa to meet secretly with Queen Ileosa. Soon thereafter, he became the primary point of contact between her and the Red Mantis. At the doctor's suggestion, the Red Mantis also brought in two additional specialists on disease to help him weaponize Vorel's phage: the cult of Urgathoa (led by a zealot named Andaisin, recently fled from Nidal) and the vampire Ramoska Arkminos (a scholar of diseases and necromantic contagions like vampirism). Offered significant fortunes from the Korvosan royal vaults, these nefarious scholars and cultists worked together to engineer a citywide assassination.

Within weeks, the foundation of Queen Ileosa's plot against her people was laid. The group she and the Red Mantis had gathered swiftly crafted the perfect epidemic to plague the city. The result was a more potent and infectious variation with dramatic symptoms sure to panic the populace. The Urgathoans named their creation "blood veil."

Using methods perfected by Lady Andaisin and enhanced by Ramoska Arkminos, Davaulus planned a double-tiered infection targeting Korvosa's lifeblood: its coin. In an operation overseen by Arkminos, a small fortune in Korvosan silver was tainted with blood veil using a magical container called a *death's head coffer* (see page 433). The silver would be scattered throughout the city, particularly in the poorer quarters or directly into the vaults of the Bank of Abadar, where its taint would target the priests best poised to combat the disease and those most likely to unknowingly disperse the coin into the city. Finally, the conspirators engineered the arrival and sinking in the Jeggare River of the *Direption*, which would given the all the appearances of a plague ship, as a ploy to draw attention away from the tainted silver. Anyone seeking the source of the disease would uncover the clues pointing to the *Direption*, and thus waste valuable time chasing a red herring while the sickness only spreads further.

Her wishes fulfilled, her new dark allies marshaled, and her mind brimming with insidious dreams, Queen Ileosa gave the nod that launched a ship with black sails and opened her city gates to a pestilence unlike any Korvosa has ever known. If blood veil is allowed to run its course, not only will Ileosa have crippled the city's ability to resist her future plans and made Korvosa into a place more "suitable" for her warped sensibilities, but her final pacts with infernal and ancient fonts of power will grow all the more potent.

NPC Developments

Some of the NPCs the player characters met in Chapter 1 don't have roles in this chapter, yet that doesn't mean they remain idle. Use the following notes to expand the roles of these additional NPCs as you see fit if the PCs seek them out during "Seven Days to the Grave."

Amin Jalento: After the PCs saved him from the mob in the previous chapter, Amin returns to his home in Old Korvosa; he remains there throughout this adventure, barricaded in his home. He survives the plague and will meet the PCs again in the next chapter.

Devargo Barvasi: Devargo continues to run Eel's End for much of this chapter, but when Queen Ileosa orders Old Korvosa quarantined, the King of Spiders puts Eel's End itself in lockdown. He hopes to ride out the plague, but unless the PCs intervene, things take a bad turn before this chapter's end when his ettercap ally Chittersnap, driven to extremes by hunger, attacks and kills Devargo. In this case, if the PCs visit Eel's End later, they find the place mostly abandoned, with Devargo's body wrapped in silk in the hold. If Chittersnap died, then Devargo may well survive the plague. In this case, Eel's End might serve as a safe place to rest for the PCs—assuming they can make such a prospect worth Devargo's time!

Neolandus Kalepopolis: The castle's seneschal has been lying low in Old Korvosa, but as this chapter begins, he is captured by the Arkonas—see Chapter 3 for more details.

PART 1

INFECTION

While "Edge of Anarchy" gave the PCs ample opportunities to explore Korvosa and become acquainted with its districts and people, most of these encounters occurred under stressful circumstances and the backdrop of a city in chaos. With the quieting of much of the city's disorder and the slow acceptance of Queen Ileosa as Korvosa's new sovereign, the city returns to a state of near normalcy, although the scars of the recent upheaval are still evident on many buildings and in whispered gossip.

Blood veil has already been introduced to Korvosa at the time this chapter begins, but it takes 7 days, on average, for victims to succumb. At first, these deaths are isolated and spread throughout the poorer sections of the city, as vagrants snatch up tainted silver coins scattered surreptitiously by the queen's agents in back alleys and waterfronts. Those in the city who would fight against the plague don't realize the looming threat for several days as a result, and it is only at this point that the PCs are brought in to investigate. Until then, you'll need to keep the PCs occupied with other events and tasks. The first part of this adventure presents encounters to do just that, the most time-consuming of which is smuggling Trinia Sabor out of the city.

In addition to these preliminary events, give the PCs time to recover from the previous chapter's perils. They should have a chance to explore the city, resupply, and clean up any loose ends. As "Seven Days to the Grave" promises to drastically alter the face and feel of Korvosa, be sure the PCs have ample time to prepare. Characters should be encouraged to make connections and grow attached to people and places throughout the city, especially if they're locals. Such bonds should cause the tragedies of the impending days to affect the characters even more deeply and lend personal meaning to their search for a cure.

THE SECOND HARROWING

In the previous chapter, the PCs gained a powerful magic item—*Zellara's harrow deck*. This harrow deck plays a recurring role throughout Curse of the Crimson Throne. This chapter is thematically tied to the suit of shields in a harrow deck and, by extension, to Constitution.

The best time to have Zellara perform her second harrowing (and thus generate the PCs' available Harrow Points for this chapter) is at the very start of this adventure. Zellara can sense that something dire is coming for Korvosa as "Seven Days to the Grave" begins, and she uses her empathic link to instill an urge to perform a harrow reading in the mind of the PC who carries her deck. If that PC doesn't comply soon by using her cards to perform a reading, she takes matters into her own hands once she sees the PCs are alone by creating a *major image* of herself which then performs the reading. When you do this reading, take pains to interpret the cards from the past to dwell upon previous brushes with disease, sickness, and death the PCs might have experienced (be these drawn from their character histories or from events in "Edge of Anarchy," such as the battle with the carrion golem or otyugh). When you get to cards representing the present, focus on metaphors that relate to the general sense of unease in the city. For the cards representing the future, get grim: interpret the cards as dire warnings, mass graves, undeath, rot and decay, birds feasting upon the dead (to symbolize the Queen's Physicians), and beautiful women with ashen skin and blank faces (to symbolize the Gray Maidens).

See Appendix 3 for further information on how to perform a harrowing.

CRESSIDA'S CONCERN

The PCs spent much of the previous chapter working for the commander of the Korvosan Guard—specifically, for Field Marshal Cressida Kroft. When this chapter of *Curse of the Crimson Throne* begins, perhaps even as early as hours or even minutes after the botched execution of Trinia Sabor, Field Marshal Kroft seeks out the PCs, looking worried.

Cressida has some disturbing news. She's received advance word that Queen Ileosa intends to restructure several elements of the city's military organizations. Rumors of disbanding some or even all of the groups in favor of new organizations are on many lips, and with events running the way they have of late, Kroft is increasingly afraid that Queen Ileosa's inexperience as a ruler is going to result in some poor or even disastrous decisions. The Field Marshal doesn't go as far as to suggest malice or evil fuels Ileosa's plans, but to her mind,

ignorance and naivete can be almost as dangerous. In particular, the way Ileosa handled Trinia has left Kroft disturbed and worried for the city's future.

If the PCs stood up for Trinia or helped Blackjack rescue her, their actions may not have been immediately noticed by Ileosa and the city at large, but Field Marshal Kroft took note. Even if they didn't, she warns the PCs that events are moving swiftly in Korvosa, and in a direction that makes her nervous. More importantly, she reveals to the PCs that her ability to finance their missions will almost certainly be diminished as the new leadership realigns and restructures elements of the Korvosan Guard. Kroft even worries that her position as Field Marshal may be in jeopardy. Her goal at this point is to not make waves and to cling to her post as tenaciously as possible so she'll remain in a position to protect and represent the men and women of the Guard she's grown to trust and feel responsible for.

All of this is Kroft's way of informing the PCs that, for all of their best interests, the PCs should no longer consider themselves official agents of the Korvosan Guard. She hopes the PCs will continue to fight for Korvosa and her citizens, and promises to aid them as she can, but she can foresee a time in the near future when the power of the Korvosan Guard may not be enough to protect those who serve the city. She doesn't yet use words like "revolution," but the implication should be clear to the PCs that having a group of specialists like them on hand to help protect Korvosa from itself may mean the difference between life and death for the city.

In any event, Kroft does ask where the PCs will be staying in Korvosa, and how she can contact them if she has an opportunity for them. She doesn't need their aid currently, but imagines it won't be long before their services will be required.

Rise of the Gray Maidens

At the end of the previous chapter, Ileosa's bodyguard Sabina appeared in public for the first time clad in a remarkable suit of exquisitely fashioned full-plate armor. With its red plume and crimson highlights, the armor serves as protection as much as it does a uniform, and although most gossip in the days to follow focuses on Blackjack's daring rescue, not a few tongues wag about the mysterious figure at the queen's side.

Sabina represents the Gray Maidens, a military group created by Queen Ileosa and loyal only to her that serves increasingly as both a royal guard and city enforcers. She places her bodyguard and lover Sabina Merrin in command of this elite force, and at about the time the PCs visit young Brienna Soldado (see page 78), Ileosa hands over the Longacre Building to the group as a headquarters. Many of the Longacre Building's arbiters protest, and those who do are relieved of duty (they know better than to protest too loudly though, and thus avoid being imprisoned, or worse). Yet the city's senior arbiter, Zenobia Zenderholm, openly welcomes the Gray Maidens into the Longacre Building and pledges to aid them with the transition into their new headquarters. With funds from the castle treasury and the assistance of a bound efreeti named Yzahnum (conjured courtesy of one of the queen's powerful new allies, the bloatmage Togomor, who has taken up the role of castle seneschal in the absence of Neolandus), Ileosa is able to begin swift production of the armor, swords, and shields that will soon become symbolic of the Gray Maidens. At the same time, she begins hand-selecting new recruits into the Gray Maidens, choosing

GRAY MAIDEN FOOT SOLDIER

beautiful young fighters, cavaliers, and the like, most of whom were initially conscripted from the Sable Company, the Order of the Nail, and the Korvosan Guard. As this campaign continues, the Gray Maidens increasingly recruit new members from Korvosa's violent underworld. Conscripts to the Gray Maidens must pass the queen's own examination for beauty and strength. Those found lacking are told they can play another role in the new age, but are instead led down into the dungeons below the Longacre Building, disfigured, and imprisoned. Women who make the cut undergo a cruel and grueling initiation process designed to break down their personalities, leave their once-beautiful faces scarred, and impress upon them that service and loyalty to the queen are the surest ways to avoid painful punishment. Recruits who don't fall in line find themselves imprisoned, but those who comply earn vaunted roles at Queen Ileosa's side and the power and support to revel in their roles as Korvosa's new enforcers.

During this chapter, the Gray Maidens are few in number, but Sabina Merrin quickly bolsters their ranks over the weeks. Although they are destined to become one of the major opposition groups against the PCs, strive in this adventure to present them as merely a necessity of desperate times—a personification of the threat of martial law in the face of a great urban crisis. By the time the PCs finish this chapter of *Curse of the Crimson Throne*, they should know the true and brutal nature of the Gray Maidens, but as this chapter starts, they might almost see them as potential saviors of the city. Certainly, their regimented training and imperious presence seems to work wonders in keeping order in the streets.

The introduction of the Gray Maidens takes place in the same square where Ileosa recently staged Trinia's near-execution. Whether the PCs are in attendance or hear about these developments through the grapevine is left to your discretion (they may well learn about this only after returning to Korvosa from the next event). Alternatively, the PCs could learn all this information directly from Cressida Kroft in their meeting with her, at which point her fears of Queen Ileosa restructuring the city's military seem to be fully justified.

In any event, once this announcement goes out, Queen Ileosa retreats into the Castle, which is closed to the public for the duration of this adventure. She does not emerge into the public again until the start of Chapter 3 (see The Crown Revealed on page 137).

Use the following statistics for rank-and-file Gray Maiden foot soldiers, particularly those encountered in combat scenes in this chapter.

GRAY MAIDEN FOOT SOLDIER **CR 2**

XP 600

Female human fighter 3

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 21 (+9 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 27 (3d10+6)

Fort +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2 (+1 vs. fear)

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee longsword +7 (1d8+3/19–20)

Ranged composite longbow +4 (1d8/×3)

TACTICS

During Combat Although the Gray Maidens prefer to fight in melee, they are also excellent shots, and in larger groups at least a few of their number hang back to fire upon foes in combat while their sisters engage with sword and shield.

Morale Gray Maidens fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 12, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 17

Feats Iron Will, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills Climb +2, Intimidate +8, Perception +2

Languages Common

SQ armor training 1

Gear full plate, heavy steel shield, composite longbow with 20 arrows, longsword

A DAMSEL IN DISTRESS

In the aftermath of "Edge of Anarchy," the PCs probably have some questions, particularly about the events surrounding Trinia's botched execution and her rescue at Blackjack's hand. It's even possible the PCs might have thrown in their lot with Blackjack by aiding his escape. In this case, the general chaos of the scene keeps their actions anonymous to a certain extent, although it isn't long before Queen Ileosa realizes the PCs represent her greatest enemies.

The PCs aren't the only ones who have an interest in Blackjack. In the days following his daring rescue of the king's accused assassin, mercenaries, soldiers, and (increasingly) the Gray Maidens have been scouring the city for the fugitives, to no avail. The enraged queen has thus set a royal bounty of 5,000 gp for the capture of Trinia Sabor. Wildly embellished news of the botched execution spreads quickly to every corner of the city, leaving all to wonder why Korvosa's long-absent hero chose now to reappear and why he rescued a sentenced killer.

After his rescue of Trinia, Blackjack—the alter ego of Vencarlo Orisini—sought a way to ensure the painter-turned-scapegoat's safety, and decided that as long as Trinia remained in Korvosa, she would be in danger. Smuggling someone out of the city would usually be

My friends, I hope this note finds you in good health in these dangerous times. In light of the recent unrest, I feel that I could provide some tips on self-defense to adventurers such as you, and would be most gratified to meet with you for these lessons, offered gratis, at Orisini Academy, 16 Hillcrest Street. I eagerly await your arrival.

Vencarlo Orisini

HANDOUT #2–1

no problem for the well-connected swordmaster, but in the days following the city riots and general upheaval, many of Vencarlo's usual contacts are either doing time or lying low. Further, he knows he's being watched by the government, and he can't disrupt his routine. Yet every day Trinia remains hidden in his home is another she might be discovered. Thus, he turns to the adventurers whom his friend Field Marshal Kroft put so much faith in and sends them a short, cryptic note that invites them to pay him a visit in his academy in Old Korvosa (see Handout #2–1).

As mentioned in the note, Orisini Academy is located at 16 Hillcrest Street, near the center of Old Korvosa. A sign hanging from the front door reads, "Classes Cancelled Today." A few moments after the PCs arrive, regardless of whether they knock on the academy's front door, a serious-looking Vencarlo appears and ushers them inside. The swordsman thanks the PCs for responding to his cryptic note and leads them down a hall and into a study, the windows of which are tightly shuttered and curtained. He explains in hushed tones that he has an important task for the PCs, one that becomes obvious when he calls another guest into the room: Trinia Sabor.

Wearing simple traveling clothes, the alleged assassin holds a wide-brimmed rider's hat and a wig of long red curls, gifts from Orisini to use in her disguise. Trinia appears nervous and excited, and upon sighting the PCs she smiles, saying, "Sorry about the trouble I gave you in the Shingles a few weeks ago." Vencarlo then asks his guests to be seated, but remains standing as he speaks.

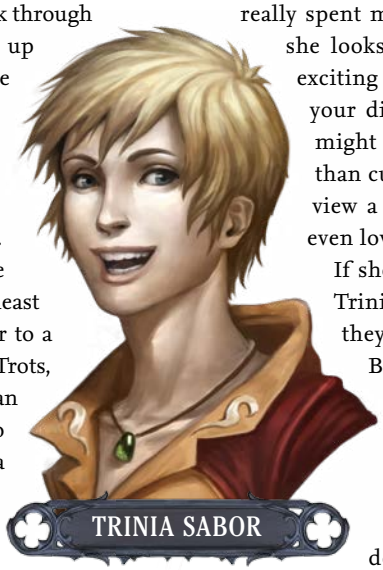
"You were all at the queen's debacle, so I don't doubt you recognize this charming young woman. I had only just reached my home the night of Her Majesty's morbid gala when that troublemaker Blackjack and this startled woman arrived at my doorstep. The so-called "people's hero" and I have had some dealings in the past, but it's been some years since I've seen the scoundrel. He was quick with his words and soon swooped off, doubtlessly to right some other festering wrong, but not before entrusting Miss Sabor to my protection and care. Although I don't know Blackjack's motives or politics, I trust his judgment and have seen much right done by his blade. He says Miss Sabor is innocent of the crime she's been accused of, and I'm more disposed to trust a hero of the city than the tantrums of some bloody-minded child playing at queen.

"The matter is simple: Korvosa is no longer safe for Miss Sabor. I've arranged for friends in Harse—a couple of well-respected ranchers—to take in our beautiful renegade until this whole 'assassination' foolishness blows over. It's the first leg of the journey where we find our problem, though. Ever since the queen's put a price on her head, mercenaries, soldiers, and the queen's new Gray Maidens have been searching for the young lady tirelessly. They've stopped by here three times so far, and each time I've only just barely been able to turn them away without inviting a search. My most reliable contacts have gone to ground in light of the recent uprisings, and Her Highness's bounty for Trinia's capture makes the use of new agents inadvisable. Thus, after some time to let her trail cool, I turned to you resourceful lot. Care to escort a lady home?"

Vencarlo is relatively sure the PCs will aid him, particularly if they've already put their reputations on the line in helping Blackjack effect his escape from the execution, which is why he's risked revealing he's been harboring Trinia in the first place. He plans on funding the escape: supplying Trinia with a horse and supplies for her travels, along with any reasonable mundane supplies the party needs to smuggle her out of the city. Should the PCs prove hesitant, Vencarlo insists that more is afoot than is currently clear and that as gentlefolk, the PCs should aid an innocent in need. If they require further convincing, he grudgingly offers them 500 gp for their efforts.

Vencarlo asserts that a simple, subtle egress would work best and draw the least attention. With the recent events

near North Bridge, he suggests a slow walk through the city down to High Bridge and then up to Dwarfwalk Road, mingling with the afternoon's merchants leaving the city. He opposes more dramatic attempts to leave town, knowing the city is certainly on alert for such theatrics as flying people or other shows of magical power. The PCs don't have to escort Trinia all the way to Harse (which is over 60 miles northeast of Korvosa). They need only to escort her to a wayside inn along the road north called Trots, where they're to hand Trinia over to a man named Jasan Adriel, a friend of Vencarlo who owns a horse ranch in Harse. It's a 12-mile trip to Trots, and Vencarlo hands the PCs a pouch of 20 gp to cover a night at the inn if they don't want to make the journey back to Korvosa immediately.



Overall, Vencarlo puts his trust in the PCs and leaves the details of Trinia's escape to them. He refuses to go with them, explaining that he's too well known about town and that his history with the monarchy might have drawn unwanted suspicion (he's the first to admit he might have been too outspoken in his criticism of the king and queen over the past several months). As such, Vencarlo plans to attend to some private business and disappear into the anonymity of Old Korvosa for a time. When the PCs are ready to depart with Trinia, he tells them this, thanks them for all of their help, and asks that they not try to find him—he'll call upon them when the time is right.

Guiding Trinia out of the city should be a relatively simple affair, provided the PCs don't overcomplicate it. With Trinia adopting the disguise of an everyday traveler, there's very little chance of her being spotted among the city's crowds as long as she and the party keep a low profile, but the PCs shouldn't know this. Groups of guards (who now bear crimson tunics to proclaim their allegiance to the new queen), Hellknights and mercenaries, and perhaps even a Gray Maiden might cast sidelong glances at the party as it travels through Korvosa, but each passes by as long as the PCs don't do anything suspicious.

During the walk, Trinia takes advantage of her time with the PCs to learn a little more about them. She's particularly curious as to why they're helping her now after they perhaps played a role in her capture, asking them questions about their past and current goals. She's intrigued by any tales of adventure since, as a bard, she's always on the lookout for exciting new stories. She remains relatively humble if asked about herself. She's been through a lot lately and just wants to be out of Korvosa on her way to somewhere safe. She's never really spent much time out of the city before, and she looks forward to her stay in Harse as an exciting opportunity, much like a vacation. At your discretion, Trinia's interest in the PCs might bloom into something even more than curiosity. For instance, she may start to view a PC as a potential mentor, friend, or even lover.

If she's asked about Blackjack or Vencarlo, Trinia grows somewhat evasive. After they made their escape from the castle, Blackjack and Trinia fled north through the city's alleys, rooftops, and sewers in an attempt to evade pursuit. They eventually came to Vencarlo's academy. Blackjack broke into the building through a back door and bade Trinia wait in a back room while he spoke to the school's master. Several minutes later, Vencarlo himself, appearing flushed and worried, introduced himself to Trinia as an accomplice of the legendary hero, explaining that he'd agreed to hide Trinia at the academy until he could orchestrate her escape from the city. The next morning, a package was delivered to the academy containing all of Trinia's confiscated gear. She and Vencarlo assumed this to be a final gift from Blackjack.

Trinia is no fool, and strongly suspects that Vencarlo and Blackjack are the same person, but her gratitude and respect for Vencarlo are more than enough to ensure she shares her suspicions only with her most trusted companions. It's unlikely that the PCs qualify now, but eventually they might. Until then, she remains evasive regarding her suspicions, going so far as to say that she blacked out at times during her escape and can't clearly remember the events of that frenzied flight.

As soon as the party escorts Trinia through the city gates, the trip should grow much less stressful. As Vencarlo mentioned, Trots is a 12-mile journey. Feel free to check for wandering monsters on this journey (using the Hinterland Encounters table presented on page 464 in Appendix 7); a battle against some minor monsters not only gives the PCs a chance to fight alongside Trinia, but can also get them a few experience points closer to 5th level.

Trots is a relatively unremarkable roadside inn with bland fare and mostly vermin-free accommodations. The PCs are met there by Jasan, a wide-grinning, barrel-chested man who greets Trinia like a long-lost friend. He thanks the PCs for escorting her, but is eager to be on his way back home. Trinia bids the PCs farewell for now as she and Jasan ride north. The PCs are free to spend the night at Trots or head back to Korvosa at once.

YELLOW LIGHTS RUMORS

Diplomacy Check DC	Information Gained
10	The Korvosan Guard fired upon and destroyed a ship full of foolish pirates from Riddleport who had obviously hoped to sneak into the heart of the city under cover of night. (*False*.)
15	A sinister-looking ship refused inspection as it sailed into the river. When it neared North Bridge and still failed to make its intentions known, the watch fired upon and destroyed it. (*True*.)
20	None of the guards who signaled or shouted out to the ship received a response. Some say that no one was on board at all. (*Mostly true*.)

The PCs aren't scheduled to meet Trinia again until Chapter 4, but if she has struck up a friendship with one of the PCs, she may well keep in touch by means of messages delivered via *animal messenger*. If the PCs wish to make additional visits out to Harse to visit her, consult Appendix 2 for more information on the village and Korvosa's hinterlands. For now, though, Cressida's request that the PCs remain in Korvosa in case the city need them should compel them to return soon.

Treasure: If the PCs befriended Trinia, either earlier in the adventure by hiding her, or during the course of their escorting mission, the bard is grateful for their aid and gives them her masterwork mithral dagger and her *wand of daze monster* as thanks, observing that she won't need them out in Harse, but the PCs may well if things keep getting worse in Korvosa.

Story Award: Once Trinia has been delivered safely to Trots, award the PCs 2,400 XP.

YELLOW LIGHTS

One night early in this adventure (preferably when the PCs are out of town, escorting Trinia out of the city), the queen's red herring sails into Jeggare River. This is the *Direption*, a black-sailed Nidalese ship owned by the cult of Urgathoa that serves largely as a mysterious decoy to divert inquisitive eyes from the plague's true source. The conspirators sail the ship into the harbor, hung with a lanterns shedding yellow light from the figurehead—a common method in the Inner Sea trade routes of identifying a ship under quarantine. They hope this action misdirects those seeking the source of the plague—or even better, eliminates them when they investigate the sunken wreck and fall victim to the dangerous aquatic ally the conspirators have ensconced in the shipwreck.

The *Direption* sails upriver just before midnight. Before the ship makes it to the docks, though, the night's peace is shattered by a wooden screech, followed by the crash of a trebuchet being fired. Again and again the sounds echo from the Wall of Eodred near North Bridge, waking nearly all of North Point. Across the river in Trail's End, citizens wake just in time to see a sleek brig swiftly sink into the wine-dark waters. The rest of the night passes in breathless anticipation of the wall-weapons' further use, which fortuitously never comes.

Next morning, gossip buzzes through the city and fanciful tales run wild. Every tavern and street corner is abuzz with rumors of pirate raiders and ghost ships. The Crimson Throne remains quiet on the matter, though, with even the loosest-tongued politicos seemingly knowing nothing of the previous night's incident. With so many far wilder and more interesting tales circulating, the facts of the matter quickly become lost among the frenzied gossip.

This event should occur when the PCs are out of town, so that they hear the information secondhand via rumors on the street (or perhaps from Grau Soldado, Cressida, or another NPC they speak to soon thereafter). At your discretion, you can have this event take place while the PCs are in Korvosa, but you should be prepared for them to want to immediately seek out the wrecked ship. In this case, use the information presented on page 88 of this adventure, but omit the presence of the sea hag within the sunken ship. Should the PCs attempt a Diplomacy check to gather information about the mysterious events, the rumors they learn depend on the result, as summarized on the table above.

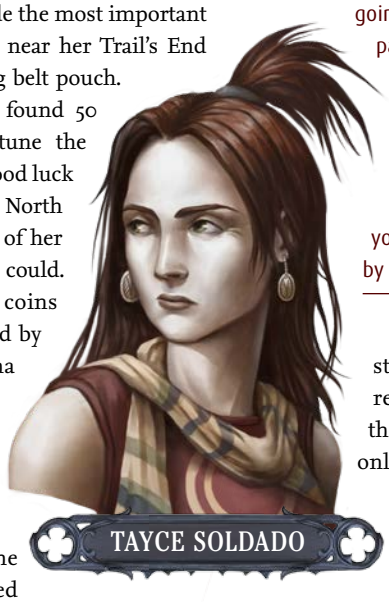
When the PCs hear of the strangely lit ship, a successful DC 20 Profession (sailor) check reveals that shining a single yellow light from the bow is a nautical warning identifying a ship under quarantine.

The PCs likely have more questions about the *Direption* and might even seek to investigate the sunken wreck (see The Wreck of the Direption on page 88 if they insist), but for now, its importance should be downplayed. Present the event as part of the campaign's background flavor, if you can. The general feeling about the incident should be that it was a potential danger that has been handled, although many in Korvosa remain surprised at the quickness and lethality with which the intruder was dealt. As the plague spreads, though, rumors that the mysterious ship was the source of the plague swiftly circulate.

THE FIRST SYMPTOMS

Several days before the *Direption* sinks into the Jeggare, young Brienna "Breeze" Soldado made the most important discovery of her life. In an alleyway near her Trail's End home, she found a small but bulging belt pouch. When she opened the pouch, she found 50 shiny silver coins—the largest fortune the child had ever seen. Shocked at her good luck and thanking Desna, she raced into North Point, intent on spending every coin of her unexpected windfall as quickly as she could.

Unfortunately for Brienna, the coins she found were among those tainted by the cult's *death's head coffer*. Brienna fell ill quickly. Her mother, Tayce, did all she could think of, drawing on more than 20 years of common parenting sense, but nothing seemed to soothe the girl. By that evening, despite the attentions of her mother, concerned neighbors, and a pinch-faced local herbalist, Brienna's condition had only worsened.



TAYCE SOLDADO

After a long night that brought little respite, it was clear that Brienna's condition was dire indeed. Tayce sent her sons into the city to schedule a visit from a cleric from the Grand Vault of Abadar while she called on her departed husband's brother, Grau Soldado, her only family in the city.

A SECOND FAVOR

In "Edge of Anarchy," the PCs met Grau Soldado and hopefully helped him recover from his depression and alcoholism. Their kindness and support made a mark, and now that his niece has taken ill, Grau realizes these fine adventurers might be her best shot at recovery. Even if there are no healers among the PCs, Grau still seeks them out, having seen they have a knack for getting things done and knowing they're probably the best equipped out of all his contacts to help.

Grau uses his contacts with the Korvosan Guard to locate the PCs, an easy enough task if they are still in the good graces of Field Marshal Cressida Kroft. Physically, he's in much better condition than the last time the PCs met him, having shaved, bathed, and sobered up. Psychologically, though, Grau remains distressed. If he encounters a character besides the one he's looking for, he urgently requests to be led to the PC he believes can best help his sick niece. Once Grau finds the PC he's searching for, he looks for a private place where they can talk.

"My niece is sick. I don't know what she has and neither does anyone in Trail's End. She's broken out all over in red pocks and can barely keep down food, or even the swill that good-for-nothing herbalist gave her. Her mother's talking about going to the Bank of Abadar, but can't afford to pay the prices their clerics would demand. Then I remembered how you and your friends handled yourselves during the riots, and how you aided me, and I figured you could help. A bunch of resourceful folk like you, I'd bet if you don't already have a way to fix this, you must know who can. Surely you can't just sit by while a child suffers, can you?"

Grau believes his request is simple and straightforward, and he is shocked if the PCs refuse. If it comes down to it, he offers to pay the PCs for their services, but he can afford only 100 gp (50 gp shy of being able to pay for a *remove disease* spell himself). Should the PCs still refuse, he resorts to guilt and insults to try to goad them into coming before finally giving up and seeking help elsewhere.

A Family in Need

Tayce and Brienna Soldado live in a small community northeast of Korvosa called Trail's End. Made up primarily of Varisians—with a few Shoanti and socially disaffected Chelaxians—Trail's End is poor and reputedly dangerous, but the neighborhood feels more like a small town than any district within the city proper. The criminal element is obvious and impossible to ignore in the face of dozens of toughs and thugs who loiter on the streets, mostly Sczarni brutes who call themselves the Bashwater Boys and prey exclusively upon Chelaxians and other outsiders. Knowing most city folks' distaste for Varisia's natives, the residents of Trail's End return such prejudices, creating a community that thrives off Korvosan coin but reviles the city all the same.

Tayce Soldado (CG female human commoner 3) lives here with her three children, Brienna, Charlo, and Rello. Despite being only half-blooded Varisians, Tayce's sons have distinctly Varisian features, with unruly black hair, brown eyes, and olive skin, while Brienna takes more after her father, having a paler complexion, with light hair and freckles. Tayce and her family are well known and quietly respected in Trail's End, and have nothing to fear from the local Sczarni toughs. While Tayce works as a washerwoman for those in the community and several families in North Point, her children also bring in a few coins for the family, with Brienna working as a maid, while Charlo and Rello work as unofficial apprentices to a wheelwright friend of the family.

Tayce is a single mother. Her husband Bayan was murdered long ago by highwaymen. Left with three

children to raise alone, Tayce dedicated her life to bringing them up right. Grau visits the family at least once a week to ensure that they're safe and have everything they need. He respects and honestly likes Tayce, and his visits are inspired by familial concern and fraternal obligation, not any one-sided feelings for his brother's widow.

The Soldado home is a squat, two-story wooden building in desperate need of repair. Overall, the building feels like the home of a family too busy living to bother with tedious chores. Inside, the house is remarkably clean and well kept, filled with worn furniture and decorated with the crafts and scribbling of children. Tayce ceded the one bedroom to her children years ago and sleeps on a settee on the first floor. Since Brienna's illness, though, the boys have joined their mother downstairs.

Infectious Encounters

When Grau and the PCs reach Tayce's home, Charlo and Rello are playing quietly in the living room, while Tayce attends Brienna upstairs. Every few minutes, a spasm of ragged coughing fills the house from above. Ishani Dhatri, an acolyte from the Bank of Abadar, is in the kitchen with a bag of herbs, brewing some concoction that smells of cinnamon and anise. Upon seeing the man still there, Grau is obviously displeased and goes upstairs to have a sternly whispered conversation with Tayce. Any character who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check can make out the gist of the conversation: Grau scolding Tayce for racking up a bill with an expensive healer when he said he would handle things, and Tayce defending her decision and restating the direness of Brienna's condition.

Ishani Dhatri attends a kettle boiling on the kitchen hearth until Grau and Tayce come back downstairs. He is almost 30 years old, yet is still only a low-ranking priest in the church of Abadar. His mother brought him and his sister Vavana to Korvosa when he was less than 10 years old, fleeing an outbreak of scarlet leprosy in Vudra that had already claimed his father. Taking the first ship they could find, the Dhatris found themselves on the return journey of an Arkona ship, and upon their arrival in Korvosa, their mother had to pay the price for said passage: 13 years of indentured service to the Arkonas. She died a mere 4 months after arrival, leaving Ishani and Vavana orphaned. After Vavana secured enrollment in the Acadamae, she cut ties with Ishani as well, leaving the young man completely alone.

Ishani's experience in Vudra scarred him, and being on his own in a strange city threatened to overwhelm him; rather than crumble under these fears and emotions, though, he found support and a purpose in the church of Abadar. He's spent his life in Korvosa seeking to help the sick ever since. Yet with each year, his frustrations with church restrictions on offering healing magic without payment grows. He knows he can't offer actual healing without seeking payment, and the use of herbal remedies and other methods of fighting illness are his way of skirting the system for folk who need his aid yet cannot afford the church's rates. In time, Ishani may well simply convert to a more altruistic faith (most likely that of Sarenrae), a process that can be greatly expedited if a PC cleric of an appropriate deity senses his conflicts, but for now, the comfort and support of the church of Abadar outweighs his other concerns.

Any PC who takes the time to talk to Ishani has a chance to learn much about him and the disease afflicting Brienna Soldado. His greatest concern about the girl isn't that she's ill, but that he doesn't recognize the exact combination of her symptoms. He fears this might be a harbinger of a new disease.

If the PCs ask why he hasn't cured the girl yet, he sighs in frustration and replies, "If I had been sent for earlier, perhaps I could, but I'm afraid my duties at the Golden One's Vault required me to entreat him for similar miracles already this day. Even if I could heal her, the tenets of my church force me to request a donation for Abadar's power, which I suspect these simple folk could scarcely afford."

Nearing 40, Tayce Soldado possesses a simple beauty, scarcely hidden by her disheveled appearance and wan features. She hasn't slept in more than a day, but her concern for her daughter drives her on and she welcomes the PCs sincerely, especially if one of them has the look of a priest. She knows nothing of how her daughter might have become so ill, as the girl has drifted in and out of consciousness since she succumbed to the disease. Once Tayce satisfies herself that one of the PCs might be

able to help her, she invites the healer upstairs with her to see Brienna.

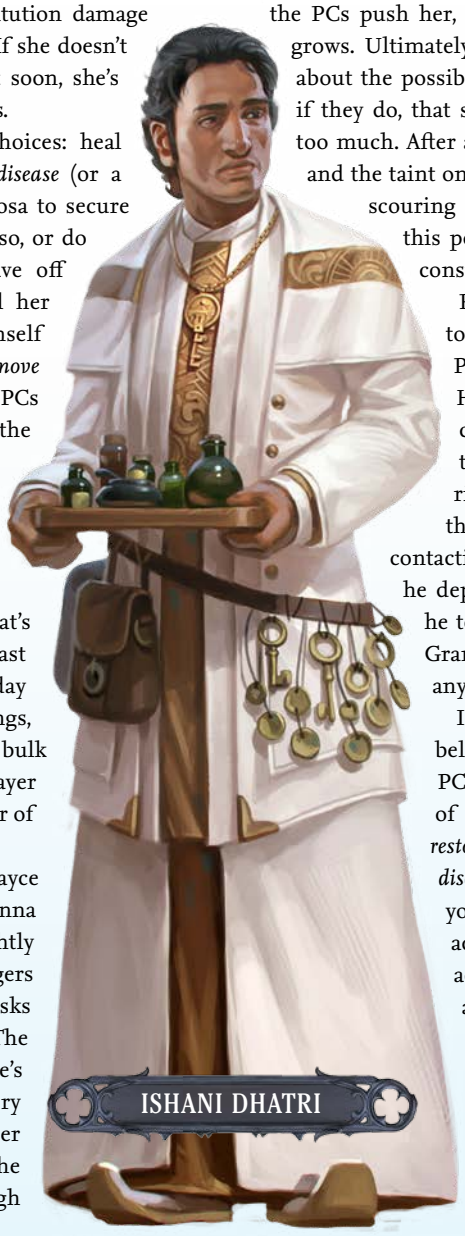
The creaky steps open up into a bedroom loft above the main room of the Soldado home. A young girl lies in one of the beds, her slight frame dwarfed by the bed's size and the pile of pillows, afghans, and quilts surrounding her. Splotches of an angry red rash cover her face and arms, appearing in irregular shapes and sizes. Suddenly, her restlessness is interrupted by a violent fit of hacking coughs that jerk her entire frame, lifting her well off her pillows. The spasm passes after a moment, dropping her back to the bed, but seemingly having done little to ease her breathing.

Brienna Soldado is a 1st-level commoner with a Constitution score of 9 and a Charisma score of 12, but has currently taken 4 points of Constitution damage and 5 points of Charisma damage. If she doesn't receive healing or other treatment soon, she's likely to die within the next few days.

The PCs have three obvious choices: heal Brienna on the spot via *remove disease* (or a similar effect), head out into Korvosa to secure a potion or NPC spellcaster to do so, or do nothing. *Lesser restoration* can stave off the inevitable if it's used to heal her Constitution damage. Ishani himself suggests purchasing a *potion of remove disease* from his temple, or if the PCs can pay the 150 gp, he can return the next morning to cast the spell himself. A successful DC 20 Sense Motive check reveals that Ishani feels awkward and ashamed at asking for money, and a successful DC 12 Diplomacy check is all that's required to convince him to cast *remove disease* for free the next day (doing so is against Abadar's teachings, of course, so Ishani spends the bulk of the remainder of the day in prayer seeking forgiveness from the Master of the First Vault).

If Brienna's life is saved, Tayce is overwhelmed with joy. Brienna wakes almost immediately. Slightly befuddled by the crowd of strangers in the house and all the fuss, she asks her mother if lunch is ready yet. The PCs immediately become Tayce's personal heroes, and she proves very animated and affectionate in her thanks—few can hope to escape the relieved mother's hugs. Although the Soldados can hardly afford to compensate the PCs, Tayce is eager to prepare them a feast that, considering her cooking skill, is a considerable reward. The PCs are now always welcome in the Soldado house, which swiftly takes on a celebratory air.

Brienna herself is simply happy to be feeling better. She doesn't know the coins she found made her sick, but she does know that she became ill soon after she went on her shopping spree. She secretly worries that Desna made her sick as punishment for not sharing the coins with her family, and if the PCs press her for clues in an attempt to track down a possible source of her sickness, she grows evasive and ashamed. A successful DC 30 Diplomacy check is enough to coax out her fear, and *detect thoughts* might give the PCs a clue as well. The more the PCs push her, though, the more protective Tayce grows. Ultimately, the PCs aren't expected to learn about the possibility of tainted coins this early, but if they do, that shouldn't derail the unfolding plot too much. After all, the disease is already spreading and the taint on the coins has worn off. Time spent scouring the city for diseased coins is, at this point, a wild goose chase that could consume valuable time.



ISHANI DHATRI

Regardless of how the PCs' visit to the Soldado home develops, the PCs leave an impression on Ishani. He suggests that some of his more charitable work sometimes requires the aid of those outside his church's rigid hierarchies and asks whether the PCs might be amenable to him contacting them in the future. Soon after, he departs to attend to other duties, but he tells the PCs he can be found at the Grand Vault of Abadar should they have any need of his god's services.

Ishani's statistics are presented below. When he first encounters the PCs today, he has already cast both of his *remove disease* spells, his *lesser restoration* spell, and his *diagnose disease* spell. You can use Ishani as you wish in this chapter. He may well accompany the PCs on some of their adventures if you feel they could use a backup healer. Certainly, once he's befriended the PCs, he no longer charges them for his spellcasting, justifying his aid to them by the fact that the PCs are working to save the city, and thus working for Abadar in their own way.

ISHANI DHATRI **CR 4**

XP 1,200

Male human cleric of Abadar 5

LG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 9, touch 9, flat-footed 9 (–1 Dex)

hp 36 (5d8+10)

Fort +7, **Ref** +2, **Will** +10

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee dagger +3 (1d4/19–20)

Ranged *+1 light crossbow* +4 (1d8+1/19–20)

Special Attacks channel positive energy 5/day (DC 14, 3d6)

Cleric Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +9)

7/day—*resistant touch* (+2)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +9)

3rd—*fly*[D], *remove disease* (2)

2nd—*aid*, *calm emotions* (DC 16), *lesser restoration*, *shield other*[D]

1st—*command* (DC 15), *diagnose disease*[UM], *remove fear*, *sanctuary*[D](DC 15), *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *guidance*, *read magic*, *stabilize*

D domain spell; **Domains** Protection, Travel

TACTICS

Before Combat Ishani casts *shield of faith* before combat if possible.

During Combat Casting *shield of faith* is Ishani's first act in combat if the spell isn't already active. Otherwise, he starts by casting *sanctuary* and then seeks to heal and support allies for the duration. A pacifist by nature, he avoids combat himself unless there's no other option.

Morale If confronted alone, Ishani seeks to use *fly* to escape. If cornered, though, he fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 8, **Con** 13, **Int** 12, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 12

Feats Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Selective Channeling

Skills Craft (alchemy) +7, Heal +12, Knowledge (nature) +3, Knowledge (religion) +9, Spellcraft +9

Languages Common, Varisian, Vudrani

SQ agile feet (7/day)

Combat Gear *potions of cure moderate wounds* (3); **Other Gear** *+1 light crossbow* with 10 bolts, dagger, silver holy symbol of Abadar, 12 gp

Development: Unfortunately, in treating Brienna, Ishani and any PCs who come in contact with the girl are exposed to blood veil and must succeed at Fortitude saves to avoid catching the disease. So far, her mother has been lucky in that she hass succeed at her saving throws, and she's had the wisdom to forbid her sons from coming into close contact with Brienna. Whether or not the Soldados are exposed to blood veil again is left up to you.

Once the PCs have saved Brienna (or alternatively, once they do what they can and leave the Soldado home), Ishani invites them to return with him to the Grand Vault of Abadar. He's seen similar signs of sickness in the city and worries that Korvosa may be on the edge of a full-on outbreak. While Ishani is right, he's also, unfortunately, a few days late. Continue with The Unwashed Masses on page 82 if the PCs agree to accompany Ishani to the temple. If they don't, Field Marshal Kroft contacts the PCs soon enough with a request for a meeting (see First, Do No Harm on page 85).

Story Award: If the PCs cure Brienna of blood veil, grant them 1,600 XP.

SIGNS OF THE PLAGUE

For the remainder of this chapter, the city of Korvosa falls increasingly under the frightening cloak of pestilence and plague. Blood veil is a terrifying sickness, and despite the best efforts of the city's healers, the plague spreads like a proverbial wildfire. The next part of this adventure presents numerous ways in which the PCs interact with those who have fallen victim to blood veil, and those who seek to take advantage of the situation. In addition, full rules for blood veil itself, along with some notes on how a plague can exist in a world where magic can cure disease, can be found on page 430 in Appendix 4 of this book.

You may wish to have additional plague-themed encounters for the PCs to navigate as they work to uncover blood veil's source and develop its cure. Two additional encounters are summarized below; feel free to use these as random events to spice up the game, or even to expand them into full-fledged missions if you want to give the PCs a few extra chances to combat the diseases's spread.

Burn Up the Dead: As the plague goes into full swing, disposal of the dead becomes even more problematic. The city takes to burning the dead in huge mass graves in the Gray District, and plumes of rancid black smoke become a common sight on the southern skyline. Unfortunately, one mass grave opens into a ghoul warren, releasing a nest of angry ghouls and ghasts into the city's graveyard. At your discretion, these undead can inflict blood veil with their bite attacks rather than ghoul fever.

The Merciless Way Massacre: A group of Gray Maidens confronts a mob of frightened locals unwilling to comply with a small-scale quarantine of a city block. The resulting riot sees the slaughter of nearly 100 citizens when the Gray Maidens refuse to back down. This is a situation where diplomacy might be a better option than combat, so make sure you give the PCs a chance to talk down the mob before the Gray Maidens are forced to attack.

PART 2

OUTBREAK

Plague has come to Korvosa, and while the new queen and her advisors bicker over how to address the calamity, fear takes hold on the streets. As the number of sick folk grows, people take desperate measures to avoid the plague, shutting themselves within their homes, shunning the infected, and even seeking escape from the city. The disease is prevalent in Korvosa's most impoverished areas, particularly Old Korvosa—blister-faced beggars and hacking common folk are visible on every corner.

As this part of the adventure proceeds, the PCs should become increasingly aware of other signs of similar sickness in the city. What starts as a few random cases soon feeds into rumors of sick people with distinctive red pocks on the face. While some are able to fend off the disease through simple resilience, magical means, or sheer luck, the number of the infected quickly grows beyond the city priesthoods' ability to simply "magic it away." The number of people who are ill in Korvosa continues to grow as this chapter proceeds. Through the efforts of Queen Ileosa and her conspirators, approximately 5,000 Korvosans are destined to succumb before the plague runs its course if the PCs do nothing to fight it.

During this part of the chapter, many encounters end with a Survivor Count section. These sections detail what results the PCs' efforts have on the worst-case-scenario death toll of 5,000. You should record the total number of lives the PCs save and any additional deaths they cause or permit, as this not only affects the plague's total casualties at the adventure's end, but also serves as a guide for how effective the PCs were in combating the plague.

When this part begins, use the Korvosa (Plagued) stat block on page 399 to represent the city.

THE UNWASHED MASSES

In a city as steeped in political scheming, decisive justice, and trade as Korvosa, it should be no surprise that the city's largest and most influential faith is the congregation of Abadar. Presided over by Archbanker **Darb Tuttle** (LN male human cleric of Abadar 13), the Bank of Abadar is one of the more potent moderating factors in the city, ever eager to remind the government and nobility of their responsibilities to their citizens. Although its acts might sometimes seem charitable, the church of Abadar is more concerned with the just enactment of the law and the continued flow of trade, a trait that Queen Ileosa was depending on to allow blood veil to gain a strong, early foothold in the city.

The PCs are most likely to first come to the Grand Vault as they accompany Ishani there, either to secure healing for Brienna or to talk to him about his fears of an imminent plague. The Grand Vault of Abadar, a meticulously well-kept structure of white marble and gleaming bronze friezes, stands in the North Point district of Korvosa. While the first floor holds a few small side shrines and counseling chambers, the majority of its airy halls are given over to the business of banking, with acolytes of Abadar eager to serve any who have coin they would entrust to the temple's care, while armored clerics keep watch for ne'er-do-wells. The floor above holds the god's sanctuary and the quarters of a small number of resident priests, although most are encouraged to maintain their own addresses away from the temple. Finally, beneath the temple lies the physical vault, a heavily guarded storehouse where the clergy's considerable fortune, as well as the investments of thousands of citizens, are safely stored. The priests are so trusted and respected that for decades these lower levels have also housed the presses that mint Korvosan coins.

Of course, when the PCs reach the temple of Abadar, things might not be as they expected.

Towering over the surrounding buildings, the Grand Vault of Abadar offers a radiant vision of divine luxuriance amid a sea of mortal troubles. As its gray-veined white marble reflects the midday sun, there's little question that this place is the house of a god.

Yet for a deity of law, the steep stairs and ramps leading up to the temple's great bronze doors offer a strangely discordant scene. Dozens of citizens—mostly of the working class, although the silks of a few merchants show through the crowd—throng the entry, scarcely being held back by a group of gold-armored Abadaran clerics. All seem intent on gaining entry to the temple, but the clerics turn away nearly all comers. The clerics' reasoning becomes clear as one desperate believer is turned away, his pitiful countenance mottled with violent red sores.

Although Brienna Soldado was among the first to be stricken with blood veil, her case did not remain unique

in Korvosa. The conspirators seeded several stashes of tainted coins throughout the city, and while those tainted coins have by now reverted to harmless silver pieces, the damage is done. Blood veil is more than capable of spreading on its own once the outbreak occurs.

This is the cause of the scene awaiting the PCs at the Temple of Abadar. The clergy has been inundated with pock-marked patients, healing those with the gold to pay and recommending local herbalists for those without. The priests might have been able to help more, but they have their own troubles—several of their acolytes, guards, and vaultkeepers have developed symptoms of the same mysterious disease. What little magic was left among the clergy was quickly sold to a few wealthy and lucky worshipers, but in all, fewer than two dozen citizens were healed.

Upon arriving, the PCs witness the temple guards turning away all comers who show signs of blood veil. Others who have less urgent business in the temple must fight through the disease-ridden crowd and undergo the guards' brief questioning as to their purpose—twin gauntlets few healthy visitors dare to run. While the crowd remains relatively orderly in its pleading, the temple's protectors and a few Korvosan Guards gathered nearby eye the situation with unease.

If the PCs intend to enter the temple (either to meet with Ishani or escort him inside), they must navigate the desperate crowd. This proves troublesome, forcing each PC to attempt a DC 14 Strength check to strong-arm through the assemblage. If any PC is obviously a healer, the crowd turns its attentions to the party, begging for healing and divine aid regardless of the PCs' actual ability to heal.

Actually healing a diseased victim or making a show of divine power within sight of the mob nearly sets off a riot. The crowd swarms the would-be healer, dozens of the sickly riffraff begging to be cured and explaining why their cases are the most desperate. Violence against the crowd at any point is immediately noticed by the Korvosan Guard. While the watch can understand a few thrown punches if the party is mobbed, the use of weapons or deadly spells, even in defense, could see the characters arrested.

Once the PCs manage to muscle through the crowd, guards at the doors to the Grand Vault halt them and sternly ask their purpose. If they aren't accompanied by Ishani, mentioning his name is enough to convince the guards that the PCs have legitimate business inside, and unless the PCs are obviously sick or violent, the guards let them into the temple for their appointment.

THE MISSING ARBITER

As the church of Abadar fights to protect Korvosa from blood veil, a troubling mystery vexes the church from within: one of their most notable (and powerful) worshipers, Arbiter Zenobia Zenderholm, is missing. Zenobia does not keep offices in the High Bank; as an Arbiter, she works out of the Longacre Building. When that building is quietly annexed by the Gray Maidens, Zenobia hands over the building over but then goes missing. Her vanishing concerns the church of Abadar, but with the more pressing matter of fighting blood veil on their hands, the priests have little time to spare for an investigation into the matter.

Before the church or the PCs have a chance to investigate further, Zenobia resurfaces and proclaims her allegiance to Queen Ileosa, vowing to aid the Gray Maidens in their pursuit of justice. She no longer carries the symbol of Abadar, and she cuts her ties with the church. Its attempts to openly communicate with the woman are rebuffed and, for now, Archbanker Tuttle regretfully considers Zenobia to be a "doubting soul lost to her fears." Once the current mayhem in Korvosa is settled, he hopes to woo her back to the fold, but for now, he and the church have bigger concerns than the apparent loss of faith of one of their members.

In fact, Zenobia has done more than lose her faith—she has perished from blood veil, one of its earliest victims. In her dying moments, her cries for mercy went to Urgathoa, not Abadar, and the goddess of undeath heard and granted Zenobia life after death as a penanggalen. The PCs will learn more of this vile fate in time (see Part 3 of "A History of Ashes,"), but until then Zenobia continues to masquerade as a living human who's simply turned her allegiance from Abadar to the Gray Maidens.

Story Award: If the PCs manage to navigate the crowd without harming anyone, grant them 1,600 XP.

THE HEALER'S HANDS

Even after the clerics of Abadar manage to disperse the plague victims with promises of healing, the temple remains a place besieged. Within its airy hall, priests and patrons eye each other and every newcomer with suspicion, and every footfall upon the marble floor echoes through a frightened silence. Ishani escorts the PCs to one of the temple's western meeting rooms before revealing his concerns.

"Thank you for your aid. I assume you already suspect my reasons for calling, having seen the crowd outside." He shakes his head sadly. "Poor lot. You recognize the symptoms too, I'm sure. I had hoped that the Soldado case was isolated, but apparently we have a bigger problem on our hands than I'd feared.

"I'm concerned for the city, but also for my brethren here. The morning after my first visit to the Soldado home, I came to the temple to hear that three of my brothers awoke with similar symptoms, although they had already been healed. I spoke to each, and aside from their usual duties in the temple, none have had any dealings with any who are ill. Later in the day, more of my fellow priests—acolytes, guards, vaultkeepers—developed symptoms, and folk from throughout the city began arriving in search of healing. It's been more than a little bit frightening. They're calling the sickness 'blood veil'—an apt enough name, I suppose.

"Most of the patients we're treating have come from North Point and Old Korvosa. The disease seems to spread fastest through the lower classes. Although we here at the temple can heal some of the ill, I dread that the transmission of the disease will soon outpace our resources. The only way to stem the growing infection is to involve the entire city. We need to organize. We need to call upon the faiths of Sarenrae, Pharasma, and even Asmodeus to face this attack. Archbanker Tuttle and several of his assistants are out pursuing alliances with these other faiths, but even that won't be enough. We need to involve the Korvosan Guard and the queen's new agents, the Gray Maidens, at the very least. That's where you come in. With the number of desperate souls growing, it's not particularly safe for a priest to walk the streets of Korvosa. I hear you have a good relationship with Field Marshal Cressida Kroft. Perhaps you would be willing to escort me to Citadel Volshyenek for an introduction?"

Ishani doesn't expect the party's involvement to be charity and has already cleared a generous payment of 200 gp for each PC involved in the errand. This is all the church is willing to commit to a single priest's unofficial interests, but Ishani might be convinced to increase the payment by 50 gp apiece if the PCs prove hesitant, supplementing the church's gold with his own.

Ishani is also willing to answer any questions the PCs might have about blood veil, but it's unlikely he knows much they don't. His first encounter with it, after Brienna, was at the temple, when three of his fellow priests received healing for the disease's early symptoms. Several other faithful fell ill soon after, but each was healed with ease. The first cases from outside the temple were a barkeep and his wife from the Three Rings Tavern in North Point. They paid to be cured magically and were sent on their way. Within the next hour, though, three more sick citizens arrived, and more in the hours after that. Soon the crowd the PCs saw upon entering the temple had formed. Ishani fears the scene on the temple's steps is but a precursor to the dangers ahead.

FIRST, DO NO HARM

Reaching Citadel Volshyenek poses little problem, despite Ishani's fear to the contrary. Although many in the city attempt to conduct life as normal, whispers and quiet conversations replace the raucous chatter of any normal business day, as if noise might attract the plague's lethal notice. If the PCs don't escort Ishani, they meet him here anyway once they answer Cressida's call for aid.

But Ishani's concerns aren't the field marshal's only recent problems. A few hours prior to the PCs' arrival, Field Marshal Kroft received orders stamped with the Korvosan royal seal, commanding the Korvosan Guard to provide members from its ranks to watch over the queen's personal physician, Doctor Reiner Davaulus, and a group of strange people proclaimed to be physicians, as they fulfill an appointment by the throne to halt the plague's spread. Although Kroft doesn't like her troops being tasked as glorified bodyguards, she knows her duty and obeys. Reiner and his band of strangely dressed "Queen's Physicians" are escorted to Citadel Volshyenek to be introduced to the Guard, and as the PCs arrive, this introduction is in full swing. Assuming the PCs have done nothing to sour their relationship with Field Marshal Cressida Kroft and the Korvosan Guard, the guards at the gate greet the PCs warmly, noting that if PCs want to meet the Queen's Physicians, they need to hurry to catch the doctors in the citadel's courtyard. As the PCs enter the citadel, read the following.

The echoes of forcefully spoken but unintelligible words resound off the imposing granite and iron walls of Citadel Volshyenek's outer curtain. Dozens of red-and-silver-armored guards stand in assembly upon the pitted stone mustering ground here, muttering in hushed, somber tones. Before them, atop a weathered wooden platform, paces Field Marshal Kroft, her eyebrows arched sternly as she momentarily tolerates the crowd's murmurs. Behind her upon the scaffold stand three grizzled veteran guards at attention, as well as an ominous-looking group. These newcomers wear cowled robes of oily-looking leather, supple gloves, and wide black hats. Some grip heavy canes, others dark satchels. Each of them, though, wears a dark-goggled mask tapering to a pointed beak. Among them stand two others. The first is a middle-aged gentleman in a simple black overcoat with streaks of white gracing the sides of his short, dark hair. He watches the gathered guards with a soft, concerned expression, his hands tightly clasping a heavy-looking doctor's case. The second figure is an imposing one indeed—one of the queen's new Gray Maidens, clad in her resplendent plate armor and crimson plume.

The Field Marshal's fierce tone cuts through the rumble of whispers as she addresses her gathered guards. "You will escort Doctor Davaulus and his physicians in their royal duties wherever those might take them. Furthermore, you are to consider orders from any of the queen's Gray Maidens to be as binding as those of any superior officer in the Korvosan Guard. You are the Korvosan Guard. You will not balk. These are dire times, and your city needs these healers. Your city needs you. Your patrol leaders have your assignments. Dismissed!"

As the assembly ends, the guards gathered in the courtyard break up into groups, many reporting for various duties while others loiter for a few moments to quietly gripe about their new orders. The armored woman is Kordaitra Destaid, the quartermaster and second-in-command of the Gray Maidens. Although she does not remove her helm and takes no notice of the PCs at this time, she confronts them more directly later in this adventure. Kroft and her veteran attendants begin to head into the citadel with Dr. Davaulus and his Queen's Physicians, but PCs who act fast can easily catch the commander's attention. Even if they don't try to catch up with Kroft, the field marshal notices them before she enters the keep and sends one of her aides to fetch the PCs. The leader of the Korvosan Guard welcomes the PCs and is even eager to see them, but she seems guarded in her current company; Davaulus's doctors unnerve her just as much as they do her guards. She introduces the PCs to Dr. Davaulus, leader of the Queen's Physicians. A calm man with a polite demeanor and deeply analytical mind, Dr. Davaulus greets the PCs warmly and welcomes their questions, saying he hopes to ease the concerns of as many of Korvosa's people as possible in this trying time. If questioned about his plans to help Korvosa, Davaulus admits he must still confer with Field Marshal Kroft to form a sensible plan, but produces a public announcement from his bag—one of numerous such writs soon to be distributed throughout the city (see Handout #2–2 on page 87)—to convey the queen's initial expectations.

If the PCs attempt to question the Queen's Physicians themselves, these people have little to say and defer to Davaulus, their voices muffled and disembodied as they emanate from their sinister masks.

The party might also wish to speak with members of the Guard. By and large, the common grunts are wary of these strange new doctors, as they're like no healers

these simple soldiers have ever seen before. They are also offended that outsiders have been given authority over them, and many are fearful that attending the doctors will expose them to the illness as well.

At the conclusion of the discussion with Kroft and Davaulus, Ishani asks if he might be of service in coordinating the efforts of the Grand Vault of Abadar with those of the city. His participation is welcomed, and he heads inside with the group after thanking the PCs, surprised and cautiously optimistic about the queen's new plans. It's up to you whether the PCs should be allowed into this meeting, a lengthy affair wherein Kroft and her aides go over the reports and statistics of plague in the city, then confer about ways to contain and treat the victims. Talk of quarantining blocks of the city and limiting movement through districts is the only news of any real import that comes of the discussion.

REINER DAVAULUS

DR. DAVAULUS AND THE QUEEN'S PHYSICIANS

Doctor Reiner Davaulus heads Korvosa's efforts to combat the blood veil plague preying upon the city. A Chelaxian in his mid-40s, the doctor is deliberate in his speech and conducts himself like a concerned father, seeming to take genuine interest in assuaging the concerns and maladies of those around him. He claims to have served Queen Ileosa's family in Egorian, the capital of Cheliax, for many years. When she contacted him several days ago, begging for his assistance on her city's behalf, he couldn't refuse. After accepting her gracious offer of magical transport to Korvosa, he has spent his time assembling a group of the city's most talented healers to help stem the tide of the spreading plague. In all cases, he speaks highly of the queen and her attentiveness to her city's needs (this being the greatest clue to his counterfeit nature).

Dr. Davaulus does not lie when he doesn't have to: he is a doctor, he did come at the queen's request, and he is from Egorian. What he doesn't say, however, is that rather than being a servant of the Arvanxi family, he is in fact a member of the Red Mantis. An unassuming and unconventional assassin more interested in slow poisonings and seemingly natural deaths than blades in the night, Davaulus was tasked by his superiors with fulfilling Queen Ileosa's genocidal wishes. To this end, the learned doctor contacted two fellow scholars of disease with whom he'd had extensive prior associations: Lady Andaisin of Urgathoa's cult and Ramoska Arkminos in Ustalav. With their aid, he masterminded the creation and advent of Korvosa's plague. Currently, he acts as a go-between for the queen, the Red Mantis, and the cult of Urgathoa hidden beneath the city. Publicly appointed as the Queen's Physician, Davaulus pantomimes the acts of a concerned healer devoted to his royal patron and the well-being of her city; in truth, he and his Queen's Physicians plan to spread blood veil to every corner of Korvosa, relieving the city of its excess population of undesirables.

Dr. Davaulus's supposedly handpicked cadre of doctors is as deadly and false as he. Each of these people is a worshiper of Urgathoa, although they bear no evidence of their religion and their magic masks disguise their evil alignments. Expecting their appearances to generate some concern, the doctors lift up their masks to show they are indeed humans if asked (although this does not count as removing the masks, allowing them to still benefit from the magic items' effects). Each claims to be a local with some knowledge of healing or a country doctor rushed in from Harse, Palin's Cove, or Veldraine as soon as word of the spreading disease reached her.

Dr. Davaulus's statistics appear on page 117. Statistics for a typical Queen's Physician appear below for use as needed in this chapter.

QUEEN'S PHYSICIAN **CR 2**

XP 600

Human rogue 3

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +7; **Senses** Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 23 (3d8+6)

Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +1; +2 vs. nauseating scents

Defensive Abilities evasion, immune to blood veil, trap sense +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk club +5 (1d6+2)

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

TACTICS

During Combat The Queen's Physicians work together in combat, seeking to team up and flank foes with their clubs to make sneak attacks. They fight with an eerie silence, coordinating their attacks with a series of hand gestures and speaking only when forced to.

Morale In the presence of a superior, the physicians follow orders to the letter out of fear and fight to the death. On their own, they attempt to flee into hiding if reduced to fewer than 3 hit points.

Attention!

By decree of her royal majesty, the radiant queen Ileosa, all citizens and members of the Korvosan Guard are to aid and admit the newly established Queen's physicians in this time of urgency. These royal agents will extend healing to those who are ill and organize defense against the spreading affliction known as "blood veil." They are to be allowed access to any home or building they deem necessary in the course of their duties. All those suffering from disease or disorder are to submit themselves to the physicians for treatment.

To aid in the duties of the Queen's physicians, know that the order of the Gray Maidens shall also provide military support as needed. The Maidens answer directly to the Crimson Throne, and will be called upon as necessary to augment and strengthen the peace where city guards will not suffice.

Impeding or distracting the Queen's physicians or the Gray Maidens in the pursuit of their duties is punishable by imprisonment. Impersonating one of the Queen's physicians or Gray Maidens is punishable by death. Knowingly harboring or hiding the infected is punishable by death. Purposefully spreading blood veil is punishable by torture, then death.

The Queen's physicians will be making rounds of every city district henceforth until her majesty deems this misfortune has abated.

HANDOUT #2–2

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 17, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8
Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 18
Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative
Skills Bluff +5, Diplomacy +5, Disguise +5, Heal +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (local) +7, Perception +6, Sense Motive +6, Sleight of Hand +9, Stealth +9
Languages Common, Varisian
SQ rogue talent (combat trick), trapfinding +1
Gear leather armor, mwk club, *plaguebringer's mask* (see page 435), healer's kit

The Quarantine

At some point later in this chapter, preferably before the PCs begin to investigate the Hospice of the Blessed Maiden in Part 3 but after they've gone on two or three missions in Part 2, word that blood veil has been particularly devastating in the district of Old Korvosa results in Queen Ileosa making a bold move. As the plague reaches its height and the citizens of Old Korvosa grow increasingly desperate, she quarantines the entire district. Enacting Her Majesty's will, the Gray Maidens destroy every wooden bridge leading into the old city and erect a permanent barricade on the one stone bridge connecting the island to the mainland. Although many of the city's most prominent citizens would protest, the people are tired and disorganized, and the deed is done before any argument can even be roused. The PCs should not be allowed to prevent this event, since the quarantining of Old Korvosa must occur for the events in the next chapter to progress. See Chapter 3 for more information and details on how one can come and go from Old Korvosa once the island is under quarantine.

Combating the Plague

The remainder of Part 2 presents five missions the PCs can undertake to combat the spread of blood veil throughout Korvosa. Each of these missions begins with a hook for the PCs that acts as a way to inform them of the mission and why they should undertake it. Completing each mission increases the number of people saved, but the order in which the PCs tackle these missions is irrelevant. Similarly, succeeding at (or even attempting) all five missions isn't a requirement for completing "Seven Days to the Grave." As the PCs complete missions, in addition to saving souls who would have perished to the plague, the PCs also begin collecting clues that point to the source of the illness. Once the PCs gather enough clues, they know to head to the Hospice of the Blessed Maiden, where the climax of

this chapter takes place. Jumping the gun and heading to the hospice before they tackle all five missions is risky, not only because they need the gear and experience they earn in this part to help survive the deadly encounters in and below the hospice, but because skipping these missions and forcing an early end to the chapter results in more deaths overall.

MISSION 1: THE WRECK OF THE DIREPTION

The PCs have likely heard rumors of the sinking of a supposed plague ship, the *Direption*, by this time. If they haven't, Field Marshal Cressida Kroft informs them. If indeed the ship was the primary source of the plague, then perhaps clues to the plague's original source or perhaps even its cure can be found within. The problem is that the *Direption* now lies in the deep waters of the Jeggare, and so exploring the shipwreck requires skill, bravery, and magic. Kroft is eager to learn more from the wreckage, but her guards aren't the best choice for the task. The job instead falls to the PCs.

The *Direption* lies beneath nearly 80 feet of water, its masts shattered and hull split in two. Reaching the wreckage can prove a daunting affair, as the PCs must overcome the barriers of swimming down to the ship, breathing underwater, and lighting their way. The PCs might not yet be able to cast *water breathing* themselves, but Cressida can pull strings with her contacts and supply each PC with two *potions of water breathing*. In addition, if the PCs have befriended Ishani, he can prepare two *water breathing* spells per day to cast on the party as needed.

With the concern of drowning overcome, seeing beneath the Jeggare's surface also poses a problem, for the murky water remains dark at this depth even at high noon. Aside from numerous illuminating spells, the inextinguishable light of everburning torches and sunrods proves useful even deep underwater.

Locating the Wreck

Finding the *Direption* shouldn't prove too difficult even with the restricted visibility of the Jeggare's muddy waters. Cressida Kroft can provide the PCs with the exact location where the ship went down, after all. Still, locating the ship's final location deep below the river's surface requires a successful DC 15 Perception check. Without a light source, the DC increases to 25. Each attempt to locate the shipwreck takes 10 minutes of swimming. Here in the deep Jeggare, the waters are relatively placid, and only a successful DC 10 Swim check is needed to navigate them. However, every 10 minutes spent attempting to locate the ship brings a cumulative 20% chance of attracting the silt eels that lurk in area **A1**.

When the PCs finally discover the *Direption*, they find that obvious scars from fire and trebuchet strikes mar the ship's hull, which lies on its side in two pieces amid the splinters of its masts. The ship's hull split into these two halves over a rock outcropping, its bow fallen to one side and a larger section of the stern on the other. Two relatively intact interior decks lie within both halves of the ship, along with the captain's quarters situated at the stern. While the bow sunk in a way that allows explorers easy access to any of its levels, the stern cleaved to the rocks it fell upon, limiting entrance to its lower decks. Upon the stern section's upper deck, the 10-foot-square main hatch and a covered ladder lead to the berth below. Both are swelled shut, and the heavy main hatch requires a successful DC 26 Strength check to open, while the trap door covering the ladder to the ship's hold requires a DC 23 Strength check to open. The trebuchet stone that struck the ship its killing blow also punched a sizable hole into the *Direption*. This 10-foot-diameter hole allows the easiest access to area **A2**.

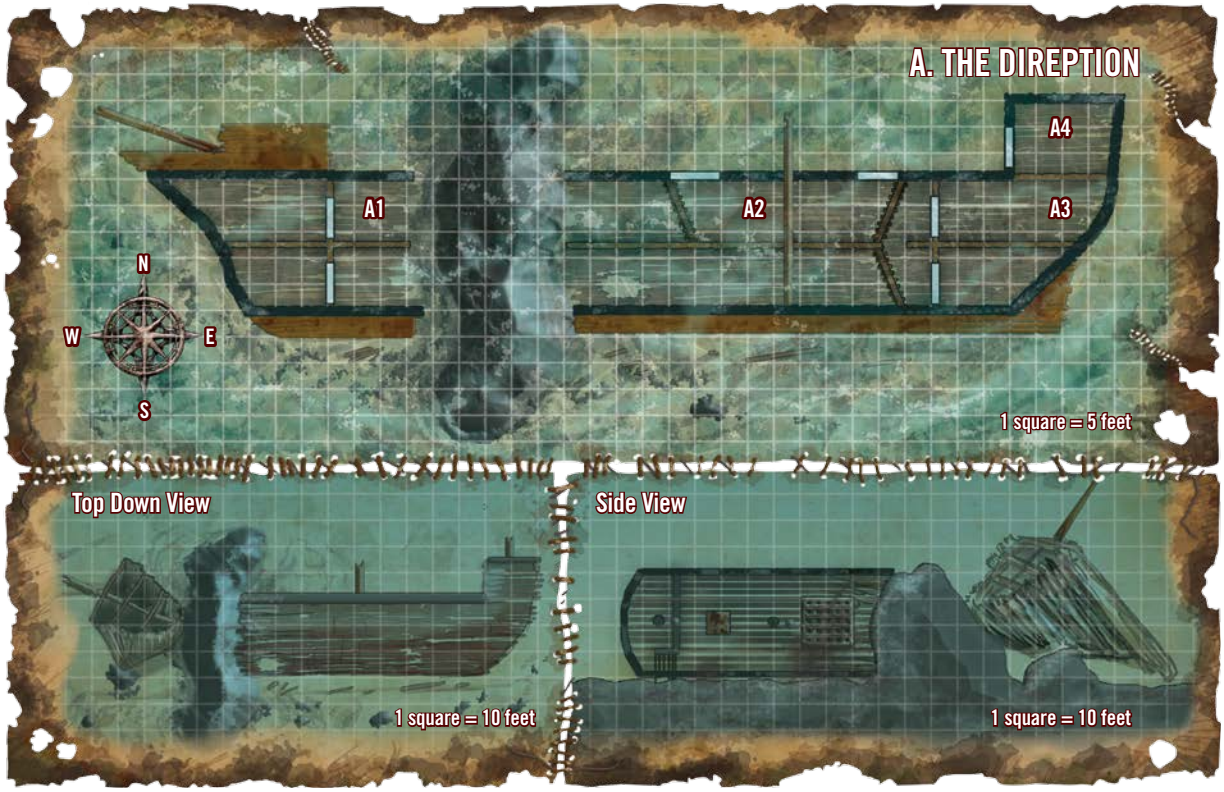
A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (local) or Profession (sailor) check identifies the shipwreck as a Nidalese merchant ship. Any attempt to research the ship's owner is a difficult task, but succeeding at a DC 30 Knowledge (local) check while using the Korvosan Guard's extensive records of ship traffic to and from the city's docks uncovers mention of the *Direption* visiting the city several times over the course of the years 4703–4711, but that at some point after that the ship was reported as "lost" by its owner, Garagori Whenston of Nisroch. Garagori, a Nidalese merchant of middling success, passed away in 4713. Further investigation into his history is a dead end, but feel free to let the PCs waste time trying to learn more if you wish, since this plays directly into the conspirators' hope that the *Direption* delays them from focusing on the truth.

A1 The Direption's Bow (CR 4)

The front portion of the ship broke away and landed awkwardly here, revealing two splintered decks inside. Its bowsprit shattered and decks filled with debris, the vessel bears an ominous moniker along its fire-scarred hull: *Direption*.

Having split from the rest of the ship as it sunk, the *Direption*'s bow emptied most of its contents into the river's currents, leaving little of interest inside. The doors into the forecastle and galley here swing open in the current, their interiors wrecked and disordered. A successful DC 18 Perception check while examining either of these areas reveals no evidence of supplies in the galley or personal goods in the forecastle.

Creatures: A half-dozen silt eels (spiny-faced, dark-brown poisonous eels native to the region) have relocated from their original lairs in the rock that split the *Direption* into scattered pots and overturned bunks on the wreck's bow.



SILT EELS (6) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 each

Variant giant moray eel (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 119)

N Tiny animal (aquatic)

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+3 Dex, +1 natural, +2 size)

hp 6 (1d8+2)

Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed swim 30 ft.

Melee bite +5 (1d4–2 plus poison)

Space 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

TACTICS

During Combat The silt eels attack any creatures that come too near to their homes, and if they notice anyone outside the wreck, swim out to investigate and attack as well.

Morale The silt eels flee to the bow of the wreck if wounded. If confronted there, they fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 6, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 1, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 9

Feats Weapon Finesse

Skills Escape Artist +11, Perception +5, Swim +11

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 12; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Dex; *cure* 1 save.

A2 Shattered Hold (CR 2)

A yawning wound in the ship's charred timbers allows murky water to flow through this debris-cluttered hold. Loose timbers, small fish, and dozens of identical boxes float eerily in the quiet darkness.

Despite what many in Korvosa have come to suspect, the *Direption*'s hold did not carry the plague. In fact, the ship was largely empty when it sailed into the harbor. Its crew comprised several loyal Urgathoan cultists who abandoned the ship as it entered the river's mouth, leaving the most loyal (and least valuable) of their number, a man named Rois Vindmel, to pilot the ship farther upriver until it was sunk. As a result, there are no remains of crew members to be found in the shattered hold, nor any sign of any element that would suggest the *Direption* was a plague ship at all.

Creatures: The conspirators hoped the *Direption* would distract those who sought to trace the plague's source and fight its outbreak, but knew that once the wreck was successfully investigated, its use as a red herring would end. And so Lady Andaisin arranged for a second "surprise" for the wreck's investigators—an aquatic ally of hers, the sea hag druid Yvicca, with whom Andaisin often compared religious theories on the nature of disease. Before the *Direption* sailed up into the Jeggare,

the Urgathoan priestess directed the crew to detour to the waters just south of Korvosa where Yvicca made her lair. The sea hag followed the ship north, then up into the river, and once it sank, she moved into the wreckage with her jigsaw shark animal companion, Skinshear, to lie in wait for the inevitable investigation by the cult's enemies.

Yvicca dwells deeper in the wreckage, but she's set her shark Skinshear to guard the hold. She prepares for combat as detailed in her stat block (see area **A3**), then joins the fight here as soon as she's ready.

SKINSHEAR **CR —**

Shark animal companion
N Small animal (aquatic)
Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +4 natural, +1 size)
hp 22 (3d8+9)
Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed swim 60 ft.
Melee bite +4 (1d4+1)

TACTICS

During Combat Skinshear circles within the area, and should it detect the PCs, it butts its head against the door of area **A3** to alert Yvicca, then swims out to attack the intruders.
Morale Skinshear fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 15, **Int** 1, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 2
Base Atk +2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14
Feats Improved Initiative, Toughness
Skills Perception +5, Stealth +11, Swim +9
SQ tricks (attack, down, guard, stay)

A3 Crew Quarters (CR 7)

Several hammocks drift in the murky waters, strung between beams in this room. The room swirls with a haze of gore, fish heads, and half-eaten eels chumming the circling waters.

As in the hold, no evidence of any bodies or personal belongings can be found in this room, suggesting the ship had no crew when it went down.

Creature: Yvicca chose this portion of the ship to serve as her new lair; the chum clouding the water is an excellent indication of her foul personal hygiene. If she's surprised in this room because her shark didn't notice the PCs, she won't have had time to cast *speak with animals* before the fight, and does so on the first round of combat so she can call out for Skinshear before she begins the fight.

YVICCA **CR 5**

XP 1,600

Female sea hag druid 2 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 243)
NE Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic)
Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13
Aura horrific appearance (DC 16)

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 13 (+4 Dex, +3 natural)
hp 57 (6 HD; 2d8+4d10+26)
Fort +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +10
SR 15

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 40 ft.
Melee *+1 shortspear* +13 (1d6+8), claw +7 (1d6+3)
Druid Spells Prepared (CL 2nd; concentration +5)
1st—*cure light wounds*, *faerie fire*, *speak with animals*
0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *flare* (DC 13), *read magic*

TACTICS

Before Combat Before combat, Yvicca casts *speak with animals* so she can more easily direct Skinshear and any summoned animals.
During Combat Upon seeing the PCs, Yvicca uses her evil eye ability to daze the strongest-looking interloper before swimming into melee herself. If brought to fewer than 15 hit points, she uses her *wand of cure moderate wounds* on herself, unless she's surrounded, in which case she continues fighting.
Morale Yvicca fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 18, **Con** 18, **Int** 10, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 18
Base Atk +5; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 26
Feats Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Perception)
Skills Bluff +11, Handle Animal +9, Knowledge (nature) +4, Perception +13, Stealth +11, Survival +10, Swim +22
Languages Common, Druidic, Giant
SQ amphibious, evil eye, nature bond (shark named Skinshear), nature sense, wild empathy +6, woodland stride
Combat Gear *wand of cure moderate wounds* (18 charges); **Other Gear** *+1 shortspear*

A4 Captain's Cabin

The door to the captain's quarters is swollen shut, requiring a successful DC 20 Strength check to open.

Along with a few other bits of ruined furnishings, the tattered sheets of a canopied bed twist like ghosts above the snapped wooden bed frame. Knotted amid the linens, a drowned man idly floats in the room's murky waters. A closed footlocker sits on its side at the far end of the room.

The *Direption* wasn't entirely abandoned when it sank into the Jeggare. The corpse here is that of the ship's only remaining crew member, an Urgathoan zealot ordered to

guide the ship into Korvosa's harbor. A sickly sort, Rois Vindmel served Urgathoa mostly due to his rampant hypochondria. Fate and bad luck eventually forced the middle-aged acolyte into the service of Lady Andaisin, who had little patience for his nebbishy ways but saw a use for his blind devotion. When the plot to sail the *Direption* into Korvosa harbor took shape, Andaisin volunteered her least-favorite servant for the mission, and Rois, who had become besotted with the Urgathoan cleric, was only too eager to impress her. Unable to decline the will of his cult's icy high priestess, Rois oversaw the mission, hoping to escape the sinking ship, swim to shore, rejoin his mistress, and obtain a reward. Completely alone, he worked furiously to guide the ponderous ship up around Old Korvosa, but was unable to maneuver it close enough to land to swim for shore before the Korvosan Guard opened fire. When the first blows began to strike the ship, Rois panicked and retreated to the cabin here where he'd left his personal belongings, but as the ship pitched and rolled he struck his head against the very footlocker he was trying to open. He was unconscious when the ship sank, and drowned without waking.

His corpse, wearing simple black robes, now floats in the room. An examination of his body reveals a nasty head wound—not something that would kill, but certainly enough to knock a person out. Rois's body has been partially eaten by crabs and fish, particularly his face. Apart from making his corpse so grisly, his lack of a tongue makes *speak with dead* essentially useless (attempts to use this spell might be able to secure yes or no answers, but details about his life should be difficult to decipher). If the PCs learn he was part of a cult of Urgathoa, that's fine, but they shouldn't be able to learn the location of the hidden cult's temple from this damaged corpse. At your discretion, if the PCs ask the right questions, his tongueless corpse might howl out Andaisin's name, but it takes a successful DC 20 Perception check to correctly understand the word. A further search of his body reveals his silver unholy symbol of Urgathoa on a chain around his neck.

Treasure: Rois' silver unholy symbol is worth 25 gp, but greater treasures lie within the watertight footlocker. A PC who succeeds at a DC 10 Perception check while examining the footlocker finds a patch of skin and hair stuck to the corner of the metal box where Rois struck his head, and a successful DC 20 Perception check also reveals that the footlocker's seal remains intact.

Within the footlocker is a leather pouch containing 50 pp and 38 gp, and a *cloak of resistance* +2 bearing an embroidered image of the unholy symbol of Urgathoa (Rois didn't want to wear it openly on the off chance that the *Direption* was hailed or boarded before its mission was carried out); the symbol on the cloak can be removed without harming the cloak's magical properties with a successful DC 20 Profession (tailor) or similar check. Failure means the symbol is removed but the cloak gains the broken condition and functions as a *cloak of resistance* +1 until it is repaired.

The footlocker also contains a copy of *Serving Your Hunger*, Urgathoa's sacred text. This book is exquisitely illuminated and bound in black silk and velvet over darkwood covers, yet its pages are ancient and fragile. The book is worth 1,500 gp. Any nonevil church in Korvosa will

pay this price as a bounty in return for the book, which the clergy will either then archive (if the church is Abadar's) or destroy (any other nonevil Korvosan church). If the footlocker is opened while still underwater, the book's contents are ruined and its value drops to 500 gp.

If the book makes it to the surface undamaged, the PCs can peruse its contents. The text is largely presented as a combination prayer book and cookbook for the preparation of various humanoids as meals, but also serves as a primer for taking a conciliatory approach to dealing with the undead and for the transformation of oneself into undead. Rois has committed blasphemy in his copy—whenever the name "Urgathoa" appears in the text, he's scratched the name out and penned in the name "Andaisin," an indication of how deep his obsession with his high priestess ran.

Development: If the PCs learn the name Andaisin, a successful DC 20 Knowledge (history or local) check, or a successful DC 25 Diplomacy check to gather information, reveals a disturbing tidbit of information. Cressida Kroft automatically knows the following information if the PCs mention the name to her. Several years ago, the small village of Beorandy on the northern shores of Nidal succumbed to a sudden and devastating outbreak of bubonic plague. Nidalese investigators found evidence that the cult of Urgathoa, led by a woman named Andaisin, had engineered the outbreak, but the high priestess and her cult has absconded. Evidence that she'd fled aboard a ship compelled Nidal to alert authorities along the western coast of Avistan that Andaisin was a wanted criminal, and that if apprehended, she was to be returned at once to Pangolais to face charges of mass murder. Andaisin was never caught.

Story Award: Award the PCs 1,600 XP for learning the connection to the cult of Urgathoa. Award them an additional 1,200 XP if they discover the significance of Lady Andaisin's involvement.

Reporting to Cressida Kroft

Once the PCs explore the wreck, Cressida Kroft is surprised to learn the ship may not have been a plague ship after all, but if the PCs found evidence the cult of Urgathoa was involved, she grows grim. If the PCs haven't figured it out on their own, she now realizes the "plague ship" was intended to do little more than delay or misdirect an investigation into the sickness. The presence of a worshiper of the goddess of disease on the ship can be no coincidence, and she comes to believe a cult of Urgathoa is operating in Korvosa. If she learns Andaisin is involved, she becomes even more worried, for this notorious Nidalese criminal has already destroyed towns via plagues, if Nidal's claims are to be believed. For obvious reasons, Kroft doesn't want to further complicate Korvosa's situation by letting word of Andaisin's possible involvement reach Nidal. Cressida asks the PCs to be on the watch for further clues but to continue working to fight the spread of blood veil throughout the city. As long as cultists of Urgathoa remain active, possibly encouraging the plague's spread, stopping the contagion grows even more important.

Survivor Count: If the PCs spend more than a day resolving this mission, each additional day they spend distracted by the *Direption* costs the lives of 10 citizens, effectively reducing the total number of people the PCs would have otherwise saved.

Mission 2: Plague Rats

As in many large cities, the tunnels and sewers beneath Korvosa attract all manner of unsavory elements. Combining elements of thieves, vermin, and monsters that prowl the reeking depths, the wererats of Korvosa eke out a living from the city's refuse. Most Korvosans contentedly believe the monsters are nothing but stories to keep children out of trouble, and thus, the lycanthropes and their unwitting hosts have long lived in a kind of oblivious accord. Until now.

Giving voice and violence to their fear of the plague, a mob of Midland citizens publicly execute a wererat they discovered foolishly prowling in an alley. Their misguided violence quickly leads to a few drunken dockworkers braving the sewers to hunt wererats, blaming their problems on the lycanthropes believed to dwell below. Used to fear and abuse, most wererats respond to the attacks by abandoning their dens and hiding elsewhere in the city. However, a wererat firebrand named Girrigz Ripperclaws refuses to do so, instead calling his kin to war against the weakened humans above.

One of Korvosa's closet lycanthropes seeks out the party once these events begin. A mousy, second-hand fishmonger with jaundiced eyes, Eries Yelloweyes has lived in secret as a wererat for more than 50 years and is one of the oldest lycanthropes in the city. She has seen much suffering in her time, including devastating government-directed purges, a return of which she fears Girrigz's warmongering ways could quickly incite. Her efforts to talk sense into the violent wererat and his gang have failed, but Eries hears of the PCs through her contacts in the Korvosan Guard and approaches them in her human form for help. Quietly proud of her lycanthropic blood, she explains that something must be done about Girrigz before more lives are lost. She asks the PCs to speak with him and, if necessary, offer him an example of the force the city will doubtlessly employ should his rebelliousness continue. Begging the PCs not to kill her people if it can be avoided, she gives them directions to Girrigz's lair beneath Midland. In exchange for their help, she promises to work

to convince her wererat kin to help fight the plague from the shadows by disposing of infected bodies and doing what else they can to fight its spread.

B1 Sewer Tunnel

The trek through Korvosa's sewers to Girrigz's wererat camp can be as long as you wish. If the PCs are lagging in experience points or you want to enliven the journey, see page 465 for encounter tables for Korvosa's sewers. Eventually, though, the party comes to a tunneled-out gap in the sewer wall.

Through the disgustingly visible haze of noxious sewer reek, the flow of unmentionable slop through the sewer tunnel's filth-slick channel unexpectedly forks. Most of the muck continues on its expected path, but a small stream of ooze diverts off through a wide cleft in the moldy masonry wall. The man-sized crack cuts deep into the rock behind the wall, and wisps of thin white smoke issue forth.

Any characters who proceed down the main tunnel another 20 feet find that the sewer bends east and is blocked by a large, rusty grate. From here, PCs can easily see into area **B4**.

B2 Guard Den (CR 5)

The flow of sewer filth oozes into this rough-hewn stone cave from the west, pooling to the south before continuing through a crude channel in the eastern wall. Fat black mushrooms and other disgusting fungus grow thick around the pool of slime. Several low alcoves are cut into the walls, each filled with moldering hay, filthy furs, and tiny bones.

This room serves as a guard post against incursions from humanoid hunters or any of the sewer's countless other threats. A PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check recognizes the largest of the mushrooms to the south of the sewage pool as a shrieker (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 416).

The shallow flow of sewage in this room makes the floor somewhat slippery in the spaces it covers. Moving at half speed through the muck offers no problem, but a PC who moves faster or makes an attack in one of these slimy spaces must succeed at a DC 12 Acrobatics check or fall prone.

Several cracks in the north wall allow Tiny or smaller creatures to slip through into area **B5**.

Creatures: A pair of wererats and three dire rats keep watch in this room. The dire rats are trained not to cross the flow of sewer water, as doing so tends to set off the shrieker, but the wererats purposefully do this if they notice intruders or are attacked.

The shrieker sits near the center of the south wall, but closer to the passage to area **B3** than to the other gap in the wall. Any creature that enters this room from **B1** and doesn't immediately move north (through the gap between the wall and the stone pillar at the room's center) causes the shrieker to begin screeching. This in turn causes the wererats in area **B3** and the rat swarm in **B5** to come investigate. It also wakes the otyugh in area **B4**.

WERERATS (2) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 18 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 197)

DIRE RATS (3) **CR 1/3**

XP 135 each

hp 5 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 232)

B3 Communal Dens (CR 6)

Several pieces of broken furniture, dried hay, and fragments of lumber burn in a small fire at the center of this open, ruggedly carved cavern. Short alcoves filled with filthy, oversized rats' nests dot the walls, and the disgusting drip of polluted black condensation echoes through the chamber. A thick flow of sewage spreads across the western edge of the chamber, seeping from a crack in the western wall to another in the south.

Most of Girrigz's wererats spend their time here sleeping, sharpening scavenged weapons, and eating what passes for food in the sewers. The filth-soaked floor here is somewhat slippery in the spaces the refuse passes through, just as in area **B2**.

A successful DC 20 Perception check in the easternmost alcove reveals a hole in the eastern wall. Small or smaller creatures can squeeze through this gap.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 14 Knowledge (engineering) or DC 20 Perception check realizes that the walls around the cleft in the south wall are subsiding. If the stone there is chipped away (hardness 8, hp 40), the gap into area **B4** becomes just large enough for the otyugh to rampage through.

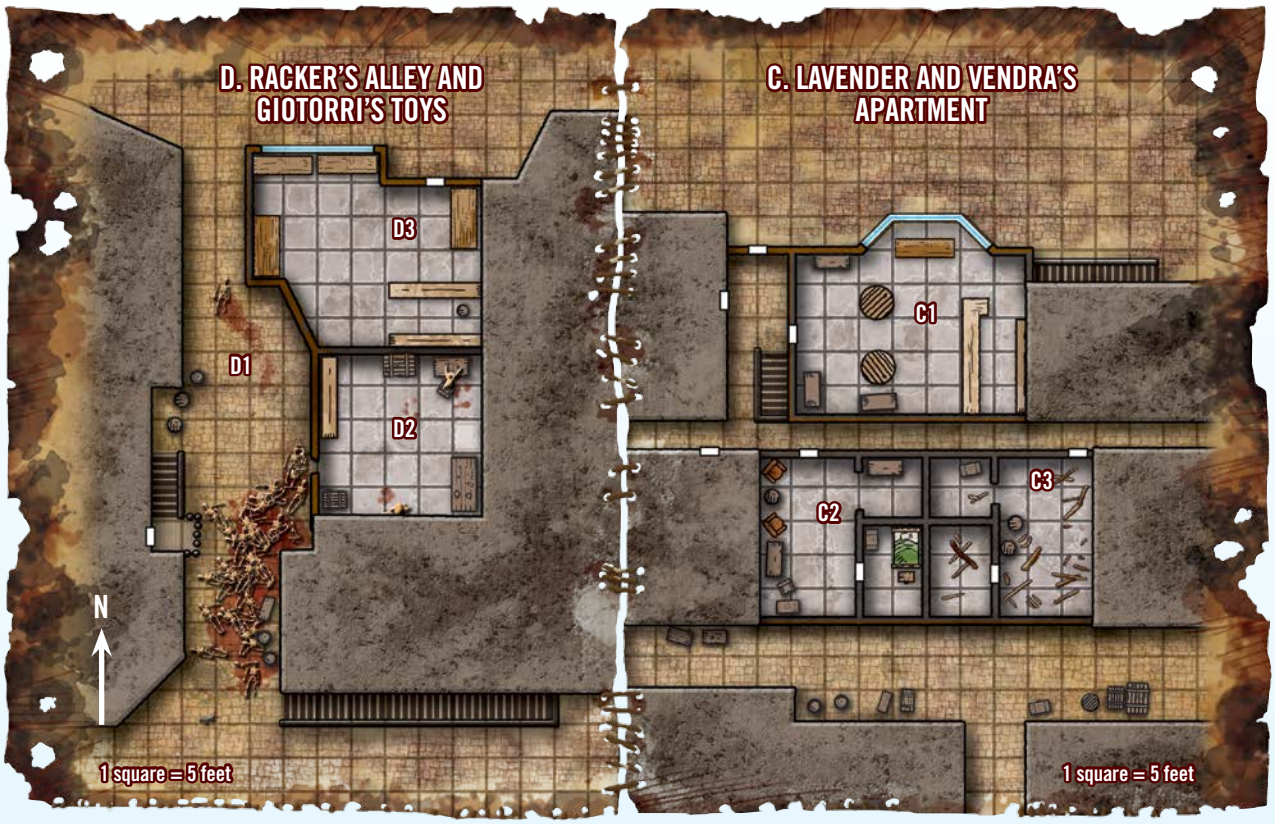
Creatures: A group of four wererats lounge here, hissing and laughing at several fat black rats tormenting an alley cat they captured in a small cage. They attack any non-wererats who enter the room. If battle erupts in this room, Girrigz transforms into his dire rat form and comes through the gap in the east wall from area **B6** to aid his allies.

WERERATS (4) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 18 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 197)

B5
B6
B2
B3
B. WERERAT SEWER DEN
N
B1
B4
1 square = 5 feet


D. RACKER'S ALLEY AND GIOTORRI'S TOYS
C. LAVENDER AND VENDRA'S APARTMENT
D3
C1
D1
D2
C3
C2
N
1 square = 5 feet
1 square = 5 feet

Treasure: A PC who succeeds at DC 18 Perception check discovers a variety of the wererats' crude treasures and tools, the most noteworthy being three smokesticks, a tanglefoot bag, a thunderstone, 20 tindertwigs, a bent copper trumpet bearing a pennant with the city's coat of arms worth 120 gp, and a complete set of masterwork carpenter's tools.

B4 Trapped Otyugh (CR 4)

Two thick grates of rusted iron hedge in this section of sewer tunnel. From a human-sized crack in the northern wall seeps a steady flow of sewage, oozing into the greater flow of tainted water. A hulking pile of filth and debris partially blocks the stream of offal, forming a cart-sized clot in this disgusting artery.

An old fixture of the city sewers, the grate to the west prevents undesirables from slinking through the sewers. The grate to the east is a newer addition meant to serve the same purpose, but includes a lifting mechanism that allows the passage of sewer workers and other civic servants, and the city has simply not removed the old grate yet. Both grates extend to the ceiling 10 feet above (hardness 10, 60 hp, lift DC 26).

A wall-mounted mechanism consisting of several gears and a large handle rests on the south wall, 10 feet to the east of the eastern grate. The wererats jammed the device to keep it permanently unlocked and ready to use. Any creature who spends a minute turning the handle causes the eastern grate to screech loudly as it retracts into the ceiling.

Creature: The wererats here have used the two grates to trap a lone otyugh. The creature has been here for more than a week, surviving off of rats and what it finds floating through its makeshift cage. Unless awakened by the shrieker in area **B2** or similar loud noises, it is sleeping when the PCs arrive.

If awakened, the hungry otyugh's first reaction is to attack any PC in reach. If the PCs are out of reach, the distressed sewer monster blubbers about being "so hungeries" and "caught by mean rat hoomans." Kind words and a successful DC 23 Diplomacy check convince the otyugh to aid the PCs by attacking the wererats. Giving the otyugh any kind of food grants the PCs a +4 bonus on this Diplomacy check. The otyugh remains friendly for only an hour, though, and unless the PCs succeed at further Diplomacy checks, it soon forgets who the PCs are and attempts to eat them anyway. With a successful DC 17 Intimidate check, a PC can also convince the otyugh to attack the wererats, but this tactic secures its cooperation for only 10 minutes before it lashes out at the PCs.

OTYUGH **CR 4**

XP 1,200

hp 39 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 223)

B5 Rat Dens (CR 3)

The scrapes and scratches of tiny claws cover the uneven walls of this crudely carved cave. Amid these marks, dozens of dark, fist-sized holes dot the stone like a rocky beehive. Hundreds of bones—of rats, horses, fish, and humans—lie scattered across the floor, and a cleft in the earthen wall leads off to the east.

Creatures: Within the carved-out walls, a swarm of rats and six fat, greasy dire rats make their nests. They attack any creature that enters the room and doesn't smell of rodent. If the shrieker in area **B2** is set off, the rat swarm moves through the gaps in the southwest wall to investigate, but the dire rats are too lazy to care.

RAT SWARM **CR 2**

XP 600

hp 16 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 232)

DIRE RATS (3) **CR 1/3**

XP 135 each

hp 5 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 232)

B6 Girrigz's Den (CR 6)

Several crates, mismatched boxes, and poorly kept weapons lie stacked and scattered about this dingy stone chamber. Pinned to the side of one stack is a crudely sketched map of Korvosa. A large rat's nest, strewn with moldy pillows, fills an elevated hollow in the south wall.

Creature: Girrigz, the wererats' leader, plans his war on the city above from this den. He and his followers managed to collect much of what they think they might need in the coming days, including a variety of weapons; discarded foodstuffs; and equipment such as rope, manacles, and several flasks of alchemist's fire.

Succeeding at a DC 20 Perception check while examining the alcove on the southern wall—Girrigz's nest—reveals a large crack, big enough for a Small creature to squeeze through, leading to area **B3**.

Girrigz always hated the sewers. A natural lycanthrope, he has spent his entire 29 years of life as a wererat, feeling trapped beneath the boots of Korvosa's people above. More than once, the rebellious wererat has sneaked up onto the streets to take out his hatred on beggars and other unsuspecting humans, seeing his predations as just revenge. Less than a year ago, he took two silver crossbow

bolts from a well-equipped Korvosan guard who came upon him savaging a dockside vagrant. Barely escaping with his life, Girrigz has since been a fiery and vocal member of the wererat community, urging his people to strike back against the weak humans above. The lack of reason and the cowardice of elder lycanthropes have long stifled Girrigz's warmongering, but the attacks from those above coming in the days since the plague have finally given the savage wererat revolutionary the following he needs. While he lacks the numbers and skill to truly threaten the city above, his blind hatred could easily lead to the deaths of hundreds.

Although he doesn't respond to the sound of the shrieker's screeching, battle in area **B3** or the release of the otyugh causes Girrigz to come investigate. If the party manages to catch him unaware, he's here studying a map of the city and dreaming of burning Castle Korvosa to the ground. Girrigz cannot be reasoned with. He hates all non-wererats, and upon seeing invaders, he savagely attacks and fights to the death.

GIRRIGZ **CR 6**

XP 2,400

Male human natural wererat fighter 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 197)

CE Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger)

Init +8; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 18, flat-footed 18 (+5 armor, +4 Dex, +3 deflection, +1 dodge)

hp 67 (6d10+30)

Fort +9, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6 (+2 vs. fear)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *+1 mithral rapier* +13/+8 (1d6+5/18–20)

Special Attacks curse of lycanthropy, weapon training (light blades +1)

TACTICS

Before Combat Given advance warning, such as by the sounds of fighting in area **B3**, Girrigz imbibes a *potion of bear's endurance*, a *potion of blur*, and a *potion of shield of faith +3* before stealthily moving in to join the battle.

During Combat Girrigz fights ferociously, taking particular pleasure in using his bite attack. He drinks his *potion of cure moderate wounds* if reduced to fewer than 20 hit points.

Morale A total fanatic, Girrigz fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 18, **Con** 18, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 25

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Vital Strike, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialization (rapier)

Skills Climb +7, Handle Animal +7, Perception +5, Stealth +7, Survival +8

Languages Common, Varisian

SQ armor training 1, change forms, lycanthropic empathy

Combat Gear *potions of bear's endurance* (2), *potion of blur*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of shield of faith +3*; **Other Gear** *+1 chain shirt*, *+1 mithral rapier*, 230 gp

Treasure: Amid the rotted food, coils of moldy rope, and threadbare dark cloaks that fill most of the crates in this room, a PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Perception check turns up 22 daggers, 12 short swords, three light crossbows, 60 crossbow bolts, four chain shirts, 12 flasks of alchemist's fire, a masterwork longsword, and a masterwork suit of chainmail. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check while searching Girrigz's nest discovers four *potions of cure moderate wounds*, a *bottle of air*, and a *pearl of power* (2nd-level spell), as well as the crack in the southern wall.

Story Award: If the PCs manage to scatter Girrigz's warband without killing any wererats (other than Girrigz), grant them experience for each surviving wererat as if they had defeated it in combat.

Survivor Count: Preventing Girrigz's war against Korvosa saves the lives of 400 citizens.

MISSION 3: THE COLOR OF DEATH

Lavender, one of the better-known and noted perfume boutiques in Korvosa, stands amid a row of tightly packed shops just off of Summoning Street. Owned by an opportunistic Chelish woman named Vendra Loaggri, the perfumery has always had a reputation for avant-garde creations and brazen promotions (infamous memories of the "Free Imp with Every Purchase" stunt still linger among residents of the Heights). With fear of blood veil running rampant throughout Korvosa, Vendra conceived of her most ingenious publicity stunt ever: a cure.

Lavender's Luxuriant Liniment is the everyday elixir of the common Korvosan. It wakes you up in the morning and calms you down at night. It soothes aching joints, tired feet, sore hands, and throbbing heads. It takes the pain out of cuts, burns, bruises, and blemishes. It smells like chastity, confidence, and respectability, and tastes like honeyed dewdrops over snow clouds. Most miraculously, though, Lavender's Luxuriant Liniment dispels blisters, minimizes swelling, calms the complexion, and erases all symptoms of the common blood veil complaint.

And it's all a complete sham.

Turning from an unscrupulous merchant to a two-bit snake-oil saleswoman, Vendra expects to collect a small fortune from desperate Korvosans and be long gone before anyone realizes her prosaic potion's main ingredient is river water.

The PCs may hear rumors about this miracle cure on their own and decide to investigate. Alternatively, an NPC ally could inform them of the rumor and ask them to check out the veracity of these claims. If Lavender's owner has indeed found a cure, it should be made freely available, and if she's peddling snake oil, the false security she's fostering needs to be dispelled before more people put their confidence in trickery and unknowingly expose themselves and spread the malediction even faster.

Lavender Features

If the PCs pay a visit to Lavender during the day, they find a queue of eager Korvosans standing in a line that stretches nearly four blocks from the perfumery's distinctive amethyst-shaded windows. Many of these people look healthy, but several bear the early but obvious symptoms of blood veil: hacking coughs and blisters. The line threads through the street and into the store, where customers pay 2 gp for a dose of Lavender's Luxuriant Liniment. Vendra greets each new customer from behind the shop counter, leaving the actual sales to two pretty young shop girls. Two large, well-dressed men with purple cravats discreetly hold saps and keep their eyes on the shop's patrons, ready to put down any trouble at a nod from Vendra.

If they visit at night, the PCs discover a line of more than 50 customers camped outside Lavender's front door, waiting until the shop opens the next morning to buy their doses of Vendra's elixir. More guards remain on duty through the night, watchful for thieves and keeping overly zealous customers in line.

In addition to Lavender, Vendra Loaggri owns the two apartments situated behind her shop. One serves as her personal residence. The other looks condemned from the outside—its door is boarded over with dusty timbers; in actuality, it serves as the laboratory in which she creates Lavender's Luxuriant Liniment. A secret door allows passage between Vendra's bedroom and this hidden laboratory.

Three times per night, two of Vendra's thugs leave through the alleyway between the shop and Vendra's apartment rolling a sturdy barrel. They take it all the way down to the Jeggare River and fill it with water (although sometimes they get lucky and just replace it with a neighbor's full rain barrel). They then bring the water back to the alley, disappearing with it into Vendra's apartment, where it is brought into area **C3** and used to make the shop's phony cure-all. Any PCs who stand watch through the night should have no trouble spotting and following Vendra's thugs, although the thugs know their employer wants them to be discreet and they have orders to rough up anyone who proves too interested in their business.

WERERAT PCS

It's possible that one or more PC could contract the curse of lycanthropy from Girrigz or one of his wererat minions in this encounter. If this occurs, you can have those PCs gain the wererat lycanthrope template and take control of their characters when the change takes over, as suggested in the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, or you can use the corruption rules in Chapter 1 of *Pathfinder RPG Horror Adventures*, which presents variant mechanics for lycanthropy that change a character in a slower and more organic manner.

C1 Perfumery (CR 7 [day] or 5 [night])

Heady scents twist throughout the cramped but stylish perfumery. A dizzying assortment of bottles—from gaudy ceramic containers to graceful crystalline vials—lines a variety of lace- and ribbon-strewn tables, shelves, and racks, as well

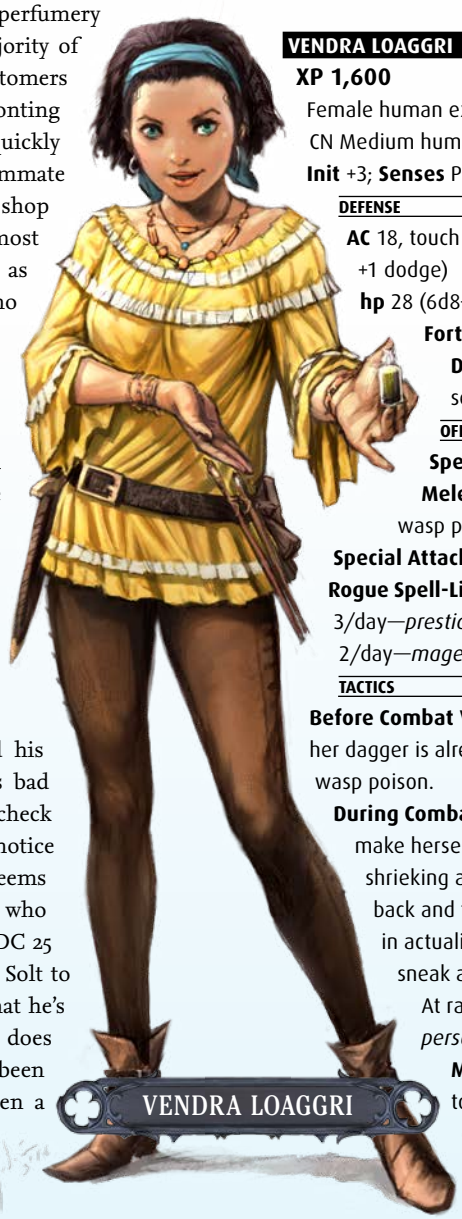
as an eye-catching display in the wide front window. Across from the front door's lavender-tinted glass panes runs a long counter, stacked high with hundreds of simple clay phials bearing round, magenta stoppers. Behind the counter, violet flourishes swoop across a sign reading, "Lavender's Luxuriant Liniment: Either You've Got It, or You've Had It."

Although Vendra once prided herself on stocking only the rarest and most expensive scents, her current venture has led her to put a large portion of her stock into storage, making room for her Luxuriant Liniment. Paying the 2 gp or otherwise obtaining a vial nets a character 1 dose of Vendra's cure-all, a pleasant-smelling oily fluid with a bitter taste. A PC who spends an hour with an alchemist's lab and succeeds at a DC 22 Craft (alchemy) check can discern the elixir's components: sugar, cheap perfume, and river water.

Creatures: If the PCs enter the perfumery during the day, Vendra and the majority of her staff are here with a line of customers stretching out the door. Confronting Vendra while she has customers quickly turns into a messy affair. A consummate saleswoman and fast-talker, the shop owner can talk herself out of most accusations. Even if she can't—such as when confronted with someone who reveals her ingredients, questions her about the barrels of river water delivered by night, or confronts her with a plague victim left unhealed by the medicine—she knows the con game well and keeps a shill in the crowd at all times.

Today, she's bought a middle-aged dockworker named Solt Carmino, whom she pays to mill about the shop, stand in line, and, if needs be, give an "unbiased" personal testimonial of how Lavender's Luxuriant Liniment not only cured his plague, but soothes the pain in his bad leg. A successful DC 18 Perception check allows a PC scanning the crowd to notice that Solt is the only person who seems to be browsing the perfumes. A PC who calls out the shill and succeeds at a DC 25 Diplomacy or Intimidate check gets Solt to confess that Vendra paid him and that he's never had the plague, although he does sheepishly point out that his leg has been feeling a little better since he's taken a dose of the Luxuriant Liniment. If his confession occurs in front of the store's customers, more than half of them begin muttering and leaving. Vendra shouts at the PCs to vacate her store, ordering her guards to forcibly eject them if they don't exit peaceably, and begins offering free doses of Lavender's Luxuriant Liniment to win back her customers. If a fight breaks out, chaos ensues, with customers scattering and Vendra shrieking that the shop is closed as dozens of vials of perfume are doubtlessly destroyed. During the fracas, the shop owner attempts to flee to area **C2**, making a vengeful sneak attack against one of the PCs if the opportunity presents itself.

At night, two guards keep watch outside the shop's front door. Vendra uses charges from her *wand of remove disease* on herself and her guards every night if they develop symptoms of blood veil. Once her wand is down to a single charge, she plans on leaving the city with her fortune.



VENDRA LOAGGRI

VENDRA LOAGGRI **CR 5**

XP 1,600

Female human expert 2/rogue 4

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 28 (6d8–2)

Fort +0, **Ref** +7, **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dagger +7 (1d4/19–20 plus giant wasp poison on first strike)

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

Rogue Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +7)

3/day—*prestidigitation*

2/day—*mage armor*

TACTICS

Before Combat Vendra casts *mage armor* on herself; her dagger is already envenomed with a dose of giant wasp poison.

During Combat The perfumer does her best to make herself look like a harmless merchant, shrieking and sobbing dramatically, rushing back and forth, and harmlessly slapping, but in actuality is looking for an opportunity to sneak attack a PC with her poisoned dagger. At range, she relies on her *wand of charm person* to turn enemies to her favor.

Morale Vendra surrenders if reduced to 10 or fewer hit points, and says or does anything to escape the city without being killed or imprisoned.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 16, **Con** 8, **Int** 13, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 18

Feats Dodge, Mobility, Skill Focus (Use Magic Device), Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +15, Craft (alchemy) +10, Diplomacy +15, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +12, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (local) +10, Linguistics +6, Perception +10, Profession (perfumer) +10, Stealth +12, Use Magic Device +18

Languages Common, Halfling, Shoanti, Varisian, Vudrani

SQ rogue talents (major magic, minor magic), trapfinding +2

Combat Gear *wand of charm person* (14 charges), *wand of remove disease* (3 charges), giant wasp poison (2); **Other Gear** dagger, *circlet of persuasion*, silver and violet earrings and bracelets (worth 180 gp in all), keys to apartments and Lavender, 13 gp

LAVENDER THUGS (2) **CR 3**

XP 800 each

Human fighter 2/rogue 2

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+5 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 shield)

hp 38 each (4 HD; 2d8+2d10+14)

Fort +6, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1 (+1 vs. fear)

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk rapier +8 (1d6+3/18–20)

Ranged mwk hand crossbow +5 (1d4/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

TACTICS

During Combat Lavender thugs don't hold back if a fight starts—they use lethal force and plan on pleading self-defense if it comes to it later. Fond of using their hand crossbows and Deadly Aim on foes already in melee combat, a Lavender thug is quick to switch to the rapier as needed. In Vendra's presence, they dutifully serve as bodyguards and work to keep themselves between the PCs and the woman who pays them.

Morale A Lavender thug drops his weapon and flees into the city if reduced to 6 hit points or fewer. He doesn't return to Vendra's side.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 13, **Con** 16, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 18

Feats Deadly Aim, Dodge, Mobility, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Bluff +7, Intimidate +7, Perception +8, Sense Motive +8, Stealth +6

Languages Common

SQ rogue talent (weapon training), trapfinding +1

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** *+1 chain shirt*, light steel shield, mwk hand crossbow (10 bolts), mwk rapier, 12 gp

Treasure: Any character who succeeds at a DC 18 Appraise, Craft (alchemy), or Knowledge (nobility) check can pick out the most expensive perfumes Lavender has to offer, scents worth upward of 100 gp to the right buyers. In all, the store holds exotic perfumes worth 800 gp. A simple wooden box and a sturdy iron safe sit behind the counter. The box holds random coins worth 422 gp—the proceeds from the last few days' sales. A PC who succeeds at a DC 28 Disable Device check cracks the safe, which contains 65 pp, 112 gp, and three empty but elegantly carved lapis lazuli perfume bottles (worth 45 gp each).

C2 Vendra's Apartment

Vendra's door is locked, requiring a successful DC 20 Disable Device check to open.

Delicate wall hangings, artistically shaped candles, and the fine scent of cherry blossoms fill this well-decorated apartment. A table sculpted with swirling ivy leaves bears a fragile porcelain tea service and an exotically curved hookah in a kitchen nook to the east. A door adjacent to the kitchen opens into a bedroom furnished with an antique armoire and a bed heavily laden with round pillows and draped with purple silk bedding.

Vendra's apartment strives to mimic the salon of a Chelish noblewoman. The place is quite neat and clean, the perfumer's collection of tawdry romances and maudlin poetry being particularly well organized. Two pieces of amateur artwork hang among candle sconces and painted dishware: a soul-soothing landscape of a mountain lake and a sketch of the famed Chelish opera house, Her Imperial Majestrix's Melodeum. The room is devoid of alchemical equipment.

A successful DC 20 Perception check reveals a corner-hinged secret door leading into the bedroom of the adjacent apartment.

If the PCs come to call on Vendra at night, there is a 50% chance that she is here sleeping; otherwise, she is in area **C3** mixing up the next day's brew of Lavender's Luxuriant Liniment.

C3 Liniment Laboratory (CR 3)

The door to this apartment is boarded over and nailed closed, both from the inside and the outside (hardness 5, hp 15, break DC 24).

Bits of broken crates and barrels cover the floor of this dilapidated apartment. A tub of oily liquid, its lip about four

feet high, fills a corner of the room, a well-used oar sticking out of it. Next to it squat several large casks of murky water and two stacks of boxes. One holds dozens of small ceramic vials with magenta stoppers; the other holds a mismatched collection of delicate perfume bottles. The apartment's kitchen nook holds another crate, this one filled with broken shards of multicolored glass. Despite being in shambles, the apartment smells delightfully of spices, flowers, and exotic oils.

Vendra and her toughs spend hours every evening combining crude elements with poorly selling perfumes to create Lavender's Luxuriant Liniment. The bottles, perfumes, and river water here are all the evidence the Korvosan Guard requires to shut down Lavender and imprison Vendra.

VAMPIRE SPAWN

Creatures: During the day, one of Vendra's hired thugs works here. At night, Vendra and two of her thugs make the lion's share of the next day's concoction, with barrels of river water being sent for at least three times per night.

LAVENDER THUGS (2) **CR 3**

XP 800 each

hp 38 each (see page 99)

Treasure: The equipment in this lab, gathered together, functions as an alchemist's lab. Although the lab is used to make a fake elixir, the ingredients here constitute 800 gp worth of raw material for brewing potions or concocting alchemical items.

Closing Up Shop

Any thorough investigation of Lavender's miracle cure reveals Vendra's completely spurious claims and criminal activities, but the Korvosan Guard needs hard evidence of the perfumer's wrongdoing to charge her with any crime. The easiest way to do this is for the PCs to purchase a dose of Lavender's Luxuriant Liniment, find a plague victim, and administer the useless panacea in the company of a Korvosan Guard. Both Grau Soldado and Field Marshal Kroft are willing participate in such an experiment, provided the PCs can actually cure the victim of the disease in the end. Successfully analyzing a dose of the liniment and determining it has nothing of medicinal value in it works as well.

Reporting to Cressida what they saw in Vendra's secret laboratory also brings down the Guard. Assigning a patrol to the task, Field Marshal Kroft sends guards to follow the PCs back to Lavender to arrest Vendra. If the PCs investigate Lavender on their own, bringing Vendra in alive is the best solution, but the PCs might take a more vigilante-style approach to dealing with her. Although murdering the perfumer is frowned upon by the Korvosan Guard, Kroft overlooks the matter based on the PCs' past help, and actually thanks them if they bring her proof of the shopkeeper's misdeeds, although she does suggest showing greater restraint in the future. In any case, once Lavender is closed, gossip about the shop's fake cure-all spreads quickly and Vendra Loaggri's reputation is permanently ruined.

Story Award: If the PCs expose Vendra's scam and shut down Lavender, award them 1,600 XP. Award them additional XP for everyone involved (including Vendra) who they didn't have to defeat in combat as if these NPCs had been defeated.

Survivor Count: Putting an end to the creation and sale of Vendra Loaggri's false cure saves the lives of

700 Korvosan citizens by preventing many souls from unknowingly contracting and spreading the illness when they assume the elixir is protecting them.

MISSION 4: THE HUNGRY DEAD

As the dead start to pile up, the church of Abadar starts to offer discounts on its healing services to those who serve Korvosa as plague carters—people who travel the streets, load the dead onto carts, and haul them to the Gray District for disposal in mass graves. It's not long before disturbing rumors spread that some of the lazier plague carters aren't delivering their bodies to the Gray District as ordered, and are instead disposing of them in one of several secluded alleys in Old Korvosa. Field Marshal Kroft sends the PCs to investigate one of these sites: Racker's Alley. The problem, Kroft explains, is more than just lazy carters; she fears that the large accumulation of dead bodies in the alley may attract dangerous scavengers, or worse, could trigger the manifestation of an undead monster. She asks the PCs to travel to Racker's Alley to confirm the presence of an illegal corpse dumping ground, and if they find one, to ensure that the region is safe from scavengers and undead before reporting back so she can send a group of guards to haul the bodies away. Alternatively, the suggestion to investigate Racker's Alley may well come from the temple of Abadar or even simple rumors the PCs have heard.

Racker's Alley, with its strange shape and shadowy corners, has long been a site of illicit exchanges, quiet murders, and criminal business in the tangles of western Old Korvosa. Already shunned by locals and constantly hidden from sunlight by looming buildings and the nearby wall, the alley made a perfect dumping spot for some of the less scrupulous plague carters. Although few living people notice the bodies accumulating in the shadows, the same cannot be said of the unliving—four vampire spawn have taken up residence in the alley.

These four are some of hundreds of such undead slaves to one Conte Senior Tiriac, a powerful vampire who rules Varno County in Ustalav. When the Red Mantis contacted his underling Ramoska Arkminos for aid, Tiriac saw it as an opportunity to establish a presence beyond his normal reach. He granted Arkminos permission to travel to Korvosa, but on the condition that he be accompanied by four of Tiriac's vampire spawn to serve the nosferatu as "assistants." Of course, Ramoska knew these vampire spawn were also sent to serve as observers and ensure that the nosferatu did not betray or compromise the Conte's interests. Ramoska had little interest in keeping the four half-feral vampire spawn nearby, and allowed them free reign in Korvosa's alleys and sewers soon after arriving in town. The four settled in the crawl space beneath Giotorri's Toys, a rundown shop abutting the alley here, and have all but forgotten their charge to keep an eye on Ramoska.

Breaking a hole in the wall between the shop's back room and the alley and disguising it with corpses, the feral vampire spawn come and go as they please, feeding on victims and piling their corpses anonymously among the alley's other dead in an attempt to disguise their presence.

D1 Racker's Alley (CR 4 or 8)

The high walls of the surrounding buildings throw this awkwardly bent alley into constant shadow. Although littered with garbage and filth, the refuse isn't the most stomach-turning trait of this rundown side way. Heaped against a bent wooden wall rises a pile of more than three dozen plague victims, their faces blistered and flushed, eyes open and staring. The scent of death is overpowered by the reek of rot, suggesting that some of these corpses have been here for days, but even a casual glance reveals that certain bodies seem strangely pale compared to most of the victims who succumb to the sickness.

Both lazy workers manning the plague carts and the vampire spawn deposit corpses in this shadowy alley. More than 40 corpses lie piled against the eastern wall. With a successful DC 16 Perception check, a PC confirms that not only are many of the bodies drained of blood, but that nearly half of them bear no signs of blood veil at all—merely twin puncture wounds on their necks, wrists, or inner thighs. The hole in the eastern wall, leading into area **D2**, is obvious to anyone who approaches within 10 feet of the mass of bodies. The bodies of those who died of the plague remain contagious, and anyone who comes into contact with them is exposed to blood veil.

Creature: During the day, Racker's Alley is thick with fat flies and rats gorging themselves on the corpses. At night, one vampire spawn hides on the roof above the alley, standing guard over the lair. The 20-foot-tall walls impose a –2 penalty on Perception checks to notice the vampire spawn from the alley floor. Once the vampire spawn sees anyone touching the pile of bodies, it shrieks an alarm and clambers down to attack. Its three companions join the fight in 1d3 rounds.

VAMPIRE SPAWN **CR 4**

XP 1,200

Elf rogue 1/warrior 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Monster Codex* 244)

CE Medium undead (humanoid, elf)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural)

hp 40 (4 HD; 1d8+3d10+19); fast healing 2

Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2; +2 vs. enchantments

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2; **DR** 5/silver; **Immune** sleep, undead traits; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10
Weaknesses resurrection vulnerability, vampire weaknesses

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee slam +4 (1d4+1 plus energy drain)
Special Attacks blood drain, dominate (DC 16), energy drain (1 level, DC 14), sneak attack +1d6

TACTICS

During Combat The vampire spawn do not coordinate their attacks well, and tend to bicker and snap at each other over meals. As a result, each vampire spawn seeks out its own PC to attack, teaming up with others against a single target only if no other options are available. When two vampire spawn fight one PC, they each take a –2 penalty on attack rolls, as they are distracted by the other's actions. They won't bother with dominating prey unless they find themselves alone, fighting a single victim.
Morale The vampire spawn fight until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 18
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 18
Feats Dodge, Skill Focus (Acrobatics), Skill Focus (Perception)
Skills Acrobatics +19, Climb +8, Perception +13, Stealth +18
Languages Common, Elven, Varisian
SQ elven magic, gaseous form, shadowless, spider climb, trapfinding +1

D2 Workshop (CR 8)

Dozens of glass eyes—crooked and crazed—glare from the heads of malformed and half-carved dolls lining skewed workroom shelves. Rat-gnawed stuffed aurochs, disembodied doll limbs, miniature rolling elephants, unseaworthy miniature wooden ships, and blocks illustrated with deformed or poorly painted animals fill bins and racks about the room. A cracked wooden door leads to the north, while a rickety trap door breaks the sawdust-covered floor to the east. In one corner lies the drying corpse of an old bald man amid the wood chips, rusty tools, and oily rags of a scored workbench.

From here, for more than 20 years, the artless ex-con Rodolfo Giotorri created his horrible toys. Now, he lies dead and desiccated under the uncaring eyes of his deformed creations. A PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Perception check while examining Giotorri's body discovers eight puncture wounds up and down his neck, as well as a ring of small keys, including those to the shop's front door and the lockbox in area **D3**.

The trap door leads into a dirt-floored crawl space 3-1/2 feet tall with the same dimensions as the room above. Medium creatures treat the area as difficult terrain. Amid numerous blocks of various types of mundane wood lie four simple but solid coffins. Dry, gray soil from Ustalav fills each.

Creatures: During the day, the four vampire spawn minions rest here. Stealthy PCs might be able to sneak up on the resting vampire spawn, who take a –10 penalty on their Perception checks for being asleep. While coordinated PCs might be able to get the drop on the vampire spawn while they're asleep, the creatures do a great deal of thrashing and howling even if one of the proscribed methods of slaying a vampire spawn is used. This clamor wakes the other vampire spawn, who fight for their unlives against the trespassers. Both areas **D1** and **D2** are shadowy enough that the vampire spawn can move through them without harm, even during daylight hours.

VAMPIRE SPAWN (4) **CR 4**

XP 1,200 each

hp 40 each (see page 100)

Treasure: A successful DC 20 Perception check reveals several items amid the soil filling the four vampire spawns' coffins. Three leather pouches hold a combined total of 15 pp and 300 gp, all of Ustalavic minting; a *ring of jumping* sculpted to look like intertwined brass spider legs; and a set of bone *pipes of haunting*.

Survivor Count: By slaying or driving off the vampire spawn and confirming that Racker's Alley is being used as a dumping ground (and therefore allowing the Guard to take action against such use in the future), the PCs save the lives of 200 citizens.

D3 Giotorri's Toys

Awkwardly stitched stuffed animals, poorly equipped toy soldiers, and dolls exhibiting myriad accidental deformities stare blankly out of the filth-smeared front window of this toy store showroom. Several heavy-looking kites dangle purple and crimson tails from the ceiling above, and a dollhouse recreating Castle Korvosa's intimidating towers dominates one of the room's side tables. Festooned with tiny bells, the shop's entrance stands to the north, across from a doorway marked "Private" and a counter cluttered with dusty jars of candies.

Closed since the earliest days of the plague, the showroom of Giotorri's Toys lies under a thin layer of dust. The vampires who have taken up residence in the shop have largely left the cheap and defective wares here alone, giving curious passersby no reason to investigate. The front door is locked; opening it requires the correct key from area **D2** or a successful DC 30 Disable Device check.

Treasure: While the hundreds of toys technically have value, they brought Giotorri little wealth and promise to enrich the lives of others even less. With a successful DC 14 Perception check, a PC turns up a rusty, pathetically jingling lockbox behind the counter. Opening the container requires a successful DC 20 Disable Device check, which reveals 2 gp, 8 sp, 22 cp, a silver tooth worth 1 gp, and a brass key shaped like the symbol of Abadar and bearing the number 261. A PC who succeeds at a DC 16 Knowledge (local or religion) check recognizes the key as belonging to a private deposit box at an Abadaran temple.

If taken to a clerk at the Grand Vault of Abadar, the key leads a priest to fetch Giotorri's life savings and his effects from his youthful days: 68 gp, a set of masterwork thieves' tools, a pair of *boots of striding and springing*, and a sheaf of papers detailing the creation of dozens of poorly designed toys.

MISSION 5: THE CASE OF THE VANISHING VIRTUOSO

The Carowyns have always relished the limelight. Whether they're contributing thousands of gold coins to the upcoming season at the Kendall Amphitheater, reserving box seats at the Marbledome, or hosting galas at their South Shore estate, the aging nobles find no scene too garish for to steal. Thus, when the gossip of the hour turned from this scandalous actor or that noble's mistress to death in the street and hastily planned flights from the city, Olauren Carowyn saw opportunity. Discussing the matter with her husband Ausio, the two hatched a fabulous plan to avoid the plague's gloom and dread: hold a fantastic party. Within days, casks of wine filled the cellar of Carowyn Manor, new Qadiran window dressings were hung, and the finest players were on retainer to entertain the nobles' dozens of guests. For a moment, South Shore's creme de la creme forgot all about the hundreds dying just blocks away.

Queen Ileosa was delighted. Blood veil had always been meant to dispose of Korvosa's weak, poor, and unsavory citizens, but what of the worthless rich? With a list of grievances against this fatuous merchant baroness or that nosy noble stretching from the gates of Castle Korvosa to the Heights' cobbles, the queen tasked Dr. Davaulus with disposing of numerous offending socialites. The queen's murderous temper fit well with a flaw Davaulus saw in their plots—he feared that someone might eventually notice how few members of Korvosa's upper crust were suffering from blood veil. As such, he turned to Rolth Lamm—a cruel-minded local necromancer conscripted by the cult of Urgathoa—to deal with the queen's hit list, stipulating only that their deaths must appear to be further ravages of the plague.

Rolth, however, had little interest in Davaulus's or the queen's errand, for in the weeks during which blood veil spread through the city, the necromancer had noticed a disturbing trend. Among the Varisian population, one in 20 showed immunity to the Urgathoan disease. Deep in his studies and eager to learn why Varisians were resistant to the sickness, he pawned off Davaulus's hit list to his obsessive sometimes-lover, a perverse-minded forsaken elf named Jolistina Susperio. The pesh-addicted, self-destructive elf—terribly immature for her near-180-year age—had fawned over the necromancer ever since he half-threatened, half-promised to turn her into a zombie one day. Knowing that his paramour would die before failing him, Rolth packed off the elf with a few tender promises, a *wand of sculpt corpse*, the queen's list, and a mind set on murder.

Ruan's Ruin

For days, Deyanira Mirukova has pleaded at the gates of Citadel Volshyenek, begging for help in finding her brother, Ruan. The young Varisians live together in a modest apartment off Overton Way, not far from the Marbledome where she works as a chorus girl and Ruan plays ocarina in the orchestra. Several days ago, Ruan came home in a state of excitement, delighted he had been personally requested to perform at a private masquerade at Carowyn Manor, home of the well-known patrons of the arts. He bought a new outfit, practiced a challenging new arrangement, and left early the evening of the event.

When Ruan didn't return the entire next day, Deyanira went to the Carowyn estate, only to find it seemingly abandoned—its entrance locked, its windows tightly curtained, and a sickly smell issuing from behind the heavy door. Next she approached the Korvosan Guard, but it proved unable to provide aid, as its efforts were stretched past the breaking point already. Deyanira didn't know where to turn.

The PCs can become involved with Deyanira Mirukova when the girl tracks them down to ask for their aid, or perhaps when Cressida Kroft, having learned of her plight, asks the PCs to step in to help in the Guard's stead. When Deyanira mentions her brother, a PC who succeeds at a DC 16 Knowledge (local) check recognizes Ruan as a Varisian prodigy and a youthful master of a most unconventional instrument, the ocarina. Deyanira barely holds herself together as she tells the PCs what she knows and what she discovered at the Carowyn estate. She has little money with which to reward the PCs, but she offers all she owns—common goods and family heirlooms worth less than 100 gp and a season's worth of free passes to the Marbledome—if they help her.

Carowyn Manor Features

A stately, gabled estate along Shoreline Way, Carowyn Manor serves as the in-town home of Olauren and Ausio

Carowyn. Built for entertaining, the property includes the manor house itself, a smaller servants' residence, and a meticulously manicured garden, complete with a gazebo and a pond full of Ember Lake charigs (tiny salamanders that glow in the dark).

Festooned with cinderberry garlands and bright-red drapery, the limestone facade of Carowyn Manor faces Shoreline Way. The sturdy front doors are made of Bloodsworn mahogany and are locked (hardness 5, hp 20, break DC 26, Disable Device DC 30). The brass banisters of a balcony rise 15 feet above the front door, and a nimble PC can scale these with a successful DC 15 Climb check. The PCs can also clamber over the garden hedges to get onto the estate grounds, a feat requiring a successful DC 12 Climb check. Failing an attempt by 5 or more results in 1d6 points of damage, as the hedges grow around a spiked iron fence (hardness 10, hp 25, break DC 26).

The manor's servant's entrance and balcony doors are stuck, and opening them requires smashing them down or disabling the sabotage Jolistina used to jam their locks (hardness 5, hp 20, break DC 25, Disable Device DC 22). She has also jammed the locks on the window shutters, but they're less solid than doors, so smashing through one of these to enter the house is somewhat easier (hardness 5, hp 10, break DC 16, Disable Device DC 22).

There is nothing of real interest on the manor grounds, since the gazebo by the fishpond is empty save for a few decorations. The servants' quarters are also abandoned, as all of the help was in the manor to help with the gala, and are now dead or undead.

Regardless of how they make it into Carowyn Manor, the PCs should immediately realize that something is terribly wrong. The masquerade that was supposed to be occurring here is most obviously over: every papier-mache mask and sequined gown hides a blister-covered corpse. With merely two exceptions—Jolistina Susperio and Ausio Carowyn—every person in Carowyn Manor is dead, killed by the murderous elf.

Jolistina Susperio's Plan (CR 8)

Rolth left much of the planning for the massacre at Carowyn to Jolistina, trusting in her imagination and skill to get the job done. As long as the end result appeared to be a noble house filled with victims of blood veil, the needs of the conspirators would be met. Of course, blood veil doesn't kill fast enough to create such a death house, so Jolistina's creativity was put to the test to create the tableau the conspirators required.

Securing an invitation to the party as a paid entertainer was the easy part. Once the gala got under way, Jolistina spent the first hour juggling and performing for the gathered aristocrats so her presence wouldn't seem out of place. At sunset, as the partygoers gathered for feasting and dancing, Jolistina surreptitiously disabled all of the exterior doors and windows before she went to work, luring lone guests or servants away or kill those she found

already alone. The aristocrats and experts gathered in the house were no match for sneak attacks delivered by her hand crossbow, and as she gathered them in small groups, she used a charge from her *wand of animate dead* to transform them into zombies under her control. Eventually, one of the partygoers discovered a murdered guest. At this point, Jolistina used her small army of loyal zombies to panic and horrify her prey while she slipped among the shadows, cutting the aristocrats down one after the other. In the end, she finished the task with very little damage to herself and a manor full of bodies, most of which had fallen to her sneak attacks. She then went meticulously from body to body with her *wand of sculpt corpse*, obscuring the wounds that had actually killed them and giving each body the rashes and other physical signs of blood veil.

Her task done, and with Rolth's request to give him some time alone to study the disease, Jolistina decided to spend the next several days in the manor. After all, the house was filled with delicious food, and it seemed a crime to let it go to waste. Further, she didn't want all of the delightfully garbed bodies go to waste either, so she used more charges from her *wand of animate dead* to transform additional dead nobles into zombies. Now they drink and dance and mingle in a grotesque pantomime at Jolistina's own masquerade of the dead.

JOLISTINA SUSPERIO **CR 8**

XP 4,800

Female elf rogue 6/sorcerer 3

CE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +9; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 18 (+4 armor, +5 Dex, +4 shield)

hp 74 (9 HD; 3d6+6d8+33)

Fort +5, **Ref** +11, **Will** +3; –2 vs. illusions and mind-affecting effects, +2 vs. enchantments

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; **DR** 5/lethal; **Immune** sleep; **Resist** cold 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +11 (1d4+2/19–20)

Ranged mwk hand crossbow +11 (1d4/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +3d6 plus 3 bleed

Sorcerer Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +4)

4/day—grave touch (1 round)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 3rd; concentration +4)

1st (6/day)—*chill touch* (DC 12), *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 12), *shield*, *silent image* (DC 12)

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 11), *mage hand*, *open/close* (DC 11)

Bloodline undead

TACTICS

Before Combat Jolistina casts *shield* and uses her *wand of cat's grace* on herself, then takes a dose of pesh before combat; she has taken 1 point of Constitution damage and 2 points of Wisdom damage as a result.

During Combat Jolistina plays a madcap game of cat and mouse with the PCs, taunting and commenting on her undead showcase. She tries to keep out of melee combat by rushing from room to room using Stealth and *potions of invisibility*, making use of her *screaming bolts* and *ray of enfeeblement* to further vex her foes. She takes single shots with her crossbow from hiding, creating bleeding sneak attacks, then hides again. When forced to fight in melee, she prefers doing so with her zombies so she can flank enemies. Confronted on her own, her first thought is to flee to another part of the manor to hide and ambush.

JOLISTINA SUSPERIO

Morale Jolistina surrenders if she's reduced to 10 or fewer hit points and tries to bargain for her life by spilling her guts (see What Jolistina Knows on page 109). She tries to escape from the PCs at the first chance she gets; if she does escape, she seeks out Rolth despite his request for privacy, so the PCs may well encounter her at his side later in the chapter.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 21, **Con** 14 (1 damage), **Int** 12, **Wis** 8 (2 damage), **Cha** 12

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 22

Feats Combat Casting, Deadly Aim, Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +14, Bluff +13, Climb +6, Diplomacy +7, Disable Device +14, Disguise +7, Escape Artist +13, Knowledge (local) +13, Perception +12, Perform (comedy) +6, Sleight of Hand +10, Spellcraft +8, Stealth +17

Languages Common, Elven, Varisian

SQ bloodline arcana (corporeal undead affected by humanoid-affecting spells), elven magic, rogue talents (bleeding attack +3, combat trick, finesse rogue), trapfinding +3

Combat Gear *potions of invisibility* (2), *potion of remove disease*, *wand of animate dead* (4 charges), *wand of cat's grace* (11 charges), *wand of sculpt corpse* (5 charges), alchemist's fire (4), smoke bombs (4; see page 432); **Other Gear** *+1 glamered studded leather*, mwk dagger, mwk hand crossbow with 17 bolts and 3 *screaming bolts*, flint and steel, mwk thieves' tools, mwk manacles, pesh (4 doses), sealing wax, stolen jewelry (worth 8 pp), 150 gp, 54 sp

Inside the Manor

Carowyn Manor is essentially just one large, complex encounter. Jolistina has 21 zombies in all, which she has posed as she pleases throughout the manor. Her job here is finished, but she intends to stay and play with the corpses until the plague ends, confident there are no actual opportunities to catch the plague herself as long as she remains within the manor's walls. She's already been here for days, greatly enjoying the luxuries the Carowyns had to offer and taking endless, megalomaniacal pleasure in ordering about her undead slaves.

When Jolistina notices the PCs, she quickly goes into hiding. She's excited to have new playmates and eager to see others' reactions to her presentations. She attempts Stealth checks to try to stay out of sight as long as possible, but once spotted, she dashes through areas of the house still containing zombies, ordering them to defend her.

All of the bodies, whether dead or undead, have been disguised via *sculpt corpse* to appear as if they had suffered from blood veil. The bodies aren't diseased or contagious, and a PC who succeeds at a DC 11 Will save or DC 20 Heal check while examining a body determines the symptoms are manufactured rather than real.

E1 First Floor

The following description details the great hall of Carowyn Manor (area **E1a**), which is likely the first scene of horror the PCs encounter if they enter the manor from the ground floor.

A massacre took place here. Upon the marble floor and heaped in the corners lie more than a dozen corpses, each clad in garish outfits of sequined velvet, revealing silk, and colorful feathers. Masks of all shapes and sizes—each competing with the last in terms of elaborateness—adorn the dead. In several cases, though, these fanciful adornments have fallen away, revealing withered flesh covered in the telltale blisters of blood veil. Most horrifyingly, upon a blood-slick space cleared at the room's center sway three couples, jerking like hellish dancers, all obviously dead.

Jolistina has animated a total of 21 zombies in Carowyn Manor, using her *wand of animate dead*. Since this magic functions at CL 7th, seven of the zombies are uncontrolled. The breakdown of which zombies are located where is listed below and in the description for area **E2** (unless otherwise noted, all zombies in an area are under Jolistina's control).

E1a. Great Hall (CR 4): Jolistina murdered the majority of the Carowyn's guests in the great hall. So taken was she with the graceful nobles that she animated six of them, setting them up into couples and ordering them to dance in the otherwise silent hall. The zombies turn and attack 1 round after the PCs enter the room.

HUMAN ZOMBIES (6) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 each

hp 12 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 288)

E1b. Den (CR 2): Two undead nobles wearing matching lion and lioness masks sit before the empty fireplace, with a third zombie dressed as a peacock and holding a silver serving tray attending them. They attack as soon as the PCs enter. These three zombies are not controlled by Jolistina, and she avoids entering this room as a result.

HUMAN ZOMBIES (3) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 each

hp 12 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 288)

E1c. Dining Room (CR 3): Eight corpses sit at a finely set dinner table, looking at one another blankly. Of the eight, four are zombies who mechanically go through the motions of eating the rotten food on the table before

them, spooning it back into their mouths after it dribbles out onto the table from their slack jaws. These zombies attack as soon as the PCs enter the room, but must use a standard action to extricate themselves from their tightly pushed-in chairs.

HUMAN ZOMBIES (4) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 each

hp 12 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 288)

E1d. Recital Hall (CR 1/2): A zombie dressed as a blue-winged angel strums at a large, standing harp, even though all of the harp's strings are broken. Four costumed corpses—a sea serpent, a castle tower, a swan, and a blue skeleton—look on from chairs. The zombie musician attacks as soon as the PCs enter the room.

HUMAN ZOMBIE **CR 1/2**

XP 200

hp 12 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 288)

E1e. Kitchen (CR 1): Two of the Carowyns' servants sit at a preparation table here holding dull knives, pantomiming the carving of a corpse on the table dressed as a huge pig. The two zombies attack as soon as the PCs enter (they are not controlled by Jolistina).

HUMAN ZOMBIES (2) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 each

hp 12 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 288)

E2 Second Floor

The remaining five of Jolistina's zombies are located on the second floor.

E2a. Gallery (CR 2): Finely framed works of art cover the walls of this gallery, looking down upon the hall below. Great windows look out to the west and south, and an alcove to the east is set with chairs for musicians. In mockery of the room's beauty, several costumed corpses are positioned about the hall, some posed like ghastly statues while others are rigged to look like contemplative critics. Three zombies dressed in flashy metallic costumes wander aimlessly through the room, pantomiming appreciation and criticism of the paintings of Korvosan cityscapes and Carowyn portraits on the walls. Periodically, a zombie stumbles over one of the dozen dead bodies on

the floor here. The zombies attack as soon as the PCs enter the room. A search of this area reveals the bodies of three musicians. Ruan's corpse is not among them.

HUMAN ZOMBIES (3) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 each

hp 12 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 288)

E2b. Bedroom (CR 1): Olauren Carowyn, now a zombie, stands in the center of this room dressed as a Galtan queen, her sprawling pearl-studded gown flowing around her and her elaborate, powdered wig nearly brushing the ceiling. A second zombie—dressed as a Qadiran princess—attends her. The zombies attack 1 round after the PCs enter the room. They are not controlled by Jolistina.

HUMAN ZOMBIES (2) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 each

hp 12 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 288)

E3 Cellar

A well-stocked wine rack and several large casks line the walls of this stuffy cellar. A small wooden door squats in the southeastern corner.

Thoroughly restocked in preparation for the Carowyns' masquerade, most of this wine cellar's contents have gone unused. Nestled away at the rear of this room is a small workshop that Ausio Carowyn converted into a studio. Currently locked from within, the door requires a successful DC 30 Disable Device check to bypass or a successful DC 24 Strength check to batter down. Within, among the painting supplies, is a tawdry-looking divan, a small shrine to Shelyn, several scandalous portraits of Olauren Carowyn, and Ausio Carowyn himself.

Creature: Ausio Carowyn has never been a brave man, and when Jolistina began her murder spree, he quickly exited the party, making for his semi-hidden sanctuary here in the cellar. He has remained hidden here for some time now, listening to the shuffling of undead feet and the high-pitched laughter of a madwoman above while subsisting on a steadily diminishing cask of water stored within this room and what rats he can catch for dinner. Ausio dares not attempt to face the invaders above. He brandishes a dull paint knife at the PCs when they enter, trying his best not to shake too obviously. Upon realizing the PCs aren't here to hurt him, he reveals everything he knows, which is little more than the following.

AUSIO CAROWYN

"We were greeting the Westerkiers when the elven acrobat we hired as an entertainer went crazy. I saw her open fire on one of my guests with her crossbow, laughing all the while in the most frightful, shrill way. I've been locked in here for days, and every time I got up the courage to sneak out, I heard that horrible laughter above. Is she dead? Is it safe?"

Ausio inquires after his wife and loses his composure for a few moments should the PCs inform him of her demise—he expected the worst, but his response is much more dramatic as he learns her true fate. Detailing her undead transformation horrifies the man, and showing him her mangled—or worse, still undead—body breaks Ausio's already traumatized mind. If the PCs ask after Ruan, Ausio recalls the youth and last saw him in the gallery on the second floor.

Ausio wears no armor and carries no gear other than his dull paint knife (which functions similarly to an improvised dagger).

AUSIO CAROWYN **CR 2**

XP 600

Human aristocrat 4

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init –1; **Senses** Perception –1

DEFENSE

AC 9, touch 9, flat-footed 9 (–1 Dex)

hp 22 (4d8+4)

Fort +2, **Ref** +0, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dull paint knife –2 (1d4+1)

TACTICS

During Combat Ausio is no fighter and he knows it. He prefers to flee combat, fighting only if he's cornered. He won't resist offers of a better weapon, of course, but even well-armed he remains a relatively cowardly man (though he would say "realistic").

Morale Ausio flees if brought to fewer than 10 hit points; if flight is impossible, he begs for mercy unless the foe is obviously one that won't grant it. Only in that dire situation does Ausio fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 8, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 13
Feats Persuasive, Skill Focus (Craft [painting]), Skill Focus (Stealth)
Skills Appraise +7, Craft (painting) +8, Diplomacy +11, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Stealth +6
Languages Common
Gear dull paint knife (improvised dagger)

Story Award: If the PCs rescue Ausio, award them XP as if they'd defeated him in combat.

What Jolistina Knows

Should Jolistina be captured alive, she knows much that might help the PCs. The problem, however, is that she's thoroughly insane. Unless she's charmed or otherwise magically controlled, a PC must succeed at a DC 36 Diplomacy check to get her to talk. Regardless of the result, she gives a high-pitched giggle and mentions how the character's tone reminds her of "my darling Rolth's silken tongue." Intimidation can also work, but this is an unusually difficult route to get her to comply, since the forlorn elf is a fatalistic masochist. She responds with delight and exaggerated scandalous cries if threatened with pain or tortured for information (especially threats to infect her with blood veil). She's immune to any intimidation unless the attempt threatens her with imprisonment or to expose her failure to Rolth, in which case, a PC who succeeds at a DC 17 Intimidate check gets her to talk.

Should the PCs manage to get her talking, she tells them why she's there: Rolth sent her to kill several "rich bastards" who were scheduled to attend the party here, and the others (including the manor's servants) were just bonuses. She doesn't know why he wanted them dead, but she suspects it's something his new employer wanted, as Rolth wouldn't have been acquainted with any of these sorts of people. Jolistina doesn't know who Rolth's employer is, but she doesn't like his boss, as he (or she—an infuriating possibility) has kept the necromancer holed up in some hidden laboratory somewhere in the city. She has no idea where it is, but she has barely heard from Rolth for weeks except for a brief visit the morning after she crashed the party. If asked why she made the bodies appear to be suffering from blood veil, she shrugs and says, "Another of my darling Rolth's ideas, but a good one. Had I escaped, who would have suspected me of being their killer?"

If asked about Ruan, Jolistina doesn't recognize his name, but does know him by his description. She giggles as she admits that Rolth asked her to capture alive any young, healthy-looking Varisians at the party and to keep them under wraps but alive for Rolth to collect. Ruan was the only Varisian at the masquerade, and Jolistina dutifully restrained him until Rolth showed up the morning after her massacre with two of those "bird-masked doctors" at his side. The necromancer seemed very pleased and had the two Queen's Physicians with him carry the youth off to who-knows-where. Rolth told her as he left that he needed some time alone, and invited Jolistina to spend a few days or even weeks at Carowyn Manor relaxing and hiding out while the "plague ran its course"—a suggestion she took to heart.

Beyond this, Jolistina knows little more. She's of no help in tracking down Rolth, as she doesn't know where he is (although she does ask the PCs to tell him she misses him if they see him). If the elf is released, she finds some filthy pesh den and spends the next several days pining for her beloved.

Forgiving PCs might be moved by Jolistina's plight, though, and could well attempt to take the mad elf under their wing. This can be dangerous, as Jolistina remains unstable and prone to violent outbursts, but if the PCs are particularly supportive and don't get too frustrated with her, she isn't so far gone that she can't mend her ways. At your discretion, if the PCs are caring and supportive enough, Jolistina could be redeemed, in which case she could eventually make for a useful ally or, if a PC's level is high enough, an interesting cohort.

Story Award: If the PCs manage to learn what Jolistina knows, award them 2,400 XP in addition to what they earned for defeating her in combat.

Survivor Count: Although doing so doesn't directly spread more plague, destroying the zombies in Carowyn Manor and preventing Jolistina Susperio from releasing her undead creations into the streets when she grows bored (or worse, moving on to other noble manors) saves the lives of 500 citizens.

Ruan's Fate

After exploring Carowyn Manor, the PCs have both good news and bad news to report to Deyanira Mirukova. Although the manor was filled with the dead and undead, her brother was not among them. If the PCs managed to interrogate Jolistina, they may have learned that a necromancer took him to an unknown location. Unsurprisingly, the news does little to relieve the young woman's concerns.

For now, Ruan is probably out of the PCs' reach, but they have a chance to rescue him later when they explore the Temple of Urgathoa in the final part of this adventure. Deyanira pays the PCs anything she promised, entreating them to keep an eye out for her brother and to come to her with any rumor of him they might hear. Still distraught, she solemnly excuses herself from the PCs' company.

PART 3

EPIDEMIC

As the PCs work through the missions in Part 2, hints that blood veil might be engineered come to light. While no hard evidence surfaces to connect the Queen's Physicians or Queen Ileosa to the plague, the PCs may well come to these assumptions on their own. In addition, the discovery of the involvement of the cult of Urgathoa and the notorious Nidalese criminal Andaisin should further suggest to the PCs that the disease is engineered.

The PCs may now wish to investigate the Queen's Physicians, even though they were appointed publicly by the queen. While the Queen's Physicians, under the guidance of Dr. Davaulus, are supposedly combating the sickness, the fact that blood veil continues to ravage Korvosa suggests that the physicians simply aren't very good at their job, are deliberately avoiding attempts to cure it, or worst of all, are perhaps encouraging its spread. Should the PCs get their hands on the gear used by a Queen's Physician (particularly one of their *plaguebringer's masks*), they may begin to suspect the latter.

If the PCs don't hit on the idea of investigating the Queen's Physicians and Dr. Davaulus themselves, then one of their NPC allies such as Cressida Kroft should suggest doing so to them. The group has made no secret of the building they've chosen as their base of operations, as it's the same building that Dr. Davaulus is reputed to be using as his headquarters for the field operations of combating blood veil. This location is known as the Hospice of the Blessed Maiden. Both Ishani and Cressida Kroft know where this is, and if they ask the PCs to investigate the Queen's Physicians, they suggest starting there. Otherwise, finding the building requires a successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) check to recall its location or a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check to gather this information. Alternatively, if the PCs trail a group of Queen's Physicians and remain undetected for 1d4 hours while doing so (this requires a successful Stealth check opposed by one physician's Perception check each hour), they can follow the physicians to the building as well.

F HOSPICE OF THE BLESSED MAIDEN

When one of the Arkona Imports warehouses on West Dock was purchased nearly 4 months ago, few people raised an eyebrow. That the shrewd Arkonas would sell one of their half-full storage houses struck most as simple business sense. In truth, the sale was the culmination of several backroom meetings, bribes, and bouts of blackmailing. In the end, the West Dock warehouse—one of the Arkonas' most secret and secure smuggling dens—became the property of the Red Mantis. The Arkonas tried to double-cross the Red Mantis, quietly attempting (but failing) to reveal the existence of the warehouse's secret lower levels to the Korvosan Guard. The Red Mantis's growing influence in the city ensured that the information, and all who laid eyes on it, disappeared. Allies of the Red Mantis among the church of Urgathoa, led by the cold and fanatical beauty Lady Andaisin, then rebuilt the den of criminal greed into a temple dedicated to the ruin of an entire city.

Renamed the Hospice of the Blessed Maiden and opened to the public as the Queen's Physicians became established in Korvosa, the former Arkona warehouse now serves multiple purposes. On the outside, the hospice presents itself as a place of hope and respite for those in advanced stages of suffering from the disease, where sick folk from any walk of Korvosan life might come to find salvation under the care of the Queen's Physicians. In truth, though, the place is a sanctum of Urgathoan research and corruption. The ibis-masked Queen's Physicians, worshipers of Urgathoa in disguise, watch their plague take effect firsthand, endeavor to root out its weaknesses, and create ever more deadly strains in the secret depths below.

Once the PCs realize that there's something dire going on in the hospice, they might try to recruit assistance from the Korvosan Guard, the church of Abadar, or another group. Unfortunately, the plague has almost completely tapped the city's resources. Whether or not any of these groups has agents to spare to aid the PCs is up to you. If you feel that the PCs could use some help in investigating the hospice, feel free to have a small group of guards, acolytes, or other agents assigned to them. Otherwise, the investigation of the site falls to the PCs, and in the end, if the Queen's Physicians and the cult of Urgathoa are to be stopped, it's up to the player characters to do it.

The first floor of the hospice is, for the most part, open to the public. The presence of so many plague victims within the building is the structure's strongest security, and no one is eager to enter what many come to think of as the greatest concentration of sickness in Korvosa. In fact, while there are some sufferers of the disease languishing in the hospice, those who enter the building as patients do not stay long. They "succumb" to their affliction quickly and the bodies are brought to the temple chambers below for use by the cult. Anyone who stakes out the hospice and watches the building's activity for a few days can't help but note that despite the number of patients admitted to the building, very few come back out either dead or alive, raising the disturbing question of what might be happening to the bodies that must surely be stacking up inside.

The main entrance to the hospice is a wooden door that is kept locked after dark (hardness 5, hp 15, break DC 18, Disable Device DC 30). Around the back, several larger doors once provided access to the building's loading bay back in its time as a warehouse, but the physicians have boarded them up. Entering the building through these reinforced doors requires them to be smashed down (hardness 5, hp 30, break DC 25). During the day, the front door is closed but unlocked.

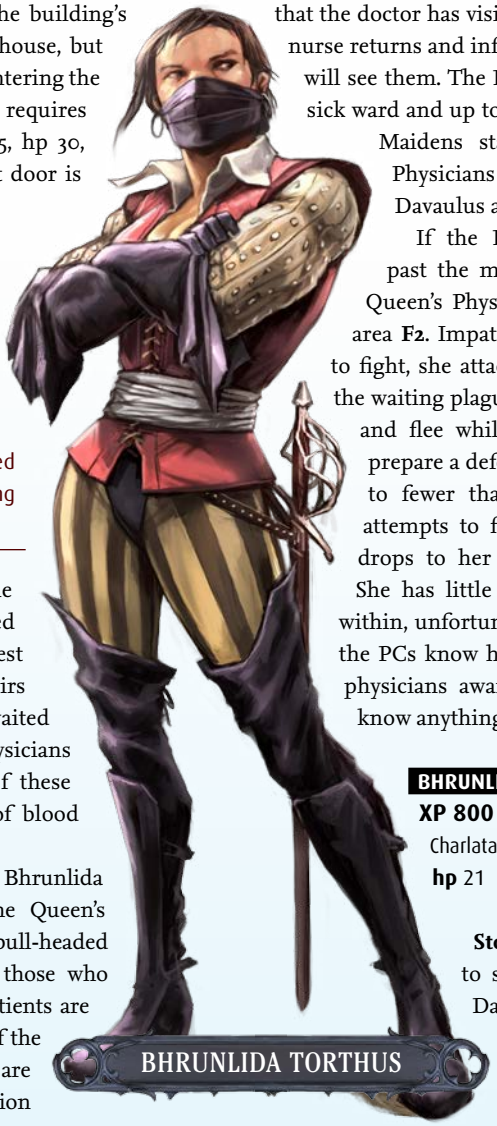
F1 Entry (CR 3)

The stinging scent of alcohol and medicine floods this dingy reception room, an odor typical of hospices—and morgues. Across from the entrance sits a long wooden desk, beyond which a stained leather curtain covers an archway, muffling the moans issuing from the rooms beyond.

This reception room serves as the public face of the Hospice of the Blessed Maiden (formerly Arkona Imports West Dock). Six poor citizens huddle in chairs and against walls here, some having waited for hours to be seen by the Queen's Physicians in the hospice proper beyond. Each of these men and women exhibits symptoms of blood veil, some at quite advanced stages.

Creatures: A burly "nurse" named Bhrunlida Torthus sits at the desk, hired by the Queen's Physicians to serve here. This blunt and bull-headed woman's job is to take the names of those who come to the hospice and ensure that patients are admitted to the quarantined main hall of the warehouse in order and when the doctors are ready. Nurse Torthus has no real compassion for the sick and does all she can to avoid contracting the plague herself, including avoiding physical contact, as well as wearing three scarves over her mouth and nose and heavy leather gloves over her hands. She knows nothing of the Queen's Physicians' true endeavors or of the cult of Urgathoa working below.

When the PCs arrive, Nurse Torthus looks up disinterestedly and waits for them to come over and add their names to her list of those waiting for treatment. If the PCs don't do this, she ignores them unless they try to pass through the leather curtain leading to area **F2**, at which point she shrilly informs them that there's a queue and they aren't allowed to go back there until it's their turn. Nurse Torthus is quite adamant in her duties, but with a successful DC 25 Diplomacy or DC 15 Intimidate check, a PC can convince her to go fetch Dr. Davaulus to speak to them. In this case, she steps into area **F2** for a few moments to let one of the Queen's Physicians know that the doctor has visitors. After a few minutes, the nurse returns and informs the PCs that the doctor will see them. The PCs are then led through the sick ward and up to area **F6**, where the two Gray Maidens stationed there, the Queen's Physicians from area **F7**, and Dr. Davaulus await.


BHRUNLIDA TORTHUS

If the PCs try to force their way past the matron, her bellows alert the Queen's Physicians and Gray Maidens in area **F2**. Impatient and eager for an excuse to fight, she attacks the PCs at once, causing the waiting plague victims in area **F1** to panic and flee while the guardians of area **F2** prepare a defense of that room. If reduced to fewer than 15 hit points, Bhrunlida attempts to flee if she can, or otherwise drops to her knees and begs for mercy. She has little insight into the operations within, unfortunately, and aside from letting the PCs know how many Gray Maidens and physicians await in the sick ward, doesn't know anything else of much use.

BHRUNLIDA TORTHUS CR 3

XP 800

Charlatan (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 145)

hp 21

Story Award: If the PCs manage to secure an audience with Dr. Davaulus without attacking Bhrunlida, award them experience points as if they had defeated her in combat.

F. HOSPICE OF THE BLESSED MAIDEN
First Floor
F4
F3
F2
F1
Catwalks
F5
N
W
E
S
F6
F7
F8
1 square = 10 feet
TEMPLE CENTER
G14
N
W
E
S
1 square = 5 feet
G12
S
G11
G7
G3
G13
To Temple Center
G8
G4
G1
G5
G9
G10
G2
G6
N
W
E
S
G. TEMPLE OF URGATHOA
1 square = 5 feet

F2 Sick Ward (CR 8)

The warehouse's vast interior has been converted into one gigantic convalescent ward. The stench of alcohol, sickness, and waste chokes the breath, and tight rows of low, stained cots cram the stone-floored hall. Every bed is filled with a pitiful story—men and women of all walks groaning and wheezing as they're consumed by blood veil, their sufferings multiplied by the echoing chamber.

A warehouse that once held a fortune of rare Vudrani imports has become a vast sick ward for Korvosa's most hopelessly ill. Here, the Queen's Physicians mill about the cots, cooing at their victims in insincere and unsympathetic voices as they watch the sick wither and die. More than 60 cots fill the area, each holding a helpless citizen; most are too weak to even rise from their stinking sick beds. While much of the room is filled with beds and the dying, the northeast holds an improvised kitchen with room and supplies enough to make the patients their daily watery gruel. Each round a PC remains in this room, there's a 10% chance she is exposed to blood veil (this chance rises to 100% if she touches any of the suffering patients).

The ceiling of this room is nearly 30 feet high, though the catwalks above span the room at 20 feet.

Creatures: Amid the sick hover four dark-robed Queen's Physicians, their avian masks giving them an unnerving resemblance to crows waiting to feed. Two Gray Maidens patrol the catwalks above (area **F5**), while another two stand guard at the entrance to area **F4** and the stairs to the floor above. Any physician or Gray Maiden who notices the PCs enter without an escort immediately knows that something is wrong. The closest Queen's Physician moves up to the PCs while the Gray Maidens to the north and above ready their bows. The Queen's Physician who approaches the PCs loudly informs them that they should wait their turn in the entry (area **F1**). If the PCs demand to see Dr. Davaulus, they're told to wait here while another physician scurries upstairs. If the PCs are patient, they are invited up to area **F6** after 1d4+2 minutes.

The physicians do not initiate an attack here, knowing they need to maintain their cover. If the PCs force their way through the room, the Gray Maidens to the north intercept and try to escort the PCs out of the hospice. Unlike the physicians, they (and the ones posted on the catwalk above) have no compunctions about fighting back if the PCs resist.

The physicians join the fight only if it seems obvious that the PCs know what's really going on, such as by mentioning the cult of Urgathoa. The physicians also fight back if one of them is attacked first, or if any PCs attempt to enter the lift (area **F4**).

Fighting in this area might prove difficult, as every bed also holds a sick (but innocent) patient. While the PCs might care about the wellbeing of the unfortunates here, the doctors and Gray Maidens do not. GMs might wish to account for the effects of ranged attacks that miss their intended targets, assigning them a 25% chance of striking a patient. The patients in this room are all helpless and have 2 hit points each.

GRAY MAIDEN FOOT SOLDIERS (2) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 27 each (see page 74)

QUEEN'S PHYSICIANS (4) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 23 each (see page 86)

Development: Aiding the dozens of helpless, plague-ridden patients in this room is likely a feat beyond the PCs' capabilities. As most are too sick to rise, much less walk, what the party does with the innocent invalids is likely to be a difficult decision. The PCs may be able to heal a few of the 60 patients, but in order to save more they need to evacuate these unfortunates to an actual safe place to recover and receive legitimate attention. If a PC has a good relationship with one of the city's temples (such as by being an active cleric of that faith), that temple may agree to host up 30 victims. The PCs could also prevail upon Cressida Kroft's aid; she can put 30 sick people up in unused guard buildings.

Unfortunately, if the PCs reveal that they know something is up at the hospice but then leave the building without destroying the cult below, on their next visit to the hospice they find the building closed up and the patients missing. The official story claims that thieves and malcontents attacked the hospice, forcing the Queen's Physicians to relocate the patients to a secret location, when in fact the plague victims in the building were simply murdered and delivered to the cult headquarters below. Feel free to bolster the resources in the Temple of Urgathoa with additional zombies in this event.

Story Award: If the PCs get help for all the patients in this room, grant 3,200 XP.

Survivor Count: Every patient who survives the PCs' visit to the hospice and is cured of blood veil counts as one life saved.

F3 Loading Bay

The scent of exotic wood and sawdust fills this maze of barrels and crates. A web of ropes and pulleys crisscrosses the ceiling; from one thick cable hangs a net of barrels suspended nearly twenty feet above the splinter-scattered floor below.

Three great wooden doors stand in the northern wall, while leather flaps lead to the south and east.

These crates and containers house the remains of the legitimate Arkona importing venture that once occupied the entire building. The majority of the containers are empty, as their textile contents were relocated to other warehouses once the Arkonas were forced to give up this site. In the southwest corner of the bay stand a number of empty cages and crates for transporting animals, many bearing the names and origins of the exotic creatures once held within, names such as "Three Breaths Viper—Mwangi Expanse," "Emperor Cobra (Eggs)—Vudra," and "Toad Shrew—uncharted island."

Any Queen's Physicians or Gray Maidens in area **F2** can attempt a DC –10 Perception check (remember to increase this DC by 1 per 10 feet of distance to the listener) to hear if a PC smashes open one of the doors from the alley. Both Gray Maidens from area **F2** come to investigate immediately if anyone in area **F2** notices the noise.

Treasure: A thorough search of the loading dock takes nearly half an hour and requires a successful DC 20 Perception check. Those who take the time, though, are rewarded with a crate of elegant silk Vudrani clothes, such as robes, saris, stoles, turbans, and the like. One of the saris is bloodstained and marred by a jagged gash. Aside from this damage, the brightly patterned garb is collectively worth 300 gp.

F4 Warehouse Lift

Several cubbies and wooden lockers line the walls of this small workroom. Four rickety chairs surround a water-damaged table, and a well-used but solid-looking cargo lift rises up through the ceiling.

Formerly a break and storage area for the warehouse's workers, this room contains a powerful lift, allowing sizable cargo to be hauled to the floors above or hidden in the chambers below. The Red Mantis chose this warehouse primarily for its secret underground level, cleverly concealed and accessed by the cargo lift.

Any character who gets on the lift can plainly see controls that cause the contraption to operate. The lever itself radiates moderate necromancy. A successful DC 20 Perception check reveals an additional control set within the slot of the operating lever, a simple hole that's missing the button to operate it. If the missing button is set within the hole and depressed, the lift can be made to descend to the hidden basement, admitting those onboard to area **G1** in what is now the hidden Temple of Urgathoa. With a successful DC 35 Disable Device check, a PC can cause the lift to lower, bypassing the need for a button. The missing button is in the possession of Dr. Davaulus in area **F8**.

Story Award: Once the PCs activate this lift to enter the hidden underground level, award them 800 XP.

F5 Catwalks (CR 4)

A track of sturdy-looking catwalks soar over the warehouse floor below, the evenly placed and well-trod platforms supported from above by iron poles.

These catwalks once allowed warehouse workers access to the upper reaches of the storage shelves that filled area **F2** below. Although the rows of rare imports have been removed, the permanent catwalks remain. The catwalks are 20 feet above the floor.

Creatures: Two Gray Maidens patrol these catwalks. If a fight breaks out in the sick ward, they use their bows against intruders. If they see intruders head into the stairwell, they move to intercept, either fighting on the stairs or moving up to area **F6** to protect the doctor.

GRAY MAIDEN FOOT SOLDIERS (2) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

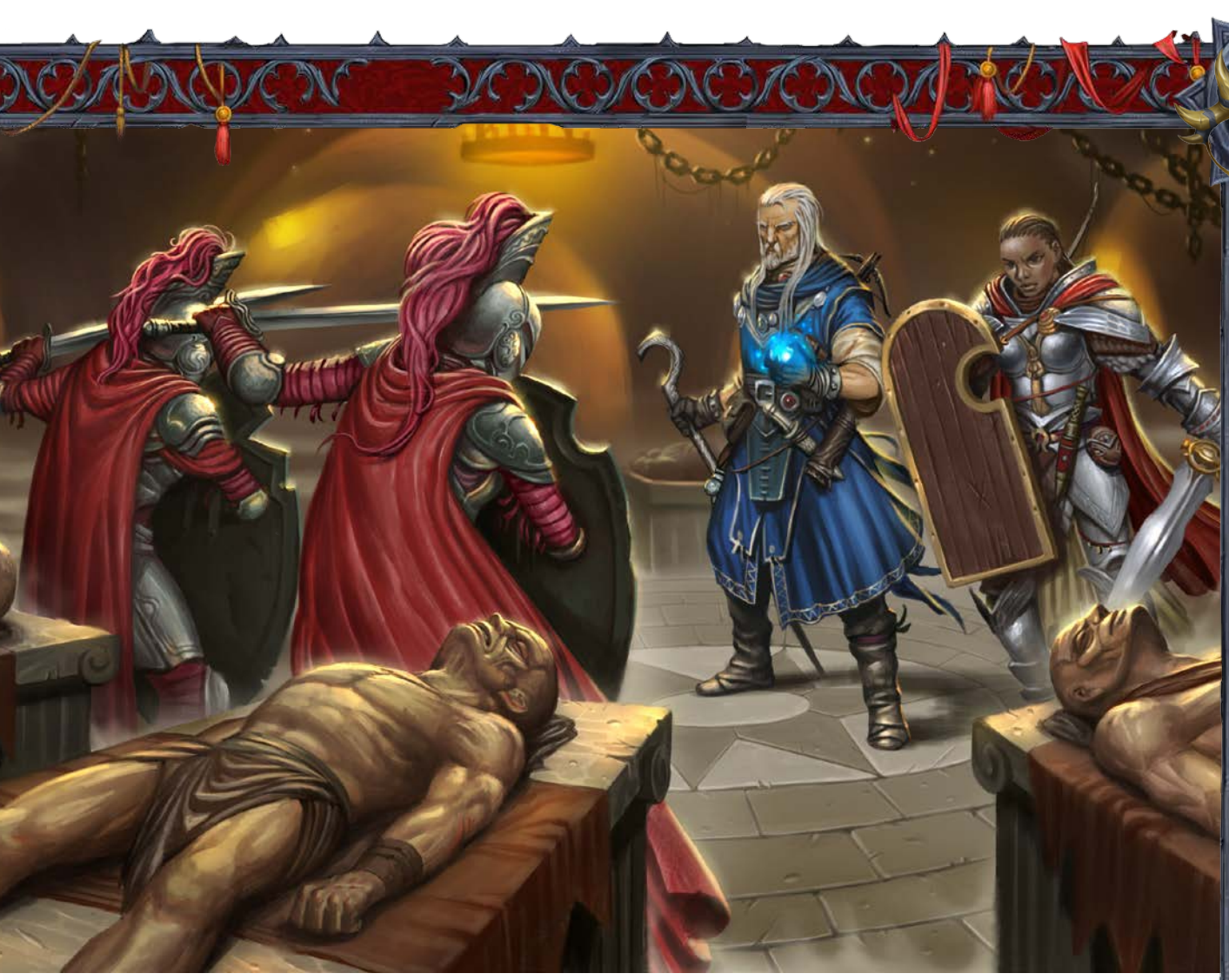
hp 27 each (see page 74)

F6 Private Hall (CR 4)

The rough functionality of the warehouse below gives way to beige tile and a whitewashed hall on this floor. Double doors engraved with images of rampant gazelles stands to the south, their once fine teak bearing obvious scores and chips from rough use.

This hall once served as an entryway to the clerks' and manager's offices beyond. Now it is little more than a guardroom. The doors to area **F7** are kept locked. They can be opened with a successful DC 30 Disable Device check of DC 26 Strength check, or via the key carried by Dr. Davaulus in area **F8** (he opens and closes the doors for the Queen's Physicians in area **F7** when a shift change occurs).

Creatures: Two Gray Maidens stand guard in this room. They order intruders to leave immediately; this includes anyone disguised as Gray Maidens or Queen's Physicians, since there's little reason for such personnel to visit the area except during a shift change (dawn or dusk). A successful Bluff check and a successful Disguise check are required to trick the Gray Maidens into believing that the PCs are the next shift of Gray Maidens. (This ruse fails automatically if more than two PCs are disguised as Gray Maidens or more than three PCs are disguised



as Queen's Physicians.) If the Gray Maidens realize the PCs aren't supposed to be here, they immediately attack, calling out an alarm to the Queen's Physicians in area **F7**.

GRAY MAIDEN FOOT SOLDIERS (2) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 27 each (see page 74)

Development: If the PCs arrange a meeting with Dr. Davaulus, he meets with them here, accompanied by the physicians from area **F7**. See area **F8** for further details on the doctor and how he interacts with unexpected visitors. If combat breaks out in this room, the physicians in area **F7** alert the doctor, and all four soon join the fight here.

F7 Experimentation Ward (CR 5)

Rows of white-sheeted beds line the walls of this room. Each bed holds a patient restrained by leather straps that bind the figure to the sturdy metal frame. At the room's center stretch simple wooden worktables, each covered in fluid-filled beakers, intricate glass tubes, small burners, and other alchemical instruments.

This was once the communal office of Arkona clerks, but all traces of that use have been removed from this room, replaced by the profane studies of Urgathoa's faithful. Here, the Pallid Princess's servants keep a number of humans of Varisian descent drugged, as each has shown inexplicable resistance to blood veil. The cultists eagerly examine, operate on, and mutilate their prisoners, hoping to discover the reason for this immunity. The alchemical and surgical tools of their work and notes from their murderous observations cover the tables at the room's center.

Currently, Varisian research subjects occupy each of the 15 beds here. Each prisoner is stable but has –2 hit points. All are immune to blood veil, although they don't know that themselves.

Creatures: Three of the Queen's Physicians work in this room, trying to discover what makes some Varisians immune to the effects of blood veil. They keep their patients unconscious so as to minimize trouble while experimenting on them.

QUEEN'S PHYSICIANS (3) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 23 each (see page 86)

Development: The research notes in this room clearly indicate why the Varisians are being studied here. A search of the notes should also reveal the fact that the church of Urgathoa is involved in the investigation, with several references of reports being "sent below to A." If the PCs attack the hospice, the Queen's Physicians here swiftly gather and burn the notes to prevent them from falling into enemy hands before they move to join the defense of the building, but their hasty job leaves a few scraps intact—enough to reveal that the cult of Urgathoa is active below the hospice.

As they burn the notes, the physicians also cut the throats of the 15 Varisians kept here. Even if the PCs manage to infiltrate the hospice and prevent this end, the victims are unable to act and move of their own accord until healed. Even then, most remain so weak from mistreatment and needless surgeries that they need significant help to escape. None of the Varisians know anything about where they are or what the doctors were attempting to do. All are 1st- or 2nd-level commoners.

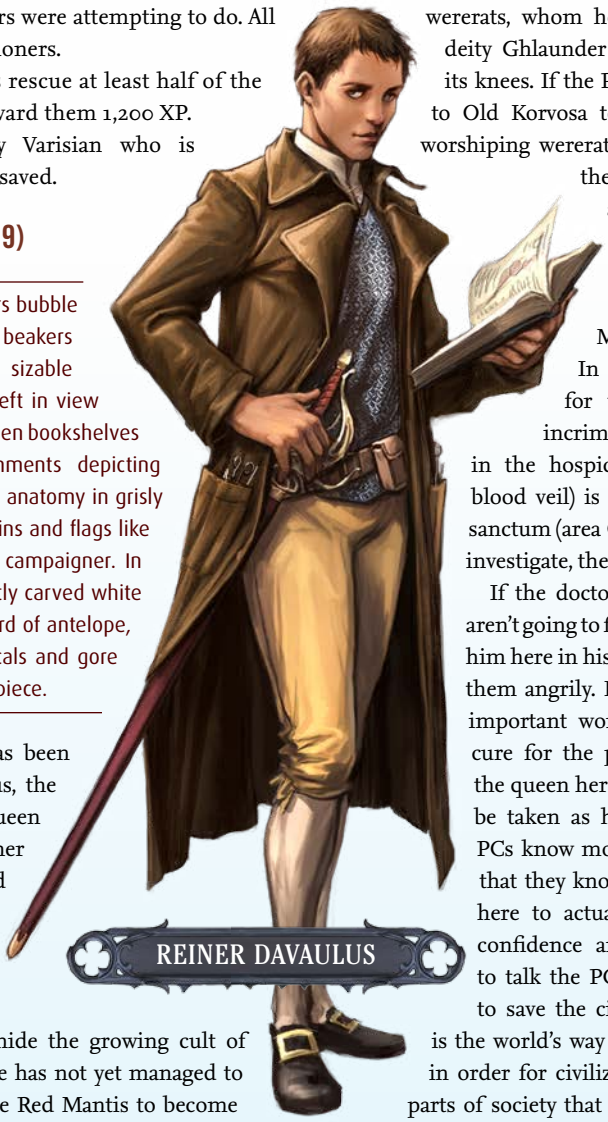
Story Award: If the PCs rescue at least half of the prisoners in this room, award them 1,200 XP.

Survivor Count: Every Varisian who is rescued counts as one life saved.

F8 Doctor's Office (CR 9)

Blood, bile, and other humors bubble away within oddly formed beakers and twisted tubes in this sizable laboratory. Any wall space left in view between cabinets or over-laden bookshelves is covered by worn parchments depicting magnified aspects of human anatomy in grisly detail—many pierced with pins and flags like the war maps of a veteran campaigner. In the corner, a desk of elegantly carved white ash bears the image of a herd of antelope, but stains from dark chemicals and gore disfigure the once-beautiful piece.

Creature: This office has been given over to Dr. Davaulus, the man appointed by the queen to be the public face for her efforts to eradicate blood veil. In truth, the "good doctor" is an agent of the Red Mantis and the selection of this warehouse as a place to hide the growing cult of Urgathoa was his. While he has not yet managed to join the upper ranks of the Red Mantis to become a full-fledged assassin, he hopes to do so some day. In particular, he hopes that his work orchestrating blood veil with the church of Urgathoa will bring him favor in the eyes of the mysterious leader of Korvosa's Red Mantis cell.



REINER DAVAULUS

Although Dr. Davaulus is normally not interested in interacting with others, if the PCs are particularly pushy he agrees to meet with them in area **F6**. If such a meeting occurs, he is attended by the Gray Maidens stationed in area **F4** and the physicians from area **F7**. He puts on a friendly air when greeting the PCs, yet his primary goal is to get them to leave the hospice without probing deeper into the goings-on within. He listens quietly and patiently to the PCs, hoping to redirect their suspicions to an entirely fictional cabal of wererats he claims dwell in the sewers below Old Korvosa. He says that he hasn't yet managed to learn the location of these lycanthropes, mostly because he hasn't had the resources to do so. If he can, he tries to hire the PCs to travel to Old Korvosa and search for these wererats, whom he claims worship the parasitic deity Ghlaunder and seek to bring Korvosa to its knees. If the PCs fall for this story and set off to Old Korvosa to chase imaginary Ghlaunder-worshiping wererats, Davaulus contacts his kin in the Red Mantis, who send agents after the PCs to stalk and, when the opportunity presents itself, kill them. See Chapter 3 for more details on the Red Mantis activity in Old Korvosa. In the meantime, if the PCs fall for the ruse, he ensures that all incriminating evidence aboveground in the hospice (in particular his notes on blood veil) is relocated to the temple's inner sanctum (area **G14**) so should the PCs return to investigate, they'll find fewer, if any, clues.

If the doctor gets the feeling that the PCs aren't going to fall for his ruse, or if the PCs catch him here in his office unprepared, he confronts them angrily. He claims they are interrupting important work being done to determine a cure for the plague, work commissioned by the queen herself, and that their actions could be taken as high treason. If he realizes the PCs know more about the plague's source or that they know there's not much being done here to actually research a cure, he feigns confidence and superiority as he attempts to talk the PCs out of their "foolish crusade to save the city." He points out that disease is the world's way to bring back balance, and that in order for civilization to grow and prosper, the parts of society that hold everything else back must

be periodically pruned. "Korvosa will be stronger at the end of these dark days—a place you and I would be proud to call home." As soon as he gets the feeling that the PCs are about to attack, Davaulus casts *invisibility* and attempts to flee to the temple of Urgathoa as detailed below.

Dr. Davaulus prefers to kill from afar with poison or sickness, or to work his evil on those rendered helpless by bindings or toxins. If he hears the alarm raised or the sounds of combat, he gathers his gear, casts *invisibility* on himself, and attempts to make his way to the lift in area **F4**, taking it down to the temple of Urgathoa to warn his allies there. Of course, PCs in proximity to the lift when he makes this escape could be inadvertently alerted to the existence of chambers below the warehouse by his tactics. If he does escape, he can be found in area **G5** with Rolth.

REINER DAVAULUS **CR 9**

XP 6,400

Male human bard 4/expert 3/rogue 3

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+5 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural)

hp 62 (10d8+14)

Fort +3, **Ref** +10, **Will** +9; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *+1 human-bane rapier* +10/+5 (1d6/18–20)

Special Attacks bardic performance 13 rounds/day (countersong, distraction, fascinate [DC 15], inspire competence +2, inspire courage +1), sneak attack +2d6

Bard Spells Known (CL 4th; concentration +7)

2nd (2/day)—*invisibility*, *misdirection*

1st (4/day)—*charm person* (DC 14), *cure light wounds*, *disguise self*, *hideous laughter* (DC 14)

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

TACTICS

Before Combat Dr. Davaulus casts *misdirection* whenever he expects to be involved in a public scene; if he meets with the PCs, he chooses one of the chaotic good but unconscious Varisians in area **F7** as the spell's target.

During Combat Davaulus considers himself a gentleman, even though his interests run to murder and cruelty. He engages in physical combat only as a last resort. When he fights, he uses Combat Expertise, saving *hideous laughter* for use against foes who seem to have more brawn than brains.

Morale Davaulus attempts to flee if brought to fewer than 10 hit points, but fights to the death if no escape seems possible. Loyal to the Red Mantis, he does not surrender.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 16, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 19

Feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Quick Draw, Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +15, Bluff +16, Disable Device +12, Heal +14, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (nature) +13, Knowledge (religion) +13, Perception +13, Perform (oratory) +16, Profession (doctor) +9, Sleight of Hand +10, Spellcraft +16, Stealth +15

Languages Common, Elven, Necril, Varisian

SQ bardic knowledge +2, rogue talent (combat trick), trapfinding +1, versatile performance (oratory)

Combat Gear *potion of remove disease*; **Other Gear** *+1 mithral chain shirt*, *+1 human-bane rapier*, *amulet of natural armor +1*, *flask of curses* (labeled "elixir of true healing"), button key for lift to area **G1**, key to cabinet in area **G3**, key to doors into area **F7**, 580 gp

Treasure: With a successful DC 16 Perception check made while searching the desk, a PC uncovers Dr. Davaulus's scattered notes on the source of some Varisians' immunity to blood veil. When combined with the notes found in areas **G5** and **G11**, these findings prove helpful in the creation of a cure for blood veil.

Story Award: Recovering Davaulus's notes earns the PCs 2,400 XP.

G TEMPLE OF URGATHOA

Beneath the Hospice of the Blessed Maiden lies a secret laboratory-temple dedicated to Urgathoa, the goddess of disease. Overseen by Lady Andaisin, a wanted criminal in Nidal and a morbid beauty dedicated body and soul to the Pallid Princess, these foul cultists work with the support of the Red Mantis, encouraging the spread of blood veil through Korvosa and refining the disease into an even deadlier plague.

The Temple of Urgathoa lies 40 feet below the warehouse, and is connected to the upper levels via a wooden cargo lift that runs between area **F4** and **G1**. Formerly a much smaller smuggler's den, the hidden chambers have recently undergone significant expansion to suit their new priestly inhabitants' genocidal plot. Rock excavated from these expansions was smuggled out in carts and dumped into the Jeggare. The cultists have rebuilt and refurbished the drippy, brick-lined chambers with stone panels and plaster, decorating many of the walls with murals of plague-infested cities. Nevertheless, water seepage from the surrounding rocks has already damaged the new plaster in many locations. Although most of the areas in the temple are well lit, areas **G1** and areas **G9** through **G12** are dark.

Unless otherwise stated, the doors in the temple are made of strong wood (hardness 5, hp 20, break DC 25, Disable Device DC 30); they are locked only if specifically mentioned as such in the text.

The Temple Under Alert

The following encounters are described under the assumption that the cultists don't know they're under attack. Once the alarm is raised (either by Dr. Davaulus's retreat down here to warn the priests, or by the priests themselves once one group is attacked by the PCs), the inhabitants of the complex react as described below.

Cultists of Urgathoa: Fourteen priests of Urgathoa are active in the temple—when the alarm is raised, six go to guard area **G8** and eight go to protect area **G13**.

Dr. Davaulus: The doctor seeks out Lady Andaisin to warn her about the attack, and then joins the cultists in area **G8** to defend that area.

Gray Maidens: The Gray Maidens in area **G2** take up a defensive position in **G1** near the double doors, bows at the ready to open fire on intruders the instant they enter the room.

Lady Andaisin: Lady Andaisin's reaction to the raised alarm is detailed in area **G14**.

Queen's Physicians: Five Queen's Physicians are active in the temple—when the alarm is raised, they relocate to the ground floor of area **G8** to defend the temple.

Ramoska Arkminos: Ramoska ignores any raised alarms and continues to work on his victim in area **G11**.

Rolth Lamm: Rolth joins the guardians of area **G8**, standing atop the catwalk in the middle of the room, to aid in that chamber's defense.

Skeletons: The four skeletons in area **G7** are set to guard area **G4**.

Zombies: The four zombies in area **G9** are set to guard area **G4**.

Reinforcements: Once the cult has been attacked, the fanatics dig in, hoping that their allies elsewhere in Korvosa take steps to intervene. No easy escape route exists for the cultists if the PCs prevent them from using the lift. They are unwilling to give up their hideout, and any slain cultists are animated as new zombies by Lady Andaisin. Unfortunately for the cultists, by this point blood veil has mostly run its course and the conspirators in the city above are increasingly turning their attentions elsewhere, so no outside reinforcements come to aid the cultists. After a week, if he still lives, Dr. Davaulus abandons the cult entirely, as does Rolth (these NPCs may be encountered later in the campaign as you see fit). After 2 to 3 more weeks, if she still lives, Lady Andaisin leads her followers in a ritual of self-sacrifice, but she doesn't take her own life. As the last surviving cultist dies, she gathers her gear, burns any notes she has on blood veil, and abandons the city. Feel free to adjust the timing of these events as you wish, but the PCs should have plenty of time to mount multiple assaults on the temple before Andaisin decides to abandon the temple. You can have her leave the city forever if you wish, or perhaps have her simply relocate to Deathhead Vault below the Longacre Building so she can face the PCs again in Part 3 of Chapter 4.

G1 Entry Hall (CR 8)

The scuffed stone walls of this chamber have been plastered over and then decorated with lurid murals of skeletons cavorting among the dead of a Korvosa that has completely succumbed to blood veil. Simple wooden doors lead to the north, south, and west, each bearing a painting of a scythe-wielding skeleton. A sizable double door stands on the east wall, appearing in the mural as a massive set of double doors opening into the pyramid foundation of Castle Korvosa. Two more scythe-wielding skeletons decorate these large doors.

Trap: The double doors on the eastern walls and the door to the north bear potent magical wards meant to bar all non-Urgathoans from the rooms beyond. Any creature of an alignment other than neutral evil who touches either of these doors triggers the trap, causing the skeletons painted on the wall surrounding the door to breathe forth poisonous gas and animating their scythe-wielding arms to strike from the painting as if they were real. Setting off this trap also triggers an *alarm* spell in area **G8**, alerting all creatures in areas **G8** through **G13** to the PCs' presence.

DEATH'S BREATH DOORS **CR 8**

XP 4,800

Type magical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** automatic (after 1 minute); **Bypass** if either door is caught in the area of positive energy (such as that created by channeled energy) that deals at least 10 points of damage without someone touching either door in the process, the trap is neutralized for 1 minute before it resets

Effect Atk +10 melee (scythe; 2d4+5/×4; all targets within 5 feet of any door); poison gas (ungol dust; all creatures in area **G1**)

G2 Guard Post (CR 6)

A number of crates fill this room. A particularly large one has been dragged into the chamber's center, around which stand four mismatched chairs and stools.

The crates in the room once held a number of exotic imports, but they have since been emptied.

Creatures: A group of four Queen's Physicians stand guard here. They ready themselves for battle if any one of them succeeds at a DC 16 Perception check to hear the lift lowering in area **G1**, or if the traps in that room are set off. Once they hear the traps go off, they step into area **G1** 1 round later, after the poison gas has dissipated.

QUEEN'S PHYSICIANS (4) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 23 each (see page 86)

G3 Doctor Indoctrination

Cabinets and low benches fill this chamber. From pegs on the opposite side of the room, the empty black eyes of two beaked plague masks glare with soulless, unblinking stares.

Whenever the cult of Urgathoa indoctrinates a new Queen's Physician, she is sworn in to her new role and outfitted with appropriate gear in this chamber. Dark leather robes, high boots, wide-brimmed hats, and solid canes fill most of the cabinets. The doors of one large, glass-doored cabinet against the west wall open to reveal glass shelves covered in a variety of delicate doctors' instruments, including containers of unguents, syringes, magnifying lenses, and the like, plus a medicine jar full of black onyx gems. A small brass lock keeps these doors firmly shut.

Any significant noise in this room—such as breaking the glass door—attracts the attentions of the Queen's Physicians in area **G7**.

Treasure: There are enough Queen's Physician robes and other accouterments to outfit 20 doctors in this room. The collected clothes, boots, canes, and other accessories are well made and only slightly used, so each set is worth 5 gp. There are also two *plaguebringer's masks* here (see page 435).

The most valuable items in the room are held behind the west cabinet's locked glass door (hardness 1, hp 1, break DC 10, Disable Device DC 30). Dr. Davaulus has the key. Within are four healer's kits and 23 black onyx gems worth 50 gp each. At the back of the cabinet are four identical flasks, with three containing *potions of cure moderate wounds* while the fourth contains a cursed *potion of poison*.

G4 The Princess's Bacchanal

Behind thick panes of glass, fragments and even whole bodies of the living dead line the walls and floor of this chamber. Their rotting faces sneer and broken fingers claw at each other as the shattered forms twitch in vain, their splintered appendages grasping hopelessly. Yet rather than some massive, nightmarish grave, this horror show seems instead to be a stomach-churning attempt at art.

This room contains an Urgathoan decoration known as the Princess's Bacchanal, a perverse memento mori with a profane message: "In the end may you be undead." Here, dozens of twitching undead are on display, their bodies too damaged to do anything but writhe and scrape in an unliving tableau until their flesh flakes away and their bones turn to dust. The glass separating the undead from the party is quite sturdy, but the PCs shouldn't know that. Only a significant effort to break the thick glass (hardness 4, 10 hit points per 5-foot section) allows the fragmentary undead to spill out into the chamber. While hideous and nauseating, these disgusting remnants are harmless if released.

G5 Operating Room (CR 9)

Eight unpleasant-looking beds stand here. Their sharp iron frames are threaded with worn manacles and stained leather straps. Several are occupied by obviously unwilling patients; all are bound and in various states of consciousness, and their combined moans murmur throughout the room. Between them stand several small tables strewn with gore-soaked pans, flasks of mysterious fluids, and all manner of cruel-looking cutting instruments. A sizable brown-crimson stain covers much of the eastern wall, as if all the blood from a body once held there had exploded forth in a single violent eruption.

Here, the priests of Urgathoa perform foul, gratuitous, and torturous experiments on the living in the name of their vile goddess. Currently, the doctors here focus on testing diseases crafted by their fellow cultists in area **G13**, particularly variations of the blood veil plague capable of infecting the small percentage of immune Varisians.

A pair of sturdy, locked iron doors (hardness 10, hp 60, break DC 28, Disable Device DC 30) leads to the cells of **G6** to the east; each of the cultists of Urgathoa in the complex carries keys to this door and the cells beyond.

Creatures: Two Queen's Physicians and two cultists of Urgathoa currently work in this room, encouraging and observing the diseases at work within their imprisoned patients here. Their work is in turn observed and guided by Rolth Lamm, a gifted but reprehensible

man whose skill at necromancy recently came to Lady Andaisin's attention; his work has been a major factor in developing a strain of blood veil that can animate its victims as zombies. Rolth finds Lady Andaisin ravishing, but hasn't yet worked up the courage to approach the gothic priestess regarding his desires. He hopes that if he develops the variant of blood veil she wants, though, he'll be rewarded with far more than her favor and the gold she has promised.

Six unwilling patients lie strapped to the metal operating beds scattered throughout the room. One of the patients is dead, but his body is still highly contagious with blood veil. Two of the other patients fade in and out of consciousness; wracked by blood veil, they cough violently and whimper through their restless fever dreams. The other three bodies carry a new strain of blood veil the priests of Urgathoa believe has great potential. These men died within the past 2 days and have awakened as plague zombies. They remain here for observation and further study—if a version of blood veil that swiftly animates its dead as plague zombies can be perfected, the cult will have a potent weapon on its hands indeed. While these zombies can inflict blood veil with their attacks or death burst, the variant doesn't yet animate the dead as the cultists hoped.

The two living prisoners here are a cobbler named Olena Hanch and a Sable Company hostler named Dalvun Krand. Both are 2nd-level human experts and are unconscious with 0 hit points each. If their diseases are cured, they can tell the PCs a bit about the temple. They know that more prisoners are trapped in area **G6** and that the priests of Urgathoa are the source of the plague infecting Korvosa—both believe that the disease was created in a laboratory further to the east in this very complex. They also know that the priests take orders from two fearsome individuals: a beautiful high priestess who speaks of death like some great gift, and a disturbing bald man with pale skin and rodentlike teeth who constantly berates the doctors for amateurish and dim-witted work.

If a battle breaks out here, the Queen's Physicians attack at once. Rolth and the clerics release the three plague zombies (which are under the clerics' control) to attack intruders. The clerics then fight as detailed below. Rolth avoids melee, hanging back and using his spells as detailed in his tactics on page 452, but as he fights he shrilly accuses the PCs of murdering his father, Gaedren Lamm, promising to animate their bodies once they're killed for all manner of unsettling and unsavory revenge.

ROLTH LAMM **CR 8**

XP 4,800

hp 94 (see page 452)

CULTISTS OF URGATHOA (2) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

Human cleric of Urgathoa 3

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; **Senses** Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+7 armor, +2 deflection)

hp 26 each (3d8+9)

Fort +7, **Ref** +1, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee *+1 scythe* +6 (2d4+3/×4)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 4/day (DC 12, 2d6)

Cleric Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +6)

6/day—*battle rage* (+1), *bleeding touch* (1 round)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +6)

2nd—*cure moderate wounds*, *hold person* (DC 15), *spiritual weapon*[D]

1st—*cure light wounds*, *divine favor*, *magic weapon*[D], *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *light*, *stabilize*

D domain spell; **Domains** Death, War

TACTICS

Before Combat Before engaging in combat, a cultist casts *magic weapon* and *shield of faith*.

During Combat On the first round of combat, a cultist casts *divine favor*. The cultist then engages in melee in the following rounds. He uses healing magic on himself if brought to fewer than 6 hit points, saving *hold person* and *spiritual weapon* for use against foes at range.

Morale A cultist of Urgathoa fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 10, **Con** 15, **Int** 8, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15

Feats Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Weapon Focus (scythe)

Skills Heal +8, Knowledge (arcana) +4, Spellcraft +4

Languages Common

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds* (4); **Other Gear** *+1 breastplate*, scythe, prison key (unlocks door into and cells within area **G6**), silver holy symbol of Urgathoa

QUEEN'S PHYSICIANS (2) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 23 each (see page 86)

PLAGUE ZOMBIES (3) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 each

hp 12 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 288)

Story Award: If the PCs rescue and heal the two survivors in this room, grant them 600 XP.

Survivor Count: Every living prisoner who is rescued and healed counts as one life saved.

G6 Patient Cells

Iron doors with slotted windows, much like one might find in a prison or asylum, line the walls of this chamber. Faint bloodstains fleck the straw-strewn flagstones.

The strong iron doors (hardness 10, hp 60, break DC 28, Disable Device DC 30) in this hall lead to cramped cells. These doors can also be opened with the keys carried by the cultists of Urgathoa.

Five of the eight cells hold captive Varisian men and women of various ages and walks of life. They have been here for a week or less, and many have seen those who were here before them taken away to face the Urgathoans' terrible experiments. These prisoners have all displayed immunity to blood veil, and are being used by the cult to develop an even more potent version of the plague. The prisoners can tell the party essentially the same information as the sick captives in area **G5**.

Story Award: If the PCs free all of the prisoners in this room and lead them to safety, grant the party 1,200 XP.

Survivor Count: Every living prisoner who is rescued and healed counts as one life saved.

G7 Cult Quarters (CR 8)

Black-sheeted cots fill this room; their satin coverings and overstuffed pillows seem more akin to funerary trappings than the resting places of the living. Numerous skulls are set evenly within the room's stone walls. Candles inside them cause them to glow like morbid jack-o'-lanterns and cast dim light across the room.

Creatures: Three unmasked Queen's Physicians and four priests of Urgathoa currently rest in this room. They are waited upon by four skeletal servants. One skeleton holds a platter bearing several goblets and a decanter of rich Nidalese midnight wine. When combat begins, the Urgathoans order the skeletons into battle first. Two then move to attack, one hangs back to cast supporting spells, and the fourth runs to alert his fellow cultists in area **G8**.

CULTISTS OF URGATHOA (4) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 26 each (see page 120)

QUEEN'S PHYSICIANS (3) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 23 each (see page 86)

HUMAN SKELETONS (4) **CR 1/3**

XP 135 each

hp 4 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 250)

Treasure: Footlockers and shelves near each cot hold the sparse—and often disturbing—personal effects of the cult of Urgathoa's members. A character who spends 10 minutes searching the room and succeeds at a DC 16 Perception check discovers 12 bottles of midnight wine worth 14 gp each, a *robe of bones* still bearing a human skeleton and a wolf skeleton, and a rune-etched onyx sculpture of a skull worth 35 gp, as well as 11 pp, 40 gp, 58 sp, and 160 cp.

G8 The Blood Vats (CR 8)

The stinging scent of harsh chemicals chokes this high-ceilinged chamber. Three huge metal vats bubble here, each more than six feet tall. A sturdy series of catwalks ten feet off the ground

CULTIST OF URGATHOA

stretches over and around the vats, allowing those above to attend whatever slurry produces the foul green-brown mist emanating from each gigantic vessel. Circling the upper portion of the room is an elaborate mosaic of white, black, and green stone that depicts a giant half-skeletal woman in black veils dancing among fields of the dead, undead, and dying.

This room holds the source of the plague destroying Korvosa. Within this chamber, priests of Urgathoa use magic and alchemical processes to produce the noxious liquid medium of raw blood veil.

The vats here hold roughly 1,000 gallons of a viscous, phlegm-like fluid of concentrated blood veil. Any creature that comes into contact with the fluid must succeed at a DC 24 Fortitude save or become infected with the disease. If a vat is destroyed (hardness 10, hp 90, break DC 30), it spills its contents out into the room, potentially exposing everyone standing on the lower floor but also ruining the contents for the cult. After 1 hour, a spilled vat's contents lose their potency and, while still foul, are no longer infectious. *Purify food and drink* can also remove the infectious element of a vat's contents, although the 1,000 gallons of fluid within equate to just over 133 cubic feet of material—at CL 7th, it will take 20 castings of *purify food and drink* (or 2 minutes of repeated applications of the spell) to neutralize the contents of a single vat. A single *remove disease* spell cast on a vat immediately negates the infection (provided the caster succeeds at the required DC 24 caster level check). Other methods of destroying the concentrated blood veil may work at your discretion.

The doors to the west, south, and east lie on the area's lower level. The door to area **G11** can be accessed from the catwalks. While the door is locked, it can be opened with the key carried by Arkminos.

Creatures: The day-to-day work of brewing the foul liquid blood veil is a relatively simple affair. None of the temple's commanders are required to supervise the process, and they leave it to the six priests of Urgathoa here to tend the brew while it undergoes its long process of distillation and concentration. If the cultists see intruders, one races over to the door to area **G11** to hammer on it and alert the room beyond, while another races to **G14** to alert Lady Andaisin. A third cultist opens the door to area **G9** to release the zombies kept therein. The remaining cultists stand fast, fighting to the death. As a move action, a cultist can dip her scythe into a vat of disease if she's standing on the catwalk above—the next 1d4 times she hits with her scythe, the creature hit is exposed to blood veil.

CULTISTS OF URGATHOA (6) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 26 each (see page 120)

Story Award: If the PCs destroy all three vats of blood veil, the cult will need to spend many weeks to rebuild their supply of concentrated blood veil; award the PCs 2,400 XP if they accomplish this.

Survivor Count: Each destroyed vat of blood veil saves 200 citizens.

G9 Storage (CR 3)

Little more than barrels of water, kindling, and long stirring poles are contained in this room.

Creatures: Four human zombies stand in this storeroom, waiting until they are needed for the defense of the temple. They attack any non-Urgathoan who enters the room.

HUMAN ZOMBIES (4) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 each

hp 12 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 288)

G10 Unfinished Storeroom

The southeastern corner of this otherwise empty room seems to be unfinished, and a large mound of rubble fills the corner.

Although the temple nears completion, the cultists have not yet finished this secondary storeroom's construction. Now that the plague is underway, they are too busy to complete the work.

G11 Arkminos's Laboratory (CR 14)

An elegant operating table dominates the center of this grim laboratory. Crossed with iron restraints and encircled by a gore-encrusted gutter, the macabre device sports various cranks and levers, and is large enough to accommodate an ogre. Along the walls stand several tables strewn with all manner of alchemical accouterments. Their contents appear extremely old: rusted iron tools, beakers of purpled glass, and deep pools of wax from countless melted candles.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Perception check locates the secret door in the western wall.

Creatures: Ramoska Arkminos, a powerful and ancient nosferatu vampire, uses this room as his personal laboratory, having imported his favorite pieces of equipment from his home laboratory below Castle Corvischoir—the home of the reclusive Ristomaur Tiriac, count of Varno County in the nation of Ustalav many miles to the east of Varisia.

The operating table holds Ruan Mirukova, Deyanira's missing brother. He is unconscious, currently at 0 hit points, and held fast by the table's three heavy iron crossbeams. The table he lies on is a combination operating table and

torture device, and its restraints are capable of crushing a victim in their metal grip. Three identical levers on the side of the table cause the restraints to loosen or constrict an inch at a time. The levers can be moved to any of 20 slots, each denoting an inch of space between the restraints and the table's surface. Words in Varisian at either end of the levers' paths suggest the mechanisms' use: "up" to the left and "down" to the right. Sliding the levers left loosens the restraints and gradually releases Ruan. Moving any of them right, however, causes the already tight restraints to crush the prisoner, dealing 1d6 points of crushing damage with each slot moved. All three restraints are currently set to the tenth slot, and moving a lever one slot in either direction is a full-round action. Other cranks on the table adjust its height and the angle of the table's surface.

Ramoska Arkminos has lived as a nosferatu for hundreds of years and has loathed his existence for the majority of that time. In his faintest memories, he half recalls having been a devout worshiper of a god, although he cannot recall which god that was. He regrets the forgotten decisions that led to his undead status and wants nothing more than to end his existence—but not while undead. He believes that if he dies as a vampire he will be denied some eternal reward or reunion in the afterlife and thus he seeks a cure for the curse of vampirism, if only so he can die as a man.

Currently, at the will of his vampiric master, Count Tiriac, Arkminos has been lent to the Red Mantis, and by extension, the cult of Urgathoa. Through his centuries of alchemical research, the nosferatu has become a scholar of diseases nearly without peer. Arkminos takes umbrage at being drawn away from his experiments in Varno, but is obedient to his patron and master. Currently, his research supplements the disease refinement efforts of the cult of Urgathoa, although he continues his own studies into the nature of vampirism. He is fascinated by the fact that some Varisians seem immune to blood veil, and now seeks to test the extent of this mysterious resilience. His current patient is Ruan Mirukova. After subjecting the young man to a number of strains of blood veil—each of which has failed to infect the youth—Arkminos now prepares a regime of other equally virulent diseases to test on his captive. Should the Varisian survive these contagions, Arkminos plans to infect the youth with vampirism. This is not the first time the vampire has subjected a Varisian to this test, though, and each time his subject has proven immune to blood veil and no other disease. He repeats his tests now out of scientific thoroughness and in desperate optimism that his past tests were somehow flawed and a greater immunity to infections does indeed lie within some Varisians.

When the PCs enter, Arkminos is preparing a number of contagions to test upon Ruan. Although he is obviously a monster, the vampire has no interest in fighting the PCs, wanting only to continue his experiments. He bears no love for the cult of Urgathoa, the Red Mantis, the Gray Maidens, or Queen Ileosa, and says as much before the PCs can attack him, if he can. If the PCs leave him be, he reciprocates the favor, as long as they remove themselves from his laboratory immediately.

Ruan's presence, however, likely complicates the situation. While Arkminos is reluctant to relinquish his newest subject, the nosferatu proves quick to take advantage of the PCs, especially if they've obviously already laid waste to the rest of the hidden temple. Arkminos offers to sell the youth to the PCs and leave quietly for the price of 2,000 gp. If the party agrees, he honors the bargain and readies his equipment for departure. If they disagree, however, he welcomes a counteroffer, accepting no less than 1,000 gp in coin, magic items, or useful future favors. If the PCs and the vampire still can't reconcile, the nosferatu acknowledges that they are at an impasse and waits patiently for the party to make the next move.

Alternatively, if Ramoska thinks the PCs can handle the task, he might offer to trade Ruan to them in return for a favor. He still longs to return to Ustalav, and if Lady Andaisin were forced to give up her plans due to death or some other unforeseen incident, there would be little to keep Ramoska in Korvosa. Yet Ramoska isn't willing to abandon his post here without bringing something back to Ustalav to make the trip worthwhile. Among the more intriguing magical items he's seen recently are the *death's head coffers* the cult used to infect silver coins. Unfortunately, all but one of these coffers have been used; if the PCs can deliver the final coffer to him, the vampire will trade it for Ruan. The problem is, of course, that this final coffer is held in the temple's inner sanctum, and Lady Andaisin is very unlikely to simply let the PCs take it from her. Ramoska can certainly explain to the PCs how the cult used these coffers to spread blood veil, but won't divulge his own desires to test how the item might interact with vampirism.

The vampire is the most dangerous foe the PCs face in this chapter, but if the PCs insist on attacking him, Ramoska won't hesitate to fight back. Fortunately for the PCs, the nosferatu has no interest in dying on this particular hill, and has plenty of ways to flee a fight if it starts to look like things might not be going his way.

RAMOSKA ARKMINOS **CR 14**

XP 38,400

Male human nosferatu alchemist 4/wizard 9 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 268, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 26)

LE Medium undead (humanoid, human)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +24

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 14, flat-footed 25 (+4 armor, +4 Dex, +11 natural)

hp 139 (13 HD; 9d6+4d8+87); fast healing 5

Fort +14, **Ref** +15, **Will** +16; +2 bonus vs. poison, +4 bonus vs. channeled energy

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4; **DR** 5/ piercing and wood; **Immune** undead traits; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10, sonic 10, poison resistance

Weaknesses vampire weaknesses

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +7 (1d6)

Ranged bomb +12 (2d6+5 fire) or smoke bomb +12 (2d6+5 fire)

Special Attacks blood drain (1d4 Con and 1d4 Wis), bomb 9/day (2d6+5 fire, DC 17), dominate (DC 21), hand of the apprentice (8/day), telekinesis (DC 21)

Alchemist Extracts Prepared (CL 4th; concentration +9)

2nd—*resist energy*, *see invisibility*

1st—*detect undead*, *disguise self*, *expeditious retreat*, *shield*, *true strike*

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +14)

5th—*cone of cold* (DC 20), *teleport*

4th—*crushing despair* (DC 20), *detonate*[APG] (DC 19), *phantasmal killer* (DC 19)

3rd—*deep slumber* (DC 19), *dispel magic*, *lightning bolt* (DC 18), *stinking cloud* (DC 18)

2nd—*invisibility*, *scorching ray*, *summon swarm*, *touch of idiocy*, *web* (DC 17)

1st—*mage armor*, *magic missile*, *memory lapse*[APG] (DC 17), *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 16), *shocking grasp*, *silent image* (DC 16)

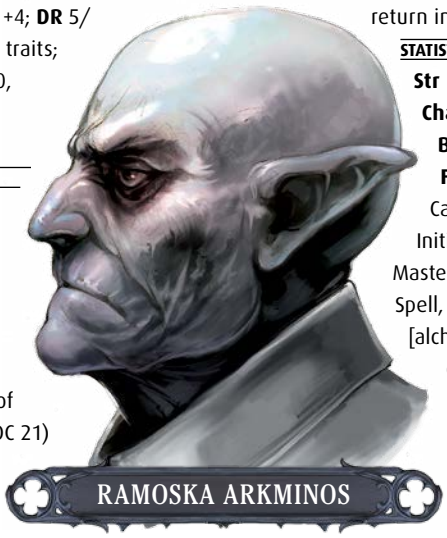
0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 15), *mage hand*, *message*

TACTICS

Before Combat Ramoska casts *mage armor* on himself well before combat begins.

During Combat Ramoska is honestly surprised if the PCs are foolish enough to attack him. He drinks his mutagen on the first round of combat to gain a +4 bonus to his Dexterity and take a –2 penalty to his Wisdom, then casts *shield* the next round. He doesn't start to attack the PCs until the third round unless they prove more than capable of hurting him. Ramoska prefers to end combats with slaves rather than bodies, and attempts to dominate PCs for several turns while chiding the heroes for being so reckless as to antagonize one so much more dangerous than they. If reduced to fewer than 90 hit points, Ramoska abandons this tactic and casts *stinking cloud* and *ray of enfeeblement* to try to remove PCs from the battle without killing them.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 60 hit points, Ramoska sighs in frustration, saying, "Fine, take the lad if you wish. This plague has run its course, in any event." He then casts *teleport* to leave Korvosa and doesn't return in this adventure.



RAMOSKA ARKMINOS

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 19, **Con** —, **Int** 20, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 21

Feats Alertness, Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Master Alchemist[APG], Persuasive, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Craft [alchemy]), Skill Focus (Heal), Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Mastery, Throw Anything, Toughness

Skills Craft (alchemy) +29, Diplomacy +21, Fly +11, Heal +17, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (history) +12, Knowledge (nobility) +12, Knowledge (planes) +12, Knowledge (religion) +12, Linguistics +10, Perception +24, Sense Motive +20, Spellcraft +20, Stealth +21, Use Magic Device +11

Languages Aklo, Ancient Osiriani, Common, Draconic, Hallit, Infernal, Necril, Varisian; telepathy 60 ft.

SQ alchemy (alchemy crafting +4), arcane bond (rat named Andrzej), discoveries (precise bombs [5 squares], smoke bomb), metamagic mastery (1/day), mutagen (+4/–2, +2 natural armor, 40 minutes), poison use, recovery, spider climb, swarm form, swift alchemy

Gear *pink and green sphere ioun stone*, *amulet of natural armor +3*, *belt of incredible dexterity +2*, *cloak of resistance +2*, key to locked trunk in area **G12**, 80 pp

RUAN MIRUKOVA CR 5

XP 1,600

Male human bard 6

CG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 42 (currently 0; 6d8+12)

Fort +3, **Ref** +7, **Will** +4; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +6 (1d3 nonlethal)

Special Attacks bardic performance 18 rounds/day (countersong, distraction, fascinate [DC 17], inspire competence +2, inspire courage +2, suggestion [DC 17])

Bard Spells Known (CL 6th; concentration +10)
2nd (4/day)—*cat's grace*, *cure moderate wounds*, *minor image* (DC 16), *mirror image*
1st (5/day)—*charm person* (DC 15), *cure light wounds*, *sleep* (DC 15), *unseen servant*
0 (at will)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *summon instrument*

TACTICS

During Combat Ruan loathes combat, and prefers to avoid fights if possible. He casts *sleep* and illusion spells to end fights before they get out of hand, but if forced to fight, he casts *mirror image* and *cat's grace* to increase his defenses. He prefers to fight with daggers or a rapier if given the choice. In a fight with allies, Ruan hangs back and uses his healing spells to keep those allies alive so they can defend him.

Morale Ruan flees any fight if reduced to fewer than 10 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 14, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 18
Base Atk +4; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 17
Feats Arcane Strike, Combat Casting, Dodge, Weapon Finesse
Skills Acrobatics +11, Disguise +13, Escape Artist +11, Perception +8, Perform (sing) +13, Perform (wind instruments) +13, Sleight of Hand +11, Stealth +11
Languages Common, Tien, Varisian
SQ bardic knowledge +3, lore master 1/day, versatile performances (sing, wind)

Treasure: The alchemical supplies here include six flasks of acid; tubes containing distillations of blood veil, filth fever, and red ache; and 500 gp worth of miscellaneous alchemical and medical equipment. Also kept here are several notebooks filled with Ramoska's observations on blood veil, and these observations can help with the development of a cure for the disease.

Development: Ramoska accepts surrender from the PCs at any point, and also breaks off combat if all of the PCs are incapacitated or dominated. In this case, he informs the PCs that the price for their lives is to secure the *death's head coffer* in the temple's inner sanctum. Whether or not he kills Ruan before then, or indeed, is interested in giving the man over to the PCs once they've served their use, is left to you to decide.

If the PCs rescue Ruan, he's eager to flee the temple and return to his sister. Even if the PCs heal his injuries, he's of little use to them in any confrontations that may yet await the party here in the temple.

Story Award: If the PCs secure Ruan's freedom from Ramoska and reunite him with his sister, award them 4,800 XP.

G12 Arkminos's Room

Several open trunks spill piles of books across this dusty room. Stacks of tomes, some apparently quite old, stand in orderly stacks and haphazard heaps, surrounding nearly every foot of floor space except for that occupied by an elegant black-canopied bed.

Hidden away from the sun, Arkminos has no need to sleep. What little time the nosferatu takes for leisure he spends here, reading tomes of ancient healing, legendary accounts of vampires, and books of religious lore.

All of the trunks in this room are open except for one. This trunk is locked, and a successful DC 30 Disable Device check is needed to open it. With a successful DC 22 Strength check, a PC can break the trunk open, but destroys its contents in the process. Inside are several padded niches and trays, each holding more than two dozen elegant crystal vials filled with crimson liquid. Each holds just enough blood to sate a vampire for 1 day. Of the 150 vials in the container, 32 are empty. A small gold locket lies among the vials at the bottom of the chest, but the tiny etching within has worn down into nothing more than an androgynous outline.

A character who succeeds at a DC 12 Perception check discovers that the bed in this room is but a frame. Beneath the tightly stretched black satin coverings is one of Arkminos's traveling coffins. He flees here if reduced to 0 hit points.

Treasure: The complete collection of books has a total value of 1,500 gp, although many have rotted bindings and weak glue, causing them to deteriorate if handled with anything less than extreme delicacy. If emptied of blood, the vials in Arkminos's locked chest can also fetch 1,000 gp in all, while the aged locket is worth only 100 gp.

G13 Hall of Pestilence (CR 9)

The reek of burning wax wafts through this morbid chamber, with several tall, misshapen candles being the apparent source. Workspaces strewn with tall beakers of foul-colored liquids, parchments covered in insidious symbols, and cages of whimpering rodents fill large alcoves in both the northern and southern walls. A pair of huge stone doors hang ajar to

the east, revealing a long hallway leading further into the dark. At the room's center stand four large, cylindrical glass vats, each filled with a bubbling emerald fluid that tints the chamber's light a noxious green. Within each suspension floats a malformed abomination—something part human, part angel, and part horse—things of half-formed muscle with dead, fleshless equine skulls. Three of the forms are motionless, but the fourth twitches now and then.

The open double doors to the east lead to a 100-foot-long hallway that slopes downward at a noticeable (but not dangerous) angle, slowly widening to a width of 15 feet before emerging into area **G14**.

Creatures: A pair of cultists of Urgathoa are found here at all times, dutifully scrubbing and cleaning the four glass vats or praying on mats made of woven human hair on the floor between the four vats.

The four tubes are magical prisons, gifts from Queen Ileosa to Lady Andaisin to aid her in developing blood veil. Each prison contains a single leukodaemon, the presence of which has enhanced the growth and development of the various diseases on which the cultists have been working. The daemons are imprisoned inside containers that prevent them from wreaking havoc on the cultists, but still allow their infectious auras to bolster the diseases generated in this complex. Three of the leukodaemons have already been sacrificed by Lady Andaisin as part of the generation of progressively more virulent strains of blood veil. Once her minions have developed a strain that will affect even the resistant Varisians, she'll sacrifice the remaining daemon as well. Until then, this final fiend remains trapped inside the magical container, which functions as a *magic circle against evil* focused inward.

Unfortunately, the container is relatively fragile. A solid blow from any attack is likely to fracture the glass (hardness 1, hp 2), which immediately renders the cage nonmagical. The enraged leukodaemon can then burst free as a standard action. If one of the cultists of Urgathoa is defeated, the other does just this, hoping to free the daemon so it attacks and kills the PCs. Of course, the enraged outsider sees all humanoids as prey, and is as much of a threat to the cultist as it is to the PCs. Canny PCs can take advantage of this fact, possibly luring the leukodaemon into other encounters with the cultists, or even Lady Andaisin herself.

LEUKODAEMON

LEUKODAEMON **CR 9**

XP 6,400

hp 95 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 68)

CULTISTS OF URGATHOA (2) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 26 each (see page 120)

G14 Inner Sanctum (CR 9 and 8)

The long hall opens into a circular chamber rising into a high dome. Seven basins jut from the walls, ensconced within evenly spaced alcoves that circle the room. Each is filled to the brim with a unique liquid—blood, bile, milk, or other unidentifiable fluid. Each fills the air with its own distinct reek, creating a noxious, eye-watering bouquet. On the floor around each basin lie several small, empty metal boxes carved with images of skulls.

At the room's center, rising from a wide pool of crystalline water, is a golden statue that is both erotic and horrifying. The statue depicts a beautiful nude woman who is human above the waist, but below this, the figure is nothing more than a skeleton.

Within this inner sanctum lies the heart of the temple's corruption. Urgathoa's seven scourges lie within the basins here—seven fluids believed by her faithful to eternally leak from the Pallid Princess's necrotic body: bile, blood, milk, phlegm, pus, sweat, and tears. These revolting fluids spontaneously generate within Urgathoa's shrines in specially prepared basins deep in her temples, serving as foci for her servants' worship, components in a variety of obscene rites, and mediums for the creation and spread of diseases.

Gathered by agents of the Red Mantis, more than two dozen used (and now nonmagical) *death's head coffers* lie scattered within the side shrines throughout this room. Each once held a specimen infected with some terrible affliction, such as rats, diseased blood, flesh from plague victims, and other contaminants. One such box containing samples of Vorel's phage was brought here as well, and it became the foundation for the scourge known now as blood veil.

Each of the seven fluids in this room has been used as a medium to create and spread blood veil, and currently all seven contain the disease. Any creature that touches any of the fluids must succeed at a DC 30 check or become infected with blood veil. In this case, there is no incubation period for those who contract blood veil from these sources; those who fail their saving throw take the first day's damage immediately.

The statue of Urgathoa at the room's center is the focus of a 40-foot-radius *unhallow* spell that grants all worshipers of Urgathoa in its area of effect *freedom of movement*.

Creatures: Lady Andaisin, High Priestess of Urgathoa and wanted Nidalese criminal, occupies herself in this room with prayer and meditation. If she hears the alarm or cries from outside the inner sanctum, she takes several rounds to prepare herself for the possibility of combat before returning to her contemplation at the statue, trusting in the four juju zombie guardians she keeps at her side as protectors. As the PCs enter this chamber, she greets them with an icy smile, welcoming them into the presence of the Pallid Princess. The high priestess is confident to the extreme and, being a true fanatic, honestly believes that she is invincible here in the sanctuary of her goddess. Read or paraphrase the following greeting to the PCs at this time.

"And so you have found your way to me, hopeful heroes. Know that you stand before the architect of your city's death. You call this sending blood veil, yet I know it as the gentle kiss of the Pallid Princess. Your reward shall be great—choose of the seven scourges to become one with the goddess. Those who drink I shall only cripple, leaving you alive to enjoy her as she quickens inside your flesh. Those who abstain are fools, not fit to house the divine gift. You may prostrate yourselves at my feet, and I shall make your end all the more swift for it. Swifter, in any event, than this delightful end your lovely queen has enjoined me to create!"

Lady Andaisin sees blood veil as her personal masterpiece—a dagger used in a mass sacrifice to the Pallid Princess's morbid glory. When she tires of taunting the PCs, she toys with her scythe and promises to try and merely cripple one or two of them so they might still experience the lethal ecstasy of her plague in their days to come as her playthings.

Unlike with most fanatics, Lady Andaisin's arrogance is not mere delusion. Urgathoa has taken note of the blood veil plague ravaging Korvosa and is pleased with the ingenuity and effectiveness of her servants there. As such, she has considered gifting Lady Andaisin with one of her greatest blessings, transformation into an undead saint of her profane church: a daughter of Urgathoa. The goddess has not yet made Lady Andaisin aware of the decision, planning to quicken her as she exults atop the plague-ravaged ruin of Castle Korvosa. Should Lady Andaisin be slain before this destiny is fulfilled, though, the incensed goddess immediately imbues her minion's corpse with her intended gift, as death is no barrier to the goddess of the undead. The round after Lady Andaisin falls, her body crackles with unholy power and is lifted into the air. Her sundered flesh explodes with boils and pustules, while torrents of Urgathoa's foul humors flood forth and congeal into a sickening new body for the unliving saint. Lady Andaisin is instantly reborn as a daughter of Urgathoa, entirely bent on revenge.

ANDAISIN **CR 9**

XP 6,400

Female human cleric of Urgathoa 10

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init –1; **Senses** Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 12, flat-footed 24 (+8 armor, +3 deflection, –1 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 100 (10d8+52)

Fort +13, **Ref** +4, Will +13; +1 morale bonus vs. fear

Defensive Abilities death's embrace

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., *air walk*

Melee *+2 vicious scythe* +12/+7 (2d4+3/×4 plus 2d6)

ANDAISIN

Special Attacks channel negative energy 4/day (DC 16, 5d6), weapon master (10 rounds/day)

Cleric Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +14)
7/day—battle rage (+5), bleeding touch (5 rounds)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 10th; concentration +14)
5th—*greater command* (DC 19), *greater contagion*[UM] (DC 20), *slay living*[D] (DC 20)
4th—*air walk*, *cure critical wounds* (2), *divine power*[D], *greater magic weapon*
3rd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 18), *contagion* (DC 18), *dispel magic*, *magic vestment*[D], extended *status*
2nd—*aid*, *cure moderate wounds* (3), extended *shield of faith*, *spiritual weapon*[D]
1st—*cause fear*[D] (DC 16), *cure light wounds* (3), *obscuring mist*, *sanctuary* (DC 15)
0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 15), *guidance*, *light*, *stabilize*
D domain spell; **Domains** Death, War

TACTICS

Before Combat Every morning, Lady Andaisin casts extended *status* on a cultist of Urgathoa in area **G13**, Rolth, and Dr. Davaulus. As soon as she realizes the temple is invaded (likely because the alarm is raised or because one of the creatures she's cast *status* on is wounded), she casts *air walk*, *greater magic weapon*, and *magic vestment* on herself and drinks her *potion of barkskin*. When she hears the sounds of combat in area **G13**, she casts *aid* and extended *shield of faith* on herself as well. If enemies do not arrive in area **G14** within 4 minutes, she makes a quick patrol of every room in the temple to seek them out (or to determine whether the intruders have been defeated).

During Combat Andaisin's first act in combat is to cast *divine power* on herself to gain a +3 luck bonus on attack rolls, weapon damage rolls, Strength checks, and Strength-based skill checks along with 10 temporary hit points (these effects have not been included in her statistics above). After that, she uses *air walk* to climb to a point 10 feet off the ground, then spends the following few rounds of combat casting spells at the PCs. She generally starts with *greater command*, ordering her enemies to fall prone before her, then follows that by casting *blindness/deafness* on an obvious cleric, *dispel magic* on a PC who has obvious spell effects, or *spiritual weapon* on a wizard or other frail-looking PC. She then casts *slay living*, holds the charge, and drops down into melee with the PCs. If brought to fewer than 30 hit points, she retreats back into the air, casting *obscuring mist* on the ground below to make it difficult for non-flying creatures to target her. She spends the next few rounds healing herself before returning to battle.

Morale Lady Andaisin fights to the death, and is then transformed into a daughter of Urgathoa.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 8, **Con** 18, **Int** 10, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 13
Base Atk +7; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 20

Feats Combat Casting, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell, Spell Focus (necromancy), Weapon Focus (scythe)
Skills Diplomacy +14, Knowledge (religion) +13, Spellcraft +13
Languages Common
Combat Gear *potions of barkskin +4* (2); **Other Gear** *+2 breastplate*, *+2 vicious scythe*, *belt of mighty constitution +2*, *cloak of resistance +2*, *headband of inspired wisdom +2*, onyx unholy symbol of Urgathoa worth 200 gp, 27 gp, 3 sp, 3 cp

ANDAISIN TRANSFORMED CR 8

XP 4,800

Daughter of Urgathoa (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide* 309)
NE Large undead
Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17
Aura desecrate (20 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+3 Dex, +9 natural, –1 size)
hp 115 (11d8+66)
Fort +9, **Ref** +7, **Will** +11
Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4; **Immune** undead traits

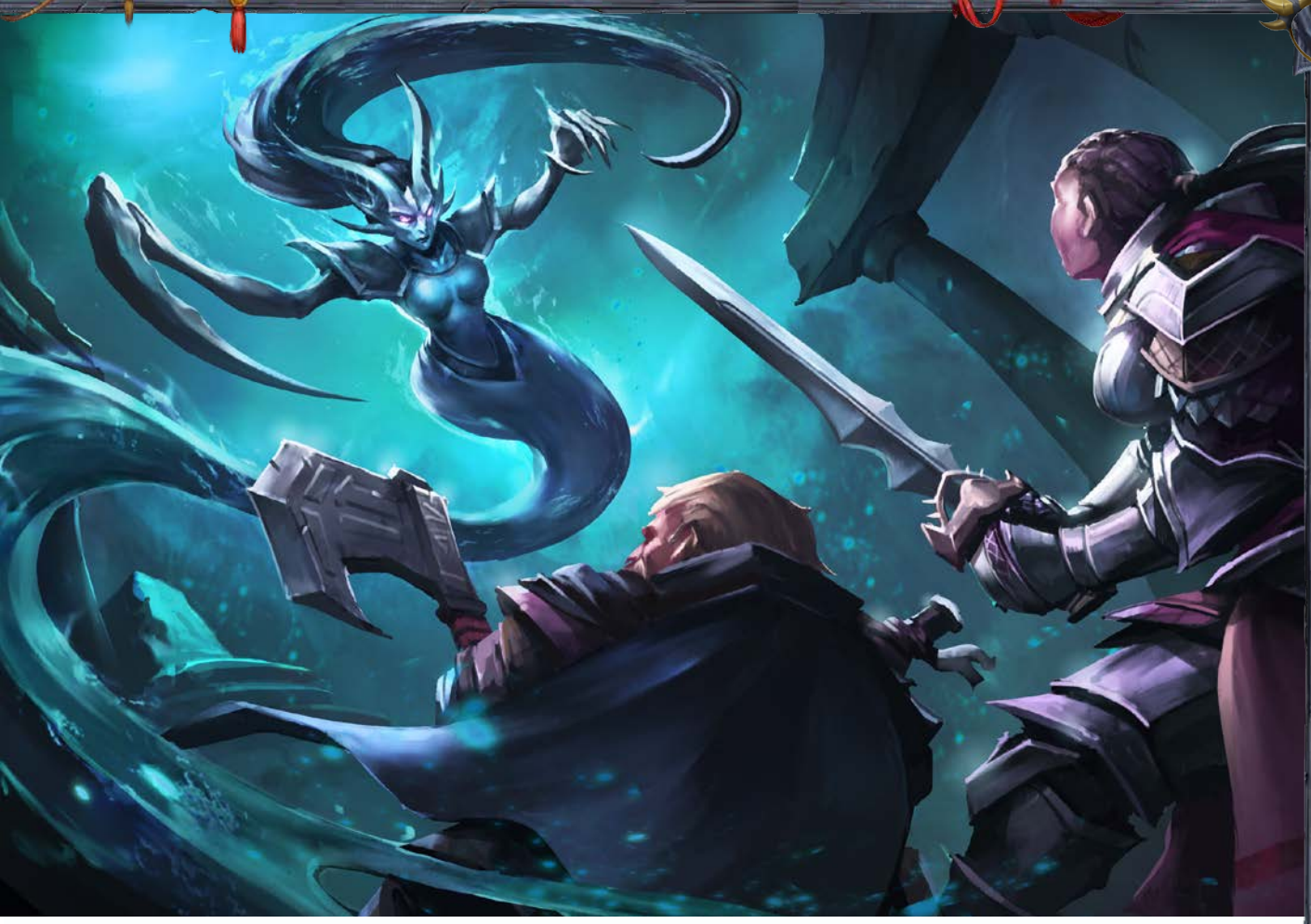
OFFENSE

Speed fly 40 ft. (perfect)
Melee great claw +16 (2d6+9/×4 plus disease), claw +16 (1d8+9)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Special Attacks great claw
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +16)
Constant—*desecrate* (centered on self)
Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 6th; concentration +9)
3rd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 16), *contagion* (DC 16), *dispel magic*, *magic vestment*[D]
2nd—*death knell* (DC 15), *hold person* (DC 15), *resist energy*, *sound burst* (DC 15), *spiritual weapon*[D]
1st—*cause fear*[D] (DC 14), *command* (DC 14), *obscuring mist*, *sanctuary* (DC 14), *shield of faith*
0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 13), *guidance*, *light*, *stabilize*
D domain spell; **Domains** Death, War

TACTICS

During Combat As part of her transformation, Lady Andaisin regains many spells as detailed above, but loses all those she otherwise had while alive. In addition, all ongoing spell effects on her end, and all of her gear lies discarded on the ground amid her other remains after she transforms. She casts *shield of faith* on the first round of combat, followed by her other ranged spells unless the PCs immediately surround her, in which case she fights in melee.

Morale The newly transformed Lady Andaisin fights until she is destroyed.



STATISTICS

Str 27, **Dex** 17, **Con** —, **Int** 18, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 21

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 30

Feats Ability Focus (disease), Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Vital Strike

Skills Acrobatics +14, Bluff +16, Fly +23, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (religion) +18, Perception +17, Sense Motive +17, Spellcraft +18

Languages Abyssal, Common, Infernal, Necril

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease (Su) *Blood Veil*: Great claw—injury; *save* Fortitude DC 22; *onset* immediate; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d4 Con damage and 1d4 Cha damage.

Great Claw (Ex) Lady Andaisin's larger scythe-shaped claw deals ×4 damage on a critical hit, and is treated as an evil weapon for the purpose of penetrating damage reduction.

Spells The transformed Lady Andaisin casts spells as a 6th-level cleric of Urgathoa. She selects two domains to determine bonus spells, she doesn't gain domain powers.

JUJU ZOMBIES (4) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 15 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 291)

Treasure: A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Perception check while examining the statue of Urgathoa finds a well-concealed compartment at its base. Within lie a number of ceremonial instruments used by Lady Andaisin for various rituals: two grim candelabras made from human hands encased in silver (worth 150 gp each), several sticks of exotic incense (worth a total of 450 gp), a *wand of cure serious wounds* with 37 charges, a *wand of remove disease* (8 charges), a *scroll of restoration*, a *scroll of raise dead*, and three blocks of *incense of meditation*.

One empty, unused *death's head coffer* (see page 433) sits among the other discarded coffers. Lady Andaisin intended to infect something with the final, enhanced strain of blood veil once the Varisian immunity was overcome, but until then this coffer remains usable—and of interest to the nosferatu Arkminos.

Development: Lady Andaisin is a fanatic and unlikely to flee, but if the PCs kill her first incarnation and then flee the temple after she transforms, the daughter of Urgathoa incarnation may well abandon the temple to join the Gray Maidens in Deathhead Vault. At your discretion, the PCs could then encounter her again in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER CONCLUSION

With Dr. Davaulus and Lady Andaisin defeated, the creation and spread of blood veil suffers a mortal blow. As no one is actively propagating the disease, its unnaturally swift and seemingly random spread ends. The disease remains at large, though, and deaths continue until the Korvosan Guard and city priests get matters under control. Fortunately, while investigating the Hospice of the Blessed Maiden and the Temple of Urgathoa below, the PCs should have stumbled across the seeds of a cure.

The cure for blood veil lies within the research of three ingenious but undoubtedly demented minds: Dr. Davaulus, Ramoska Arkminos, and the necromancer Rolth. Each had discovered that approximately one in 20 Varisians exhibits an immunity to blood veil, but none have yet deduced the nature of this immunity. Unknown to them, the original strain of the disease, Vorel's phage, was infused with potent spiritual energies before it was harvested. In 4644 AR, a man named Vorel Foxglove attempted to become a lich, but failed when his wife, Kasanda Miromia-Foxglove, disrupted his final ritual. A fragment of Kasanda's spirit infused the tainted fungus that resulted from Vorel's botched lich transformation, a fragment that even today watches over her people. Those Varisians who are immune to blood veil are, in effect, saved by Kasanda herself. Her supernatural influence is limited, unfortunately, and can grant immunity to only a small fraction of the Varisians exposed to the plague. This influence alone isn't enough to save the city from blood veil, but it is a weakness in the sickness' design that allows enterprising alchemists or canny spellcasters the opportunity to engineer a cure for blood veil. If Dr. Davaulus, Arkminos, and Rolth had shared their discoveries with each other, they would have probably learned of the disease's one defect; had they done so, a new strain of blood veil could have been developed that would have been much more difficult to cure.

CURING BLOOD VEIL

Fortunately, one need not understand the deep history behind this irregularity in the plague to use the notes to generate a cure for blood veil. If the PCs have at least one collection of notes from these three researchers, they can create a cure for blood veil. With only one researcher's set of notes, the cure can be found with a successful DC 30 Craft (alchemy) check and 1 week of work. With two sets of notes, this requires a successful DC 25 Craft (alchemy) check and only 1d4+1 days of work. With all three sets, this requires only a successful DC 20 Craft (alchemy) check and 1 day of work. Whether or not these notes reveal to the PCs the strange influence of Kasanda Miromia-Foxglove is left to you (consider leaving this information out, though, unless the PCs use magic like *divination*, *commune*, or *legend lore* to learn more about this hidden facet of the sickness if you don't want to distract them with the extra details).

The cure, once developed, is a mercifully simple concoction to create for anyone with the Brew Potion feat or skill in Craft (alchemy). The disease's supernatural origins prove to be its undoing, for once a person suffering from blood veil takes the cure, not only does the disease fade, but for 1 week thereafter, contact with the recently cured person spreads the cure in a manner identical to how blood veil itself spreads. Manufacturing the initial doses of the cure requires Brew Potion or Craft (alchemy). With Brew Potion, 4 doses can be crafted in a day at a cost of 200 gp. Via alchemy, a successful DC 20 Craft (alchemy) check is needed to generate a cure (a single dose of the cure effectively costs 100 gp for the purpose of creation). Combined with additional usages of *lesser restoration* and *remove disease* to continually fight the plague's spread, each day that passes sees blood veil losing more and more footing until the disease is eventually defeated after a mere 1d4+1 weeks.

Survivor Count: Finding a cure for blood veil within a month saves 100 citizens. Doing so in only a week saves 500 citizens. If it takes only a day, 1,000 people are saved.

FINAL SURVIVOR COUNT

Once the PCs defeat Lady Andaisin and the cult of Urgathoa, the plague's progress slows but does not halt. Each day that follows this event, the number of citizens who perish continues to grow by 1d6 per day until either the plague is cured or it burns itself out in a few months (with the final death toll being 5,000 people). When either of these conditions is reached, total the amount of citizens saved by the PCs minus the number

they killed or allowed to die (as per the Survivor Count sections), then consult the table below to see how the city rewards them for their good work. With the exception of the XP awards, these awards are cumulative, and if the PCs save more than 2,800 citizens, they receive all four of the rewards listed below.

700 or Fewer Citizens Saved (Family Friends): In gratitude for their efforts during the plague, Tayce Soldado organizes the thanks of some of Korvosa's settled Varisians. The PCs are treated to a large feast at Tayce's home with the Varisian community, many of whom bring the party modest gifts (such as delicately embroidered scarves, beautiful jewelry, exquisitely illustrated harrow decks, or fine clothing) with a total value of 250 gp per character. Grant the PCs 2,400 XP.

701–1,900 Citizens Saved (Good Neighbors): Dozens of families recognize the PCs for saving the lives of family members or neighbors. The PCs each gain a favor from a skilled artisan, a local artist, or another member of an NPC class. This favor might be the gift of an item worth no more than 1,000 gp (such as a set of three matching masterwork daggers, a bejeweled ring worth 1,000 gp, or a *cloak of resistance* +1 embroidered with the PCs' coat of arms or the symbol of her deity), a place to hide out for a night, help researching a topic (this grants a +5 circumstance bonus on the next five Knowledge checks the PC attempts, provided they recruit the aid of the NPC offering help), or any other useful services (ultimately adjudicated by you). Grant the PCs 3,200 XP.

1,901–2,800 Citizens Saved (Local Heroes): Field Marshal Cressida Kroft personally thanks the PCs for their extensive aid during the plague. She finally and officially deputizes them as members of the Korvosan Guard and opens Citadel Volshyenek's armory to them. Each PC can select equipment worth up to 2,500 gp (including magic weapons and armor) from the stores. Grant the PCs 4,800 XP. Unfortunately, if the PCs achieve this level of success or higher, they certainly come to the immediate attention of Queen Ileosa. She does little to oppose them directly at this point, but at your discretion, chance encounters with Gray Maidens or Red Mantis assassins might increase.

2,801 or More Citizens Saved (City Saviors): Nearly everyone in the city knows or has heard of the PCs. The PCs gain a +2 bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate checks against Korvosan citizens. More importantly, Queen Ileosa is forced to publicly acknowledge their work, and gives a short and (noticeable with a successful DC 20 Sense Motive check) grudging speech in their honor, praising their work and actions and granting each of them a 5,000 gp writ in reward for their services. This writ is good for any purchase made within Korvosa's walls. If the PCs have been open and aggressive about their theories of the queen's involvement in the plague, she instead has Sabina, commander of the Gray Maidens, issue the award, claiming exhaustion in the wake of the recent events as her excuse for not attending the ceremony. Grant the PCs 6,400 XP.

A CONSPIRACY REVEALED

Although discovering a cure for the plague and saving Korvosa are important accomplishments, another even more significant development occurs if the PCs survive this adventure. The fact that agents of the queen—Doctor Davaulus and his Queen's Physicians—are revealed to be in league with the foul creators of blood veil, and worse, seem to have been involved in propagating its spread rather than seeking its cure, is dangerous knowledge. Although the PCs cannot directly confront Queen Ileosa at this time with accusations of engineering a plague to shape the city into something more to her liking, word of the crown's involvement in the outbreak spreads as soon as it's made apparent that Reiner Davaulus and the Queen's Physicians were corrupt. The queen's official stance is that the charming doctor duped her, and that his actions and those of his masked minions do not accurately reflect her desires. Gray Maidens involved in the hospice claim to have had no knowledge of the true goings-on in the chambers below, and if he survived his encounter with the PCs, Dr. Davaulus is publicly executed (or branded a traitor to the city if he is unavailable for execution). Without hard evidence that she was involved, the majority of Korvosa's citizens find it difficult to believe that their queen, however vain and unpleasant, could be the source of such an evil. Most of Korvosa's citizens are simply thankful that the scourge of blood veil has passed, and are eager to get back to their lives. The city is too wounded to contemplate rebellion.

Yet unrest grows. As the city continues to recover, the rumors of the queen's involvement spread. Unfortunately, so do her resources. The Gray Maidens become more prominent on the street, and progressively oppressive laws and edicts begin to appear. The PCs retain any alliances with Cressida Kroft, Ishani, Grau Soldado, Vencarlo, and other allies in the city, yet they should distinctly feel increasingly unwelcome in Korvosa. The reason for this will be clear soon enough: Queen Ileosa knows now that the PCs are, without a doubt, her enemies. It won't be long before the PCs learn just how dangerous staying in Korvosa could become.

ESCAPE FROM OLD KORVOSA

BY RICHARD PETT

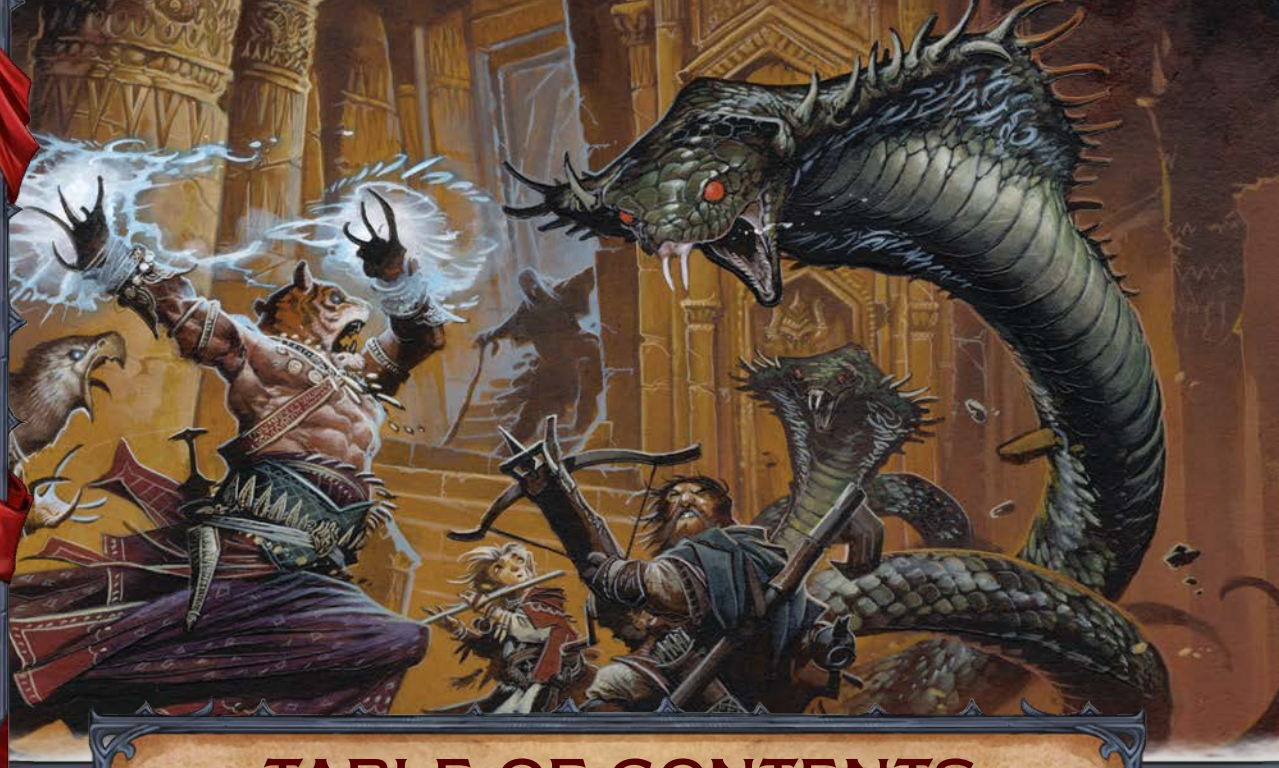


TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER BACKGROUND 134
PART 1: INTO THE DYING CITY 136
PART 2: EMPEROR OF OLD KORVOSA 150
PART 3: WRATH OF THE ARKONAS 162
CHAPTER CONCLUSION 188

MAPS

VENCARLO'S HOME 143
THE ARTIST'S LAIR 143
PILTS'S PALACE 152
ARKONA PALACE 166
THE VIVIFIED LABYRINTH 178

CHAPTER BACKGROUND

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

The PCs should begin Chapter 3 at 8th level.

9 The PCs should be 9th level after dealing with the self-stylized Emperor of Old Korvosa, Pilts Swastel.

10 The PCs should reach 10th level before entering the Vivified Labyrinth below Arkona Palace.

The PCs should not quite reach 11th level by the end of the chapter, but should be very close.

The queen's madness grows. Her paranoia and anger blossom. Her newfound powers quicken, unlocked by her soul merging with a fragment of the great blue wyrm Kazavon. She sees Korvosa now as populated by two castes: slaves and enemies. The city, already weakened by anarchy after her husband's death, now staggers in the aftershocks of an engineered plague. Korvosa's defenders have either shut themselves away or are so exhausted from recent events that it is a simple matter for Queen Ileosa's new army of Gray Maidens to establish martial law. Old Korvosa is the first of her victims, cut off and quarantined, left to die of its own internal strife. Yet in this decaying district languishes the city's salvation—if it can only escape from Old Korvosa in time.

Korvosa was built on a foundation of evil. Although it remained sealed away in a hidden vault below the castle until just recently, the Kazavon's fangs haven't lain quiet over the centuries. The fragments of the dragon's spirit lodged in these relics knew that someday they would be

discovered and released. While inside the vault, his spirit could do little to influence the minds of the thousands that it felt, so agonizingly close, in the growing city above. Now and then, a particularly susceptible mind arose in Korvosa, one whose thoughts and emotions were, for whatever cruel twist of fate, more open to the lingering presence of the ancient dragon. As these minds slept, Kazavon could whisper to them, and in so doing he hoped to lure one into the castle to release him and become a vessel for his power.

Time and again, however, Kazavon's whispers to these tortured, sensitive souls backfired. Instead of fostering a loyalty to his twisted agenda, he created only madness. Left to their own devices, these victims would have flourished as talented artists or poets, but with Kazavon's influence, they became murderers or worse. Queen Ileosa's discovery of Kazavon's fangs was an unforeseen accident, one the dragon's shattered spirit took advantage of immediately. He abandoned his current "projects" in the city, seven sensitive men and women with whom he had slowly been making strides. The loss of their muse was a tragedy for this group. Living out their days both comforted and horrified by Kazavon's whispers, they had grown accustomed to his faint voice in their dreams. For six of the seven, the loss of that voice drove them to quietly kill themselves, becoming more nameless victims in the wake of the anarchy and the plague. Only one lives to this day—a moody but talented painter named Salvator Scream.

Born Salvator Bevery, this struggling young artist was kicked out of his home by his father, a devout Abadaran who found his son's gruesome paintings to be sadistic and unpalatable. Seeking shelter with several of his artist friends who dwelled in a flat in Old Korvosa, Salvator swiftly found regular work creating backdrops and other paintings for Pilts Swastel, purveyor of all things grisly and vile for the city's most notorious playhouse, Exemplary Execrables. It was at Pilts's suggestion that Salvator changed his surname to "Scream," since that helped Pilts market the man's violent art even better.

Salvator Scream's work drew many admiring eyes, and not just among the regulars at Exemplary Execrables. His work became a favorite of noble families and other prominent citizens, who found his subjects shocking but safely scandalous. Among these patrons was the seneschal of Castle Korvosa, Neolandus Kalepopolis. Neolandus was more interested in the artist than the art, and after attending a showing of "Tears of Abendego" at Exemplary Execrables (a performance he found distasteful at best), he met the young artist. The two formed a fast friendship, one of the few in Salvator's life, and their meetings at various eateries to discuss art, history, and religion became a weekly event—an event that Kalepopolis, always a private man, kept very secret.

After Neolandus survived an attempt on his life by the Red Mantis and escaped the castle, wounded and poisoned, he fled to Salvator's doorstep. With the aid of Salvator and his network of contacts in the Old Korvosan artistic underworld, Neolandus managed to both recover from his wounds and avoid the Red Mantis. Yet as things in Korvosa grew worse, and the assassins grew closer to discovering him, Neolandus realized he needed to find a new hiding place. Salvator had just the patron in mind—the Arkonas. Long a fan of Salvator's grisly work, Glorio Arkona (who was, in fact, actually a rakshasa named Bahor) gracefully agreed to hide Neolandus in his estate as a favor to the artist. Of course, gaining control of the seneschal played perfectly into the Arkonas' plans to upset the queen, for according to Korvosan law, only the seneschal can legally depose a corrupt monarch. Neolandus has become little more than a caged pet to the Arkonas, an insurance policy they're waiting patiently to cash in while Old Korvosa grows more desperate.

Today, Old Korvosa is cut off. Quarantined and forgotten, the island has been left to fend for itself. The Arkonas have retained control over their manor grounds but the majority of Endrin Isle has fallen to the mob, which is increasingly under the subjugation of Pilts Swastel, now calling himself the Emperor of Old Korvosa. His influence over Old Korvosa grows by the week, and has recently "commissioned" Salvator Scream as his royal painter. The tortured artist is one of the only Korvosans who knows Neolandus suspects the truth behind Queen Ileosa's madness and what must be done to stop it. Maintaining such a secret is quite dangerous, especially because if this information spreads, the queen will spare nothing to see the seneschal dead, and might well burn Old Korvosa to the ground to do it.

NPC Developments

Use the following notes to expand the roles of NPCs from the previous chapter as you see fit if the PCs seek them out during "Escape from Old Korvosa."

Ishani Dhatri: Ishani continues to work with the church to help those impacted by the plague to rebuild their lives during this chapter, but grows increasingly frustrated with the church's bureaucratic elements.

Rolth Lamm: If Rolth escaped the events of "Seven Days to the Grave," he becomes obsessed with the PCs, seeing as how they've now twice meddled in his projects. Rolth's NPC entry on page 452 of Appendix 6 explores ways he can continue to vex the PCs for the rest of the campaign.

The Soldado Family: The Soldados flee the city for greener pastures as this chapter begins, but before they leave, they might happily pay the PCs a visit to thank them one last time before heading west toward their new lives in Magnimar.

PART 1

INTO THE DYING CITY

With the plague's final defeat, Korvosa settles in to a wounded silence, as if the citizens don't quite believe that the epidemic has come to an end. At first, it seems as if the city is slowly healing and recovering from the tragedies it has suffered, but it should soon become apparent that the damage dealt to Korvosa during the riots after Eodred II's death and by the plague itself might have been even greater than anyone feared—and could be just the beginning of more sinister threats.

Korvosa has survived the hideous plague, but not unscathed. The streets are dull and muted, strangely empty except for when markets quietly open. People seem to be more interested in staying home than going out, and when they do emerge, they shuffle quickly to their destinations and conduct their business swiftly. The Order of the Nail has withdrawn from Korvosa, retreating to Citadel Vraid for the first time in Korvosa's history. Some whisper the Hellknights are planning a full-scale invasion of Korvosa to seize control, but more knowledgeable sources know that dozens of Hellknights perished or failed to uphold their charges during the recent events, and that Lictor Severs has recalled his troops to punish the city for these failures. City temples have their hands full tracking down the last remaining pockets of sick residents and disposing of the dead, while the Acadamae continues to keep its doors shut and withhold its resources for the duration, hoping to wait out these troubled times. The Sable Company is falling apart, and the Korvosan Guard has taken staggering hits to both its personnel and its morale. Field Marshal Kroft talks about recruitment drives to replenish the ranks, but helping Korvosa recover remains the primary goal—one made difficult by Queen Ileosa's reduced support.

Yet the queen is not ignoring Korvosa. The energy and support once lent to the Korvosan Guard and the Sable Company is now funneled into the enigmatic Gray Maidens. Even as the number of Korvosan Guards on the streets dwindles, the presence of these armored warrior women increases. Regular patrols of Gray Maidens march along the major streets, and rumors spread that strike forces are breaking into homes and buildings reputed to house those who voiced dissenting opinions of the monarchy. Old Korvosa remains under a tight quarantine, with troops of Gray Maidens stationed along the Narrows and patrolling the Jeggare in swift barges to ensure that no one gets off Endrin Isle. The plumes of smoke as buildings burn and the periodic roars of riots that echo down from Old Korvosa alone are enough to warn away the curious.

Feel free to give the PCs as much time as they want to recover from the events of "Seven Days to the Grave" before starting this adventure. The atmosphere of oppression and fear that fills Korvosa should continue, with rumors of a new plague growing, even if the PCs helped develop (or are still working on) a cure for blood veil. Furthermore, depending on how the PCs dealt with the Gray Maidens and the discovery of links between the plague and Queen Ileosa, they might not even be able to openly walk the streets. If they've publicly decried the queen and tried to prove she was responsible for the plague, the PCs quickly find her hold over Korvosa is even stronger than it appears. Even if they've kept their suspicions quiet (which is what allies like Field Marshal Cressida Kroft, Ishani, and Grau Soldado all suggest if consulted), the queen knows of their involvement in the disruption of the Queen's Physicians and the cult of Urgathoa, and it isn't long before she sends Red Mantis assassins after the PCs.

THE THIRD HARROWING

The best time to have Zellara perform her third harrowing (and thus generate the PCs' available Harrow Points for this chapter) is not long after the PCs defeat the cultists of Urgathoa and save Korvosa from the plague. Zellara senses Ileosa's building strength, but does not yet know what it signifies. She uses her empathic link to instill an urge to perform a harrow reading in the mind of the PC who carries her deck. If that PC doesn't comply soon by using her cards to perform a reading, she takes matters into her own hands once she sees the PCs are alone by creating a *major image* of herself and performing the reading. When you do this reading, take pains to interpret the cards from the past so they dwell upon events (either of the campaign world or each PC's life) that involved despotic overlords and cruel dictators. When you get to cards representing the present, focus on metaphors that relate to Korvosa's current woes, particularly the growing sense of oppression, martial law, and the fact that the queen herself might be seeking the PCs' deaths. For the cards representing the

future, be grim, interpreting the cards as ghosts and demonic animals (particularly tigers and mantises) that plague the living, metaphors that describe life as a cruel and vindictive play or other work of art, and recurring themes of beautiful women with ashen skin and blank faces (to symbolize the Gray Maidens). As a particular note, if the Rakshasa card comes up in the reading, you might want to give the role that card plays in the reading particular attention—focusing on its interpretations of dominance or freedom from enslavement, depending on its location in the spread.

See Appendix 3 on page 416 for further information on how to perform a harrowing.

THE CROWN REVEALED

Queen Ileosa spends the bulk of Chapter 2 of *Curse of the Crimson Throne* within the walls of Castle Korvosa. The official story is that she's seeking shelter from the plague, but in truth, she spends much of this time exploring, enhancing, and practicing her powers, with a particular focus on the fangs of Kazavon. During this time, she uses her own talents to incorporate the fangs into a new crown. As she completes this construction, Kazavon's teeth infuse this new crown with their essence, creating the *Crown of Fangs*, a powerful artifact.

With her crown complete, Queen Ileosa announces a surprise public address when it becomes clear the plague is coming to an end. The PCs should certainly hear about the aftermath of this event, but there's too much opportunity for PCs to get in over their heads if they're on site at this time. The best way to time this event is soon after the PCs defeat Dr. Davaulus, but while they're still fighting the cult in the chambers below, especially if the PCs have taken several days (as is likely) between Davaulus's defeat and the final push into the hidden temple. When they emerge from the temple of Urgathoa after having defeated Lady Andaisin, the whole city is abuzz. The PCs may even learn of the event from Cressida Kroft if they simply report directly back to her after defeating Andaisin.

Although the announcement of her address gives Korvosa only an hour or so to prepare, a large crowd nonetheless gathers to hear her words—particularly if it's now public knowledge that Dr. Davaulus was behind the disease. Attending this address at the queen's side are her bodyguard and lover Sabina Merrin (clad in her breathtaking and intimidating suit of Gray Maiden armor), her new advisor and ally Togomor (who she announces has taken up the duties of castle seneschal), commander of the Korvosan Guard Cressida Kroft, and the commandant of the Sable Company Marcus Endrin. In the days to follow,

many speak of how ill at ease Marcus appeared, as if they knew at the time what the desperate commandant had planned all along.

As the address begins, Queen Ileosa (wearing her fang-adorned crown) announces triumphantly that the plague has been defeated, although unfortunately at the cost of Doctor Davaulus's life. The good doctor's body, she goes on, has already been shipped back to Cheliax for burial in his family vault, and the order of the Queen's Physicians has been disbanded as well. (Of course, if the PCs successfully and publicly exposed Davaulus' role, she instead expertly shifts the blame to him and announces he's been executed for his crimes.) Yet Korvosa remains wounded. The queen goes on to report that the Order of the Nail has shown its true colors and fled like cowards into Citadel Vraid. Worse, both the Korvosan Guard and the Sable Company have suffered terrible losses over the past weeks. Neither group is fully capable of continuing as Korvosa's protectors, and thus, to shore up this fault, Queen Ileosa names the Gray Maidens as the official new protectors of Korvosa, appointing Sabina Merrin as the city's new general. As a ripple of concerned whispers spreads, Queen Ileosa turns her attention to the Sable Company. Citing the fact that the care and feeding of the company's hippogriff mounts places too great a strain on the city's coffers (an exaggeration); the company's relative incompetence in helping to deal with the recent unrest (not so much of an exaggeration); and the fact that the company's commander, Seneschal Neolandus Kalepopolis, fled the city rather than stay by her side in her time of need (a lie, but not one anyone in the city can disprove, as Neolandus has certainly been missing since the start of the campaign), Ileosa has decided to disband the organization and seize its holdings. At this point, she asks Commandant Endrin to step forth to surrender his badge of office.

MARCUS ENDRIN

As Endrin does so, he trembles. He reaches for his badge, but instead of handing it over, he throws it at the queen, striking her cheek. Everyone (queen included) is shocked into paralysis for a few moments, long enough for Endrin to bellow out, "Your shameful reign ends now! Korvosa will be free again!" An instant later, his bow is in his hands, aimed at the still-frozen queen. Endrin fires and his aim is true. The arrow strikes Queen Ileosa in the right temple, sinking deep into her skull.

Yet she does not fall.

With incredible speed, she regains her composure and yanks the arrow from her skull. Before blood from the wound has time to run all the way down to her jaw, she's standing before Endrin. Her free hand whips out and seizes him by the throat, lifting him off the ground and holding him up for all to see. An instant later, she stabs Endrin's own arrow up under his jaw and out the side of his face with a spray of blood.

As Endrin's body crumples to the ground and Ileosa imperiously shakes his blood from her hand, she cries out in a strong, clear voice, "This shall be the fate of all enemies of Korvosa! Mark well his punishment! It is only the first!" A moment later, Togomor steps forward, taking Ileosa's hand and teleporting her back into the castle. The resulting riot is quelled quickly and brutally by the Gray Maidens. Field Marshal Cressida Kroft flees to Citadel Volshyenek, stunned and horrified by what she witnessed, and knowing that things have indeed taken a turn for the worse in her city. (Endrin is not killed by this turn of events, and the PCs may be able to rescue him from the Longacre Building at a later date—see Chapter 4).

WHISPERS FROM OLD KORVOSA

Not long after the PCs hear about the failed assassination attempt, they receive an urgent request to meet with Cressida. If the PCs haven't visited Citadel Volshyenek recently, they might be shocked when they arrive to see the place so understaffed. Only one guard stands at the citadel entrance, and none train in the large inner courtyard. The citadel halls are silent and empty, with refuse and trash scattered here and there, dust gathering in empty barracks, and an overall state of creeping neglect hanging over the place like a pall.

Cressida Kroft looks haggard and tired when the PCs arrive; she ushers them into the central keep quickly, leading them into a smaller meeting room in the depths of the keep to a doorway that, when opened, reveals what appears to be a room filled with fog. Beyond is a plain-looking chamber with a single long table (on which sits a small closed coffer) and enough chairs for the PCs and herself. This chamber is protected by a permanent *mage's private sanctum*. After everyone is seated, she speaks in a low voice. Read or paraphrase the following.

"Korvosa is dying. No, strike that. Korvosa is being murdered. Killed by our queen. The evidence you've uncovered that links her to the plague is damning enough, but now that

she's disbanded the Sable Company and reallocated our own funding to the Gray Maidens, she's more in control now than ever. I dare not move against her, as my guards would be executed to the last fighter by her Gray Maidens before sundown. But she must be stopped. And I know of no one else but you to do this deed.

"Whatever foul magic the queen has wrapped herself in is obviously of the highest order. Endrin's aim was true, and his shot should have dropped her. I had feared he was going to take matters into his own hands like this, but hoped he would find it within himself to find a better route. If only he could have waited.

"You see, just this morning, new information came to me. Vencarlo Orisini's been one of my most trusted sources of information regarding the public; it's hard for an officer of the Korvosan Guard to get honest opinions from the citizens, and Vencarlo's observations on these topics have been a godsend, particularly since the plague started. When the queen quarantined Old Korvosa, I'd feared his messages would end, yet he managed to find ways to smuggle updates to me every day. Recently, he wrote of discovering something of vital importance regarding the queen. He mentions something about dark magic and a pact with a devil, but until the events of this morning, I found his claims difficult to believe. But even more astounding, he hinted he'd found a lead on Seneschal Kalepopolis, and implied the man might still be in hiding in Old Korvosa!

"That was the last I heard from him. It's been several days, and I've started to worry for his safety. The rumors about riots and gangs seizing control of entire neighborhoods in Old Korvosa are disturbing. Certainly, the plumes of smoke we all see rising from fires on the island are proof that as bad as things are elsewhere, they're probably worse in Old Korvosa.

"I can see a time in the near future when the Korvosan Guard is disbanded as well. Even now I lack the resources to mount my own investigations. Which is where you come in. Trusting you may have been my best decision over the past several months, for your group holds the possibility of Korvosa's salvation. I ask you to seek out Vencarlo in Old Korvosa, and to learn more of what he's discovered about the nature of our queen's increasingly violent and destructive turns of personality. Ironically, you should actually be safer in Old Korvosa, since the queen's quarantine has cut off the island entirely, and word on the street is that she plans on leaving it to rot. She won't think to look for you there if you maintain a low profile and avoid confrontations with the Gray Maidens. Once you contact Vencarlo, we can only hope what he's discovered will suggest a course of action we can take to save the city!"

Cressida suggests that Vencarlo's home near the grounds of the Orisini Academy (which the PCs visited at the start of Chapter 2) should be their first stop in attempting to track him down. She's heard rumors about a new leader who has risen to power in the streets and is calling himself the "Emperor of Old Korvosa," but hasn't yet been able to determine who this man is. If Vencarlo's not in his home, a meeting with the island's new self-appointed ruler might turn up the swordmaster's trail, but Cressida prompts caution here. Whoever this "emperor" is, he's likely a dangerous man indeed.

Cressida goes on to say that as important as finding out what's befallen her friend Vencarlo is to her, discovering what actually happened to Seneschal Kalepopolis is of even greater concern to the city. Not only might Kalepopolis have valuable insights into what's going on with the queen, but his return may well give those who oppose Queen Ileosa a legal way to, if not remove her from the throne, at least wrest away some of her power.

The citadel treasury is nearly empty, but Cressida does have a small cache of potions and a few wands she wants to give the PCs to aid them in their mission into Old Korvosa—four *potions of cure serious wounds*, three *potions of lesser restoration*, a *wand of invisibility* (10 charges), and a *wand of cure moderate wounds* (30 charges). After handing them the gear, Cressida urges the PCs to make haste to Old Korvosa and track down Vencarlo. She doubts the queen will take long to recover from the indignation of the failed assassination, and once she does, the field marshal fears she might make things very difficult for those who remain within the city walls. If asked how to infiltrate the quarantined island, Cressida suggests swimming or taking a skiff from the northern banks of the Jeggare, optimally under the cover of darkness to avoid notice.

Old Korvosa Today

The last few weeks have been the most terrifying the good people of Old Korvosa have known. The king's death and the plague were bad enough, but it was the sudden destruction of the bridges linking the old city to the new that heralded the final breakdown in law and order in Old Korvosa. Abandoned by the government, Old Korvosa descended into anarchy. Where honest laborers once toiled, a mob now rules—a mob that is falling increasingly under the sway of the self-styled Emperor of Old Korvosa, Pilts Swastel. Yet in truth, even the Emperor of Old Korvosa is more of a symptom than a cause. The true architects of Old Korvosa's rapid descent into madness are its supposed representatives to the city: the Arkona family.

In the eyes of many of Old Korvosa's citizens, the Arkona family has acted as champions for the district, protecting as many citizens as it can with its own house guards and representing the district in government gatherings. Yet no one openly discusses the fact that the Arkonas fund and support the vast majority of the criminal dealings in Old Korvosa. When the district was cut off from the

rest of Korvosa and quarantined, the Arkonas withdrew their influence to the highest part of Old Korvosa, the ward known as Fort Korvosa, and abandoned the rest of the district to anarchy. Pilts Swastel used this as a major component of his platform, promising that the treacherous Arkonas will eventually be ousted from Old Korvosa and the entire place will revert to the people. Of course, the Arkonas are wise and know that Pilts is a momentary distraction. Once the mob has burned itself out, it will be an easy matter for them to reclaim even greater control over Old Korvosa than before, positioning them perfectly place to make their next move and wrestle control of the entire city from the queen. Many of Old Korvosa's inhabitants suspect the Arkonas of such plots and machinations, yet what none suspect is their greatest secret—the Arkonas are, and have been for hundreds of years, rakshasas.

Among the four wards of Old Korvosa, Fort Korvosa, the highest point of the district, has weathered the quarantine the best, in large part due to the Arkonas' influence. Existing in the shadow of Fort Korvosa's relative order, Garrison Hill has not had the benefit of this protection. Several fires have destroyed buildings in this district, and the citizens here venture out only as necessary to scavenge for supplies. Bridgefront has suffered the most under the quarantine, the destruction of the bridges over the Narrows having had a similar destructive influence on the morale and sanity of the locals there. Yet Bridgefront is not the most dangerous place in Old Korvosa today. That honor falls upon Old Dock, for it is here that the lunatic Emperor of Old Korvosa rules his mob.

Entering and Exiting Old Korvosa

The Gray Maidens have been ordered to quarantine Old Korvosa, preventing anyone inside from leaving. Troops of Gray Maidens patrol the boardwalk along the northern side of North Point overlooking Old Korvosa, while additional Gray Maidens stand watch atop the wall along North Point's northern shore. They confront anyone they spy trying to leave Old Korvosa, warning them to turn back. If this order is refused, they open fire on anyone who continues to try to return to the city proper, either chasing them off or slaughtering them where they stand.

The Gray Maidens have also burned and wrecked all of the wooden bridges that cross the Narrows, leaving only the stone Jeggare Bridge as a physical link between Endrin Isle and the mainland. On that bridge, they maintain a barricade raised via several castings of *wall of stone* and augmented on the southern side by wooden catwalks, creating a 15-foot-high stone blockade across the bridge's southernmost end. The bridge deck is kept clear of obstacles, so anyone spotted on the bridge can be easily fired upon if the intruder ignores warnings to turn back to Old Korvosa.

However, while these measures are quite efficient at keeping the bulk of Old Korvosa's citizens locked in, entering Old Korvosa is simple. The Gray Maidens take no such actions against anyone they spot entering Old Korvosa, though. If someone prefers to flee the city, they consider the departure of such an undesirable as simply one fewer agitator or troublemaker they have to deal with.

You also needn't spend too much time obsessing over how the PCs come and go if they derive even a half-decent plan. Magic, such as flight or teleportation, offers a perfect solution for characters who wish to move between the main city and Old Korvosa, but crossing after dark along the northern shore over the Jeggare River and then coming around on land to enter the city via North Bridge or High Bridge works fine as well—the far side of the Narrows of St. Alika, where many buildings have burned or been partially destroyed by looters, remains dark at night, making it easier to avoid detection there.

Strange Times in Old Korvosa

As the PCs explore Old Korvosa, you should mention the hapless and forlorn and desperate who now live in this dying town. The following sample encounters can help you get started if a PC stops to talk to someone on the street—or even if they simply catch a local's eye!

Children: A flock of incongruously happy children sing a strange little rhyme as they gather around something in the middle of the street and sing, "Headless, headless, that's what you'll be, brand-new dolls in the Emp'ror's cemet'ry! Choppy, choppy, chop, the tall knife calls, waitin' for the day for Korvosa to fall." One of the children has fashioned a crude guillotine from sticks and pegs, and the children are using it to behead a collection of dolls. If the PCs speak to the children, they brag that they've been to see the emperor's real "tall knife" at his palace, when in fact this is just false bravado.

Foolhardy Hero: **Tesh Zobberdin** (N male human warrior 1), a wild-eyed human wearing an ill-fitting suit of leather armor, strides purposefully down the street toward Old Dock, sword in hand. The last surviving member of a family executed by the emperor for refusing to turn out their food stores and life savings, Tesh has murder on his mind. Unfortunately, he's no match for the emperor or his goons. Tesh nonetheless could aid the PCs in navigating Old Korvosa if you wish.

Insane Plague Doctor: Have the PCs all attempt Perception checks—whoever rolls the highest hears a strange sound coming from a nearby alley, a weird sort of chirping and cooing that sounds more human than animal. Investigation reveals **Rook** (see page 86 for the statistics of a Queen's Physician), clad in a filthy doctor's mask and equally grimy outfit. Rook wasn't able to handle the horrors he faced during the plague, and

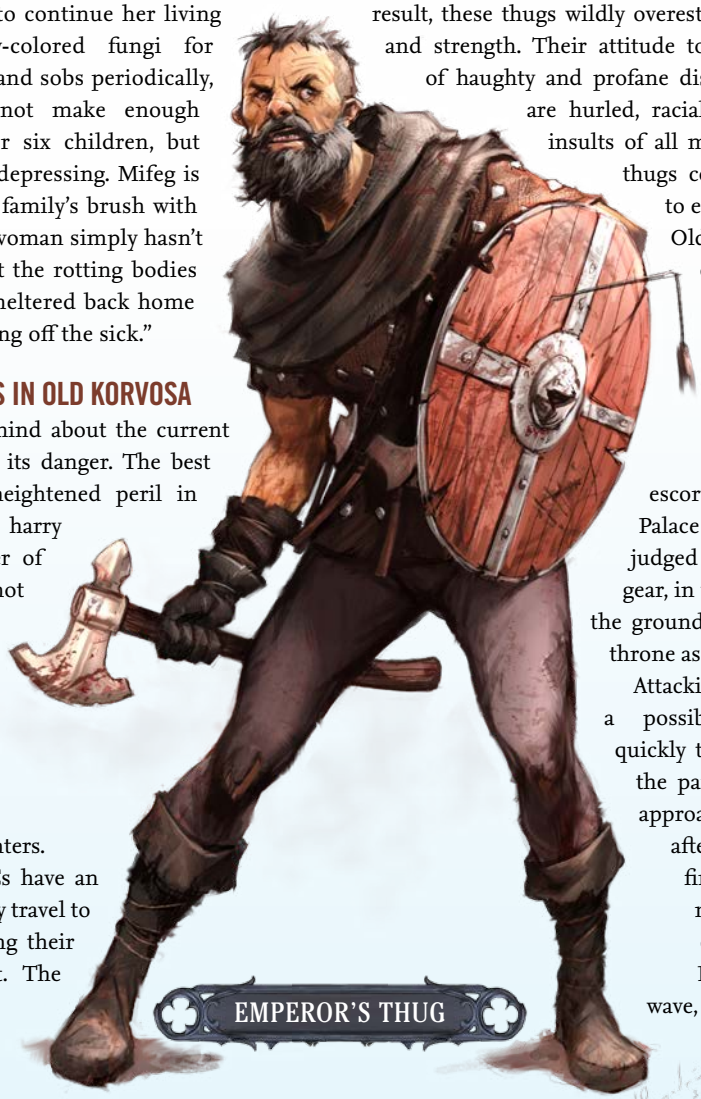
his mind snapped, leaving him with no memory of his previous life. He thinks of himself as a psychopomp now, a birdlike creature that goes by the name "Rook." He offers to "breathe in the sick" from the PCs if they confront him, promising that once he takes the foul vapors from their breath, they will never fall ill again. Of course, Rook's "cure" does nothing of the sort, and at your discretion, close contact with the mad physician may well expose the PCs to other illnesses.

Ranting Local: Olmere Bliversin (CG male human expert 2) addresses the mostly empty street from a balcony above his bakery, demanding to know what the queen's going to do about the mob, when she's going to repair the bridges, and how long the quarantine will persist. The fact that Olmere does much of his ranting wearing his nightclothes and punctuates his rants with high-pitched giggles certainly undermines his arguments.

Sad Old Woman: Old Mother Mifeg (CN old female human expert 2) shambles along the edges of the streets, doing her best to continue her living selling not-so-brightly-colored fungi for pigments. She mutters and sobs periodically, worrying she might not make enough coppers to support her six children, but the truth is even more depressing. Mifeg is the last survivor of her family's brush with blood veil, and the old woman simply hasn't admitted to herself that the rotting bodies she keeps so lovingly sheltered back home are anything but "sleeping off the sick."

Random Encounters in Old Korvosa

One thing to keep in mind about the current state of Old Korvosa is its danger. The best way to simulate the heightened peril in the neighborhood is to harry the PCs with a number of random encounters—not all of these encounters need result in a fight, of course, and you should be sure to keep an eye on your player's enjoyment level, as it can be easy to overdo random encounters. It's best to have the PCs have an encounter whenever they travel to a new location, including their exits from the district. The first encounter the PCs should have is with Pilts's mob (see below), but after this, roll on the Korvosa Street Encounter table on page 465 to generate additional encounters with rabble and dangerous foes alike.


EMPEROR'S THUG

Pilts's Mob (CR 8)

Of the hundreds of people who lived in Old Dock, most have joined Pilts's mob, if only to avoid being branded traitors by the emperor and then forced to take part in his violent entertainment. Those who revel in the chaos quickly ascend to the role of soldiers in the mob, where they serve as leaders and commanders, and the majority of the petty thugs under their control obey out of fear. Unless the PCs take pains to remain unobserved, there's a 10% chance per hour that they are noticed by members of the mob (this increases to a 50% chance per 10 minutes in Old Dock), at which point a group of four thugs congregates and demands to know the meaning of the party's intrusion into the "emperor's domain."

Few have openly opposed the Pilts's mob yet, and as a result, these thugs wildly overestimate their own power and strength. Their attitude toward intruders is one of haughty and profane disdain. Lewd comments are hurled, racial epithets howled, and insults of all manner are lobbed. The thugs command the intruders to explain their presence in Old Korvosa. Any response other than "We're here to join you," is met with laughter and scorn, followed by an order to hand over their weapons. Characters who do so are then escorted to area **C3** of Pilts's Palace (see page 151) to be judged by the emperor; their gear, in this event, is stacked on the ground next to the emperor's throne as an offering.

Attacking the thugs is certainly a possibility. Word spreads quickly through Old Korvosa if the party adopts an offensive approach, and 3d6 minutes after the PCs defeat the first group of four, two more groups arrive to confront them. If the PCs defeat this second wave, a fourth group of four then seeks them out in 3d6 minutes to

WHAT HAPPENED TO VENCARLO?

Vencarlo might hate the queen, but his personal code prevents him from even contemplating assassination as a way to get Korvosa's government back on track. This leaves him with few options. When he first heard rumors that Seneschal Neolandus Kalepopolis might still be alive, and furthermore, might be hiding out in Old Korvosa, Vencarlo grew increasingly obsessed with finding the man. His investigations led him to Salvator Scream, but the artist was particularly close-lipped in revealing anything; it took several meetings, bribes, and reassurances on Vencarlo's part to prove to Salvator that he wanted to help his friend Neolandus, but when the artist revealed to Vencarlo that he'd given Neolandus to the Arkonas for safekeeping, Vencarlo nearly lost it. His rage frightened Salvator into fleeing, and not long thereafter, the Red Mantis attacked Vencarlo's academy as they continued their own search for Neolandus (their leads led them along parallel lines of investigation that pointed to Vencarlo as being Blackjack and therefore the agent most likely to be hiding the seneschal). Vencarlo survived the ambush, but when he attempted to infiltrate the Arkona palace a day later, the rakshasas captured him. Vencarlo thus has found Neolandus—both are imprisoned in the same dungeon—but he is now as much a prisoner as his quarry.

extend an invitation to speak with the emperor. In this event, the PCs are watched by thugs from the surrounding streets but are allowed to keep their gear.

EMPEROR'S THUGS (4) **CR 4**

XP 1,200 each

Human fighter 2/rogue 3

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 46 each (5 HD; 3d8+2d10+18)

Fort +8, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2 (+1 vs. fear)

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk battleaxe +9 (1d8+3/×3) or unarmed strike +7 (1d3+3)

Ranged throwing axe +6 (1d6+3)

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

TACTICS

During Combat These thugs initially use unarmed strikes against their foes, hoping to beat the PCs into submission and catch them alive for the emperor's amusement, but if the PCs use lethal attacks against them, they switch to their axes.

Morale If reduced to 10 or fewer hit points, a thug flees into Old Korvosa to nurse her wounds and hide from the emperor's retaliation for abandoning her post.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7 (+9 grapple); **CMD** 19 (21 vs. grapple)

Feats Athletic, Great Fortitude, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Toughness, Weapon Focus (battleaxe)

Skills Climb +12, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (local) +5, Perception +9, Sense Motive +9, Swim +12

Languages Common

SQ rogue talent (weapon training), trapfinding +1

Gear mwk studded leather, mwk heavy wooden shield, mwk battleaxe, throwing axes (5)

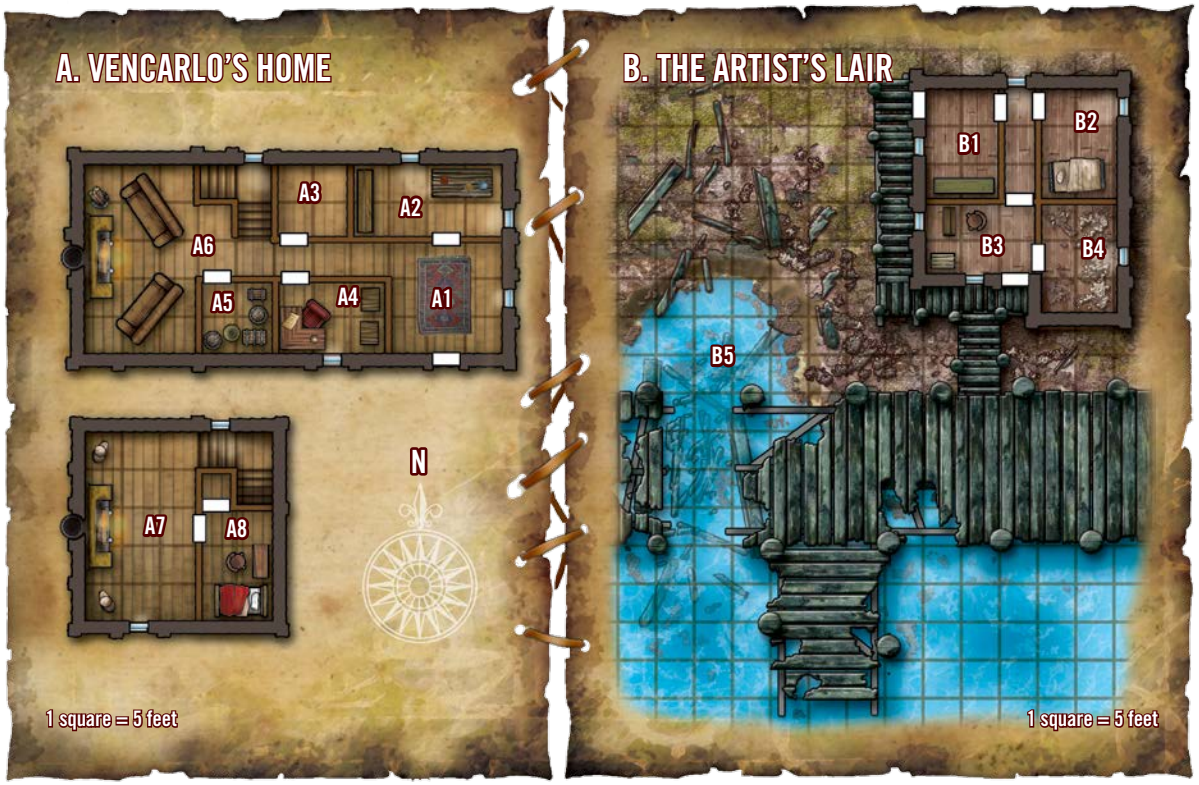
A VENCARLO'S HOME (CR 10)

Vencarlo's home is a humble building just east of his academy—or at least, where his academy once stood, for the once-proud structure is no more. It was burned to the ground in a recent fire set by the Red Mantis as a warning after Vencarlo survived and escaped an ambush they'd set for him. The fire aroused the Arkonas' wrath because the academy was located in their territory, and the family's resulting hostility toward the Red Mantis and suspected Red Mantis agents has forced the assassins to continue their work here in a subtler manner. Vencarlo's home thus still stands, nestled in the southern section of Fort Korvosa, although Vencarlo himself is not at home when the PCs arrive.

The only door into Vencarlo's home is closed but not locked, and the building's interior is warm but quiet and unlit. Announcements of arrival, whether knocks on the door or calls out for Vencarlo, go unanswered. The contents of the house (with the exception of the hidden cache in area **A8**) speak of a man who lives a simple life despite his success. As the PCs move from room to room, they may find hints here and there that something is amiss before things suddenly get out of hand.

Once the PCs reach area **A7** or **A8**, allow them each to attempt a DC 20 Perception check to notice the scent of smoke in the air, but with a strange tang; a character with the scent ability gains a +10 circumstance bonus on this check. Anyone who detects the odor can identify it with a successful DC 15 Craft (alchemy) check as residual alchemist's fire. A successful DC 25 Perception check reveals that the walls, floor, and even the furniture are faintly stained with the stuff in multiple places.

As the PCs search the home, a successful DC 20 Survival check reveals that the building hasn't seen much traffic for quite some time (adjust this specific interval so



the building seems to have been abandoned since about the time of Kroft's last letter from Vencarlo). A PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Survival check notices a few smears in the dust or fresh scratches in the woodwork, suggesting that someone very stealthy has been in the building at least once in the interim (these are marks accidentally left behind by the Red Mantis assassins who now dwell in the building and hope for another chance at Vencarlo if and when he returns home).

A1. Entrance: Here, an elegant and colorful Vudrani throw rug covers much of the floor of this otherwise empty front room.

A2. Workshop: This is a well-stocked workshop for decorating and repairing bladed weapons. Several partially repaired daggers and rapiers lie on the table. None are particularly valuable.

A3. Bathroom: This room contains a freestanding bathtub and a toilet.

A4. Study: A single leather chair sits at a desk, while two tall cabinets filled with books about sword fighting and philosophy stand to the east. The papers on the desk are mostly accounting documents and ledgers for Vencarlo's academy. It appears that up until the death of King Eodred II, Vencarlo's academy was doing rather well, but then business turned bad as students failed to show and Vencarlo took an increasing number of breaks from teaching.

A5. Pantry: Food and water are stored here, although the perishable food has gone bad. Vencarlo had no kitchen to speak of, as he generally has prepared food brought in and takes his meals in the living room or in his workshop.

A6. Living Room: Two large sofas face a brick fireplace. A fire burns brightly inside the hearth, despite the fact that the building seems to be abandoned.

A7. Training Room: This is an open room used to train and practice sword fighting. Practice dummies stand in the western corners, to either side of a brick fireplace. A fire burns inside, as down below. The ceiling is 14 feet high, with exposed rafters giving the room an open feel.

A8. Bedroom: Vencarlo's bedroom appears well lived in, but the bed is made and hasn't been slept in. A desk and chair sit next to the bed, and a small clothes closet is to the north.

Creatures: In truth, Vencarlo hasn't been here since he fled the burning of his academy (only to be captured shortly thereafter by the Arkonas), and two Red Mantis assassins have been living here in secret. Posted here in case Vencarlo should attempt to return, the assassins are eager to ambush anyone who enters the home.

Patient and professional, these Red Mantis assassins serve 8-hour shifts before they are replaced by two others sent from their hidden headquarters below the Longacre Building (see Chapter 4). One Red Mantis hides in the nook behind the northern sofa in area **A6** (just under the rising

stairs) while the second assassin lurks in the rafters above area **A7**. As soon as they hear anyone enter the building, they spend charges from their masks to gain the +5 bonus on Perception checks and the effects of *see invisibility* and *deathwatch* (or darkvision, if it's night)—followed by their preparatory magic as they ready their ambush.

The Red Mantis agents are concerned with finding and finishing the job they started: assassinating Neolandus Kalepopolis. But since he's currently being held by the Arkonas and Queen Ileosa has the Red Mantis's resources spread so thin, it's been slow going for the assassins. The lead that Vencarlo might know something about the ex-seneschal's location took the Red Mantis weeks, if not months, to acquire, and when the PCs arrive at Vencarlo's home, the delicate operation set into motion by the assassins becomes threatened. Despite the fact that the PCs aren't officially targets of the Red Mantis yet, they are known to the group, and their involvement in Kalepopolis's fate quickly puts them at odds with the infamous assassin's guild.

RED MANTIS ASSASSINS (2) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

Human fighter 3/rogue 3/red mantis assassin 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide* 282)

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 shield)

hp 78 each (9 HD; 6d8+3d10+30)

Fort +8, **Ref** +11, **Will** +5 (+1 vs. fear)

Defensive Abilities evasion, red shroud (2/day, 3 rounds), trap sense +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *+1 sawtooth sabre* +11/+6 (1d8+8/19–20), *+1 sawtooth sabre* +11 (1d8+6/19–20)

Ranged dagger +11 (1d4+5/19–20)

Special Attacks prayer attack (DC 16), sneak attack +3d6

Red Mantis Assassin Spells Known (CL 3rd; concentration +4)

1st (4/day)—*expeditious retreat*, *feather fall*, *magic weapon*, *vanish*[APG]

TACTICS

Before Combat As soon as the assassins realize someone's entering the house, they each drink a *potion of resist fire* and a *potion of bull's* strength, cast *magic weapon* on their blades, and spend charges from their masks to activate all of the masks' abilities (using the effects of *deathwatch* at day or darkvision at night). They then remain hidden until they are spotted or until at least one PC climbs the stairs up to area **A7**.

During Combat The assassins are outnumbered, but they've got a deadly advantage: just as in their previous attempt to slay Vencarlo, they crept into the ambush site early and prepared the place with distilled alchemist's fire. On the first round of combat, each assassin throws a vial of alchemist's fire at the fireplace on her level, causing flames to burst out and quickly light the room on fire. The 3 squares the fireplace takes up are now burning—each round, the fire spreads quickly to 1d4 adjacent squares. A character in a square that is on fire takes 1d6 points of fire damage and must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save or catch on fire. The Red Mantis assassins need not fear the fire as long as their potions last, and they use the fire to their advantage as they are able. Once the battle begins, the assassins each activate their red shroud ability and make an effort to reach each other so they can team up and flank foes. If the assassins begin combat with only one PC in sight, an assassin attempts to use his prayer attack on that PC before starting his fire.

Morale The assassins fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 18, **Con** 14, **Int** 8, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 26

Feats Alertness, Arcane Strike, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (sawtooth sabre), Toughness, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse,

RED MANTIS ASSASSIN

Weapon Focus (sawtooth sabre), Weapon Specialization (sawtooth sabre)

Skills Acrobatics +16, Bluff +10, Climb +16, Intimidate +10, Perception +14, Sense Motive +2, Stealth +16

Languages Common

SQ armor training 1, rogue talent (finesse rogue), trapfinding +1

Combat Gear *potion of bull's strength* (2), *potion of resist fire*, alchemist's fire (2); **Other Gear** *+1 leather armor*, *+1 sawtooth sabres*[UE] (2), daggers (4), *cloak of resistance +1*, *mask of the mantis* (see page 434), 27 pp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Prayer Attack (Su) To initiate a prayer attack, a Red Mantis assassin holds her sawtooth sabre (or sabres) out, point down, and weaves the blade in the air. She must be within 30 feet of and visible to her victim. Beginning a prayer attack is a standard action, and causes her victim to be fascinated by her unless he succeeds at a DC 16 Will save. She can maintain the fascination effect by concentrating. The victim can attempt a new save to escape fascination each time a threat (other than the assassin) appears. At any point after 3 rounds, the assassin can make a coup de grace attack against the target, provided the target is still fascinated. Activating or concentrating on maintaining a prayer attack does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Red Shroud (Su) A Red Mantis assassin can create a veil of red mist two times per day as a move action. The red shroud persists for 3 rounds. It grants a +1 dodge bonus to Armor Class and fast healing 2. This mist cannot be dissipated by wind. If she is slain while this ability is active, she can choose whether to remain corporeal or to disintegrate into a cloud of red mist that leaves behind only her gear in order to deprive her enemies of access to her remains.

Treasure: A successful DC 30 Perception check while examining area **A8** reveals a hidden panel in the east wall of the closet. The Red Mantis assassins missed it merely because they're not here to loot the place and so haven't done a hard search of the building. Opening it reveals a tiny compartment containing a metal iron lockbox. The box can be opened with a successful DC 40 Disable Device check (the key is now with Vencarlo's other confiscated gear in the Arkona Palace; see area **D16** on page 171), or bashed open (hardness 10; hp 40, break DC 23). Inside is a *bag of holding* (type I) that contains a black hooded *cloak of elvenkind*, several black masks, a dozen masterwork daggers with a stylized "B" engraved in their pommels, a black leather suit of *+2 slick leather armor*, a pair of black leather *boots of elvenkind*, an *amulet of proof against detection and location*, a pair of black leather *gloves of swimming and climbing* (with two fingers in the right hand containing

VENCARLO'S SECRET

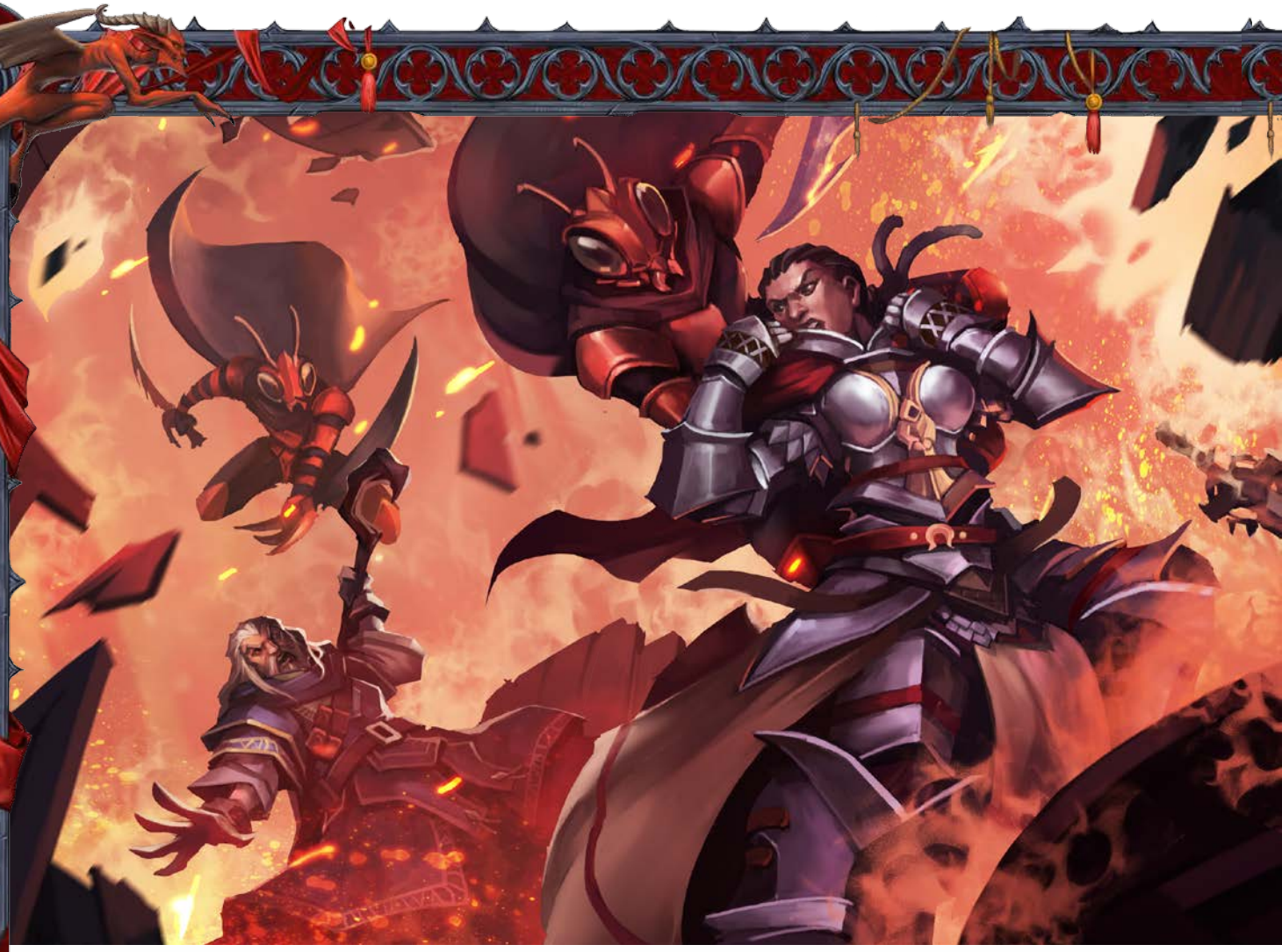
fake, adjustable wooden fingers), and an exquisite *+2 keen mithral rapier*. Characters who attended the execution from which Trinia was rescued at the end of "Edge of Anarchy" recognize the clothes immediately; otherwise, it requires a successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) check to recognize Blackjack's signature armor and weaponry.

With this gear, a PC could effectively become the next Blackjack. The identity of Blackjack, a famous folk hero of Korvosa, has been passed down from hero to hero over the course of generations. Vencarlo is the latest Blackjack, although with his imprisonment in the Arkona dungeons and the discovery of these clothes by the PCs, that mantle may fall upon another's shoulders.

Development: If the PCs don't put out the fire, Vencarlo's home goes up in flames. Fire is one of the few things that draws Old Korvosa's citizens out, and they and brigades of Arkona agents do their best to contain the blaze—without aid, they do, but they are unable to save the house. If the house burns, Vencarlo's iron coffer (its contents unharmed by the flames) can be found in the rubble with a successful DC 25 Perception check.

The Concerned Student

Hitting a dead end this early in the adventure might stump the PCs at first, but fortunately an ally with more clues approaches them shortly after they visit Vencarlo's home. Drawn by the flames as Vencarlo's house burns, or perhaps by the sounds of combat or the sight of the PCs entering his teacher's home, a desperate and worried student named Amin Jalento approaches them not long after things in Vencarlo's home come to an end. This might not be the first time the PCs have met young Amin; they might have saved him from the mob back in "Edge of



Anarchy," in which case his delight upon recognizing the PCs is apparent on his face. If Amin didn't survive, then this character is instead his concerned cousin, Gerran.

Once Amin has the PCs in a place where they can talk quietly (a likely option is in the partially collapsed building across the street from the academy where he's been squatting for the past several days), Amin tells the PCs his story. He was attending classes at Vencarlo's academy when the quarantine hit, and when he was unable to escape back to the mainland and his home, Vencarlo graciously allowed Amin to stay at the academy as a guest. That stay ended not long after, when several Red Mantis assassins invaded the building. Vencarlo confronted them and took one of them down, but there were too many. Vencarlo was forced to flee, and Amin assumes the assassins burned down the academy as a warning as much as anything else.

Amin doesn't know where Vencarlo has gone, but he does suspect who might. In the days after the quarantine, while he was Vencarlo's houseguest, Amin noticed his teacher seemed restless and distracted. Vencarlo regularly left his house at odd hours in the night, sometimes not returning until morning. After one such return, Vencarlo's clothes were bloody, and he said he had to fight off a thief, but Amin is sure there was more to it than that. Furthermore, in the days before the Red Mantis assassins attacked, Vencarlo had a singularly strange houseguest visit several times—a man with paint-stained hands, wild hair, and a jittery habit of looking about. Vencarlo introduced him as a friend, but Amin recognized him as a somewhat notorious local artist named Salvator Scream. Vencarlo and Salvator always met behind closed doors, three times in all, and on that last meeting Amin swore he heard Vencarlo's voice raised in anger. Unfortunately, he has little more information than that. He's been meaning to try to track down Salvator to ask him if he knows what happened to Vencarlo, but has not, of yet, worked up the courage to brave Old Dock, the place where Salvator's home is located.

AMIN JALENTO **CR 1**

XP 400

hp 19 (see page 32)

Story Award: If the PCs learn about Salvator Scream, award them 2,400 XP, and if they escort Amin safely back to the mainland, award them a further 4,800 XP.

B THE ARTIST'S LAIR

Amin knows that Salvator lives in Old Dock and did enough asking around to confirm that the artist lived in a building located at 140 Wave Street. He also knows that Old Dock is under the control of the Emperor of Old Korvosa. Amin's heard plenty of rumors about the emperor—that he's a cannibal, that he's beheaded more people than died to blood veil, that he's a devil hiding in the flesh of a man, and that his minions are almost as bad as he is. Although Amin doesn't believe the rumors, he does believe the emperor is deserving of them, and wants nothing to do with Old Dock as a result.

A character who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (local) or Diplomacy check to gather information knows that Salvator Scream is a notorious artist whose gruesome and often scandalous art is held in relatively high esteem by several of Korvosa's nobles. His popularity is even greater among the lower classes, who are most familiar with his work at the Old Dock playhouse known as Exemplary Execrables, where his paintings served as grisly backdrops to that venue's notoriously violent entertainments. Salvator himself isn't a public figure, though, and beyond his name, few folk can say they know him.

Salvator's home is a leaning, decrepit building located along the Narrows, not far from one of the many now-ruined bridges that once connected Old Korvosa to the mainland. Salvator continued to live in this home for some time after the quarantine began, but after his last visit to Vencarlo (and well after he'd turned over Neolandus to the Arkonas for safekeeping), the Emperor of Old Korvosa sent a group of thugs out here to "collect" the artist. The emperor is eager to rebuild his collection of violence and mayhem after Exemplary Execrables burned to the ground; he's managed to reacquire or salvage a lot from the ruined playhouse, and Salvator Scream is merely the latest of his acquisitions. The emperor has kept Salvator's capture relatively quiet, but *locate creature* should lead the PCs directly to Salvator.

Although Salvator hasn't lived here for many days, his house is not abandoned. Its current inhabitant is Laori Vaus, a member of a secretive society known as the Brotherhood of Bones who came to Korvosa on the trail of the Nidalese criminal Andaisin, but who ended up staying in the city for other reasons. Although Laori worships the same patron as legendary Kazavon himself, she might be one of the more useful allies the PCs meet.

Use the map on page 143 for this location.

B1 Front Room

The smell in this entryway is of must and mildew, much of it coming from the mud tracked over the floorboards, as if a small army had marched through the room. To the south stands a single empty set of shelves.

The muddy prints on the floor were left by the emperor's thugs when they invaded the building several days ago. A character who succeeds at a DC 20 Survival check discerns not only that a half-dozen people were involved, but that a seventh person was likely dragged back out of the building—the thin trails and scuff marks of his dangling feet hint at the abduction.

B2 Bedroom

A single bed, the blankets and pillows atop it scattered and in disarray, sits to the south in this room. More muddy boot prints mar the wooden floor here and a splash of dried blood decorates one pillow.

When they invaded, the emperor's thugs found Salvator sleeping here. One of them knocked him out with a blow to the head, and the others helped drag him back to Pilts's Palace. A successful DC 20 Survival check confirms that the prints lead up to the bed and that the victim was likely abducted as he slept.

B3 Salvator's Studio (CR 10)

Both of this room's windows are tightly shuttered, yet the air inside seems strangely fresh and scented, no doubt because of the six large candles that burn within. Each candle has been affixed by a glob of melted wax to the crown of a gleaming, polished skull, and each of these impromptu and grisly candleholders has been placed atop an otherwise clear desk to the west, arrayed in a gentle arc. A chair sits before the desk, and a careful stack of papers and scrolls sits inside the arc of skulls. To the south stands a nearly empty cabinet, its shelves barren save for a few paintbrushes and a cracked pottery urn.

This chamber served Salvator as his studio, and it was here that he spent the majority of his time, committing the visions of violence in his head to canvas. His painting supplies, finished art, and easel were taken from here soon after he was abducted, leaving behind only the room's few furnishings.

Creature: This room's current occupant is an elven woman named Laori Vaus, a priestess of the god of darkness and pain, a member of a secret society called the Brotherhood of Bones, and possibly one of the party's greatest allies in "Escape from Old Korvosa." See her NPC entry on page 450 for more details on this unusual worshiper of Zon-Kuthon.

The Brotherhood of Bones consists of a group of Zon-Kuthon worshipers from across Avistan, and these fanatics seek a singular goal: securing the relics of Kazavon to keep anyone from resurrecting the ancient warlord.

The Brotherhood of Bones has long suspected that one of these relics was located in Varisia, so when a wanted Nidalese criminal named Andaisin was believed to have fled to Korvosa, Laori volunteered to travel to the city to try to track her down. In truth, she simply used this as a public excuse to cover for a long trip to Korvosa to search for Kazavon's relics for the brotherhood without exposing that goal to the Nidalese government.

Laori arrived in Korvosa just as blood veil began to spread, and used the chaos of the plague to further obscure her research. She learned early on where Lady Andaisin was hiding out, but left her be so that she could milk her time in Korvosa for all it was worth to research Kazavon's influence on the city. What she found was the proof she sought—seven artists and artisans whose work incorporated Kazavon's unmistakable influence. Yet even more incredible, his influence was the most potent in the city's new queen. When the PCs defeated Andaisin and, soon thereafter, Queen Ileosa appeared publicly with Kazavon's fangs displayed on her crown, Laori was stunned. She now remains in Korvosa to observe while her superiors in the brotherhood determine what the next step should be.

As she waited and watched the queen, Laori searched for the seven artists. Unfortunately, one after the other, six of the seven proved to be dead by their own hands, so Laori tracked down their bodies and collected their skulls, which are the six now sitting on the table in this room. Periodically, Laori uses *speak with dead* to try to communicate with the skulls, but the results of these castings are generally too garbled to make much sense of. From left to right, the skulls belonged to Jeonia Chirco (a costumer), Boathar Kaay (a toymaker), Velaka Hoon (a writer), Maxtel Erns (a sculptor), Yvos Tanguany (a tattooist), and Imon Vernell (a poet).

Laori saved Salvator for last in her search because she suspected the whisperings of Kazavon were strongest in this artist, judging by his work. Although she was disappointed to find that Salvator had gone missing by the time she found his address, she tempered that disappointment with the discovery that the artist, unlike the other six, remained alive as a captive of the Emperor of Old Korvosa. Laori has been trying to decide on the best route to confront the emperor and gain access to Salvator to interrogate him, spending the last few nights here at Salvator's home meditating and attempting to discover any remaining shadows of Kazavon's influence in the area. She's found none, but hopes to learn more by speaking with Salvator in person.

Although she's a sadist and something of a lunatic, Laori is not the enemy. To a certain extent, the PCs and the Brotherhood of Bones will eventually share the same goal of removing Kazavon's influence from Queen Ileosa and the city of Korvosa, after all. For now, Laori views the arrival of a group of adventurers as a sign from Zon-Kuthon. Here she was, trying to figure out the best way to confront the Emperor of Old Korvosa to gain access to Salvator Scream, when a handy group of specialists showed up looking for the same thing. Assuming the PCs don't immediately attack her, she greets them cheerfully, introducing herself as Laori Vaus and asking if they're looking for Salvator as well.

While Laori doesn't hide her allegiance to Zon-Kuthon and openly admits (if asked) that she wants to speak to Salvator because his art has a lot of themes important to Zon-Kuthon's faith, she remains close-lipped about the Brotherhood of Bones, never mentioning the organization and volunteering no information of her suspicions about Queen Ileosa. She certainly doesn't mention anything about Kazavon. She hopes the PCs can help her secure an audience with Salvator, but isn't sure how far she can actually trust them, especially if members of the group include paladins or priests of Shelyn. Only if magically compelled does Laori reveal this information. The fact that Queen Ileosa's new crown is made out of the teeth of a notorious warlord of Zon-Kuthon is a revelation that the PCs are expected to learn at the end of the chapter when they rescue Neolandus Kalepopolis, though discovering this a little early from Laori works just as well. The PCs still need to rescue the seneschal, if only to find out what he knows about defeating such powerful magic.

If the PCs voice concern that Laori might be planning to harm Salvator, she brushes off the very concept with a good-natured laugh and tells the truth: "Why would I want to hurt him? He's a talented artist! I would just like to ask him where his inspiration comes from." It shouldn't be long before Laori proposes that she and the PCs team up and work together to find Salvator. She mentions she already found out who took him and suspects she knows where he is, and to further sweeten the deal, she insinuates she found something here she believes the PCs would be very interested to know about.

Laori is referring to a fragment of cloth she found in Salvator's bedroom. When Neolandus staggered into Salvator's home in the predawn hours, dreadfully wounded and poisoned from his run-in with the Red Mantis, his uniform was in terrible shape. Salvator did what he could to tend Neolandus's wounds, but was forced to tear apart the seneschal's uniform to get a splint on the man's broken arm. Laori discovered and kept a fragment of the sleeve that slipped down between the bed and the wall. She recognized the scrap as coming from a government official's uniform, but has not yet deciphered its significance. She assumes a bloodstained fragment of a politician's uniform is of interest to the PCs, though. She hands it over to them if they agree to an alliance, and also reveals that Salvator is held by the Emperor of Old Korvosa.

The scrap is obviously from a high-ranking Korvosan official, since the city's coat of arms appears on the fragment, but a successful DC 15 Knowledge (nobility) check is required to determine the fragment is from the uniform of the seneschal of Castle Korvosa.

LAORI VAUS **CR 10**

XP 9,600

hp 108 (see page 450)

Development: If the PCs don't agree to work with Laori at this point, she looks a little hurt but recovers quickly, returning to her usual cheerful self. She says, "That's all right—maybe we'll run into each other again down the road!" and heads off into Old Korvosa. In fact, she doesn't go far; she remains close by, following the PCs and waiting to "reappear" once they've found Salvator. She may even pop in to save the PCs if a fight goes bad, using the chance to rescue them as an opportunity to try to prove her good intentions to the group one more time.

Story Award: If the PCs deal with Laori peacefully and form an alliance with her, award them experience points as if they had defeated her in combat.

B4 Fungal Incursion (CR 6)

This room appears to have once been a combination kitchen and storeroom, but is now a bewildering riot of brightly colored fungus and mold. The stuff grows everywhere and in every color, over tables, across cupboards, and in swaths along the floor and walls, but it seems thickest to the southwest, where puffy sheets of yellow fungus cover several objects so completely it's impossible to make out what lies beneath.

In an effort to get just the right colors on canvas to correspond to those in his strange visions, Salvator resorted to cultivating brightly colored strains of fungus to craft his own pigments, an endeavor which met with some success. However, since he was taken from his home, the fungus he normally kept well maintained here has run riot, covering much of the room's otherwise mundane contents.

Hazard: Among the harmless strains of fungus that have taken over much of this room grows a single colony of yellow mold (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 416). Salvator kept a small patch of the fungus on hand as he valued the vibrant colors he could distill from it, taking care to keep the flask of mold in sunlight when working with it. In his absence, however, the spores have grown into a patch that covers a 5-foot square in the northeast corner of the room, an area of the room that is never exposed to the rays of direct sunlight.

YELLOW MOLD **CR 6**

XP 2,400

Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook 416

Treasure: The yellow mold has grown over a fair portion of Salvator's painting supplies, including a full jar of *marvelous pigments*.

B5 Sinkhole (CR 7)

What once might have been a small house has been obliterated, collapsed from within by a twenty-foot-diameter sinkhole. Water from the Narrows fills the hole, creating a muddy pit strewn with jagged bits of timber and flotsam. The edges of the hole are slick and patchy with fungus. Immediately south of the sinkhole, the boardwalk has also collapsed, creating a dangerous tangle of timber and crazily tilted pilings.

The sinkhole isn't quite as deep as it looks, although the 5 feet of standing water covers several more feet of mud. The mud on the bottom of the hole is considered difficult terrain. The sides of the sinkhole aren't particularly steep, but the loose soil and mud make clambering up them somewhat treacherous; a successful DC 5 Climb check is needed to navigate the slope. While this may be a simple task for one trained in climbing, a heavily armored character may have problems doing so, particularly if the sinkhole's denizens are riled up!

Creatures: With Old Korvosa going under quarantine, the soldiers normally in charge of keeping the island's indigenous otyugh population contained have not been able to keep up with their charge, and the otyughs of Old Korvosa are slowly coming to realize they're free. The sinkhole here was created when several otyughs forced their way out of the sewers through a drainage tunnel. Barely able to fit, the otyughs caused the collapse of the small shack that once stood here in their struggles to escape, and their further thrashings caused the destruction of the boardwalk. Now, the monsters wallow in the water and mud of the sinkhole, periodically lurching out of the water to attack anyone who comes too close.

OTYUGHS (3) **CR 4**

XP 1,200 each

hp 39 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 223)

Development: If the PCs haven't yet met Laori when the otyughs attack, she emerges from area **B3** 1 round after combat begins. She shrieks in delight at the sight of the battle, and rushes to assist the PCs, hoping that her aid will make the PCs more disposed toward helping her contact Salvator. Once the battle is over, she interacts with the PCs as detailed in area **B3** above.

PART 2

EMPEROR OF OLD KORVOSA

In his previous life, the Emperor of Old Korvosa was a man named Pilts Swastel, owner of Exemplary Execrables, a notorious playhouse that specialized in violent, gruesome productions. Pilts was already a bit unhinged before Korvosa fell apart, but the riots, a bout with blood veil, and the quarantine pushed him the rest of the way to derangement. Given his knack for showboating and organizing crowds and his horrifying imagination, it was a relatively simple thing for him to transition from theater director to gang lord.

The emperor's imagination has captured the admiration of the mob he rules—from the gory but entertaining real-life plays he produces to new ventures, such as the extremely popular game of blood pig, his followers look to him for ongoing distractions from the horrors of their new world. Yet the emperor is also a primary source of that same horror. His obsession with an extravagantly carved guillotine has created a constant need for new victims, and when the mob can't provide the emperor with such playthings to go under the blade of his favorite toy, he is boundlessly creative in finding reasons to punish random followers with his "tall knife" for transgressions against his new laws. Today, Pilts's position of power is growing. Every day, his mob absorbs or murders more of Old Korvosa's remaining citizens, and his resulting influence expands.

WHO IS THE EMPEROR?

After his playhouse was partially burned to the ground, Pilts decided to relocate his home to a group of buildings a bit closer to the core of Old Dock, where he could centralize his power base. Pilts has converted these onetime tenements into a "palace." He managed to save many of his old props and gruesome backdrops, storing them for now in his palace while he works on plans for a new, larger playhouse. He couldn't salvage it all, though, and his latest "acquisition," Salvator Scream, is his first step to rebuild his assets.

The Emperor of Old Korvosa has rapidly become one of the most notorious figures in the quarantine zone. If the PCs take the time to gather information specifically about the emperor, they can learn much about the man before they ever confront him. Each attempt to gather information requires 1d4 hours of work and a successful Diplomacy check. If the PCs gather information outside of Old Korvosa, where word of the emperor is more difficult to come by, they take a –20 penalty on this Diplomacy check. Each successful check yields results as summarized on the Researching the Emperor table on page 151.

C PILTS'S PALACE

The streets surrounding the palace are littered with bodies, rubble, and refuse; feral dogs, stirges, drain spiders, and other vermin scuttle around with a bravery not seen in the city before the quarantine. The farther one ventures into Old Dock and the closer one draws to the palace, the fewer citizens appear behind boarded windows, and the more signs of the emperor's mob grow. Vandalism, brutalized bodies hung up on display, remnants of fires, and other evidence of public violence are everywhere.

The Emperor of Old Korvosa's palace is located at 11 Silk Street in Old Dock, a collection of tenements and abandoned stores that barely escaped destruction during a recent fire that consumed much of the city block to the west. The palace consists of six buildings, the lower floors of which have been gutted and destroyed by mob violence (see the map on page 152). Only the upper floors of the northern buildings remain intact; to the south, the roofs alone remain, leaving hollow shells of buildings below. Other than this, all of these wood buildings are stable and in no danger of collapse, despite the large amount of cosmetic damage the mob has inflicted on them in the form of graffiti, scorch marks, and weapon play.

Not all of the emperor's citizens dwell within his palace complex. In fact, the vast majority live spread out through all of Old Dock. Nonetheless, the emperor retains a small contingent of thugs in his palace as personal guards, and they are stationed as indicated in the area encounter descriptions on the following pages. If these guards are ever defeated, Pilts has hundreds of replacements from across Old Korvosa he can call on to serve as reinforcements.

If the PCs are escorted to the palace by a mob (see page 141), the mob announces its arrival with yells and calls, forcing the PCs to enter at area **C1** and then move up to area **C4** to stand before the emperor. In this case, all of the additional thugs in the palace are on alert and ready to defend the place.

If the PCs aren't being escorted, they can pick their own route into the palace. As soon as any guards notice them,

RESEARCHING THE EMPEROR

Diplomacy Result	Information Gathered
DC 10	The Emperor of Old Korvosa rules Old Dock from his palace on Silk Street. He's seized control of several tenements there, and rarely leaves the place. Mobs of his fanatics scour the streets of Old Dock, seeking more conscripts for his cause. Those who resist are instead captured for other purposes.
DC 15	The emperor sees Old Korvosa as his stage. He forces some of his prisoners to take part in violent, deadly games or gruesome performances, pitting them against his most ferocious pets and followers. Others he simply beheads with his favorite toy, an extravagant guillotine called the "Tall Knife."
DC 20	Those who seek to speak with the emperor must first earn his respect by providing him with entertainment. Of late, it is said that the emperor's favorite entertainment is a brutal game he invented called blood pig. He's converted a large rooftop inside of his palace into a playing field for this game, and the howls and screams of those playing and watching can be heard throughout Old Dock every evening.
DC 30	Before the quarantine, the emperor was a man named Pilts Swastel, the owner of a notorious theater called Exemplary Execrables in Old Korvosa.

they raise the alarm and confront the PCs, demanding to know their purpose. With a successful DC 25 Diplomacy check or successful DC 16 Intimidate check, a PC convinces the thugs to let the PCs in to speak to the emperor; if the PC beats the DC by 10 or more, the thugs don't demand the PCs to turn over their weapons before escorting them to area **C4**. A battle with the guards could quickly turn into an all-out brawl spread across the entire palace, with the emperor barking orders and aiding his minions from his throne as best he can. In this event, the PCs need not defeat every single thug in the palace. Defeating the emperor is enough to cow the entire mob (see area **C3**).

C1 Palace Entrance

The interior of this home has been gutted. A huge mound of rubble—broken timbers, bits of wall, ruined furniture, and other debris—lies heaped in the center of the room. Rickety wooden stairs wind up to a splintered hole in the wall near the roof above.

Areas **C1** and **C2** are connected by a rope bridge suspended 15 feet off the ground.

C2 Guardroom (CR 8)

What was once an attic has been cleared of all clutter, leaving a large open area under exposed rafters and the roof above. Rope bridges lead to other areas outside of the room to the northeast and southwest, and a flight of stairs descends to a lower floor to the northwest.

While the northeast rope bridge is level, the southwest one climbs an additional 10 feet to area **C3**, turning the bridge into a somewhat unsettling (but still relatively safe) "rope stairway." The wooden stairs descend to a floor that has been filled almost completely with rubble that blocks entry from below.

Creatures: If the alarm is not raised, four of the emperor's thugs stand guard in this room, leaning casually against the wall and deep in an argument about whether chokers have skeletons or not. As long as they're arguing, they're distracted and take a –5 penalty on Perception checks.

EMPEROR'S THUGS (4) **CR 4**

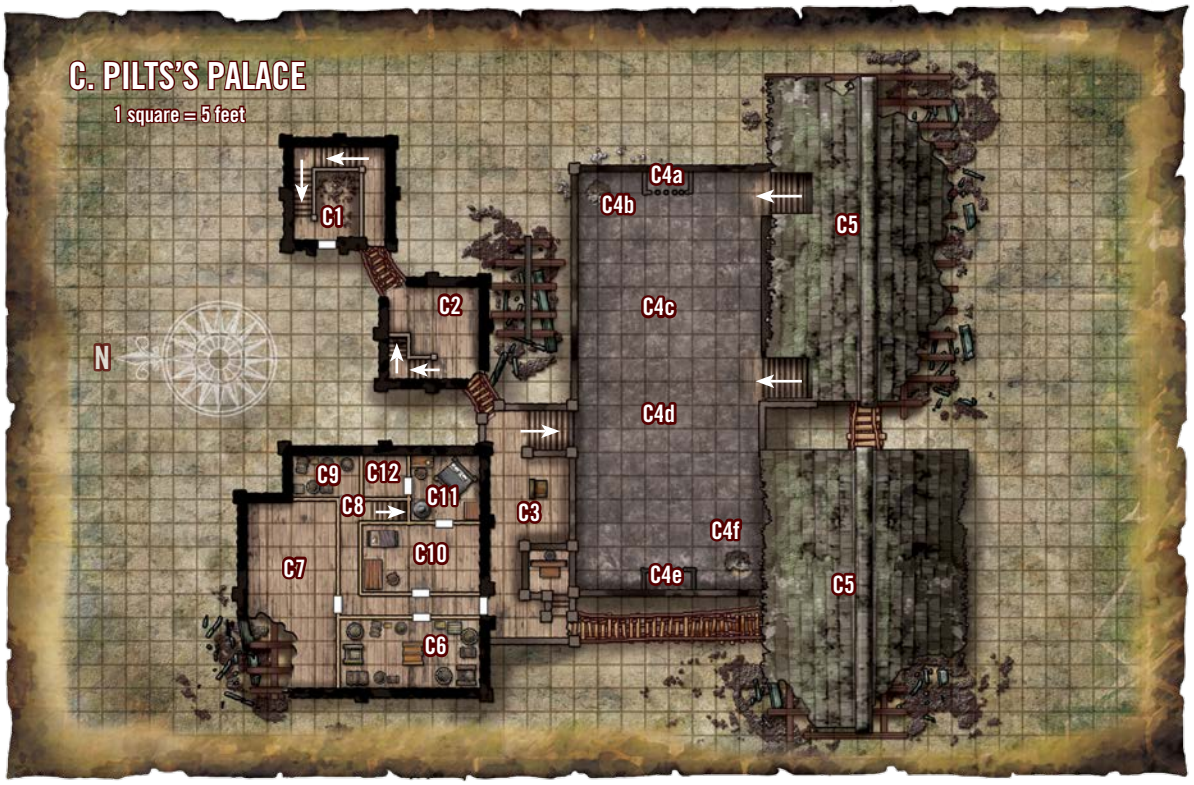
XP 1,200 each

hp 46 each (see page 142)

C3 The Emperor's Throne (CR 12)

This open-air balcony is shielded from rain and sun by a brightly colored canvas roof that extends up over the area like a half-dome, held in place by a wooden framework. The inside of the canvas has been decorated with scenes of gruesome debauchery; battlefields, executions, torture chambers, and human-eating monsters all vie for space. The balcony contains two major features of note. The first is a high-backed throne that looks like a poor man's version of the Crimson Throne, a thing of blood-red cushions and silks and spikes. Directly west of the throne stands an intimidating device: a tall guillotine of carved wood and bone, its base depicting grasping demonic feet and the housing of its glittering blade a leering demonic face.

This balcony is where the Emperor of Old Korvosa holds court, 25 feet off the ground and overlooking a large open rooftop. The guillotine is one of the emperor's most valued prizes—a device he had constructed at great expense to enhance and build upon the legend of the *final blades* of Galt. Known variously as the Tall Knife, Jabbyr's



Tongue, and the Demon's Maw, the guillotine was the first thing Pilts rescued from his old lair when the fire spread, and it remains his favorite method for disposing of unneeded prisoners. It takes 3 rounds to strap a willing or helpless character into place in the Demon's Maw; once a character is strapped down, she must succeed at a DC 30 Escape Artist check (or spend 3 rounds undoing the straps) to escape. The guillotine can be triggered as a move action, at which point the blade drops out of the housing above to shear through the victim's neck. Treat this as a coup de grace performed by a creature with a Strength score of 26 wielding a Large greataxe. The victim takes 9d6+36 points of damage and must then succeed at a Fortitude save (DC = 10 + the damage dealt by the blade) to avoid death. To date, none have survived the Tall Knife's kiss.

Creatures: The Emperor of Old Korvosa holds court here daily. After waking and taking his breakfast in his bedroom (area **C11**), he generally takes a seat here on his throne an hour after sunrise and remains until dusk. During this time, he hears reports from his mob and entertains pleas from citizens of Old Dock desperate for more food, shelter, or safety. Most of his time, though, is spent in entertainment, whether directing his latest grotesque play or observing a contest, game, or execution.

Pilts is an odious man—a thin Chelaxian cursed from childhood by acne, made worse of late by his recent bout with blood veil. Pilts has an extensive collection of costumes, and he delights in mixing and matching them to create an endless array of variations on what he believes to be royal attire. That his costumes are generally threadbare and ratty gives him the look more of a vagrant king than actual royalty, but all who have pointed this out to him before have felt the Tall Knife's kiss. Despite his unsavory appearance, Pilts has an almost hypnotic speaking voice and a real talent for grandstanding and delivering compelling soliloquies; these are his greatest tools for gathering the desperate and cruel to his banner.

When he's holding court, the emperor is always attended by four thugs and his cohort, a deranged gnome named Jabbyr. Pilts found Jabbyr several years ago in a shipment of torture devices he imported from Cheliax, near death and tongueless, and with one eye burned out by a hot poker. How the gnome ended up in the shipment and whether his wounds were inflicted by some cruel past master or were self-inflicted, Pilts never determined. At first, he thought Jabbyr was dead, but when Pilts tried to extract him from the torture device, the tormented soul shrieked and began babbling. Pilts took the nearly dead gnome under his wing. Jabbyr never quite recovered his mind from whatever nameless tortures he'd undergone, but he did indeed become a loyal minion of the man he now calls "Unca Pit." Today, Jabbyr serves primarily as the operator for the Tall Knife, a role he has taken to with great delight, especially since Pilts dressed him as a court

executioner, stitching up the eyehole in the hood that one-eyed Jabbyr no longer needs.

PILTS SWASTEL **CR 10**

XP 9,600

Male human bard 11

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 13, flat-footed 19 (+5 armor, +3 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 97 (11d8+44)

Fort +7, **Ref** +13, **Will** +8; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk war razor +13/+8 (1d4/19–20)

Ranged mwk light crossbow +13 (1d8/19–20)

Special Attacks bardic performance 28 rounds/day (move action; countersong, dirge of doom, distraction, fascinate [DC 19], inspire competence +4, inspire courage +3, inspire greatness, suggestion [DC 19])

Bard Spells Known (CL 11th; concentration +15)

4th (3/day)—*dimension door*, *greater invisibility*, *modify memory* (DC 18)

3rd (5/day)—*charm monster* (DC 17), *confusion* (DC 17), *displacement*, *glibness*

2nd (5/day)—*cat's grace*, *detect thoughts* (DC 16), *hold person* (DC 16), *mirror image*, *tongues*

1st (6/day)—*alarm*, *charm person* (DC 15), *cure light wounds*, *grease* (DC 15), *undetectable alignment*, *unseen servant*

0 (at will)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 14), *mage hand*, *open/close* (DC 14), *prestidigitation*

TACTICS

Before Combat Pilts casts *alarm* on the door to Salvator's cell every morning, and *unseen servant* and *undetectable alignment* as soon as he takes his throne for the day. As soon as he realizes he's about to have visitors, he also casts *glibness* and *tongues* on himself. Before Pilts enters combat, he makes sure to drink his *potion of barkskin +4* and casts *cat's grace*.

During Combat Pilts orders his minions to the attack, supporting them with inspire courage on the first round of combat. He then alternates casting spells such as *confusion*, *charm monster*, and *hold person* with activations of his *rod of wonder*. Each time he successfully uses this unpredictable device, he shrieks in delight and offers impromptu commentary on the rod's results. As soon as it seems obvious that he's about to be attacked, he casts *displacement* on himself and fights back with his war razor.

Morale If brought below 20 hit points, the emperor uses *dimension door* to go to his bedroom (area **C11**), then takes 3d6 rounds gathering up his favorite prizes before using *dimension door* again (or by fleeing via area **C7**) to hide out in Old Dock and nurse his wounds and plan his revenge against the PCs. If he's brought below 10 hit points and unable to use *dimension door*, Pilts's bravado crumbles. He drops to his knees and begs pitifully for his life, offering up pretty much anything to the PCs in return for mercy. In either event, as soon as Pilts is killed or surrenders publicly (or 2d6 rounds after he flees), his mob falls to pieces and the thugs scatter, seeking a safe place to recover and figure out what to do next.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 18, **Con** 14, **Int** 13, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 22

PILTS SWASTEL

Feats Craft Rod, Craft Wondrous Item, Leadership, Martial Weapon Proficiency (war razor), Persuasive, Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Diplomacy +18, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (local) +20, Perception +13, Perform (act) +18, Perform (comedy) +18, Perform (oratory) +18, Sleight of Hand +15, Stealth +15, Survival +10

Languages Common, Gnome, Varisian

SQ bardic knowledge +5, jack-of-all-trades, lore master 2/day, versatile performances (act, comedy, oratory)

Combat Gear *potion of barkskin +4* (2), *rod of wonder*; **Other Gear** *+1 glamered chain shirt*, mwk light crossbow with 10 bolts, mwk war razor[ISWG], *cloak of resistance +2*, *headband of alluring charisma +2*, 291 gp

JABBYR AND THE TALL KNIFE

JABBYR **CR 8**

XP 4,800

Male gnome barbarian 9

CE Small humanoid (gnome)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural, –2 rage, +1 size)

hp 118 (9d12+54)

Fort +11, **Ref** +5, **Will** +8; +2 vs. illusions

Defensive Abilities defensive training, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3; **DR** 1/—

OFFENSE

Speed 35 ft.

Melee *+1 greataxe* +17/+12 (1d10+8/×3)

Special Attacks hatred, rage (23 rounds/day), rage powers (clear mind, guarded stance +2, no escape, swift foot)

TACTICS

Before Combat As soon as combat begins, Jabbyr rages.

During Combat Jabbyr follows Pilts's commands exactly, attacking whomever the emperor orders him to. Left to his own devices, Jabbyr tends to focus on whatever enemy is closest. The single exception to this is gnomes, as Jabbyr attacks other gnomes only in response to being attacked by one of them first. Pilts knows better than to order the insane barbarian to attack another gnome, in any event.

Morale Jabbyr fights to the death. If he discovers that Pilts has been killed, he freezes in shock for 1 round before continuing his rage (this round of no actions still depletes his available rounds of raging as normal). On the other hand, if Pilts surrenders in Jabbyr's presence, something inside the gnome snaps and he focuses his wrath on the ex-emperor. Surrendering is tantamount to treason in Jabbyr's mind, and he'd rather have his master slain at his own hands than live with the ignominy of such a defeat. He might even demand that the PCs help him put Pilts into the Tall Knife, although whether the PCs can understand the demented little gnome's tongueless babbling is left for you to determine (at your discretion, this may require a successful DC 20 Sense Motive check).

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 14, **Con** 20, **Int** 4, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 24

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greataxe)

Skills Perception +15

Languages Common, Gnome, Sylvan

SQ fast movement, gnome magic

Gear *+1 leather armor*, *+1 greataxe*, *amulet of natural armor +1*, *belt of giant strength +2*

EMPEROR'S THUGS (4) **CR 4**

XP 1,200 each

hp 46 each (see page 142)

C4 The Emperor's Stage

The large, flat roof of this long building has been converted into a strange sort of marshaling yard or game field. Two large square areas have been outlined with what could be blood, while at either end to the west and east, small wooden cages have been set up to the side of a hole in the roof that drops into the upper floor of the building below. Flights of stairs lead up from the roof to a balcony to the north and the gently slanted roof of a building to the south.

Lately, the emperor's current distraction is a violent game he invented called blood pig, a sport that requires an ever-increasing number of small animals to play. The exact name of the game changes as needed (blood dog, blood cat, and blood rat were all previous names), but the sound of a squealing pig delights Pilts the most, and so blood pig has become his favorite. The roof's markings and additions are all set up to play this game (the rules for blood pig are presented on page 160).

C5 Rooftops (CR 8)

Two gently sloped rooftops overlook a flat roof to the north. The northern slopes of these roofs are littered with boards, stacks of shingles, and other impromptu seats, transforming the area into a sort of arena-style seating. The southern slopes are falling into disrepair, and it's obvious the materials to build the northern sides' seating were harvested from there.

During performances and games, the roofs here are packed with throngs of lowlifes and crooks, all eager to see what new entertainments their emperor has crafted for them. Dozens of spectators gather here at these times, but when no game is in progress, a pair of thugs stands guard on each of these rooftops.

EMPEROR'S THUGS (4) **CR 4**

XP 1,200 each

hp 46 each (see page 142)

C6 Storeroom

Crates, boxes, and barrels fill this long storeroom, making it difficult to judge the room's actual dimensions.

Treasure: The majority of the props, tools, and other bits of salvage Pilts scavenged from Exemplary Execrables are stored here. There's little of actual value kept here, as most of the contents have been damaged by fire, but with a successful DC 25 Perception check, a PC uncovers a small, unlocked jewelry box. Most of its contents are relatively worthless costume jewelry, but one of the rings is a *ring of chameleon power* that Pilts sometimes loaned to actors to aid with their disguises. Unfortunately, the ring doesn't function perfectly and has a strange quirk: whenever the ring is activated or removed, all of the wearer's hair changes to a strange and unnatural random color. This strange side effect has no real game effect, but it was enough to rub Pilts the wrong way and he never used the ring himself.

C7 Choker Nest (CR 8)

This large room might once have been an attic storage area, but the rafters above now brood over an empty chamber. To the northwest, a large portion of the roof and floor below have collapsed entirely, leaving a void looking out over the sodden skyline of Old Korvosa.

This could serve the PCs as a possible entry point into Pilts's Palace, provided any intruders are able to navigate the 25-foot distance between the ground and this room with a successful DC 20 Climb check. The area within 5 feet of the collapsed floor is unstable, and a medium or larger creature that steps on a square within 5 feet of the collapse causes that square to crumble. A successful DC 15 Reflex save allows the character to stagger back to more solid footing behind her; otherwise, the fall deals 2d6 points of damage (and likely defeats any attempt at a stealthy intrusion).

Creatures: This room is the lair of six particularly well-fed and cruel chokers, creatures who once dwelled on the roof of Exemplary Execrables and with whom Pilts Swastel had nurtured something of a friendship. He often used these chokers to dispose of unanticipated bodies resulting from some of his shows, and has come to rely upon the efficiency with which the chokers do their thing; the monsters generally eat the choice bits, then carry the remains out across Korvosa's rooftops to stash in nooks, hollows, and other hidden places in the Shingles for scavengers like spiders and rats to feed upon. When Exemplary Execrables burned, Pilts offered to let the chokers dwell here. The monsters agreed, and have continued to serve Pilts as a disposal method. The chokers don't mind that most of the bodies they're asked to get rid of now are headless.

CHOKER BRUTES (6) **CR 3**

XP 800 each

Choker rogue 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 45)

CE Small aberration

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +4 natural, +1 size)
hp 34 (4d8+17)
Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 10 ft.
Melee 2 tentacles +8 (1d4+5 plus grab)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Special Attacks constrict (1d4+5), grab (Medium), sneak attack +1d6, strangle

TACTICS

During Combat The choker brutes lurk in the shadows in the rafters up above, watching observantly if they notice anyone attempting to move through the room. They swiftly move to attack as soon as they notice anyone outside trying to open the door, or 3 rounds after intruders from the south have already opened the door and are moving about inside the room.
Morale The choker brutes fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 14, **Con** 18, **Int** 6, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 5
Base Atk +2; **CMB** +6 (+10 grapple); **CMD** 18
Feats Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Stealth)
Skills Acrobatics +8, Climb +18, Perception +10, Stealth +15
Languages Undercommon
SQ quickness, trapfinding +1

Treasure: The chokers have amassed a small amount of treasure they keep in a leather bag wedged between two high rafters in the southeast corner of the room; locating this bag requires a successful DC 15 Perception check. The bag contains 3 pp, 44 gp, a single silk glove inset with tiny pearls on the back of the hand (worth 250 gp), a masterwork hand crossbow, and a *wand of slow* (13 charges).

C8 Collapsed Stairway

This flight of stairs has been filled with rubble. Clearing the stairs to access the abandoned floor of this building that lies below takes 1d4 hours.

C9 Art Supplies

Several barrels and crates sit against the walls here. Stacked on some are many blank canvases and what appear to be ceramic containers. A stack of paintings leans against the eastern wall, stretched on wooden frames and covered with sheets.

The paintings leaning against the eastern wall are all brand-new Screams, identifiable as such with a successful DC 20 Appraise or Craft (painting) check. If the viewer exceeds this DC by 10, it's also obvious these paintings lack some quality that the artist's previous work contained, seeming muddled and pedestrian compared to the brilliance of his work before the death of King Eodred II. In particular, the use of blue pigment, a trademark in Salvator's work, seems sloppy and poor. The reason for this is simple: when Kazavon's spirit bonded with that of Queen Ileosa, it abandoned Salvator and the other artists and artisans it had been cultivating. Salvator's muse has vanished.

Treasure: Salvator's paintings often command a high price among his fans, and each of these 11 paintings incorporate themes those collectors value: shadowy dragons, torture, violence, darkness, and scenes of pain and despair in vivid colors. These paintings, while maintaining the same themes, simply aren't as good, and are worth only 20 gp each.

If Laori is with the party when these paintings are discovered, she gleefully goes through them all, but quickly becomes disappointed by their mundane nature and wants nothing more to do with them.

C10 Trophy Hall

The air in this room smells sickly sweet—a combination of flowers and vinegar. The unpleasant smell likely comes from the fourteen poorly preserved heads mounted on the walls of this grisly trophy hall. Most of the heads are human, although two are those of elves and one is from a dwarf with a beard roughly sheered off to match the cut to the neck. To the north, a small, child-sized bed sits against the wall opposite a wooden table decorated with a magnificent set of silverware.

This room serves several purposes. The small bed is where the emperor's cohort Jabbyr sleeps, and the table is where the emperor takes his meals (served by one of his thugs, who themselves bully these meals out of local citizens). The grisly trophies on the walls, partially preserved by a process of soaking in brine, perfume, and other herbs, are the heads of enemies who particularly vexed the emperor. He sometimes carries on mocking conversations with these heads in the late hours of the night when he's having trouble sleeping.

The door to area **C11** is warded by an *alarm* spell; if triggered, it creates a mental alarm, alerting Pilts that someone's intruding in his home.

Treasure: The silverware set on the table is the best that Pilts could steal—the full set is worth 500 gp. A platinum and crystal decanter filled with fine brandy sits on the table as well, and this item alone is worth 750 gp.

C11 Emperor's Chambers

This extravagantly decorated bedroom would seem to belong in the richest of noble villas or monarchs' castles—at least, until one looks a little more closely at the sheets on the four-poster

bed and notes how stained and frayed they are, or examines the tapestries and bed curtains and sees the patches of mold and threadbare edges. A tall, well-stocked bookcase to the south turns out to be leaning against the wall for support; the contents of its sagging shelves are poorly produced books with violent or erotic names on their mildewed spines. Everything is slightly musty, stained with age, and well beyond its prime. Only the three paintings hanging on the wall hold up to closer examination, but their grisly subject matter might make them difficult to show in most public venues. To the north, a simple wooden door is secured with a lock and a heavy wooden bar.

Most of the furnishings in this room are props from countless plays and productions—they've seen much use, but Pilts finds no fault in their rundown states. The emperor can be found here after dark, either sleeping fitfully or reading one of his scandalous books of violence and erotica stored on the bookshelf. For about an hour each night, he unbolts the door to area **C12** to speak with Salvator, give him his food, empty his chamber pot, and remove any finished works to put into storage at area **C9**.

Treasure: The three paintings are all original Screams—produced before Salvator lost his muse—that Pilts salvaged from his previous home.

The first depicts a full portrait of a thin humanoid wearing shadows as he stands framed by a dolmen of great size. The figure's brilliant blue eyes are the only true points of color in the piece, and they seem to almost glow with anger. This painting is worth 450 gp, and with a successful DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check, a PC identifies it as a depiction of Zon-Kuthon stepping through a portal into ancient Nidal.

The second picture depicts a rugged mountain range above a desert under a harsh blue sky. In the foreground, a quartet of Vudrani tusked camels ridden by N'darr tribespeople race across dunes that, upon closer examination, consist of tiny skulls. This picture is worth 1,100 gp. With a successful DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check, a PC can interpret this as a minor but haunting scene from *Umbral Leaves*, the unholy text of Zon-Kuthon.

The final portrait is the most disturbing, for it depicts a handsome man in the process of peeling away the flesh of his arms as if he were taking off a pair of gloves. Underneath, his arms are muscular and covered with glittering blue scales. The man's expression is one of delight, yet his eyes are empty pits of blackness. Half seen in the shadows beyond him are thousands of humans impaled on towering wooden poles erected in the shadow of an indistinct shape looming on the horizon—perhaps a castle, maybe a mountain, but likely something more. This last painting is worth a staggering 2,000 gp.

With a successful DC 30 Knowledge (geography) check, a PC identifies the distorted shape on the horizon as definitely being a castle (if the viewer exceeds the DC by 10, she can identify it as Castle Scarwall in Belkzen), while with a successful DC 30 Knowledge (arcana) check, a PC identifies the pattern and shape of the blue scales as being similar to those that adorn a blue dragon. That the man depicted is Kazavon is not something a Knowledge check alone can confirm, but the PCs will recognize the man later when they finally visit Scarwall and view the artwork there, which includes some of the only other examples that preserve Kazavon's human appearance today.

If Laori is with the PCs, she asks if it's okay for her to keep all three paintings. She'll settle on splitting the paintings evenly among the PCs and herself, but soon thereafter starts offering to buy them back.

SALVATOR SCREAM

C12 Salvator's Cell (CR 4)

The air in this room is an unpleasant mix of body odor and paint. A lumpy straw mattress lies on the floor in one corner of the room, partially covered by a few blankets, while in the other stands a large easel on which rests a nearly completed painting of immense fiends attacking a village.

Creature: This is where the emperor has been keeping Salvator Scream. The artist hasn't left this room for many days, and his initial despair has fallen into a numb acceptance that painting for a madman while his muse has abandoned him is his new life. Still, he works desperately to create and recapture his old inspiration, if only to produce a work the emperor will enjoy. With each failed painting, the emperor's frustration and anger grows, and he regularly beats Salvator after the ruined artist finishes a painting these days. Yet Salvator sees no chance at rescue, so he continues to slave away at his easel, knowing with each brush stroke that all he has to look forward to at the end is a worse beating than the last one. He hopes the emperor will eventually go too far, solving the problem of Salvator's missing muse permanently.

Salvator is a plain-looking man dressed in paint-stained rags. Flea bites cover his skin, and his eyes are sunken since he's barely been sleeping an hour or 2 at a time. The man is desperate, and wants only to escape the nightmare that has captured him. Upon seeing anyone other than the emperor, Salvator immediately falls to his knees and breaks into desperate sobs, begging for rescue between each heartbreaking shudder. He does or says anything to reward his rescuers, but his mind isn't so far gone that he just hands out all his information to anyone. Before he agrees to answer any questions the PCs might have, he demands two things—the death of the emperor and to be escorted out of Old Korvosa to the mainland. With a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check, a PC convinces Salvator to reveal what he knows if the PCs promise to rescue him. Intimidation and magic can also serve to pressure him into revealing what he knows, options that Laori encourages if she's with the PCs.

If the PCs convince Salvator to talk, the man admits he spoke with Vencarlo on several occasions, but if the PCs ask him what that subject of these conversations was, Salvator grows nervous. He'd rather not finish what he has to say unless he and the PCs are in a safe place where he can't be overheard. Once these conditions have been met, he continues his story in a whisper, revealing that Vencarlo asked for everything Salvator knew about the fate of Castle Korvosa's seneschal, Neolandus Kalepopolis.

Salvator explains his friendship with Neolandus, ending with a description of how the man showed up at his home, desperate, bloodied, and poisoned, early on the morning Eodred II died. Neolandus was delirious, but managed to convey to Salvator that he needed a place to hide. Salvator nursed him back to health, whereupon Neolandus confided in him that Queen Ileosa had murdered her husband, and that she'd entered into an alliance with the Red Mantis. They were the ones who tried to assassinate Neolandus, and his escape was as much luck as anything. Worse, Neolandus said there was something about Queen Ileosa that wasn't quite right—that she'd changed recently. Grown "worse"... whatever that meant. Neolandus refused to divulge more to Salvator, saying that "the less he knew, the safer he'd be," and that the seneschal needed more time to think things through and do some research before he decided on the proper course of action.

Yet an artist's simple home was not a secure hideout, which both Neolandus and Salvator knew. Salvator had connections with the Arkonas (they were among his greatest patrons), and when he suggested that Neolandus seek them out for asylum, the seneschal grudgingly agreed. Salvator escorted his friend up to Arkona Palace late one night, just a few days before the quarantine occurred, and hasn't seen his friend since.

Salvator says the Arkonas seemed friendly enough, and at the time he felt they could be trusted to hide Neolandus from the queen. After his recent meetings with Vencarlo, wherein the man convinced Salvator that the Arkonas were more criminal-minded than the artist suspected, Salvator has come to believe he might have just traded his friend's danger for a different one. He suspects Vencarlo might have tried to infiltrate Arkona Palace to find out more, and if told that Vencarlo has gone missing too, the artist grows pale and begs the PCs to find them both. "Korvosa's not a safe place for them—they need to escape the city!" he cries. "Me too. And you as well!"

Laori has her own questions for Salvator, but would rather not ask them in front of the PCs. If they give her no other choice, she haltingly proceeds. Her primary interest in Salvator is to determine where his ideas come from; when he reveals to her that before Eodred II's death, his muse inspired him in vivid dreams and he merely painted these dreams, she grows excited and asks him to describe to her his memories of these dreams. When she asks him about why his current work doesn't hold the same power, she's disappointed to learn that Salvator's muse seems to have left him. She has no desire to punish, though; after all, if he's allowed to live, his muse might someday return. In any event, she volunteers to escort Salvator to the mainland, and even though she's a worshiper of the god of pain, she can be trusted to deliver on this promise. Once she learns what she can from Salvator, the strange elf takes her leave from the party (with Salvator, if the PCs let her, but without if they don't trust her to see to

his safety). She thanks them for their help, but says she must now report to her superiors. Before she leaves, she enigmatically predicts that she hasn't seen the last of the PCs and tells them she looks forward to the next time they meet. She then slips into the lengthening shadows of Old Korvosa.

SALVATOR SCREAM **CR 4**

XP 1,200

Male human expert 6

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex)

hp 39 (6d8+12)

Fort +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +4 (1d3 nonlethal)

TACTICS

During Combat Salvator is no fighter, and he knows it. In combat, he cowers behind his allies, throwing punches only when there's no other choice.

Morale Salvator flees if all his allies are defeated, or if reduced to fewer than 25 hit points. If he does so, his primary goal is to find a small dark place to hide, and he eventually works his way back to his home (only to be eaten by the otyughs if the PCs haven't defeated them).

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 13, **Con** 12, **Int** 14, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 15

Feats Alertness, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Craft [painting])

Skills Appraise +11, Bluff +8, Craft (painting) +12, Knowledge (history) +11, Knowledge (planes) +11, Knowledge (religion) +11, Perception +10, Profession (artist) +8, Sense Motive +10

Languages Aklo, Common, Draconic

Gear painter's equipment, stained clothes

Story Award: If the PCs learn what Salvator knows, award them 4,800 XP.

A Rousing Game

Stealth and violence are two possible methods to secure an audience with Salvator, but there is a more diplomatic approach as well. If the PCs can arrange a meeting with the Emperor of Old Korvosa, whether as prisoners or as guests, they might just be able to convince the lunatic to let them talk with his pet artist. If asked about Salvator,

the emperor proudly admits the artist is his "houseguest" and won't be going anywhere anytime soon. No amount of diplomacy or threats can convince the emperor to grant an audience with the artist. Magic such as *dominate person* or *suggestion* could work, but only if the PCs can cast it without being obvious. If their initial attempt fails, the emperor realizes what the PCs are up to and orders their immediate execution, and he and his minions attack.

Yet the emperor isn't completely opposed to letting people visit Salvator. After negotiations have gone on for a bit, the lunatic claps once as if to signal the end of discussion, but then gives the PCs a chance to "earn" the audience they so desperately seek. If they can win a game of blood pig against the emperor's best players (a team of eight thugs who compose the notorious "Shinglesnipes"), he'll allow them 5 minutes with Salvator—under his supervision, of course! If the PCs have given up their gear, he even promises to return it and grant the party a safe escort out of Old Dock after their interview if they can win this game.

If the PCs agree to his terms, he invites them to stand in the western square in the middle of the blood pig field (area **C4d**). As they do, the Shinglesnipes take up their position in the eastern square (area **C4c**) while the emperor goes over the rules of the game.

Blood Pig!

The rules for blood pig are fairly simple, but bear in mind they were created by a madman. To a certain extent, confusion should be a natural response to the game. The rules have never been written down, and tend to change on a weekly basis. It's best if you roleplay out Pilts announcing the rules summarized below; as you do, it's okay if the PCs don't grasp all the rules at once. After all, since Pilts changes the rules so often, even members of the Shinglesnipes might call for clarifications or get things wrong!

Running a game of blood pig uses standard combat rules, save that the PCs aren't in it to fight.

Goal: The goal of blood pig is to be the first team to reach 5 points.

Scoring Points: A player scores a point for her team by throwing, kicking, dropping, or otherwise placing a pig into her team's pit. The PCs' pit is located in area **C4f**, while the Shinglesnipes's pit is located in area **C4b**. Each of these pits contains a starving wolverine. The pig, once thrown into a pit, suffers a violent and noisy, yet swift death—all part of the macabre entertainment for the emperor. At the game's start, a pig is loaded into one of two cages (either area **C4a** or **C4e**; see The Game Begins below). Whenever a point is scored, a fresh pig is loaded into the cage on the opposite side of the playing field from the pit where the previous pig was killed (area **C4a** if the PCs score a point by getting a pig into area **C4f**, or area **C4e** if the Shinglesnipes score a point by dumping a pig into area **C4b**).

Starting Locations: Each member of a team must start the game within her team's square in the middle of the field. The PCs must start in area **C4d**, while the emperor's team starts in area **C4c**. Exact positioning in these areas is left to the game players to decide. No more than eight players can play on a team; if the PCs don't have enough players to round out their team, the emperor shrugs and says, "At least you won't be as crowded when the game begins."

Limitations: No weapons are allowed in a game of blood pig. Casting spells before or during a match is also against the rules. Each time one of these rules is broken, the opposing team gets a point. The use of fists and other unarmed attacks do not count as the use of weapons; players are allowed (and expected) to throw punches (lethal or otherwise) during a game. Natural attacks are legal, but only because no one has used such weaponry in a game of blood pig before—if the game proceeds to a "best two out of three" or beyond (see Development on page 161), Pilts makes sure to revise the rules for the following games to outlaw "cheaty claws" from the game.

Betting: Observers often bet on the outcome of the game, usually for coin but sometimes for favors or promises. The bets are arranged by the emperor's thugs, who give 2 to 1 odds against the PCs. Each PC can place a bet of up to 100 gp.

The Game Begins: Once all the players are in position, the emperor flips a coin. If the result is heads, a trap door opens in area **C4a** and a frightened pig is raised up into the cage from below. If the result is tails, the pig is raised up through the trap door in area **C4e**. The game begins 1 round later as the emperor cries out, "Go get your pig!" At this point, each PC and each of the Shinglesnipes attempt an initiative check to determine when they act. (It's best for each Shinglesnipe to act on her own roll rather than all at once.)

The Pig: Although Pilts and his thugs refer to them as pigs, the creatures used in the game are little more than Tiny piglets. Retrieving, carrying, and throwing a pig is treated as follows.

Picking Up a Pig: Retrieving a pig from a cage is a standard action that provokes attack of opportunities. Picking up a live pig that has been dropped on the field, however, requires a character to also attempt a successful attack against an Armor Class of 15. If a member of the emperor's team retrieves a pig from a cage and has the time, he attempts an unarmed strike against the pig to knock it out and thus make it easier to carry.

Carrying a Pig: A pig weighs 15 pounds. Each round that a character carries a live and conscious pig, roll 1d6 and consult the Squirming Pig sidebar on page 161 to see how the pig reacts to being carried.

Dropping a Pig: A character who takes damage while carrying a live pig must succeed at a combat maneuver check (DC = 10 + 1 per point of damage taken) or she drops the squirming pig. (Damage taken does not incur a chance of dropping a dead pig.)

A pig that is dropped runs in a straight line away from the closest person on initiative count 0 each round, moving at a speed of 30 feet. A pig will not run off the edge of the roof or into a pit.

Passing a Pig: A character can pass a pig to a teammate as a standard action if she is within reach of a teammate.

Throwing a Pig: A pig is an improvised thrown weapon, and thus imparts a –4 penalty on attack rolls. It has a range increment of 10 feet. Catching a thrown pig requires a successful DC 12 combat maneuver check.

Throwing a Pig into a Pit: In order to throw a pig into a pit, the thrower must make a ranged attack against AC 6 with a thrown pig. Dropping a pig into an adjacent pit is a free action and is automatically successful.

Intercepting a Pig: A character can attempt to intercept a thrown pig if it passes through a square he threatens. To intercept, the PC must succeed at a DC 18 combat maneuver check (intercepting a pig is more difficult than catching one deliberately thrown to you). Attempting to intercept a pig is an immediate action.

Stealing a Pig: A character can grab a pig out of another person's hands with a successful disarm combat maneuver check. Roll 1d6 on the Squirming Pig table on this page to determine how the pig reacts to the second person trying to snatch it away.

The Pits: Each pit is 10 feet deep and contains a particularly hungry and aggressive wolverine, but the opening to each pit is only 1 foot in diameter and is reinforced with wood-and-metal slats. This makes it difficult for a Medium creature (such as a wolverine) to climb out of the pit but easy for a Tiny creature (like a piglet) to pass through. A character who kills one of the two wolverines automatically forfeits the game for his team, in which case the other team is declared the winner. While the wolverines in these pits can't escape their cages, they do clamber up the walls of the pit once a game begins. Once a wolverine has a piglet, it spends 1d3 rounds devouring the thing, but otherwise, the creature can attempt a single claw attack each round against any creature within 5 feet of the pit's entrance.

EMPEROR'S THUGS (8) **CR 4**

XP 1,200 each

hp 46 each (see page 142)

WOLVERINES (2) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 22 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 279)

SQUIRMING PIG

A live pig does not enjoy being carried. Each round a live, conscious pig is held, roll 1d6 and consult the following table to see how it reacts.

d6	Pig's Action
1	**Slump**: The pig takes no action and simply hangs limp in the character's grasp.
2	**Squirm**: The carrier must succeed at a DC 12 Strength check, or he drops the pig.
3	**Squeal**: The noise draws a hearty round of laughter from the emperor and the crowd.
4	**Bite**: The pig makes a +0 melee attack against whoever is carrying it, dealing 1d3–2 points of damage if it manages to hit; this might cause the carrier to drop the pig (see Dropping a Pig).
5	**Kick**: The pig begins kicking. The carrier must succeed at a DC 12 Dexterity check or drop the pig.
6	**Panic**: The pig explodes into a fury of action; apply the results of a squeal, a bite, a squirm, and a kick all at once.

PIGLETS (AS MANY AS YOU NEED!) **CR —**

Young pig (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 291, 113)

hp 4 each

Development: The emperor is a sore loser. If the PCs win the game, he lurches to his feet and bellows, "Two out of three!" He also has his cohort Jabbyr join the Shinglesnipes for any additional games even if this means the Shinglesnipes exceed the eight-person limit. If the PCs then go on to win two out of three games of blood pig, the emperor cries out, "Three out of five!" only to be told by a nervous thug that they've run out of pigs. For a moment, the emperor seems ready to strap the thug into the Tall Knife. An instant later he regains his composure, congratulates the PCs on their victory, and invites them up to the balcony. Jabbyr and two thugs accompany them. He then bids the PCs wait in area **C10** and then brings a nervous-looking Salvator out to speak to them. Of course, Salvator won't speak at all (unless magically compelled or successfully intimidated) as long as the emperor lives. How the PCs handle the situation at this time is up to them, but this may be the best chance to attack the emperor, since the area's a relatively confined space and he doesn't have all of his thugs on hand to defend him.

Story Award: If the PCs win two blood pig games and gain an audience with Salvator, award them 9,600 XP in addition to any XP earned for defeating thugs in the game.

PART 3

WRATH OF THE ARKONAS

Both Neolandus Kalepopolis and Vencarlo Orisini are prisoners in the dungeons below Arkona Palace, and while they're protected from Queen Ileosa there (for the time being), they're far from safe. Through a variety of methods at any point during this chapter, the PCs can learn their quarry is being held by the Arkonas. But once the PCs decide to take on the noble family, they should be ready for a fight—for the Arkonas are actually rakshasas led by a powerful member of their kind named Bahor.

THE ARKONA SECRET

That the Arkonas control crime in Old Korvosa is not their true secret. The government knows the Arkonas are heavily involved with the underworld, but since this crime is kept behind the scenes and doesn't disrupt life in Old Korvosa, city officials have traditionally looked the other way—the good the Arkonas do is believed to outweigh the bad. This is only because the true depravities and evil they inflict upon the city are well-hidden indeed.

MELIYA ARKONA

The original (and very human) Arkonas fell victim to a group of rakshasas many years ago, when the family attempted to establish a trade route with distant Vudra. What they found instead was death. The entire trade ship was murdered, the captain and family members were replaced by rakshasas eager to flee persecution in their homeland, and the crew were swapped out for charmed thralls. When they returned to Korvosa, the rakshasas found an entire city ripe for their harvest. Building on the now-established trade route with Vudra, the new Arkonas—rakshasas disguised as humans—were able to build the stolen name into one of Korvosa's most powerful families. Over the decades, the rakshasas have held their own secret internal wars for power, but their continued control over the family name has remained.

Currently, the Arkona family is ruled by two rakshasas, the children of the original rakshasas who replaced the Arkonas so long ago. Of these two, Bahor has assumed the role of patriarch Glorio Arkona, while his sibling Vimanda has assumed the role of Meliya Arkona, Glorio's younger sister. In private, the two rakshasas are constantly embroiled in tiny power plays to gain an advantage over the other, yet neither has yet made a move so reckless as to threaten what they have accomplished as a family so far. Under this pair, several other rakshasas dwell in the palace, most having traveled from distant Vudra to join the Arkonas on their grand experiment in Korvosa. Beneath the rakshasas are the "kept" members of the family, humans who are subdued via magical control and honeyed words. These humans don't suspect the Arkonas of being anything other than criminal masterminds.

D ARKONA PALACE

Arkona Palace is perched at the highest point atop Endrin Isle in Old Korvosa. The palace is home to the Arkona family alone; servants and guards dwell nearby in one of two outbuildings, and play no direct role in this adventure (all are 1st- or 2nd-level human experts or warriors, in any event). The grounds are mostly open, decorated here and there with tiny copses of trees, exotic topiary animals (elephants, cobras, and tigers being the most common), beautiful flower gardens, and exquisite fountains. The palace is a breathtaking structure built in the Vudrani style, with golden pillars; high windows that rise to tapered points; minarets; and domes decorated with slender spires. Inside, walls are made of ebony and carved with depictions of elephants, tigers, monkeys, and peacocks, all with shimmering mother-of-pearl eyes. Mahogany doors are carved with images of the Vudrani deity Chamidu, the God of Wild Beasts (identifiable as such with a successful DC 30 Knowledge [religion] check). Chamidu appears as a six-armed, four-faced giant who rides a tiger with human hands for paws. All rooms are lit at night by everburning torches. Exotic plants in clay pots are abundant, and each room is rich with their scents, mingled with that of sandalwood incense burning in brass censers that hang in various spots along the ceiling. The rooms inside the palace are spacious and grand—ceilings, unless otherwise mentioned, are 20 feet high.

Securing an Audience

While the Arkonas have increased patrols of their human guards in Fort Korvosa (the portion of Old Korvosa they've kept under their personal watch during the quarantine), they have not closed the palace doors completely to the outside world. During the day, visitors to Arkona Palace are intercepted by a patrol of six house guards who politely but firmly demand to know the party's reasons for approaching the manor. As long as the PCs are able to respond with a believable request (including asking for an audience with Glorio Arkona), the guards nod and escort them along through the immaculately landscaped palace grounds to the reception area.

The PCs are led into the palace entrance (area **D1**), whereupon the guards return to their patrol and the PCs are greeted by a tall, pleasant man who wears an eye patch. He introduces himself as Carnochan, the palace majordomo. Carnochan hears the PCs' request, and if they wish an audience with Glorio (Meliya is not available), they are taken to the visitor's lounge (area **D2**), where Carnochan asks them to wait while he determines if the master of the palace has time for them. Characters may suspect they are still under observation even after they are left alone in the visitor's lounge, and they are correct. Carnochan shares a permanent *telepathic bond* with Bahor, and alerts his superior telepathically as soon as the PCs arrive, giving Bahor brief descriptions of them. Bahor then uses *clairaudience/clairvoyance* (using his *third eye*) to observe area **D2**. If the PCs don't wait and instead move out to infiltrate the palace, Bahor informs the others at once and the palace goes on alert.

If the PCs decide to wait, though, they are rewarded in about 5 minutes with an appearance by the lord himself. Bahor greets the PCs warmly as Glorio Arkona, gently reprimanding Carnochan for not supplying the guests with wine and cheese to enjoy while they waited. As Carnochan scurries off to rectify this faux pas, Bahor joins the PCs on one of the room's couches and asks how he can be of service.

As Glorio, Bahor plays the role of a concerned noble, saying he's done what he can with his limited resources to keep Old Korvosa from falling into complete anarchy, but he admits that more could be done. To outward appearances, he has nothing but kind words and support to offer if asked about the queen, ruminating that quarantine really was her only choice and hoping that she'll be able to lift it soon. Throughout his discussion, though, Bahor drops hints that he thinks the queen is driving Korvosa into the ground and that she needs to be removed from power, using Bluff to communicate this innuendo. If confronted point-blank with these thoughts, he feigns shock and denies that's what he said, while still maintaining his bluff to get across his true feelings.

Where are the Prisoners?

Vencarlo and Neolandus are both prisoners of the Arkonas, held in chambers below the palace (in areas **E20** and **E21** respectively). The Arkonas are masters of deception, and have spared no expense in not only hiding the presence of the dungeon, but also in ensuring those they keep therein remain hidden. The region is protected by a permanent *mage's private sanctum* (CL 9th), preventing either man from being scried upon. The Arkonas have kept both men unconscious as well, so any attempt to communicate via *sending* or similar magic fails. *Dream* can successfully deliver a message to either man, and while the man won't be able to reply, the caster knows he is alive and sleeping. At your discretion, particularly canny methods of magical divination might be able to lead the PCs to either prisoner, but the matter of how to reach them and effect their escape remains.

Full details of the dungeon beneath Arkona Palace appear on pages 176–187.

Bahor does indeed want Queen Ileosa out of power, and he hopes to accomplish this goal by using Seneschal Kalepopolis when the time is right so he can step in to take her place. Maneuvering his agents and sycophants throughout the city government and other noble families to ensure this end result occurs is a delicate procedure, though, and Bahor estimates he won't be ready to make his move for several more months. Until then, he hopes to retain possession of Neolandus so he can use the man's political status at precisely the right moment. At least, that was Bahor's plan until recently.

Queen Ileosa's display of power at the start of this chapter has put Bahor ill at ease. He now suspects the queen has gained a potent source of strength, likely something to do with her new crown. His interrogations and mind readings of Kalepopolis have verified his fears. Currently, Bahor is unsure how to proceed; he certainly doesn't want to risk his own life by directly opposing the queen, yet at the same time, he knows something must be done before her power grows too great.

As it turns out, the PCs may be his salvation.

Bahor uses *detect thoughts* and the conversation to judge the PCs' position on things. He suspects they're here to rescue Vencarlo, Neolandus, or both, but he can't just hand them over without appearing weak before his minions (an act he fears would give Vimanda the support she's seeking to seize control of the family). After speaking with the PCs for some time, Bahor hints (again using Bluff) that he knows there's something more to the queen than meets the eye. Furthermore, he hints that he can put the PCs in

contact with someone who may be able to help them—if they can help him first.

Among his other plans, Bahor wants to regain control of Old Korvosa, and a major step in that direction would be the removal of the Emperor of Old Korvosa. At this point, Bahor drops all pretense of subtlety, stating flat out that if the PCs can assassinate the emperor, he's certain the mob in Old Dock will collapse and Arkona agents will be able to step in and regain control of Old Korvosa. In return, he promises to do what he can to help the PCs find their friends. If the PCs have already done this, he smiles broadly and proceeds to aid them as detailed below.

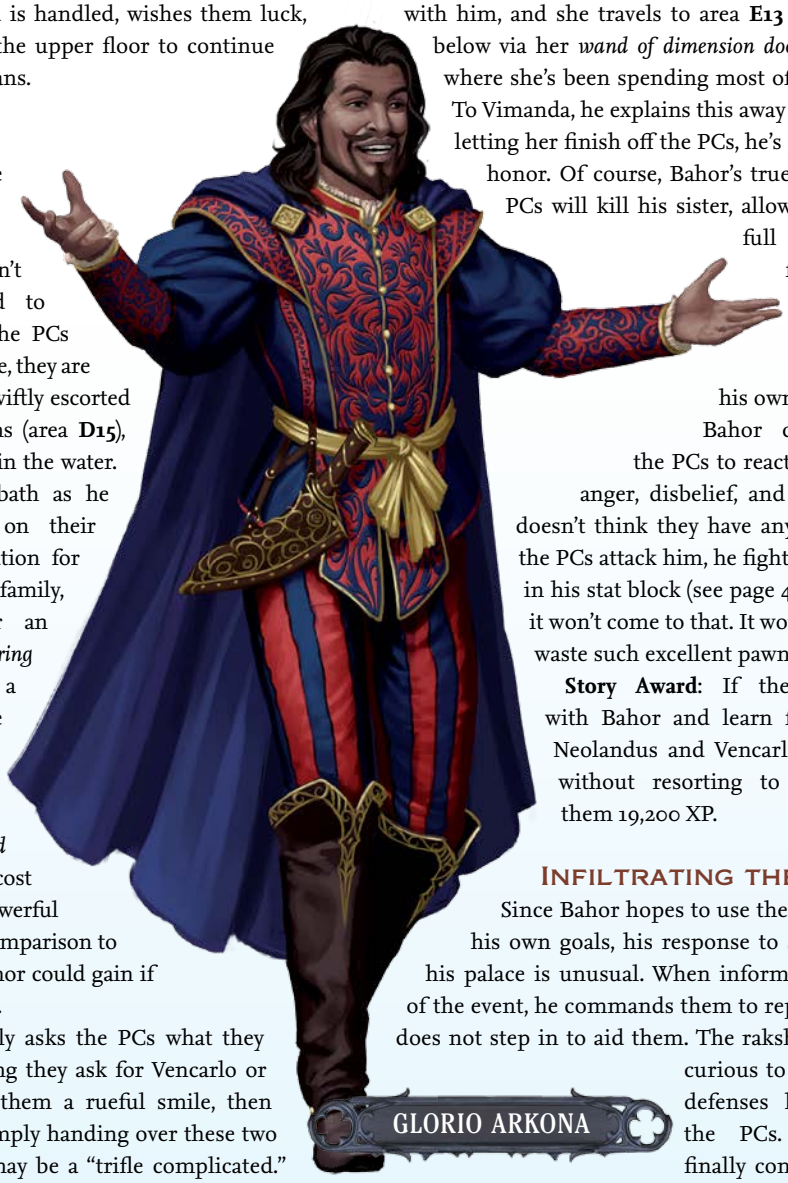
Bahor has little more to say after this if the PCs haven't yet killed Pilts, and guides the PCs back to the palace entrance where they are escorted off the Arkona grounds by the guards. Bahor asks them not to return until the matter they discussed is handled, wishes them luck, and retreats back to the upper floor to continue laying his complex plans.

Bahor's Offer

Once the PCs have removed the Emperor of Old Korvosa from the picture, it doesn't take long for word to reach Bahor. When the PCs return to Arkona Palace, they are greeted warmly and swiftly escorted upstairs into the baths (area **D15**), where Bahor lounges in the water. He remains in the bath as he congratulates them on their success. In compensation for their service to the family, he's ready to offer an additional reward: a *ring of evasion* set with a deep green bloodstone that sits on a nearby shelf. Of course, this bloodstone is also linked to Bahor's *third eye* (see page 436); the cost of giving up such a powerful magic item pales in comparison to the new viewpoint Bahor could gain if the PCs accept the gift.

Bahor then abruptly asks the PCs what they wish of him. Assuming they ask for Vencarlo or Neolandus, he gives them a rueful smile, then goes on to say that simply handing over these two "guests" to the PCs may be a "trifle complicated." He explains that both men have been sent below into the Vivified Labyrinth. A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Knowledge (local) check recalls rumors of this notorious dungeon, a place said to be used by the Arkonas to torment and test prisoners and agents alike. Bahor apologizes for the difficulties, and that he won't retrieve either "guest" for the PCs, but he will do the next best thing. He tells them the secret of the elephant statue in area **D4**, how to access the caverns below the palace, and where to seek the secret door that leads down to the labyrinth entrance. He'll even tell the PCs that the labyrinth can be adjusted by pulling key levers to rotate the four sections, promising them that both of the people they seek are hidden therein.

What he doesn't tell them is that he's also sending Vimanda into the labyrinth to ambush them. He does this via a *scroll of sending* as soon as the PCs leave their meeting with him, and she travels to area **E13** of the dungeons below via her *wand of dimension door* from area **E21**, where she's been spending most of her time of late. To Vimanda, he explains this away as a game, and by letting her finish off the PCs, he's giving her a great honor. Of course, Bahor's true hope is that the PCs will kill his sister, allowing him to seize full control of the family without resorting to the distasteful step of killing one of his own blood.



Bahor certainly expects the PCs to react to his offer with anger, disbelief, and hostility, but he doesn't think they have any other choice. If the PCs attack him, he fights back as detailed in his stat block (see page 440), but he hopes it won't come to that. It would be a shame to waste such excellent pawns, after all.

Story Award: If the PCs negotiate with Bahor and learn from him where Neolandus and Vencarlo are being held without resorting to violence, award them 19,200 XP.

Infiltrating the Palace

Since Bahor hopes to use the PCs to help with his own goals, his response to an infiltration of his palace is unusual. When informed by his guards of the event, he commands them to repulse the PCs but does not step in to aid them. The rakshasa is somewhat curious to see how well his defenses hold up against the PCs. Only if they finally confront him in his

chambers or attempt to damage his treasury in area **D16** does he contact them to tempt them with his offer, as detailed on page 164.

The following encounter areas assume that the palace is not on any sort of alert, and give the standard locations and activities of the guards and rakshasas that dwell within. Once the palace alarm is raised for any reason, all servants and human guards flee the building, knowing full well that their masters tend not to discriminate between intruders and the help when defending their lair. Bahor retires to his chambers in the event of an alarm, and sends Vimanda down into the Vivified Labyrinth to await the PCs should they reach that area. The marai rakshasas in the palace split into two groups of two; one pair (Avishandu and Nudhaali) goes to the garden (area **D4**) to take up defensive positions, while the other pair (Carnochan and Vennashti) patrols the remaining rooms (patrolling in encounter number order and spending a few rounds in each room searching for intruders).

The marai remain in their human forms at all times during these encounters until one of them is slain, at which point the corpse reverts to its true form. If this happens, the remaining rakshasas immediately revert to true form as well. Once their true forms are revealed, they fight to the death to protect the secret.

If the PCs are forced to retreat from an infiltration, the rakshasas do not pursue. They revert to human form and dispose of the bodies of any dead, turning them over to Avidexu in area **D24**. They know at this point that it's their word against the PCs should they spread the truth of the situation, and Bahor seeks to control the damage as soon as possible.

His first act if the PCs flee the palace is to contact one of them via a *scroll of sending* with the following message.

"Greetings. This is Glorio Arkona. I apologize for the misunderstanding with my unusual servants. I wish to speak to you in private at my palace."

If the PCs accept the invitation, Bahor retains his human guise as he greets the PCs and gives them his pitch to try to recruit them, explaining that he uses bound rakshasas as bodyguards and asking the PCs to keep this information to themselves.

If the PCs don't accept the invitation, Bahor retreats to his quarters in area **D18** and informs the palace guardians to greet the PCs on their return and to allow no intrusions into the palace. The rakshasa patriarch sends his sister below to guard the dungeon, but if the PCs begin a room-by-room exploration of the upper floors, he eventually seeks them out and attempts to kill them himself. He does his best, as do his guards, to keep the secret of his true form, but once one of the Arkonas is slain and his or her body reverts to its true and terrible shape, the rakshasas remaining in the palace revert to their true forms as well and redouble their efforts to ensure none who know the truth live to tell the tale.

In the long term, the Arkonas can call in more rakshasas from Vudra, but such reinforcements are unlikely to arrive in the span of this chapter's adventure.

D1 Palace Entrance

A black marble arch depicting dozens of elephants standing one atop the other frames a great ebony door in the south wall of this wide and airy entrance hall. Above the door, an elephant looks out over the hall, its single eye a glittering bloodstone the size of an apple. Tall windows grant a commanding view of the palace grounds, and a rich red carpet, ten feet wide and luxuriously thick, provides a pathway between doors to the west and north, and around a corner to the east. Each of these doors, as well as three smaller ones to the west of the northern pair, are decorated with images of a six-armed, four-faced woman who rides a tiger with human hands for feet.

The palace doors are generally kept unlocked, even after dark, which is a manifestation of the Arkona arrogance and belief that anyone foolish enough to try to invade the palace shouldn't be detained from meeting his proper punishment at the hands of the palace guards. This arrogance lessens should the PCs kill a rakshasa of any type and then retreat from the palace. On any return trips, they find the doors locked tight (hardness 5, hp 20, break DC 25, Disable Device DC 30).

A permanent *magic mouth* spell wards the door, triggering an audible alarm that sounds like a bull elephant trumpeting (including an illusion of the elephant head's sudden animation above the door) whenever anyone not visibly wearing the Arkona family crest walks into view of the effect. This alarm doesn't trigger if at least one person in a group wears the crest.

Treasure: The bloodstone set in the elephant's lone eye socket is one of several differently sized bloodstones linked to Bahor's *third eye*. He can look through this stone as if it were his own eye, and does so if the alarm goes off. This bloodstone's faint divination aura, like all of the *third eye* bloodstones, is hidden by a *magic aura* (CL 10th). The bloodstone is worth 1,000 gp.

D2 Visitor's Lounge

This comfortable room is warmed by a large fireplace, its marble sides and mantle carved into a parade of capering monkeys and tigers. A large sofa is against the north wall, while a few cozy-looking chairs sit to the south.

D. ARKONA PALACE
D2
D3
D6
D6
D5
D1
D4
D7
D6
D9
D11
D8
D10
GROUND FLOOR
1 square = 5 feet
D16
D17
D15
D18
D12
D14
D13
N
UPPER FLOOR
1 square = 5 feet
D21
D20
D20
D23
D20
D22
D20
S
D24
D25
D20
D20
D20
D19
N
UPPER CAVERNS
1 square = 5 feet
LOWER CAVERNS
1 square = 5 feet

This is where the Arkonas meet with visitors to the palace, and likely where Bahor first meets with the PCs if they seek his audience.

D3 Statue of Chamidu

A fourteen-foot-tall marble statue of a six-armed woman with four faces on her head—one looking to each of the four cardinal directions—stands under a dome of colored glass. The statue wields numerous weapons in its six hands, and a small kneeler at its base gives a place to pay respects to whatever deity the statue represents. Each of the statue's eight eyes is a sparkling bright green orb.

This statue is a depiction of the Vudrani goddess Chamidu, a deity with an affinity for the beasts of the world. A successful DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the exotic goddess.

Treasure: The left eye in the statue's west-facing face is a 200 gp *third eye* bloodstone.

D4 Garden (CR 8 or 11)

This chamber hardly seems to be part of a palace, but looks more like a clearing at the heart of a vast jungle, teeming with life. The sky above is a deep, cloudless blue, while in the distance, hazy towers rise above the verdant canopy. Exotic bird calls fill the air, the scent of dozens of unfamiliar flowers and plants assault the nose, and everywhere a riot of color demands the eye, whether it's the wing of a tropical bird, the petals of a brightly hued flower, or the glittering multicolored tiles that make up a round fountain to the north. The fountain's central plume is a stone pillar around which entwine two cobra statues that clutch green gems in their fanged maws. To the south of the fountain stands an immense, life-sized jade statue of an elephant, a howdah perched on its back, its tusks and trunk raised high in greeting to the southeast doors. From inside the room, the doors look more like gates set into a wrought-iron fence that encircles the garden. Other gates set in this fence doubtless lead to other parts of the palace, and after a bit more observation, the somewhat static nature of the jungle and landscape becomes apparent—the walls of this garden are in fact an incredibly realistic and clever painting of a Vudrani junglescape.

The paintings along the walls bear minor illusions to enhance their realism, but close inspection reveals that they, the "fence" enclosing the area, and even the gate-doors are little more than clever deceptions. The birds and small animals dwelling in the garden, though, are all very much alive. Temperature and humidity in this chamber are maintained by magic, creating a self-sustaining ecosystem that effectively duplicates a Vudrani jungle. The Arkonas often come here to relax in familiar surroundings, particularly on cold Korvosan winter days.

The windows in the walls all bear permanent *silent images* that prevent them from breaking the illusion created by the room while still allowing sunlight to filter in on the plants. Skylights above do the same, including a large glass dome above the northern portion of the room. A balcony encircles the southern portion of the room at a height of 25 feet, although from ground level looking up, it takes a successful DC 15 Perception check to be able to tell the edge of the balcony apart from the upper walls and dome, so clever are the paintings and illusions. If a creature stands on the upper balcony so as to be visible to those below, this additional point of reference makes it much easier to see the balcony's edge.

The elephant statue is in fact one of the room's guardians, being a variant *figurine of wondrous power* (see Creatures and Treasure below). The 10-foot-diameter stone platform on which it stands is a circular secret trap door that can be discovered with a successful DC 25 Perception check. This door can be opened even when the statue is standing on the platform by pressing a hidden 6-inch-diameter pressure plate at the platform's center. Doing so causes the entire disk to slowly rotate 180 degrees. As it does so, a curved opening appears, granting access to a flight of spiral stairs that descend into the ground to area **D19**. From below, the secret trap door can be opened by pressing a second hidden switch in the wall, 20 steps down. Like the trap door, this panel can be discovered with a successful DC 25 Perception check. Once opened, the door remains open for 10 minutes before closing automatically. It can also be manually closed by pressing one of the hidden pressure plates a second time.

Both of the double doors leading out onto the palace grounds are kept locked (DC 30 Disable Device to unlock), and each is warded with a *magic mouth* alarm similar to the one in area **D1**, except these doors are not fitted with *third eye* bloodstones.

Creatures: The fountain constantly replenishes pure, cool water. The upward plume of water may appear to be created by pressure or a hidden pump, but is in fact generated by a huge water elemental bound there. It recognizes the Arkonas on sight, but does not attack intruders unless they open the secret trap door or it sees intruders attacked by the Arkonas. Once it attacks, the elemental leaves its fountain to pursue enemies throughout this chamber but will not chase enemies into other parts of the palace or out onto the grounds, instead returning to this fountain. It fights to the death.

The marble elephant remains passive until commanded to attack, or unless someone attempts to pass through the secret trap door without first uttering the passphrase,

"Chamidu is blind." Once activated, the elephant follows the commands of its activator to the best of its ability. If it activates on its own because of intruders, it attacks anyone who attempts to use the trap door, returning to this pedestal as soon as the trap door closes. If slain, it reverts to its small figurine shape.

If the palace is already on alert, two of the Arkona rakshasas (Avishandu and Nudhaali) lurk in the howdah on the elephant's back, ready to ambush any intruders who wander into this room or pass along the balcony in area **D12** above. In preparation, the rakshasas cast *mage armor* as soon as they go on alert. Once they assume their position in the elephant's howdah, they also cast *invisibility*, recasting it 5 minutes later when it expires if no one's entered the garden yet. If no one's entered the garden after the second 5-minute period, the rakshasas abandon their post to join the other two on patrol until they're certain that whatever triggered the alarm has been dealt with. When combat begins, Avishandu activates the elephant and orders it to attack the PCs, while Nudhaali casts *scorching ray*. The marai remain in human form and cast spells, but once the PCs know they're facing rakshasas, they revert to their true forms and use their energy bolts on foes.

AVISHANDU AND NUDHAALI **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

Marai rakshasas (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 228)

hp 94 each

MARBLE ELEPHANT **CR 7**

XP 3,200

hp 93 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 128)

LARGE WATER ELEMENTAL **CR 5**

XP 1,600

hp 68 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 126)

Treasure: The two gems in the cobra mouths on the fountain are bloodstones, each worth 100 gp. The one facing west is a *third eye* bloodstone.

If the elephant is defeated, it then reverts to its dormant *figurine of wondrous power* shape. This figurine has an additional power beyond those normally possessed by a *marble elephant*, though—it can be commanded to assume the form of a marble, life-sized statue of an elephant rather than its normal figurine form. Treat this effect as if the elephant were under the effects of a *statue* spell. Assuming statue form counts as one of its activations for the month, but it can remain in *statue* form for an indefinite period of time. This additional function makes the marble elephant a bit more valuable than most of its kind—it's worth 26,000 gp.

D5 Garden Storage

Maintaining the garden in area **D4** requires a lot of water, work, and landscaping. This room is used to store all the tools necessary, including five huge casks of water and dozens of buckets and other containers for the servants to perform the necessary labor.

D6 Storerooms

These storerooms house all manner of tools, firewood, food, and other necessities. There's little of interest in these chambers, except for stacks of barrels and crates that could provide lots of places to hide.

D7 Library

Two floor-to-ceiling bookshelves decorate the south and west walls of this chamber, facing a curved north wall on which hang a half-dozen grotesque paintings depicting torture, murder, cannibalism, and even necrophilia. Two glittering chandeliers hang from the ceiling, providing more than enough lighting to read by for anyone sprawled on the dozens of cushions strewn about the room.

The Arkonas' library is small, but well stocked with a wide variety of books ranging in topic from poetry to philosophy to essays to fiction. Tawdry romances are shelved next to detailed explorations of conjuration magic in no apparent order. A fair number of the books are written in Vudrani and are concerned with topics and themes common to that distant land, yet even these books cover numerous subjects.

Treasure: The six paintings on the wall are all Salvator's, and among that body of work, these six are among the most stomach-turning and disgusting in subject matter. As always, blue plays a prominent role in the paintings. Each painting is worth 800 gp.

D8 Smoking Den (CR 8)

A long couch and two stuffed chairs sit around an elegant rug on the floor of this room, the walls of which are carved in depictions of air spirits cavorting in the clouds. The scent of exotic smoke lingers in the air, and four bejeweled hookahs sit in the room, two at either end of the couch, and one next to each chair. A flight of stairs leads up to the floor above, and a glass case built into the underside of these stairs displays a wide collection of cigars, pottery jars, and bundles of dried leaves in a range of colors.

The four hookahs are each valuable, but the real treasure in this room is the collection of exotic tobacco and cigars in the case. The case is locked (Disable Device DC 40 to open; Bahor carries the only key), but it's a relatively simple matter to smash the glass to get to the contents.

Trap: This room and the expensive collection in the case are protected by a magical trap triggered by any attempt to damage the glass case or pick its lock. Doing so causes smoke to pour from the walls as two belkers are summoned to defend the chamber. The belkers appear near the 20-foot-high ceiling of the room. Their reach allows them to attack creatures on the floor but prevents most creatures on the floor from attacking them in turn.

HUNGRY SMOKE **CR 8**

XP 4,800

Type magical; **Perception** DC 30; **Disable Device** DC 30

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** repair

Effect spell effect (variant *summon monster VI*, CL 11th, 2 belkers)

BELKERS (2) **CR —**

hp 68 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 45)

Treasure: Each of the hookahs is worth 350 gp. A *third eye* bloodstone worth 100 gp has been incorporated into the pipe of the hookah next to the southwestern chair. The contents of the glass case amount to 10 pounds of exotic cigars, smoking weed, and other relatively minor narcotics. In all, the collection is worth 1,400 gp.

D9 Trophy Hall

Glass cases line this hallway's north and south walls. The northern case displays exotic weapons, many of which resemble swords, spears, and starknives, hanging on the wall around a suit of bright blue leather and ivory armor. The southern case displays a gruesome tableau of a stuffed tiger feeding upon a extremely realistic sculpture of a dead Vudrani man.

Both display cases are locked but not trapped; a successful DC 20 Disable Device check unlocks either case. The tiger was once a real beast, but is now stuffed with sawdust. The human it's depicted as disemboweling looks realistic but is nothing more than a wax sculpture. The body's exposed heart is in fact a large carved bloodstone, identifiable as such from afar with a successful DC 20 Appraise check.

Treasure: The bloodstone heart is a *third eye* bloodstone worth 500 gp. The weapons in the northern display case consist of a *+1 ghost touch kama*, 12 masterwork daggers, a masterwork falchion, six masterwork punching daggers,

two masterwork sais, two masterwork sianghams, and two masterwork spears. The leather armor is a suit of *+2 light fortification studded leather*.

D10 Statuary

A gracefully curving wall lined with tall windows presents a commanding view of the western palace grounds. The room is empty save for three human-sized statues, each depicting a Vudrani warrior holding aloft a glittering blue-green javelin with a head carved from bloodstone.

These three statues depict Vudrani soldiers, yet another display brought here by the Arkonas to remind them of their homeland. Each of the statues bears a *magic mouth* spell that activates if any creature draws or carries an unsheathed weapon into the room. Once triggered, the three statues begin to shout highly insulting oaths in Vudrani, serving to alert the house guards (particularly those who may still be at rest in area **D14**).

Treasure: All three statues hold javelins that can be removed from the statue with ease (an act that, once the weapon is removed, triggers the statue's *magic mouth*). All three javelins have bloodstone heads, but only the central statue's is a *third eye* bloodstone. Each javelin head is worth 150 gp.

MARAI RAKSHASA

D11 Banquet Hall

A magnificent mahogany table dominates this room, the surface of which is decorated by an immense cover fashioned from the brightly colored skins of various great snakes.

This room is where the Arkonas take most of their meals, feasting on sumptuous banquets prepared by the small army of servants who dwell in the nearby outbuilding. No servants are ever allowed in the palace during dinner, as part of a particularly restrictive Vudrani custom. Of course, now and then the Arkonas prefer to feed in their natural forms, in which case their meals are much more living, loud, and wet. These meals typically take place behind locked doors in the rakshasas' bedchambers (or barracks, in the case of the four guards), with use of *prestidigitation* to clean up afterward.

The double doors leading out onto the palace grounds are kept locked (DC 30 Disable Device), and warded with a *magic mouth* alarm similar to the one in area **D1**, save that these doors are not fitted with *third eye* bloodstones.

D12 Upper Balcony

This walkway overlooks the garden on the ground floor 25 feet below, and as such this area is generally warmer than the rest of the building as heated air rises up from the chamber below. The sound of birdcalls and the gentle babble of the fountain trickle up as well.

D13 Washroom

A large, ornate mirror hangs on the western wall of this washroom and latrine. The air smells remarkably fresh, and the water-filled porcelain commode to the east looks more comfortable than it has any right to be.

Several minor magical effects in this room keep the air fresh and the toilet clean. Waste placed into the water is immediately transformed into clean water that is then drained away by an ingenious set of pipes that feed into the garden below.

Treasure: The large toilet is something of an aesthetic marvel, worth 150 gp but weighing nearly 300 pounds, making transport of the treasure both awkward and possibly embarrassing.

D14 Guard Quarters (CR 12)

The floor of this room is thickly carpeted and strewn with numerous throw pillows and furs. The walls are carved with erotic depictions of men and women engaged in all manner of sexual acts. The only real furnishings in the room are the four beds against the western walls.

Creatures: This room is the home to four Arkona "cousins"—marai rakshasas who don't bear an actual blood relation to the Arkonas, having recently come to live here from Vudra. They are presented to Korvosa as distant cousins, and as a result are now generally thought of as members of the nobility. These four marai are each tasked with two roles in the palace: to act as guards, and to serve additional roles particular to the individual rakshasas' temperaments. Although the rakshasas are careful to retain their human disguises in public, they generally prefer to lounge in their true forms when they're off duty, often with an attractive victim or four abducted for their entertainment and feeding. The quarantine has put a kink in their standard hunt, preventing them from gathering new "meals" with ease, and as a result the four rakshasas have grown quite short-tempered with each other. As long as the alarm isn't raised, their arguments and bickering gives them a –5 penalty on Perception checks to hear the alarms in areas **D1**, **D4**, **D10**, or **D11**.

Avishandu's keen sight and eye for grace makes her ideal for tasks like landscaping and other types of delicate artistic maintenance on the palace. One-eyed Carnochan's knack for knowing the right thing to say makes him an excellent choice as the palace's majordomo and the initial point of contact for visitors. Nudhaali's obsession with food makes him ideal for handling the complex task of keeping the kitchen staff in line (and for hiding the fact that much of the meat they prepare for the Arkonas comes from humanoids). And Vennashti's knack for security makes her the best nominee to supervise patrol tactics and the overall security of the palace. When the alarm goes off, the other three turn to Vennashti for guidance.

MARAI RAKSHASAS (4) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

hp 94 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 228)

D15 Bath

The air in this chamber is incredibly warm and humid, filled with steam rising from the bubbling oval bath set in the floor to the southeast. The walls, ceiling, and floor are polished marble tiles of alternating blues and greens, giving the entire chamber a pervasive aquatic feel. Three lacquered wooden benches sit just north of the bath.

The bath's temperature is maintained by several minor magical enhancements, keeping the water hot at all times and preventing the constant moisture from damaging the room's surrounding structure. The temperature of the water can be controlled by the mental command of anyone submerged in it, ranging from cold to not quite scalding. Unlike the toilet in area **D13**, though, this minor magical marvel is not portable, and cannot be looted by greedy intruders.

D16 Leaves of Gold and Glitter

The door to this room appears to be made of ebony, but is in fact made of iron (hardness 10, hp 60, break DC 28, Disable Device DC 50). The chamber beyond is the Arkona's treasury, one of the most secure rooms in the palace. The door's lock is augmented by an *arcane lock* (CL 15th) placed via a high-level scroll. The door is also warded by a permanent *alarm* spell. Unlike the others in the palace, this one is a silent mental alarm that alerts Bahor if anyone enters the room beyond.

The plain ebony walls of this chamber seem to glisten with moisture. Above, the chamber rises forty feet to a domed ceiling set with eight wedge-shaped windows; to the north, east, and south three additional glass windows rise up from floor level to the dome. The room is empty, save for a thirty-foot-tall tree with sparkling gold and green leaves, its roots burrowing in and out of the floor. A breeze tickles the branches above, and as the leaves waver, the sound of crystal bells filters through the room.

Bahor spared no expense in building this vault, and it's somewhat ironic that the cost of the chamber may even be more than that of the treasures kept inside.

The "moisture" on the walls (and floor, windows, and ceiling) is in fact permanent *walls of force*; the only opening into this room is via the door. Furthermore, the chamber is warded by a *forbiddance* spell (CL 13th, Will DC 21) keyed to lawful evil. The third ward in place in this chamber is the "tree." A successful DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check correctly identifies it as the Tree of Eternal Dawn, a mythical tree said to grow on a lost island in northern Vudra, whose leaves are reputed to grant eternal life at a terrible cost (variously said to be the loss of all emotions, eternal life without eternal youth, or eternal life only after the seeker is himself turned into a tree in the surrounding grove). The tree in this room is an illusion generated by a persistent *screen* effect that masks the room's actual contents: a single iron cabinet. A character who interacts with the tree can attempt a DC 23 Will save to see through the illusion.

Treasure: The iron chest in the middle of the room is locked (Disable Device DC 40) but not trapped.

Sitting atop the chest is a single *third eye* bloodstone worth 100 gp, placed here so that Bahor can peer into his treasure room as needed to satisfy his paranoia that all is well. The chest contains the majority of the Arkona family's wealth. Unfortunately for would-be looters, the majority of this wealth consists of oaths of loyalty, debt, and servitude that show just how vast the Arkona's influence over Korvosa's crime scene actually is. This is Bahor's final level of protection, as the Arkonas have effectively spread their wealth across dozens, if not hundreds, of different treasuries throughout the city. Even if their palace were completely robbed of all of its valuables, the family would be able to call in these various debts with relative ease in order to replenish their vast material fortune.

Sifting through these hundreds of documents can reveal to the PCs that the entire roster of the city's thieves' guild (the Cerulean Society) is in the Arkonas' pocket, which the PCs might find useful in Chapter 4 when they encounter Guildmaster Boule. The most recent bit of correspondence between Glorio Arkona and Guildmaster Boule commands the Cerulean Society to "bottle up" during the quarantine, and let things unfold as they may so that the citizens will be "properly desperate" when the Arkonas decide to make their move with "the fool seneschal" to usurp the queen and gain control over the entire metropolis. The letter closes with a promise from Glorio to bequeath all of Old Korvosa to the Cerulean Society to do with as they see fit. Even if the PCs don't kill every rakshasa in the palace, this stack of papers is enough to politically destroy the Arkona family—once the situation with Queen Ileosa is handled, of course.

There are, nevertheless, some actual items of value kept in the chest, including three leather bags of coins (500 pp, 2,000 gp, and 4,000 sp), 5,500 gp worth of assorted gems and jewels, and a lacquered cherrywood-and-ivory *+1 holy light crossbow* that a would-be assassin who discovered what the Arkonas actually were once attempted to use on Bahor several decades ago. Bahor knows the weapon is a danger, but its beauty was too much to bear destroying, so he locked it in here, the most secure of the palace's rooms, for safekeeping on the theory that if his enemies made it this far, he'd either be long gone or dead already. If Bahor hasn't given the PCs the *ring of evasion* for agreeing to his offer, it can be found here as well.

Finally, a neatly folded set of noble's clothes, along with a belt pouch containing 34 pp and 29 gp, a brass key for the lockbox in area **A8** in Vencarlo's home, a *+1 rapier*, and a gold signet ring worth 250 gp, sit next to the chest. These items belong to Vencarlo and can be immediately recognized as his unique belongings by any PC who's spent time with the man.

D17 Vimanda's Room

This austere chamber is apparently the sleeping chamber of someone quite orderly. The bed is made, sheets drawn tight against the mattress and pillows arranged perfectly at the head, and a dressing table and chair at the bed's side are both dust-free and polished to a shine.

This chamber belongs to Vimanda, Bahor's sister. Publicly, the two play the role of loving siblings, yet privately, they have slowly grown to despise each other, maintaining the veneer of civility and cooperation out of little more than tradition. Vimanda has spent much of the last several years building her own contacts among Korvosa's underworld in preparation for her takeover of the Arkona family. The death of King Eodred II threw these plans into chaos, and of late, Vimanda's been spending an increasing amount of time in the dungeons below, venting her frustrations on prisoners.

D18 Bahor's Room (CR 14)

The crowning glory of this dazzling chamber is, without a doubt, the four-posted canopy bed that takes up a full quarter of the room. Silk sheets, gossamer curtains, ebony bedposts depicting tigers and cobras chasing monkeys in an endless circle, and a half-dozen huge pillows combine to create a resting place fit for a king. Strange and ferocious animal heads are mounted on the walls, their eyes looking almost alive. A towering redwood cabinet stands against the eastern wall, while to the west sits a massive desk covered with books and scrolls and a large green paperweight the size of an apple. An exotic-looking, five-foot-long stringed instrument sits displayed on a bronze stand near the desk, and a spherical birdcage containing several brightly colored songbirds hangs from the center of the ceiling above.

Bahor's personal quarters are perhaps the most ostentatious chamber in all of Arkona Palace. The exquisite furniture in here is worth a combined total of 3,000 gp but is quite unwieldy, and the more portable treasures in the room are listed below.

The papers on the desk are a combination of astrological charts, maps of the world (including several of Vudra), and various bits of non-incriminating paperwork involving the day-to-day business of running a noble family. The trophies mounted on the wall all bear names identifying them as Vudrani animals—a Barakot peacock, an Ukhrul wolverine, a Khar skink, a Kothar great bat, a Vimerian tiger, and a Johar long viper. A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Knowledge (nature) check observes that these heads seem somehow "off," and not really like real animal heads at all. A successful DC 30 Knowledge (the planes) check reveals

these are all preserved rakshasa heads. Bahor enjoys keeping mementos of his predecessors and children (all of whom have, to date, disappointed the rakshasa).

Creature: Bahor has been spending more and more of his time brooding in this chamber, waiting patiently for the quarantine to end so he can get about with the business of displacing Queen Ileosa. News of the failed assassination attempt against her has somewhat rattled the normally confident rakshasa, though, and now his thoughts turn to desperate plans.

Bahor's plans for the PCs are detailed on pages 163–164 under the Securing an Audience and Bahor's Offer sections, and further details on the dangerous outsider can be found on page 440. If the PCs invade his palace, he patiently waits here in human form for them to confront him, at which point he calmly invites them to listen to his offer. If the PCs instead attack him, he sighs with regret and does his best to put them down. Bahor is a dangerous foe, easily the most dangerous enemy the PCs meet in this chapter, and they would be well advised to listen to his offer.

BAHOR **CR 14**

XP 38,400

hp 207 (see page 440)

Treasure: The bloodstone paperweight on the desk is a *third eye* bloodstone worth 500 gp. The exotic stringed instrument is a Jawassan sitar. Decorated with gold filigree work depicting crocodiles eating storks, it is worth 350 gp. All of Bahor's other treasures are either carried on his person or kept in his treasury.

D19 Hidden Garden (CR 11)

The air in this vast grotto is cool. An iron-framed flight of spiral stairs winds up through a hole in the ceiling in the northwest section of the room from the top of a semicircular ledge. The ledge winds down along the cavern's inner wall to a series of rope bridges that descend even lower from ledge to ledge. The upper ledge is breathtaking and strangely beautiful—a tableau of all manner of odd-colored fungi, lichens, and molds. The fungi have been cultivated, shaped into symmetrical patterns normally not seen in nature, transforming the ledge into a sort of underground fungal garden. Here and there, flickering torches burn in sconces above the fungi, while from somewhere in the darkness below comes the soft splash of water against an unseen shore.

This is the Arkonas' hidden garden, a natural cave that existed here before they built their palace above. In fact, the location of this cave and its access to the sea was the primary reason the Arkonas chose to live here.

At the point where the stairs lead up to area **D4** above, the ledge is a 100-foot drop to the water of area **D23** below. The ledge surrounding the cave slopes downward to the southwest corner of the chamber, where it's only a 50-foot drop to the water below. The rope bridge from here descends to area **D20** and beyond that to area **D22** and finally down to area **D23**.

The fungi, while colorful, is harmless. The same cannot be said of the guardians that lurk therein.

Creatures: In Vudra, the use of genies is common. They are often bound to the service of kings, queens, or warlords as bodyguards, servants, or (with increasing frequency) lovers. The majority of these genies are jann, as they are the easiest to bind to servitude. While the Arkonas don't have the magical skill to bind even jann to their will, Bahor made use of the next best thing. With the aid of several other scholars of all things fungal, he managed to transform four imported janni slaves into faithful guardians—that the jann had to die to create these fungal guardians was unfortunate—almost as unfortunate as the fact that the man responsible for creating them for Bahor, a wizard named Innachi Naven, accidentally discovered the Arkonas' true nature. Bahor turned this onetime ally over to Senshiir for her entertainment (see area **E21**), but still wishes he'd kept the man around a bit longer to create a few more of these delightful garden guardians for him. After failing several times trying create his own

GARDEN GUARDIAN

fungal creatures, Bahor swiftly gave up on making his own guardians.

The guardians still possess many janni traits, but at their core they are little more than masses of fungus that have grown over and throughout the bodies of their long-dead hosts. The fungus now animates these bodies and has access to their thoughts and memories, yet the garden guardians are bound to the will of the Arkonas as part of their creation. Appearing as fungus-encrusted skeletons with gelid ooze and tufts of mold in place of flesh, the garden guardians attack anyone they don't recognize as an Arkona.

GARDEN GUARDIANS (4) **CR 7**

XP 3,200 each

Fungal janni genie (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 116, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 141)

NE Medium plant (outsider, native)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 12, flat-footed 21 (+7 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, +1 shield)

hp 80 (9d8+27)

Fort +9, **Ref** +7, **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities poisonous blood; **Immune** disease, mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison, polymorph, sleep, stunning; **Resist** fire 10

Weaknesses worldbound

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor), fly 5 ft. (perfect)

Melee *+1 scimitar* +16/+11 (1d6+6/15–20)

Special Attacks poison spore cloud

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +9)

3/day—*invisibility* (self only), *speak with animals*

2/day—change size

1/day—*create food and water*

TACTICS

Before Combat The garden guardians become invisible as soon as they hear anything or anyone approaching the area they protect.

During Combat These fungal creatures open combat with their poison spore clouds, following that up with melee attacks. They avoid using their change size ability to increase their own size so as to maintain more mobility on the ledge, but don't hesitate to reduce the size of particularly strong foes.

Morale The fungal janni fight to the death, pursuing foes throughout the entire cavern (but not into area **D24**, area **D25** or the palace above).

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 13, **Con** 16, **Int** 14, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 26

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (scimitar), Improved Initiative, Mobility, Weapon Focus (scimitar)

Skills Appraise +14, Craft (weapons) +12, Fly +17, Perception +14, Ride +6, Sense Motive +14, Spellcraft +14, Stealth +9

Languages Common, Sylvan, Terran, Vudrani; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ elemental endurance, fungal metabolism, rejuvenation

Gear *+1 chainmail*, mwk light steel shield, *+1 scimitar*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Worldbound (Ex) The garden guardians are transformed jann that have been bound to the Material Plane by Vudrani magic. As a result, they do not have the ability to use *ethereal jaunt* or *plane shift* as spell-like abilities. Because of their unique nature, they also lack the create spawn ability possessed by most fungal creatures.

ENORMOUS REEFCLAW

D20 The Cat's Cradle

This protrusion rises from a rocky beach overlooking the sloshing waters of a sea cave. Three rope bridges descend deeper into the cave, connecting three progressively lower ledges on the wall until finally reaching a stony protrusion at ground level.

Called the "Cat's Cradle" by the Arkonas, these sturdy rope bridges allow easy access between the palace above and the cave below.

D21 Avidexu's Room

This simple chamber contains a bed and a number of shelves carved into the stone walls. All manner of animal figurines, some crude and carved of wood, others exquisite and sculpted from stone or even metal, decorate these shelves. A heap of raw materials for crafting more of the animals lies against the western wall.

This chamber belongs to Avidexu, a rakshasa who came all the way from Vudra to join Bahor and Vimanda in their grand experiment in Korvosa. Avidexu has little interest in the politics of this endeavor, though, and instead finds the local wildlife to be quite intriguing. He spends a fair amount of his time here, crafting sculptures of various Varisian creatures out of a wide range of local materials, but can currently be found in area **D24** tending to his pets.

Treasure: Several of Avidexu's sculptures are skillfully made. The most valuable are a 1-foot-long blue-coral gecko worth 300 gp, an exquisitely crafted firepelt cougar carved from redwood worth 200 gp, and a gold flame drake with tiny pearls for eyes worth 1,200 gp.

D22 Secret Dungeon Entrance

A secret door in the wall (Perception DC 25) opens into a long tunnel that winds to the southeast for 100 feet on its way to area **E1** in the Arkona Dungeons.

D23 Arkona Pier (CR 10)

At the bottom of the vast cavern, a wooden pier extends out into a gently sloshing pool of blue seawater. A shallow-draft barge is docked at the pier, an unlit lantern hanging from its bow. Supporting timbers and brickwork line parts of the lower edge of the immense cavern to both the west and south, showing where the original sea cave has been artificially expanded. To the north, a twenty-five-foot-wide waterway provides an aquatic exit from the cavern—the distant, muted sounds of the surf and sloshing water echo down from that direction.

The Arkonas use this sea cave to move sensitive cargo to and from the palace, most often consisting of unconscious victims stolen off the streets of Korvosa and scheduled for an Arkona feast. The seawater in the pool is 15 feet deep, and winds approximately 120 feet to the northwest before ending at what appears to be a stone wall. This is an *illusory wall* (CL 11th), which was placed there to mask the entrance from traffic along the Jeggare River. Anyone who interacts with the wall can attempt a DC 16 Will save to realize it's an illusion.

Creature: The sea pool is inhabited by an enormous reefclaw that serves as a guardian for this vast cavern. The monster was initially charmed by Avidexu, but over the years, the regular offerings of food the Arkonas have given the immense aquatic predator have caused it to adopt the cavern as its territory, and now the reefclaw lives here and stands guard of its own accord. The reefclaw periodically leaves the cave to swim out to sea to hunt for food or just to enjoy the open water. The first time the PCs come through this area, there's a 50% chance the reefclaw is doing just that. If the PCs return to this area sometime later, likely after having rescued Vencarlo and Neolandus and eager to effect their escape from Korvosa, the reefclaw has returned to present a final battle for the party.

ENORMOUS REEFCLAW **CR 10**

XP 9,600

Unique reefclaw (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 234)

CN Large aberration (aquatic)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +9 natural, –1 size)

hp 151 (10d8+70)

Fort +10, **Ref** +5, **Will** +10

Defensive Abilities ferocity; **Resist** cold 5

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee 2 claws +14 (1d8+8 plus grab)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (1d8+8), death frenzy, grab (any size), poison (DC 22)

TACTICS

During Combat The reefclaw knows the barge and pier belong to its Arkona allies, and does its best not to damage them. The same gentle touch is not extended to the PCs, as the monster attacks anyone it regards as an intruder with a ferocious rage.

Morale The enormous reefclaw gives up the fight if reduced to fewer than 20 hit points, swimming swiftly out to sea to seek new allies. It does not return.

STATISTICS

Str 26, **Dex** 15, **Con** 24, **Int** 9, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 17
Base Atk +7; **CMB** +16 (+24 grapple); **CMD** 29 (can't be tripped)
Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor (3)
Skills Perception +16, Stealth +11, Swim +29
Languages Common (can't speak)
SQ amphibious

D24 Arkona Temple (CR 11)

Four lit braziers illuminate this vast chamber, a cathedral-like space made all the more immense by its lack of benches or other concessions to comfort. The floor is polished tan marble, with the walls rising up to form a domed ceiling sixty feet above. Alcoves line these walls, six in all, inside of which stand human-sized statues of a tiger-headed man. To the south, a few steps lead up to a pulpit-like area with three more statues of the same figure—the central one being twice as tall and holding out before him two lances from which hang flags. The left is the flag of Korvosa, while the right bears the Arkona coat of arms.

While this large chamber may look like a temple, the Arkonas themselves do not worship gods. Rather, they (like most rakshasas) see themselves as the ones who should be worshiped. Deep under his palace, this room is a nod to Bahor's suppressed ego and pride, and the statues represent him as the god-ruler of Korvosa.

Creatures: The rakshasa Avidexu petitioned to be placed in charge of defending this temple, and Bahor granted him this responsibility even though the eldest Arkona knew Avidexu was really only looking for a place to keep his favorite pets, a pair of immense emperor cobras imported from Vudra at great expense. The two 18-foot-long snakes dwell in this chamber, and Avidexu spends much of his time in here with them, admiring their beauty or watching them hunt and feed on animals and vagrants the rakshasa supplies. When the PCs first come to this temple, Avidexu can be encountered here—one of the cobras has just finished shedding, and the rakshasa is sharing the shed skin as a meal with his two pets.

AVIDEXU **CR 10**

XP 9,600
Male rakshasa (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 231)
hp 115

EMPEROR COBRAS (2) **CR 5**

XP 1,600 each
hp 51 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 252)

D25 Tunnel to Dungeons

This winding tunnel leads to area **E1** to the east.

E The Vivified Labyrinth

The climax of this adventure takes place in the Vivified Labyrinth, a deadly obstacle course the Arkonas built for their own entertainment, using it to train and test new recruits, and to punish and torment prisoners. Bahor is particularly fond of sending in a prisoner with a knife and a loincloth, poisoning him with slow-acting venom, and telling him a pool deep inside the labyrinth can cure the poison if the victim can make it in time (so far, no prisoners have survived this challenge). Making navigation of the dungeon difficult are the numerous obstacles and guardians bound within its walls. Even worse is the fact that the layout of the dungeon can be changed.

Four circular areas in the Vivified Labyrinth are built inside of giant gears. By activating various levers inside of the labyrinth, these four gears can be rotated in the direction of the arrow

shown on the map, one-quarter turn per lever, to alter the labyrinth's layout. There are five of these levers in the labyrinth (one of which is hidden); when one is pulled, it locks in place and cannot be used for 1 minute. A successful DC 30 Disable Device check attempted as a full-round action unlocks a lever early so it may be used an additional time. The four dungeon sections rotate simultaneously, and take 1 round to rotate 90 degrees, and openings between sections close very rapidly. A character standing in a transitional square between sections must attempt a DC 15 Reflex save; if he succeeds, he can adjust 5 feet in either direction to step out of the transitional square. If he fails, the moving walls scissor him, dealing 10d6 points of damage and forcing him into a random nontransitional adjacent square. Anyone standing in one of the gear areas of the dungeon while it is rotating must succeed at a DC 10 Acrobatics check or fall prone. The rooms themselves make a loud grinding noise that is plainly audible to any creature in areas **E1–E20**.

Since the central chambers of the Vivified Labyrinth are mobile, keeping track of what areas of the dungeon are accessible to others can be confusing. The dungeon effectively has four different orientations—the layout given on the map presents the first of these, and the only one where entrance into the dungeon is possible from area **E2** without resorting to teleportation or other alternate forms of travel.

Ceiling height in the Vivified Labyrinth remains at 10 feet high, unless otherwise specified. The rooms themselves are unlit.

Two dangerous foes await the PCs within the labyrinth: the rakshasa Vimanda and the darksphinx Sivit. These two begin in the dungeon, but once the PCs begin to rotate gears, they move about and begin separate games of cat and mouse. As a result, these two foes are presented below in their own sections rather than tying them to specific rooms.

The Revolving Dungeon

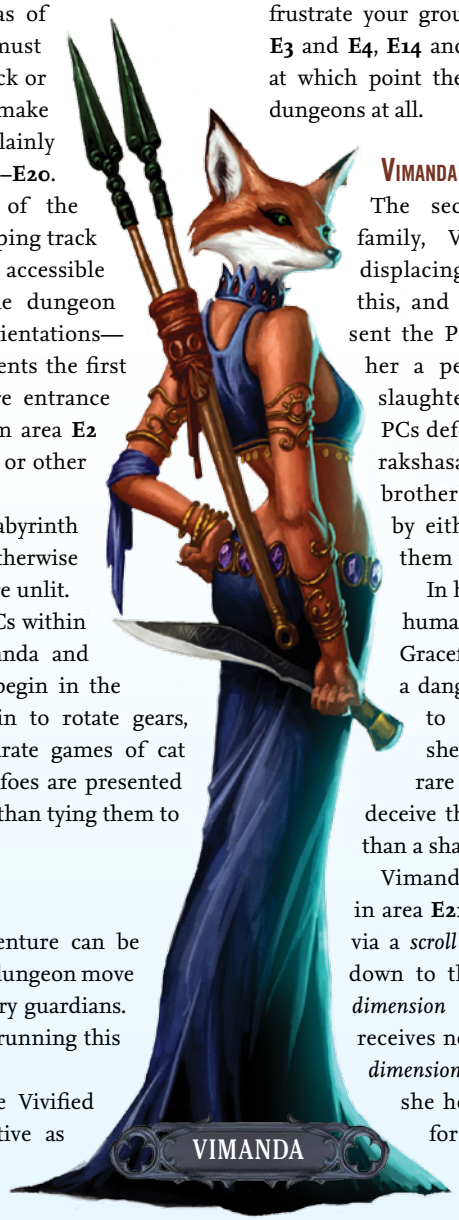
Running this section of the adventure can be complicated, for not only does the dungeon move about, but so too do its two primary guardians. The following tips can help make running this dungeon a bit easier.

Tip 1: As the PCs explore the Vivified Labyrinth, have them roll initiative as they trigger the first rotation in area **E3**. Roll initiatives for Sivit and Vimanda as well, and track their movements through the dungeon secretly on their turns on your copy of the dungeon map.

Tip 2: Before the PCs reach the dungeon, prepare four 8-inch-diameter circles of paper and sketch out a grid on each so that you can place them on your gaming table. As the PCs explore the dungeon, sketch in the map of the dungeon, but since they're on separate pieces of paper, you'll be able to rotate each of them 90 degrees each time the dungeon rotates.

Tip 3: If the PCs get completely trapped in an area where they can't access the levers, have an NPC elsewhere pull one to keep the game afoot.

Tip 4: Finally, don't be afraid to toss out the rotating gears aspect of the dungeon entirely if you think it'll just frustrate your group. It's an easy thing to attach areas **E3** and **E4**, **E14** and **E15**, and **E17** and **E18** with tunnels, at which point there's no need for confusing rotating dungeons at all.


VIMANDA

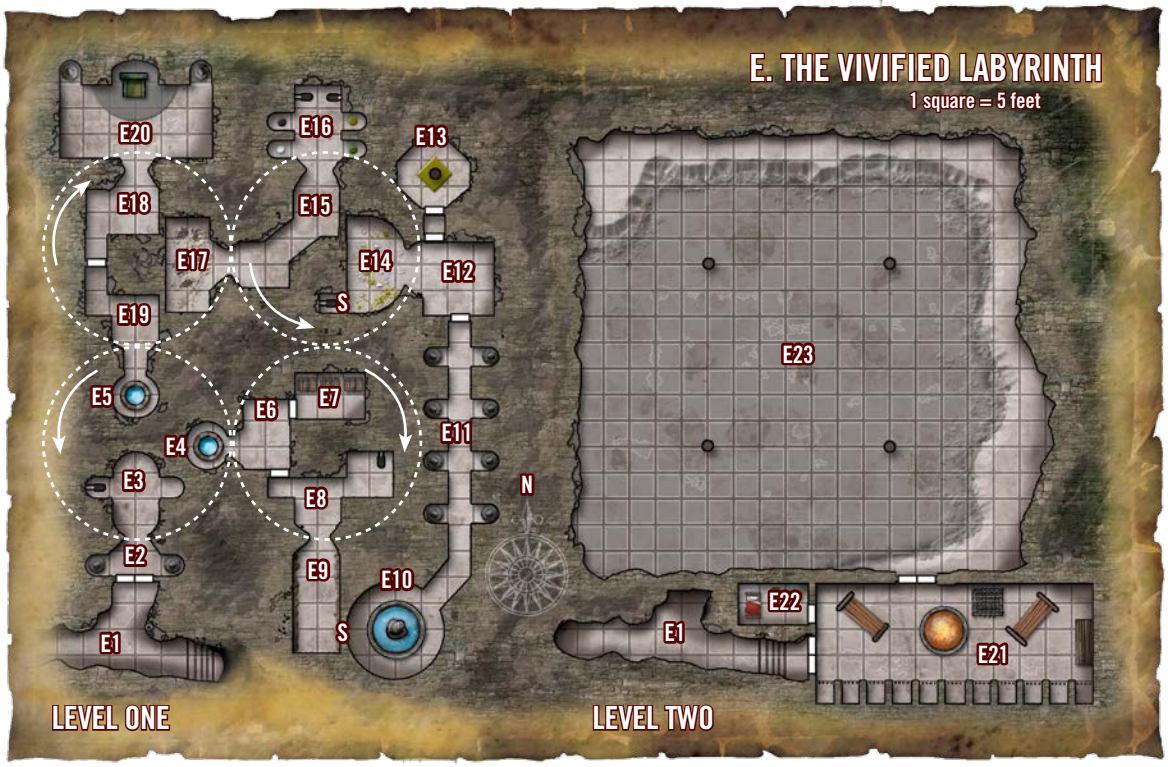
Vimanda (CR 12)

The second-in-command of the Arkona family, Vimanda has secret designs on displacing Bahor. Of course, Bahor suspects this, and although he tells Vimanda that he sent the PCs down into the labyrinth to give her a perfect opportunity to ambush and slaughter them, his true hope is that the PCs defeat her. In the ever-complex way that rakshasas work, Vimanda suspects this is her brother's desire, and hopes to show him up by either defeating the PCs or recruiting them to help her defeat Bahor.

In her true form, Vimanda is an attractive humanoid woman with the head of a fox. Graceful, elegant, and confident, she exudes a dangerous sensuality that she's not afraid to use to leverage whatever advantage she can in combat or diplomacy. Only on rare occasions (such as her current plan to deceive the PCs) does she take anything other than a shapely feminine form.

Vimanda has been spending most of her time in area **E21** of late, but once Bahor informs her via a *scroll of sending* that the PCs are heading down to the labyrinth, she uses her wand of *dimension door* to travel to area **E13**. If she receives no such warning from Bahor, she uses *dimension door* to teleport to area **E13** as soon as she hears the gears of the labyrinth grind for the first time.

If she's warned by Bahor, Vimanda assumes the form of a middle-aged



male human and then uses her Disguise skill to make herself appear to be a bedraggled, filthy Vencarlo Orisini, hoping to trick the PCs into thinking they've rescued their friend when they find her. She casts *fly* on herself, but doesn't bother using this mode of movement until combat begins. Once the gears grind, indicating the PCs have begun exploring, she begins seeking them out by patrolling the dungeon from area **E13** in a generally clockwise fashion. If she knows the PCs have been sent here by Bahor, she casts *locate object* to track them via the *ring of evasion* he gave them. Vimanda does not wish to involve Sivit in her plot, as the darksphinx is too loyal to Bahor, so if she encounters Sivit, Vimanda retreats immediately. Vimanda knows there are several symbol spells placed throughout the dungeon, and even though they don't affect her since she's lawful evil, she might warn the PCs about a few of them in an attempt to gain their trust once she meets them.

When she first encounters the PCs disguised as Vencarlo, Vimanda tries to convince them that Bahor sent them down here to die. She warns them about Sivit, and tries to encourage the PCs to leave the labyrinth and return to the palace above to confront Bahor (she explains her javelins away by saying they're weapons she scavenged from the dungeon). If this works, she hangs back in any fight against Bahor. As soon as Bahor realizes what's going on (which shouldn't take long, especially if he successfully reads Vimanda's mind), he tries to blow her cover to win the PCs back to his side. At this point, unless the PCs attack both rakshasas, they should be able to enjoy the aid of one of the two fiendish "siblings" in the resulting battle. In "Edge of Anarchy," the PCs may have unwittingly allowed one of Vimanda's spies into their midst—a raktavarna rakshasa. If this creature managed to remain in the PCs' possession all this time, it continues to provide Vimanda with information about them, giving her an excellent way to track them and prepare for battle. When the PCs finally confront her, Vimanda commands her loyal raktavarna to assume its true form and return to her; the dagger does so at once, attempting to bite its onetime owner at least once before it takes its mistress's side.

VIMANDA **CR 12**

XP 19,200

Female rakshasa monk 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 231)

LE Medium outsider (native, shapechanger)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 19, flat-footed 22 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +9 natural, +3 Wis)

hp 202 (15 HD; 5d8+10d10+125)

Fort +15, **Ref** +16, **Will** +15; +2 vs. enchantments

Defensive Abilities evasion; **DR** 15/good and piercing; **Immune** disease; **SR** 25

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee *+1 ki focus shock kukri* +17/+12/+7 (1d4+7/15–20 plus 1d6 electricity) and unarmed strike +11 (1d8+6) or unarmed strike flurry of blows +19/+19/+14/+9 (1d8+6)
Ranged *javelin of lightning* +18 (1d6+6)
Special Attacks detect thoughts, flurry of blows, stunning fist (7/day, DC 19)
Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 7th; concentration +12)
3rd (5/day)—*fly*, *suggestion* (DC 18)
2nd (7/day)—*invisibility*, *locate object*, *scorching ray*
1st (8/day)—*charm person* (DC 16), *expeditious retreat*, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 16), *true strike*
0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *detect poison*, *ghost sound* (DC 15), *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

TACTICS

During Combat If the PCs see through Vimanda's deception, she snarls and attacks. In combat, she takes to the air and hurls her javelins, as well as casts *scorching ray* and *magic missile*. If pushed into melee, she switches to physical attacks, delivering stunning fists with her kukri on her first attack each round. She does not assume her true form in battle.
Morale If Vimanda is brought to fewer than 50 hit points, she attempts to bargain with the PCs, congratulating them on their skill and asking them if they would like her aid in defeating the man who is their true enemy—Bahor. If the PCs don't agree, she uses a precious charge of her *wand of dimension door* to flee to Old Korvosa and recover from the fight. In time, she could seek out the PCs again for revenge.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 20, **Con** 26, **Int** 11, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 20
Base Atk +13; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 38
Feats Arcane Strike, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Critical (kukri), Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Multiattack, Stunning Fist, Weapon Focus (kukri)
Skills Acrobatics +18, Bluff +22, Diplomacy +18, Disguise +26, Perception +15, Perform (dance) +18, Sense Motive +15, Stealth +18; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Bluff, +8 Disguise
Languages Common, Vudrani
SQ change shape (any humanoid; *alter self*), fast movement, high jump, ki pool (4 points, magic), maneuver training, slow fall 20 ft.
Combat Gear *wand of dimension door* (3 charges); **Other Gear** *+1 ki focus shock kukri*, *javelins of lightning* (2), gold armbands worth 1,400 gp

Sivit, Lady of the Labyrinth (CR 10)

Bound to the dungeon by Bahor's rakshasa predecessor via *binding* (CL 15th), Sivit, the infamous Lady of the Labyrinth, is a darksphinx, a dangerous outsider called from one of the deeper circles of Hell. In the Outer Planes, the darksphinxes are keepers of hidden secrets and forbidden knowledge, yet here in the Vivified Labyrinth, she is little more than a guard.

Sivit feels no loyalty toward Vimanda, and if Sivit learns she's attempting to betray Bahor (such as if she discovers Vimanda is masquerading as Vencarlo and trying to lead the PCs back up to the palace), she focuses her attacks on the rakshasa, bound by the same ancient magic that keeps her inside the Vivified Labyrinth to protect her current master. Sivit cannot leave the labyrinth; area **E2** and beyond are forbidden to her as long as the *binding* spell remains in effect. There is no release clause to the *binding*.

Sivit begins in area **E20**. As soon as the first rotation occurs, she casts *clairaudience/clairvoyance* on area **E8** to observe the PCs once they enter. She then casts *locate object* to track one of the character's more unusual items, and the next time either area **E18** or **E19** open up to her chamber, she moves in and begins making her way toward the PCs. Sivit knows the layout of the Vivified Labyrinth quite well, along with the four orientations of the dungeon. She activates rotations now and then to reorient the dungeon to her advantage and to

try to split up the party. Sivit has placed multiple symbol spells into various chambers in the Vivified Labyrinth, and tries to time her attack on the PCs for a point where they're dealing with the effects of one of them. Each of these symbol spells is keyed to lawful evil, but affect creatures with other alignments normally. If Sivit believes the PCs have left the labyrinth, she uses her *wand of dimension door* to return to area **E20** to await their return.

SIVIT **CR 10**

XP 9,600

Female darksphinx (*The Book of Fiends* 156)

LE Large outsider (evil, extraplanar)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *detect magic*, *read magic*, *see invisibility*; Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 12, flat-footed 21 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +8 natural, +1 shield, –1 size)

hp 126 (11d10+66)

Fort +13, **Ref** +6, **Will** +11

DR 10/good; **Immune** poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 22

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (poor)

Melee *+1 kukri* +16/+11/+6 (1d6+7/15–20), *+1 kukri* +16 (1d6+7/15–20), tail slap +11 (1d6+3)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks pounce, rake (2 claws +16, 1d6+6)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +15)

Constant—*comprehend languages*, *detect magic*, *read magic*, *see invisibility*

3/day—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *darkness*, *poison* (DC 19)

1/day—*desecrate*, *dispel magic*, *legend lore*, *locate object*, *remove curse*, *unholy blight* (DC 19)

1/week—*symbol of fear* (DC 21), *symbol of pain* (DC 20), *symbol of sleep* (DC 20), *symbol of stunning* (DC 22)

TACTICS

Before Combat Sivit has already used her four *symbols*, as indicated in the text of the encounters.

During Combat Sivit starts combat by casting *unholy blight*, then moves in to attack foes in melee, to pouncing and raking on the first round of battle. Against ranged foes, she relies on her *wand of magic missile*.

Morale Sivit fights to the death, but cannot pursue foes beyond the Vivified Labyrinth's borders.

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 16, **Con** 23, **Int** 22, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +11; CMB +18; **CMD** 31 (35 vs. trip)

Feats Dazzling Display, Double Slice, Improved Critical (kukri), Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (kukri)

Skills Acrobatics +17, Bluff +19, Diplomacy +19, Fly +11, Heal +15, Knowledge (engineering) +17, Knowledge (planes) +20, Perception +18, Sense Motive +18, Stealth +13, Survival +18, Use Magic Device +16

Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal, Sphinx, Vudrani; *comprehend languages*

Combat Gear *wand of dimension door* (19 charges), *wand of magic missile* (CL 9th, 18 charges); **Other Gear** *+1 leather armor*, *+1 kukris* (2)

E1 Dungeon Entrance

The tunnel curves sharply to the north here, ending at a set of large bronze doors, each carved with images of tigers chasing other tigers in four adjacent circles. At the center of each circle of tigers, a snarling tiger head looks out.

These doors are kept unlocked and well maintained; they swing open silently at a touch. The dotted line across the passageway leading east is an *illusory wall* (CL 7th). A character who interacts with the wall here can attempt a DC 16 Will save to recognize this as an illusion.

E2 Labyrinth Entrance

Two statues, each depicting a tiger-headed man, stand in alcoves to either side of the doors. Their arms are wide, as if to usher visitors forward into the room beyond.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Perception check notices the gap in the floor, walls, and ceiling between this room and area **E3**. Both statues depict Bahor Arkona in his true form, and are thus recognizable as the same figure from area **D24**.

E3 First Lever

Two alcoves open on either side of this otherwise empty room. In one alcove, a long lever with an ebony handle protrudes from the wall.

This lever is one of those that trigger a partial rotation of the four central sections of the Vivified Labyrinth.

E4 Corrupted Pool

A five-foot-diameter pool of crystal-clear water nearly fills this small, circular room.

Hazard: The "water" in this 10-foot-deep pool is magical, and anyone who drinks from the water is affected by a *poison* spell (DC 16, CL 7th). A permanent *magic aura* spell cloaks the pool's aura, making it appear nonmagical. Liquid taken from this pool in a container loses its magical properties immediately, becoming

normal water. If combat with Vimanda occurs near this pool, she (knowing full well the pool's properties) might cast *suggestion* on a PC to force them to drink from it.

E5 Refreshing Pool (CR 7)

A five-foot-diameter pool of murky green water nearly fills this small, circular room.

Although the water in this 10-foot-deep pool looks fouled, it is in fact enhanced with potent curative effects. Once per day, a creature that drinks from the pool gains the effects of a *heal* spell (CL 11th). Both Vimanda and Sivit know about this pool's properties, and if badly wounded or otherwise harmed, they could try to reach this pool to drink from it. Liquid removed from this pool reverts to nonmagical, gritty, foul-tasting water.

Trap: Sivit maintains a *symbol of fear* on the wall opposite the entrance to this room. The symbol activates as soon as it is looked at.

SYMBOL OF FEAR **CR 7**

XP 3,200

Type spell; **Perception** DC 31; **Disable Device** DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger sight; **Reset** no reset

Effect spell effect (*symbol of fear*; CL 10th, DC 21)

E6 Hall of Pain (CR 6)

Two doors lead from this rectangular room.

Trap: Sivit has placed a *symbol of pain* on the floor of this room. The symbol activates as soon as it is looked at.

SYMBOL OF PAIN **CR 6**

XP 2,400

Type spell; **Perception** DC 30; **Disable Device** DC 30

EFFECTS

Trigger sight; **Reset** no reset

Effect spell effect (*symbol of pain*; CL 10th, DC 20)

E7 Three Flavors of Venom (CR 9)

Three large wooden chests, their lids decorated with carvings of cavorting tigers, sit against one wall of this room. Some sort of message seems to be carved on each lid. Colorful frescoes on the wall opposite the chests depict hundreds of tigers marching in widening circles around a single green gem the size of a fist, set in the wall and carved to resemble a tiger's head.

This is one of several rooms Bahor designed to give prisoners put into the Vivified Labyrinth a chance to provide him a bit more entertainment than simply avoiding Sivit or the various active obstacles. The three chests are identical in appearance except for a short phrase engraved on each lid. This phrase is written in Vudrani, a hint from Bahor to at least give some small bit of aid to those who speak his native tongue. Of course, since these hints are somewhat misleading, they're more like threats to those who dare speak his native tongue.

The left chest says, "By gentle caress shall truth be known." The right chest says, "Breathe deep your salvation." The middle chest says, "Life within but Death without."

Creature: Inside the middle chest are several potions (see Treasure below) and a relatively cranky, blood-red cobra. Bahor periodically feeds the cobra, but not nearly enough to keep it happy. The snake is furious, and immediately attacks the first person it sees.

BLOOD COBRA **CR 1**

XP 400

Venomous snake (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 255)

hp 13

Traps: The left chest is coated in terinav root venom and is empty. The right chest is airtight and filled with insanity mist and nothing else. Opening it exposes everyone in the room to the effects of the poison, and the airborne poison fades after 1 round.

INSANITY MIST CHEST **CR 7**

XP 3,200

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger touch (opening chest); **Reset** no reset

Effect poison cloud (insanity mist, affects all creatures in room; Fortitude DC 15)

TERINAV TREATED CHEST **CR 7**

XP 3,200

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** no reset

Effect poison (terinav root, Fortitude DC 16)

Treasure: Bahor keeps a helpful item or weapon in the central chest to provide those exploring his dungeon a glimmer of false hope. The middle chest currently contains three *potions of cure serious wounds* and *three potions of lesser restoration* in addition to the cobra. The gem embedded in the wall is a *third eye* bloodstone worth 750 gp.

E8 Second Lever

A lever to rotate the Vivified Labyrinth protrudes from the wall of this room's side chamber.

E9 The Biting Tigers (CR 10)

Both walls of this twenty-foot-long corridor are decorated with row upon row of tiger heads. Each head appears to be that of an actual, once-living tiger. The heads are remarkably well preserved—their gaping mouths and glaring eyes even appear to be moist.

This room is the first in a series of four rooms (areas **E9–E12**) that serve as a perilous obstacle course. All four of these chambers were designed and created by Mapras, Bahor's father. Although Mapras died at Bahor's hands, Bahor never rebuilt these four rooms, and they remain Mapras's only legacy in the Arkona dungeon—chambers too ingeniously cruel in their creativity for even a murderous son to ignore.

All four of the obstacles can be temporarily deactivated by a hidden bypass switch. A switch is located on the wall next to each entrance to room **E9** through **E12**; locating a switch requires a successful DC 30 Perception check. Once a switch is pressed, the trap in its related room does not activate for the following 3 rounds. On the fourth round, the trap reactivates (but may be deactivated by again pressing the hidden bypass switch).

The secret door leading to area **E10** can be discovered with a successful DC 30 Perception check.

Trap: The tiger heads lining the walls animate and attack 1 round after the first person sets foot in the chamber, writhing out of the walls on long serpentine necks in a horrific storm of scales, fangs, and fur. Although these serpentine tiger heads may seem to be living creatures, they are in fact a magical trap. The tiger heads can be destroyed via damage (each has an AC of 20, hardness 3, and 20 hp).

BITING TIGERS **CR 10**

XP 9,600

Type magic; **Perception** DC 28; **Disable Device** DC 28

EFFECTS

Trigger visual (*arcane eye*); **Reset** automatic; **Bypass** (hidden switch or damage)

Effect Atk +15 melee (2d6+3); multiple targets (four random targets in area **E9**)

E10 The Fangs of Diomazul (CR 10)

A ten-foot-wide, two-foot-tall well rises from the center of this circular room. Inky water fills the well nearly to its rim, obscuring its depths. A stone statue of a rearing snake rises from the center of the well. Along the length of the serpent's body, dozens of carved arms cross over the creature's belly—each arm grips a long curved blade. The statue's serpentine head rises ten feet above the surface of the water, gazing down coolly to the northeast with amethyst eyes.

A successful DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the many-armed serpent as a statue of the obscure Vudrani deity Diomazul, the Serpent of Eighty Blades, a god noted particularly for its ruthless fury and cruelty in battle.

Trap: The well is in fact a shallow pool; the water is only 4 inches deep, but is dark enough to hide the fact that the lower section contains the workings of a deadly trap. Two rounds after the first person enters the room, a loud hiss issues from the statue as dozens of curved blades spring out of the well's base and spin furiously around the room, striking anyone standing on the ground within 5 feet of the well. The blades continue to spin for 5 rounds before retracting. The trap automatically resets at this point, and if anyone remains in the room, it triggers again after 2 rounds. As long as the blades continue spinning, this region around the well is considered difficult terrain.

FANGS OF DIOMAZUL **CR 10**

XP 9,600

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Onset Delay** 2 rounds; **Reset** automatic; **Bypass** (hidden switch)

Effect blades spin around fountain (all targets on the ground within 5 feet of the room's walls; 3d6 damage per round; Reflex DC 15 negates for that round; blades continue spinning for 5 rounds)

Treasure: The statue's amethyst eyes can each be pried out of the statue as a full-round action; they are each worth 500 gp.

E11 The Wailing Maidens (CR 10)

Eight alcoves line this long, narrow hallway. Inside each alcove stands a human-sized, upright iron casket, the image of a sobbing woman decorating its lid. The hallway's floor gleams bright red, a mosaic of tiny red stones giving the appearance that the hall is awash in blood.

Trap: This is a cruel, two-stage trap that activates 3 rounds after any creature steps on a square between two iron maiden alcoves. When the trap activates, the 5-foot squares not flanked by iron maiden alcoves suddenly rise, tipping up to a 45-degree angle that slopes to the south. Any creature on one of these squares must succeed at a DC 12 Reflex save or slide back into a square between the iron maidens. A creature that

slides into an occupied square falls prone. An instant later, the western iron maidens begin shrieking and wailing. Any creature adjacent to a wailing maiden must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save or be stunned and deafened for 1d4 rounds. On the round after the western maidens wail, the eastern maidens open to reveal an interior lined with spikes. These spikes shoot out on long shafts, nearly reaching the opposing iron maiden and impaling anything in the way. The spikes retract and refire once per round for the next 4 rounds, at which point the hall returns to normal. The trap takes 5 rounds to reset, filling the area with ominous clicking and grinding.

WAILING MAIDENS **CR 10**

XP 9,600

Type magic; **Perception** DC 28; **Disable Device** DC 28

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Onset Delay** 3 rounds; **Reset** automatic (after 5 rounds); **Bypass** (hidden switch)

Effect stunning wail (stun and deafened for 1d4 rounds, Fortitude DC 15 negates); spike barrage (Atk +12 melee, 2d6+3 damage, attack repeats once per round for 4 rounds); multiple targets (all targets between the iron maiden alcoves)

E12 The Stinging Wasps (CR 8)

The walls, floor, and ceiling of this chamber are decorated with a complex mosaic depicting an immense swarm of angry wasps.

Trap: This trap activates 1 round after a creature enters the room. At this point, without any prior warning, thousands of 6-inch-long needles stab out of the walls, floor, and ceiling of this room, jabbing in and out of tiny holes several times each round. The needles jab in waves, creating a beautiful rippling effect as they stab repeatedly. Any creature walking or climbing walls in this room is targeted by the needles. The needles continue stabbing as long as anyone remains in the room; whenever they're stabbing, this room is considered to be difficult terrain. Each time a creature takes damage from these needles, it must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save or take 2 points of Dexterity damage as magically generated toxins numb its arms and legs.

STINGING WASPS **CR 8**

XP 4,800

Type magic; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Onset Delay** 2 rounds; **Reset** automatic; **Bypass** (hidden switch)

Effect numbing needles (Atk +15 melee, 1d6+2 damage plus 2 Dexterity damage; Fortitude DC 15 negates Dexterity damage); multiple targets (all creatures in contact with walls, floor, or ceiling)

E13 Meditation Chamber

A six-inch-tall bronze dais on the floor in the middle of this otherwise empty room supports a polished column of black marble. The black stone seems to be vibrating softly, filling the air with a faint hum.

This pillar of black stone is another Vudrani import: a slab of magical rock known as a *sonorous stone*. The stone's magic is as much tied to its hexagonal chamber as the stone, and once created, requires a year to attune itself to its surroundings, at which point the stone begins to vibrate and hum softly. This vibration is soothing and relaxing, and any creature that spends 1 minute within 5 feet of an active *sonorous stone* receives the benefits of a *calm emotions* spell. In addition, a creature that touches an active *sonorous stone* is targeted by a *restoration* spell that also allows it to recall up to 3 levels of spells it had prepared or three expended spell slots—the spells are prepared again or spell slots are once again available, just as if they had not been used. A *sonorous stone* can be activated in this manner up to four times per month, after which it becomes dormant for 1 month while it rebuilds its charge. The effects of a *sonorous stone* can be discovered with a successful DC 25 Spellcraft check while it is studied by someone who can observe magical auras (such as by *detect magic* or *arcane sight*). Removing the *sonorous stone* from this room destroys the item.

E14 Hidden Lever

The floor of this empty room is strewn with bones and patches of mold.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Perception check discovers the secret door in this room. The alcove beyond the door contains another lever to rotate the Vivified Labyrinth's chambers.

E15 Threatening Murals

The walls of this oddly shaped hallway are decorated in a complex mural depicting a hot, steaming jungle brimming with hungry life. Predators of every sort stalk and maim and feed on dozens of hapless people. In the canopy above, monkeys, snakes, and birds seem to chatter and mock the victims below.

Those who examine these murals swiftly find themselves among the victims represented. This relatively minor illusion has no further effect—it was created merely to unsettle and frighten any who view it.

E16 Transport Room

Four alcoves in the walls of this room contain floating spheres of mist, each hovering three feet off the ground. Each sphere is one foot in diameter and of a different color—black, white, green, and gold. Just north of the strange floating spheres, two levers protrude from opposite walls.

This chamber serves as a way to relocate to one of four specific areas in the Vivified Labyrinth; for someone who knows the dungeon's pattern, it allows increased mobility, but to characters who don't, it could well trap someone in a room with no exit.

The four spheres are, in fact, teleporters; merely touching a sphere is enough to send the person who does so (or an object thrown into the sphere) into another area of the dungeon, as per *greater teleport*. The white sphere teleports anyone who touches it to area **E2**. The black sphere teleports anyone who touches it to area **E13**. The green sphere teleports anyone who touches it to area **E20**. Lastly, the gold sphere teleports anyone who touches it to area **E5**.

The eastern lever allows for a rotation of the Vivified Labyrinth's chambers, but the western lever alters the destinations of the teleporters. When the western lever is in the up position, the teleporters work as detailed above. When the western lever is in the down position (as it is when the PCs enter the room), all four teleporters instead transport anyone who touches them into a random unoccupied cell in area **E21**; if there are no cells available, the teleporters simply won't function when this lever is in the down position.

E17 Disposal Room

The filthy floor of this chamber is covered by a thick layer of rubble, bones, and other debris. A lever protrudes from the center of the wall opposite the entrance.

After victims succumb to the Vivified Labyrinth, Sivit generally disposes of the bodies in this room. Some time later, the remains are carried away by the Arkonas, typically for meals. There's currently nothing of interest for the PCs in this chamber.

A lever to rotate the Vivified Labyrinth protrudes from the wall of this room opposite its entrance.

E18 Hall of Slumber (CR 6)

A short hallway leads out this small room.

Trap: Sivit has placed a *symbol of sleep* on the floor of this room. The symbol activates as soon as it is looked at.

SYMBOL OF SLEEP **CR 6**

XP 2,400

Type spell; **Perception** DC 30; **Disable Device** DC 30

EFFECTS

Trigger sight; **Reset** no reset

Effect spell effect (*symbol of sleep*; CL 10th, DC 20)

E19 Hall of Stunning (CR 8)

A door lies at one end of this crooked hall.

Trap: Sivit has placed a *symbol of stunning* on the floor of this room. The symbol activates as soon as it is looked at.

SYMBOL OF STUNNING **CR 8**

XP 4,800

Type spell; **Perception** DC 32; **Disable Device** DC 32

EFFECTS

Trigger sight; **Reset** no reset

Effect spell effect (*symbol of stunning*; CL 10th, DC 22)

E20 Sivit's Throne

A great green throne sits atop a dais in the northern end of the room. To either side stand statues of a tiger-headed man—each holds aloft a pair of chains from which manacles dangle. Dried blood spatters the walls, the floor, and even the throne and statues, filling the room with its stale reek.

This chamber is where the darksphinx Sivit spends the majority of her time, languishing on her green marble throne and daydreaming about the day she escapes her *binding* and sees her revenge on the Arkonas. The manacles can be unlocked with a key that Sivit keeps hidden under her throne's well-worn cushion

VENCARLO ORISINI

(Perception DC 20), or opened with a successful DC 30 Disable Device check.

Creature: Often when prisoners are placed in the Vivified Labyrinth, Sivit captures them alive and brings them back here, shackling them to one of the two statues of Bahor. She does her best to keep her playthings alive as long as she can, and once they expire, she dumps the bodies in area **E17**. Her current victim is manacled to the western statue. Dressed in tattered rags, his body a display of bruises and partially healed cuts and scrapes, Vencarlo Orisini has languished here for days. He is currently unconscious, suffering from starvation and exhaustion, but wakens as soon as anyone heals enough damage. Although he's been beaten and is in pain, his expression brightens immediately upon seeing the PCs, and he even manages a smile as he says, "It's quite the delight to see you." He eagerly tells the PCs that the key to his manacles is hidden under the throne's cushion (if they haven't discovered this already).

NEOLANDUS KALEPOPOLIS

Vencarlo is in a rough state. Badly wounded and without his gear, he is little help in a fight. Yet he still demands to assist in every way he can. If the PCs can equip and heal him, he can be a valuable ally in the chapter's remaining fights. While Vencarlo is certainly curious to hear the PCs' story, he knows this isn't the best time to get caught up. If the PCs haven't already rescued Neolandus from area **E21**, Vencarlo suggests this should be their first priority. Having spent some time in the torture chamber, Vencarlo can show the PCs where *illusory walls* hide the entrance to the lower level.

If the PCs confront Vencarlo about his alternate identity as Blackjack, he laughs and acts as if it were a joke. If the PCs present proof (such as that he's dressed as Blackjack), he grows serious, then says, "Looks like you caught me. Well done. But we don't have time to talk about this. Let's rescue Neolandus and get the hell out of Korvosa first. We'll have plenty of time to talk this over later, I assure you."

VENCARLO ORISINI **CR 10**

XP 9,600

hp 68 (currently 0; see page 462)

Story Award: If the PCs rescue Vencarlo, award them 9,600 XP.

E21 Torture Chamber (CR 9)

This large room is lit by a heartily burning firepit in the room's center. Cages hang on chains dangling from hooks in the ceiling, while racks, strappados, gibbets, and other implements of torture fill the floor space. A set of immense wooden doors stand in the wall to the north, while to the south stand several narrow cells.

Creatures: This well-stocked torture chamber is where the majority of the Arkonas' prisoners end up. Although prisoners are allowed to languish for a time in the cells, the chamber's mistress eventually gets around to spending some quality time with every prisoner kept here. This being is Senshiir, an upasunda asura.

Senshiir struck a bargain with Bahor several years ago, agreeing to serve him as a torturer as long as he supplies her regularly with fresh victims. Although the majority of her kind seek enlightenment through brutal combat and mastery of life-ending weaponry, Senshiir has narrowed her focus a bit through the observation of pain and its effects on the mortal mind. She approaches her role with a detached and emotionless curiosity that only a creature born in Hell could foster.

Currently, Senshiir has only one guest; since the quarantine and the Arkonas' resulting introversion, no new prisoners have come to this chamber. This, combined with Bahor's demand that the current guest not be subjected to any pain, has angered the fiend, and she has recently decided to try her hand on some torture that doesn't leave any obvious marks on the exterior flesh. As the PCs arrive, she's just finished placing a sobbing Neolandus Kalepopolis into one of the stretching racks, but hasn't quite begun her sadistic work.

If the PCs manage to reach this point without raising any alarms or interacting with Bahor, they find Vimanda here, discussing the finer points of torture with Senshiir. The rakshasa is startled to have visitors, but recovers quickly enough to assist Senshiir in combat.

A longtime worshiper of Abadar and a ferociously patriotic Korvosan, Neolandus nonetheless knows when he's in over his head, and ever since fleeing the queen and the Red Mantis, he's felt like a ship tossed around at the whims of a hurricane. If Senshiir is defeated, it's a simple matter to release Neolandus from the rack. He does not recognize the PCs (having been holed up in Old Korvosa during their entire rise to fame), and unless Vencarlo is with the PCs, he avoids revealing his true identity. He instead claims to be a thief named Velak who was captured by the Arkonas for robbing one of the merchants under the family's protection. As Velak, the seneschal begs to be rescued but also tells the PCs "a friend" has been sent

to the Vivified Labyrinth, and that before they leave, they must rescue him as well.

Of course, even if the PCs don't know who Neolandus is initially, the rags and grime he wears are not an effective disguise. With a successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) or Knowledge (nobility) check, anyone can recognize him for who he really is. In this case, Neolandus comes clean, but continues to insist that the PCs rescue his friend Vencarlo from the labyrinth. Neolandus offers to help the PCs in any way he can, but can certainly be a greater help if he's first healed and outfitted with gear.

Once Neolandus is sure the PCs aren't agents of the queen and that they can be trusted, he grows quite excited; here are the exact people he's been hoping to find—heroes who can act on the information he has about Queen Ileosa. Consult the Chapter Conclusion on page 188 to see what he can tell the PCs about the true peril facing Korvosa.

SENSHIIR **CR 9**

XP 6,400

Female upasunda asura (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 27)

hp 114

NEOLANDUS KALEPOPOLIS **CR 5**

XP 1,600

Male human aristocrat 3/ranger 3

LG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +7; **Senses** Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10 (+3 Dex)

hp 34 (currently stable at 0 hp; 6 HD; 3d8+3d10)

Fort +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +4 (1d3–1 nonlethal)

Special Attacks combat style (crossbow)[APG], favored enemy (giants +2)

TACTICS

During Combat Although Neolandus trained as a ranger, he realizes his true skills are in diplomacy. As such, he only fights when there is no other choice, in which case he prefers to engage in combat with his deity's favored weapon, the light crossbow.

Morale Neolandus won't abandon an ally, but if alone, flees to safety if brought to fewer than 15 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 16, **Con** 10, **Int** 12, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 17

Feats Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Persuasive, Rapid Reload, Skill Focus (Diplomacy)

Skills Bluff +11, Diplomacy +16, Handle Animal +8, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Perception +11, Ride +12, Sense Motive +11, Survival +11

Languages Common, Varisian

SQ favored terrain (mountainous +2), track +1, wild empathy +5

Story Award: If the PCs rescue Neolandus from his fate, award them 6,400 XP.

E22 Torturer's Home

A narrow bed, stool, and table are this room's sole furnishings. None appear to have been used in some time.

This room once belonged to a vile man who served Bahor's father as a torturer, but he was put to the sword not long after his previous master perished. The room has gone unused since, with the periodic exception of Senshiir, who sometimes retreats here to meditate.

E23 The Gizzard (EL 11)

This vast cavern stretches into the shadows, the true extent of its area difficult to discern due to a thick maze of wooden timbers that rise up to support the roof. A ledge winds along the eastern and northern sides of the cave, with the floor dropping away to a depth of thirty feet. Four immense stone pillars support the ceiling ten feet above. Where these pillars connect to the ceiling, a network of wooden braces and timbers radiate out in a wheel shape, forming four forty-foot-wide disks flush against the roof. Dozens of chains hang down from these beams to attach to the pillars themselves, many of which are decorated with rows upon rows of bells.

The maze of support timbers is not shown on the map of this room, for the lowest 10 feet of the area are left quite open to give the chamber's denizens plenty of room to toil. Above the 10-foot mark, though, a creature can move through this room on these tangled wooden beams with a successful DC 10 Acrobatics or Climb check.

Creatures: This room is the source of the Vivified Labyrinth's power—the Gizzard. The four pillars are in fact axles attached to the four large gears above. Each of these pillars is attended by a specialized skeletal mastodon known as a rajambari. The blasphemous methods of creating these undead elephants is known to many necromancy cults in distant Vudra, secrets known to the original Arkonas who came to Korvosa but carried with them to their graves. Although their creators are long-dead, the four rajambari remain loyal servants of the Arkona family, despite their lack of intelligence. They can be commanded by any Arkona to perform any act a skeletal mastodon can perform, but for the most part are left here to power the Gizzard.

Each undead mastodon is chained to a pillar, and as the levers in the Vivified Labyrinth above are triggered,

chains affixed to the labyrinth's workings cause the bells to ring and unlock the four gears, signaling the skeletal mastodons to walk a quarter circle around each pillar, causing the immense gears above to grind and rotate. Once a rotation completes a 90-degree turn, the gears lock back into place and the skeletons once again become motionless until compelled back into action.

RAJAMBARI (4) **CR 7**

XP 3,200

Variant mastodon elephant skeleton (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 128, 250)

NE Huge undead

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+4 Dex, +5 natural, –2 size)

hp 63 (14d8)

Fort +4, **Ref** +8, **Will** +9

DR 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** cold, undead traits

Weaknesses servile

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee gore +22 (2d8+14), slam +22 (2d6+14)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attack war stomp

TACTICS

During Combat As long as no creatures attempt to damage them or the surrounding structure of the Gizzard, the rajambari remain passive. Once either of these conditions ends, though, the undead mastodons immediately move to defend the Gizzard. Each mastodon skeleton can move up to 15 feet from its pillar to attack intruders; as they fight, the chains that attach them to the pillars move and shake, causing the rooms above to shake as well, but as long as the gears remain locked, the rooms above won't shift. If at least two of the skeletal mastodons are destroyed, the remaining ones are not strong enough to rotate the chambers of the Vivified Labyrinth above and the rooms remain stuck in their current configuration.

Morale The skeletal elephants fight until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 38, **Dex** 18, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

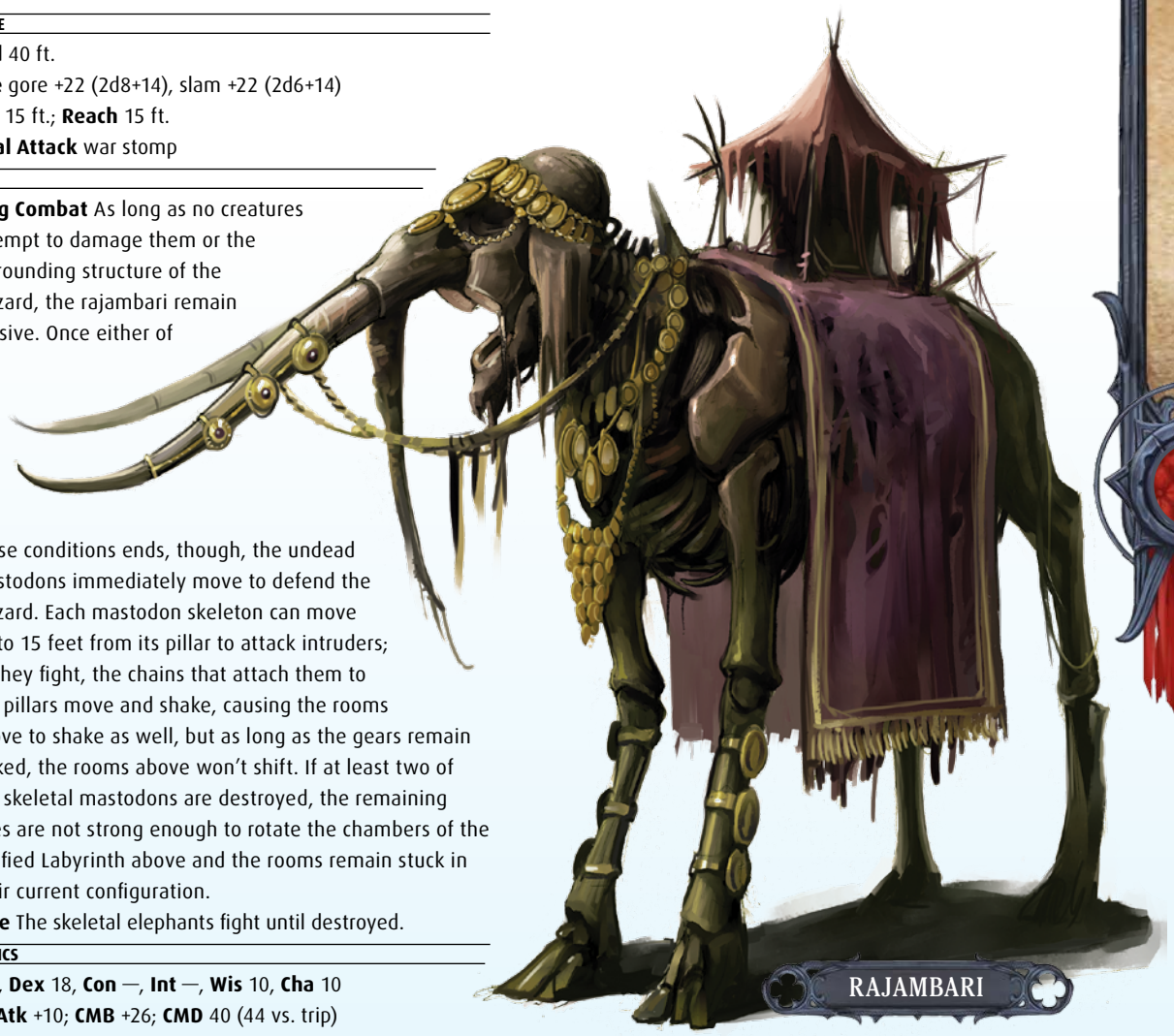
Base Atk +10; **CMB** +26; **CMD** 40 (44 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Initiative[B]

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Servile (Ex) A rajambari's method of creation makes it far easier to command, and when affected by any spell or effect that allows command over undead creatures, the duration of the effect is doubled. A rajambari can understand the spoken commands of any creature that successfully commands it, regardless of the language.

War Stomp (Su) Upon creation, a rajambari is infused with the ability to perform a war stomp. The mindless undead can perform a war stomp as a standard action once per minute, and they generally do so when first presented with the opportunity against a foe, regardless of whether the tactic is sound or not. When a rajambari war stomps, it slams its front two feet down upon the ground, creating a shock wave that can knock nearby opponents prone. The rajambari attempts a trip combat maneuver against all creatures standing on the ground within a 20-foot radius, including other rajambari.



RAJAMBARI

CHAPTER CONCLUSION

The rescue of Neolandus and Vencarlo represents a turning point in Curse of the Crimson Throne. With the seneschal in safe hands, the PCs have a powerful political tool to use against the queen and to rally Korvosa's citizens and aristocracy alike. Yet Neolandus alone is not enough to reclaim Korvosa, for the time when legal concerns could slow or stop Ileosa's plans has passed. If the PCs are to save Korvosa and force the queen off the Crimson Throne, they'll need more than politics on their side.

Although the order in which the PCs tackle the various situations and encounters in this chapter can be quite fluid, the ultimate goal remains the same: rescue Neolandus and Vencarlo and help them escape from the city. Even if the PCs haven't made public enemies of themselves and aren't on Queen Ileosa's growing list of "problems to solve," Neolandus certainly is. He can't stay in Korvosa, and both he and Vencarlo know this. Vencarlo wants out of the city as well, if just to get some time to think things over and plan his next move. His recommendation to the PCs is the same, although as detailed in the next chapter, there are reasons for the PCs to maintain ties to Korvosa if they do choose to flee the city.

Fortunately, Vencarlo has friends in the nearby town of Harse, the same one to which he sent Trinia Sabor to stay with at the start of "Seven Days to the Grave." He suggests that he, Neolandus, and the PCs find the fastest route out of the city, likely by stealing the barge in area **D23**. Once the enormous reefclaw there is dealt with, this is a relatively safe way to head up the coast a few miles, as long as the PCs take care to do so under the cover of darkness or magic to avoid being spotted. Eventually, Vencarlo suggests they make their way inland to Harse, where they can catch their breath and plan their next moves.

During this voyage, Vencarlo and Neolandus ask the PCs about how they came to Old Korvosa, pumping them for information about what's been happening in the city over the past few days. When they learn about the incident involving Marcus's failed assassination attempt, their eyes grow large and Vencarlo curses under his breath; this is positive proof that Neolandus's fears have, in fact, come true. Queen Ileosa has become something more than human—the reincarnation of a draconic warlord long thought to be dead. And as long she wears the *Crown of Fangs*, she retains this power, and there may be few methods to defeat her. Neolandus knows who may hold the secret of defeating this evil presence and, perhaps, even saving the queen from her fate. For countless years before Cheliax came to Varisia, the region known today as Korvosa had been the tribal land of the Shoanti. Neolandus explains that, although known by few, those who dwelled in the shadow of the pyramid that now serves as Castle Korvosa's foundation believed a great evil was hidden within those ancient stones. Today, the keepers of this lore, if they still live, are hidden among the Shoanti tribes of the Cinderlands.

Unfortunately, the Shoanti have learned to fear and distrust Korvosans, and securing their aid will be an adventure in and of itself.

ILEOSA'S PLANS

As this chapter ends, things in Korvosa are going from bad to worse, particularly for those who would oppose the queen, like the PCs or their longtime ally Cressida Kroft. Furthermore, if the PCs hope to save Korvosa from her new tyrant, they must look for answers in the Cinderlands. Yet some PCs might balk at the thought of abandoning their home, and might even wish to stay in Korvosa to continue the fight against Queen Ileosa there. In truth, remaining in Korvosa to help fight against the Gray Maidens, the Red Mantis, and the queen's other plots could save many lives.

While the PCs can't be in two places at once, they are now of a high enough level that they should have access to powerful methods of magical travel, such as teleportation, *shadow walk*, or *wind walk*. Even if they don't, they'll soon be meeting strange new allies who do have such capabilities, so even as they travel into the Cinderlands and beyond, they'll be able to return periodically to Korvosa to help their allies defend the city and continue resisting the queen's increasing power.

This rebellion will not be easy, though, for Queen Ileosa is no longer the petulant aristocrat she was when this campaign began. PCs who seek to directly oppose Queen Ileosa will face a very powerful bard with an artifact that protects her from death and a loyal band of followers that includes high-level fighters, devils, and soon, even a black dragon. Things in Korvosa quickly go from bad to worse

as the next chapter begins. Taxes soon eclipse the ability of the city's citizens to pay them, and slavery replaces honest work. Martial law continues to enfold the city, and every day, the Gray Maidens grow more violent and brutal in their enforcement of the queen's edicts, which themselves become stranger and crueler as her madness grows. Through it all, Field Marshal Cressida Kroft continues to ride the delicate line between rebel and loyalist, and PCs worried about friends and family whom they leave behind can rest assured that Cressida will do everything in her power to keep them safe.

ARKONA RAMIFICATIONS

The remainder of Curse of the Crimson Throne assumes the Arkonas play no further role in events unfolding in Korvosa, expecting that Bahor, Vimanda, and the rest have been killed by the PCs or at least exposed for the fiends they are. Yet Bahor is canny, and it's certainly likely that he'll survive the events of this chapter, even if he's forced to abandon his holdings in Arkona Palace. Listed below are some suggestions and guidelines on how Bahor and the Arkonas can continue to play roles in your game if the PCs left some (or even all) of them alive.

Arkona Secret Remains Safe: In the unlikely development that the PCs never figured out that the Arkonas are in fact rakshasas, Bahor elects to go with damage control rather than revenge. He washes his hands of Neolandus and Vencarlo, and if the PCs are amenable, agrees to let bygones be bygones. He will no longer meddle in PC affairs if they leave him alone. In this event, the Arkonas hunker down in their palace to wait out the remaining events of Curse of the Crimson Throne and play no further role in the campaign.

Arkona Secret Is Exposed: A likelier result is that the PCs have learned the truth about the rakshasas. In this case, Bahor does not remain idle as this chapter ends. As long as the PCs are the only ones who know, he continues to work against them, sending any remaining family members out to attempt to kill the PCs, but also using his resources to hire additional assassins, both mundane and supernatural. If the PCs go public with claims that the Arkonas are monsters, Bahor is put on the defensive. For now, other concerns in the city prevent a full investigation into the Arkonas, but they know their time is limited. Bahor consolidates his remaining funds as best he can, and is prepared to flee Korvosa with his surviving family members—but even robbed of his resources and palace, the rakshasa will hold a grudge. He may even seek teleportation magic to return to Vudra and gather reinforcements to strike at the PCs one last time.

A HISTORY OF ASHES

BY MICHAEL KORTES AND JAMES JACOBS

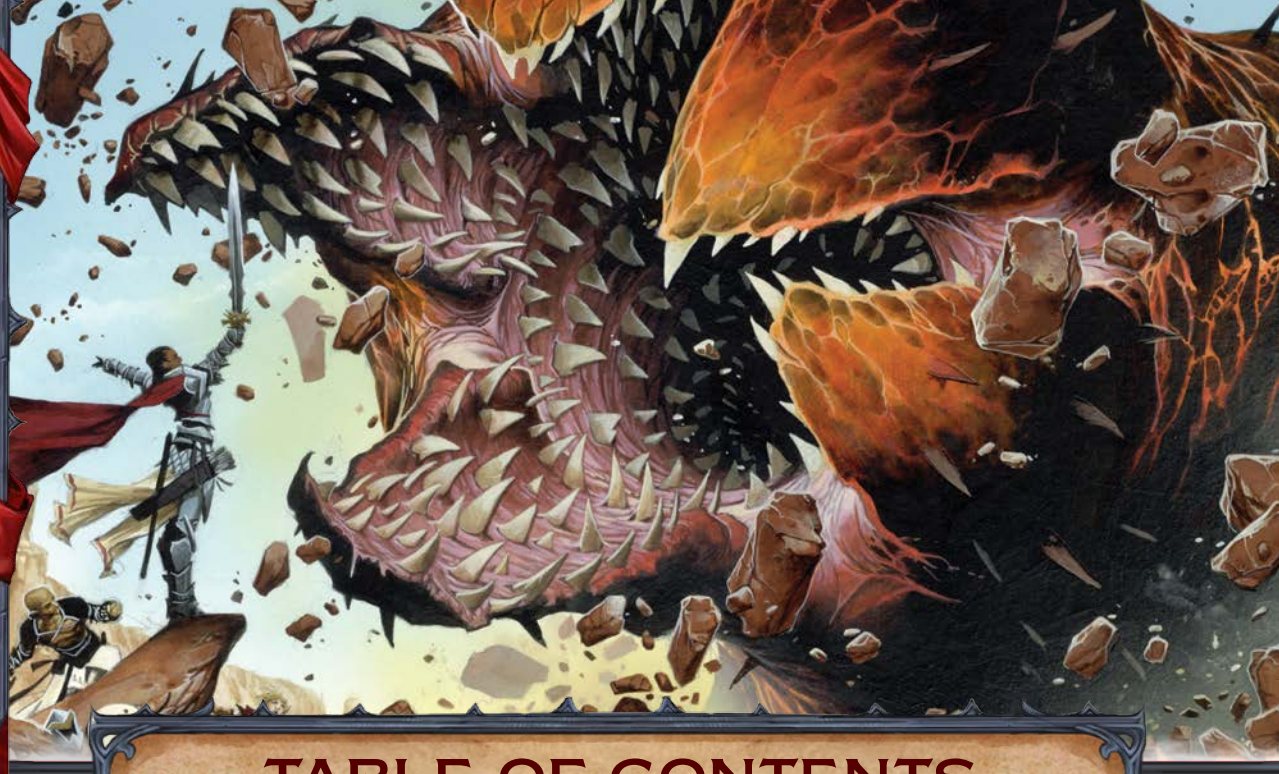


TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER BACKGROUND 192
PART 1: THE ROAD NORTH 194
PART 2: TRIALS OF RESPECT 200
PART 3: MANTIS AND MAIDEN 234
CHAPTER CONCLUSION 254

MAPS

THE ACROPOLIS OF THE THRALLKEEPERS 213
HOUSE OF THE MOON 220
CINDERMAW'S HUNTING GROUNDS 220
FLAMEFORD 227
DEATHHEAD VAULT 237

CHAPTER BACKGROUND

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

The PCs should begin Chapter 4 at 10th level, and should be very close to reaching 11th level.

9 The PCs should reach 11th level early in the chapter, preferably before they begin undertaking any of the quests to gain the Shoanti's respect.

10 The PCs should reach 12th level once they have completed most of the quests, and should not assault Deathhead Vault until reaching 12th level.

The PCs should reach 13th level by the end of the chapter.

Several hundred years ago, a brutal warlord of Zon-Kuthon named Kazavon conquered much of the Hold of Belkzen. His violent expansion and assaults against the neighboring countries of Ustalav and Lastwall quickly became far deadlier and horrific than the petty skirmishes against orcs those nations' defenders expected. From his castle, Scarwall, Kazavon threatened to engulf all who dared rise against him. His tactical brilliance, combined with his savage armies of orcs and barbarians, continuously broke every army Lastwall and Ustalav could throw against him. With none able to withstand his power, it seemed as if his bloody and cruel reign would last forever.

Kazavon's defeat occurred not on the field of battle, but in his own fortress. There, a secret cabal of heroes and mercenaries from the Esoteric Order of the Palatine Eye managed to do what armies could not. Led by a hero of Lastwall named Mandraivus, these heroes infiltrated Scarwall. The atrocities they found there tested them to their limits, and when they reached Kazavon, a terrific

battle took place. During this battle, they stripped away Kazavon's human disguise, revealing the champion of Zon-Kuthon to be a blue dragon. In the end, Mandraivus laid Kazavon low with his legendary weapon, a magical bastard sword named *Serithtial* (see page 435). Yet even in death, Kazavon's body shuddered and gasped. Fire and acid destroyed much of the dragon's corpse, yet seven fragments proved impossible to destroy. These grisly relics were so suffused with evil and malignancy they refused to burn or melt—even as the heroes watched, the bones twitched and writhed as they tried to return to life.

Mandraivus ordered his surviving comrades to each take one of these seven relics out into the world and go into hiding. None would know where the other members went, least of all their leader, who would remain in Scarwall with *Serithtial* to guard against it ever being used by Kazavon or his minions again.

One of the heroes Mandraivus called to join his cabal was a powerful Shoanti shaman. When the surviving members of the band each took a piece of the dragon, this shaman chose the Kazavon's fangs as his responsibility. He returned to his homeland in Varisia, opting to hide the relic in an ancient Thassilonian monument on the shore of his people's ancestral lands. He spent the rest of his life guarding the monument, seeking to ensure that nothing dared enter the hidden chambers within, and before he died, he passed the task down to his son. And so, for hundreds of years, the descendants of this now-forgotten Shoanti shaman guarded and protected the fangs of Kazavon from discovery. Eventually, they forgot what exactly it was they guarded, knowing only that they were bound by tradition and honor to continue the task.

When Cheliax founded Korvosa and warred with the Shoanti, driving them north into the Cinderlands, many of the guardians of Kazavon's fangs perished. A few Shoanti shamans survived the decades of war, and watched with fear from afar as the invaders built a castle atop the hidden chambers. Yet as the years wore on, the world didn't end, and the Shoanti began to hope that the evil threat inside the pyramid was dormant. Recently, Shoanti ambassadors have attempted to entreat Korvosa for peace, but these reconciliations are little more than an excuse to get the line of guardian shamans nearer to the seat of their traditional charge, so they can watch and be on hand should the unthinkable occur.

But the unthinkable has already happened, and the initial change went all but unnoticed, overshadowed as it was by riots and disease. When Queen Ileosa discovered Kazavon's fangs, the ancient warlord's spirit infused her with incredible power. The scenario the ancient shamans feared has come to pass, with no guardians in place to notice or prevent it. Now, sensing weakness in the city as it reels from riots and plague and staggers under the despotic rule of a new tyrant, the Shoanti are preparing for war. By driving out the invaders, they hope to return to their traditional role of guardians over the ancient evil—not yet knowing that the time for guarding is long gone. If they are allowed to march on Korvosa, the resulting slaughter on both sides of the conflict will surely be a crowning glory for Queen Ileosa and her newfound patron Kazavon.

NPC Developments

Use the following notes to expand the roles of NPCs encountered in the previous chapter as you see fit if the PCs seek them out during "A History of Ashes."

Amin Jalento: If the PCs escorted Amin out of Old Korvosa, he is now among the growing group of Cressida's rebels hiding in the Gray District, and the PCs can perhaps meet him again during Part 3 of this chapter. If the PCs didn't escort him out and left him to his own devices, Amin is likely now dead, the victim of a band of murderous chokers or bandits.

Pilts Swastel: If Pilts still lives, he continues to rule Old Korvosa as long as the city remains under martial law. The Gray Maidens expend very little effort to bring peace to Old Korvosa, and if the PCs have crippled the Arkonas, Pilts sees that as an opportunity to strengthen his hold on the district. Agents of the Cerulean Society approach him during this adventure in an attempt to secure his servitude but Pilts has none of it and puts the thieves to a game of blood pig—these thieves aren't nearly as successful at the game as the PCs likely were, and do not survive the ordeal. When word of their execution via the Tall Knife gets back to Boule, the guildmaster of the Cerulean Society is livid and he may well ask the PCs to return to Old Korvosa to finish the job by taking out Pilts. Whether Pilts emerges to be the most powerful crime lord of Old Korvosa after the events of Curse of the Crimson Throne play out is left to you to determine, but unless the PCs take direct action, the Emperor of Old Korvosa isn't going anywhere.

Salvator Scream: Salvator's fate depends on if he was escorted out of Old Korvosa by the PCs (or perhaps Laori). If the PCs left the artist with Pilts, he won't last long in Old Korvosa. Perhaps emboldened by the PCs' actions or maybe just fed up with his lot in life, Salvator makes a foolish attempt to escape from under Pilts's thumb. How he dies in this attempt is left to you to determine—he might be murdered (and eaten) by the choker brutes, or he could well simply end up in the Tall Knife, the latest of Pilts's victims. On the other hand, if the PCs do engineer Salvator's escape from Old Korvosa, he is likely contacted by Laori Vaus before long. Soon thereafter, agents of the Brotherhood of Bones whisk him away to Nidal, where the group hopes to rekindle his muse.

PART 1

THE ROAD NORTH

The PCs have done much to protect the citizens of Korvosa and oppose the plots and machinations of the queen, but with martial law descending upon the city, they may not feel like they have made strides against Ileosa. This begins to change as the PCs learn more of the truth behind the queen's growing power, and finally have a chance to stand against her allies and agents directly. The most immediate goal now lies outside of Korvosa, in the Cinderlands to the north.

As this chapter begins, the assumption is that the PCs are accompanying Vencarlo Orisini and Neolandus Kalepopolis as they flee from the city of Korvosa, bound for the town of Harse and Orisini's allies there. If the PCs chose instead to send Vencarlo and Neolandus up to Harse alone while they remain in Korvosa, you can have Cressida Kroft urge the PCs to head on up to Harse to speak to the two men and learn what they know about Ileosa. If the PCs are nervous about leaving Korvosa behind, Cressida does her best to assuage their fears by pointing out that plenty of good folk remain to handle things in the PCs' absence; the best thing the PCs can do at this point is to head out to find an actual solution to the problem of Queen Ileosa. While the Korvosan Guard's resources are running thin, Cressida can supply the PCs with a few magic items that will help them stay in contact with her during their trip out of town: a *wand of sending* with 10 charges and two *scrolls of dream*. If no PC can use these items, she promises to have spellcasting allies (Bishop d'Bear of the church of Pharasma) cast *sending* every few days to contact the PCs. Cressida can also supply the PCs with four *scrolls of teleport* (CL 12th) for emergency trips back to Korvosa if the PCs fear that they'll end up being out of the city for long. The first two parts of this chapter and all of the next chapter do take place outside of Korvosa's walls, but if the PCs wish to travel back to the city now and then to resupply or check in, that's fine!

Near the end of or immediately after the second part of this chapter, the PCs are called back to Korvosa to strike a blow against Ileosa's forces (see Part 3 on page 234).

THE FOURTH HARROWING

The best time to have Zellara perform her fourth harrowing (and thus generate the PCs' available Harrow Points for this chapter) is at some point during the PCs' journey from Korvosa to Harse. Whether or not this harrowing takes place where Vencarlo and Neolandus can witness it is up to you, but certainly neither man is overly shocked to find out the PCs have supernatural aid!

When this harrowing occurs, cards that come up representing the past should symbolize the early days of Korvosa's founding and the fact the Shoanti dwelt there before the place was colonized by the Chelaxians. Cards representing the present should be metaphors for the PCs now being fugitives or rebels; you can even draw parallels between the PCs' forced flight from Korvosa and the Shoanti's expulsion centuries ago, emphasizing that by following in the footsteps of those Shoanti and heading up to the Cinderlands, the route to resolution should be clear. Cards representing the future should paint Korvosa as a dangerous place, but one with elements that are ready to be toppled. You can also foreshadow certain events in this adventure, especially the encounter with Cindermaw, the fight at the Moon Temple, the trials on Bolt Rock, and the assault on Deathhead Vault. Use these cards to imply to the PCs that strength will be important in their immediate future, but that they are not yet strong enough to face Queen Ileosa herself.

See Appendix 3 on page 416 for further information on how to perform a harrowing.

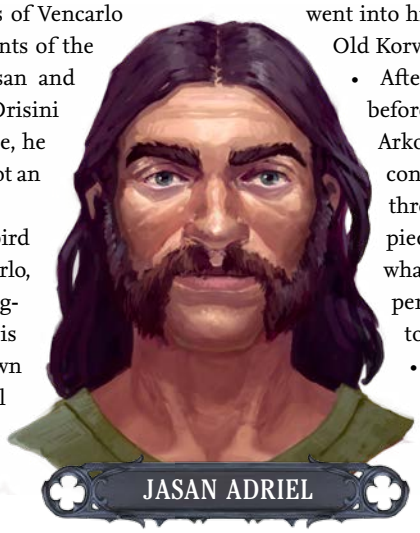
BLACKBIRD RANCH

A short 5-minute ride north from Harse along the Sarwin River, a moderately sized horse ranch sits comfortably in the cleft of two low hills topped with small copses of fir trees. This is Blackbird Ranch, owned by a barrel-chested man named Jasan Adriel. Living here with his wife, three sons, and two daughters, Jasan is one of the two surviving members of an adventuring party that made a small fortune exploring the Storval Rise and the Mindspin Mountains. That adventuring party was known as the Blackbirds, and the only other surviving member is Vencarlo Orisini.

Jasan and Vencarlo remained good friends after the Blackbirds broke up, periodically exchanging correspondence using a code they'd developed in their adventuring days, more out of novelty at first than any real desire to obscure their connection. But as their letters grew increasingly political and critical of Korvosa's

government, they grew more clandestine and conscious of keeping their code. The system paid off recently, for there are no obvious written records of Vencarlo and Jasan's friendship—no links agents of the queen could use to track down Jasan and use him against Vencarlo. So when Orisini needed a safe place for Trinia to hide, he wrote Jasan a brief coded letter and got an even briefer reply: "Yes."

When the PCs arrive at Blackbird Ranch with Neolandus and Vencarlo, Jasan greets them as if they were long-lost family members. Trinia Sabor is present as well. She has had her own adventures recently and is higher level than the last time the PCs saw her, and she's eager to reunite with the PCs and perhaps reward them a bit more with some new magic she's discovered (see her NPC entry on page 460 for more details).


JASAN ADRIEL

Jasan invites everyone to join his family for dinner, after which he leads his guests into his basement so they can talk frankly without worrying his family. When Vencarlo introduces Neolandus by name, Jasan's eyes widen and he whistles in admiration at the audacity of his home becoming the refuge of Korvosa's seneschal.

Blackbird Ranch is a large place, but not large enough to accommodate a party of adventurers for long. Worse is the unspoken worry on Vencarlo's and Neolandus's minds—they are known fugitives, and Queen Ileosa will spare little expense in tracking them down. If the PCs recovered his Blackjack gear, Vencarlo requests the *amulet of proof against detection and location*, intending to have Neolandus wear it to help hide him.

During a late-night meeting in Jasan's basement, Neolandus outlines everything he knows (see The Kazavon Situation below). If Queen Ileosa is to be defeated, someone has to travel into the Cinderlands and contact the Shoanti to find out what they know of Kazavon's fangs, and how best to defeat the ancient evil. If the PCs don't suggest it themselves, Vencarlo points out that keeping Neolandus safe is important. He volunteers to stay with the seneschal to help Jasan keep things under wraps until the time to strike at Ileosa is nigh, then bluntly (but with a twinkle in his eye) asks the PCs if they're ready to leave for the Cinderlands in the morning.

THE KAZAVON SITUATION

Everything that Neolandus knows about Kazavon is summarized below.

- When Neolandus confronted Queen Ileosa about King Eodred II's death, her response was to send Red Mantis assassins after him—proof enough of guilt to Neolandus. Through a combination of luck and knowledge of the castle's layout, Neolandus escaped and went into hiding with his friend Salvator Scream in Old Korvosa.
- After he recovered from the attack but before Salvator handed him over to the Arkonas, Neolandus spent much of his time conducting clandestine interviews, poring through records in Endrin Academy, and piecing together rumors to try to determine what caused Queen Ileosa's sudden personality change from a petulant queen to a scheming tyrant.
- Neolandus's knew that Queen Ileosa had been "borrowing" the treasury key to look through Korvosa's treasures. Neolandus was also familiar with several old and obscure legends about the rooms below Castle Korvosa—chambers, it was whispered, used to hide something of great power or terrible evil. He's heard mention of something called "Midnight's Teeth," believed to be a sacred relic of great import to the Shoanti. Circumstantial evidence indicates that the Shoanti kept these teeth somewhere inside the pyramid that now serves as Castle Korvosa's foundation.
- Further research uncovered a chilling old legend. Several hundred years ago, a blue dragon agent of Zon-Kuthon named Kazavon brought the orcs of the Hold of Belkzen to their knees before attacking Ustalav and Lastwall, until he was finally defeated and his remains scattered. According to the legend, some of his body parts, including his fangs, contained fragments of the dragon's essence.
- Neolandus suspects that Midnight's Teeth and Kazavon's fangs are one and the same. The description of the queen's new crown sounds to Neolandus as if she now wears the teeth on her brow, the implications of which trouble him greatly.
- Hard facts about Midnight's Teeth remain sparse, since Korvosa's founders didn't think it important to preserve much in the way of Shoanti culture. Yet the Shoanti have very strong oral traditions, and if anyone knows the truth behind Midnight's Teeth, that truth is doubtless hidden among their historians up in the Cinderlands.

THE JOURNEY BEGINS

The next step should be clear: the PCs must travel to the Cinderlands and establish a rapport with Shoanti historians. Unfortunately, the Shoanti have long distrusted Korvosa, and many of them will doubtless view the PCs as enemies. However, Neolandus has advice on where to

start: the Skoan-Quah, the Tribe of the Skull. This tribe has been the most open to talks of peace with Korvosa, and Neolandus recalls one old shaman in particular as being level-headed and friendly, a man named Thousand Bones. One of the last things Neolandus tried before the Arkonas got hold of him was to arrange a midnight meeting with the old shaman, but by that time Thousand Bones had abandoned Korvosa and returned to the Cinderlands, to a place known as the Kallow Mounds.

The PCs encountered Thousand Bones themselves near the end of "Edge of Anarchy," and assuming they returned the body of his grandson Gaekhen to the Shoanti, their relationship with the old shaman should remain strong. Neolandus believes the best course of action now is for someone to travel to this tribe, find Thousand Bones, and learn from him any information about what Midnight's Teeth actually were—and see if the Shoanti know how to fight against a power that grants Queen Ileosa the ability to survive a mortal wound.

When it comes time for the PCs to leave, Vencarlo and Neolandus (and Trinia, unless the PCs would rather have her accompany them) see them off, wishing them luck and praying for their safety. Jasan can provide them with a few weeks' worth of trail rations and enough light warhorses for them all (including a few pack horses if they need them) if they wish to ride. The actual journey north to the Cinderlands should pass relatively quickly. The easiest way to navigate the towering cliffs that separate Varisia from the Cinderlands is to pass through the anarchic city of Kaer Maga. Kaer Maga is fully detailed in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: City of Strangers*, but no events in this chapter take place there. Nonetheless, the City of Strangers can be an excellent place to sell magic items, buy gear, and otherwise resupply and prepare, especially since Korvosa is under martial law and returning to that city might not be immediately advisable. Apart from Kaer Maga, there aren't many easy land routes available, Magic such as flight and teleportation allows for even swifter routes up and over the cliff to the lands above. Once the PCs surmount the Storval Rise and enter the Cinderlands themselves, the peril increases. Page 414 in Appendix 2 gives additional details on this rugged, hostile region, including a map on page 412 that shows the primary locations featured in this chapter. The random encounter table provided on page 464 presents several possible additional encounters the PCs can have as they travel though this perilous land.

The Shoanti

There are three tribes of Shoanti dwelling in the Cinderlands, each of which has distinct traditions and unique lifestyles.

Lyrune-Quah (Clan of the Moon): The Lyrune-Quah are nomadic worshipers of Desna. A large group of Lyrune-Quah members are visiting an ancient shrine to Desna called the House of the Moon, but their traditional campsite has become the lair of a dangerous local predator.

Sklar-Quah (Clan of the Sun): The largest and most warlike of the Cinderlands Shoanti tribes, Sklar-Quah members endure dangerous trials before they become warriors. The only shamans who retain any lore about Kazavon's fangs are Sklar-Quah shamans.

Skoan-Quah (Clan of the Skull): The Skoan-Quah dwell in the easternmost regions of the Cinderlands. Many of their shamans, including Thousand Bones, have worked with Korvosa to try to build peace between their peoples; as a result the Skoan-Quah have been increasingly shunned by the other Shoanti. Yet since the Shoanti believe that the Skoan-Quah have the closest connection to the land of the dead and guard Shoanti ancestors from evil spirits, the other clans have grudgingly refrained from truly ostracizing the tribe.

The Brotherhood of Bones

The Brotherhood of Bones is a secret society of Kuthites from across Avistan, fanatics who seek a singular goal: gathering Kazavon's relics so that they can make sure the ancient warlord is never reborn. Its existence hidden from other worshipers even in the nation of Nidal, the Brotherhood of Bones has long suspected that one of these relics was located in Varisia. With Kazavon's recent awakening in Korvosa, the closest Brotherhood agent, Laori Vaus, came to investigate the signs and portents.

Taking Laori's words under advisement, the Brotherhood's leadership elected to send one of their shadowcounts (a sort of ambassador between the Brotherhood and the kytons who serve Zon-Kuthon) to aid Laori. Shadowcount Sial arrives with his kyton eidolon in the region as this chapter begins, meeting Laori Vaus in Kaer Maga, where the two of them can research without risking attracting Queen Ileosa's attention. They also speak of how they intend to involve the PCs and try to determine how much aid the PCs can be to the Brotherhood in wrestling Kazavon's fangs away from Queen Ileosa when the time comes. Laori seethes at the Brotherhood's decision to send help, especially when she learns that the help is Shadowcount Sial (a man with whom she's had arguments in the past). For his part, Sial considers Laori an immature child and hopes to salvage what he can from the situation; where Laori may value the PCs' input, Sial considers her contact with nonbelievers (and worse, nonmembers of the Brotherhood) to have put their entire society at risk of exposure.

The two remain in Kaer Maga for the bulk of this chapter, watching from afar via *scrying* as the PCs progress, although being forced to learn this information

secondhand from Laori's spells grates on Sial's nerves. They won't approach the PCs in person until the heroes near Scarwall in Chapter 5. In the meantime, feel free to have the PC you've chosen as Laori's scrying target to periodically have an opportunity to notice the *scrying*. If the PCs become concerned about it and get too distracted, Laori uses a charge from her *wand of sending* to contact them and apologize for spying, saying she was curious what they were up to. Whether or not this leads to an early contact between the Brotherhood and the PCs is up to you.

The Red Mantis

As Queen Ileosa becomes more concerned about the PCs, she begins to push harder for her Red Mantis allies to handle these rebellious upstarts before they can do her plans significant harm. At this time, she adjusts her standing orders with the assassin group. While she still hopes to see Neolandus assassinated, she's moved so far beyond the city charter at this point that the seneschal isn't much of a legitimate political threat to her anymore. The PCs, on the other hand, are a growing concern, and so she tasks Cinnabar, the current leader of the Red Mantis in the region, with taking out the PCs.

Working from the Mantis's secret hideout in Korvosa, Cinnabar takes several days to organize her assassins and refocus their pursuit from Neolandus to the PCs. Once she learns the PCs are traveling into the Cinderlands, she engages the services of a local legend: a Shoanti-hunting ranger known as the Cinderlander. Thanks to his intimate knowledge of the region, Cinnabar's agents can strike multiple times against the PCs during Part 2—two such attempts are detailed in the text, but you can have more assassination attempts occur. Cinnabar never leaves Korvosa, communicating with the assassins she sends into the field via *sending* cast by her cleric ally Koriantu, but the PCs will have a chance to confront her in Part 3.

The Ashwing Gargoyles

Numerous tribes of monstrous humanoids and other savage creatures dwell in the Cinderlands. While their numbers don't come close to those represented by the Shoanti, they are individually more dangerous and deadly than the average human. One such tribe of creatures that has long dwelt in the Cinderlands (and been in conflict with all three of the local Shoanti quahs) is the gargoyles of the Ashwing tribe. These gargoyles are all advanced specimens of their kind. They appear more craggy and weathered than those of their ilk who dwell in more civilized environs, so that when they use their freeze ability they look more like eroded statues or sinister slabs of rock.

When the Red Mantis turns to the Cinderlands, the Ashwings make excellent allies, and Cinnabar swiftly negotiates a truce with the gargoyles (using a large payment of gold requisitioned from Mediogalti Island). The gargoyles accompany the Red Mantis when they eventually attack the Shoanti settlement of Flameford, but at your discretion, the PCs could encounter a group of these gargoyles well before then. In any event, statistics for these powerful and unusual gargoyles are presented in full below.

ASHWING GARGOYLE **CR 5**

XP 1,600

Advanced gargoyle (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 288, 137)

CE Medium monstrous humanoid (earth)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+4 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 52 (5d10+25)

Fort +6, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6

DR 10/magic

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee bite +9 (1d4+4), 2 claws +9 (1d6+4), gore +9 (1d4+4)

TACTICS

During Combat Ashwing gargoyles hate humans—and among them, hate Shoanti the most. They favor these targets in combat over all others, and often take advantage of Flyby Attack to swoop in and bite at enemies while preventing full attacks in retaliation.

Morale An Ashwing flees once reduced to fewer than 5 hp.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 18, **Con** 20, **Int** 10, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 23

Feats Combat Reflexes, Flyby Attack, Hover

Skills Acrobatics +4, Fly +12, Perception +10, Stealth +14 (+20 in stony areas), Survival +10

Languages Common, Terran

SQ freeze

The Cinderlander

Sklar-Quah raiders have long descended the Storval Rise in raiding bands to strike at locations like Sarwin and Abken, but these marauders also target the smaller farming thorps that can be found in the verdant farmlands between Ashwood and the Yondabakari River. After one such thorp was wiped out by Sklar-Quah raiders, the man who would become the Cinderlander abandoned his name and took up hunting Shoanti full time to seek revenge. Now notorious among the quahs of the region, the Cinderlander is referred to by the Shoanti as the "devil tshamek," and many Shoanti believe that the Cinderlander can't be a living man, but rather is a spirit of wrath fueled by those slain during the raids into the southern lowlands.

After years of hunting and killing Shoanti, the Cinderlander gradually achieved two cynical epiphanies—first, no matter how many Shoanti he killed in his lifetime, there would always be more; and second, that the Shoanti were already a doomed culture, gradually being crushed between the growing cities and nations to the south and west and the more brutal orcs and giants to the north and east. His righteous fury largely exhausted, the Cinderlander now hires himself out as a guide for those who seek to cross the arid region in safety, facilitating the inland travel of southerners. He secretly resents the paradox that, over the years, he has gradually become far more like the Shoanti he hunts than the Chelish heritage he thought he was defending, yet he knows little else. Grisly trophies of his victims periodically appear in the landscape (typically the heads of Shoanti hunters who sought him out). These heads are left mounted on sticks with crossbow bolts lodged in the eyes, an implied threat that those slain by the Cinderlander are robbed of the ability to find their way to their afterlife.

As the journey through the Cinderlands progresses, the PCs should come upon at least one such display: the rotting head of a Shoanti man mounted on a sharp wooden pole, the other end of which has been jammed into a cleft between two rocks so that the head hangs out much like a flag on the side of a building. Bright red crossbow bolts have been driven into each of the head's eyes. With a successful DC 30 Knowledge (local) check, a PC recognizes that the totem was left behind by the Cinderlander; if the PCs are traveling with a Shoanti NPC, the NPC gives them this information automatically. In such a case, their Shoanti companion goes on to explain that this mysterious figure has stalked the Cinderlands for many years. He never attacks large groups but targets only lone hunters, using a "strange screaming crossbow." There are plenty of legends and tales about the Cinderlander, who he is, where he's from, and why he hunts the Shoanti. The Skoan-Quah believe he is the unquiet ghost of a Korvosan general who stalks these lands and will continue to slay Shoanti until the number of Shoanti he kills equals the number of friends and family members the Shoanti took from him. The two crossbow bolts in the eyes have become the Cinderlander's calling card, but the aged condition of the head implies that the mysterious killer is long gone from the area. Of course, nothing is further from the truth.

When Cinnabar hires the Cinderlander as a guide, the embittered loner makes more money than he has in years leading a strange and sinister group of assassins through the region. In true cynical style, the Cinderlander doesn't care that the ones the assassins hunt are probably descendents of Chelish settlers, just like him—he tells himself that the assassins' payments might finally net him enough funds to return to the lowlands and build a new thorp to replace the one the Shoanti destroyed so long ago. Yet in his heart, the Cinderlander knows that these rugged lands are his home now and that he has become as much a product of this harsh realm as the Shoanti he despises.

The Cinderlander fights alongside the Red Mantis at the climax of Part 2, but the PCs can attempt to seek him out before then to earn respect among the Shoanti. If they do so, consider having the PCs encounter him with a few Red Mantis allies.

THE CINDERLANDER **CR 12**

XP 19,200

Male human ranger 10/horizon walker 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 265)

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 16, flat-footed 20 (+6 armor, +1 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural)

hp 151 (13d10+75)

Fort +13, **Ref** +12, **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities evasion; **Immune** exhaustion, fatigue; **Resist** fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk handaxe +15/+10/+5 (1d6+1/×3)

Ranged *Vindicator* +15/+10/+5 (1d10+1/17–20)

Special Attacks combat style (crossbow)[APG], favored enemies (giants +6, humans +2, magical beasts +2)

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 7th; concentration +8)

2nd—*barkskin*

1st—*charm animal* (DC 12), *gravity bow*[APG], *pass without trace*

TACTICS

Before Combat The Cinderlander casts *pass without trace* before going on any scouting missions. Before engaging in combat, the Cinderlander casts *barkskin* on himself.

During Combat The Cinderlander prefers to fight at range with *Vindicator*, casting *gravity bow* on the crossbow and then targeting Shoanti to the exclusion of all other foes if given a choice. A favorite tactic against mounted enemies is to cast *charm animal* on a mount to lessen its rider's mobility. He resorts to his masterwork handaxe only when forced to. His animal companion Neverfar remains at his side—the Cinderlander prefers to use the firepelt cougar as a guardian while he sleeps rather than as a bodyguard or assassin.

Morale Although far from cowardly, the Cinderlander doesn't particularly like the Red Mantis. He can be bought, and for a bribe of no less than 500 gp, he abandons Cinnabar and the assassins to their fate, even switching sides in the middle of combat. He's seen what they're capable of, though, and isn't particularly interested in picking a fight against them. In any event, he attempts to flee if brought to fewer than 20 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 18, **Con** 18, **Int** 10, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 30

Feats Bleeding Critical, Critical Focus, Deadly Aim, Diehard, Dodge, Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (repeating heavy crossbow), Improved Critical (repeating heavy crossbow), Precise Shot, Shot On The Run, Toughness, Weapon Focus (repeating heavy crossbow)

Skills Handle Animal +15, Heal +17, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (geography) +14, Linguistics +5, Perception +17, Stealth +20, Survival +17

Languages Common, Giant, Shoanti

SQ favored terrains (desert +6, mountainous +2, plains +2, urban +2), hunter's bond (firepelt cougar named Neverfar), swift tracker, terrain dominance (desert), terrain mastery (desert), track +5, wild empathy +9, woodland stride

Combat Gear *potion of haste*, *wand of cure moderate wounds* (8 charges); **Other Gear** *+2 mithral chain shirt*, *Vindicator* (*+1 human-bane repeating heavy crossbow*) with 20 *screaming bolts* and 10 bolts, mwk handaxe, *belt of incredible dexterity +2*, *ring of protection +1*, survival kit[UE]

NEVERFAR **CR —**

Male firepelt cougar (leopard) animal companion

N Medium animal

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 16, flat-footed 15 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)

hp 51 (6d8+24)

Fort +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +3 (+4 morale bonus vs. enchantments)

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft., sprint

Melee bite +9 (1d6+4), 2 claws +9 (1d3+4)

TACTICS

During Combat Neverfar has been trained to attack Shoanti in preference to all other targets, but if the Cinderlander is hurt by a foe, the firepelt focuses on that enemy instead.

Morale Neverfar fights to the death as long as the Cinderlander lives. If the Cinderlander is killed, the cougar defends the man's body to the death.

STATISTICS

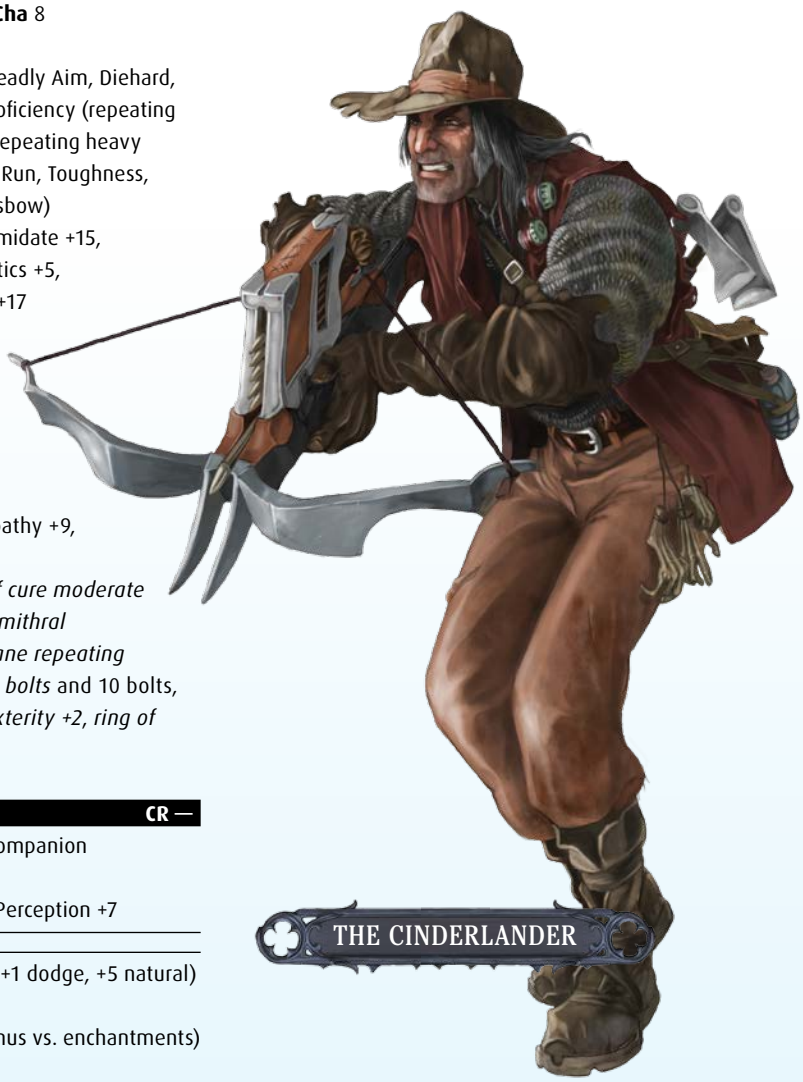
Str 18, **Dex** 21, **Con** 16, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 24 (28 vs. trip)

Feats Dodge, Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Perception +7, Stealth +11 (+15 in undergrowth)

SQ devotion



THE CINDERLANDER

PART 2

TRIALS OF RESPECT

The Shoanti have no love for Korvosa or its people, and the history of violence they share with the Chelish settlers has long tainted and strained the relationship between the quahs and Korvosa. Even if the PCs count Shoanti members in their party, they cannot be assured of safety among the quahs... at least, not until they earn the respect of the tribes. Little of what the PCs have done so far in this campaign matters to the Shoanti—if the PCs are to earn the Shoanti's respect, they must work for it.

By the time the PCs venture into the Cinderlands, they should know that Thousand Bones, the man Neolandus hopes can help the PCs learn more about Kazavon's fangs, lives at a place called the Kallow Mounds in the heart of Skoan-Quah territory. Neolandus knows that the Kallow Mounds are located about 50 miles east of Kaer Maga, as does any PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Knowledge (geography) check.

This adventure assumes that the PCs follow the path of least resistance as they attempt to earn the trust and gain the assistance of the Shoanti. When they first enter the Cinderlands, chances are good that they have limited knowledge about the territorial tribes, but their earlier interaction with Thousand Bones in Chapter 1 gives them an advantage, especially if they use magic like *dream* or *sending* to contact the shaman beforehand to let him know they wish to speak. Even if they arrive at the Kallow Mounds unannounced, Thousand Bones quickly learns of their arrival and welcomes the PCs into the camp with open arms—assuming the PCs helped recover Gaekhen's body in Chapter 1.

Attempting to contact the Lyrune-Quah or the Sklar-Quah before the PCs have made peaceful contact with the Skoan-Quah dramatically increases the difficulty of the adventure, since the Sklar-Quah react to intruders with violence and the Lyrune-Quah are quite adept at avoiding encounters entirely. In this event, divination spells and random encounters can be your friend. Use the results of spells like *commune* or *divination* to guide the PCs toward the Kallow Mounds. If they wander too long, they could encounter a band of Skoan-Quah boneslayers who can serve as guides to the Kallow Mounds—if it's not too heavy-handed for your taste, these boneslayers could even have been sent out to find the PCs after their shaman Thousand Bones received a vision of their coming.

Of course, if the PCs seem bent on remaining hostile with the Shoanti (or if they failed to deliver Gaekhen to Thousand Bones in Chapter 1 or manage to lose all respect with the Shoanti by dropping to –10 or fewer Respect Points; see below), you can run this adventure in a more straightforward manner. Simply give the Sun Shaman (see page 226) an ancient stone tablet that contains the required information the PCs need to send them on to Scarwall to retrieve the sword *Serithtial*—a fair prize to be won after a long and bloody battle against the Shoanti tribes.

Possibly, some of the PCs could be Shoanti, maybe even members of one of the Cinderlands tribes. In this case, such PCs have spent so much time in the company of outlanders (like the other PCs or Korvosa's citizens) that the Sklar-Quah likely see them as *tshamek* (outlanders) as well. While being reaccepted back into a tribe could add an interesting layer to a Shoanti PC's quest, a Shoanti background shouldn't serve as a shortcut to avoid having to earn the Sklar-Quah's respect.

Nevertheless, for each Shoanti character in the party, the group gains a Respect Point (see below).

RESPECT POINTS

Central to this part of the adventure is the goal of earning the respect of the Shoanti people. Once the PCs earn enough respect, they'll be rewarded with the opportunity to learn some of the Shoanti's greatest secrets about the region's history as it pertains to Kazavon's fangs. Track the PCs' growing recognition via Respect Points. You shouldn't conceal the number of Respect Points the PCs have earned, but don't tell them how many they need to succeed! The method in which the PCs build their Respect Points and the order in which they do so is irrelevant, but the encounters and adventures presented in this chapter are organized in order of increasing danger.

Once the PCs earn 20 Respect Points, they are contacted by Thousand Bones and told that his people have decided the PCs are worthy of the lore the Shoanti have to share—see the Chapter Conclusion on page 254 for more details.

Shoanti PCs: When the PCs first interact with a Shoanti quah in a significant manner (likely upon their arrival at the Kallow Mounds), the party earns 1 Respect Point for every member who appears to be Shoanti. If a supposed

Shoanti PC is later revealed to be an impostor (such as a Chelaxian using *disguise self* to appear Shoanti), the PCs lose 3 Respect Points. Regardless of how many times the party interacts with different Shoanti quahs, a single PC can earn this Respect Point reward for the party only once.

Trophies: A PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (local) or asks any Shoanti about the subject learns that certain monsters and denizens of the Cinderlands are long-standing enemies of the Shoanti people, and the presentation of trophies in the form of severed heads harvested from these enemies is an excellent way to build respect. Such trophies must be harvested from creatures of CR of 9 or higher (less dangerous foes, while enemies of the Shoanti, are not deadly enough to earn their respect), and must be presented to a Shoanti elder or shaman in public within a week of the completed task. The PCs can earn 1 Respect Point per trophy presented in this manner, to a maximum of 10 Respect Points—trophies beyond this total are appreciated but earn the PCs no additional Respect Points. Appropriate creatures include powerful orcs, giants, dragons, magical beasts, and known criminals and enemies of the Shoanti (such as the Cinderlander).

Quests and Events: The PCs can also earn Respect Points during play by completing quests or comporting themselves in particularly Shoanti ways in the numerous social encounters to follow; the amount of Respect Points they can earn in such cases is given in the Respect Points entry in those encounters.

Losing Respect Points: Failing at a quest does not cost the PCs any Respect Points they have already earned, since the Shoanti know that failure on a first attempt does not guarantee failure on a following attempt. Public disrespect of a Shoanti elder or unwarranted assault any Shoanti person can cost the PCs Respect Points as you see fit. Note that Respect Points can drop below 0 into negative numbers!

Losing All Respect: If the PCs ever accumulate a Respect Point total of –10 or lower, the Shoanti brand them enemies of the people. At this point, only battle will earn the PCs what they seek.

THE KALLOW MOUNDS

Although the Skoan-Quah are not as warlike as the Sklar-Quah, they remain distrustful of strangers, particularly tshamek who encroach upon the ancestral burial grounds at the Kallow Mounds. The Skoan-Quah mark their territories with large rock cairns topped with animal skulls—markers that serve as both signposts and warnings

to deter strangers, as a successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) check reveals. As the PCs approach the Kallow Mounds, these cairns appear more frequently.

As soon as the PCs get within half a mile of the Kallow Mounds, they are intercepted by a group of four Skoan-Quah boneslayers—women and men who patrol Shoanti burial mounds and are trained from an early age to be particularly effective against the undead. The four boneslayers are somewhat surprised to see tshamek, but greet them nonetheless. They demand to know why the PCs are approaching their campsite, but aren't completely rude or hostile. As long as the PCs state their desires plainly, the boneslayers agree to lead them into the quah's camp. Mentioning Thousand Bones or Gaekhen sets them at ease, for the old shaman has told his people of how the PCs retrieved the young warrior's body for him.

The Kallow Mounds are a collection of hundreds of cairns, the burial sites for all three Cinderlands Shoanti tribes for the past 300 years. The Skoan-Quah are the cairns' caretakers, and typically camp at a small dale on the westernmost edge of the mounds. At any one time, approximately 75 Skoan-Quah dwell in this camp, with a constant influx of new nomads maintaining this level as others move on. Most of these nomads are 1st-level warriors or barbarians, but there's always at least 12 boneslayers present as well.

The chieftain of the Kallow Mounds, and of all the Skoan-Quah, is a quiet and gaunt man named **One-Life** (CN male human ranger 9). He has lived in the Kallow Mounds for his entire adult life—unlike the others in his tribe, who remain nomadic, Chief One-Life dwells permanently in this small camp with his direct family. Another permanent resident of the camp is an elderly woman known as **Ash Dancer** (CN female old human ranger 2/shaman[ACG] 9), the tribe's eldest, most experienced shaman and the leader of the boneslayers. The Kallow Mounds are further protected by a crippled dragonne named **Wicked-Claws** (an advanced dragonne who has no fly speed; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 104). The dragonne lost his wings to a bulette some years ago, and Chief One-Life saved the proud creature from certain death. No longer able to soar the skies, Wicked-Claws now protects the Skoan-Quah and can often be seen sunning atop a cairn not far from Chief One-Life's tent. Finally, the Kallow Mounds are also the current home of Thousand Bones (see page 458), a Skoan-Quah shaman. Since he and his followers withdrew from Korvosa in the face of increasing hostility, Thousand Bones has become more and more concerned with the future. He knows that the trouble in Korvosa has poisoned the city, and fears what plans Queen Ileosa might develop for the Shoanti if she continues building power in Korvosa. Of course, his fellow Shoanti see the deteriorating situation in Korvosa as just desserts for a decadent people, and Thousand Bones's warnings that Queen Ileosa might well be as bad, if not worse, for the Shoanti as she is for the city of Korvosa have thus far fallen on deaf ears.

Although the initial contact with the Skoan-Quah could be tense, these tensions fall away once Thousand Bones arrives on the scene. His ready smile and welcoming calls do much to set the other Shoanti at ease, and their initial hostility gives way to curiosity, as many of the Skoan-Quah have never actually seen an honest-to-goodness tshamek before. Thousand Bones waves aside any talk of Queen Ileosa or Kazavon for now, telling the PCs that he has similar worries of his own but that such a discussion should be held at the proper location and time—in this case, Thousand Bones suggests, during the evening's Bone Council Fire.

Thousand Bones arranges for a guest yurt for the PCs to rest in. He has plenty of food and water delivered to the tent and even visits with the PCs for some time, as he is eager to hear about their adventures since they recovered Gaekhen's body. If he learns that Rolth Lamm has been punished or killed, he nods in appreciation of the justice. If the PCs ask, Thousand Bones is willing to guide them to the cairn in which Gaekhen's ashes now rest.

Krojun's Arrival

The PCs are not the only guests destined to visit the Kallow Mounds this day. At some point after the PCs have arrived and are at rest in their yurt, or perhaps as they are returning from Gaekhen's cairn, another visitor arrives: a brash young hero of the Sklar-Quah named Krojun Eats-What-He-Kills. Krojun, along with an honor guard of a half-dozen thundercallers, arrives at the Kallow Mounds for the same reason every other Shoanti visits—someone important has died. In this case, they bring the body of Berak, a Sklar-Quah hero known for leading many successful attacks against orc aggressors from Urglin. Krojun was no friend of Berak's, but Krojun's chieftain asked him to bring Berak's body south to the Kallow Mounds to join the other heroes. Krojun knew better than to speak ill of the dead at the time, but the journey has left him bitter and cranky.

When Krojun arrives at the Kallow Mounds, the Skoan-Quah silently accept Berak's body and begin preparing it for interment. Krojun has little interest in staying for the ceremony, but before he leaves, he notices that the Skoan-Quah have other visitors, either by seeing the PCs directly or simply noticing that the guest yurt is in use. He quickly seeks out Chief One-Life and demands to know who visits; when he discovers the visitors are the PCs, he seeks them out, his rage and indignation growing.

Thousand Bones is quick to come to the PCs' side before Krojun confronts them. He warns the PCs that Krojun is a hero to the Sklar-Quah, and that blood spilled

here would undermine the already shaky relations between the tribes. Krojun spends a few moments sizing up the PCs with a sneer, and as he turns to the chief, read or paraphrase the following.

Krojun asks Chief One-Life, "Why do the Skoan-Quah harbor tshamek trespassers?"

As Chief One-Life struggles to find an explanation that won't further enrage the towering visitor, Thousand Bones inclines his head as though considering Krojun's words carefully, but then responds sharply. "Tell me, Krojun, when did the Sklar-Quah become judges of who trespasses upon the Kallow Mounds where the ashes of our fathers lie?"

"Your words change the question, Thousand Bones," answers the Shoanti hero with a snort. "These ones bring trouble to the Cinderlands, and you know it. The coming days shall reveal to us all who is right about them."

"Perhaps," says Thousand Bones. "But not today, and not here. Would you have word that Berak's burial was tainted by bloodshed get back to your Sun Shaman?"

Krojun pauses, the cords in his neck straining, but then he exhales and grins. "You misunderstand me, Thousand Bones. My grief has wounded my words. But see to it that no tshamek defiles our memories here." His smile broadens as he pulls a thin leather loop from one of his packs. "Certainly, though, guests of the Skoan-Quah must be brave to come this far. You wouldn't mind if I tested the courage and strength of your guests, would you?"

A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (local) check recognizes that the leather loop is a prop for a Shoanti game known as sredna. Thousand Bones looks to the PCs with a shrug, indicating that this choice is theirs. Only one PC need accept the challenge—if none do, Krojun laughs heartily and returns his loop to his pack. "It is a wonder they made it here at all, Thousand Bones," he says, and with one final glance at the PCs, he turns to join his fellow thundercallers while they see their brother off before they leave for Sklar-Quah lands.

Creature: Krojun is a symbol and hero of the Sklar-Quah. With a successful DC 30 Knowledge (local) check (or by asking Thousand Bones or another knowledgeable Shoanti), a PC can learn much of Krojun's tale. As a young warrior, Krojun sought the means to enact revenge upon an orc champion named Kyrust Chiefkiller, a Rotten Tongue marauder from Urglin who had long organized

brutal raids upon Krojun's tribe. Desperate, Krojun sought the aid of a reclusive Shoanti sorcerer who lived alone deep in the Mindspin Mountains. The hermit put Krojun through several punishing trials, promising him that if he succeeded, he would earn the power he needed to defeat Kyrust. The tests were harrowing indeed, designed in part to train Krojun in the ways of the Thunder and Fang fighting style, and it took Krojun many months to complete them. In the end, he stood before the sorcerer in triumph. When Krojun demanded his reward, however, the sorcerer responded that he had no reward to give and vanished. Krojun's rage was great, and when he returned to his people empty-handed, he found that his entire tribe had been enslaved by Kyrust. Krojun tracked the slave caravan for days, finally catching up to it a few miles from Urglin's gates. In a fantastic display of rage and power, he single-handedly defeated the orcs and their leader Kyrust. Only as Krojun claimed the orc's head as both a trophy and a symbol of the Sklar-Quah's power over their enemies did he finally realize the truth: that strange old sorcerer had indeed given him a gift. Without the skills and strength Krojun honed in completing the tasks the sorcerer had set him to, he would surely have fallen in combat against the orcs.

Today, Krojun is at the forefront of the Sun Clan's efforts to strike back at the orcs and tshamek who have hammered away at the Shoanti for centuries. When Krojun learns of the PCs' entry into the Cinderlands, he quickly becomes obsessed with them. In his interactions with the orcs of the north and the tshamek of the south, Krojun has noted that despite his tribe's teachings, the tshamek aren't as savage or cruel as the orcs. He has seen much of his own people reflected in tshamek bravery, tenacity, and strength, but he has not yet been fully convinced that they deserve his respect. With the PCs, he hopes to test them, learn more about their ways, and eventually prevent what he believes will be a disastrous war should his people march on Korvosa.

Whether or not one of the PCs accept Krojun's challenge, the barbarian returns a number of times throughout the chapter.

KROJUN EATS-WHAT-HE-KILLS **CR 12**

XP 19,200

Male human barbarian 13

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** scent; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 20 (+6 armor, +2 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 natural, –2 rage, +3 shield)

hp 181 (13d12+91)

Fort +14, **Ref** +6, **Will** +9

Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +4; **DR** 4/—

OFFENSE

Speed 55 ft. (40 ft. in armor)

Melee *+1 thundering earth breaker* +19/+14/+9 (2d6+7/19–20/×3), *+1 klar* +19 (1d6+4), bite +14 (1d4+3)

Special Attacks greater rage (31 rounds/day), rage powers (animal fury, clear mind, increase damage reduction +1, rolling dodge +3, scent, swift foot +5 ft.)

TACTICS

Before Combat If Krojun knows he is about to face great opposition, he applies his *Shoanti war paint* and drinks a *potion of shield of faith +2*.

During Combat Krojun charges fearlessly into battle, preferring to fight toe-to-toe against foes to make full use of his Thunder and Fang fighting style. Krojun is fond of screaming his own name whenever he lands a critical hit against a foe.

Morale Headstrong, Krojun has courage to spare. He is not a fool, however, and withdraws if vastly outnumbered or overmatched, or upon being reduced to 20 hit points or fewer. Only when raging does he fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 15, **Con** 22, **Int** 8, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +19; **CMD** 31

Feats Improved Critical (earth breaker), Iron Will, Power Attack, Shield Focus, Thunder and Fang, Two-weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (earth breaker), Weapon Focus (klar)

Skills Acrobatics +16 (+20 to jump), Intimidate +17, Ride +16, Survival +16

Languages Common, Shoanti

SQ fast movement

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds* (2), *potion of shield of faith +2* (4); **Other Gear** *+2 hide armor*, *+1 klar*[UE], *+1 thundering earth breaker*[UE], *amulet of natural armor +1*, *boots of striding and springing*, *Shoanti war paint* (3, orange; see page 436), 3 garnets worth 50 gp each

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Thunder and Fang This feat (from page 10 of *Pathfinder Player Companion: Varisia, Birthplace of Legends*) allows Krojun to wield his earth breaker and klar simultaneously in combat, as if he were fighting with a double weapon. When he uses an earth breaker in one hand and a klar in his off hand, Krojun retains the shield bonus his klar grants even when he uses it to attack, and treats his earth breaker as a one-handed weapon and his klar as a light weapon for the purpose of determining his two-weapon fighting penalty.

Respect Points: The PCs lose 1 Respect Point if none of them accept Krojun's challenge.

A "FRIENDLY" GAME OF SREDNA

In sredna, two contestants face one another on their hands and knees with their foreheads spaced just over a foot

apart. A leather loop is placed around the competitor's heads, like a headband, so that the contestants are bound to one another. When the game begins, each contestant stares his opponent in the eye while slowly attempting to crawl backwards. The resulting tug-of-war results in extreme pain as the leather digs into the soft part of the back of the neck and skull. At some point, one of the competitors relents, acknowledging defeat by bowing his head, causing the strap to roll over the top. Games of sredna typically last for mere seconds, but two evenly matched opponents might duel much longer. In such cases, standoffs occur frequently.

When a sredna match begins, each contestant must spend three "breaths" (3 rounds) staring into the other's eyes before attempting to pull. Pulling before the 4th round is an immediate disqualification. Intimidation and patience are almost as important tools to win sredna matches as is strength. During these initial 3 rounds, the contestants attempt opposed Intimidate checks by growling, gnashing teeth, and spitting insults. Each time a contestant wins one of these checks, he gains 2 points. In the case of a tied Intimidate check, both players gain 1 point.

On the 4th round, each character rolls an initiative check to determine when he moves. On his turn, a character can opt to tug or dig in.

Tug: The characters attempt opposed Strength checks. A defending character who dug in on his previous turn receives a +4 bonus on this check. If the tugging character wins the check, he gains 2 points. If he fails (or if the results are tied), his opponent gains 2 points.

Dig In: The character strengthens his stance and gains a +4 bonus on his next Strength check to resist a tug.

At the end of each round after the 4th round, total up each contestant's points. Each contestant must attempt a Fortitude save to continue the match, with the DC being equal to his opposition's current point total. A contestant who fails this save collapses and loses the match. If both contestants fail their saving throw, the match is declared a draw. If both contestants succeed at their saving throws, the game proceeds into another round. A character who has the Endurance feat gains a +4 bonus on this Fortitude saving throw.

Respect Points: If the match against Krojun lasts longer than 6 rounds, he rages to give himself an additional edge over the PC; he also activates his rage in response to any PC doing the same. Forcing Krojun to rage earns the party 1 Respect Point.

Krojun respects bravery, and even if he beats his opponent, he good-naturedly claps the PC on the shoulder and proclaims, "Almost as good as an aurochs calf. Nothing to be ashamed about." With a hearty laugh, he reclaims his strap and returns to his kin to see to their brother's burial. The party earns 1 Respect Point.

If, on the other hand, the game is a draw, Krojun says nothing. He regards his competitor with narrowed eyes, nods curtly, and returns to the funeral. The party earns 2 Respect Points.

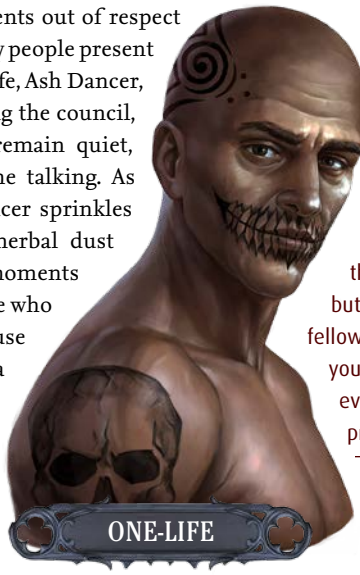
If the PC beats Krojun, he topples to the ground with a roar of rage and rolls about in the dust for a moment. By the time the barbarian has regained his feet, his roar has turned to laughter. "You pull like an aurochs dam in heat, little tshamek. Well done!" He finishes his compliment with a quick nod and another grin before rejoining his brothers. The party earns 3 Respect Points.

Story Award: If the PCs earn 2 or more Respect Points as a result of the game (even if they ended up losing), award them 6,400 XP.

KROJUN EATS-WHAT-HE-KILLS

The Bone Council Fire

As night falls, Thousand Bones invites the PCs to join him at the center of the camp. The majority of the other Skoan-Quah retire early to their tents out of respect for the Bone Council Fire—the only people present are Thousand Bones, Chief One-Life, Ash Dancer, and the PCs and their allies. During the council, both One-Life and Ash Dancer remain quiet, letting Thousand Bones do all the talking. As Thousand Bones speaks, Ash Dancer sprinkles the fire with a greenish-brown herbal dust from a weathered pouch. A few moments later, the fumes encapsulate anyone who remains by the fire; the effects cause a slight blurring of the vision and a feeling of ease, but have no actual game effects. Read or paraphrase Thousand Bones's speech here to the players.



"You have already done my people a great favor by returning the body of one of our warriors. I sense now you come to me to ask something in return, yet know that by asking for this, you are helping us all. The Skoan-Quah are a peaceful people, yet we are also all but shunned by our kin. Our willingness to mix with tshamek shames many of my brothers and sisters in the other quahs. Only their respect for our tradition of guarding and protecting the dead of all Shoanti keeps them from open hostility against us. My words do not reach their ears when I warn them of Queen Ileosa and her rise in power. They hear tales of the city in flames, of its king dead, of disease ravaging its people, and they see this as a just punishment for a hated enemy. My people do not see that a greater threat is growing in this turmoil. And now, you come to me with concerns, seeking the aid of my people. Speak of what you wish of the Shoanti, and perhaps we may find our needs are the same."

Thousand Bones listens to the PCs' tale quietly and somberly, but grows visibly distraught when he hears from the PCs' lips tales of Ileosa's power, her apparent invulnerability, and in particular a description of her new crown. He's heard rumors from other travelers, of course, but hearing the news from people he's come to trust confirms his fears. Once the PCs reveal this information or ask him about "Midnight's Teeth" or Kazavon's fangs, his brow furrows a moment before he answers again.

"My people dwelt where your people live now, not so long ago. We remained there for many, many generations, but across the centuries my people have always kept the lore of our ancestors in mind, passing knowledge to the new generations. Yet when Cheliax came to us with war and drove us to the Cinderlands so many years ago, we fought. And died. And many of those who died took this lore to their graves. The name 'Midnight's Teeth' is unfamiliar to me, but the name 'Kazavon' is not entirely so—it is a name associated with a great and ancient evil, and many Shoanti believe to repeat such a name aloud is to preserve the evil. This, coupled with the deaths of so many lore keepers, has sequestered the knowledge I suspect you seek in the minds of a rare few: the Sun Shamans of the Sklar-Quah. They alone preserve the history of the Shoanti time in the lands you now call Korvosa, but they do not readily share this with tshamek... or fellow Shoanti, for that matter. Yet if you were to build your names among my people, to earn proper respect, even the eldest of the Sun Shamans would agree to provide the knowledge you desire."

If it is warranted, Thousand Bones pauses at this point to congratulate the PCs on how they comported themselves with Krojun and the game of sredna, revealing that such actions have already planted the seeds of respect among the Shoanti. Yet the PCs have much work to do if they hope to convince a Sun Shaman of the Sklar-Quah to reveal what he may know of Kazavon and his fangs.

There is no one way to earn respect, Thousand Bones advises, but he suspects it would be for the best if the PCs earn that respect quickly. Defeating enemies of the Shoanti and spending time among them learning their ways would eventually work, but not swiftly enough. Instead, Thousand Bones offers suggestions for less time-intensive tasks the PCs should attempt in order to earn the respect and fame they need to speak to a Sun Shaman of the Sklar-Quah.

Become an Enemy's Nalharest: It is one thing to defeat an enemy in battle, but another to earn that enemy's respect. Thousand Bones notes that the PCs may have already made an enemy, through no fault of their own, in Krojun. If they can convince Krojun to proclaim even one of the PCs as his *nalharest*—his honorary sibling—the Sun Shaman will be forced to admit that the PCs are people to be trusted. (If the PCs save Krojun during the assault on Flameford, he declares them his nalharests; see page 232.)

Recreate a Legendary Hero's Accomplishment: If the PCs can duplicate a legendary Shoanti hero's storied accomplishment in front of a Shoanti witness, they can earn respect. One potential stunt that comes to Thousand Bones' mind is the story of Skurak, which is presented on page 207 as Handout #4–1. Cindermaw still lives, and if the PCs were to travel to the great worm's killing grounds and replicate Skurak's deed, their legend will only grow. (The quest to be consumed by and then

SKURAK'S TALE

Skurak was a great warrior and greater traitor to the Sklar-Quah. He slew his brother, a man of even greater courage. To the Sklar-Quah, family is purity-crimes against family are the greatest one can commit. Although Skurak claimed the death was an accident that occurred while he and his brother were hunting, others spoke of murder spawned of jealous rage. Skurak was declared a tshamek by the Sun Shaman and cast out. But before Skurak left, he said he would be born again and return to his tribe.

This he did.

He went to the killing grounds of great Cindermaw the Clan-Eater. Skurak walked up to the beast carrying only his dagger. Without fear he dove into the beast's mouth and cut his way out. He returned to the clan and declared he had been reborn, and had left his misdeeds behind in the cleansing fire of Cindermaw's belly. The legend says the Sun Shaman accepted this and Skurak's time as a tshamek was spoken of no more.

HANDOUT #4–1

escape from Cindermaw is detailed in Belly of the Beast on page 224.)

Secure a Truthspeaker's Endorsement: Truthspeakers are born, not made, and sometimes generations pass without the Shoanti counting a truthspeaker among them. A truthspeaker, Thousand Bones explains, is "one who has lived many lives without lie, and who achieves the gift of speaking only truth after decades spent in chastity, self-control, and introspection." Thousand Bones knows of only one living truthspeaker in the Cinderlands today, a man named Akram who lives among the Lyrune-Quah. He knows not if Akram still lives or if he would agree to endorse the PCs; however, if they can go before the Sklar-Quah Sun Shaman with a truthspeaker at their side, the shaman would know that the PCs are earnest and true. (In order to gain Akram's aid, the PCs will need to help the Lyrune-Quah with a problem of their own, as detailed in House of the Moon on page 218.)

Seek the Thrallkeeper's Mark: In ancient times, a caste of spellcasters the Shoanti remember as the "Thrallkeepers" kept them as slaves. The Thrallkeepers are now gone, but some of their buildings remain. One such building may be found in the Cinderlands, a dangerous acropolis many Shoanti voyage to, seeking to earn the Thrallkeeper's Mark as a way to prove their bravery. Some never return. Those who do earn the Thrallkeeper's Mark are known to be powerful, lucky, or both. Thousand Bones can tell the PCs where the Acropolis of the Thrallkeepers is, but has never dared enter the ruin himself. If asked about the mark, he describes it as a seven-pointed star that allows the one who caries it the ability to wield strange magical powers. With a successful DC 30 Knowledge (arcana or history) check, a PC confirms that this mark is the Sihedron Rune, a potent symbol associated with ancient Thassilon. (Exploring this dangerous ruin is detailed in Acropolis of the Thrallkeepers on page 209.)

Survive the Trial of the Totem: Finally, if the PCs can earn permission from the Sklar-Quah to take the Trial of the Totem and survive it, even the most intolerant Shoanti of that tribe will be forced to admit that the PCs deserve respect. (This complex initiation into the Sklar-Quah is detailed on page 228.)

Skoan-Quah Support

Once the PCs have asked their questions and are sure of their goals, Thousand Bones tells them that he has no intention of sending them into the Cinderlands on their quest alone or unarmed. He calls forth four brave young Skoan-Quah boneslayers, introducing them as Ahalak, Hargev, Nalmid, and Shadfrar. These four are to be the PCs' guides through the Cinderlands and shall lead them where they need to go. In addition, they will be the witnesses to the PCs' deeds, and their word will aid in spreading respect for the PCs wherever they travel in the Cinderlands. Finally, the boneslayers' survival at the PCs' side despite many dangers will prove the PCs' ability and interest in protecting Shoanti allies. When the time comes to speak to a Sun Shaman, if at least one boneslayer remains at the PCs' side, they will find it easier to earn the shaman's cooperation.

Further, Thousand Bones presents an array of helpful gifts to the PCs: five *potions of cure serious wounds*, a *wand of create water* (44 charges), a *wand of endure elements* (23 charges), and five pots of *Shoanti war paint* (three red and two silver; see page 436). If asked about these generous offerings, Thousand Bones smiles and says, "I had suspected for some time you would need my help. These items are nothing to me, but they may be everything to you."

SKOAN-QUAH BONESLAYERS (4) **CR 4**

XP 1,200 each

Human oracle 3/ranger 2 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 42)

CN Medium humanoid (human) **Init** +2; **Senses** Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 46 each (5 HD; 3d8+2d10+18)

Fort +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3; +2 insight bonus vs. diseases, mind-affecting, poison

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk earth breaker +7 (2d6+3/×3)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +7 (1d8+2/×3)

Special Attacks combat style (two-handed weapon)[APG], favored enemy (undead +2)

Oracle Spells Known (CL 3rd; concentration +5)

1st (6/day)—*cause fear* (DC 13), *cure light wounds*, *detect undead*, *hide from undead* (DC 13), *sanctuary* (DC 13)

0 (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 12), *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *purify food and drink* (DC 12)

Mystery bones

TACTICS

During Combat The boneslayers prefer to fire their bows from covered positions, but if one of them is attacked in melee, the others quickly come to her aid. Once the PCs earn at least 10 Respect Points, the boneslayers are willing to alter their tactics to whatever the PCs want.

Morale The boneslayers fight to the death.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 19

Feats Combat Casting, Dodge, Power Attack, Totem Spirit (Skoan-Quah)[ISWG], Toughness

Skills Heal +10, Knowledge (religion) +6, Perception +8, Stealth +8, Survival +8

Languages Common, Shoanti

SQ oracle's curse (haunted), revelations (near death, voice of the grave), track +1, wild empathy +4

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds* (3), *potion of lesser restoration*; **Other Gear** mwk hide armor, mwk composite longbow (+2 Str), mwk earth breaker[UE], *Shoanti war paint* (white; see page 436), 95 gp

SKOAN-QUAH BONESLAYER

Respect Points: Each time a Boneslayer is slain and not restored to life, the PCs lose 1d4 Respect Points. If all four boneslayers are slain, the PCs can no longer gain Respect Points until at least one of the boneslayers is restored to life or they return to the Kallow Mounds to request more boneslayers from Thousand Bones. Thousand Bones can "resupply" the PCs with an additional four boneslayers up to three times before their reputation becomes too tarnished.

Story Award: For each of the original four boneslayers who survives to the chapter's end (or who die and are restored to life by the PCs), award the PCs 2,400 XP, to a maximum award of 9,600 XP.

INTO THE CINDERLANDS

Once the PCs begin to explore the Cinderlands, either to travel between quest locations or merely to scour the landscape for Shoanti enemies to kill and harvest trophies from, consult page 414 in Appendix 2 for additional information about this harsh environment. A map of the Cinderlands that includes the locations of all the sites of import for this adventure appears on page 412. You can either track the PCs' journey across the landscape in play, checking for random encounters as detailed on page 464, or you can skip this element, especially if the PCs have boneslayer guides to help direct them.

At times during the journey, feel free to have the PCs attempt Perception checks; whoever rolls the highest catches a glimpse of what seems to be another small group of riders on a distant outcropping. With a successful DC 40 Perception check, that PC confirms that the man at the head of this group is Krojun, who is keeping an eye on the PCs as they travel and waiting for an opportunity to test them further. If the PCs attempt to confront him, he easily avoids them unless the PCs teleport directly to his location, a display of power that spooks Krojun's warriors but simply makes Krojun smile. In such an event, he points out that the Cinderlands are a dangerous place, and if the PCs die, someone needs to carry their bodies back to the Kallow Mounds, lest they rise as undead. He insinuates that he also wouldn't pass up the opportunity to loot the PCs' dead bodies if the opportunity arose.

You can heighten the tension caused by the war party's presence by drawing out this distant game of cat and mouse, perhaps to the point of where it becomes unclear who is hunting whom. Until the PCs reach the Acropolis of the Thrallkeepers or the Sklar-Quah camp of Flameford, however, try to avoid having too many direct confrontations with Krojun and his band.

A THE ACROPOLIS OF THE THRALLKEEPERS

The Acropolis of the Thrallkeepers sits atop a raised area in the shadows of the Wyvern Mountains. The acropolis was built by an order of Thassilonian wizards known as the Thrallkeepers (a competing order of scholars that worked against the Therassic Monks who built the Black Tower and the Library under Jorgenfist—see pages 207–209 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path: Rise of the Runelords Anniversary Edition*), but its true grandeur lies hidden underground. Eager to prove their value and use to Runelord Karzoug, the Thrallkeepers turned increasingly to the teachings of the rune goddess Lissala, and through their meditations, they sought a method to duplicate the great works of Thassilon's most powerful conjurers. The acropolis was built as a place where they could perfect their conjurations and study the strange and horrific monstrosities like scarlet walkers, shining children, and malignancies from beyond the stars, ever seeking ways to call down larger and more dangerous minions to present to Karzoug. The most arrogant of the order hoped one day to call upon a creature like the Oliphaunt of Jandelay, yet they never quite reached such a level of power before they overstepped their own ability.

Following forbidden methods stolen from dubious sources (strangely garbed merchants visiting from Leng), the Thrallkeepers set about the conjuration of a gigantic entity from a distant corner of the universe—a monster referred to as the havero, or the "Arms and Eyes of Forever." The Thrallkeepers managed to locate a havero slumbering in orbit around a dead star using their strange magics, but when they attempted to draw it out of the Dark Tapestry and into a specially designed prison in their acropolis, the havero twitched in its slumber. It never quite woke, but its preconscious thrashings wiped out the Thrallkeepers and destroyed much of the above-ground structure of the acropolis in a matter of minutes. Once the Thrallkeepers were dead, the havero returned to its distant slumber. Yet the partially functioning portals between it and the chambers below remained active, and even today, long after Thassilon had crumbled, the tips of some of the monster's tentacles twitch and writhe below. The Shoanti have learned to avoid the ruins, other than to view it as place for headstrong heroes to seek out and prove their bravery by gaining the Thrallkeeper's Mark. To the Shoanti, the Thrallkeeper's Mark is a sign of great bravery, and should the PCs gain it, their standing in Shoanti eyes will surely grow.

Acropolis Features

Aboveground, what remains of the acropolis is a partially collapsed tower bearing the mark of the seven-pointed star—the Sihedron. Just to the side of the mark, a pair of 20-foot-wide stone doors stand ajar, leading down to a dusty flight of stairs that descend to area **A1**. The doors have always stood open and sinisterly inviting in this manner. Even attempts to seal them shut by the Shoanti over the ages have eventually and mysteriously been defeated.

Unless otherwise specified, the chambers below the acropolis aren't lighted. The walls are composed of black granite flecked with blood-red deposits of rock crystal. Intricate rune patterns of Thassilonian writing extolling the virtues of Runelord Karzoug and the power of the goddess Lissala decorate the walls at regular intervals, as does the ubiquitous seven-pointed Sihedron. Each stone door bears a bas relief of the Sihedron on its face as well. If the symbol is pressed, it clicks and the door slowly grinds up into the ceiling the following round, granting access beyond. The door descends 1 minute later. A PC who

succeeds at a DC 15 Disable Device check can jam the door open (or shut) for 1 month, until the structure's energies restore the door's functionality. A similar check from either side restores the door to functionality. A creature that is unable to step out of a descending door's slow path is crushed, taking 3d6 points of damage, and becomes pinned in place until it can escape with a successful DC 25 Strength or Escape Artist check.

Use the map on page 213 for this location.

A Crowded Dungeon

While the PCs likely come to the acropolis to seek the Thrallkeeper's Mark, they aren't the only group exploring the ruins. Krojun and his thundercallers may arrive in the region as well. Krojun has never sought the Thrallkeeper's Mark himself, and if he learns the PCs are doing so, he both wonders how these outlanders plan to gain the mark (or, indeed, if they're merely planning on faking it), and also can't abide the notion of outlanders gaining the Thrallkeeper's Mark when he has not. He and three loyal thundercallers (Sklar-Quah skalds who use weapons called totem spears in battle) arrive at the acropolis shortly before the PCs and immediately enter, hoping to observe the PCs within.

In addition, four Red Mantis assassins arrive at the complex, guided to the region by the Cinderlander once word spreads that the PCs are seeking the acropolis to earn favor among the Shoanti. The Red Mantis assassins don't care if the PCs achieve this goal or not. They merely see the acropolis as a suitable battle ground wherein they can strike at the PCs, preferably after the PCs have expended some of their resources. Unlike Krojun and his band of thundercallers, the Red Mantis assassins enter the dungeon after the PCs.

Red Mantis Assassins (CR 12): Cinnabar doesn't honestly expect these four to be able to slay all of the PCs. Their primary job is to engage the PCs so that Cinnabar's cleric ally Koriantu, who is scrying on one of the assassins from the safety of her Korvosa hideout, can observe the PCs in combat. The Cinderlander does not enter the acropolis with these assassins—once they step into the building, he retreats to rejoin the remaining Red Mantis assassins elsewhere in the Cinderlands, and will likely not interact with the PCs until the attack on Flameford (see page 230). Assume that these four assassins are on top of their game and enter the acropolis about 10 minutes after the PCs (or at about the time the PCs move on beyond area **A2**). Once the PCs have discovered the assassins, the Red Mantis attack immediately.

RED MANTIS ASSASSINS (4) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

hp 78 (see page 144)

Sklar-Quah (CR 13): Krojun and his Sklar-Quah thundercallers enter the acropolis about an hour before the PCs arrive. They quickly proceed down to area **A3** to hide and observe. Once the PCs discover Krojun, his demeanor is brisk. He greets the PCs with a stoic nod, explaining that he and his thundercallers were concerned that the PCs were not going to properly respect the ruins and would fake their quest to gain the Thrallkeeper's Mark. Even if the PCs explain that they have no intention to cheat, Krojun snorts derisively, saying that the PCs are no better than those "stargazing Lyrune-Quah." Yet he doesn't take action to prevent their exploration. He does, however, demand to know what the PCs are doing in the Cinderlands, curious in his own way as to what took place between the PCs and Thousand Bones during the Bone Council Fire. He meets most answers with noncommittal grunts, but if the PCs say that they seek an audience with a Sun Shaman, he laughs loudly (add 2 Noise Points in this case—see page 212 for further details) and says that such a thing will never happen, for the Sun Shamans of the Sklar-Quah have nothing to say to tshamek.

Once the PCs encounter him, Krojun accompanies them for a short time, explaining that he finds them entertaining, when in fact he's sizing them up and trying to understand their methods and motivations. He doesn't aid them in a fight against the unless the Red Mantis assassins harm him or one of his thundercallers or the PCs persuade him to do so. The PCs can convince him to join a fight against the Red Mantis before such an event with a successful DC 31 Diplomacy check or a successful DC 23 Intimidate check. If the PCs use intimidation, he and his thundercallers quit the acropolis after the fight to return to Flameford, in which case they speak ill of the PCs (see Respect Points on page 211). Krojun and his thundercallers automatically step in to aid the PCs in any fight against the havero. Krojun wants to attain the Thrallkeeper's Mark, but his thundercallers grow increasingly nervous about the strange assassins and monsters encountered within the dungeon.

At your discretion, if the PCs go out of their way to protect and save Krojun and his thundercallers from certain death, he might well proclaim the PCs nalharests early, rather than holding back until the end of the assault on Flameford (see page 232).

KROJUN EATS-WHAT-HE-KILLS **CR 12**

XP 19,200

hp 181 (see page 204)

SKLAR-QUAH THUNDERCALLERS (3) **CR 7**

XP 3,200

Human skald 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide* 49)

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +7; **Senses** Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +3 deflection, +3 Dex, –1 rage)
hp 87 (8d8+48)
Fort +11, **Ref** +5, **Will** +10; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic
Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 25 ft.
Melee *+1 totem spear* +11/+6 (1d10+7/×3)
Ranged totem spear +9 (1d10+6/×3)
Special Attacks rage powers (guarded stance +2, swift foot +5 ft.), raging song 20 rounds/day (move action; inspired rage, song of marching, song of strength), spell kenning 1/day
Skald Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +11)
3rd (3/day)—*charm monster* (DC 16), *cure serious wounds*, *dispel magic*
2nd (5/day)—*gallant inspiration*[APG] (DC 15), *pyrotechnics* (DC 15), *shatter* (DC 15), *sound burst* (DC 15)
1st (5/day)—*lesser confusion* (DC 14), *cure light wounds*, *expeditious retreat*, *feather fall*, *saving finale*[APG]
0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *summon instrument*

TACTICS

Before Combat A thundercaller puts on his *war paint* and uses his *wand of cat's grace* once a fight seems likely.
During Combat One thundercaller activates his inspiring rage while the others engage in melee. The first thundercaller supports the melee fighters with healing magic or casts ranged spells; when a thundercaller in melee is reduced to 30 or fewer hit points, that skald falls back and swaps position and roles with the previous thundercaller.
Morale As long as Krojun lives, the thundercallers fight to the death. If Krojun dies or is otherwise incapacitated, the thundercallers abandon the acropolis immediately—in this case, they speak ill of the PCs.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 16, **Con** 20, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 16
Base Atk +6; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 25
Feats Combat Casting, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (totem spear), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Scribe Scroll
Skills Knowledge (history) +11, Perception +10, Perform (percussion instruments) +14, Perform (wind instruments) +14, Ride +8, Survival +7
Languages Common
SQ bardic knowledge +4, lore master 1/day, rage powers, versatile performance (percussion, wind)
Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2), *wand of cat's grace* (15 charges), *wand of cure light wounds* (30 charges); **Other Gear** *+1 hide armor*, *+1 totem spear*, totem spears (3), *Shoanti war paint* (silver, 2; see page 436), 35 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Totem Spear A totem spear is a 6-pound, exotic two-handed melee weapon that deals piercing or slashing damage. A character proficient with a totem spear can use the holes in the spear's shovel-like head to create eerie whistling music with Perform (wind instruments). Totem spears are detailed on page 14 of *Pathfinder Player's Companion: Varisia, Birthplace of Legends* (note that the rules presented in this stat block correct the totem spear's damage type to piercing and slashing, rather than piercing and bludgeoning).

Respect Points: If the thundercallers flee the acropolis and speak ill of the PCs, the PCs lose 1d6 Respect Points.

Story Award: If the PCs do not attack the hot-headed Shoanti, award the PCs XP for each thundercaller who survives the delve under the acropolis as if the PCs had defeated the Shoanti in combat.

A1 Thrallkeeper's Walk

The stone stairs end at a twenty-foot-wide and twenty-foot-tall hallway that leads to the east, opening into a large chamber. The floor is cluttered with dust and tiny mounds of ash that look to have been recently disturbed in places, but signs of the trail vanish to the east once the stones become clear of debris.

With a successful DC 4 Survival check, a PC notes that four human-sized creatures seem to have moved through this area recently, traveling from the stairs toward the room to the east. Within 10 feet of area **A2**, though, the floor is clear of dust. A PC who succeeds at a DC 19 Survival check can follow the trail, which leads to the door between area **A2** and area **A3**, where Krojun and his thundercallers await.

Red Mantis: If there is activity in area **A2** when the Red Mantis assassins enter the acropolis 10 minutes after the PCs do, two remain in hiding here while two sneak into area **A2**. Otherwise, the assassins break into two groups of two and move into area **A2** using Stealth.

Sklar-Quah: The four Sklar-Quah left these prints as they moved toward area **A3**.

A2 Pool of the Havero (CR 10+)

The air in this massive, cathedral-like space seems strangely cool. The walls are carved with vertical ridges that rise to support the arch above, where the ceiling vaults into the shadows to a height of nearly sixty feet. A five-foot-wide balcony rings the room, the floor of which drops fifteen feet into a pool of dark water. Halfway between the east and west ends of the room, a bridge crosses the pool. Two large stone

doors stand in the walls to the south and east. Smaller doors sit in the walls to the northwest and southwest—all four doors bear depictions of seven-pointed-stars.

The dark water in the pool is cold and stagnant, clogged with silt and a thick upper layer of dark algae. The pool was once a vast chamber that served as the acropolis's primary summoning chamber, but anyone who investigates the foul water finds that something cold, rubbery, and immense fills most of this chamber to an uneven depth of about 10 feet.

Narrow gaps along the north and south walls allow creatures in the passageways beyond the ability to observe events in this room, but are difficult to notice from inside area **A2**. A PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Perception check locates these cleverly hidden gaps.

Creature: The strange uneven "floor" of the pool is in fact the result of the Thrallkeeper's attempt to conjure a havero from the Dark Tapestry. If the water were drained, it would reveal what appears to be a petrified, uneven floor of tentacles and coils of flesh—this is a small portion of the havero's flank. Here and there, strange bulbous protrusions (closed eyes) stud the ropy mass. The slumbering creature is, as far as visitors to this chamber are concerned, in a trance-like state analogous to what mortals would understand as a form of hibernation. In this form of stasis, the havero's gigantic body is impossibly distant where it orbits its nameless dead star, but the bottom of this pool sits strangely "adjacent" to its side.

Fortunately for the PCs, there is no way to waken the havero or draw it completely through the portal into this room (as detailed on page 472, a havero is a CR 24 creature), but due to a strange quirk of the ancient Thrallkeeper magic, the havero's body can feel sounds that manifest in this room. Worse, the tips of its most distant tentacles can reach through this boundary to attack creatures in the immediate area.

As the PCs explore areas **A2–A7**, track their Noise Points to determine how many of the havero's tentacles awaken. Adjust the PCs' Noise Points as detailed on the following table.

Action	Noise Points Generated
Casting a spell with a verbal component	1 point per spell
Running (or swimming in water)	1 point per character moving
Yelling	1 point per yell
Combat	5 points per round
Using a sonic effect	10 points per effect
Attacking tentacles	0 points
Attacking havero's flank	1 point per point of damage

If a noise occurs in area **A2**, double the Noise Points generated (this does not apply to attacks on the havero). For every minute that passes, reduce the total of accumulated Noise Points by 1d10.

The number of Noise Points determines how the havero's tentacles waken and investigate. Use the following chart to determine when the arms awaken and what actions they take; the effects of each level of noise occur on the round after the Noise Point total reaches the indicated level. Reductions to Noise Points don't trigger a new havero tentacle reaction.

Noise Points	Tentacle Reaction
10	**Twitch**: The havero's tentacles writhe and tremble. The entire ruin shakes slightly, and the waters of the pool in area **A2** slosh and churn as if something large just shifted below the surface.
20	**Investigate**: One havero tentacle emerges from the water of area **A2** to investigate that room. The tentacle emerges from one of the two central squares on a randomly determined side of the pool (between the areas east and west of the central balcony). If there are already tentacles in these squares, new tentacles can emerge in any adjacent square. If the tentacle that emerges senses any creatures within the 60-foot range of its blindsense, it attacks the closest such creature in range.
30	**Seek**: As per Investigate above, but two havero tentacles emerge from the pool in area **A2**, one from each side of the pool.
40	**Assault**: As per Seek above, save that the two tentacles emerge from a square along a pool's edge closest to the last sound that generated any noise, potentially giving the tentacles further reach.
50	**Wrath**: As per Assault above, save that four tentacles emerge.

When the havero's tentacles emerge, treat each one as its own, unique creature. No more than four tentacles can be active at a time, and new tentacles emerge at the start of any round as appropriate for the current Noise Point total. Once a tentacle emerges, it cannot move, but it does have a reach of 60 feet—only 10 feet is "used up" by reaching out of the pool, leaving plenty of length to reach targets throughout the upper floor.

The easiest way to represent the havero's tentacles in tactical combat is with a large number of similarly sized tokens, such as coins. When a tentacle emerges, place a token on the appropriate square. This first token notes the position of the tentacle's tip—this is the part of the

tentacle that "moves" when the havero explores. Whenever you move this token out of a square, leave a new token in the square it vacates; this indicates the length of the tentacle as it trails from the tip back to the pool. Consider using differently colored tokens to represent different tentacles, since once they start curling around the room they can quickly grow tangled.

When a tentacle takes its action, the tip can immediately relocate to any point within 50 feet of its base, and the tentacle can make a single attack against any creature that is adjacent to any of the tokens that make up its length. Likewise, a character can attack a tentacle at any point along its length.

Once multiple tentacles emerge, it might be easiest to use additional types of markers as well, if you wish to keep clear which trail of tokens is "attached" to which tip. You might use different colored lengths of string or yarn to track the location of each tentacle, for instance, using tokens at points along the length to weigh down the string so it doesn't slide all over the battlemat. If a tentacle is reduced to 0 hit points, it retracts into the pool. To represent the havero's reaction to this tiny amount of pain, reduce the current Noise Point total by 1d20 each time the PCs defeat a tentacle (but remember to keep adding on new Noise Points as the round carries on). At the start of the following round, determine the amount of active havero tentacles again, reducing or increasing the number as appropriate. The PCs can effectively reduce their Noise Point total to less than 10 by killing one or more tentacles and rolling well on the resulting d20 roll, in which case any active tentacles retract into the pool as well. This means the havero becomes quelled for 1 hour, during which time no amount of noise can attract its attention again.

There is no limit to the number of tentacles the havero can extend into this room, but if the PCs stubbornly kill a minimum of 20 tentacles in the span of a single combat, the creature grows tired of the battle and retracts its tentacles entirely for 1 hour, during which time no amount of noise can attract its attention again.

HAVERO TENTACLE **CR —**

hp 66 each (see page 473)

Red Mantis: If the Red Mantis assassins find the PCs here, they hang back and observe, waiting to see what the PCs do in the room. They would prefer to wait for their attack when the PCs split up or are in a room where they can surround the PCs easily, and as such do not wish to initiate attack in this chamber. If the havero wakes, the Red Mantis watch quietly, entering the fray only if they are noticed or to strike while the PCs are wounded as soon as the tentacles withdraw. If there are no PCs here when the assassins arrive, they avoid the pool, spreading out to investigate the surrounding rooms in numerical order.

Sklar-Quah: The Sklar-Quah feel ill at ease in this room and don't stay to investigate, instead moving on to area **A3**. A successful DC 21 Survival check allows PCs to track their progress across the floor to this room. If the Sklar-Quah observe the PCs' fight in this room, they come to the party's aid if things start to look dire, but otherwise, they simply watch.

Story Award: If the PCs navigate this room without waking the havero, or if the PCs wake the creature's tentacles but manage to quell them (regardless of how many havero tentacles are destroyed), award the PCs 9,600 XP.

A3 Observation Point

One wall of this otherwise plain hallway features several long narrow gaps that open into the room beyond.

At the time of the acropolis's construction, the Thrallkeepers naively intended to use these gaps to view summoned creatures from a point of safety.

Sklar-Quah: Krojun and his thundercallers choose this area as their observation point. Once the PCs move out of area **A2**, the barbarians follow as quietly as they can—chances are good they'll be spotted, of course, at which point refer to A Crowded Dungeon on page 210 to see how they react to being discovered.

A4 Shrine to Kurshu

The curved northern alcove of this chamber displays a brilliantly colored bas-relief carving of a woman with six wings and a serpentine lower body. The coils of her lower body wind in and out and around a large seven-pointed star. Tiny shards of gemstones embedded in her tail make her scales glisten as though with moisture, but in more places, chunks of the carving have cracked or crumbled away, giving the depiction of the serpentine woman a strange but undeniable look of age and decay.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check recalls that this room was once a shrine dedicated to Lissala's herald, Kurshu; known during Thassilon's height as "Kurshu the Divine Serpent," the herald is known today as "Kurshu the Undying," as she lingers despite the fact that her god seems to have moved on.

The Thrallkeepers called upon Kurshu during the construction of the acropolis, and this shrine was built to honor her aid, yet none have offered prayer here in thousands of years.

Treasure: The sapphire and emerald slivers in the statue's tail collectively total 3,175 gp in value.

Sklar-Quah: If the Sklar-Quah enter this room while tracking the PCs, the thundercallers hoot in appreciation at the herald's beauty (add 2 Noise Points) while they wait for Krojun to pick up the trail again.

A5 The Illumacore

The floor of this otherwise empty chamber contains a five-foot-diameter hole in the center, surrounded by a ring of tangled runes. Inside the hole, a shaft filled with brilliant emerald light drops into the depths.

The glowing shaft is a magical elevator called an *illumacore*. A traveler who steps into the ring receives the benefit of a *feather fall* spell and gently floats down the shaft of light for 70 feet into area **A9**. Once there, a traveler who crosses the matching ring of ruins on the floor and enters the shaft is affected by *levitate*, allowing him to safely ascend back to this chamber. The spell effects terminate each time the traveler steps out of the shaft. A character who studies the *illumacore's* moderate magic aura and succeeds at a DC 26 Spellcraft check deduces its properties.

Red Mantis: If a pair of assassins move through the double doors into this room in search of the PCs, they spend 2d4 rounds investigating the *illumacore* before determining what the device is for, at which point they descend down into area **A9**.

Sklar-Quah: The Sklar-Quah don't know what to make of the light-filled shaft. If Krojun determines that the PCs' trail leads down here, his curiosity wanes, as he's not willing to dig that deep into these ruins just to see what the PCs are up to or to get a mark of any sort. If he accompanies the PCs, though, he shows no sign of fear and follows them down the hole; he may even, at this point, be the first to step into the light, if only to show off his bravery.

A6 Shrine to Lissala

A strange bronze statue stands in the center of the room. The statue depicts a half-snake, half-human creature with the lower body of a serpent coiled about a stand and the upper torso of a slender human woman. Her hands are crossed over her chest to clutch two objects at her shoulders—the right hand holds a large quill, while the left holds a jade-handled whip. Six birdlike wings emerge from the torso's shoulders, and instead of a head, it has a disk bearing a seven-pointed star. Jade runes run down the statue's belly and along the length of its snaky lower body.

This statue depicts Lissala, the forgotten goddess of runes and fate. Tradition dictated that the Thrallkeepers ensure that a map of their complex was accessible to visiting members of the order. These maps, however, were

usually obscured to prevent lowly thralls from educating themselves and becoming tempted to explore forbidden areas of the complex. The statue conceals one such map.

The statue's base contains a wide but shallow drawer, which a PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check notices. Inside is a 4-foot-diameter circular frame containing several wedge-shaped metal plates, each punched with its own intricate design. Each plate slides smoothly over or under the two adjacent plates along the outer ring. The ring fits perfectly over the entrance to the *illumacore* in area **A5**; if it's placed there, light from the shaft below shines through the openings in the plates to create a pattern of lines on the ceiling above. By correctly aligning the wedges (with a successful DC 20 Disable Device check), the markings line up to create a huge map of what the acropolis once looked like during the height of the Thassilonian empire. A few rounds of study should allow a character to note that the few rooms that remain extant today are but a small fraction of the chambers that once sprawled here.

Treasure: The jade-handled whip the statue holds can be removed with a little bit of work—it is a +2 *axiomatic whip* but carries with it a potent curse. Each day someone maintains ownership of the whip, he takes 1 point of Wisdom damage—this damage manifests as vague visions of menacing but indistinct shapes covered with runes lurking now and then at the edge of that character's vision. Further, Thassilonian runes become harbingers for great menace and fear to the cursed PC—even if he can read Thassilonian, he believes the runes hold some deeper threat to him and his loved ones. As long as Thassilonian writing is visible, the cursed character takes a –6 penalty on all Will saving throws. This curse can be lifted only by returning the whip to the statue's hand, or by a *remove curse* or *break enchantment* effect against CL 18th.

A7 Eternal Glyphs (CR 9)

The walls of this chamber are decorated with six life-sized bas-relief carvings that depict a diverse collection of priests, each adorned in billowing robes covered in Thassilonian runes. An intricate scripture winds around the carvings, coiling across them and along the walls like an immensely long tangle of ribbons. Several ancient skeletons, some clad in hide armor or clutching Shoanti weapons, lie scattered around the statue's base.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check identifies that the carvings portray upper-tier clergy of Lissala. The tiny coded lettering on the walls can be deciphered by a PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Linguistics

check and either understands Thassilonian or uses *comprehend languages*. Although the text purports to be a dire warning of life-threatening perils in the acropolis beyond, it is actually a trap to thwart unwanted visitors.

Trap: The glyphs compel any who begin to read and comprehend them to refrain from any other activity until she has finished reading and made sense of the entire text (characters who do not understand Thassilonian cannot be affected by this trap). This task is impossible, since portions of the text that have already been studied change and alter themselves slightly to create different nonsense meanings that nonetheless seem incredibly important while they are being studied.

To simulate the full extent of the trap's allure, GMs are encouraged to hoodwink players into having their PCs read the text for as long as possible before even requiring a saving throw. For example, should a player ask how long it takes his PC to decipher the script, answer, "Approximately 5 minutes." After the time expires, explain that the PC is almost done but the writing is denser than anticipated, so deciphering it requires perhaps an additional 15 minutes of work. After that time passes, explain the first line of text is now complete but there are five more that need to be read to piece together all the information from the first. This takes just 6, maybe 7 hours. Only when a player has caught on and insists on tearing away his PC should you have that character attempt a Will save. A character who fails becomes obsessed with the carvings and finds that she cannot stop reading. A new save can be attempted each day to pull away, but each save comes with a cumulative –2 penalty to escape. A character who is not under the influence of the eternal glyphs can manually drag an entranced ally out of the room, at which point she recovers immediately; but a character under the glyphs' influence resists such an act, so a successful grapple combat maneuver check is needed to save her in this manner.

Note that characters who succumb to this trap may become victims of the Red Mantis. At your discretion, if the entire party falls victim to the eternal glyphs, you can have Krojun and his thundercallers step in to drag the PCs to safety.

ETERNAL GLYPHS **CR 9**

XP 6,400

Type magic; **Perception** DC 33; **Disable Device** DC 33

EFFECTS

Trigger when read; **Reset** automatic

Effect spell effect (*suggestion* heightened to 8th level to continue reading glyphs; Will DC 23 negates, new save can be attempted each day at a cumulative –2 penalty)

STATUE OF LISSALA

Treasure: The five skeletons on the floor are the remains of long-dead Shoanti explorers who had the unfortunate ability to read Thassilonian and died of thirst while reading the eternal glyphs. Most of their gear has rotted or rusted away, but among the remains are a suit of *+2 hide armor*, a *+1 frost earth breaker*[UE], and a *+1 returning totem spear* (see page 211).

Respect Points: If Krojun has to save the PCs from this trap, they lose 1d6 Respect Points.

A8 Collapsed Corridors

This corridor ends abruptly, choked off by thousands of tons of collapsed rock and sand.

These sections of the complex were damaged during the havero's initial rampage, and over the centuries that followed, erosion finished the job. The corridors to the north once led to the Thrallkeepers' opulent living quarters as well as several chambers that housed a number of smaller, less ambitious summoning projects.

The corridor to the south once led to the Thrallkeepers' slave pens and common rooms for their thralls.

A9 Lower Level

This wide corridor, composed of polished black granite, runs north to south. A blue stone disc sits on the floor to the south, with a glowing column of blue light rising up from the disc through a hole in the ceiling. To the north, a five-foot-wide circular opening in the wall opens into a smaller chamber. The ceiling here is only fifteen feet high.

As long as the havero remains in hibernation (even if the tips of some of its tentacles are "aware"), this level is beyond the reach of the havero's arms. Likewise, noise created here cannot alert the slumbering creature above unless the sound is particularly loud.

A huge stone plug blocks a hidden hallway to the east from this passage, and this fact can be discovered with a successful DC 22 Perception check. In its current position, the plug bars entry to area **A10**. When the Thrallkeepers required entry to area **A10**, the plug was removed by a huge team of servants, or with the use of Strength-enhancing magic. The plug is 15 feet long and weighs 120 tons—it cannot be pulled out of place without fantastic strength (a single Medium humanoid would need a Strength score of 55 to perform this stunt)—but enough of a gap exists that *gaseous form* can be used to enter area **A10**. The stone plug has hardness 8 and 1,800 hit points per 5-foot-square.

Red Mantis: If the assassins reach this far before the PCs arrive, they plan an ambush for the PCs, placing themselves around the *illumacore's* landing pad so that they can surround the first PC to descend into the room. If they reach here after the PCs, they prepare their ambush to the north so they can strike the PCs once the PCs exit from area **A11**.

A10 The Fallback Vault

A jumble of five crushed humanoid skeletons lie in the southeast corner of this chamber. Stone niches in the southern wall contain a few pieces of clutter.

This vault was used by the Thrallkeepers as a panic room, a common emergency defense in case a conjured creature ever managed to break free of containment. The more powerful Thrallkeepers used teleportation to transport themselves into this chamber, leaving no way for their thralls to follow. Once inside, the Thrallkeepers would use magic to contact another outpost for aid and then wait for their colleagues to unseal the vault once whatever crisis had arisen was safely contained.

When the havero escaped its bonds, five Thrallkeepers fled here, just as they had been taught. The fully wakened havero, however, was able to slide its tentacles between dimensions and reach the Thrallkeepers even here. The skeletons are all that remain of their bodies. Unlike elsewhere in the acropolis where scavengers and explorers have looted most objects of value, the dead bodies in this vault are still wearing their gear. The bones crumble to dust if touched, as does much of what remains of the bodies' nonmagical clothing, but there are plenty of valuable items here.

Treasure: The shelves contain several ancient magic items designed to sustain sheltering Thrallkeepers until whatever crisis might lurk outside could be quelled. Among a collection of exotic cups, bowls, and silverware worth 75 gp in all are a *bottle of air*, a *decanter of endless water*, and a *sustaining spoon* (which produces gruel with an abnormally spicy taste). The Thrallkeepers also kept two *scrolls of clairvoyance*, two *scrolls of sending*, and two *scrolls of dimension door* here, enabling any members who sought sanctuary to evaluate how safe it was outside the vault.

The treasure scattered among the skeletons consists of a crystal locket depicting a two-headed dove (worth 325 gp), a pair of sapphire earrings (worth 4,350 gp), and a bejeweled holy symbol of Lissala (worth 2,000 gp). Also found among the bones are three magic items: a *+1 magical beast-bane dagger*, a bright orange *cloak of resistance +3*, and a *scabbard of keen edges*.

A11 The Golarion Globe (CR 8)

The walls, ceiling, and floor of this chamber have been painted to resemble a starry sky, giving the illusion of walking through space. A ten-foot-diameter stone sphere floats five feet above the floor near the room's southern wall. Three short metal rods protrude from the lower hemisphere, radiating outward like a tripod, only the rods rest on empty air rather than a solid surface. The sphere appears to have been carefully carved with tiny rivers, mountains, oceans, and forests.

This stone globe represents the world of Golarion as it appeared more than 10,000 years in the past. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (geography) check reveals that the sphere is a map of the ancient world, yet there are many features on the globe that seem inaccurate—characters who seek out Varisia, for example, find that the nation is mostly landlocked except for a narrow southern coastline. Other features are missing as well, such as the Inner Sea, while in some places islands or entire continents exist where none appear today. Further casting the globe's accuracy into suspicion are the vast swaths of blank surface in some regions, where only vague outlines of continents and oceans appear.

Although the globe seems inaccurate, it is simply out of date. Crafted by Thassilonian explorers who were able to cast their minds out into the gulfs of space so they could then look back upon the planet, the globe was created before Earthfall reshaped much of the world.

The globe is hollow—a 1-foot-thick shell of stone surrounding a spherical chamber containing a magical space that the Thrallkeepers used to cast their minds out beyond Golarion to explore and meditate. The globe radiates strong divination magic. Anyone who touches the globe and concentrates on the stars or sky is immediately teleported inside of the globe and placed into a state of suspended animation as his mind is cast out into the distance to see strange and alien worlds and float in the void between the stars. A successful DC 30 Spellcraft check while studying the globe's aura allows a researcher to deduce its function as a magic item, including the method of exiting the globe once a character has entered it (see below).

Originally, this magical device allowed the Thrallkeepers to seek out strange new creatures to attempt to call into the acropolis, but over the years, the magic of the globe has faltered. Today, it does little more than provide a strange series of visions to the user that, over prolonged exposure, can cause madness. Every minute a character remains inside the globe, he must succeed at a DC 15 Will save to avoid taking 1d4 points of Intelligence damage. A character can exit the globe into area **A11** at any time by concentrating on Golarion or any part of the world (including creatures that live on the planet). Once a character is reduced to 0 Intelligence, he is shunted out of the globe automatically.

Once a character emerges from the globe, the Thrallkeeper's Mark manifests on one of the character's hands (see Treasure below for what this brand grants).

Treasure: The globe is held in place by a triangle of three *immovable rods*. Removing a rod is a simple matter of pressing the button at the rod's base, but since the hollow stone globe is balanced on the three rods, removing even one causes the globe to roll off and fall crashing to the floor 5 feet below. This sends thunderous echoes up through the ruins (add 10 Noise Points) and cracks the globe's surface—sinister GMs can pick Varisia as the part of the world to suffer this indignity, even though the damage is superficial and meaningless. A creature under the globe when it falls takes 5d6 points of damage from the sphere unless it succeeds at a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid the damage. If the globe is damaged in this way, it continues to function for 1d4 weeks before its magic forever fades.

THRALLKEEPER'S MARK

The Thrallkeeper's Mark manifests on the palm of a character when he or she emerges from the globe. Each PC understands the ramifications of the mark and how to use it immediately, and can choose to gain the mark on her right or left palm. A character who takes the mark on her right palm gains the ability to use *dismissal* once per day as a spell-like ability, while a character who takes the mark on her left palm instead gains the ability to use *summon monster V* once per day as a spell-like ability. These spell-like abilities function at a caster level equal to the user's total Hit Dice, and the save DC for *dismissal* is equal to 15 + the user's Charisma modifier. Regardless of which palm is chosen, the Thrallkeeper's Mark grants a +4 luck bonus on all saving throws against mind-affecting effects. The Thrallkeeper's Mark lasts for only 1 week before its magic fades, and a character can receive the mark only once per year.

Respect Points: If the PCs gain the Thrallkeeper's Mark in the presence of a Shoanti NPC, or if they display the brand and manifest one of its powers before such an NPC, the party gains 3 Respect Points.

Story Award: If at least one PC gains the Thrallkeeper's Mark, award the party 9,600 XP.

A Parting of Ways

Once the PCs complete their business in the acropolis, the other two groups in the area prepare to depart. If the PCs haven't had a decisive conflict with the Red Mantis assassins by the time they attempt to leave the ruins, they should encounter the Red Mantis then. The Sklar-Quah, if they haven't left already, do so soon after the PCs gain the Thrallkeeper's Mark; the PCs don't encounter Krojun and the Sklar-Quah again until they travel to Flameford (see page 226). At your discretion, though, Krojun may agree to guide the PCs to the Sklar-Quah camp if they wish to travel there next.

House of the Moon

Akram is the only truthspeaker currently living in the Cinderlands. As a member of the Lyrune-Quah, Akram is a nomad and travels with his clan throughout the area; fortunately, Thousand Bones knows where the Lyrune-Quah are likely to be camped during this season—near an

ancient Desnan temple called the House of the Moon. If the PCs wish to contact Akram and attempt to secure his support as a truthspeaker, they must travel to the House of the Moon and search for him there.

The House of the Moon is unlike most of the ruins that dot the Varisian landscape, for it was not built by the Thassilonians. Worship of Desna dates back further than that ancient empire. Before the minions of First King Xin arrived in the region, the Varisians already dwelt here. The Varisians were all nomadic at the time, and many worshiped Desna. As Thassilon rose, though, the runelords saw open worship of the gods as a distraction, and destroyed most of the Desnan shrines that dotted the land. The House of the Moon was no exception. Yet when Thassilon fell and the Age of Darkness began, a new shrine was mysteriously rebuilt on the site of one of those destroyed shrines. It gave the people who would become the Lyrune-Quah a place of shelter in that deadly age, and today it has become one of the anchors of their culture.

Meeting the Moon Maidens

Currently, very few Lyrune-Quah are present at the House of the Moon, though more are en route. As is sometimes the case, unfortunately, the nomads who went ahead to prepare the site arrived to find that a local predator has taken up the shrine as its territory—in this case, a dangerous creature known as a red reaver. Traditionally, the first tribe to arrive at the House of the Moon in a season is responsible for driving out the monsters and making the shrine safe for the tribes yet to arrive, but the red reaver is proving to be more trouble than a pack of gargoyles or a few hungry ankhegs, and already several Lyrune-Quah moon maidens have perished at the monster's talons.

When the PCs arrive in the region, a patrol of six moon maidens notices their approach unless the PCs take pains to reach the area stealthily (in which case they might well come to the House of the Moon unannounced). If they simply defeat the red reaver on their own, the Lyrune-Quah react with the same gratitude as if the PCs had spoken to them beforehand.

Moon maidens are the traditional honor guard and protector caste of the Lyrune-Quah, an order of rangers who prefer to travel and hunt at night under the moon's watchful eye. The patrol's leader is a woman named Tekrakai, and she has grown increasingly worried and distracted at the red reaver's presence in the House of the Moon. Having already thrown nearly a dozen of her moon maidens at the problem, she has consigned herself to the inevitable humiliation of admitting to the main body of the Lyrune-Quah—scheduled to arrive in the area in less than a month—that she was unable to secure the House of the Moon.

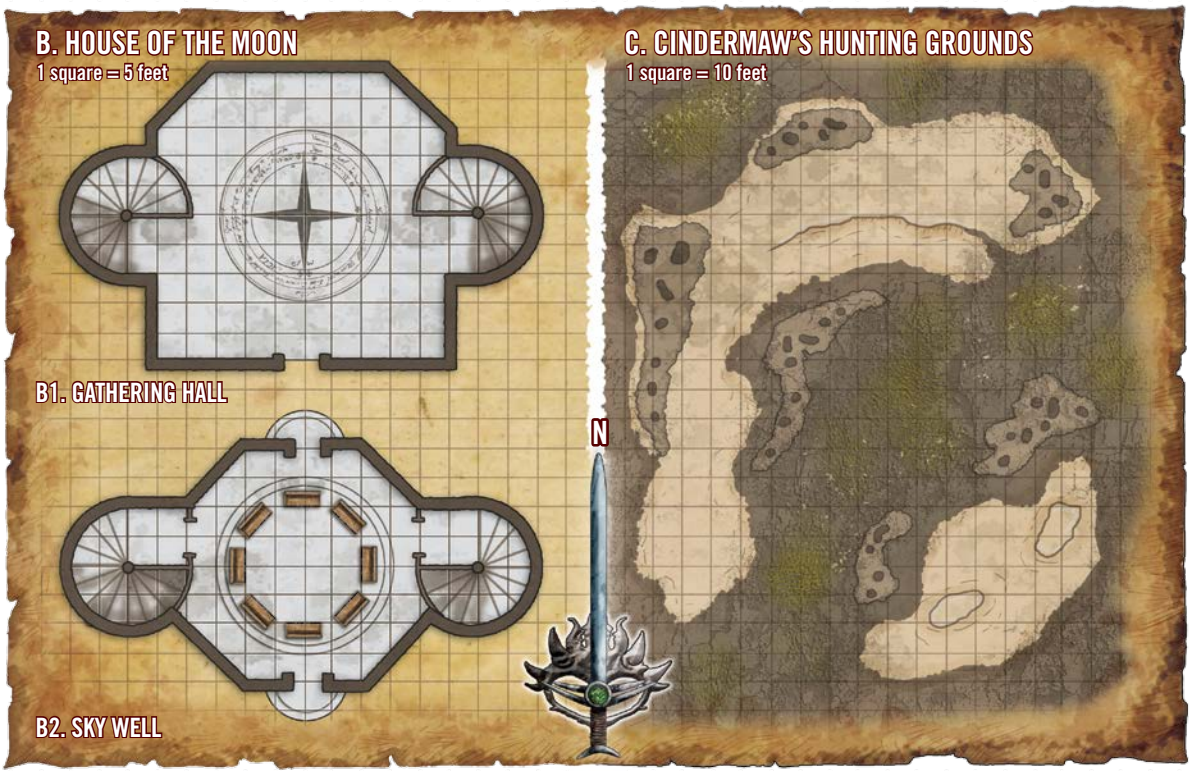
Tekrakai is not the original leader of these moon maidens, but after their previous commander was killed and eaten on the first assault against the red reaver, the others turned to her. She isn't eager to maintain this role, but does her best to live up to the title for the time. The other moon maidens are Eaklai, Maeva, and Yandree—all three are loyal to Tekrakai.

Tekrakai's initial reaction to the PCs is initially one of distrust but not hostility, for she also knows that many tshamek worship Desna, and that the Song of the Spheres often uses traveling adventurers as her agents. In all, only four moon maidens remain in the area, including Tekrakai—far too few to confront the red reaver. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Sense Motive check notes the expressions of worry worn by the moon maidens as they confront the PCs and demand an explanation for why tshamek dare approach a site sacred to the Lyrune-Quah.

As long as the PCs aren't offensive or hostile, Tekrakai's attitude softens. She's a kind person at heart, and as with many Lyrune-Quah, she is more open in accepting tshamek than other quahs. If the PCs ask her about Truthspeaker Akram, Tekrakai admits that he is indeed scheduled to arrive with the rest of her tribe in a few short days, but their sacred House of the Moon has been claimed by a highly territorial monster that the moon maidens have been unable to drive off, and she worries that this year's pilgrimage may need to be rerouted. She would prefer to have the PCs volunteer to help defeat the monster, but if they don't take the hint, she humbly asks for their aid. She adds that if the PCs can help her kill the red reaver, the Lyrune-Quah will be much more prepared to provide aid and allow the PC to travel with their truthspeaker.

Assuming the PCs agree to aid them, Tekrakai sighs in relief and tells them that she and her remaining three moon maidens are prepared to assault the House of the Moon immediately, and if the PCs are ready, she leads them to the structure's entrance at once. She can tell them about the powers and abilities of the red reaver that dwells within, particularly that its claws can rend flesh, its roar can cause fearful discord, and perhaps most importantly, the creatures is easily distracted by artistic beauty so a performance could well lull it into a state of temporary calm. She can also point out that the creature never sleeps, and as long as it defends a site it counts as its territory, it fights with a ferocious focus—driving the thing off permanently is likely impossible, and killing it is the best solution.

Tekrakai and her fellow moon maidens are prepared to assist the PCs with the battle to retake the House of the Moon; in fact, if the PCs want them to stay out of the fight, one PC must succeed at a DC 30 Diplomacy check or a DC 23 Intimidate check. A PC who succeeds at



a DC 25 Knowledge (local) check recognizes that forcing the moon maidens to stand down would likely damage any growing respect the PCs might otherwise earn (see Respect Points below).

LYRUNE-QUAH MOON MAIDENS (4) **CR 6**

XP 2,400 each

Female human barbarian 1/ranger 6

CG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 13 (+5 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, –2 rage)

hp 92 each (7 HD; 6d10+1d12+48)

Fort +13, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee *+1 starknife* +11/+6 (1d6+5/×3), *+1 starknife* +11/+6 (1d6+3/×3)

Ranged starknife +9/+4 (1d6+5/×3)

Special Attacks combat style (two-weapon combat), favored enemy (giants +4, magical beasts +2), rage (8 rounds/day)

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +4)

1st—*lead blades*[APG], *longstrider*

TACTICS

Before Combat The moon maidens each cast *lead blades* and *longstrider* before entering combat.

During Combat The moon maidens rage when combat begins, hurling their nonmagical starknives at their enemies for the first few rounds. Once they're down to only their magical starknives, they rush in to engage foes in melee. If they're fighting with allies, one moon maiden activates her hunter's bond to share her bonuses, with the others activating their bonds in turn when the previous one wears off.

Morale A moon maiden fights until brought to fewer than 10 hit points, at which point she flees to recover and plan her second assault on the enemy. A moon maiden who is raging does not flee, but fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 13, **Con** 22, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 21

Feats Dodge, Endurance, Extra Rage, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Quick Draw, Totem Spirit (Lyrune-Quah)[ISWG], Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (starknife)

Skills Acrobatics +9, Climb +12, Handle Animal +8, Perception +13, Stealth +9, Survival +11

Languages Common, Shoanti

SQ fast movement, favored terrain (desert +2), hunter's bond (companions), track +3, wild empathy +6

Gear *+1 hide armor, +1 starknives* (2), starknives (6)

Respect Points: If the PCs argue successfully to keep the moon maidens from taking part in the fight, they lose 2d4 Respect Points.

Story Award: For each moon maiden who survives the fight with the red reaver (or who is brought back to life should she be killed), award the PCs XP as if they had defeated that moon maiden in combat.

B HOUSE OF THE MOON (CR 13)

A silvery stone shrine stands atop a low promontory in the foothills here. The surrounding stone has been smoothed by ages of wind, but the shrine itself remains as stark and unweathered as the day its final block was set in place. The structure shimmers with a slightly reflective sheen, and even on moonless nights it glimmers with lunar radiance. A 30-foot-tall opening allows access to the shrine interior at ground level. The curving sides of the archway are framed by the long peacock-like tail feathers of an immense star monarch carved into the building's facade. The creature's wings furl to the left and right, fanning over two side towers attached to the central spire, which rises to a height of 100 feet. Above, a silvery sphere caps the central tower's peak, as if the moon had fallen out of the sky to become impaled upon the steeple.

The House of the Moon is an ancient structure, built (according to legend) by an army of lyrakiens to serve Desna's faithful as a place of shelter during the Age of Darkness. The stone that makes up the sacred site's walls is certainly unusual, featuring many of the qualities of magically treated superior masonry (hardness 16, hp 180, break DC 55). In addition, the stone walls repair damage to themselves at the rate of 5 hit points per round as long as moonlight shines upon the structure. The stone resists magical manipulation and effects with spell resistance 26. At night, the glowing walls provide dim illumination within the structure.

The entire building is suffused with Desna's grace, and a worshiper of Desna who enters the House of the Moon feels welcome even when monsters like the red reaver lurk within. Worshipers who sleep inside the building at night are always visited with dreams in which a birdlike humanoid with jet-black feathers engages the dreamer in conversation. This is a visitation from one of Desna's favored agents, an avoral (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 16) named Nightspear. The conversation functions as *commune* (five questions) followed by a *divination* spell (on any one topic of concern to the dreamer). This dream vision can occur only once per year for each worshiper, and is one of the primary reasons the worshipers of the Lyrune-Quah annually return to the House of the Moon.

The House of the Moon's interior consists of two floors—a large open area below that serves as a gathering hall (area **B1**) and a smaller area above known as the "sky well" (area **B2**). The two floors are connected by graceful spiraling staircases.

The walls in the gathering hall are decorated with symbols and imagery sacred to the worship of Desna. A massive starknife made of white stone, measuring 20 feet from tip to tip, sits on a pivot in the center of the floor. The starknife is very cunningly balanced, so that despite its size, visiting priests can easily rotate it on its central axis to reflect the current month and day. With its constant need for manual updating, this primitive proto-calendar enables a Shoanti visitor to determine that it's been months since anyone worshiped at the House of the Moon. A formidable stack of picked-over animal carcasses (remnants from the red reaver's meals) and seven dead moon maidens are heaped in the southwest corner of the hall.

Above, in the sky well, a moonlike sphere emanates a shimmering curtain of moonlight at all times that then

TEKRAKAI

reflects upward against the ceiling to project an accurate image of the clear night sky, regardless of the time of day or weather. In this way, the sky well functions as an observatory, allowing astronomers to stargaze even on stormy nights or at high noon.

Creature: The red reaver is not an intrinsically evil creature, but neither is it particularly peaceful. When its previous territory higher up in the Wyvern Mountains (an outdoor observatory ringed by standing menhirs) was destroyed by a landslide, the red reaver lumbered south in search of a new home. After roving through the mountains and down into the Cinderlands, it came upon the House of the Moon—something in the terrain and structure itself felt like a natural fit, and the red reaver adopted the site as its own.

The reaver spends the majority of its time in area **B1**, which it finds to be the most comfortable part of the House of the Moon. As soon as it notices intruders, it swiftly moves to confront them with its fearsome roar. It has learned that heavily armored foes tend to hit harder, so it focuses its wrath on any of the most armored targets in sight. The red reaver fights to the death, and pursues foes to the limit of its territory (half a mile in any direction from the House of the Moon).

RED REAVER **CR 13**

XP 25,600

hp 184 (currently 151; see page 476)

Treasure: Among the slain moon maidens in area **B1**, three suits of *+1 hide armor* and five *+1 starknives* remain intact. If the PCs aid the Lyrune-Quah in defeating the red reaver, they offer these magical weapons and suits of armor as thanks.

After the Battle

Although the Lyrune-Quah are as passionate about their heritage as any quah, they are much less xenophobic than most other quahs. Once the red reaver is slain, the Lyrune-Quah become even friendlier, and any surviving moon maidens invite the PCs to stay at the House of the Moon for a few nights, if they wish. If the PCs are accompanied by any Skoan-Quah boneslayers, the boneslayers' cultural mores require them to avoid too much interaction with the Lyrune-Quah; they opt instead to camp out of sight in a nearby vale until the PCs decide to move on.

The rest of the Lyrune-Quah tribe arrives, as scheduled, a few nights after the PCs arrive. Tekrakai introduces the PCs to the rest of her people, and once the PCs explain that they seek a Truthspeeker to vouch for their honor, the Shoanti become noticeably impressed. A few moments later, an aged man named Akram steps forward to introduce himself.

Akram himself is quiet, content for the most part to watch and observe. When he learns that the PCs seek to earn the respect of the Shoanti by undertaking quests, he becomes very intrigued and readily agrees to travel with them—primarily so he can witness their acts first-hand. Furthermore, while the Lyrune-Quah are not at war with the Sklar-Quah, relations between the two tribes are tense, and Akram sees traveling with the PCs as an opportunity to speak with a Sun Shaman to attempt to strengthen allegiances between the two tribes.

Akram finds the PCs endlessly fascinating: you should select one PC in particular (the character who is the most out-of-place and awkward in a wilderness environment works best) for him to become specifically interested in. Akram is never too far from this character, and often asks the character to explain choices made in a combat or conflicts. You can use Akram to encourage the PCs to examine their tactics and goals, or you can keep him in the background as a resource that needs to be protected from peril—whatever works best for your game.

In any case, once Akram agrees to accompany the PCs on their journey, he can be ready to go at a moment's notice. The old man presents an additional complication for the PCs—Akram remains relatively spry for man of 68 years, and with sharp mind and vision alike, but he's also quite frail and feeble. Keeping him alive when faced with monsters or other concerns is an unspoken responsibility the PCs shoulder as soon as they leave with their new truthspeaker ally; it's dishonorable for the Lyrune-Quah to send additional members along on a truthspeaker's mission simply to support the man, since that implies that the truthspeaker alone isn't enough to witness the required event.

AKRAM **CR 7**

XP 3,200

Male old human cleric of Desna 8

CG Medium humanoid (human)

Init –1; **Senses** *discern lies*, Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 9, flat-footed 12 (+3 armor, –1 Dex)

hp 47 (8d8+8)

Fort +7, **Ref** +2, **Will** +14

Immune charm, compulsion

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee *+1 returning starknife* +5/+0 (1d4–1/×3)

Special Attacks channel positive energy 6/day (DC 17, 4d6)

Cleric Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +13)

At will—dimensional hop (80 feet/day)

8/day—bit of luck

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +13)

4th—*dimension door*[D], *divination*, *sending*, *tongues*

3rd—*dispel magic*, *fly*[D], *magic vestment*, *prayer*, *remove disease*
2nd—*aid*[D], *calm emotions* (DC 17), *enthrall* (DC 17), *spiritual weapon*, *zone of truth* (DC 17)
1st—*command* (DC 16), *endure elements*, *longstrider*[D], *obscuring mist*, *protection from evil*, *sanctuary* (DC 16), *shield of faith*
0 (at will)—*create water*, *light*, *mending*, *purify food and drink* (DC 15)
D domain spell; **Domains** Luck, Travel

TACTICS

Before Combat Akram casts *magic vestment* on his robes every day after breakfast.

During Combat Akram prefers to save his spells for healing or support. He generally casts *prayer* on the first round of battle, followed by *spiritual weapon* and then *sanctuary*, so he can move about the fringe of combat to heal allies in relative safety.

Morale Akram has little interest in combat, and if confronted while alone or if reduced to fewer than 10 hit points, he casts *dimension door* to escape immediate danger and then *fly* to flee to a place of safety.

STATISTICS

Str 6, **Dex** 9, **Con** 10, **Int** 12, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 16
Base Atk +6; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 13
Feats Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wand, Iron Will, Selective Channeling, Skill Focus (Sense Motive)
Skills Diplomacy +12, Knowledge (religion) +12, Linguistics +6, Sense Motive +19, Survival +13
Languages Common, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Shoanti
SQ agile feet (8/day), good fortune (1/day)
Combat Gear *wand of cure moderate wounds* (32 charges), *wand of lesser restoration* (20 charges); **Other Gear** padded armor, *+1 returning starknife*, *cloak of resistance +1*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Truthspeaker (Su) Akram has undertaken a lifelong quest of fasting, meditation, exploration, and prayer to achieve the status of truthspeaker. This has granted him immunity to all charm and compulsion effects. Furthermore, he is constantly under the effects of *discern lies* (CL 7th).

Respect Points: If the PCs secure the support of Truthspeaker Akram, award them 3 Respect Points.

Story Award: Grant the PCs 3,200 XP if they gain the support of Truthspeaker Akram, and a further 3,200 XP if he survives long enough for the PCs to earn the Sun Shaman's lore (as detailed in the Chapter Conclusion on page 254).

BELLY OF THE BEAST

Cindermaw is one of the deadliest predators of the Cinderlands, an ancient purple worm transformed into a unique creature infused with elemental fire after it devoured a malfunctioning portal to the Plane of Fire that stood inside a partially collapsed Thassilonian ruin. The infusion of elemental fire granted Cindermaw a host of unique fire-based abilities, drastically lengthened its lifespan, and awakened its intellect, which enabled it to understand its place in the world. Cindermaw knows that the Shoanti regard it as a sort of god, and it has taken this notion to an extreme. For an immense worm, Cindermaw is surprisingly vain and egocentric.

Cindermaw is a fiercely territorial hunter. Shoanti myth portrays the worm as a demonic creature capable of consuming entire tribes, and the creature's exceptionally long lifespan has further cemented its position in Shoanti myth. Although it is challenging to track a creature that can burrow, Cindermaw generally sticks to one large hunting ground at a time. Thousand Bones can tell the PCs that their best chances of finding one of Cindermaw's current feeding grounds is to explore a region in the extreme west portion of the Ash-Blown Lands; it is said that the cindercones and other volcanic activity common in this area soothe the beast's troubled spirit.

As the PCs approach the worm's killing ground, they should become increasingly aware of the beast's presence. Encounters with other creatures grow less frequent, and what at first might seem like hills are in fact mounded burrows left behind by Cindermaw's tunneling. You can heighten the excitement of tracking down Cindermaw by confronting the PCs with some of the environmental hazards common to the Cinderlands (see Appendix 2).

AKRAM

C CINDERMAW'S HUNTING GROUNDS (CR 14)

In the end, the PCs don't have to find Cindermaw—if they spend enough time exploring its feeding grounds, the immense worm finds them. Build tension by having the creature surface in the distance and then dive below, as if it were an immense whale swimming through the ground. Have the worm erupt in front of the PCs, then behind them, and then to the side, and so on—Cindermaw enjoys showing off and intimidating prey before it attempts to feed.

In order to fulfill the ancient tradition's requirements and properly display bravery, only one PC needs to be eaten by the worm. How she emerges from within the worm is irrelevant, as long as the event is witnessed by Shoanti. Thousand Bones (and any other Shoanti the PCs speak to) should indicate that slaying Cindermaw isn't recommended, and can ironically undermine the PCs' story. After all, if the monster they fought could be killed, it obviously wasn't that tough of a foe.

The simplest method of fulfilling the goal is for a character to allow the worm to swallow her whole, and then cut her way out of the beast's belly. This is a dangerous stunt, and fire resistance is a good way to prepare for it. Paralyzing the worm (with *hold monster*, for example) is an acceptable way to simplify the situation (although keep in mind that Cindermaw is somewhat resistant to paralysis), as is charming or otherwise magically controlling the worm. If a PC can succeed at the concentration check required to cast spells while inside of a monster, she can even use *dimension door* or *teleport* to escape from the beast's belly once she has been swallowed.

Illusions are another option. A convincing illusion of a PC being eaten by Cindermaw might be difficult to create, though, especially if the PCs haven't seen the worm. Since Cindermaw radiates heat, any illusion of the worm must also be capable of radiating warmth. *Major image* (or a more powerful spell) can create a believable scene, but the observing Shoanti can still attempt a Will save against the spell's DC to determine whether he believes it. Of course, for such a deception to function, he also needs to believe he is in Cindermaw's hunting grounds in the first place.

CINDERMAW **CR 14**

XP 38,400

Fire-infused advanced purple worm (*Advanced Bestiary* 139, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 230)

N Gargantuan magical beast (fire)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 7, flat-footed 30 (+1 Dex, +24 natural, –4 size)

hp 216 (16d10+128); fire healing 1

Fort +18, **Ref** +11, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities elemental body; **Immune** fire

Weaknesses vulnerable to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft., firewalk 30 ft., swim 10 ft.

Melee bite +26 (4d8+13/19–20 plus 1d6 fire and grab), sting +26 (2d8+13 plus 1d6 fire)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks fire breath, heat (1d6 fire), poison, swallow whole (4d8+18, AC 22, 21 hp)

TACTICS

During Combat When Cindermaw tires of toying with the PCs, it burrows up directly in their midst. Unfortunately, Cindermaw has recently fed. On the first round of combat, it breathes fire on the most densely packed group of PCs. It then attacks with its bite and sting on the second round of combat. It does not try to swallow foes whole immediately—instead, it bites and moves on. Once the PCs deal more than 100 points of damage to the worm (or once it has breathed fire twice), it abandons this tactic and begins attempting to swallow victims. Alternatively, a character can tempt the worm into swallowing her by attempting a Bluff check to appear particularly appetizing and worth the risk of a stomach ache; she takes a –10 penalty on the check due to the bluff's far-fetched believability. Cindermaw can oppose this check with a Sense Motive check.

Morale Cindermaw retreats if it takes more than 80 points of damage in all from cold attacks, or as soon as it is reduced to fewer than 50 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 37, **Dex** 12, **Con** 27, **Int** 5, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +16; **CMB** +33 (+35 bull rush, +37 grapple); **CMD** 44 (46 vs. bull rush, can't be tripped)

Feats Awesome Blow, Critical Focus, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (bite), Iron Will, Power Attack, Staggering Critical, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (sting)

Skills Perception +18, Swim +21

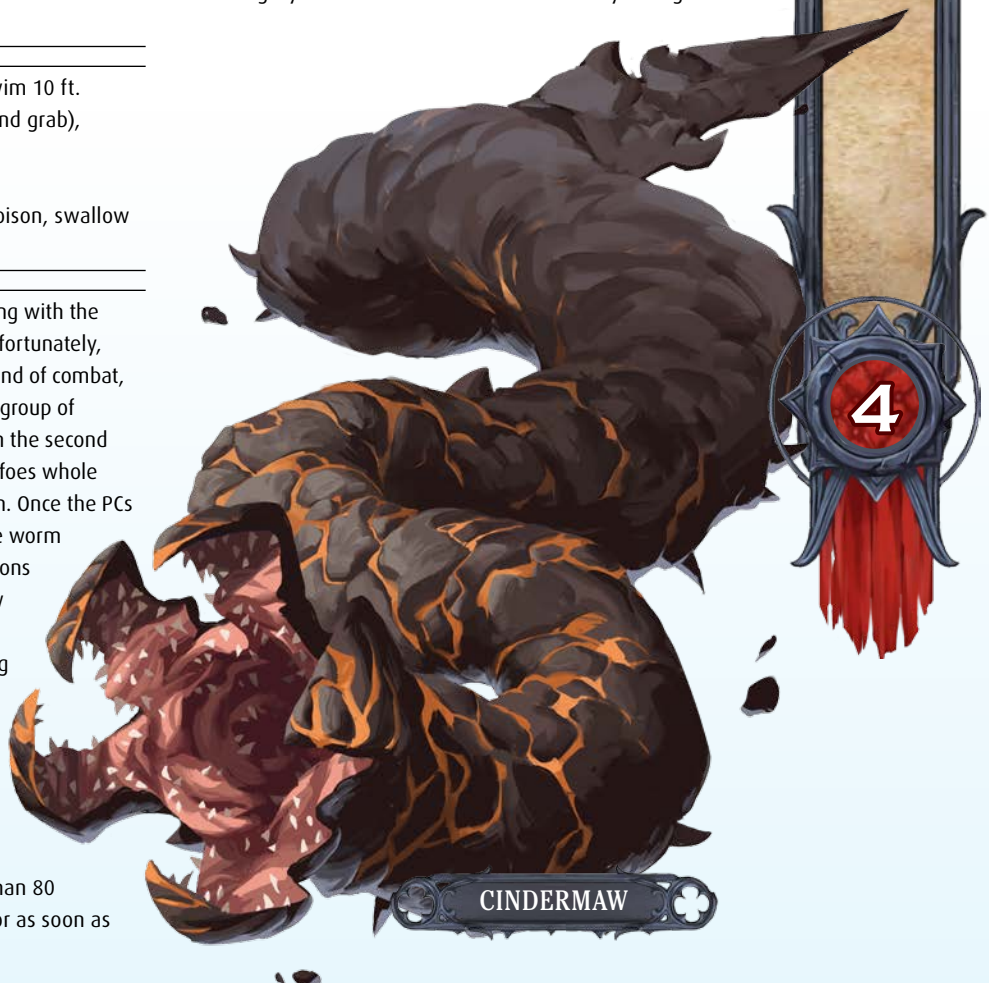
SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bonus Feat Rather than receive Quick Draw as a bonus feat from the element-infused creature template, Cindermaw gained Iron Will as a bonus feat.

Elemental Body (Ex) Each time Cindermaw is exposed to a bleed, precision damage, poison, paralysis, seep, or stunning effect, it has a 25% chance to avoid that effect.

Fire Breath (Su) Cindermaw can breathe out a 30-foot cone of fire once every 1d4 rounds, dealing 8d6 points of fire damage to all in the area of effect. A successful DC 26 Reflex saving throw halves this damage. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Fire Healing (Ex) Cindermaw regains 1 hit point for each full round it remains in contact with a fire at least one size category smaller than itself. When struck by a magical fire



CINDERMAW

effect, Cindermaw regains 1 hit point for every 10 points of damage that the fire effect would otherwise deal.

Firewalk (Su) Cindermaw can climb an object on fire as though it had a climb speed of 30 feet. It can also fly at this speed with perfect maneuverability as long as it remains in contact with fire, and can walk on flames at its highest speed as per *air walk*.

Heat (Su) Each of Cindermaw's attacks deals an extra 1d6 points of fire damage.

Respect Points: The PCs earn 2 Respect points if one of them is swallowed and then escapes the worm's gullet. If she manages this stunt and leaves Cindermaw alive, this award increases to 4 Respect Points. If Cindermaw is slain, the PCs lose 1 Respect Point.

D FLAMEFORD

The PCs need not wait to visit the Sklar-Quah, even if they have not yet accumulated the 20 Respect Points needed to earn an audience with the Sun Shaman. Indeed, once they arrive at the camp of Flameford (the Sklar-Quah camp Thousand Bones suggests the PCs visit), they have additional opportunities to earn Respect Points by undergoing a grueling trial. Flameford's relatively central location in the Cinderlands makes it an attractive place to visit while the PCs are on their way to other locations, and while the Sklar-Quah are not friendly, their camp is not completely closed to tshamek.

As the PCs near Flameford, they are intercepted by a patrolling war party of six Shoanti burn riders—Sklar-Quah riders who have trained their mounts not to fear fire. These burn riders are headstrong and quick to anger, but they stay their weapons and do not attack on sight. If the PCs claim to the burn riders that they seek to gain Shoanti respect and shed their tshamek status, the burn riders respond with a hearty round of laughter. The presence of Boneslayer guides or Akram helps to lend plausibility to the PCs' situation, but regardless, the burn riders soon grow serious and agree to escort the PCs to Flameford at the very heart of Sklar-Quah lands. The Sklar-Quah do not attempt to disarm the PCs (believing that if they can't defeat an armed party of adventurers, they are not worthy of being burn riders), though the PCs are effectively surrounded by hundreds of Shoanti who are ready at an instant to defend their home from the outlanders.

The camp of Flameford is in a highly defensible spot, nestled in the middle of a field of permanent *spike stones* at the edge of an 80-foot-high cliff. The campsite consists of 17 yurts (weatherproof wood-framed tents with aurochs-hide walls and roofs), two larger tents, and a yard for the tribe's horses. In all, 52 Shoanti dwell here under the watchful guidance of Chief **Ready-Klar** (CN male old human barbarian 12), the aging and well-respected uncle of the tribe's greatest living hero, Krojun Eats-What-He-Kills. The camp is also the home of a wizened old man who gave up his name when he became one of the Sun Shamans of the Sklar-Quah. The majority of the remaining Shoanti who dwell in the camp are 1st- to 3rd-level barbarians, although six thundercallers and eight burn riders dwell here as well. The six points of interest to the PCs in Flameford are described below.

D1. The Approach: Flameford has remained one of the largest and best-defended Sklar-Quah camps due to the presence of large fields of permanent *spike stones* (CL 16th) that surround the site. These fields of dangerous terrain leave unmarked zigzagging paths that permit safe passage to those who know the route. In this way, the Sklar-Quah control the entrance and egress from the camp and the Sun Clan needs to post few guards. The map of the camp shows the safe paths through the fields of *spike stones*, but these paths are all but undetectable to visitors, who must navigate the approach very carefully if they wish to avoid the dangerous hazard. A successful DC 29 Perception check is required to determine whether any one 5-foot square contains *spike stones*.

D2. War Council Fire: Flameford's heart is a massive fire at which the tribe gathers each night to feast and discuss matters of import.

D3. Corral: The tribe's eight horses are kept here; each belongs to one of the camp's eight burn riders.

D4. Sun Shaman's Yurt: The Quah-Chief takes counsel from the **Sun Shaman** (N male venerable human shaman of lore[ACG] 14), the clan's spiritual leader. When a Sklar-Quah shaman has seen sufficient winters, he is invited to abandon his name and take on the mantle of a Sun Shaman. Hence, "Sun Shaman" is both a name and a title. This yurt is the home of Flameford's Sun Shaman.

D5. Chieftain's Yurt: Chief Ready-Klar's home is the largest yurt in the camp. The chieftain's personal living area takes up the northeasternmost quarter of the tent, with the rest containing a communal feasting hall.

D6. Guest Yurt: This unused yurt is given to the PCs as a place for them to stay during their visit. Apart from a few furs and a single small fire pit, the yurt contains no furnishings at all.

At the Foot of the Fire

As the PCs are led through the *spike stones* into Flameford's heart, the entire camp, chieftain and Sun Shaman included, come to see. The PCs' burn rider escorts lead them to the War Council Fire and bid them to be seated. The PCs might be dismayed or heartened to see that Krojun is in attendance as well.

The Sun Shaman remains quiet for this meeting, letting Ready-Klar speak to the PCs. The chieftain is loud and easily angered, and does not suffer arrogance. He demands

to know why the PCs have dared enter Sklar-Quah lands, even though he likely knows of their desire to speak to the Sun Shaman—he wants to hear from the PCs' own lips what they want. A PC who succeeds at a DC 29 Diplomacy check mollifies the chieftain (and earns the PCs a few Respect Points; see below). If Akram accompanies the PCs, they gain a +10 bonus on this check. A PC who succeeds at a DC 24 Intimidate check also impresses the chieftain, and after a tense moment of silence when the entire tribe seems ready to attack, his bout of appreciative laughter at the PCs' bravery earns them Respect Points as if they had successfully used Diplomacy.

If the PCs have accumulated 20 Respect Points, proceed with The Flameford Assault on page 230 before the PCs get a chance to speak to the Sun Shaman and learn what he knows of Kazavon and Midnight's Teeth.

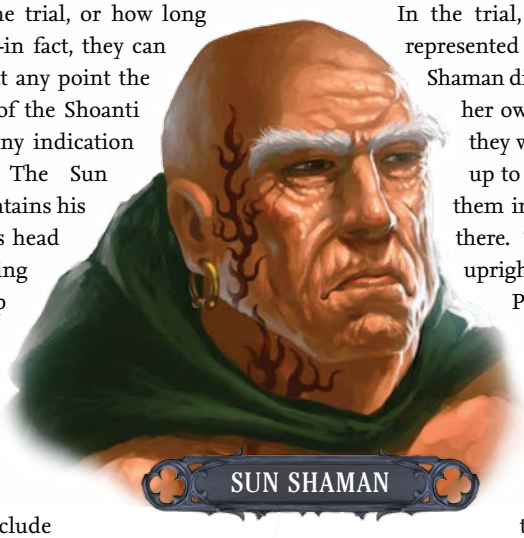
If the PCs haven't yet accumulated 20 Respect Points, the chieftain tells them point-blank that they are still tshamek and do not deserve the Sun Shaman's advice, yet there is a way they can work toward earning more respect: they can petition to take the Trial of the Totem.

As soon as the PCs request to take the trial, the gathered Shoanti fall remarkably silent. The Sun Shaman finally breaks this silence, not by speaking but by placing a hand on the chieftain's shoulder and indicating wordlessly that they should retreat to the Sun Shaman's tent to speak in private. The chieftain does so, asking the PCs to wait for their return. Quiet tension looms while the crowd waits. Krojun crosses his arms and stares at the PC with whom he played sredna (or alternatively, a PC he has faced in melee). If Akram is present, he quietly explains to the PCs that if the Sun Shaman rejects this request and decides the PCs are not worthy of the trial, they (Akram included) will be disemboweled for trespassing on Sklar-Quah land.

An hour later, the shaman and chieftain return to the fire. The shaman asks each of the PCs to stand before him and speak their names. The Sun Shaman repeats the names in sequence, and then tersely announces that the PCs are permitted the opportunity to prove themselves to the Sklar-Quah by enduring the Trial of the Totem. The proclamation startles the gathered Shoanti, Krojun in particular, but while some struggle to contain their fury, only Krojun lashes out. He shouts in protest but immediately realizes the disrespect he has displayed to the Sun Shaman and stops his tirade before it goes too far. Instead, he storms off with several burn riders to take a long ride through the Cinderlands to cool off, much to the Sun Shaman's apparent amusement and the chieftain's shock and anger.

Once Krojun is gone, the Sun Shaman announces that the Trial of the Totem shall begin the next morning just after dawn, and then motions for everyone to disperse from the council fire. The gathering begins to break up

at this point, and the Sun Shaman grants the PCs access to the guest yurt (area **D6**) to use during their stay in Flameford. No word is mentioned of why the Sun Shaman agreed to let the PCs take the trial, or how long the PCs are allowed to stay—in fact, they can stay as long as they wish. If at any point the PCs mention Kazavon, none of the Shoanti save the Sun Shaman gives any indication of recognizing the word. The Sun Shaman pales visibly, but maintains his composure before shaking his head and refusing to hear anything more, explaining that this deep history of his people is not for other tribes to know, and if the PCs wish to learn it, they must continue to earn his people's respect.


SUN SHAMAN

For his part, Akram explains that his quah's traditions preclude him from sharing a sunrise with the Sklar-Quah and so he intends to depart before dawn. If the boneslayers are still accompanying the PCs, they volunteer to escort the old truthspeaker back to the Lyrune-Quah; otherwise, an honor guard of three burn riders takes up the charge. Akram wishes the PCs luck in their trial, and as he leaves he offers one final bit of advice: Krojun is an important member of the tribe, and anything the PCs can do to earn his respect can only help them.

Respect Points: Successfully using Diplomacy to show the chieftain respect earns the PCs 2 Respect Points.

Trial of the Totem

Early the following morning, about an hour before dawn, the PCs are awakened by the Sun Shaman, who asks them to follow him. He, along with a trio of thundercallers, escorts the PCs out through the *spike stones* in silence and takes them east across the Cinderlands on a 20-minute walk to a site known as Bolt Rock, a small mesa of spiritual significance to the Sun Clan.

A single ledge winds up to the westernmost flat-topped area of Bolt Rock, a plateau that sits about 30 feet above the surrounding plain. A second ledge leads up higher to a second miniature mesa, this one 40 feet above the ground. During storms, the large quantities of iron ore in the rock here attract numerous lightning bolts, and as a result the place has become one of particular obsession for the Sun Shamans, who often ascend Bolt Rock during storms to experience the fury.

The Sun Shaman explains that for the Trial of the Totems, would-be Sklar-Quah must erect fired-clay pylons called sun totems (hardness 6, hp 40) atop Bolt Rock. Each totem is 10 feet tall, and the sides are decorated with numerous sigils sacred to the Sklar-Quah. The lower portion of each totem is rounded. When not in use, they're stored in square stone pods at the base of Bolt Rock.

In the trial, each prospective clan member is represented by a specific sun totem. The Sun Shaman directs the PCs to each select a totem as her own and then explains that as a group, they will have 1 hour to carry these totems up to the lower tier of Bolt Rock and erect them in circular depressions in the ground there. They must then keep the totems upright for a day. At the next sunrise, the PCs must move all of their totems up to the highest mesa (again, within 1 hour) and must keep them upright in another set of depressions found there for an additional day. When the sun rises on the third day, any totem still standing grants the PC who kept it upright Sklar-Quah citizenship.

The Sun Shaman goes on to explain that while no food or water will be brought to the PCs for the 2 days they must remain atop Bolt Rock, they are welcome to provide their own. Likewise, they are welcome to use magic or whatever means they have at their disposal to aid in keeping their sun totems upright for the 2 days, as long as the magic does not change or damage the totems or the structure of Bolt Rock in any way. Bolt Rock is clearly visible from Flameford, and the Sun Shaman explains that many eyes will be turned eastward for the next 2 days. At night, the totems glow with their own radiance, the result of minor magical enhancements placed on the totems that enable those in Flameford to see even on darkest nights whether the totems still stand.

The trial explained, the Sun Shaman returns to Flameford to rest, and the PCs are on their own.

Raising the Totems

As soon as the sun rises, the PCs have 1 hour to select their totems and carry them up onto the westernmost tier of Bolt Rock above. Though each totem is hollow, they're still quite heavy at 500 pounds apiece. A character with a Strength of 10 can barely manage to drag one of these totems; a character with a Strength of 17 or higher can lift the totem off the ground and stagger around with it at a speed of 5 feet. Characters who are unable to transport their totems alone must rely on aid. There is no penalty for not being able to carry one's own totem, and indeed, the teamwork required for this trial is a valuable part of the lesson. Any character can anchor a totem and push it into an upright position as long as he can drag 500 pounds.

Once a totem is upright, the shallow concavity and rounded base of the totem help stabilize it, but without someone on hand at all times to keep the totems balanced, a totem will eventually topple. Holding a totem in place requires a successful DC 12 Strength check every 6 hours. A character can take 10 on this check, but on a failed check the totem begins to lean precariously. At this point, a DC 16 Strength check is required to stabilize the totem. If this second check fails, the totem topples and takes 3d6 points of damage. As long as the totem isn't broken, it can be lifted back into place, but once a totem shatters, that character can no longer become one of the Sklar-Quah.

Keeping the totems upright for 2 days is a perilous task in and of itself, but unfortunately for the PCs, several other factors combine to make the trial even more arduous.

Exhaustion: The top of Bolt Rock is dangerously exposed to the elements. By default, "A History of Ashes" occurs during late spring, but if in your campaign the events of this chapter take place in the summer, daytime temperatures can rise into hot conditions, so characters must succeed at Fortitude saves to avoid taking nonlethal damage (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 444). Furthermore, once the PCs head into the second day, they are operating on no sleep and become fatigued, making the prospect of another day's worth of Strength checks more difficult. Remember, *lesser restoration*, paladin mercies, and similar effects can remove fatigue, and the use of such resources is not banned from the trial.

Thirst: As detailed on page 444 of the *Core Rulebook*, a character can go without water for 1 day plus a number of hours equal to her Constitution score. After this time, a PC must succeed at a Constitution check each hour (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. Once a PC has taken nonlethal damage, he becomes fatigued. Since characters can go without food for 3 days, they need not fear starvation during the trial. If characters bring food with them, they can certainly take short 5-to-10-minute breaks to drink and eat, as long as they remain on Bolt Rock and can hasten back to their totem's side in an emergency, but taking longer breaks (such as to go hunt or seek water) quickly results in a fallen totem.

Magic: Magic like *endure elements* and *create food and water* are perfectly acceptable ways to help endure the trial. While it is against the spirit of the trial to use spells like *stone shape* to fix the totems in place, the PCs can attempt such subterfuge if they wish. When the trial ends, the Sun Shaman inspects Bolt Rock and the totems for damage. He automatically notices evidence of *stone shape* and similar spells if the PCs take no action to hide their trickery—if a PC tries to disguise this evidence, she must succeed at a DC 20 Survival check for each totem so disguised to make the site appear to be unaltered and natural. Each totem site (or totem) the Sun Shaman detects magical alterations to is disqualified. Using at least three *immovable rods* (such as those found in area **A11** of the acropolis) can keep a single totem stable without any obvious signs of damage. Similar tactics may work as well, at your discretion.

Sun Vision of the Aurochs

The Trial of the Totem not only tests the limits of the PCs' stamina, but also to weakens the body so that the mind is open to a vision from Father Sun. Any character who becomes fatigued during the trial has a 10% cumulative chance per hour she remains fatigued of receiving such a vision. The chance of having a vision increases by 30% per hour if the character becomes exhausted.

If a PC receives a vision, she notices waves of heat rising from the stone around him. The shimmers cloud her vision, and the character sees a crystal-clear pool of water has seeped into an empty totem depression. She realizes that if she is quick, perhaps she can steal a drink from the pool before returning to her totem. If she attempts this, she sees the face of a horned aurochs staring back at her from the water. With a successful DC 10 Wisdom check, the character understands she is the aurochs, primal and proud.

No sooner does the character appreciate her new sense of self than she catches the scent of her natural enemies: the beasts with claws are nearby. Although she cannot see them, she senses they are moving in unison, seeking to surround her. Yet as her pulse begins to race and she is sure her unseen enemies close in, the sun beams down upon her. As its light hits her, the character can attempt a second DC 10 Wisdom check to achieve a moment of deep clarity in which she realizes that she is not the prey, but the protector of the Cinderlands. As she feels her enemies begin to quail at her newfound strength, the vision ends.

This vision is meant to signify that it is time for the PCs to stop waiting for the Red Mantis to attack and to turn and face them with full fury. For the remainder of this chapter, a PC who has received the Sun Vision of the Aurochs gains a +1 insight bonus on attack rolls and weapon damage rolls against Red Mantis assassins and their minions.

Krojun's Acknowledgement

On the morning of the second day, Krojun returns from his therapeutic ride through the wilds and pays the PCs a visit. Although initially enraged that invading tshamek were given the opportunity to join the Sklar-Quah, he calms down considerably when he learns that the Sun Shaman selected a particularly grueling challenge to properly test their mettle and climbs Bolt Rock to see how the PCs are doing. He is especially impressed by scrawny PCs (such as elves) who he suspects would

have a harder time enduring the trial. Krojun stares at the PCs silently for a few minutes and then grudgingly compliments them by suggesting they are lucky to have one another as nalharests (siblings).

Hungry Visitors (CR 11)

Play up the difficulty of the trial, and never let the PCs forget how excruciatingly exhausted they are from balancing the massive totems—because on the afternoon of day two, their predicament gets worse.

Creatures: A pack of six bulettes have noticed the PCs, and as the afternoon of the second day of the trial draws toward night, these bulettes begin circling the ground around Bolt Rock. The sound of the burrowing creatures and their dorsal fins periodically protruding above the ash and gravel of the surrounding earth is unmistakable, giving the PCs 2d4 rounds to prepare for the assault.

When the attack comes, the six bulettes leap out of the ground and scramble up onto the lower mesa. A character can continue to hold up her totem while she's fighting as long as her totem remains in reach and she devotes one hand to steadying it. A character who chooses to fight in this manner takes a –4 penalty on all attack rolls as a result. Any totem that is not supported in this way has a flat 10% chance per round of combat of being jostled and toppling.

The bulettes spread out when they attack, each seeking its own target and doubling up on prey only if there are more bulettes than targets. There isn't enough room atop Bolt Rock for all six at once, so any bulettes that are unable to fit pace angrily about on the lower tier or the surrounding ground, eager to snap at anyone who leaves the upper tier or to run up and replace a bulette that is slain or driven off. Although the monsters don't particularly care about the totems, each time a bulette passes through a square that's adjacent to a totem, the character holding the totem must succeed at a DC 15 Strength check to keep the totem upright; if the totem is unsupported, the bulette's passage automatically topples the totem. If a bulette attempts to attack a character engaged in holding up a totem but fails at the attack by 3 or less, the creature's attack has a 50% chance of striking the totem instead and dealing the appropriate amount of damage. A desperate PC can attempt to drop a totem on a bulette, but the bulette can avoid the totem with a successful DC 15 Reflex save, taking 3d6 points of damage on a failure. A dropped totem takes 3d6 points of damage as well.

A bulette flees if reduced to fewer than 15 hit points.

BULETTES (6) **CR 7**

XP 3,200 each

hp 84 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 39)

The Third Dawn

With the third dawn, the Trial of the Totems ends. The Sun Shaman leads the entire tribe from Flameford up to Bolt Rock in the pre-dawn hours, and as the sun rises, any unbroken totems that are still standing are greeted with a rousing cheer. These totems represent new brothers and sisters in the Sklar-Quah, an event that is cause for great celebration. As long as even one totem remains standing, everyone in the party is accepted as an ally, for even among the Sklar-Quah there are those whose skills lie in areas other than fortitude and stamina. Simply attempting the test where at least one ally succeeds is enough.

Before the jubilation gets too out of hand, the Sun Shaman holds his hands high for silence, then personally welcomes those PCs who succeeded at the trial into the Sklar-Quah. Yet he goes even further—he acknowledges those PCs whose totems toppled and broke as nalharests to those whose totems survived, and while these folk are not considered full-blooded members of the Sklar-Quah, they are welcome at Flameford as guests as long as their allies remain as well.

The PCs are likely exhausted after their trial, and the Sun Shaman has prepared a *lesser restoration* spell to cast on each PC, yet still suggests that they return to the guest yurt in Flameford to rest and recover from their ordeal atop Bolt Rock.

Respect Points: The PCs earn 1 Respect Point for attempting the Trial of the Totem, and an additional 1 Respect Point for each totem that remained upright throughout the trial (maximum of 1 per PC).

Story Award: If at least one PC kept her totem from toppling, award the party 12,800 XP.

The Flameford Assault (CR 12 or 14)

Once the PCs earn 20 Respect Points, they have built up enough esteem to learn what the Sun Shaman knows of Kazavon. If the PCs reach this Respect Point total after completing the Trial of the Totem, the Sun Shaman quietly tells the PCs that he is nearly ready to speak with them about the information they seek regarding Midnight's Teeth and the great evil that the Shoanti once guarded as long ago as they return to Flameford. Otherwise, the PCs need to travel to Flameford to meet with the Sun Shaman and make their request. Once they earn 20 Respect Points, any Shoanti they travel with suggest that they should make this journey.

While the Sun Shaman is ready to divulge what he knows about Kazavon to the PCs, he first wishes to seek out the wisdom of his ancestors by traveling to the Kallow Mounds to commune with them. This trip will also bolster the Sun Shaman's knowledge of the ancient subject, resulting in additional information for the PCs. As tradition demands, the Sun Shaman is accompanied

on this trip by Chief Ready-Klar and four of the tribe's thundercallers, and the journey is made via *wind walk*. The Sun Shaman estimates that they will return to Flameford in but a day, and suggests that the PCs take that day to rest, recover, and relax. While they are gone, Krojun is given command of the tribe, a responsibility he accepts with pride and honor. If the PCs volunteer to accompany the Sun Shaman, he thanks them but says that this is a journey that must be taken by as few as possible, and only those who are ancestral members of the quah, so as to not vex and distract the very spirits with which the shaman seeks to commune.

Creatures: Of course, once these two powerful NPCs leave Flameford, the PCs themselves are the most powerful characters remaining in the camp. If the PCs haven't defeated or driven off Cinnabar and crippled the Red Mantis operation in the region yet, the assassins who have been tracking them through the Cinderlands take this opportunity to marshal their resources and allies to launch an attack on the PCs. This assault force is composed of several Red Mantis assassins, their guide the Cinderlander, and a tribe of human-hating gargoyles known as the Ashwings. The Red Mantis have paid the Ashwings well for their services, and when the assault on Flameford occurs, the bulk of these gargoyles focus on the Shoanti who dwell there, leaving only a few of their number, plus the assassins themselves, to attack the PCs.

The Flameford assault occurs as dusk approaches. The humans in the attack party can avoid the *spike stones* that surround Flameford by having the gargoyles carry them in via flight.

When the gargoyles reach the campsite, they swoop up the cliffside and drop off their deadly passengers amid the westernmost yurts. Unless the Red Mantis assassins know exactly which yurt belongs to the PCs, the assassins and gargoyles simply start tearing into the tents with shrieks and roars. Flameford awakens quickly to the assault, but with the village's chieftain and Sun Shaman not present, the Red Mantis have a deadly advantage.

When the battle begins, be sure to describe to the PCs how the Shoanti quickly rouse themselves to the fight and take on the gargoyles and a few assassins here and there. You don't need to run this entire combat—just keep it in the background. If the PCs survive the battle, so do the majority of the Shoanti. If the PCs fall, the Shoanti are wiped out, though if you're feeling magnanimous, surviving PCs are stripped of their gear and brought back to Korvosa to be

imprisoned in Deathhead Vault (see page 236). Whether or not they can escape is up to them and to luck.

You should tailor this encounter for when it takes place, either as a climax for this part of the adventure or a climax for the entire chapter.

CR 12: If the PCs are 11th level or the PCs haven't yet disbanded the Red Mantis hideout (see Part 3), this encounter should be with three Red Mantis assassins who are eager to return to Korvosa to bring proof of the PCs' death to Cinnabar. These assassins are accompanied by three Ashwing gargoyles.

CR 14: If the PCs are 12th level or have disbanded the Red Mantis hideout, the encounter is tougher and includes all six Red Mantis assassins and six Ashwing gargoyles. If Cinnabar escaped the PCs and bears a grudge, she should be encountered here as well, a complication that increases the CR to 15.

ASHWING GARGOYLE

Regardless of the number of attacking assassins and gargoyles the group faces, one of the assassins calls out the PCs by name, accusing them of consigning these proud Shoanti to death—she had no wish to kill this many, but the PCs leave her no choice. She offers the Shoanti an out—if they agree to turn over the PCs to her, or better, aid her in slaying the PCs, she'll call off her minions and leave the survivors alone. If the PCs have at least 5 Respect Points, the Shoanti roar in outrage and turn down the offer, but if the PCs have 4 or fewer Respect Points, the Shoanti grimly nod and step aside, allowing the full force of six assassins, the Cinderlander, 24 Ashwing gargoyles, and perhaps Cinnabar to focus their attention on the PCs.

Once the attack begins, the assassins focus on one PC at a time rather than spreading out their attacks. Any gargoyles who are directly aiding them move to attack other PCs, running interference and doing what they can to prevent anyone from coming to the aid of the primary target. Once the PCs kill all of the assassins they face, any surviving gargoyles break off combat and flee, along with all remaining gargoyles in the area.

RED MANTIS ASSASSINS (3 OR 6) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

hp 78 each (see page 144)

ASHWING GARGOYLES (3 OR 6) **CR 5**

XP 1,600 each

hp 52 each (see page 197)

Respect Points: If the PCs defeat the assassins and thus save Flameford during the assault, award them 4 Respect Points.

SAVING KROJUN (CR 12)

During the assault on Flameford, another battle takes place.

Creatures: The Cinderlander—who helped guide the Red Mantis assassins through the Cinderlands, aided in brokering their alliance with the Ashwings, and brought them to Flameford—takes advantage of the mayhem to collect the payment he'd been promised. Namely, he uses the opportunity to try to kill one of the Shoanti's most prominent heroes: Krojun. This battle should initially happen offstage while the PCs take on the Red Mantis, but as soon as they defeat their foes, Krojun and the Cinderlander should still be going at it. If the PCs choose to intervene, either during their own fight or immediately after, the Cinderlander is obviously winning; he's been reduced to 100 hit points (and his animal companion Neverfar is unwounded) but Krojun has been reduced to

30 hit points. The two are surrounded by dead gargoyles and a few dead thundercallers. If the PCs don't intervene, the Cinderlander soon kills Krojun and then leaves the area. If the PCs do step in to aid the Shoanti hero, he nods in thanks but doesn't break his stride in fighting against his enemy. The Cinderlander himself attempts to flee combat if reduced to 20 or fewer hit points, but Krojun fights to the death.

THE CINDERLANDER **CR 12**

XP 19,200

hp 151 (currently 100, see page 198)

NEVERFAR **CR —**

hp 51 (see page 199)

KROJUN EATS-WHAT-HE-KILLS **CR 12**

XP 19,200

hp 181 (currently 30, see page 204)

Respect Points: If the PCs save Krojun's life, he becomes their lifelong friend and ally, declaring them his nalharests. Award the PCs 3 Respect Points.

Story Award: If the PCs save Krojun's life, award them XP as if they had defeated the barbarian in combat.

Aftermath

The Shoanti are hardy folk, and as long as the PCs deal with their enemies swiftly, the people of Flameford come through the assault with relatively few casualties—certainly not enough to dull the sense of triumph. From now until the point when the Sun Shaman returns to Flameford, the campsite hosts a victory party. The PCs are asked to share tales of their adventures with the Shoanti, and Krojun might challenge a PC to a sredna rematch. Try to involve each PC in some sort of celebration during this time. A religious or kindly PC might be called upon to tend to the wounded or to help bury the dead. A brave or fearless PC might be given the opportunity to receive a Sklar-Quah tattoo. A loquacious PC might be asked to recount the tale of the party's encounter with Cindermaw. A charming PC might be asked by a Shoanti admirer to share a bed for the night (but only if the PC agrees to shave that unsightly mop of hair beforehand).

When the Sun Shaman, the chieftain, and other Shoanti return to Flameford the next day, they find the camp in a shambles from the previous night's battle and celebration. Flameford needs time for things to get back to normal, but the Sun Shaman doesn't wait. He invites the PCs into his home to speak to them personally—what he has to reveal to them is detailed in the Chapter Conclusion on page 254.

PART 3

MANTIS AND MAIDEN

Things do not remain static in Korvosa while the PCs are out in the Cinderlands. Queen Ileosa continues to build her power and prepare for her final atrocity—the sacrifice of thousands to enable her lasting youth. A growing rebellion inspired by the PCs' heroism begins in the hidden parts of the city, but it falls to the PCs themselves to strike the first blow, and the agents of the Red Mantis and the Gray Maidens make excellent targets!

As the PCs strive to earn respect among the Shoanti, a developing situation back in Korvosa could use their assistance. Queen Ileosa grows more powerful, and those who would oppose her are being dismantled or neutralized. The Sable Company is officially disbanded, the Hellknights of the Nail have fled the city for the safety of their own Citadel, and the Korvosan Guard, already shattered by riots and plague, has become little more than a mockery of its former glory. After some rough moments, the church of Abadar announces its support of Queen Ileosa, and Archbanker Darb Tuttle officially recognizes her as Korvosa's greatest opportunity for recovery. That her methods are seated in cruelty and tyranny doesn't matter to the church, in light of the obvious effects her rule is having on squelching civil unrest. Of course, this decision plants the seeds of a growing schism in the church, with many of its younger members seeking a way to legally oppose the queen while maintaining their good standing with the church. The church of Asmodeus has fewer qualms supporting the queen. The churches of Shelyn and Sarenrae remain apart from the potential conflict, but they are already overwhelmed helping to organize the city's recovery from the plague and riots. Only the church of Pharasma has the right combination of resources and dissatisfaction to oppose the queen, but for now, the Korvosan Pharasmins play their allegiance to the rebellion close to the chest.

KEPPIRA D'BEAR

True power in Korvosa increasingly lies with the Gray Maidens, ruthless and brutal warrior women who patrol the streets in larger and larger patrols. At the same time, the Red Mantis supports the queen from the shadows. There is no official announcement of the Red Mantis's alliance with the Korvosan monarch, but after several prominent nobles and even a few magistrates and arbiters meet with savage and public assassinations, no formal proclamation is necessary. As a result, Korvosa is firmly in Queen Ileosa's control by the time the PCs are well into this chapter. And this control is what a burgeoning rebellion wishes to oppose.

AN UNEXPECTED OPPORTUNITY

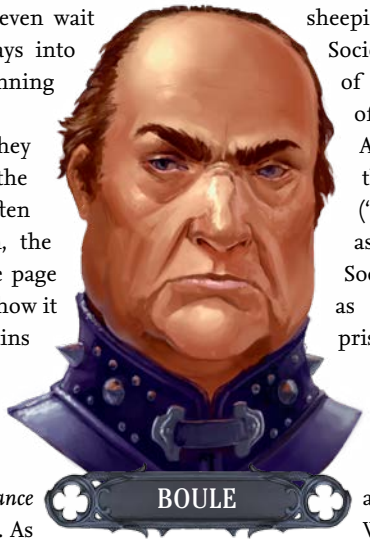
The PCs will likely be unsurprised to learn that Cressida Kroft counts herself among those eager to rebel against Ileosa's rule. The news that the high priestess of the church of Pharasma in Korvosa, Bishop Keppira d'Bear, is eager to take action against Ileosa may, however, come as a shock. You may add other NPCs to the rebellion as you wish, but until Chapter 6 begins, the rebels aren't yet ready to take drastic action.

That said, at some point late in this chapter but before the PCs progress too far into Chapter 5, a unique break falls into the rebellion's metaphorical lap—a chance to strike at the heart of the Gray Maidens and Red Mantis alike and rip away their base of operations. The timing of when this occurs is left to you, but you shouldn't start this part of the campaign until the PCs are at least 12th level. The PCs may be in Korvosa at this point, perhaps having teleported back to recover from their adventures in the Cinderlands, or to replenish supplies, or simply to check up on friends and allies who remained behind in the city; if they aren't, they receive a *sending* spell cast by Keppira, as follows.

"Return to Korvosa! An opportunity to strike at our enemies has presented itself. The Mantis and Maidens will fall! Seek us in the Dead Warrens!"

While teleportation, flight, and other magical solutions can swiftly return the PCs to Korvosa, the mission the rebels have for the heroes can wait until they make their way back to Korvosa on foot from the Cinderlands or Kaer Maga if necessary. You can even wait until the PCs have made a few forays into Castle Scarwall in Chapter 5 before running this part if you wish.

When the PCs return to Korvosa, they should seek out their allies back in the Dead Warrens; here, the rebels often meet in that complex's front room, the ossuary (area **D1** of that complex; see page 60). The room is quite different from how it appeared the first time. It now contains several chairs arranged around a large wooden table on which a map of Korvosa has been placed. The room also bears additional protections: a *mage's private sanctum* and a *forbiddance* spell (keyed to the neutral alignment). As the PCs approach the Dead Warrens, Cressida Kroft meets them and gives them the password to come and go from the ossuary with ease: "Blackjack."


BOULE

Within the ossuary, Bishop d'Bear waits to greet the PCs, her expression somber and her manner grim. Other allied NPCs may be present as well, at your discretion, but one person the PCs have not yet met is there as well—a florid and heavyset man with short brown hair and beady dark eyes. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (local) check identifies this man as Boule, the guildmaster of Korvosa's thieves' guild, the Cerulean Society. If the PCs don't recognize him, Cressida introduces the guildmaster, her words bitter but resigned. "Tell them, Boule," she says. "Tell them why I'm tolerating your presence." Boule smirks, then makes an exaggerated bow to greet the PCs and relates the following.

"Yes, let me get right to the point. We may operate on different sides of the law, but we can agree that Ileosa is not good for Korvosa. I want her gone as much as you. And while I feel that neither I nor my... associates... are the right ones for the task, you, brave adventurers, have proven time and time again that you are precisely what Korvosa needs.

"Without the Gray Maidens to police the streets or the Red Mantis to stalk the alleys, Ileosa's grip on Korvosa will slip. Yet in their fortress at the Longacre Building, the Red Mantis and the Gray Maidens are bolstered against attack, and many who work within the building may yet be innocent, forced to comply with the queen against their will. But as it happens, I know of a back door into the chambers below. I know the secret to Deathhead Vault."

A PC who succeeds at a DC 10 Knowledge (local) check has heard of Deathhead Vault, where the most violent of Korvosa's criminals go to be imprisoned and, in many cases, executed. Boule goes on to explain, (somewhat sheepishly) that for many years, the Cerulean Society has had an arrangement with a group of derros who operated in a secret network of caverns that adjoin the Deathhead Vault. As long as the Cerulean Society provided the derros with stock for their experiments ("vagrants and lowlifes no one missed, I assure you!"), the derros allowed the Cerulean Society to use the upper level of their caverns as a secret route to occasionally smuggle prisoners out of Deathhead Vault. The thieves sometimes freed fellow guild members, and sometimes were hired to rescue a friend or ally from the prison. The derros were masters of stealth and hidden architecture, and maintained this access route for decades. With the Cerulean Society's support, abducted prisoners were often replaced by insane patsies who would then live out the original prisoner's sentence without the Arbiters realizing it.

Boule makes no excuses for the practice, but if the PCs demand it, he does vow to cease if things return to normal—after all, he's giving up the guild's secrets, so the prisoner-smuggling route is no longer of use to him anyway. He has had no contact from the derros in months, since some weeks before the Longacre Building officially shifted over to Gray Maiden control. He's done some investigation on his own and is convinced that the Gray Maidens and their allies, the Red Mantis, have discovered the hidden derro caverns and are using them in some manner. He can confirm that the secret door leading to the derro warren from the abandoned sewers still operates, and while he cannot vouch for what new perils may wait within, assaulting the Longacre Building from this approach provides a direct shot into the prison's heart. Boule also provides the PCs with a special key that can unlock several (but not all) of the doors in Deathhead Vault.

Although she loathes Boule, Cressida Kroft agrees with this plan. If someone like the PCs could stage a successful raid on Deathhead Vault, the Gray Maidens and the Red Mantis could be thrown into disarray. At the very least, rescuing certain prisoners from the Vault would build support for the rebels among Korvosa's citizenry. One prisoner in particular is of note—Kroft has secured reliable intelligence that the ex-commander of the Sable Company, Marcus Endrin, is held within. If he could be rescued, he could become a significant supporter of the rebellion. The recovery of any important documents

held by the Gray Maidens could also help tremendously, as would determining why Arbiter Zenobia Zenderholm has thrown in with the queen (for example, if she's been magically compelled to serve, rescuing her from the Gray Maidens would also be a coup). Finally, defeating or capturing leaders among the Red Mantis or Gray Maidens would deal the opposition a significant blow. Kroft is hesitant to use her own resources, noting that this type of mission is precisely what the PCs have been working toward over the past several months. The queen already knows the PCs oppose her, and Kroft notes grimly that if the PCs are spotted on the mission, that won't undermine other plans at furthering rebellion in the city. As she makes clear, the PCs are her greatest weapon, and if they can't destabilize the Gray Maidens and Red Mantis, none of it will matter anyway.

To the matter of defeating Gray Maiden leadership, Boule has one final gift to offer the PCs. He's prepared a set of fake "coded documents" and can arrange for them to fall into the hands of the Gray Maidens. He knows that the group's second-in-command, Kordaitra, fancies herself a codebreaker, and the acquisition of what she suspects are documents containing information about a rebellion would be too much for her to resist. When the PCs are ready to begin their mission, Boule sets these falsified documents loose, and Kordaitra will certainly take the bait, ensconcing herself in her quarters below the Longacre Building for days and ensuring that when the PCs strike, she'll be present for the PCs to capture or defeat.

Finally, at this point, the PCs may have recovered sensitive documents from area **D16** of Arkona Palace (see page 172) in the previous chapter—documents that contain details on the Cerulean Society. If the PCs make it clear to Boule that they've retrieved these, he grows pale, then offers a reward for them. In return for the PCs handing the documents over, he offers each PC a bounty of 600 pp. If a PC succeeds at a DC 25 Diplomacy check, Boule agrees to increase this per-person payment to 900 pp. Kroft doesn't approve of returning the papers to Boule (unless the PCs make a copy of the information first, of course), and instead of a reward would like the PCs to extract promises of favors from Boule and the Cerulean Society, to be paid to the Korvosan Guard in the future. The exact details of these negotiations are left to your group. Boule is somewhat desperate, though, and should be willing to agree to almost anything so long as he remains in power and his guild isn't unduly penalized. Of course, if the PCs do keep copies of the information and Boule finds out later, he is incensed and may well take retributive actions.

In any event, Kroft is eager for the PCs to begin this mission, for the sooner they can strike, the sooner the Gray Maidens' hold over Korvosa will be shaken.

Story Award: If the PCs broker a deal of favors or other nebulous, non-monetary rewards for the return of the Cerulean Society documents, grant them 12,800 XP.

E DEATHHEAD VAULT

The closest entrance to the abandoned sewers that connect to Deathhead Vault is located in an alley near Arbiter Way and Second Street. The actual navigation of the tunnels to area **E1** should take little time and pose little danger if the PCs follow Boule's directions.

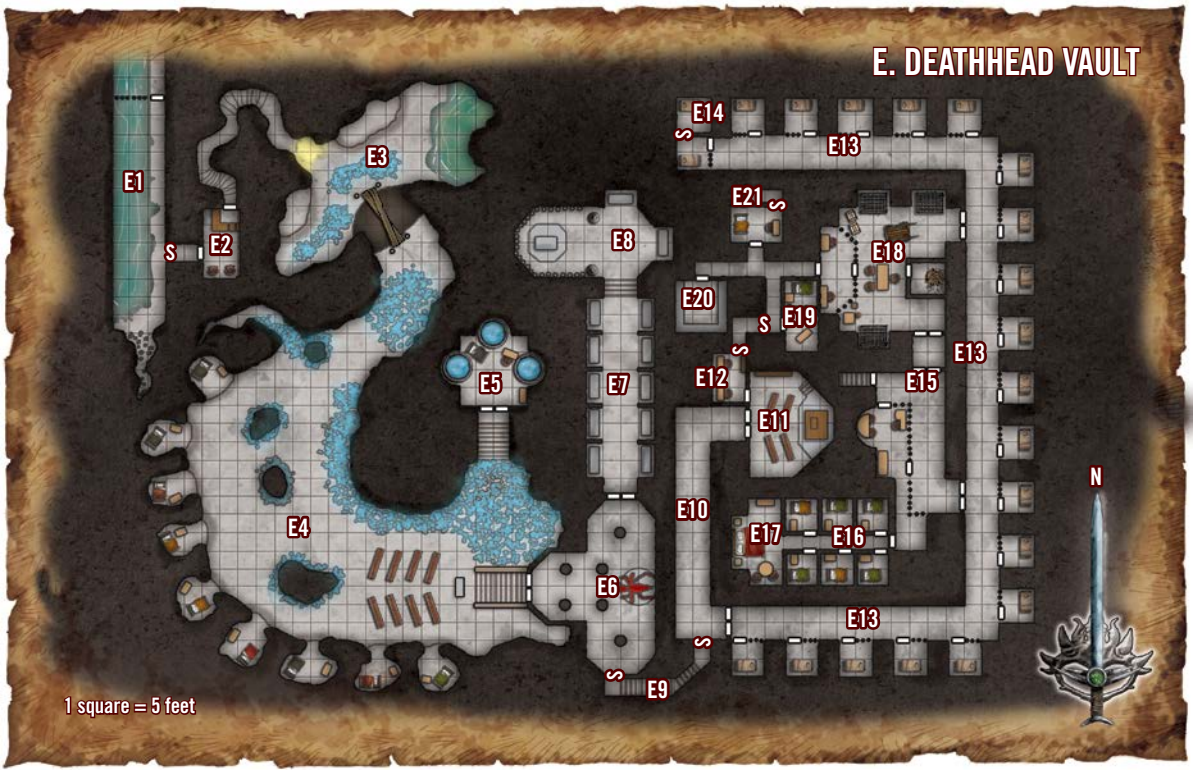
The doors in the western half of the complex (areas **E1–E9**) are made of stone (hardness 8, hp 60, break DC 28) but cannot be locked unless otherwise noted. The doors in the main area of Deathhead Vault (areas **E10–E21**) are made of wood and reinforced with iron unless otherwise specified (hardness 5, hp 20, break DC 25, Disable Device DC 40); these doors are kept locked unless otherwise noted. Keys carried by certain NPCs (as mentioned in the text) are capable of unlocking these; many of the Gray Maiden guards must rely upon their commanders to come and go throughout most of the complex.

E1 "Abandoned" Sewer Entrance (CR 12)

A ten-foot-wide trough of murky water fills two-thirds of this wide, brick-lined tunnel. A slimy five-foot-wide walkway runs along the east side of the waterway. A wall of rusty iron bars with an equally rusty gate atop the walkway blocks passage further into the tunnel. Further to the south, the tunnel dead-ends at an ancient collapse.

The rusted iron bars and gate may look old and decrepit, but a PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Perception check confirms that the rust is cunningly applied paint and that the bars and gate are actually well maintained. The gate is locked; Boule's key unlocks it, or it can be forced open (hardness 10, hp 60, break DC 28, Disable Device DC 40). The secret door to area **E2** can be found with a successful DC 40 Perception check, but anyone following Boule's advice on locating the door gains a +20 circumstance bonus on the check.

Creature: While Boule's information and key can help the PCs navigate this area with ease, the guildmaster doesn't know about the creature that dwells here now. This guardian is an albino catoblepas, shipped at great expense from Mediogalti Island. One of Cinnabar's favorite monstrous pets, the catoblepas is fed regularly by the Red Mantis assassins. It recognizes all those who wear the traditional red and black armor as friends but is hardly tame. It roars and bleats at all those who pass through the gate, Red Mantis or not, but the creature attacks any intruders who aren't accompanied by those wearing Red Mantis armor.



CATOBLEPAS **CR 12**

XP 19,200

hp 161 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 52)

Treasure: The catoblepas wears a filth-encrusted collar that, if cleaned up, is revealed to be a waterproof strip of leather set with mithral spikes and bearing a nameplate on which the creature's name, "Snagglebreath," has been engraved. The collar is worth 1,000 gp for its mithral content alone.

E2 Waiting Room (CR 8)

The air in this room smells strongly of frankincense and is hazy with smoke from several incense burners mounted on the walls, yet a slight whiff of the stench from the sewers to the west nonetheless manages to linger faintly in the background. A pair of rickety chairs with moldy cushions sit to the south, while to the north stands a strange incongruity—a wooden bar, complete with shelves filled with bottles and tankards on the walls. A wooden door is set into the northeast corner of the room, amid all the shelves behind the bar.

In the days before the Gray Maidens, the Cerulean Society used this room as a staging area for smuggling prisoners out of Deathhead Vault. The room was set up like a tavern bar, and sponsors could actually purchase drinks to pass the time while they waited for their friends or allies to be rescued.

The door to the north is kept locked (Mogmora carries a key and the key Boule provided to the PCs unlocks it as well—otherwise a PC who succeeds at a DC 40 Disable Device check unlocks it).

Creature: With the derros gone and the Cerulean Society in hiding, this room now serves the Red Mantis as a guard post against intruders. A single advanced greater barghest named Mogmora stands vigil here in goblin form, perched patiently on the bar with its little bandy legs hanging over the edge. Pressed into service by the Red Mantis priestess Koriantu (via *planar ally*), Mogmora hasn't had many chances to fight the boredom of his post, and he greets the arrival of the PCs with excitement. Trusting his innocuous appearance as a goblin to prevent an immediate attack, he hops up onto the bar and holds wide his arms as the PCs step into the room, welcoming them to his tavern, the "Sewer Brewer." He tells the PCs that, as his lucky first-ever customers, drinks are on the house. PCs foolish enough to take the drinks the barghest lines up for them swiftly learn that they've been served cheap ale poisoned with lich dust (*Core Rulebook* 560). Wise PCs instead confront the strange goblin, who does what he can to delay a fight or an attempt to pass through the northern door. He employs irreverent banter and backhanded compliments, like "You smell pretty good—

for a dwarf," or "You must be lucky to find clothes that nice that actually fit you!" All the time, he's observing the PCs, taking in their armaments and numbers and descriptions; after 1d4 rounds of chatter (or as soon as he has attacked or the PCs try to go through the northern door), he yelps in apparent fright and flees via *dimension door* to area **E6** to report the intruders to Koriantu.

MOGMORA **CR 8**

XP 4,800

Male advanced greater barghest (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 27)

hp 103

Treasure: Mogmora keeps several doses of ale poisoned with lich dust behind the counter (a number of doses equal to the number of PCs + 4). The other bottles of alcohol are for display only and contain sewer water decorated with various coloring agents.

E3 Chokepoint (CR 11)

The entrance to this cavern from the northwest tunnel is blocked by a 5-foot-thick wall of pale yellow glowing fog—see Trap below.

Trap: The wall of yellow fog in the northwest entrance blocks sight entirely, but can be passed through with ease. Doing so subjects the person passing through the wall to a *greater dispel magic* effect that attempts to dispel all ongoing spell effects (this *greater dispel magic* effect does not affect magic items, but can dispel effects created by magic items). Whenever the wall dispels magic, it makes a loud humming sound and flashes brightly, alerting the room's occupants. Successfully removing the trap via either Disable Device or *dispel magic* (this only negates the trap for 1d4 rounds, though) causes the softly glowing wall to vanish, which also alerts the room's occupants.

DISPELLING MIST **CR 8**

XP 4,800

Type magic; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 30

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** automatic

Effect spell effect (*greater dispel magic*, CL 12th; targets all active spell effects that pass through)

Once the PCs navigate the yellow fog, proceed with the rest of the room's encounter and description as normal.

The tunnel opens into a wide cavern with a high vaulted ceiling that arches up to a height of thirty feet. Two ten-foot-high ledges look out over the wall from the northwest wall, while to the east the cavern dips down into a pool of dark water. Swaths of softly glowing blue fungus fill the cave with light; the fungus grows in lumps that bear an eerie resemblance to brains. To the southeast, a fifteen-foot-wide tunnel is bisected by a deep pit. A pair of three-foot-wide planks forms a treacherous-looking bridge over the pit.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Climb check can clamber up either ledge on the northwest wall or the walls of the pit to the southeast. The pool of water to the east is drinkable but has a bitter aftertaste; it served as the primary source of water for the derros before and the Red Mantis assassins now. The pit to the southeast is 60 feet deep and is strewn with sharp rocks; a fall into this pit deals 8d6 points of damage (the additional damage is from the sharp rocks below). The planks across the pit are, in fact, a *permanent image* (DC 17, CL 11th), as anyone who attempts to cross them quickly learns; the assassins move across the pit as needed by jumping or climbing.

The swaths of glowing fungi are patches of cytillesh, also known as brain mold, a substance prized by the derros who previously inhabited the area. Long-term exposure to the mold can cause brain damage (1d4 points of Wisdom damage after being within 20 feet of a patch of cytillesh for 24 hours; Will DC 15 negates). The Red Mantis assassins understand the dangers of the mold and take care to avoid being exposed to the unhealthy illumination for no more than 20 hours at a time if possible.

Creatures: A single Red Mantis assassin stands guard in this room, hidden against the wall on the far side of the pit. Once she spots intruders, she watches silently as they navigate the cave's curiosities or deal with its guardians for 2 rounds before she flees south to area **E4** to report.

The primary guardians of the chamber are a pair of hideous undead creatures—mananangals—that perch on the cavern's two ledges. These two legless flying undead creatures were created in the area of a *desecrate* effect by their mistress Zenobia, and remain loyal to her. If the PCs enter the caves during the day, both mananangals appear as normal human women; at night, their lower torsos reside in area **E7** and they appear as legless winged monsters. In life, these unfortunates were high-ranking officers among the Sable Company—Avanah Banzul (the company's second-in-command) and Ulweth Wevenner (the company's lead trainer of hippogriffs). Both were held prisoner in Deathhead Vauls for a few days before they were handed over to Zenobia and transformed into undead minions. With a successful DC 20 Knowledge (local) check, a PC can recognize them for who they were in life. Both women remember their lives as humans but have been entirely corrupted by their transformations.

If the PCs enter the room during the night, the two mananangals simply attack, using *deep slumber* and *fear* from their vantage points above to scatter the PCs before they swoop down to claw and bite. If the PCs visit the cavern

during the day, the two creatures are in human shape, and they call out to the PCs to attempt to trick them, claiming to have recently escaped torment from derros who dwell in the caves beyond. Their hope is to get the PCs to split their group, with one or two of them climbing up to a ledge to help them climb back down before attacking (even in their human guise, manananggals retain their bite and claw attacks).

MANANANGGALS (2) **CR 7**

XP 3,200 each

hp 105 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 190)

RED MANTIS ASSASSIN **CR 8**

XP 4,800

hp 78 (see page 144)

E4 Temple of Achaekek (CR 11)

The arched ceiling of this vast, crescent-shaped, cathedral-like cavern rises to a height of nearly forty feet, supported by four natural stone columns. These columns are caked with glowing blue swaths of brain-shaped fungi, while a larger section of the stuff grows along the curved wall to the north and east. A total of nine dark openings near the ceiling to the south and west can be reached only by climbing or flight. To the southeast, eight stone benches face a single pulpit that stands before a flight of stairs. The stairs lead up to a worked stone facade that bears a looming carving of an immense mantis, its arms arrayed downward like an archway over a set of double doors.

The fungus patches are cytillesh (see area **E3**). A tunnel to the north (at area **E4a**) once wound down to a deeper level of derro warrens that in turn connected to Nar-Voth in the Darklands, but the Gray Maidens collapsed this tunnel soon after they wiped out the derros. What lies beyond the collapse today is beyond the scope of this chapter, but if you allow the PCs to clear the rubble you can fill it with dangerous Darklands adventures of your own design. A PC who succeeds at a DC 28 Knowledge (arcana) check confirms that the carvings on the facade to area **E6** were created recently via *stone shape*, while a PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the subject as Achaekek, god of the Red Mantis assassins.

Creatures: The bulk of the Red Mantis assassins active in Korvosa spend a few nights each week stationed here, in the Temple of Achaekek. The presence of cytillesh ensures that the assassins don't spend more than 20 hours at a time here, so they usually using the barracks along the southern walls to rest in a safe place while recovering from a mission. At this time, the vast majority of the assassins are spread throughout the city or on assignment in pursuit of the PCs in the Cinderlands, and only three of these assassins (one of which is stationed at area **E3**) are present (in addition to their leaders). The two stationed here are resting in two of the chambers to the south unless the alarm has been raised, in which case the assassins hide amid the benches to the south, ready to make sneak attacks on intruders.

An additional guardian dwells here as well: a horse-sized insectile monstrosity called a cytillipede. The Gray Maidens allowed the intelligent beast to live after it begged for mercy upon seeing the slaughter of its derro allies, and today counts the Red Mantis assassins as its new family. The centipede-like monster lives amid the cytillesh in the eastern part of the cave, and clatters out to attack any intruders. It uses its cytillesh flash as soon as it can affect as many foes as possible, at which point the Red Mantis assassins move in to sneak attack stunned victims.

ADVANCED CYTILLIPEDE **CR 7**

XP 3,200

hp 92 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 288, 65)

RED MANTIS ASSASSINS (2) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

hp 78 each (see page 144)

Development: If the alarm is raised, the PCs face more than a pair of assassins and a cytillipede here. In addition to any guardians from areas **E2** or **E3** who fled here, they must contend with the leader of the Red Mantis assassins in Korvosa (Cinnabar; see area **E5**) and the local high priestess of Achaekek (Koriantu; see area **E6**).

E5 Cinnabar's Chambers (CR 12)

Three large stone vats sit in alcoves in this room. Each is big enough to hold a human, but apart from a strange blue residue caking the insides of each, they are empty. A cot and a writing desk sit amid the vats—awkward additions of comfort in what once seems to have been a strange laboratory.

Creature: This room was once where the derros cultivated various toxins derived from cytillesh, but the Gray Maidens disposed of the noxious materials. Today, the room serves as barracks for the leader of the Red Mantis assassins currently active in Korvosa—a woman named Cinnabar.

The sole child of the notorious Red Mantis cultist Carmine the Lustful Feaster, Cinnabar was an egregious disappointment to the family tradition, as her meek manner left her ill-suited to be a killer. Carmine, however, had Cinnabar "fixed" at the age of eight by placing a *geas* upon her, compelling the young girl to kill at least one living

creature each week without assistance or suffer wracking pain and potential death. Out of necessity, Cinnabar swiftly grew to become a dispassionate and self-reliant killer. As a result, she took to her Red Mantis training with a level of dedication previously unseen in any other initiate. She finally came of age when her mother perished on a job, leaving Cinnabar alone in the world. With the death of her mother came an unforeseen development. Hatred of her mother had been all Cinnabar's main driving force, and with her mother dead and the regular *geas* now removed, little remained but loyalty to the Red Mantis. Cinnabar's chilling lack of passion makes her a truly effective killer, yet also robs her of the drive to climb the ladder of the Red Mantis society. She has stagnated, in effect, in the role of commander, something her superiors seek to cure her of by giving her an important task that will hopefully restore her inner fire and make her fit for true leadership.

Although Cinnabar has had the inconvenience of the *geas* removed, she continues to slay with her trademark dispassion and frequency. Most within the lower-echelon of the Red Mantis are convinced that Cinnabar's *geas* remains in effect and that to displease her is to become her weekly sustenance. This false belief has enabled Cinnabar to command a loyalty based on fear unrivaled by her Red Mantis peers. While she conceals her face with the traditional mantis mask when in battle, Cinnabar is in fact quite beautiful, with strawberry-colored hair, though her original kind countenance has hardened into one of permanent cold severity.

CINNABAR **CR 12**

XP 19,200

Female human ranger 2/rogue 4/Red Mantis assassin 7 (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide* 282)

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** Perception +19

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 16, flat-footed 20 (+8 armor, +1 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 shield)

hp 133 (13 HD; 11d8+2d10+69)

Fort +10, **Ref** +16, **Will** +4

Defensive Abilities evasion, red shroud, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft.

Melee *+1 sawtooth sabre* +15/+10 (1d8+11/17–20), *+1 sawtooth sabre* +15/+10 (1d8+11/17–20)

Special Attacks combat style (two-weapon combat), favored enemy (humans +2), prayer attack (DC 17), sneak attack +5d6

Red Mantis Assassin Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +9)

1/day—summon mantis

Red Mantis Assassin Spells Known (CL 7th; concentration +9)

3rd (1/day)—*fly*, *haste*

2nd (4/day)—*bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *cat's grace*, *summon swarm*

1st (5/day)—*disguise self*, *expeditious retreat*, *jump*, *true strike*, *vanish*[APG]

TACTICS

Before Combat Cinnabar casts *fly*, *bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, and *cat's grace* on herself before combat.

During Combat If she is with allies, Cinnabar hangs back to summon 1d3 fiendish giant mantises on the first round of combat, then casts *haste* on the second round before moving in to join the fight in melee, staying mobile as needed to make sneak attacks. If she is alone, she instead fights defensively and attacks via melee on the first round. She uses Arcane Strike to enhance her attacks.

Morale Cinnabar is a relentless leader and loyal to the Red Mantis, yet her personality has begun to crack. If she is reduced to 10 or fewer hit points, her next action in combat is to drop her weapons and fall to her knees and beg for a quick death. If death is not granted in 1 round, she picks her weapons back up (hoping to provoke attacks of opportunity that result in her demise) and then fights to the death with a furious wrath, gaining a +4 morale bonus on attack rolls and weapon damage rolls for the next 10 rounds. If she is granted mercy and given the chance to surrender instead of death, the conditioning in her mind reels and she instead becomes speechless for 1d6 rounds, during which she takes no offensive actions unless she's attacked (in which case she is filled with a wrath as detailed above). If none attack her in those 1d6 rounds, Cinnabar's original, more kind-hearted personality has a chance to return. A full redemption should take many weeks or even months, and while she doesn't aid the PCs in combat (her distaste for bloodshed having returned), she can provide them with information about the repercussions the PCs may face for driving off the Red Mantis. This includes the information in her recent letter from the Crimson Citadel, along with warnings of Mistress Kayltanya, as well as information about the defenders within Deathhead Vault. In time, she'll be targeted for assassination by the Red Mantis, but if the PCs can keep her alive, Cinnabar can become a potent ally in the climax of Curse of the Crimson Throne (at your discretion).

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 21, **Con** 18, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 31

Feats Alertness, Arcane Strike, Dodge, Double Slice, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (sawtooth sabre), Greater Weapon Focus (sawtooth sabre), Greater Weapon Specialization (sawtooth sabre), Improved Critical (sawtooth sabre), Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Toughness, Two-Weapon

Cinnabar–

Agent Koriantu's reports of your progress in Korvosa paints a very different picture than that you've presented previously to the Crimson Citadel, and we are displeased you have downplayed the facts. In particular, we find the disruptions inflicted on the operation by the adventurers you claimed would be "simple matters to resolve" to be particularly worrisome. If the agents under your command can defeat these adventurers in the Cinderlands as you promise, well and good, but should they continue to act as flies in the ointment, I shall be obliged to relieve you of duty and lead the operation myself. The Blood Mistress is already unhappy with the, shall we say, sloppiness your agents have exhibited to date, and if I am forced to step in to take command of a continually faltering operation, one would hope for your sake that you have not survived this latest mishandling of resources. Any pains inflicted upon you by your simple little adventurers would feel as a lover's tender caress compared to my ministrations.

Trusting you will do what is needed, and may you walk in blood.

–K

HANDOUT #4–2

Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (sawtooth sabre), Weapon Specialization (sawtooth sabre)

Skills Acrobatics +19, Bluff +18, Disguise +18, Fly +12, Intimidate +18, Perception +19, Sense Motive +12, Stealth +19, Survival +15

Languages Common

SQ mantis form, resurrection sense, rogue talents (combat trick, weapon training), track +1, trapfinding +2, wild empathy +4

Combat Gear *mask of the mantis* (see page 434), *potions of cure moderate wounds* (2); **Other Gear** *+2 mithral chainmail, +1 sawtooth sabre*[UE], *+1 sawtooth sabre*[UE], *boots of striding and springing, ring of protection +1*, 8 pp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Mantis Form (Su) Once per day, Cinnabar can transform into a blood-red giant praying mantis as a standard action, as if using *vermin shape II*[UM] (CL 10th). In addition to the normal adjustments to Strength, Dexterity, and natural armor provided by this spell effect, she gains the giant mantis's darkvision (with a range of 60 feet), grab, lunge, mandibles, and sudden strike extraordinary abilities, but not its immunity to mind-affecting effects or its racial modifiers on Perception and Stealth checks. If she wields a magical sawtooth sabre in her hand when she transforms, the magical enhancements for that weapon apply to her corresponding claw attack—if she wields two of them, then the weapons each apply to a different claw attack.

Prayer Attack (Su) Resisting Cinnabar's prayer attack requires a successful DC 17 Will save. See page 145 for more details on this signature assassination style.

Red Shroud (Su) Cinnabar's red shroud persists for 7 rounds when she activates it. She can use this ability four times per day. See page 145 for more details.

Resurrection Sense (Su) Cinnabar senses if a creature she has slain within the last year has been restored to life, as long as she and the creature are both on the same plane.

Summon Mantis (Sp) Once per day, Cinnabar can summon an advanced fiendish giant mantis, 1d3 fiendish giant mantises, or 1d4+1 giant mantises, as if using *summon monster V*. She can mentally direct the actions of these summoned vermin as a free action. All mantises summoned by this spell-like ability are bloodred and gain no racial bonuses on Stealth checks in forests.

Treasure: An investigation of the materials on the writing desk reveals the majority of the notes to be concerned with training exercises, prayers to Achaekek, and detailed illustrations of anatomy and the best methods of delivering fatal coups de grace or sneak attacks. There is nothing here to directly link the Red Mantis presence in

Korvosa to Queen Ileosa—but one document comes close. With a successful DC 25 Perception check, a PC searching the desk can find what appears to be a piece of crimson parchment tucked away, out of sight between two desk drawers. While this sheet seems to have nothing more than additional illustrations of attack methods, it bears a dim magic aura; in truth, it's a short message from Cinnabar's commander, Kayltanya, who disguised the letter with a *secret page* spell (CL 10th). Speaking the word "Kayltanya" reveals the page's actual contents. The contents of this letter are presented on page 241 as Handout #4–2.

E6 Inner Sanctum of the Mantis (CR 12)

Six stone pillars support the roof of this T-shaped chamber. The walls are decorated with incredibly detailed paintings of immense mantis-like monsters destroying towns with various forms of architecture. Strangely, the scenes constantly evolve, playing out an eternal scene of slaughter. The most impressive feature in the chamber is a towering stone statue of a four-armed mantis to the west.

This entire room's contents are the product of a *screen* spell placed by the room's inhabitant. The animated paintings on the walls and the statue of Achaekek are illusions, and only the pillars in the room are real. The illusory statue of the mantis hides a cot and a small altar, atop which sits a bowl of water used by the room's occupant for *scrying*. The illusion also obscures the door in the north wall, although anyone who touches along the wall in the right spot can feel the door. With the *screen* removed, the original decor of the room is revealed—a plain stone chamber once used for meetings between the derros and thieves of the Cerulean Society, where prisoner exchanges and payments were carried out.

The secret door in the south wall can be found with a successful DC 40 Perception check. If the PCs use the information given them by Boule, they gain a +20 circumstance bonus on this check, but as long as a searcher is fooled by the *screen* spell, she also takes a –20 penalty on the check.

Creature: This room's occupant is a relatively recent arrival named Koriantu, a debased aasimar whose loyalty to the Red Mantis has been complete and utter since her conversion from the worship of Iomedae 12 years ago, when she was confronted by hypocrisy and treachery among corrupt priests while serving in the crusade in the Worldwound. She now believes that chaos is the greatest danger facing civilization, and that those who hesitate to slaughter agents of chaos without mercy are the enemy's greatest ally. She fled the crusades after she grew disillusioned with "a contagion of mercy" among her fellow Iomedaeans, and found the culture on Mediogalti Isle to be the perfect combination of merciless order and welcome distance from Mendev.

In the following 12 years, Koriantu has served the Red Mantis well as a sort of internal observer. Less interested in the mechanics of religion or the workings of magic, Koriantu is exceptionally talented at ferreting out dissenters and free thinkers. She has long campaigned against Cinnabar in particular, seeing in her great potential for a relapse into kindness and betrayal of the church, but the other woman's political ties to powerful families has largely kept her shielded. When rumors rose that Cinnabar's mission in Korvosa was faltering, Koriantu swiftly volunteered to travel to the city to observe and report.

Cinnabar knows Koriantu's reputation, and the aasimar's arrival in the region has had the opposite effect the church had hoped, resulting in a potential relapse (see the Morale entry in Cinnabar's stat block). Koriantu hopes to give Cinnabar the opportunity to fail so she can execute what she's come to see as a weak link in the organization. Koriantu has little interest in the assassins' specific mission in Korvosa and even less interest in the PCs. She has believed from the start that working for Queen Ileosa would only damage the Red Mantis's reputation in the long run—an opinion she has kept mostly to herself.

KORIANTU **CR 12**

XP 19,200

Female azata-blooded aasimar (musetouched) cleric of Achaekek 13 (*Pathfinder Player Companion: Blood of Angels* 22, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 7)

LE Medium outsider (native)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 19, flat-footed 28 (+6 armor, +3 *defending sabre*, +4 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 natural, +4 shield)

hp 140 (13d8+78)

Fort +15, **Ref** +9, **Will** +17

Resist acid 5, cold 5, electricity 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.; *air walk*

Melee *defending spell-storing sawtooth sabre* +9/+4 (1d8/19–20)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 5/day (DC 18, 7d6)

Aasimar Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th; concentration +15)

1/day—*glitterdust* (DC 14)

Cleric Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th; concentration +19)

At will—master's illusion (13 rounds/day)

9/day—battle rage (+6), copycat (13 rounds)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 13th; concentration +19)

7th—*blasphemy* (DC 23), *screen*[D] (DC 23)

6th—*blade barrier*[D] (DC 22), quickened *cure moderate wounds*, *heal*, *word of recall*

5th—quickened *divine favor*, extended *greater magic weapon*, quickened *sanctuary*, *scrying*, *wall of thorns*[D]
4th—*air walk*, *confusion*[D] (DC 20), *cure critical wounds*, *discern lies* (DC 20), extended *magic vestment* (2)
3rd—*cure serious wounds* (3), *dispel magic*, *speak with dead* (DC 19), *vampiric touch*[D]
2nd—*cure moderate wounds* (2), *death knell* (DC 18), *invisibility*[D], *shield other*, *silence* (DC 18), *spiritual weapon*
1st—*cure light wounds* (4), *disguise self*[D], *sanctuary* (DC 17), *shield of faith*
0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 16), *detect magic*, *read magic*, *stabilize*
D domain spell; **Domains** Trickery, War (Blood[APG] subdomain)

TACTICS

Before Combat Koriantu casts *greater magic weapon* on her sabre and *magic vestment* twice (on her armor and buckler); just before combat begins she casts *air walk* and *shield of faith*.

During Combat Koriantu hangs back in combat, casting quickened *sanctuary* on the first round of combat and using her spells to control the battlefield or to harry foes while minions fight for her. She devotes her +3 bonus from her *defending sabre* to her Armor Class. She moves in quickly to use healing magic as needed. *Air walk* helps her to stay away from ground-based melee foes. Once she decides to fight, she abandons defensive casting to cast *blasphemy* and quickened *divine favor*, then *blade barrier* the next round, following with additional damaging spells as needed. If she sees that Cinnabar has succumbed to her previous weak personality, she focuses her actions on attempts to kill her before the fallen assassin can reveal too much to the enemy.

Morale If she is reduced to 40 hit points or fewer, suffers a debilitating condition, or is outnumbered, Koriantu casts *word of recall* to return to the Crimson Citadel on distant Mediogalti Island. If she escapes in this way, she can be encountered again at Mistress Kayltanya's side in Chapter 6. If she fails to escape via *word of recall*, she uses *invisibility* to hide her flight and abandons the complex. If she can escape to safety on foot, she uses *word of recall* as soon as she prepares spells the next day.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 15, **Con** 18, **Int** 8, **Wis** 22, **Cha** 14
Base Atk +9; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 26
Feats Command Undead, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell, Quicken Spell, Selective Channeling, Toughness
Skills Diplomacy +4, Knowledge (religion) +5, Sense Motive +19
Languages Celestial, Common
SQ wounding blade
Gear mwk studded leather, mwk buckler, *+1 defending spell-storing sawtooth sabre*[ISWG] (currently contains *hold person*), *amulet of natural armor +1*, *belt of mighty constitution +4*, *cloak of resistance +3*, *headband of inspired wisdom +4*, 395 gp

E7 Empty Burial Vaults

Alcoves along the east and west walls of this hallway contain ancient stone sarcophagi.

An examination of these stone coffins, along with a successful DC 25 Knowledge (history) check, reveals that they are ancient Shoanti crypts. The contents of the sarcophagi were looted long ago by the derros (they used

KORIANTU

the sarcophagi to keep abducted victims caged now and then). Nothing of value remains within.

E8 Zenobia's Crypt (CR 12)

The walls of this large room bear ancient carvings of wild animals in a scene set within a rugged, barren landscape. Two sarcophagi, their lids pushed aside, sit in alcoves to the north and east, while to the west is a third sarcophagus upon a raised dais surrounded by several three-foot-tall vats. The rank smell of vinegar fills the air.

This chamber was originally the resting place of a great Shoanti shaman (as a PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Knowledge [history] check confirms, identifying the wall carvings as scenes from the Cinderlands meant to soothe the resting spirits within this room); later it was used by the derros as a necromantic workshop. It has recently been given over to one of the Gray Maidens' most tragic recruits: arbiter Zenobia Zenderholm. Now that she exists as a penanggalen, she must soak her entrails in vinegar in order to fit back into her body—the vats in this room contain gallons of the stuff.

If the PCs arrive after dark, Zenobia's body lies in state in the sarcophagus, sans head and entrails. Likewise, the northern two sarcophagi now serve as resting places for Zenobia's two mananangggals (see area **E3**); during the day the coffins are empty, but at night, the discarded lower torsos of the two lie in state here. With a successful DC 27 Knowledge (religion) check, a character correctly identifies these strange remains for what they are, and realizes that if they're destroyed, the mananangggals themselves can be destroyed if they still live. Destroying Zenobia's body does not destroy her, but does keep her from masquerading as a living person in the future.

Creature: Zenobia isn't encountered here since she's working on new recruits in area **E18** when the PCs arrive. Yet she does not leave this area unguarded. So pleased was Urgathoa with the woman's change of heart and abandonment of her former faith, the deity granted Zenobia a powerful guardian—an advanced meladaemon named Vyloth. Zenobia keeps the meladaemon here with commands to keep her body safe, along with the remains of her two minions, but Vyloth has grown frustrated with the task, seeing it as below his station and as a mockery of his potential. He would rather serve Urgathoa and her faithful by spreading famine and disease than by spending all his time here in this dark room guarding bodies and breathing vinegar fumes.

Vyloth confronts intruders with a snarl but does not immediately attack. Bored, the daemon instead demands to know the PCs' business, hoping for a bit of entertainment before the inevitable fight. If the PCs don't attack at once, he proposes a trade. In return for answering his questions, he'll answer questions the PCs pose. Vyloth wants to know about the progression of chaos in the city above, particularly how it relates to the spread of disease and famine, but also asks questions about the PCs' purpose here and their goals. He eagerly answers any questions the PCs have of him, but does so with outright lies designed to misdirect the PCs or to instill despair.

Once the PCs grow tired of the game (or once they try to meddle with the bodies or attack), Vyloth steps forward to get the PCs into the area of his consumptive aura (if they weren't there already) and begins the fight with *horrid wilting* and then a quickened *magic missile* cast at the most damaged-looking PC. He focuses his following attacks on anyone who attempts to harm Zenobia's body, but if the body is destroyed, he teleports to her side in area **E18** to report the event to her. In this case, the PCs can encounter him again at Zenobia's side. The meladaemon otherwise fights to the death.

VYLOTH **CR 12**

XP 19,200

Advanced meladaemon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 292, 69)

hp 175

E9 Secret Stairwell

This stairwell was crafted many years ago by the Cerulean Society, completing its construction soon after it forged an alliance with the derros; the society managed to keep it secret from the arbiters of the Longacre Building. The thieves accomplished this in part because no one considered the possibility of someone digging a hidden tunnel into the prison (the sheer audacity of such an act helped to camouflage it), but the feat was also a testament to the skill of the talented saboteurs who built the tunnel. The secret doors at either end can be found with a successful DC 40 Perception check, but again, with Boule's advice, attempts to find either gain a +20 circumstance bonus.

E10 The Final Walk

The walls of this ten-foot-wide hallway have been set with polished ivory tiles, each of which bears a softly glowing circle of light.

Known as the "Final Walk" to prisoners, this hallway connects the Deathhead Vault's prison block to its infamous execution chamber. A magical effect woven into the walls of the Final Walk once infused the area with a *calm emotions* effect, but this trap has been disarmed and now does little more than simply provide dim illumination.

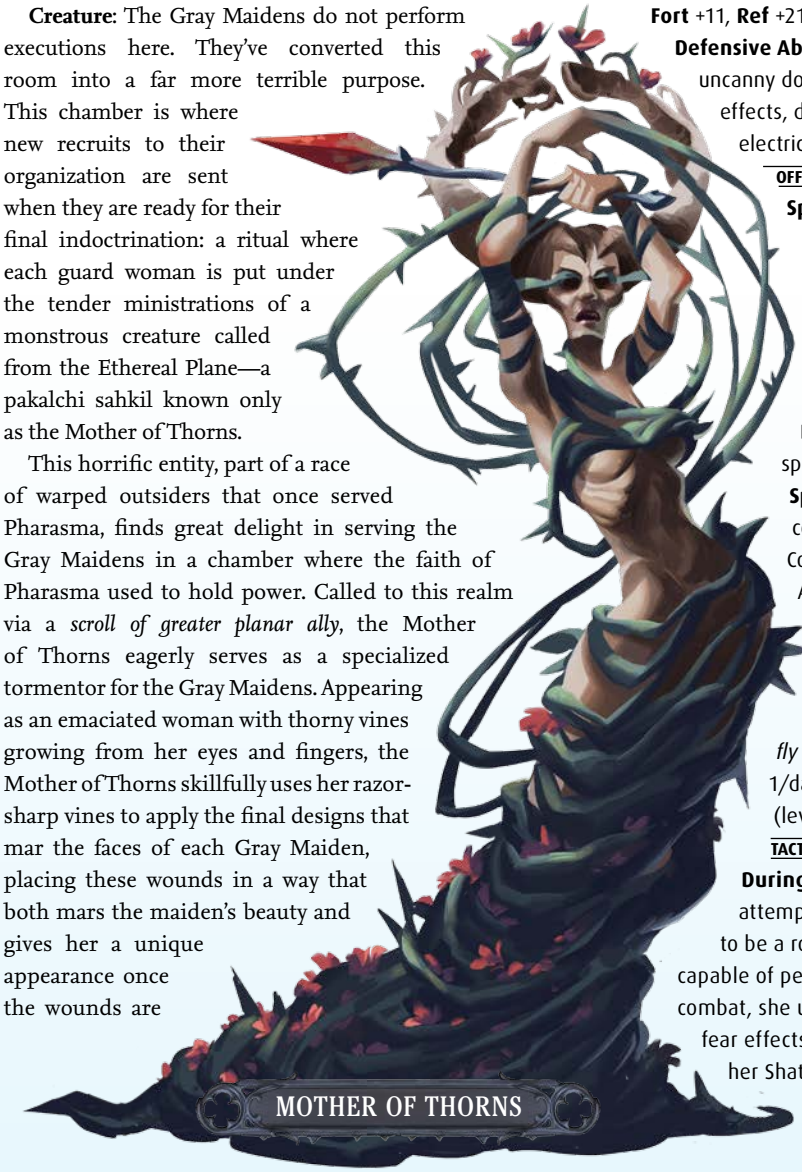
E11 Execution Chamber (CR 12)

Softly glowing ivory tiles adorn the walls, floor, and ceiling of this room. Four wooden benches sit in the center of the room, facing an upraised area on which an executioner's block sits. To the north, an intimidating-looking greataxe hangs on display on a sturdy weapon rack. An iron door in the west wall, just north of the main double-door entrance, bears a narrow window, currently closed via a sliding metal slat.

This room was where the most depraved and violent criminals convicted by Korvosa's arbiters were sent for execution via beheading. These executions were carried out swiftly, with the condemned being killed within 3 minutes of being delivered to the block and with several priests of Abadar and Pharasma in attendance, along with a minimum of three active arbiters.

Creature: The Gray Maidens do not perform executions here. They've converted this room into a far more terrible purpose. This chamber is where new recruits to their organization are sent when they are ready for their final indoctrination: a ritual where each guard woman is put under the tender ministrations of a monstrous creature called from the Ethereal Plane—a pakalchi sahkil known only as the Mother of Thorns.

This horrific entity, part of a race of warped outsiders that once served Pharasma, finds great delight in serving the Gray Maidens in a chamber where the faith of Pharasma used to hold power. Called to this realm via a *scroll of greater planar ally*, the Mother of Thorns eagerly serves as a specialized tormentor for the Gray Maidens. Appearing as an emaciated woman with thorny vines growing from her eyes and fingers, the Mother of Thorns skillfully uses her razor-sharp vines to apply the final designs that mar the faces of each Gray Maiden, placing these wounds in a way that both mars the maiden's beauty and gives her a unique appearance once the wounds are allowed to heal naturally into scars. The Gray Maidens also periodically secure the Mother of Thorns's aid to break the will of a particularly obstinate recruits. using a combination of her mind-numbing venom and mind-controlling magic. The Mother of Thorns has little patience for intruders and attacks on sight.


MOTHER OF THORNS

MOTHER OF THORNS **CR 12**

XP 19,200

Female pakalchi sahkil rogue 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 216)
NE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar, sahkil)
Init +13; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, *true seeing*; Perception +24

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 21, flat-footed 18 (+2 deflection, +9 Dex, +6 natural)
hp 161 (17 HD; 6d8+11d10+74)
Fort +11, **Ref** +21, **Will** +13
Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; **DR** 10/good; **Immune** death effects, disease, fear, poison; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10, sonic 10; **SR** 20

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee 2 claws +24 (1d6+7/19–20), 4 vines +23 (1d4+3 plus bleed and poison)
Ranged 4 thorns +24 (1d4+7 plus bleed and poison)
Special Attacks bleed (1d4), entangling train, look of fear (30 ft., DC 25), sneak attack +3d6 plus 3 bleed, spirit touch, sudden strike, thorns
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +20)
Constant—*true seeing*
At will—*charm person* (DC 19), *detect good*, *detect magic*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *protection from good*
3/day—*blink*, *calm emotions* (DC 22), *fly*
1/day—*dominate person* (DC 23), summon (level 6, 1 wihsaak 40%)

TACTICS

During Combat The Mother of Thorns attempts to dominate a character she suspects to be a rogue or a member of another class capable of performing sneak attacks. In melee combat, she uses her many methods of causing fear effects to make additional sneak attacks via her Shatter Defenses feat. She relies on her thorns and *wand of enervation* for ranged combat. During the battle, she

communicates with Kordaitra telepathically, keeping the Gray Maiden updated on her status.

Morale If reduced to 40 hp or fewer, the Mother of Thorns teleports to area **E18**, where she uses her *wand of cure critical wounds* and aid from Zenobia to heal her wounds and prepare for a rematch. When fighting at Zenobia's side, she fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 28, **Con** 18, **Int** 15, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 26

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +22; **CMD** 43

Feats Blind-fight, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dazzling Display, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Shatter Defenses, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (vine)

Skills Acrobatics +29, Bluff +28, Climb +17, Diplomacy +18, Intimidate +28, Knowledge (planes) +13, Knowledge (religion) +13, Perception +24, Sense Motive +24, Spellcraft +10, Stealth +29, Use Magic Device +19

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ easy to call, emotional focus, rogue talents (bleeding attack +3, combat trick, finesse rogue), skip between, trapfinding +3

Combat Gear *wand of cure critical wounds* (15 charges), *wand of enervation* (15 charges); **Other Gear** *ring of protection +2*

E12 Filing Office

Two writing desks are pushed up against the west wall of this room, opposite a freestanding wooden cabinet and an iron door with a window set in it.

This room once contained records of executions; those files are still here, but have been stacked haphazardly in the cabinet. The Gray Maiden commanders use this room to observe the Mother of Thorns's work, coming and going via the secret tunnel. The secret doors can be discovered with a successful DC 30 Perception check.

E13 Deathhead Cells

These cells each contain a cot and a chamber pot. Once used to house criminals, they're now used to hold women who've proven unwilling to serve as Gray Maidens or resistant to the training. Upon relenting and agreeing to serve, they are granted freedom as Gray Maidens.

Creatures: Currently, there are a dozen women locked up in these cells—all are competent but low-level fighters, and none are in any condition to provide aid to the PCs. The iron gates to their cells are locked (hardness 10, hp 60, break DC 28, Disable Device DC 40), but they can be unlocked via Boule's key or the key carried by Kordaitra.

GRAY MAIDEN RECRUITS (12) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 each

Human fighter 1 (superstitious mercenary; *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 80)

hp 14 each (currently at 1d4 hp each)

Story Award: For each of these 12 women rescued and brought to freedom outside of Deathhead Vault, award the PCs 1,600 XP.

E14 Endrin's Cell (CR 13)

This hidden cell can be accessed only via a secret door in the wall of another cell, which is generally kept empty. The secret door can be spotted with a successful DC 40 Perception check. While Boule's advice does not help in locating this door, the documents from area **E20** reveal its presence and using them as a guide grants a searcher a +20 circumstance bonus on the check. The stone door is locked (hardness 8, hp 60, break DC 28, Disable Device DC 40), but can be unlocked by a special cell key carried by Kordaitra.

Creature: Marcus Endrin, once the commander of the Sable Company, languishes unconscious and feebleminded in this cell. Beaten near to death and kept in this state by regular visits from Kordaitra, Marcus barely survived his failed assassination attempt against the queen, and has been kept here ever since. Queen Ileosa has ordered her Gray Maidens to keep Marcus alive. Once she completes her bid for immortality, her plans for the man certainly don't bode well for his continued well-being.

If the PCs heal Marcus, he wakes but is incapable of doing anything more than cringing and crying. The *feeblemind* effect he is suffering from has reduced him to the mindset of an abused animal, and unless the PCs can remove this condition, escorting him out of the dungeon and to the safe hands of the rebellion is perhaps the most merciful act they can provide.

Marcus has all but given up hope for escape, but if the PCs manage to remove the *feeblemind* effect he's suffering from, his swollen eyes fill with tears of relief. He's still in no condition at this point to provide aid to the PCs unless he's fully healed and given armor and gear; even if this happens, he'd rather just get out of Deathhead Vault. With a successful DC 24 Diplomacy check, a PC can convince him to help the PCs (provided he's healed and outfitted with gear). A successful DC 25 Intimidate check works as well, but once he turns hostile, he attempts to escape to freedom at the first opportunity.

MARCUS ENDRIN **CR 13**

XP 25,600

Male middle-aged human aristocrat 1/ranger (Sable Company marine) 13 (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Combat* 43)

LG Medium humanoid (human)
Init +1; **Senses** Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex)
hp 91 (currently stable at –2 hp; 14 HD; 1d8+13d10+15)
Fort +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +9
Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee unarmed strike +14/+9/+4 (1d3+1 nonlethal)
Special Attacks combat style (mounted[APG]), favored enemy (aberrations +4, evil outsiders +4, vermin +2), quarry

TACTICS

During Combat Marcus fights defensively until he regains gear he can use, in which case he favors ranged attacks if possible. He desperately wants to avoid being captured and avoids combat against foes who outnumber him.
Morale Marcus flees if reduced to 30 or fewer hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 13, **Con** 11, **Int** 1 (9 normally), **Wis** 13, **Cha** 1 (19 normally)
Base Atk +13; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 25
Feats Deadly Aim, Endurance, Iron Will, Monstrous Mount, Monstrous Mount Mastery, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Ride-by Attack, Toughness
Skills Handle Animal +12, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (local) +4, Perception +18, Ride +18, Sense Motive +18, Survival +18
Languages Common
SQ camouflage, favored terrain (plains +2, underground +2, urban +6), swift tracker, track +6, wild empathy +8, woodland stride

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hippogriff Companion Marcus's previous hippogriff has been slaughtered, and as long as he remains affected by *feeblemind* he cannot gain a new one. This ability and many of his feats (including Monstrous Mount and Monstrous Mount Mastery from *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Combat*) are unlikely to play a role in this chapter, but if you wish to have Marcus show up later in your campaign, feel free to design his new hippogriff mount according to the rules in *Inner Sea Combat*.

Story Award: If the PCs rescue Marcus, award the PCs XP as if they had defeated him in combat.

E15 Indoctrination Chamber (CR 10)

The western wall of this tiled hallway is a row of bars that cages a smaller room within, accessible by a heavy iron gate. Within the smaller room sits a desk, a filing cabinet, and a table. A window in the bars allows for a place to perhaps pass objects from the hall to the cage.

This room was once used to process prisoners, but now it serves the Gray Maidens as a place to process new recruits. The door in the northwest corner of the room is kept locked and leads up to the ground floor of the Longacre Building above, where a few dozen Gray Maidens can be located. These lower-ranking members of the group are forbidden from returning to the vault, though, so as long as the PCs avoid the upper floors they need not fear reinforcements. If you wish, you can detail the upper floors of the Longacre Building, but they have no direct bearing on the mission at hand and are beyond the scope of this chapter.

Creatures: Four Gray Maidens guard this room at all times. Two are posted inside the cage (they can fire arrows between the bars while enjoying the benefits of cover), while another two stand at attention in the hall itself. If they're attacked, one of the guards inside the cage raises the alarm with a shout before they attack the PCs.

GRAY MAIDEN GUARDS (4) **CR 6**

XP 2,400 each

Female human fighter 7
LN Medium humanoid (human)
Init +1; **Senses** Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 11, flat-footed 23 (+10 armor, +1 Dex, +3 shield)
hp 71 each (7d10+28)
Fort +8, **Ref** +3, **Will** +5 (+2 vs. fear)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee *+1 longsword* +13/+8 (1d8+7/19–20)
Ranged composite longbow +8/+3 (1d8+3/×3)
Special Attacks weapon training (heavy blades +1)

TACTICS

During Combat The Gray Maiden guards work together, focusing their attacks on one foe at a time rather than spreading the damage out evenly. Each time they attack a new foe, one guard uses Dazzling Display to demoralize their other enemies.
Morale Gray Maiden guards fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 13, **Con** 16, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10
Base Atk +7; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 21
Feats Alertness, Dazzling Display, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Power Attack, Shield Focus, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)
Skills Intimidate +13, Perception +10, Sense Motive +3
Languages Common
SQ armor training 2
Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** *+1 full plate*, mwk heavy steel shield, *+1 longsword*, composite longbow (+3 Str) with 20 arrows, 16 pp, 5 gp

E16 Guard Quarters (CR 10)

Each of these identical rooms features a single bed and an armor and weapon stand.

Creatures: At any one time, four Gray Maidens are resting here. If an alarm is raised, they all congregate in one room with their gear to help each other to put on their armor, but it still takes about 5 minutes for them to be ready to join a fight in area **E15**.

GRAY MAIDEN GUARDS (4) **CR 6**

XP 2,400 each

hp 71 each (see page 247)

E17 Tisharue's Quarters (CR 11)

This large room has been outfitted to serve as both a study and a bedroom. Several important-looking documents sit on a table to the south, while an elegant suit of silvery, feminine armor is on display to the north.

Creature: The commander of the Gray Maiden guards and warden of Deathhead, an elven fighter named Tisharue, keeps her quarters here. Tisharue was an early applicant to the Gray Maidens, a bitter woman who joined the cause to fuel her need for power. Losing her smooth skin to Gray Maiden scars was easy for her, and she finds the armor the Maidens wear to be far more beautiful than anything of flesh and bone. Tisharue has spent the last several months here in Deathhead Vault and the Longacre Building above, focused not on the recruitment of new soldiers but on watching the Gray Maidens for any signs of disloyalty or relapse. Her skill at noting subtle shifts of personality and the eagerness she applies to "correcting" relapses are the primary reasons the Gray Maidens have so few public incidents of disloyalty. Of late, Tisharue has grown concerned that the commander of the company, Sabina Merrin, may not have undergone the proper conditioning and could become the greatest traitor to the cause, but she has not yet gathered enough evidence to prove her concerns. Tisharue bides her time, hoping to catch Sabina in an act of irrefutable treason so that she will be rewarded with the other woman's leadership position once Sabina is executed. Although she is more skilled than the Maidens' second-in-command, Kordaitra, Tisharue does her best to maintain the cavalier's respect and support so that when she becomes the commander of the group, she can count on Kordaitra's continued allegiance.

TISHARUE **CR 11**

XP 12,800

Female elf fighter 12

LE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +1; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 11, flat-footed 24 (+9 armor, +1 Dex, +5 shield)

hp 130 (12d10+60)

Fort +11, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7 (+3 vs. fear); +2 vs. enchantments

Immune sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *+1 flaming longsword* +21/+16/+11 (1d8+11/17–20 plus 1d6 fire)

Special Attacks weapon trainings (heavy blades +2, bows +1)

TACTICS

During Combat Tisharue favors her sword in battle, resorting to her bow only when she can't close to melee. She prefers to make Power Attacks, but is otherwise a relatively straightforward combatant, stabbing her enemies until they're brought down.

Morale Warden Tisharue fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 12, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 27

Feats Alertness, Bleeding Critical, Critical Focus, Greater Shield Focus, Greater Weapon Focus (longsword), Greater Weapon Specialization (longsword), Improved Critical (longsword), Iron Will, Power Attack, Shield Focus, Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

Skills Intimidate +10, Perception +13, Sense Motive +15

Languages Common, Elven, Varisian

SQ armor training 3, elven magic

Other Gear full plate, *+1 heavy steel shield, +1 flaming longsword, belt of physical might +2 (Str, Con)*, 15 gp

Treasure: When she became a Gray Maiden, Tisharue abandoned her previous suit of armor in favor for the official full plate of her new group, yet she retains an emotional attachment to the old armor, an heirloom from her mother, who fought many years against the demons of Tanglebriar. Tisharue keeps this suit of *+2 invulnerability elven chain*[UE] on display here.

An investigation of the papers on the table reveals that they are records for the indoctrination of Gray Maidens that track conditioning, scars, and other methods of brainwashing. Notes in the margin, written in Elven, indicate Tisharue's concern that the leader of the Gray Maidens, Sabina Merrin, has undergone far less conditioning than all other Maidens have endured.

E18 Maiden's Nursery (CR 13+)

This grim chamber is outfitted with all manner of torture implements: a rack, several cages, a cramped stockade with spiky bars, and smaller tools of torture like thumbscrews and iron boots sitting on shelves. A caged-off area to the west serves as a guard post.

Creatures: Currently, three hapless and tormented prisoners languish in cages here, watched over by three Gray Maiden guards stationed in the western watch post (the gate to this area is kept locked). One of the three prisoners has been lashed to a table, and if the PCs arrive without setting off the alarm, they find this prisoner being tormented by Zenobia Zenderholm, who has taken up the role of indoctrinator now that Vavana Dhatri, the Gray Maiden's usual initiator, has been reassigned to the castle. During the day, Zenobia's methods are more classical—a combination of torture and false promises of peace combined with long periods of Gray Maiden rhetoric and propaganda whispered into the victim's ears. At night, she augments these methods with foul caresses from her withering entrails and blood drain via diseased bite. These hideous torments have had great success in quickening the process of indoctrination, be it pushing those with preexisting allegiances into alignment with Gray Maiden priorities or driving those who resist mad.

If the alarm is raised, all of the prisoners are stowed in cages and the Gray Maiden guards have joined Zenobia in the main room, prepared to defend the Nursery or join a battle in an adjoining area as necessary. In addition, Kordaitra relocates from her quarters (area **E21**) to this room to join in the defense of this chamber.

Zenobia Zenderholm was a well-known public figure before the rise of the Gray Maidens, but she was deep in the throes of blood veil when the Gray Maidens stormed the Longacre Building during the plague and seized it as their own headquarters. The Gray Maidens quarantined Zenobia in her room upstairs, leaving her to die of the affliction. In her final hours, Zenobia lost her faith in Abadar (in large part due to the fact that her attempts to cure herself with *remove disease* continually failed to work) and called out to the source of her torment—Urgathoa. She promised to serve the goddess of disease if delivered from this torment. Delighted, the Pallid Princess granted Zenobia's wish by separating her from the wracking pains of her body and transformed her into a penanggalen, so Zenobia could physically remove herself from her failing remains.

Zenobia has taken to her transformation with a startling passion. Where once she was among the upper tier of Abadar's church, she has now become Urgathoa's greatest agent in Korvosa with Lady Andaisin's death. Zenobia revels in her newfound power, enjoying the freedom to engage in her whims as a worshiper of Urgathoa in ways her previous beliefs forbade. She's considered returning to the church of Abadar to spread her new faith among the others there, but for now has been focused more intently on her duties to the Gray Maidens.

GRAY MAIDEN GUARDS (5) **CR 6**

XP 2,400 each

hp 71 each (see page 247)

GRAY MAIDEN RECRUITS (3) **CR 1/2**

XP 200 each

Human fighter 1 (superstitious mercenary; *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 80)

hp 14 each (currently at 1d4 hp each)

ZENOBIA ZENDERHOLM **CR 11**

XP 12,800

Female middle-aged human penanggalen aristocrat 2/cleric of Urgathoa 9 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 216)

NE Medium undead

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +30

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 18, flat-footed 20 (+3 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 insight, +6 natural)

hp 141 (11d8+88); fast healing 5

Fort +14, **Ref** +6, **Will** +13

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4; **DR** 5/silver and slashing; **Immune** undead traits; **Resist** cold 10, fire 10

Weaknesses light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft. (good)

Melee bite +9 (1d6+2 plus disease), slam +9 (1d4+2 plus grab and wither)

Special Attacks blood drain (1d4 Constitution), create spawn, channel negative energy 11/day (DC 22, 5d6), disease (blood veil, DC 23), hand of the acolyte (7/day), weapon master (9 rounds/day)

Cleric Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +13)
7/day—battle rage (+4)
1/day—dispelling touch

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +13)
5th—*flame strike*[D] (DC 19), *slay living* (DC 19)
4th—*divine power*[D], *poison* (DC 18), *sending*, *unholy blight* (DC 18)
3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 17), *blindness/deafness* (DC 17), *contagion* (DC 17), *dispel magic*[D], *wind wall*
2nd—*death knell* (DC 16), *desecrate*, *enthrall* (DC 16), *hold person* (DC 16), *resist energy*, *spiritual weapon*[D]
1st—*command* (2, DC 15), *identify*[D], *protection from good*, *sanctuary* (DC 15), *shield of faith*
0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *light*, *read magic*
D domain spell; **Domains** Magic, War

TACTICS

Before Combat Zenobia casts *shield of faith* before combat.

During Combat Zenobia relies on spellcasting if in her human guise, as she carries no weapons, saving her channel energy ability for moments when she's surrounded or thinks she can drop wounded foes. If encountered in her more hideous form after dark, she still focuses on spellcasting (her entrails allow her to make somatic gestures) and uses her slam attack when an attack of opportunity presents itself. Note that if Kordaitra is present, the cavalier can use her instant order ability to grant Zenobia an additional standard action on the first round of combat to cast an additional offensive spell—combining *flame strike* and *unholy blight* is a favorite tactic. Zenobia casts *divine power* on Kordaitra as soon as possible after this tactic.

Morale If reduced to 40 or fewer hit points, Zenobia attempts to flee combat. If she reaches a safe place where she can cast *sending*, she does so to alert Vavana Dhatri of the attack on Deathhead Vault. She is loath to abandon her body, but will if forced to do so. In this case, she can be encountered again in Castle Korvosa, fighting alongside Vavana in the defense of the False Ileosa.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 17, **Con** —, **Int** 15, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 26

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 27

Feats Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Mobility, Persuasive, Selective Channeling

Skills Bluff +28, Diplomacy +26, Fly +15, Intimidate +26, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (nobility) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Perception +30, Sense Motive +30, Stealth +11

Languages Common, Shoanti, Varisian

SQ separate

Gear *dusty rose prism ioun stone*, *headband of mental prowess +2* (Wis, Cha), golden unholy symbol of Urgathoa

ZENOBIA ZENDERHOLM

Story Award: For each of the three recruits rescued and brought to freedom outside of Deathhead Vault, award the PCs 1,600 XP.

E19 Vavana's Quarters

This austere bedroom doesn't appear to have been used in some time.

Once the personal quarters of Vavana Dhatri, this room has remained empty since her recent reassignment to Castle Korvosa. Nothing of interest remains here for the PCs to discover.

E20 Repository of Scars

Dozens of scrolls lie on the shelves adorning the walls of this room.

The contents of these scrolls contain accounts of all of the

women recruited and conditioned into serving the Gray Maidens, along with records of those who have failed to be indoctrinated. Recruits who continually fail are eventually executed as traitors to the crown, but a study of the documents here reveals the unfortunate truth that very few women who resist indoctrination survive the torments they endure long enough to face such an execution. No records of the alliance between the crown and the Red Mantis can be found here, unfortunately, but the records will be invaluable to the numerous families who seek closure regarding daughters, wives, or sisters lost to the Gray Maidens over the past several months. In addition, these records reveal the presence of the secret cell (area **E14**) wherein Endrin is imprisoned.

Story Award: If the PCs recover these important documents, award them 12,800 XP.

E21 Kordaitra's Quarters

This bedroom's decor reveals little about its occupant, other than that it must be a clean, well-ordered, militaristic person with little interest in decor. The monochromatic furniture is blocky and functional, and only the large landscape painting of Korvosa, presented in lovely colors, brings any personality to the chamber at all.

A successful DC 30 Perception check reveals the presence of the secret door in the north wall. The door is locked (Disable Device DC 40), but can be opened with one of the keys Kordaitra carries.

Creature: This room serves as the personal quarters of Kordaitra Destaid, who is technically the second-in-command of the Gray Maidens under Sabina Merrin. Kordaitra's tireless work is what keeps the Gray Maidens running on a daily basis, since Sabina is continually torn between leadership and serving Queen Ileosa as bodyguard and confidant. Kordaitra has grown frustrated with this arrangement; she believes that Sabina has been taking credit for her hard work and intends to have Sabina replaced soon. In truth, Sabina has been harboring second thoughts about her involvement with the Gray Maidens at all.

Kordaitra often spends long hours out in the city, working with Gray Maiden patrols, meeting with Sabina, or checking up on various projects throughout the city. Yet at this time, her duties keep her ensconced here in Deathhead Vault, thanks in large part to Guildmaster Boule's machinations. For several days, Kordaitra (who has always enjoyed the challenge of navigating complex contracts or encoded documents) has been sifting through a large collection of documents that purport to detail the inner workings of the fictional "Korvosan Revolution" Boule invented. Kordaitra is eager to be the one to break the code and personally lead the assault on the suspected rebel headquarters, but the time it will take her to decrypt the cunning false documents and determine they're complete fictions is left to you to determine. At the very least, it should take her at least 1 week from the point the PCs make their first foray into the complex. If she learns the truth about the documents before the PCs can confront her, she realizes that the actual rebels have played her and that the documents were a ruse to ensure her presence in Deathhead Vault during a raid; she thereafter relocates to Castle Korvosa, taking with her the resources in her hidden room as detailed below in the Morale entry of her stat block.

Kordaitra Destaid is one of the original Gray Maidens, and her guidance has played a key part in maintaining loyalty among a group that otherwise would have collapsed under its own collective psychological damage long ago. Once a knight-enforcer of the church of Asmodeus, she gladly accepted Ileosa's offer to help found a new martial order in not merely the ways of steel but in true loyalty. She's brought much of her Asmodean training to the methodology of founding loyalty in her troopers, and today no longer considers herself as much a crusader for the church as for the queen herself.

KORDAITRA DESTAID **CR 10**

XP 9,600

Female human cavalier (constable) 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 32, *Pathfinder Player Companion: Heroes of the Street* 17)

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init –1; **Senses** Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 9, flat-footed 23 (+10 armor, –1 Dex, +4 shield)

hp 120 (11d10+55)

Fort +12, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7; +3 vs. target of challenge

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee *+1 cruel longsword* +16/+11/+6 (1d8+4/17–20) or unarmed strike +14/+9/+4 (1d3+3)

Special Attacks challenge 4/day (+11 damage, +3 to saves while threatened), for the faith +2, greater tactician 3/day (Outflank or Shield Wall, swift action, 8 rounds)

TACTICS

Before Combat If the alarm is raised, Kordaitra moves to area **E18** and activates her squad commander ability to prepare the occupants there to use the Shield Wall teamwork feat for 11 minutes.

During Combat If Zenobia is nearby, Kordaitra starts combat using her instant order ability on the first round to allow Zenobia to cast two spells. She follows this up on the second round by moving over to be near Zenobia so she can receive a *divine power* spell on the third round. After this (or at the

start of any combat where Zenobia isn't involved), Kordaitra issues a challenge to the most dangerous martial PC, and then uses her for the faith ability to gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls (and to grant a +1 bonus to all allies nearby). She prefers to attack creatures suffering from fear effects to make the most of strikes from her *cruel longsword* (a tactic that works well when Gray Maiden guards intimidate foes with their Dazzling Display feats, or the Mother of Thorns uses her gaze weapon), but otherwise focuses her attacks on the target of her challenge.

Morale Kordaitra flees combat if reduced to fewer than 40 hit points and attempts to make her way back to the hidden chamber in her quarters. Once there, she locks herself in, gathers the remaining gear there, and uses a dose of *dust of disappearance* and a *potion of gaseous form* to make her way to Castle Korvosa. In this event, the PCs can encounter her again in Chapter 6, fighting at Vavana Dhatri's side to defend the False Ileosa. Should this happen, reassign the loot she gathers from the secret room as you see fit among the defenders of Castle Korvosa's third floor.

KORDAITRA DESTAID

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 8, **Con** 16, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +14 (+16 disarm, +16 grapple, +16 trip); **CMD** 23

Feats Dazzling Display, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Iron Will, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Outflank[APG], Power Attack, Shield Focus, Shield Wall[APG], Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills Intimidate +16, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (nobility) +6, Knowledge (religion) +15, Linguistics +12, Perception +16, Sense Motive +14

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Gnome, Halfling, Infernal, Shadowtongue, Shoanti, Varisian

SQ apprehend, badge, calling, instant order (standard action), order of the star, quick interrogator, squad commander

Gear *+1 full plate, +1 heavy steel shield, +1 cruel*[UE] *longsword, cloak of resistance +2*, prison cell master key, Endrin's cell key, treasury key, 21 pp, 5 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Apprehend (Ex) Kordaitra gains Improved Unarmed Strike as a bonus feat and can attempt a grapple combat maneuver check in place of the attack at the end of a charge. She receives a +2 bonus on Perception checks and combat maneuver checks to disarm, grapple, or trip opponents, and does not treat crowds as difficult terrain.

Badge (Ex) As long as Kordaitra wears her Gray Maiden armor (and thus displays her badge of authority in that organization), allies within 30 feet who can see her gain a +3 morale bonus on saving throws against charm, compulsion, and fear effects and a +2 morale bonus on attack rolls against targets the constable has challenged.

Instant Order (Ex) Kordaitra can bark an order to an ally within 30 feet as a standard action. That ally can instantly take a move action or standard action to comply with the order. Taking the action dazes the ally for 1 round afterward.

Quick Interrogator (Ex) Kordaitra can attempt a Diplomacy check to gather information in 1d6×5 minutes and can attempt a Diplomacy or Intimidate check to change someone's attitude in 5 rounds.

Squad Commander (Ex) Kordaitra can spend 1 minute laying out a plan to activate the tactician ability without having it count against her number of uses per day. The ability

must be triggered within 1 hour of the plan being made, and the benefits last for 11 minutes. She can have only one plan at a time, and if a new plan is made, any old plan is lost.

Treasure: The painting of Korvosa on the wall is of masterful quality—Kordaitra's one real concession to art in her life. An original work called "Sinister Sister," by the Magnimarian artist Goren Andosalu, the painting measures 3 feet by 6 feet, weighs 40 pounds, and is worth 4,500 gp.

The secret room to the north serves as an emergency repository of equipment and gear for the Gray Maidens, and a place to store items and magic looted from the Longacre Building or other sites seized by the crown in the weeks after Eodred's death. Today, much of these resources have been expended, but a few items of note remain here (assuming they haven't been used by Kordaitra in defending Deathhead Vault from the PCs). These items include a cherrywood coffer with velvet-lined compartments (the coffer itself is worth 500 gp) containing four *potions of cure serious wounds*, three *potions of remove disease*, six *potions of lesser restoration*, and three *potions of gaseous form*. In addition, there are 2 doses of *dust of disappearance*, a *wand of cure critical wounds* (40 charges), a *scroll of break enchantment*, a *scroll of heal*, a *scroll of limited wish*, a *scroll of resurrection*, two *candles of truth*, and 3 doses of *stone salve*, all kept in a *bag of holding* (type IV).

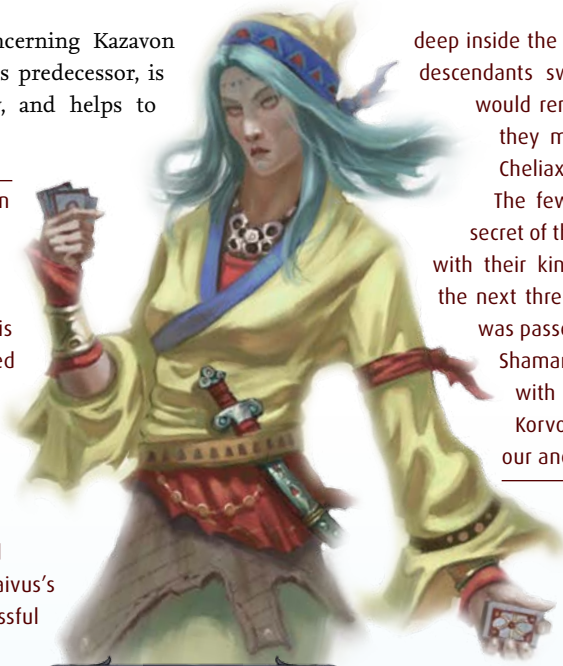
BOLSTERING THE REBELLION

By disrupting the Red Mantis and Gray Maiden presence under the Longacre Building, rescuing key prisoners, and recovering incriminating documents, the PCs can provide the burgeoning rebellion with a wide range of resources to use against Ileosa and her minions, but even with this accomplishment, the hold the queen has over Korvosa remains strong. But with the PCs' successes in this chapter, the Red Mantis temporarily retreats from the city (to return in a smaller number, led by Mistress Kayltanya herself, during Chapter 6) and the Gray Maidens are forced to relocate the center of their operations to the castle. This, combined with the rebellion's new resources and intelligence recovered from Deathhead Vault, makes Korvosa a somewhat safer place and allows for more resources to be sold and purchased. The crown's reduced resources force an end for now to martial law—use the Korvosa (Unrest) city stat block (see page 399) for Korvosa from this point until the end of the adventure path.

CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Once the PCs earn 20 Respect Points, the Sun Shaman agrees to aid the PCs. After he has communed with his ancestors and returns to Flameford, he requests their presence in his tent. When the PCs arrive, he congratulates them again on shedding their outlander status to become Sklar-Quah before inviting them to be seated around his personal fire. As one of the few Shoanti to retain knowledge of Midnight's Teeth, what he has to tell the PCs is crucial information.

The Sun Shaman's tale concerning Kazavon fangs, as told to him by his predecessor, is recounted in detail below, and helps to guide the PCs toward their next task.



ZELLARA'S GHOST

"Many hundreds of years ago, a man named Mandraivus gathered a small group of heroes to fight a despotic blue dragon named Kazavon, and my ancestor was one who joined this crusade. This ancestor, a shaman named Amarund, was gone for months. When she finally returned she was not the same woman—her hands shook, her eyes carried a haunted stare, and she cried out in fear at night. She spoke little of what she had experienced while fighting at Mandraivus's side, but did say that they were successful in defeating Kazavon and that the dragon's fortress of Scarwall in Belkzen was now under Mandraivus's control.

"While Kazavon had been defeated, his will to live was so immense that even the remains of his body twitched. The heroes attempted to destroy the remains, but key fragments of the dragon's skeleton resisted even their most destructive spells. Mandraivus tasked the seven surviving heroes, among them Amarund, with each claiming one of the bony relics of Kazavon's body and taking them far from Scarwall. None of the seven would communicate where they were going to the others or to Mandraivus in hopes of ensuring that their chosen relics would remain hidden and guarded for all time in order to prevent the dragon from returning to life.

"Amarund told this story to her fellow shamans and revealed that her selected relics were the dragon's fangs, which she called Midnight's Teeth. She and the other shamans chose the ancient pyramid on the shores of Conqueror's Bay as the fangs' reliquary. After hiding them in a secret room deep inside the pyramid, Amarund and her descendants swore to ensure the fangs would remain safe. For generations, they maintained their task—until Cheliax invaded and drove us off. The few survivors who knew the secret of the fangs were forced to flee with their kin into the Cinderlands. For the next three centuries the knowledge was passed from Sun Shaman to Sun Shaman, and we have watched with fearful eyes as the city of Korvosa has grown up around our ancient reliquary."

The Sun Shaman says that the fragments of Kazavon's soul are like seeds—once they find soil in which to grow, they can bloom into a mighty tree. This is the case with Ileosa, and her own cruelty and strength have been enhanced greatly by the fangs. Worse, she now possesses two souls: her own, and one grown from the fragment of Kazavon's. Having two souls in one body, the Sun Shaman muses, would grant her incredible power over her own mortality. If the PCs describe to him the events of the failed assassination during "Escape from Old Korvosa," he nods grimly.

THE BLESSING OF THE ANCESTORS

At this point, the Sun Shaman suggests the PCs participate in a ritual called the Blessing of the Ancestors. The Sun Shaman asks the PCs if there is a specific spirit or ancestor with whom they have a particularly strong link. The stronger the link, the more exacting the advice granted

by the Blessing of the Ancestors becomes. While it may seem like the spirit of a dead parent, sibling, child, or lover would make a good choice, there is another spirit with whom the PCs have become quite closely tied—Zellara, the Varisian harrower. If the PCs don't quickly realize she is their greatest link to the spirit world, the character who carries *Zellara's harrow deck* suddenly receives a nearly overwhelming empathic wave of emotion from her, and realizes that she is indeed their best choice. Of course, if one of the PCs is a shaman or spiritualist character, that character's companion may be a more appropriate choice.

The Blessing of the Ancestors is a ritual conducted by Sun Shamans to seek advice concerning a current quandary or event. The information isn't imparted by the contacted spirit, but rather by the realm of spirits, with the spirit contacted serving as a conduit for the information. The general effects of a Blessing of the Ancestors normally duplicate the effects of a *commune* or *contact other plane* spell, but often have unique manifestations.

The ritual itself takes 2 hours to prepare, and to the outside observer, it looks like little more than a rhythmic droning chant performed by the Sun Shaman. Those who wish to partake in the blessing seat themselves in a circle around the Sun Shaman and his focus (a small campfire) so that they are each touching another, forming an unbroken ring of flesh and bone. The ritual must begin 2 hours before sunrise, so that it comes to its conclusion as dawn breaks. The Sun Shaman chooses the upper tier of Bolt Rock to perform the ritual, and unless the PCs request otherwise, the entire Flameford tribe accompanies them to watch, silently and respectfully, as the ritual progresses.

The shaman initially recounts tribal legends and the heroics and wisdom of the ancestors in a sing-song voice, then shifts after 10 minutes into wordless droning and rhythmic chanting. This continues for 2 hours, after which the Sun Shaman slumps and the spirit to be contacted rises from the smoke of the fire to address the participants.

As the spirit coalesces, it regards the PCs favorably. If the PCs chose Zellara, she greets them each by name and offers to perform the next harrowing for them at this time. If the PCs accept, she proceeds with the fifth harrowing for them (see page 260).

Regardless of what spirit speaks to the PCs during this blessing, when the Sun Shaman asks the spirit for advice on how the PCs can defeat their enemy, the spirit begins to sing in a clear, haunting voice. The words to this song are presented in the nearby sidebar.

As the spirit finishes the song, the PCs each feel an upsurge in their souls as the spirits of the dead infuse them with energy to aid them. Even hundreds of miles away, the cruel undead within Scarwall are a blot on the spirit world, and the spirits wish to see that evil destroyed as much as the PCs. The Shoanti stand amazed as the ritual ends and the spirit fades into darkness. Finally Chief Ready-Klar breaks the awestruck silence. "Truly these Friends of the Sun are blessed by the ancestors. They walk with the spirits and bear the spirits' mark. They honor us with their presence and friendship. As they go forth to battle the evil that has plagued these lands of ash for many-score generations, they go with the power of the Sklar-Quah. They shall go forth with the power of Father Sun in their hands."

THE SPIRIT'S SONG

Fate of steel–Serithtial
Her cage for years sustained.
Four enthralled in lost Scarwall;
Undead to keep her chained.
A spirit first, red war his thirst
Still stands at post of old;
A second foe, infernal soul
Waits high in tower cold.
In kennel's grime, third bides his time
Then vents his killing breath.
And on a stone 'mid ash and bone,
The final dreams of death.
The spirits worn and battle torn
And locked in their damnation,
The chained one's hold at last grows old
And ushers in salvation.
Yet hope remains amid the chains
When blade's stone cage has crumbled,
Friends to dread and death of the dead,
Keys to Kazavon humbled.

HANDOUT #4–3

The sudden influx of spiritual energy gives each PC two additional benefits to aid them in their trials within Scarwall, as detailed below.

Infused Weapon and Armor: The spirit world infuses one weapon, suit of armor, or shield owned by each PC (PC's choice, and the item in question need not be present at the blessing). If the PC chooses a weapon, it gains the *undead-bane* weapon special ability. If the PC chooses armor or a shield, the item gains the *ghost touch* armor special ability. This effect functions only in Castle Scarwall.

Infused Soul: The next time the PC fails a saving throw against a death effect, the effect is negated but the PC is stunned for 1 round as the spiritual energies in her soul burn away. This protection can save each PC from a death effect only once, but can do so anywhere in the world (this boon is not limited to functioning only in Castle Scarwall).

Story Award: Although the PCs need only 20 Respect Points to hear the Sun Shaman's tale, there are opportunities to earn more than that during this chapter. If the PCs earn 30 or more Respect Points, award them an additional 12,800 XP for the outstanding accomplishment!

SKELETONS OF SCARWALL

BY GREG A. VAUGHAN

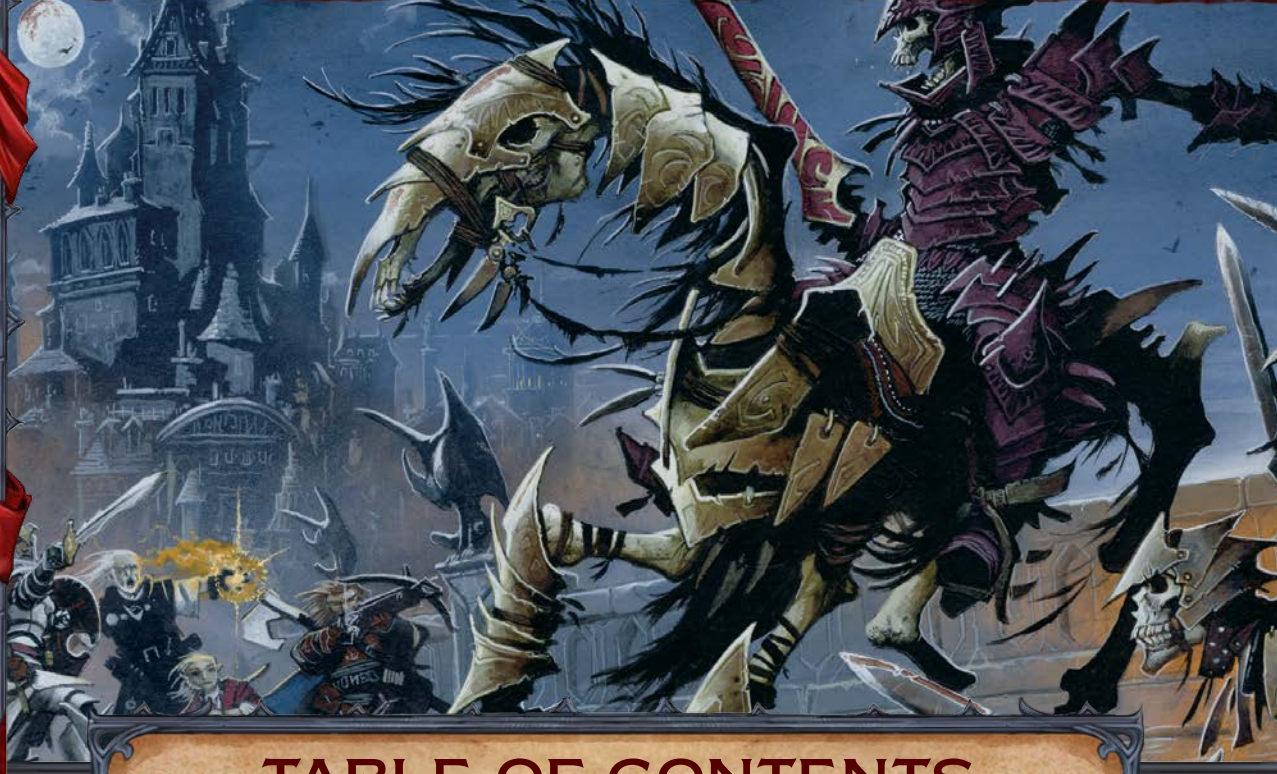


TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER BACKGROUND 258
PART 1: APPROACHING SCARWALL 260
PART 2: CASTLE SCARWALL 268
CHAPTER CONCLUSION 330

MAPS

SCARWALL BARBICAN 263
SCARWALL FIRST FLOOR AND SCARWALL ENVIRONS 275
SCARWALL GUEST WING 290
SCARWALL SECOND FLOOR 299
SCARWALL HEIGHTS 306
SCARWALL ROOF AND CAVERNS 324

CHAPTER BACKGROUND

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

The PCs should begin Chapter 5 at 13th level.

14 The PCs should reach 14th level during the exploration of Scarwall, preferably before attempting to deal with the Donjon or Star Tower.

15 The PCs should be 15th level before entering the caverns below Scarwall.

The PCs should be well tnto 15th level by the end of the chapter.

More than 800 years ago, as the nation of Ustalav was recovering from the rule of the Whispering Tyrant, orc invasions from the neighboring Hold of Belkzen became a constant threat. For generations, the county of Tamrivena (known as Canterwall in modern Ustalav) held strong against Belkzen. When command of Tamrivena fell to Count Andachi, it quickly became apparent that he had not inherited his predecessors' gifts of strategy or eloquence. Mile by mile, the orcs pressed into Ustalav through Tamrivena, and Count Andachi grew desperate. His pleas to the government of Ustalav for reinforcements were mired in bureaucracy. Even his prayers to Desna seemed to fall upon deaf ears. With a desperation born of fear, he fell back upon his ancestors' onetime patron—Zon-Kuthon, god of pain and darkness. In short order, the count's prayers were answered in the form of a powerful and gifted mercenary named Kazavon.

This charismatic general took control of Tamrivena's army and whipped it into shape with his brutal discipline and knowledge of battle tactics. When the army marched

into Belkzen, the orcs fell in waves, and by the spring of 4043 AR, the orcs had been driven into the Kodar Mountains, leaving much of central Belkzen abandoned.

His task complete, Kazavon did not return to Ustalav. Instead, he set his forces to the construction of Castle Scarwall, from which he could remain vigilant over the surrounding lowlands. In a short time, Kazavon's true goals became horrifically clear. Diplomats from southern Lastwall traveled to Scarwall, but their overtures of peace were met with violence as General Kazavon flayed the diplomats alive, then had their skins stretched over frames; he painted these skins with his new coat of arms: a fanged skull. The skinless dead were then animated and sent back south into Lastwall beneath these grisly banners with a demand to fall under Kazavon's heel or be butchered.

Aghast at this turn of events, Count Andachi at last found his courage. He raised a new army from the remnants of his people and marched west to face his former general. In a bold offensive, he laid siege to Castle Scarwall. Yet, with the next dawn, he met defeat before Kazavon's forces. Andachi was captured, publicly tortured and degraded, and ultimately executed.

For well over a decade, Kazavon ruled a nation of slaves, victims, and horror. Tales spread throughout the neighboring regions of fields of people impaled for the general's amusement, of mass executions, of Shoanti hunted like wild animals and then forced to slay their own lovers and children in carnivals of terror. Whispers of cannibal feasts and vampiric orgies trickled out of Castle Scarwall. More than once, the forces of virtuous nations marched on Scarwall, yet no army could face Kazavon's strength.

However, where armies failed, a secret cabal of heroes from the Esoteric Order of the Palatine Eye would not. Led by a paladin named Mandraivus, this group discovered that one among Kazavon's minions was willing to betray the warlord: his chamberlain, Kleestad. The chamberlain gave Mandraivus the information he needed to strike at Scarwall when its defenses were lowest. As the cabal tore through Scarwall, Kleestad returned swiftly to his room to gather his most valuable possessions and ready his escape—but Mandraivus's band moved faster than he anticipated. By the time Kleestad had his gear, the castle alarm had sounded and he was called to Kazavon's side. Kleestad realized Kazavon knew of his betrayal and had summoned him to be executed. Before Kazavon could do much more than break Kleestad's ankles, though, Mandraivus arrived. The battle raged, and in the end Kazavon fled to the Star Tower, giving Kleestad a chance to crawl into hiding.

It was during this fight that Mandraivus's group discovered the warlord's great secret—Kazavon was no mere man, but rather an insane great blue wyrm who preferred living as a human rather than a dragon. During the battle, Kazavon was forced back into his draconic identity as Mandraivus struck a lethal blow with his magical sword, *Serithtial*.

Yet Kazavon's corpse did not lie quiet. It seethed with dark energy, beginning to knit back together once again. The cabal used fire and acid and holy light, but in the end, seven skeletal fragments proved impossible to destroy. Mandraivus ordered his remaining followers to each take one of these relics and scatter them to the corners of the world. Mandraivus remained behind at Scarwall with a few loyal retainers to watch over the castle itself and prevent it from being reclaimed by the minions of Zon-Kuthon.

The victory proved short-lived. The orcs regained their strength and attacked Castle Scarwall soon after Mandraivus's cabal scattered. The defenders were overwhelmed, and as Mandraivus was slain, the curse of Scarwall took hold. The slaughter of first Kazavon's armies and then Mandraivus and his soldiers had suffused the fortress with negative energy, and an instant after they seized the castle, the orc invaders found themselves facing a host of vengeful spirits and slavering undead. Only a single orc survived to make it across the causeway from the castle, the flesh of his face blanched completely white from the horror he'd witnessed. He brought word to his people of the haunting of Castle Scarwall, and the tribal warlords declared the site forever taboo.

Yet one of Kazavon's thralls had survived the twin massacres as well—Kleestad, both ankles broken, managed to stay in hiding during Mandraivus's short reign. He emerged to find Scarwall empty and silent, and as he crawled from chamber to chamber, found further evidence of slaughter. He eventually made his way into the first floor of the keep, where he discovered Mandraivus's body slumped against a wall. In death, Mandraivus still held the blade he'd used to slay Kazavon. Kleestad, half mad and deluded, took up the blade in his hand, and heedless of the pain as the holy weapon burned his evil flesh, called out to Zon-Kuthon to witness his triumph as he claimed the blade for his own.

Zon-Kuthon was not pleased. Instead of rewarding Kleestad, he extended Scarwall's curse to envelop both Kleestad and the sword. The chamberlain had betrayed Kazavon, and as he had spent the last several hours crawling through the slaughter like a worm, Zon-Kuthon transformed the chamberlain into a monstrous wormlike beast known as a pharmakos (see page 475) and hurled him into a lightless vault deep below Scarwall. Also to this prison went the sacred blade *Serithtial*, still clutched in Kleestad's hands, its once-potent magic suppressed and locked away by the curse on the castle above. Today, the last thrall of Kazavon lives on in this underground prison, and in a final ironic twist of fate, has become the guardian of the very blade that laid his master low.

PART 1

APPROACHING SCARWALL

Castle Scarwall is among the most notorious locations in an already infamous land. The Hold of Belkzen is a realm of constant war, a blasted landscape ruled by orcs and built on the ashes of countless battles—yet even the orcs fear to intrude upon Castle Scarwall. For centuries, the looming castle has been left to its own hauntings, with but a small tribe of half-mad orcs, the Deadwatchers, camped nearby. What remains inside of Scarwall shall test the heroes of Korvosa to their absolute limit.

The bulk of this chapter covers the exploration of one of Curse of the Crimson Throne's twin castle set pieces (the other, Castle Korvosa, appears in the last chapter). Other than being 13th level (or at the very least, well into 12th level), the only prerequisite the PCs need to fill before beginning this chapter is to learn about the blade *Serithtial*. The most likely way the PCs will discover this is via the spirit's song during Chapter 4's Blessing of the Ancestors, but other methods could work to reveal this element, such as powerful divination magic utilized by PCs in search of a method to defeat the queen.

Once it becomes clear that the greatest tool against the mad queen lies somewhere within Scarwall, the PCs need to travel to the distant location. Many methods could help them reach the castle. Spells like *greater teleport*, *shadow walk*, *transport via plants*, and *wind walk* can all serve to shorten travel time, but if the PCs decided to walk or ride the approximately 300 miles from Flameford to Scarwall, there's plenty of time to do so. Consult the random encounter tables on page 464 to generate encounters with local dangers as needed as the PCs first traverse the arid Cinderlands and then move into the even more dangerous Hold of Belkzen. Additional events that might occur during this journey are beyond the scope of this adventure (with the exception of The Devil You Know below), for "Skeletons of Scarwall" truly begins as the PCs near the ancient castle itself.

During this time, of course, events don't stand still in Korvosa. The start of the Chapter 5 details many of the developments in the city that await the PCs' return. Of course, if your characters have teleportation or other fast travel options, there's no reason why they can't come and go from Scarwall and almost simultaneously experience the earlier encounters and events detailed in Part 1 of Chapter 6. However, they should wait until they've secured *Serithtial* (and are thus at least 15th level) before attempting to infiltrate the Sunken Queen itself (see Part 3 of Chapter 6); otherwise, their confrontation against the queen can only end in tragedy.

THE FIFTH HARROWING

The timing of Zellara's fifth harrowing can be a little tricky. Ideally, you want it to take place just before the PCs seek out Scarwall. Including the harrowing as part of the Blessing of the Ancestors (see page 254) makes the most sense story-wise, but if the PCs gain this blessing before they finish their duties in Korvosa, you may wish to hold off on this fifth harrowing. In such an event, you should have Zellara compel the PC who is carrying her deck to perform the harrowing on the evening before the party arrives in Scarwall's vicinity.

When this harrowing occurs, you should use the reading as best as you can to encourage the PCs to delve Scarwall to recover *Serithtial*. Cards that come up representing the past should symbolize Kazavon's tyrannical rule over Belkzen and his defeat by Mandraivus and his allies. Cards representing the present should speak to Queen Ileosa's great power and suggest that confronting her without *Serithtial* would be a fool's task; these cards can also symbolize Scarwall itself. Cards representing the future should foreshadow encounters in Scarwall, particularly those with the haunted castle's current lords (see page 273). Use these cards to imply to the PCs that wisdom will be important in their immediate future, and that bolstering themselves against death magic and the undead would be a good move. Finally, you can use these readings to hint that the Brotherhood of Bones could be an important, perhaps critical, ally in the immediate future, but that the PCs should still be careful about how much they trust these uneasy partners.

See Appendix 3 for further information on how to perform a harrowing.

THE DEVIL YOU KNOW

Soon after the PCs decide to travel to Scarwall, the Brotherhood of Bones agents Laori and Sial make plans to join forces with them. After all, they want to see the *Crown of Fangs* taken from Ileosa as much as the PCs do. What happens to the crown after Ileosa's defeat remains an

open question, but getting to that point is not something Laori and Sial can do on their own. Likewise, delving into an ancient stronghold once devoted to Zon-Kuthon without the advice and support of his worshipers might not be the wisest move for the PCs.

In any case, once this chapter begins, Laori contacts the PCs. Even though Sial is the more charismatic of the two, Laori likely has the strongest preexisting relationship with the group. If the PCs ended their last encounter with Laori in Chapter 3 on bad terms, or even with her dead, then you should amend the following as appropriate so that it's Shadowcount Sial who contacts them, possibly with a freshly resurrected (via *true resurrection*, paid for from Brotherhood coffers) Laori who is eager to attempt a reconciliation with the party.

SIAL

This chapter assumes Laori contacts the PCs, though. She uses her *wand of sending* to communicate with the PC with whom she developed the friendliest relationship, delivering the following message.

"Hi there! It's Laori! Been talking with some friends, and we all want the same thing. We should meet! And talk about stuff! Ummmm... damn."

Having run out of words, she casts a second *sending* spell and continues, regardless of how the PCs replied (feel free to tailor this second message to take into account the nature of the reply if you wish).

"This spell frustrates me. Anyway. It's me again. We should talk! You choose where and when, and we can be there. Ummmm... see you soon?"

Assuming the PCs agree to meet with Laori and her "friends" and supply her with a meeting place (she and Sial agree to pretty much any location, hoping their cooperation helps build trust with the party), the two use *shadow walk* to travel to the selected spot. Laori greets the PCs with a huge smile and a cheer, while Sial remains quiet and observant, his kyton eidolon Asyra standing at attention just a step behind him. A PC who succeeds at DC 20 Sense Motive check correctly interprets Sial's frustration and annoyance with Laori.

While Laori is friendlier with the PCs, she's aware of her own idiosyncrasies, including her tendency to say the wrong things at the wrong time. As part of her agreement with Sial to involve the PCs, she's agreed to let him do most of the talking. Sial greets the PCs with an even, cultured voice, his accent betraying his Chelish upbringing. He tells the PCs that he and Laori represent the nation of Nidal, and thanks the PCs for their service in bringing justice to a wanted criminal (Andaisin). He goes on to say that, based on Laori's "enthusiastic" recommendations, he has a proposition. In return for his and Laori's advice and support while exploring Scarwall, he hopes the PCs will agree to allow the church of Zon-Kuthon to claim the *Crown of Fangs* once all is said and done.

As "Skeletons of Scarwall" begins, the Brotherhood of Bones has officially decided the PCs are more valuable as allies than enemies, since the Brotherhood wants to capture the *Crown of Fangs*, track down and procure the other relics of Kazavon, bring them together, and keep them safe, ensuring they're never used to resurrect the ancient champion of Zon-Kuthon. If the PCs waver or doubt this claim, Sial can further state that Kazavon's fangs belong to the Brotherhood and should be returned to the church. Certainly, getting the fangs away from Ileosa is a goal both the PCs and the Brotherhood can agree on. And by extension, the recovery of *Serithtial* (the only weapon capable of overcoming Kazavon's influence) should be a shared goal.

The problem is that the undead of Scarwall no longer belong to Zon-Kuthon. Those haunting Kazavon's ancient seat of power are free-willed undead that have abandoned their old allegiances, whether to Kazavon or Mandraivus, and are equally dangerous to Brotherhood operatives and the PCs alike. Furthermore, no true worshiper of Zon-Kuthon can safely wield or even transport *Serithtial*. Likewise, there are denizens of Scarwall that remain accepting of worshipers of the Midnight Lord, yet actively oppose good-aligned folk. Clearly, the greatest chance of successfully exploring Scarwall and recovering *Serithtial* would arise from an alliance between the PCs and the Brotherhood of Bones. This is the proposition with which Laori and Sial approach the PCs.

Although Laori and Sial belong to the Brotherhood of Bones, they do not particularly enjoy each other's company. Sial finds Laori's exuberance and attitude to be shrill and unbecoming of a proper worshiper of the Midnight Lord, while Laori finds Sial to be arrogant and too self-centered to deserve a place of honor among the Brotherhood. Yet both know that recovering the *Crown of Fangs* is more important than their petty differences, considering that if they manage to recover the fangs of Kazavon and present them to the Brotherhood command

in distant Nidal, they will be rewarded with glory and fame. The two agents have spent the last several months operating on their own, feeding promising but ultimately false reports to their leaders every few weeks in order to maintain their support and funding. If their organization were to learn what they knew, all chance for glory would be lost to them as the Brotherhood moved en masse to recover the fangs. Yet on their own, they have no hope of recovering *Serithtial* and defeating Ileosa. In order for their plan to succeed, they must learn to work together as well as with the PCs.

Strive to present the pair as companions who seem more eager to please the PCs than each other. They explain that they have been following the events in Korvosa and the rise of Kazavon's influence over Queen Ileosa. If the PCs failed to ally with the Sklar-Quah, you can even use Sial and Laori to fill them in on much of the backstory they need. With the situation explained, Sial and Laori propose a truce.

By this point, you should be able to pick which of the two Brotherhood agents the PCs are likelier to trust and prefer to speak to. Once you can make this decision, that Brotherhood agent becomes the "Ally" while the other becomes the "Enemy." The Ally remains loyal to the PCs and truly does appreciate the aid, while the Enemy grows jealous and suspicious of the PCs' apparent favoritism toward the rival Brotherhood agent. The Enemy is quiet, allowing the Ally to conduct the majority of the interactions with the PCs, and for much of the adventure remains helpful as well. In some encounters in Scarwall, the Ally and the Enemy may take different actions (the Enemy might "accidently" catch a PC in the area of effect of a damaging spell, for example), and near the end of the adventure, the Enemy turns on the Ally in an attempt to seek revenge (see area **G7**).

If the PCs agree to a truce, the Ally explains that while the Brotherhood is very interested in Kazavon and his relics, Queen Ileosa doesn't really fit into their plans. They seek to destroy her and recover the draconic teeth from the *Crown of Fangs*. The Ally proposes that, for now, the PCs and the Brotherhood work together, or least not directly against each other, while navigating the dangers of Castle Scarwall to increase the likelihood that one or the other succeeds in obtaining the sword. Then, after *Serithtial* is safely recovered, they can determine what the next step should be.

If the PCs then agree to the alliance, the Ally rewards them by providing the PCs with Scarwall's exact location, potentially cutting days off their journey time. The Ally does not propose that the two groups travel together (the Ally fears that the Enemy may lose patience and do something irrational), but if the PCs propose such a step, the Ally agrees to it. Once the PCs reach Scarwall, the Ally suggests that they team up to pool their resources against what waits for them inside the haunted edifice.

Beyond this, the Ally can give the PCs a bit of Kazavon's history, in particular that the warlord seemed to be mad in more ways than one. His preference to live as a human rather than as a dragon (to the extent his castle was built for human comforts) certainly branded him as insane in the eyes of other dragons, and his vile and despicable acts against those who once called him ally ensured he would be remembered as a dangerous lunatic. Even in the church of Zon-Kuthon, Kazavon is regarded as an unstable zealot whose death did more to help the church's position than his life. Kazavon's flair for the overly dramatic made him an easy villain to hate, and as the Ally points out, giving the church's enemies a despicable monster to rally against is not a wise move for continued prosperity. They openly admit the Brotherhood has no intentions of seeing Kazavon brought back as a result—they merely covet his remains.

As this adventure unfolds, the text indicates areas where characters can attempt Knowledge checks to learn more about Scarwall's history. If the PCs are traveling with Sial and Laori, the Ally among the two can take 10 on these Knowledge checks if they have ranks, or attempt checks untrained if they do not. This represents the Ally's insider-access knowledge about Scarwall and its history.

The Brotherhood isn't interested in a fight at this time. If the PCs spurn the offer for an alliance and attack them, Laori and Sial retreat as quickly as possible, cursing the PCs and promising reprisals. Not long after they retreat, the two fall into a bitter argument and split up themselves, each seeking to infiltrate Scarwall separately. At this point, the PCs may encounter either of them inside the castle, as detailed later in the adventure.

LAORI VAUS **CR 10**

XP 9,600

hp 108 (see page 450)

SIAL **CR 11**

XP 12,800

hp 93 (see page 456)

ASYRA **CR —**

hp 94 (see page 456)

Story Award: If the PCs secure a working relationship with the two Brotherhood agents, award them 22,400 XP.

SCARWALL ENVIRONS

Castle Scarwall looms at the eastern tip of the Kodar Mountains in the northern part of the Hold of Belkzen. Once an active volcanic range, the volcanoes here have

long since gone dormant. Nonetheless, the volcanic activity left behind some truly remarkable terrain features, and Kazavon chose to build his new home among one of these. The castle sits atop a small island in a crater lake—the caldera of a dormant volcano at an elevation of 1,500 feet over the surrounding terrain. These barren hills are desolate, with little more than isolated scrub trees and lichens growing here and there. Wyverns, chimeras, and other flying predators sometimes nest in the crags along these ragged hills, but as the party approaches Scarwall, even these mighty beasts become scarce, as if the very air around the ruined castle were poisoned. The orc tribes of Belkzen rarely set foot in these hills, with one notable exception described below within the castle's barbican. Canny travelers can escape pursuing orc brigands by retreating to this ridge, although they must then contend with the denizens of Scarwall, so their respite may be brief.

Scarwall is an imposing collection of towers and fortifications. Clouds of dark carrion birds ride the winds above its heights, yet none dare perch atop them. A single span connects the castle to a small peninsula on the lake's southern edge, where a crumbling barbican still stands. Castle Scarwall is presented in full detail in the next part of the chapter. The PCs are free to approach it in any way they wish; the causeway connecting the castle to the southern gatehouse may seem the most direct approach, but for characters who can fly, entry by air might seem the safer route. An amphibious approach might appeal as well. In truth, all three approaches are perilous in their own way, as detailed below. While stealth can make any of these approaches safer, direct teleportation into the castle (or onto one of its roofs) is perhaps the safest approach, although doing so may result in danger if the PCs are forced to flee the castle on foot, thus causing them to face the orcs, worms, and gargoyles of the castle environs when their resources are depleted!

A SCARWALL BARBICAN

Guarding the only land approach to Castle Scarwall is a defensive gatehouse that stands at the tip of a small peninsula. This barbican consists of a crumbling curtain wall flanking the remains of two gatehouse towers, the western one of which has collapsed. The other tower, though battered, still stands and supports a ramshackle lean-to built against it.

The orc tribes of Belkzen well recall the days of being ground beneath Kazavon's heel and forced into hiding in the rugged northern badlands of Belkzen. Orc warlords speak solemnly of how glorious Scarwall's castle was, of how a "manling" defeated Kazavon only to be defeated by the orcs himself. Yet the warlords also recall how those who attempted to inhabit Scarwall faced the restless spirits of the accursed fortress. Few orcs who laid claim

to Scarwall after their victory lived to make it out again, and most of those who did were not altogether sane after experiencing the horrors within.

The orcs abandoned this terrible legacy and turned their efforts toward reclaiming the rest of Belkzen, leaving Scarwall to the ghosts of shame and defeat. Castle Scarwall was declared taboo to the orcs of Belkzen. Yet not all of the orcs have left Scarwall, and one tribe remains vigilant to guard the castle: the Deadwatchers. Led by a barbarian named Ury Sevenskulls, this small group of well-trained and dangerous orcs dwells in the ruined barbican. While their ancestors may have had specific goals in mind, today these orcs know only that they stand watch to ensure nothing goes in and nothing comes out of Scarwall. The Deadwatcher orcs paint their faces with white pigment to honor the legend of their ancestor's flight from Scarwall (a flight said to have turned his flesh white from the shock).

The barbican gate is in poor repair. The western gate tower is nothing more than a pile of rubble, though the eastern tower has fared better but remains in a state of crumbling decay requiring constant repair. The Deadwatcher orcs created some rough living quarters beside the tower to retain the use of its defensive qualities without taxing its structural integrity.

Although each of the areas in the barbican is detailed individually below, in all likelihood the entire Deadwatcher tribe rouses to the defense of the barbican once the orcs realize the PCs are intruding upon their territory. An all-out conflict with every orc at once is a CR 13 encounter.

A1 Forecourt

A cleared area sprawls before the barbican gate. Fragments of ancient bone and broken weaponry from ancient battles still clutter the thin soil.

Orc sentries in areas **A2** and **A11** keep a close eye on the barbican approach. If they spot the PCs approaching, they raise the alarm and prepare for a fight—the Deadwatchers have little interest in diplomacy!

Development: If the alarm is raised, the orcs spread through the barbican and ready their bows. Two orcs go to area **A7**, three go to area **A8**, and one goes to area **A12**. They focus their poison arrow attacks on characters who

wear heavy armor, hoping to weaken them enough that they become encumbered by their gear. The orcs do their best to prevent the PCs from entering Scarwall, but if the PCs do make their way through and approach Scarwall, the orcs do not pursue.

A2 Entryway (CR 7)

Two sets of gates once blocked the ends of this entryway, but they are long since gone. The surrounding structure is mostly intact to the southeast, but lies in ruins to the northwest.

Creature: One Deadwatcher orc is always posted on watch here.

DEADWATCHER ORC **CR 7**

XP 3,200

Orc fighter 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 222)

CE Medium humanoid (orc)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+7 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 72 (8d10+24)

Fort +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2 (+2 vs. fear)

Defensive Abilities ferocity

Weaknesses light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *+1 greataxe* +17/+12 (1d12+11/19–20/×3)

Ranged *+1 composite longbow* +11/+6 (1d8+6/×3)

Special Attacks weapon training (axes +1)

TACTICS

Before Combat Each orc has treated three of his arrows with shadow essence.

During Combat The orcs prefer to fight with their greataxes, but won't waste ranged advantage if they have it, firing arrows on the first rounds of combat to force foes to approach them first.

Morale The Deadwatcher orcs fight to the death as long as Ury lives. If their leader is killed, an orc flees once he's reduced to 12 hit points or fewer.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 8, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 25

Feats Blind-Fight, Greater Weapon Focus (greataxe), Improved Critical (greataxe), Improved Initiative, Point-Blank Shot, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Focus (greataxe), Weapon Specialization (greataxe)

Skills Stealth +12

Languages Common, Orc

SQ armor training 2

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, shadow essence (3; already applied to 3 arrows); **Other Gear** *+1 breastplate*, *+1 composite longbow* (+5 Str) with 20 arrows, *+1 greataxe*, 100 gp

A3 Ruined Tower

This gate tower is nothing more than a twenty-foot-high pile of rubble with a few fallen walls.

A4 Curtain Wall

The remains of this crumbling curtain wall are twenty feet high where they haven't collapsed.

The walls of this surviving structure can be scaled with a successful DC 20 Climb check.

A5 Causeway

Two leering gargoyles flank an arch at the entrance to the causeway that extends across the lake to Castle Scarwall.

A6 Deadwatcher Barracks (CR 11)

A crude wooden structure, obviously not part of the original barbican, leans awkwardly against the stone building to the south, a single rickety door hanging askew to the west.

Creatures: This building serves as a place to sleep for the six Deadwatcher orc fighters. Its 10-foot-high interior is smoky and stinks of orc sweat and worse. A ladder rises through a hole in the ceiling to the parapet at area **A8**.

DEADWATCHER ORCS (4) **CR 7**

XP 3,200 each

hp 72 each (see page 265)

A7 Defense Room

This vaulted chamber is still largely intact, with arrow slits looking out over the entry. Foul-smelling sacks and moldy crates lie heaped against the walls.

The orcs keep various mundane supplies and foodstuffs here (unpalatable by most standards).

A8 Parapets

These parapets are 20 feet above the ground.

A9 Foyer

Cracks and fissures riddle this room's the crumbling stone floor, which is apparently barely held aloft by the wood structure below.

Although the floor here looks cracked and unstable, it is safe to walk on.

A10 Sevenskulls's Chamber (CR 10)

A cot pushed against the stairway occupies this room, along with a huge black snake that's been poorly preserved, stuffed, and hung from the fifteen-foot-high ceiling.

The southeast door is barred from the inside.

Creature: This chamber is Ury Sevenskulls's home. Ury killed and stuffed the enormous nightbelly boa on display in this room, a feat the orc is inordinately proud of. The Deadwatchers go through chieftains rather frequently, but Ury has held the role for a record 3 years so far. Son of a war chief of the Rotten Tongue tribe, Ury is eager for something other than wild animals and relatively mindless monsters to fight, and engages the PCs eagerly.

URY SEVENSKULLS **CR 10**

XP 9,600

Male orc barbarian 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 222)

CE Medium humanoid (orc)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+5 armor, +3 Dex, +1 natural, –2 rage)

hp 143 (11d12+66)

Fort +12, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities ferocity, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3; **DR** 3/—

Weaknesses light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee *Akeraum* +20/+15/+10 (2d6+11/17–20), bite +13 (1d4+3)

Ranged *+1 composite longbow* +15/+10/+5 (1d8+8/×3)

Special Attacks greater rage (26 rounds/day), rage powers (animal fury, clear mind, guarded stance +2, increased damage reduction +1, no escape)

TACTICS

During Combat If the alarm is raised, Ury rages and moves to area **A8**, joining the orcs there to use his longbow. After a few rounds, he grows impatient and leaps from the parapet (attempting a DC 15 Acrobatics check to reduce the fall's damage) to attack the intruders in melee.

Morale Ury fights to the death, and pursues foes relentlessly—save for into Scarwall itself, where he will not go.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 16, **Con** 20, **Int** 6, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +18 (+22 sunder); **CMD** 29 (31 vs. sunder)

Feats Greater Sunder, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

Skills Intimidate +14, Perception +13

Languages Common, Orc

SQ fast movement

Gear *+1 chain shirt*, *+1 composite longbow* (+7 Str) with 20 arrows, *Akeraum* (*+1 dragon-bane greatsword*), *amulet of natural armor +1*, necklace of seven silver-plated red wyrmling skulls (worth 1,050 gp), 100 pp, 65 gp

A11 Watch Post (CR 7)

The sagging stone floor of this room is riddled with cracks and small holes that leave the lower wooden supports visible, or in some cases allow glimpses into the room below.

This chamber is unstable. If more than one Medium creature enters, the floor collapses into area **A10** below, dealing 2d6 damage (Reflex DC 15 half). The danger can be discerned with a successful DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) or DC 25 Perception check.

Creature: A single Deadwatcher orc is posted on sentry duty here. He understands the nature of the unstable floor and where to step safely, but if he sees a PC attempting to enter, he moves to area **A12** to avoid triggering a collapse.

DEADWATCHER ORC **CR 7**

XP 3,200

hp 72 (see page 265)

A12 Tower Parapet

Riddled with cracks and sagging, the floor of this open-air parapet seems unsafe.

This deteriorating battlement is 35 feet above the ground and has the same possibility of collapse as area **A11**.

Crater Lake (CR 13)

The waters of the crater lake surrounding Castle Scarwall are dark and preternaturally still, and almost seem to reflect the grim edifice without catching anything of the sky overhead (when they're not covered by a roiling bank of clammy gray fog). This deep mountain tarn serves as a final obstacle to invaders who would dare to try and breach Castle Scarwall. At its deepest point, the waters descend just over 800 feet. Tiny particles of basalt runoff and gritty algae give the water its dark sheen and bitter taste. The waters are cold—barely 40 degrees—and visibility under the surface is limited to 10 feet. The lake's shores are crumbling cliffs that drop, on average, 80 feet to the lake's surface below. It requires a successful DC 25 Climb check to scale these slippery, treacherous cliffs.

There are no underwater entrances to Scarwall, but there are various routes into the castle from the small island shores it sits upon. Area **B37** is perhaps the most notable one, although it isn't easy to spot from the water.

Creatures: Though the waters of the lake appear still and lifeless, they hide terrible things that swim in the deeps and cause barely a ripple on the surface. Inhabiting the tarn are several immense tarnworms that feed upon the lake's smaller eels, fish, and cephalopods. Any creature entering the water without attempting to utilize stealth quickly attracts the attention of one of these tarnworms, which quietly swims up from the depths to attack. A tarnworm is a huge, mottled, serpentine creature with the same effective statistics as an advanced purple worm, except that instead of having a burrow speed, it has the aquatic subtype and a swim speed of 40 feet.

TARNWORM **CR 13**

XP 25,600

Advanced variant purple worm (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 230)

hp 232

Air Approach (CR 13)

Castle Scarwall lies at the center of the lake, approximately 400 feet from shore in every direction.

Creatures: Flying characters may think the distance across the lake is a simple matter to traverse, but unless they use stealth, there's a good chance they are spotted by one or several of the eight, four-armed gargoyle brutes that nest in the castle's heights, at which point four of them swoop out to attack the PCs.

Alternatively, if the PCs approach via flight but stay close to the ground or the castle walls, the PCs are attacked by the banshee Aerilaya (area **D16**). The gargoyles have learned to stay away from the vengeful elven spirit when she moves to defend the castle from intruders.

AERILAYA **CR 13**

XP 25,600

Banshee (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 41)

hp 161

GARGOYLE BRUTES (4) **CR 9**

XP 6,400 each

Variant four-armed gargoyle (*Tome of Horrors Complete* 304)

CE Medium monstrous humanoid (earth)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)

hp 117 each (10d10+40)

Fort +7, **Ref** +9, **Will** +7

DR 10/magic

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee bite +13 (1d6+3), 4 claws +13 (1d6+3), gore +13 (1d6+3)

TACTICS

During Combat Gargoyle brutes wade into combat, focusing on a single foe if possible.

Morale These creatures do not retreat from combat.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 14, **Con** 18, **Int** 6, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 7

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 26

Feats Dodge, Hover, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor, Skill Focus (Fly)

Skills Fly +16, Perception +13, Stealth +11 (+15 in stony environs)

Languages Common, Terran

SQ freeze

PART 2

CASTLE SCARWALL

Castle Scarwall is among the most abominable sites in all of Belkzen. This expansive ruin is detailed fully on the following pages, with dozens of encounter areas ready to explore. A dungeon crawl of this size might not be to every table's taste, though—if you wish to run a simplified version of Castle Scarwall, make sure to check out the options and advice found on page 330 at the end of this chapter for making Castle Scarwall a more streamlined portion of your Curse of the Crimson Throne campaign.

As the PCs approach Scarwall, there should be a definite sense of a grim fate awaiting them. To set the scene, read or paraphrase the following.

Castle Scarwall looks every bit as foreboding as the legends say. Dark walls rise from darker bedrock to steep rooflines set with gargoyles and minarets. Battlements look down from towers and defensive walls, and many foul-feathered carrion birds soar above them. Mists rising off of the black tarn obscure the lower portions of the rocky island, giving the whole place an ethereal appearance. Surprisingly, even though the structure is many centuries old, its walls and roofs remain intact with no visible breaches or obvious signs of damage. A ghostly glow lights some of the windows and arrow slits, and now and then, faint flickerings betray the motion of creatures within.

SCARWALL FEATURES

Castle Scarwall's walls are composed of reinforced masonry; outer walls are 3 feet thick and inner walls are 1 foot thick (hardness 8, hp 180 per foot of thickness, break DC = 35 + 10 per foot of thickness). The exterior walls are smooth, but can be scaled with a successful DC 25 Climb check; the interior walls can be scaled with a successful DC 15 Climb check.

Doors are made of strong wood and can be locked from the inside (2 inches thick, hardness 5, hp 20, break DC 25, Disable Device DC 30), although few still have keys (a ring of them does exist in area **C3**). Unless otherwise noted, interior doors are unlocked, while all exterior doors (including those leading into the castle from the courtyard) are locked.

Floors are made of smooth flagstones, while roofs are constructed of wood with tin sheathing bolted over them (hardness 10, hp 60, break DC 25) and tend to be steep and slick with moisture (Climb DC 20).

Ceiling height in Castle Scarwall is 15 feet unless otherwise specified. Any light sources are noted in room descriptions, leaving the rest of the castle dark except for any natural light seeping in from outside or light sources carried by the party. Some torches and other small flames provide illumination in the castle; unless otherwise noted, these are all *continual flame* effects (CL 15th).

THE SCARWALL CURSE

Castle Scarwall is haunted not just by the souls of those who died in the final battle that brought down Kazavon, but also by those who have perished thereafter. The spirits of its first inhabitants, their victims, the heroes who defeated Kazavon, the orcs who defeated them, and an evil essence tied to horrific rites devoted to Zon-Kuthon have combined to infuse the castle from foundation to spire. This complex haunting manifests itself in many forms, some of which are merely sinister while others are downright deadly. One subtle manifestation is that at random times, different windows in the castle suddenly glow with a ghostly radiance, with that illumination remaining active anywhere from a few seconds to hours. Observers might notice indistinct shapes moving behind these lit windows, but no amount of skill or magic can actually determine who or what is being seen. The windows just as suddenly go dark an instant before any successful attempt to look closer is made. These ghost lights are visible from outside the castle only, and are merely an external manifestation of the restless spirits in the castle. They have no game effect.

Another side effect of the castle's haunting is that it always remains in relatively good repair (although not necessarily well maintained or clean). The force of the spirits infusing its walls ensures that their home endures and any damage inflicted to the structure is repaired. The repairs occur incrementally and are never observable, but any damage dealt, no matter how severe, is inevitably repaired by the time a year has passed. Doors, walls, and windows show cosmetic signs of aging and may be covered in dust, but much of the unused furniture in the castle has not fared so well, and is all but collapsed. This has no

effect on the adventure, as any damage the PCs inflict on the structure is not repaired unless they leave for several months and then return.

A final, and extremely important, aspect of the castle's haunted nature is that the majority of the spirits trapped in the castle, from the ones the PCs will never see that infuse the structure's walls to the majority of the undead foes they face in the adventure, are all under the sway of the chained spirit in area **C14**. The chained spirit functions as an anchor for these spirits, and as long as he retains his control, he can use the countless ghosts of Scarwall to watch and listen, giving the denizens of the castle a highly efficient organization against invasion. Also, any undead or spirits that enter the castle are swiftly assaulted by the chained spirit as he attempts to absorb and control them; this affects spirits allied to the PCs, such as a shaman's spirit (although not her spirit animal), a spiritualist's phantom, or Zellara herself, as detailed under Spiritual Doom on page 270.

KAZAVON

Beyond these broader effects, the curse has the following additional effects as well.

Aura of Menace: The presence of evil and undeath in Scarwall makes casting *detect evil* or *detect undead* dangerous. Anyone who does so becomes overwhelmed by the power of the aura, and in addition to not being able to detect specific undead or evil auras, must succeed at a DC 25 Will save or be stunned for 1 round by the power of the auras. *Detect magic* reveals a strong aura of necromancy throughout the castle, although this particular effect isn't strong enough to stun an observer.

Dread: All living creatures in the castle suffer from an eerie sense of foreboding and a feeling of being watched. As a result, resting in Castle Scarwall is problematic. Any character who tries to sleep within its walls is plagued by nightmares and bad omens, and must succeed at a DC 20 Will save upon waking to gain any benefits from sleep at all. Anyone who fails this save become fatigued and cannot prepare spells or regain expended spell slots. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

Phantasms: As long as the curse persists, certain encounter areas in Scarwall feature minor but disturbing manifestations of the curse that specifically target a PC with an unsettling event. Although these phantasms have no actual game effects, the fact that each requires the players to make specific checks or otherwise interact in a way that makes the event seem more significant should give these encounters a bit more weight. Some phantasms can even reveal minor tidbits about Scarwall's history, but overall, they exist to disturb the characters and their players. A phantasm occurs only once, regardless of how many times the PCs revisit the location. A creature that is immune to phantasm effects cannot be the subject of one of these effects. If your players seem to be more frustrated than entertained by phantasms, consider omitting further phantasms from play as they are not essential encounters and are meant only to build on the castle's eerie themes.

Soultrapping: When a living creature dies inside of Scarwall, it must succeed at a DC 23 Will save upon death or its soul becomes bound into the walls of the haunted castle. This effect is identical to that created by *soul bind* (CL 20th), save that the soul is trapped in the physical structure of the castle itself, not a gemstone. In order to resurrect a dead body whose soul has been trapped, a character must dispel the *soul bind* effect on that particular soul. If the caster knows the name of the soul to be released, he can attempt this dispelling anywhere in the castle; otherwise, he must cast the spell on the corpse (or a fragment thereof) of the person to be resurrected. A spellcaster must begin casting *resurrection* within 1 round of the successful dispelling, or the soul is reclaimed by Scarwall. *Dispel magic*, *greater dispel magic*, and *dispel evil* can be used to temporarily free a bound soul in this manner.

This soultrapping effect functions on living and undead creatures as well. Any undead creature created in Scarwall immediately becomes bound to Scarwall, as if by a hedged prison *binding* spell (no save). Undead creatures and living creatures that enter and remain in Scarwall for a week must succeed at a DC 22 Will save or be bound in the same way. If the save is successful, the creature must save again once every additional week it remains in Scarwall.

If the chained spirit is destroyed, all trapped souls in the castle are immediately freed and the curse of Scarwall is lifted (see Defeating Scarwall's Curse on page 270 for more details).

Suppression: As long as the curse persists, the potent blade *Serithtial* (currently found deep below the castle in area **H4**) has all of its powers and abilities suppressed. Even if brought out of Scarwall, the weapon functions merely as a masterwork longsword until the curse is lifted (although the sword retains the standard artifact quality of being nearly impossible to destroy).

Unhallow: The entirety of Castle Scarwall lies within a permanent *unhallow* effect. All of the castle's inhabitants

gain *protection from good*. The DC to resist negative channeled energy is increased by 4, and the DC to resist positive energy is reduced by 4. This effect also creates a *dimensional anchor* effect over all non-inhabitants of the castle (though this effect does not block summoning spells). This *unhallow* effect functions at CL 20th, and if dispelled, it automatically returns after 1d4 rounds of being suppressed.

Spiritual Doom

The living are not the only ones who have reasons to fear Scarwall. As soon as a PC bearing *Zellara's harrow deck* sets foot on the island or the causeway, the presence of a foreign spirit is immediately felt by the chained spirit Mithrodar in area **C14**, who promptly takes action to absorb this tantalizing new soul. Within 2 rounds, a noticeable breeze rises into a gale around the PCs. Vague shapes of faces and humanoid forms—the spirits of Scarwall's restless dead—can be seen in this wind. Their appearance forces the materialization of Zellara's ghost, recognizable as she manifests before the party. As they watch, she is suddenly assaulted from all sides by these ravenous souls, and though she tries to hold them back, the assault is obviously overwhelming. It is also brutally swift; each round, Zellara must succeed at a DC 25 Will save (her Will save is +7, but the PC who carries her deck can make his own saving throw instead against the effect for her if he wishes). If she fails, she is torn free and absorbed into the castle walls. This immediately reduces her deck to a nonmagical harrow deck. Now part of the haunting of Scarwall, she can be saved only by lifting the castle's curse.

The PC who bears the deck can prevent this doom from claiming Zellara by leaving Scarwall or the causeway before she is absorbed by the chained spirit. However, every time he returns with the deck in his possession (even if the deck is carried in an extradimensional container), the assault begins again. If the PCs wish to prevent Zellara's spiritual doom, they should likely find a safe place to store *Zellara's harrow deck* while they explore Scarwall.

This same condition has a much lessened but nonetheless noticeable effect on PCs who have class abilities directly tied to the spirit world, particularly shamans and spiritualists. Fortunately for these PCs, the close ties such spirits have to a living PC's soul helps to protect them somewhat from the curse, but nonetheless, there are complications, as detailed below. (Feel free to use the following notes to generate additional complications for other spiritual-themed class elements as you see fit, but strive to not make them instantly ruinous to a PC so affected!)

Magic Jar and Possession: A character who uses *astral projection*, *magic jar*, *possession*[OA], or a similar effect that causes his soul to leave his body must succeed at a DC 15 Will save upon initially activating the effect to resist being captured by Scarwall. On a failed save, the PC's soul is absorbed by the castle and held prisoner, as per *soul bind*. The PC's body does not die in this case, but remains comatose and may, in time, perish of thirst or starvation. If the *soul bind* effect (CL 20th) is dispelled, the PC's soul immediately returns to his body if it remains intact and alive, restoring the victim to life. A spellcaster who succeeds at a DC 25 Spellcraft check while casting a *magic jar*, *possession*[OA], or similar spell can notice the danger in time to abandon the spell. Doing so causes the spell to fail and still be expended as if cast (as if the spell were counterspelled) but does not expose the spellcaster to the *soul bind* effect.

Shaman Spirits: A shaman immediately feels that the spiritual presence in Scarwall is tainted upon first setting foot in the cursed castle. Her abilities are in large part unaffected, but in order to prepare spells or form a bond with a wandering spirit while within the castle, the shaman must succeed at a DC 15 caster level check. If she fails, she can't prepare spells or bond with the wandering spirit and can't attempt to do so again for 24 hours.

Speak with Dead and Speak with Haunt: Any attempt to speak to a dead body or a haunt within Castle Scarwall automatically fails. Instead of permitting the caster to contact the desired target, this spell allows the countless trapped souls in Scarwall to assault the caster with a blast of cacophonous sound. This sound is inaudible to anyone other than the caster, who must succeed at a DC 20 Fortitude save or be permanently deafened.

Spiritualist Phantom: Like a shaman, a spiritualist can feel the otherworldly taint on Scarwall upon entering the castle. A spiritualist's class abilities function normally, with the exception of her phantom. The bond with the spiritualist keeps her phantom from being absorbed upon entry into the castle, but as long as the curse persists, the phantom takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls and saving throws. Further, if a phantom is banished to the Ethereal Plane while within Castle Scarwall, the spiritualist suffers a negative level as the torment her spirit feels as the castle attempts (and fails) to wrest control away wreaks havoc on her mind. A successful DC 15 Fortitude save removes this negative level after 24 hours. A phantom that has been banished can't return to the spiritualist's consciousness while the spiritualist is within Castle Scarwall as long as the curse is active, but if the phantom is already active, it can follow its spiritualist into the castle with ease (although it still takes the above penalties to attacks and saving throws once within the walls).

Defeating Scarwall's Curse

Defeating the curse over Scarwall will not only make exploring the castle less dangerous, but also allows

Serithtial's magical properties to reemerge. This curse is too powerful and complex to be removed by a mere spell such as *remove curse* or *break enchantment*, as a successful DC 25 Spellcraft check from anyone specifically studying the necromantic aura of the curse can discern.

The curse over Scarwall persists largely due to the presence of the chained spirit Mithrodar (see area **C14** and page 468). This mighty undead force has anchored his existence in Scarwall to four powerful commanders (referred to in the text as "spirit anchors"). These spirit anchors are the umbral dragon Belshallam (area **B23**), the skeletal champion Castothrane (area **D1**), the devil Nihil (area **D14**), and the demilich Zev Ravenka (area **F11**). As long as all four of these spirit anchors survive, Mithrodar cannot be truly defeated, and as long as Mithrodar exists, Scarwall is destined to remain a cursed and haunted place. To lift the curse, the four spirit anchors must be defeated, and then Mithrodar himself must be destroyed. As the PCs succeed in defeating the spirit anchors one by one, the overwhelming evil in the castle begins to falter. Defeating or destroying the creature that acts as a spirit anchor is not the only way to remove its connection to Mithrodar, as certain spells can achieve the same end. See the Spirit Anchor special ability entry for the chained spirit on page 468 for more details.

One Spirit Anchor Defeated: The dread suffusing Scarwall fades; creatures can now sleep in the castle without fear of supernatural nightmares. Scarwall issues a silent scream that alerts all other undead in the structure that their realm is in danger. From this point on, until all four spirit anchors are defeated, undead in Scarwall gain channel resistance +4 in addition to effects of *unhallow*. (An undead creature that already has channel resistance has its bonus increased by 4.)

Two Spirit Anchors Defeated: The aura of menace in Scarwall vanishes; *detect evil* and *detect undead* now function normally. Shamans and spiritualists are no longer hampered by the curse.

Three Spirit Anchors Defeated: Spirits contained in the castle walls can no longer escape to roam the halls, and greater shadows, spectres, and wraiths no longer appear as random encounters. If you roll such results, treat them as no encounter.

All Spirit Anchors Defeated: The *unhallow* effect vanishes, along with the *dimensional lock* effect that affected all non-inhabitants of the castle. Mithrodar can now be defeated permanently. *Speak with dead* and *speak with haunt*[ACG] now function normally, as do spells like *magic jar* or *possession*[OA].

Replacing Anchors: The chained spirit Mithrodar can try to replace a defeated spirit anchor with a number of evil creatures in Scarwall. Ildervok (area **G7**) cannot be anchored, since the nightwing is here directly by Zon-Kuthon's will and thus enjoys protection from this fate, but most other denizens (undead or otherwise) could serve the role, as long as they are not mindless creatures (constructs like the golem in area **C4** can't become spirit anchors). Either Laori Vaus or Shadowcount Sial could make for interesting spirit anchors as well (see page 468 for details on how Mithrodar can chain new spirits). As new spirits are chained, the effects of the curse return in reverse order to the defeated effects listed above. Hopefully, the PCs defeat Mithrodar before he has a chance to reclaim a new anchor.

Map Key

Major encounter areas are indicated by a letter and a number. Area **A** refers to the barbican, which is detailed starting on page 263.

Area B: These encounter areas are on the first floor, and appear on the maps on page 275 and page 290.

Area C: These encounter areas are on the second floor, and appear on the map on page 299.

Area D: These encounter areas are on the third floor and in the towers, and appear on the map on page 306.

Area E: These encounter areas are in the War Tower, a section of the castle that is almost entirely cut off. These areas appear on the maps on page 275, 299, and 306.

Area F: These encounter areas are in the donjon, and appear on the maps on pages 275 and 299. Note that this numbering sequence starts on the latter map of the second floor on page 299, with the higher-numbered areas appearing on the map of the first floor on page 275, as access to the donjon is via the castle's upper works.

Area G: These encounter areas are in the Star Tower, and appear on the maps on pages 275, 299, and 324, starting at the top and working their way down.

Area H: These encounter areas are in the caverns deep below Scarwall, and appear on the map on page 324.

Stairs: The ways in which the floors of Scarwall connect can be vexing to those attempting to navigate the castle. Wherever a flight of stairs or a trap door provides access between floors, a small code number is assigned to the route. A stairwell marked "1" connects to another stairwell marked "1" on another map, "2" connects with "2," and so on.

Other Areas: Before Scarwall's fall, most of the old occupants of the castle used chamber pots, but the locations marked "R" are garderobes with holes that allow waste to fall out into the surrounding tarn. These holes are only three inches wide, but can be used via creatures using *gaseous form* or other magical effects to come and go from the castle. Locating a garderobe hole from the outside requires a successful DC 30 Perception check. Locations marked "T" are minor storage areas once used to hold everything from firewood to clothes to tools to drinking water. Only crumbled rust and debris remain in these locations.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Scarwall is large, but not so large that endless hordes of monsters prowl its halls. In most cases, the undead creatures the PCs face in Scarwall are drawn from a finite pool; likewise, there are a limited number of random encounters in the castle. The following table is a tool to generate additional encounters with Scarwall's denizens. There's no hard-and-fast time to check for these encounters, though. Do so as often or as infrequently as you wish in order to keep things exciting, but don't make the adventure an endless slog against waves of monsters. Should characters decide to spend the night in Scarwall, the chance of one of these random encounters interrupting their rest is 100% unless the PCs take some precaution and set up camp in a fortified or hidden area; if they do this, there's only a 40% chance of an encounter occurring. When an encounter occurs, you can either roll on the table below or simply pick the encounter that makes the most sense for the location.

d%	Result	Avg. CR
1–20	Lesser undead	—
21–40	Ghostly manifestation	—
41–60	1 Scarwall guard	6
61–75	Pegg and Loute	8
76–80	1d4 greater shadows	10
81–85	1 spectre and 1d8 wraiths	10
86–90	Knurlott	13
91–100	Proximity encounter	Variable

Lesser Undead: Scarwall is host to a small army of skeletons and zombies, none of which can seriously threaten a high-level party directly, but which can still cause problems by noticing the PCs and raising an alarm, or by simply being in the way when the PCs are attempting to move quickly through an area. In all, there are 44 human skeletons and 32 human zombies shambling around the halls of Scarwall. These undead rarely, if ever, enter numbered encounter areas.

Ghostly Manifestation: An assortment of ghostly manifestations can occur to add tension to the game. Some examples include echoing footsteps; strangely colored candlelight emanating from around a corner or in a room, but which fades away when approached; bloody footprints and drag marks; sounds of shuffling coming from behind supposedly solid walls; sudden changes in air pressure or temperature; doors mysteriously opening or closing; smells of decay or strange odors; whispered names; eerie laughter; or ripples running along a floor, wall, or ceiling like a wave rolling across the surface of a lake, with no discernible source or trace after it is gone. Many of these can coincide with attacks by some of the other randomly encountered monsters to keep your players from disregarding these manifestations as harmless.

Scarwall Guard: Kazavon used advanced minotaurs as elite guards in his castle. When the curse took hold, these guards rose to continue their patrols. Not counting skeletal minotaur guards that appear as part of an encounter, there are 12 of these undead patrolling the castle's halls. They can sometimes be found standing at silent attention in guard rooms as well.

SCARWALL GUARD **CR 6**

XP 2,400 each

Advanced minotaur skeletal champion (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 206, 252)

CE Large undead

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+3 Dex, +4 natural, –1 size)

hp 61 each (8d8+16)

Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +8; +4 bonus vs. channeled energy

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4; **DR** 5/ bludgeoning; **Immune** cold, undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk greataxe +13/+8 (3d6+10/×3), gore +7 (1d6+3)

Ranged mwk light crossbow +9 (2d6/19–20)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks powerful charge (gore +11, 2d6+6)

TACTICS

During Combat Scarwall guards open combat with a charge, then continue to fight with their melee weapons. They resort to crossbows only if they can't reach a victim.

Morale Scarwall guards fight until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 11, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +14 (+16 bull rush); **CMD** 27 (29 vs. bull rush)

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Intimidate +9, Perception +14, Stealth +7, Survival +14

Languages Giant

SQ natural cunning

Gear mwk greataxe, mwk light crossbow with 10 bolts

Pegg and Loute: These two ghosts were court jesters during Kazavon's reign. They spend long hours wandering the halls of Scarwall together in unlife, spasmodically carrying on their shenanigans and capering. See area **B26** for more details on these ghosts.

PEGG AND LOUTE **CR 6**

XP 2,400 each

hp 69 each (see page 292)

Incorporeal Undead: Periodically, some of the unquiet spirits trapped in the walls emerge, manifesting as greater shadows, spectres, or wraiths. These incorporeal undead spend several hours wandering Scarwall before being reabsorbed. The number of these undead that can be encountered in Scarwall is effectively limitless.

GREATER SHADOW **CR 8**

XP 4,800

hp 58 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 245)

SPECTRE **CR 7**

XP 3,200

hp 52 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 256)

WRAITH **CR 5**

XP 1,600

hp 47 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 281)

Knurlott: Once an officer in Kazavon's army, Knurlott exists now as a graveknight. He spends much of his time patrolling the castle grounds, and attacks any foes he encounters. If the PCs defeat him but don't destroy his armor, he rejuvenates in area **B10**.

KNURLOTT **CR 13**

XP 12,800

hp 178 (see page 281)

Proximity Encounter: In this encounter, one of the creatures dwelling in a nearby room has wandered out and runs into the PCs, effectively triggering that creature's encounter early.

The Lords of Scarwall

Beyond the rank-and-file undead that dwell in Scarwall, several dangerous and powerful unique NPCs command different sections of the castle. Many of these guardians held positions of power in Kazavon's army in life, and they continue to do so in death, yet not necessarily in ways that complement their fellows. Canny PCs could potentially play these NPCs against each other. The key lords and the regions they control are listed below. In addition, four of the lords function as spirit anchors for the chained spirit Mithrodar; destroying them also lessens the overall strength of the evil inside the castle, as detailed on page 270.

Aerilaya: Kazavon retained few arcanists among his minions, but one of his more dangerous spellcasting agents was the magus Aerilaya, who served in life as an assassin and in death lingers on as a banshee who keeps watch over the skies above Scarwall.

Anizora: Now a somewhat debilitated dybbuk, Anizora once served Scarwall as its hunt commander, the officer in charge of skirmishes and individual missions outside the castle walls, as opposed to its war commander (who was in charge of platoon-based missions). She also served as Scarwall's primary metalworker, and now rules a small portion of the castle's second floor near her old smithy.

Aruth: Zev Ravenka's second-in-command, Prelate Aruth lingers on in the castle donjon as a mummy lord, still subservient to the demilich in his new undead state.

Belshallam (spirit anchor): The umbral dragon Belshallam is now bound to Scarwall as surely as the castle's other denizens. Belshallam controls the War Tower and garrison, although he has little real interest in what goes on beyond his lair (area **B23**). He is one of the spirit anchors tied to Mithrodar.

Castothrane (spirit anchor): Once serving as the captain of the guard in Scarwall, Castothrane

SCARWALL GUARD

commands several skeletal undead in the castle gatehouse. He is one of Mithrodar's spirit anchors.

Danse Macabre: The danse macabre is not part of Mithrodar's network of spirit anchors. Indeed, the danse macabre is a danger to all of the denizens of Scarwall, who leave it to its eternal dancing and haunting in the Rosette Observatory at the farthest end of the guest wing.

Gorstav: Originally the commander of Kazavon's armies, General Gorstav was executed by Kazavon for failing to prevent Mandraivus's invasion, only a few short minutes before the cabal confronted Kazavon directly in the Star Tower. Gorstav exists now as a shadow of his former glory as a juju zombie.

Glimkarus: A relative newcomer to Scarwall, the bogeyman Glimkarus was lured to the castle by its notorious legend. He's long since succumbed to the castle's curse, but now believes that it is his choice to remain in the haunted castle.

Ildervok: A more recent addition to Scarwall's defenders, the nightwing Ildervok was sent by Zon-Kuthon to guard the Star Tower until a new curate of that sacred place could be found. Ildervok is bound to Scarwall not by the chained spirit, but by Zon-Kuthon's will.

Kleestad: In life, Kleestad was Kazavon's chamberlain. It was in large part due to Kleestad's betrayal that the invasion of Scarwall by Mandraivus's cabal was so successful. The simpering chamberlain fled into the lava tunnels below Scarwall to escape Kazavon's wrath, but was not able to avoid Zon-Kuthon's displeasure. He lives on deep under the castle, existing in a cursed state as a creature known as a pharmakos.

Knurlott: In life, Knurlott was the most accomplished of the second-rank officers who served Kazavon. Today, Knurlott exists as a graveknight, bound to the castle forever as a guardian.

Lashton: Once the watch commander of Scarwall and thus the man in charge of controlling soldier activities within the castle walls, Lashton currently guards the causeway entrance to Scarwall.

Mithrodar: Mithrodar, once Scarwall's castellan, is a rare form of undead with the capacity to anchor other creatures to areas near his domain. As long as his four anchor spirits exist, Mithrodar cannot be permanently slain. His domain is the main keep.

Nihil (spirit anchor): This fearsome devil was gifted to Kazavon by Zon-Kuthon himself to serve as an assassin. Nihil continues to dwell here, bound to the region now not by any lingering loyalty to Kazavon, but by Mithrodar's spiritual anchors.

Risibeth: The sayona Risibeth used to serve Kazavon as Scarwall's war commander, and was in charge of coordinating troop movements outside of Scarwall's walls. Today, she languishes in the War Tower, and if the PCs agree to her disturbing request for blood, can become an unexpected source of intelligence about Scarwall's history.

Ukwar: Ukwar came to Scarwall long after Kazavon's death, the only one of the Deadwatcher orc chieftains to succumb to the castle's fell lure. Now a nearly indestructible undead fext, Ukwar rules the castle's guest wing, where she is served by the restless spirits of many other undead orcs.

Zev Ravenka (spirit anchor): Perhaps the most dangerous of the creatures bound in Scarwall is Zev Ravenka. Even during Kazavon's reign, this cruel and sadistic man was undead—a lich cleric who served as Kazavon's religious adviser. Zev has transcended his lichdom now, though, and exists as both a demilich and a spirit anchor. His realm is the chapel.

B First Floor

The first floor of Scarwall technically includes the lowest level of the donjon, but this area is covered in a separate section beginning on page 318 and has no direct access point from this floor. Random encounters function normally on the first floor of Scarwall. These encounter locations are on the maps on pages 275 and 290.

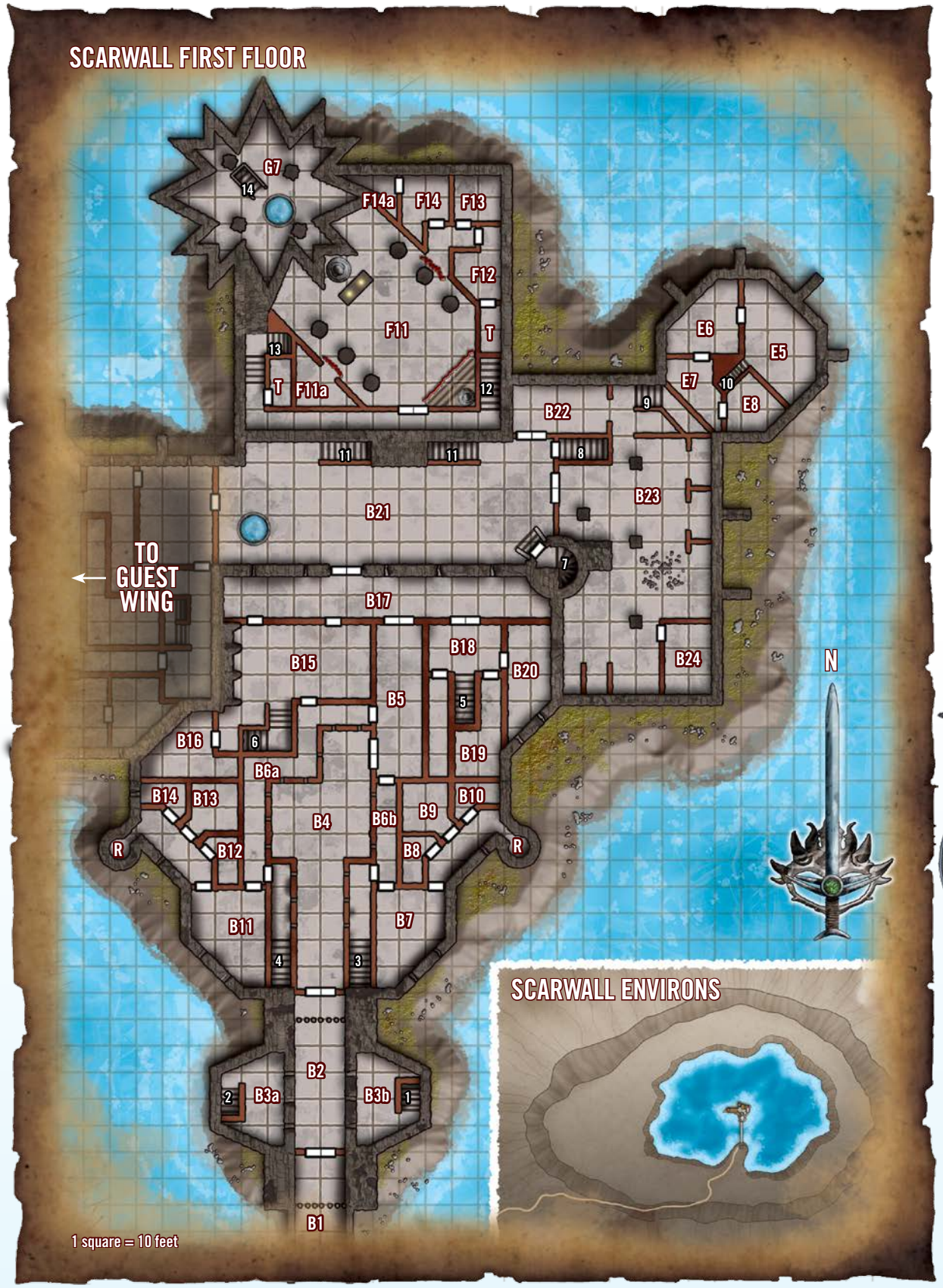
B1 Causeway (CR 12)

A high bridge crosses the vast expanse of black water between the barbican gate and the entrance to Castle Scarwall. The bridge is ornate and in excellent condition, with only a few tenacious patches of moss and lichen clinging to it here and there. High arching columns reaching from the waters below support the broad span, each marked by a pair of sinister gargoyles that stare out over the dark lake. A larger pair of these statues flanks a great archway that encompasses the near end of the bridge.

This causeway lies within the area of the spiritual influence that surrounds Castle Scarwall and slowly repairs itself in unnoticeably incremental stages. The causeway is 20 feet wide with a low, 3-foot balustrade on each side. Its entire length is smoothly cobbled. It stands 80 feet above the surface of the lake and is 400 feet long. The gargoyles along its length are stationed in pairs every 40 feet.

Castle Scarwall's front gate looms at the end of the long causeway, flanked by twin statues of warriors standing at attention. Pale flames rise from the tips of their spears 30 feet above. Torches are set into the entryway tunnel leading to the main gates themselves, providing illumination. The massive gates are closed, and a lowered iron portcullis further bars unauthorized entrance.

This area seems deserted, but is in fact under constant watch by the Scarwall guards in the gatehouse's second floor (area **C1**). If the PCs simply approach openly, those minotaurs fire upon them through the arrow slits above.


SCARWALL FIRST FLOOR
G7
14
F14a
F14
F13
F12
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13
T
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12
E6
E5
E7
10
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B22
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11
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B23
B21
TO GUEST WING
7
B17
B18
B15
B20
B24
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B16
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B19
B6a
B14
B13
B10
B4
B6b
B9
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B12
B8
R
B11
B7
4
3
B2
2
B3a
B3b
1
B1
1 square = 10 feet
N
SCARWALL ENVIRONS

The portcullises here are lowered (hardness 10, hp 60, lift DC 25), and the gates are closed and locked (hardness 5, hp 50, break DC 28, Disable Device DC 30).

Creatures: The causeway is under the watchful glare of several undead that dwell in Scarwall's gatehouse. As soon as any group reaches the midway point along the causeway, the gates and portcullises open to allow the initial guardians of Scarwall out. These consist of a platoon of 12 armored human skeletons led by a dread skeleton fighter astride a skeletal nightmare. In life, the fighter, named Lashton, served under Kazavon, although in his new undead state, he remembers only tiny fragments of his former life and his existence is singularly focused on defending the causeway from intruders.

In the unlikely event that the PCs have recovered Lashton's locket from area **B8**, he can sense if they carry it and holds off the attack, demanding the locket's immediate return. If the PCs acquiesce and give him the locket, the undead fighter gazes mournfully at the picture within the locket for a round before crumbling to dust. In this case, his remaining skeletons and mount immediately attack, but the PCs need not face the watch commander.

LASHTON

LASHTON **CR 10**

XP 9,600

Dread skeleton human fighter 10 (*Advanced Bestiary* 107)
LE Medium undead (humanoid, human)
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +11
Aura unnatural aura (30 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 12, flat-footed 24 (+10 armor, +2 Dex, +2 natural, +2 shield)
hp 119 (10d10+60)
Fort +11, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4 (+3 vs. fear); +2 bonus vs. channeled energy
Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2; **DR** 10/ bludgeoning; **Immune** cold, undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee *+2 lance* +18/+13 (1d8+10/19–20/×3) or mwk longsword +16/+11 (1d8+6/19–20)
Special Attacks command skeletons (DC 14), weapon training (spears +2, heavy blades +1)

TACTICS

During Combat Lashton commands the skeletons under his service to set up flanking opportunities or to harry and distract intruders. He fights from atop his skeletal nightmare, preferring attacks with his lance.
Morale Lashton fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 15, **Con** —, **Int** 10, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 18
Base Atk +10; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 25
Feats Greater Weapon Focus (lance), Improved Critical (lance), Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Toughness, Trample, Weapon Focus (lance), Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (lance), Weapon Specialization (longsword)
Skills Intimidate +17, Perception +11, Ride +12
Languages Common
SQ armor training 2
Gear *+1 full plate*, *+1 buckler*, *+2 lance*, mwk longsword

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Command Skeletons (Su) As a free action, Lashton can automatically command all normal skeletons within 30 feet of him (as per *command undead*, CL 10th). He is able to command skeletal champions, but they can attempt a DC 16 Will save to resist his command. Normal skeletons will never attack Lashton unless compelled to do so.

SKELETAL NIGHTMARE **CR 6**

XP 2,400

Advanced nightmare skeletal champion (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 216, 252)

NE Large undead (evil, extraplanar)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural, –1 size)

hp 69 (8d8+24)

Fort +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +9; +4 bonus vs. channeled energy

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4; **DR** 5/ bludgeoning; **Immune** cold, undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 90 ft. (good)

Melee bite +12 (1d4+7), 2 hooves +7 (1d6+3)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +9)

1/day—*plane shift* (self plus 1 rider only; currently not usable; DC 18)

TACTICS

During Combat The skeletal nightmare follows Lashton's commands unerringly, taking attacks as directed by him. As long as Scarwall remains cursed, it can't use its *plane shift* ability.

Morale The skeletal nightmare fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 21, **Con** —, **Int** 17, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 30 (34 vs. trip)

Feats Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Run

Skills Fly +18, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (planes) +11, Perception +13, Sense Motive +13, Stealth +9, Survival +14

Languages Abyssal, Infernal

SQ smoke

SKELETAL CHAMPIONS (12) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 17 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 252)

B2 Entry Corridor

Rows of arrow slits line the eastern and western walls of this hallway, and murder holes look down from above. The far end is blocked by a heavy gate with an iron portcullis set before it. Lining the length of the corridor are dozens of orc skeletons and scattered bones, many still clad in damaged pieces of armor and clinging to rusted weapons.

When the orcs of Belkzen broke through the main gates centuries ago, they met stiff resistance from the small band of mercenaries who remained behind with Mandraivus to keep watch over Scarwall. The orcs eventually fought their way through to defeat them, but their victory was short-lived as the ghostly inhabitants of the castle struck them down soon after.

Development: Watch Commander Lashton and his skeletal minions wait patiently here for intruders to make it halfway across the causeway (area **B1**). He then signals the skeletons in area **C1** above to open the gates to allow him and his minions out to defend Scarwall. If the PCs enter Scarwall from a different direction and have not already encountered these undead on the causeway, they are encountered here. The skeletons do their best to fight intruders who approach from the north, but the cramped quarters are likely to make a battle here favor the PCs.

In addition, on the first round of combat, the skeletal guards stationed in the room above empty the troughs of supernatural oil, causing the freezing fluid to cascade down into this room. All creatures in the room take 6d6 points of cold damage from the icy cascade (Reflex DC 15 half).

B3 Watchposts (CR 8)

Arrow slits in this room's longest wall allow observation of the castle's entrance hall from this barren room. A flight of stairs leads up along the room's opposite wall.

The stairs in **B3a** lead up to area **C2a**, while those in **B3b** lead up to area **C2b**. There is no easy way to enter either of these watchposts from area **B2**.

Creatures: Kazavon's original gatehouse defenders, minotaur mercenaries, were charged not only with keeping intruders out, but also with keeping any of his own recalcitrant troops in. These minotaurs were slain by Mandraivus and his band, rising later as undead skeletons. Two of them guard each of these rooms. They defend the entry corridor (area **B2**), firing on any living creatures therein, but they don't pursue foes beyond the gatehouse.

SCARWALL GUARDS (2 PER ROOM) **CR 6**

XP 2,400 each

hp 61 each (see page 272)

B4 Death Chamber (CR 13)

The scene in this large chamber is stomach-turning. Bodies lie everywhere, orc and human alike. Judging by the sprawled and mutilated nature of the corpses, they fought brutally before succumbing to their wounds, dying in heaps on the floor. Many corpses are riddled with arrows and crossbow bolts, and a few appear to have perished while locked in mortal combat and still hold weapons embedded in various parts of each other's anatomy. Strangely, while the room reeks of death, the bloodstains on the walls and floor seem incredibly ancient.

This chamber is where Mandraivus's army held off the orc invaders for the longest, all of them eventually killed, but not before slaughtering dozens of orcs. While the bodies here may seem recent, they are in fact hundreds of years old, kept from rotting by the necromantic auras in the walls. Any corpse in this room is infused with a *gentle repose* effect, so the dead bodies remain fresh reminders of the last major battle to take place in Scarwall's halls.

Creature: A strange and sinister recent arrival to Scarwall dwells here, drawn by the tantalizing and permanent supply of non-decaying body parts. This immense oozelike creature is a monster known as a corpse orgy. Actually an aberration, the corpse orgy absorbs cadavers and makes them part of its body—the huge mound of corpses in the northwest corner of the room is in fact the creature itself, sitting quietly and watching through its dozens of eyes. The disgusting monster intended to dwell here only as long as it took to absorb the bodies in the room before moving on, but it has become ensnared by Scarwall's malevolence and is now supernaturally sustained by these same unholy energies.

Over the months the corpse orgy has been here, the creature has slipped further into dementia, and can no longer tell its own mind apart from the thoughts of the orcs and humans whose bodies it has absorbed. The creature sees itself as the true heir of Scarwall, and any new living creatures that enter the room are seen as fragments of its body returning to rejoin their original host. As it notices the PCs, the creature speaks to them, welcoming them "home" before scuttling forth on dozens of arms and legs in a horrific attempt to embrace and absorb its "wayward children." That it talks in Aklo only further enhances its bizarre and disturbing welcome.

CORPSE ORGY **CR 13**

XP 25,600

CE Large aberration (*Tome of Horrors Complete* 121)

Init +4; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +28

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 9, flat-footed 24 (+15 natural, –1 size)

hp 199 (19d8+114)

Fort +14, **Ref** +8, **Will** +15

DR 10/piercing or slashing

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 4 slams +20 (2d6+6 plus grab)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks absorb body, pain shriek

TACTICS

During Combat Upon attacking, the corpse orgy immediately looses a pain shriek. It then relies on its undeadlike appearance to cause opponents to waste channel energy attempts and other undead-affecting attacks against it.

Morale If reduced to 30 hit points or fewer, the corpse orgy attempts to flee deeper into Scarwall, but it fights to the death if cornered.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 10, **Con** 23, **Int** 14, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +14; **CMB** +21 (+23 bull rush, +25 grapple); **CMD** 31 (33 vs. bull rush, can't be tripped)

Feats Blind-Fight, Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Lunge, Power Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Climb +19, Escape Artist +15, Intimidate +25, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +20, Perception +28, Sense Motive +24, Stealth +11, Survival +13

Languages Aklo, Common, Undercommon

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Absorb Body (Su) A corpse orgy can absorb the physical body of any creature that has been reduced to 0 hit points or fewer by moving over it and remaining in contact with it for at least 1 full round. A living opponent can attempt a DC 25 Fortitude save to resist absorption. A dead body gets no saving throw. When it absorbs a body, the corpse orgy gains 12 temporary hit points. A creature that was not yet dead dies immediately upon being absorbed. When a creature's body is absorbed, it can be raised or resurrected only if the corpse orgy that absorbed the body is slain. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Pain Shriek (Su) Twice per day as a standard action, a corpse orgy can unleash a piercing shriek from the various heads captured in its form. This shriek deals 10d6 points of sonic damage to all living creatures within a 40-foot radius. Affected creatures can attempt a DC 22 Fortitude save for half damage. This is a sonic effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

B5 Mandraivus's Fall (CR 14)

The double door between this hall and area **B4** is barred from the eastern side with a heavy iron crossbar (break DC 30).

Tattered bits of ruined tapestries line the walls of this hallway—wispy filaments of rotting cloth that hang limp and forgotten. Ancient bones from scattered skeletons lie on the floor amid bits of broken weaponry and armor. Only one skeleton seems to remain whole, slumped against the northeastern corner, clad in dust-caked full plate armor.

When the orcs invaded Scarwall, Mandraivus and his soldiers held them off for some time in area **B4** before retreating to this room. One by one, Mandraivus's final guards fell to the invaders until only Mandraivus remained alive. The orcs finally overwhelmed him here.

But as the orcs delivered the final blow and Mandraivus's presence in the castle ended, the latent spirits within Scarwall rose in triumph. It didn't take the malevolent, wrathful dead long to slaughter the orcs and drive them out of the castle, claiming the building as their own. Bold Mandraivus, victor of a hundred battles, hero of Ustalav, and slayer of Kazavon, lies here still, his skeleton slumped ignobly among those of his foes and servants, an anonymous tomb for a great hero.

Haunt: Two rounds after a living creature enters this room, the silence of the ancient, dead castle suddenly shatters. The hall fills with a cacophony of clashing weapons and battle cries intermingled with the screams of the dead and dying. Individual words are impossible to discern, but as the sounds reach a crescendo of violence, smoky black shapes boil up out of the bones and swirl into a vortex of angry shrieking spirits. The wailing of these spirits may be enough to drive those caught inside the room to madness.

VORTEX OF MADNESS **CR 10**

XP 9,600

CE haunt (area **B5**)

Caster Level 10th

Notice Perception DC 25 (to hear the faint sounds of battle)

hp 20; **Trigger** proximity (2 round onset delay); **Reset** 1 minute

Effect As the storm of shrieking spirits churns into an overwhelming vortex, every creature in this room must attempt a DC 19 Will save or be driven temporarily insane, as per *confusion* heightened to 6th level.

Destruction If the curse affecting Scarwall is lifted, this haunt fades away.

Creature: The vortex of madness here is merely the first danger PCs may face in this room. The round after the vortex collapses, a towering smoky form rises from the plate-mail-clad bones in the corner. This cursed and wrathful spirit is none other than Mandraivus, driven to madness by his centuries of imprisonment in Scarwall. He appears as a shadowy, muscular humanoid made of dark mist. Two yellow eyes glow deep inside the sockets of his skull-like face. Mandraivus's stricken soul now exists as a powerful wraith. Almost all shreds of his actual personality have long since faded, and his hatred is now all that remains.

MANDRAIVUS THE LOST **CR 13**

XP 25,600

Unique advanced wraith (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 281)

LE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., lifesense 60 ft.; Perception +19

Aura unnatural aura (30 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 24, flat-footed 18 (+8 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 182 (12d8+96)

Fort +12, **Ref** +9, **Will** +12

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2, incorporeal; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee incorporeal touch +14 touch (1d6 negative energy/19–20 plus 1d6 Con drain)

Special Attacks ability drain (DC 24)

TACTICS

During Combat A paladin in life, Mandraivus focuses on characters who remind him of his former existence. Paladins, heavily armored fighters, and clerics of militant or good deities are his favored targets, but anyone who wields a bastard sword trumps all others. As he lunges at such a target, he shrieks, "You shall not have Serithtial! It is mine and no other's!"

Morale Mandraivus fights until he is destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 20, **Con** —, **Int** 18, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 26

MANDRAIVUS THE LOST

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 33
Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (incorporeal touch), Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spring Attack
Skills Acrobatics +17, Fly +24, Intimidate +23, Knowledge (history) +16, Knowledge (religion) +19, Perception +19, Sense Motive +19, Stealth +20
Languages Ancient Osiriani, Celestial, Common, Orc, Varisian
SQ create spawn, sunlight powerlessness

Treasure: Most of Mandraivus's gear has long since been claimed by other denizens of the castle, but his full plate, which is a suit of *celestial armor* bearing heraldry from the nation of Lastwall, was too unsettling for the vile denizens to handle. Thus, it has stayed untouched on his remains for centuries.

B6 Defense Corridors (CR 11)

This nondescript corridor has arrow slits spaced along one wall, looking out into the main keep's entry corridor. Human bodies in chain shirts lie on the floor among the broken remains of shortbows and quivers of arrows. Curls of yellow smoke waft among the bones and ruined weapons.

Scarwall has two defense corridors, with **B6a** being longer and more twisting than **B6b**. Both were once used by the castle's defenders to riddle castle invaders with arrows, but today, the remains found here are the unfortunate soldiers who once served Mandraivus, only to die choking deaths when alchemists among the orc invaders used poison gas to slaughter the defenders while battle raged within area **B4**. The wisps of yellow smoke are a remnant of this toxic death maintained by the castle's curse and form a harmless but eerie manifestation.

Creatures: The numerous bodies lying around in area **B6b** are just harmless skeletons; however, six of those in areas **B6a** are actually juju zombies controlled by a trench mist that rose from the choking spirits of the slain after the curse descended on Scarwall. The trench mist and juju zombies remain quiescent until anyone enters area **B6a**, at which point the zombies rise with raspy cries, clutching short swords as they step forward to defend the corridor. The trench mist suffuses the floor and walls of the hallway, and as a fight begins, it wells up amid the juju zombies to engulf the PCs, using its amorphous ability to conform to the hall's shape as needed. Once roused, the zombies and the mist pursue foes throughout the whole castle.

TRENCH MIST **CR 10**
XP 9,600
hp 127 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 250)

JUJU ZOMBIES (6) **CR 2**
XP 600 each
hp 15 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 291)

B7 Eastern Guard Quarters

Several dust-covered bunks, each large enough to hold a creature slightly larger than a bulky human, sag along the walls of this dreary, chilly room. Arrow slits look out over the tarn, yet these do little but let in the damp and cold, as if the wind itself were loath to enter Scarwall. A message seems to have been scrawled in blood on the west wall. An orc's body, still clad in hide armor and clutching an obsidian battleaxe, lies facedown below the writing.

This room was where several of Kazavon's minotaur guards slept.

Although the Deadwatcher orcs fear Scarwall, now and then the castle's influence reaches out to one of the superstitious barbarians and instills an orc with an overwhelming urge to cross the causeway and enter Scarwall. The Deadwatchers call this condition "going spirit-skulled," and without exception, orcs who succumb to this compulsion are never seen beyond the castle's walls again. The orc found lying here was the latest victim, and her body is several weeks old. The message scrawled on the wall was written in the orc's own blood and reads, in Orc, "Beware of Ukwar." Ukwar is, perhaps, the most notorious of the spirit-skulled orcs, for she alone "survived" her stay in Scarwall long enough to be affected by the curse and become another of its undead guardians (see area **B29** for more details on this dangerous denizen).

A *speak with dead* spell cast on the orc's body (an act that requires it to be hauled out of the castle if the curse is still in effect) can reveal the reason this orc (named Gralka in life, she was chaotic evil and had a +5 Will save) came into the castle. Asked about "Ukwar," the dead orc shrieks in fear, saying, "She hunts me still! Death is no escape from Ukwar!"

Treasure: The dead orc still wears a suit of *rhino hide* and clutches a *+1 undead-bane obsidian*[UE] *battleaxe*, but her other gear is relatively unremarkable.

B8 Watch Commander's Office

A ruined bunk lies in splinters to the south, along with other broken bits of furniture that might have once been a weapon rack and an armor stand.

This room was the personal quarters for Scarwall's watch commander, Lashton, who now eternally guards the castle causeway (see area **B1**).

Treasure: A successful DC 30 Perception check uncovers a gold locket amid the rubble. The locket is worth 150 gp, and contains a tiny portrait of a beautiful woman. The back bears an inscription: "Remember me and come home safe, my Lashton!"

B9 Quartermaster's Chamber

A moldy bunk sits against the west wall here, next to a desk heaped with rotting scrolls. A rusty iron footlocker sits at the foot of the bed.

This chamber was home to Scarwall's quartermaster, a petty man who perished when the Esoteric Order stormed the castle. The scrolls on the desk contained accounts for the castle's resources, but any information they once held has been destroyed by the damp.

Phantasm: The first character to investigate the scrolls on the desk must attempt a Perception check. Regardless of the result, write the character's name on a piece of scrap paper nearby. This action has no meaning and is simply intended only to make that player nervous. A moment later, that character is seized with a sudden panic as he realizes that there's simply not enough supplies in Scarwall to defend the place against Mandraivus, followed by an urge to run up to the gatehouse parapets (area **D2a**) and hurl himself off the edge before Kazavon punishes him for the failure. The urge passes quickly, but leaves the character with knowledge of the layout of the gatehouse (areas **B2**, **B3**, **C1**, **C2**, **D1**, and **D2**).

Treasure: The footlocker is rusted shut and must be forced open (break DC 18). Inside are several rusted weapons, a few broken potions, an intact potion that has spoiled and become a *potion of poison*, and a rotten leather sack containing 34 pp, 49 gp, and a silver ring decorated with a jade scarab worth 250 gp.

B10 Eastern Officer's Quarters (CR 11)

Two double bunks sit against the north wall of this otherwise empty room. The sheets on the bunks are tattered and moldy.

Creature: This room was used by four of Kazavon's officers. Most of these were humans who perished in the fighting against Mandraivus, but one of them, a brutal fighter named Knurlott, lasted longer than the others and held the line long enough for Kazavon to retreat deeper into the castle. After the curse took hold, Knurlott returned to unlife as a graveknight. If the PCs haven't fought him in a random encounter yet (or if they have but didn't manage to destroy his armor), they encounter the graveknight here. In this case, Knurlott sits forlornly on one of the bunks, clad in his armor, begging Kazavon over and over for forgiveness for not repulsing the humans. When the PCs enter, he shrieks in delight, saying, "This time I shall not fail you, Master Kazavon!" as he attacks.

KNURLOTT **CR 13**

XP 25,600

Male human graveknight fighter 12 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 138)

CE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +23

Aura sacrilegious aura (30 ft., DC 21)

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 13, flat-footed 26 (+12 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural)

hp 178 (12d10+108)
Fort +15, **Ref** +8, **Will** +11 (+3 vs. fear)
Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, rejuvenation; **DR** 10/magic; **Immune** acid, cold, electricity, undead traits; **SR** 24

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee *+2 cold iron greatsword* +26/+21/+16 (2d6+19/17–20 plus 3d6 acid) or
armor spikes +21/+16/+11 (1d6+9 plus 3d6 acid) or
slam +15 (1d4+5)
Special Attacks channel destruction (3d6 acid), devastating blast (8d6 acid, DC 21, 3/day), undead mastery (60 HD, DC 21), weapon trainings (heavy blades +2, close +1)

TACTICS

During Combat Knurlott prefers fighting in melee with his greatsword, and uses Power Attack with Greater Sunder when he must move to reach a foe. Otherwise, he makes full attacks with Power Attack, focusing his wrath on heavily armored foes first and trusting to his spell resistance and other immunities to protect him from magic attacks. He relies entirely on his channel destruction and devastating blast for ranged combat, and faced with a foe against whom these tactics are not viable, Knurlott retreats into Scarwall to recruit allies or to lure the enemy into an area where he can fight them more efficiently.
Morale Knurlott fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** 10, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 20
Base Atk +12; **CMB** +18 (+20 bull rush, +22 sunder); **CMD** 31 (33 vs. bull rush, 33 vs. sunder)
Feats Bleeding Critical, Critical Focus, Dodge, Greater Sunder, Greater Weapon Focus (greatsword), Greater Weapon Specialization (greatsword), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-by Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword)
Skills Intimidate +28, Perception +23, Ride +8, Sense Motive +15
Languages Common, Hallit
SQ armor training 3, graveknight armor, phantom mount, ruinous revivification (acid)
Gear *+3 full plate* with armor spikes, *+2 cold iron greatsword*

B11 Western Guard Quarters

Numerous moldy bunks sized for creatures a few feet taller than the average human sit against the walls of this room, which must have once been quarters for castle guards, if the partially collapsed and empty armor rack near the south wall is any hint.

As with area **B7** to the east, several of Kazavon's minotaurs dwelled here.

Phantasm: If the PCs search this chamber, have them all attempt Will saves. When you find out who rolled the lowest, take that character's player away from the table and quietly inform him that his character suddenly feels an overwhelming sense of agoraphobia and yearns to hide in a cramped, winding labyrinth. The yearning passes quickly, a fragment of a long-dead minotaur's distaste for the large open spaces in human habitations. This has no in-game effect, whether or not the player's character shares this experience with the others.

B12 Magus Quarters

A partially collapsed bed sits to the south in this room next to a small, ruined reading desk. A battered combat dummy that once looked like an orc leans against the northeast corner of the room.

This room was where a bitter elven magus named Aerilaya dwelled. Kazavon nearly put Aerilaya to death when he rescued her from orc raiders, but when she furiously tore apart the surviving orcs with her magic and a blade she wrenched from an orc commander's hand, Kazavon instead hired the magus to serve him. Aerilaya fell in combat against Mandraivus, slain in the castle cupola by an elven sorcerer whom she recognized as a cousin, and now haunts that area as a banshee (see area **D16**).

Treasure: Most of Aerilaya's gear was lost in the battle against Mandraivus, but a successful DC 20 Perception check uncovers her spellbook in a once-much-better-hidden secret drawer of the ruined desk. In life, Aerilaya was a 12th-level magus; her spellbook contains dozens spells (of level 1 through 4) of your choice. Perhaps of more interest to the PCs are the fragmentary journal entries written throughout her spellbook, alongside the arcane notations. A character who can read Elven can learn the magus's name, of her exile from Kyonin after her involvement in a series of unsanctioned vengeance killings against innocent half-orcs, of her journey to Belkzen to seek death while killing the orcs she hated (for reasons the journal never makes clear), of her capture by orcs and rescue a few short days later by Kazavon, and of her being hired by him to serve as a court spellcaster. She characterizes Kazavon as a "handsome and well-spoken lunatic" and all but gushes over his passion for slaying orcs. After a PC reads her journal entries, a successful DC 20 Sense Motive check reveals the likelihood that her hatred of orcs bordered on a true obsession, and this knowledge may give the PCs a tactical edge if they confront her later.

B13 Captain's Quarters

This room was once elegantly appointed, but today the large bed, dresser, table, and desk lie in ruins. A message has been scratched into the northern wall.

This room once served as Captain Castothrane's living quarters, but the man now stands eternal vigil in the gatehouse loft (area **D1**). The message on the wall was left years ago by another spirit-skulled orc, and it reads (in Orc) "Ukwar Lives—We Die!"

B14 Western Officer's Quarters

Two wrecked double bunks sit against the northern wall of this otherwise empty room. What appears to be a strip of cloth flaps in the wind in an arrow slit to the west.

This room, like area **B10** to the west, was used by four of Kazavon's officers. Unlike area **B10**, there is little danger here, save for an unnerving but harmless phantasm. The piece of cloth is all that remains of a desperate halfling warrior who served Mandraivus and who tried (and failed) to escape through the arrow slit during the fateful final orc attack on Scarwall. A successful DC 15 Perception check reveals bloodstains around the arrow slit's base and a few bloody and ancient fingernails stuck in the crevices between the stones on the outside, but the halfling's body has long since been carried off (in pieces) by scavengers.

Phantasm: The first PC who moves to investigate the strip of cloth must attempt a Will save. When you know the result, write it down and tell the player (regardless of the result) that his character feels a sudden panic at being caught in the arrow slit while trying to escape a murderous orc that's right behind him! Of course, there is no orc, and the Will save has no significance beyond being an attempt to unsettle the players.

B15 Castle Kitchens (CR 13)

Rickety tables, butcher's blocks, and collapsed shelves clutter this room which appears to have once served as the castle kitchen. The walls and ceiling are covered in soot, particularly to the west where three huge ovens loom. Each is completely covered in a layer of char, inside and out, with bits of blackened bone and charcoal caked on the iron grills and in the ash pits beneath. Worse, however, are the four outlines burned into the brick of the oven walls—humanoid images splayed in positions of agony and death. Despite the ancient look of the layers of grime, the ovens radiate slight warmth and the faint odor of burning meat, as if they have been used recently.

As is evidenced by the shadows on the wall, these kitchens were used for far more than just food preparation. One of Kazavon's favorite means of execution was to lock a victim in one of the huge ovens during his evening meal and slowly fire it up while the bound victim struggled. Sometimes he ate the victim as well. When Mandraivus arrived, all the degenerate, villainous cooks were thrown into the ovens as just rewards.

Haunt: While Mandraivus managed to cleanse the kitchen of its wicked staff, the method of execution he and his cabal chose had the unfortunate side effect of giving Scarwall the raw soul energy needed to create a dangerous haunt and set of undead guardians. The haunt triggers as soon as anyone walks within 20 feet of the front of the three huge ovens.

CREMATORY BLAST **CR 10**

XP 9,600

CE haunt (20-foot radius around oven)

Caster Level 10th

Notice Perception DC 25 (to notice tendrils of smoke rising from each of the huge ovens)

hp 20; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 hour

Effect A sudden blast of fire wells up inside of each of the three ovens, then plumes out into a sheet of flame that fills the room. As the fires burn, shrieking spirits made of flame tear through the room, swimming through the bodies of living creatures and appearing to tear away bits of flesh as they do. Every character exposed to the fires must succeed at a DC 20 Will save or be convinced the flames are real. If a character succeeds at the save, the haunt deals no damage, but failure results in the character taking 10d6 points of fire damage. At the end of the round, the fire vanishes (leaving behind the creatures detailed below), but only those creatures that took fire damage appear burned. Other creatures and the contents of the room are unscathed.

Destruction If the curse affecting Scarwall is lifted, this haunt fades away.

Creatures: The round immediately after the haunt resolves, the scorched outlines on the wall suddenly peel away and ignite into horrifying undead monsters known as cinder ghouls. These are the spirits of the kitchen's four most cruel and sadistic cooks, transformed after the castle's evil took hold into swirling, humanoid clouds of burning ash, bone, and charred body parts that glow fiery red from within and reek of scorched flesh. They roar like a wind-stoked fire as they move to attack.

CINDER GHOULS (4) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

(*Tome of Horrors Complete* 313)

CE Large undead (fire)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural, –1 size)

hp 68 each (8d8+32)

Fort +6, **Ref** +9, **Will** +7

Defensive Abilities limited gaseous form; **DR** 10/magic; **Immune** fire, undead traits

Weaknesses vulnerable to cold

OFFENSE

Speed fly 40 ft. (perfect)

CINDER GHOUL

Melee cleaver +12/+7 (1d6+5/19–20 plus burn and energy drain), slam +5 (1d8+1 plus burn and energy drain)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks burn (1d8 fire, DC 18), energy drain (1 level, DC 18), smoke inhalation

TACTICS

During Combat The cinder ghouls move to attack the closest targets. On the first round that a cinder ghoul is adjacent to a foe at the start of that round, the ghoul attempts its smoke inhalation attack while the other ghoul continues to fight. Although they will pursue foes into the nearby larder to the southwest, they do not pursue foes further into the castle.

Morale The cinder ghouls fight until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 20, **Con** —, **Int** 4, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 26 (can't be tripped)

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Finesse

Skills Fly +18, Perception +8

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Cleaver (Su) Each of these cinder ghouls wields a wicked-looking meat cleaver that functions as a *+2 conductive*[UE] *dagger*. If a cinder ghoul is destroyed, or if a cinder ghoul is forced to drop its cleaver, the cleaver becomes a nonmagical improvised weapon. This unique ability, which grants the cinder ghoul additional opportunities to affect foes with burn and energy drain, increases its CR by 1.

Limited Gaseous Form (Ex) Because it has solid body parts that constantly float and swirl within it, a cinder ghoul has a limited version of *gaseous form*. Although other gaseous creatures can slip under the crack of a door, a cinder ghoul cannot. A cinder ghoul can, however, make slam attacks, retains its natural armor bonus, and can wield objects and weapons. Spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities affect them normally. A cinder ghoul cannot enter water or other liquid. It is not ethereal or incorporeal, and is affected by winds or other forms of moving air to the extent that the wind pushes them in the direction the wind is moving. However, even the strongest wind can't disperse or damage a cinder ghoul. Because it contains burning embers and small bits of perpetually smoldering flesh, a cinder ghoul cannot hide and gains no bonuses on Stealth checks in an area of mist, smoke, or other gas.

Smoke Inhalation (Su) As a standard action, a cinder ghoul can attempt to force some of its smoky form into the lungs of a living opponent. To initiate this attack, it must move into its target's space (this does not provoke an attack of opportunity). The target must then attempt a successful DC 18 Fortitude save or inhale part of the creature. Smoke inside the victim's lungs burns the

surrounding tissue, dealing 1d2 points of Constitution damage each round. The affected creature can attempt another Fortitude save each round to cough out the burning residue and thus end the effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Treasure: Hidden in a collapsed cupboard is a stash left by one of the cooks. It consists of valuables taken from victims of the ovens. The stash can be located with a successful DC 24 Perception check, and includes three partially melted silver teeth worth 1 gp each; a polished green stone, now slightly scorched and cracked (actually a worthless gallstone); the melted remains of a gold wedding ring worth 20 gp; and a *ring of minor spell storing* that contains a *displacement* spell.

B16 Larder

The ruined remnants of several crates, barrels, shelves, and other storage devices suggest this room's original purpose as a larder for the castle.

Once used to store food and water for the castle (augmented as needed via spells like *create food and water*), the contents of this chamber have long since rotted and crumbled away into dust. A successful DC 15 Perception check on the rubble turns up many brittle humanoid bones—a grisly reminder of the cannibalistic nature of Kazavon's troops.

B17 Porters' Hall (CR 11)

Numerous arrow slits along the northern wall look out over the castle courtyard. The burned stubs of torches hang in iron brackets between the arrow slits, and small puddles of rain have formed beneath them, staining the stone. Opposite these, metal rings have been driven into the stone wall; some have short lengths of chain attached to them.

This corridor once served as housing for the castle's slave-porters. It was in ready shouting distance from the main keep, barracks, chapel, or guest wing—wherever they were needed. Their threadbare bedrolls have long since disintegrated from exposure to the elements. The porters were chained to the metal rings when not on duty.

Creatures: The slave-porters were released by Mandraivus when his cabal took the castle centuries ago. The minotaur guards that watched over them were slain and left behind. These five undead minotaurs now patrol this hall under Mithrodar's orders, watching for intruders attempting to infiltrate the castle via its courtyard. They immediately open fire with their crossbows if they see any targets therein.

SCARWALL GUARDS (5) **CR 6**

XP 2,400 each

hp 61 (see page 272)

B18 Abandoned Workshop (CR 12)

Empty shelves and dusty workbenches are all that remain in this room, and what specialty this workshop may have supported is unclear.

Closer inspection of the shelves reveals strange circular stains left behind by various beakers and other alchemical containers. A successful DC 20 Craft (alchemy) or a successful DC 30 Perception check confirms that this was once a well-stocked alchemist's lab, but all of the usable surviving gear has been relocated to area **B19**.

Trap: This room contains a dangerous but relatively simple trap rigged by the night hag Malatrothe (see area **B19**). As soon as the double door from area **B17** are opened, a system of trip lines and pulleys pulls the corks stopping three bottles lashed into torch sconces next to the three southern doors, releasing the three evil undead spirits trapped within to attack anyone in the room. These three creatures are advanced polongs, undead murderers given to the night hag by the chained spirit as part of their ongoing negotiations. A character who succeeds at a DC 22 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the polongs as incorporeal undead, with claws that make terrible wounds; if the result of this check exceeds that DC by 10 or more, the character also realizes that possessing or destroying a polong's bottle can grant control of or stagger the creature.

POLONG BOTTLES **CR 12**

XP 19,200

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 30 (DC 10 inside area **B18**); **Disable Device** DC 25 (DC 10 inside area **B18**)

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** repair

Effect 3 advanced polongs are released into area **B18**

ADVANCED POLONGS (3) **CR —**

hp 115 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 288, 196)

B19 Malatrothe's Lair (CR 10)

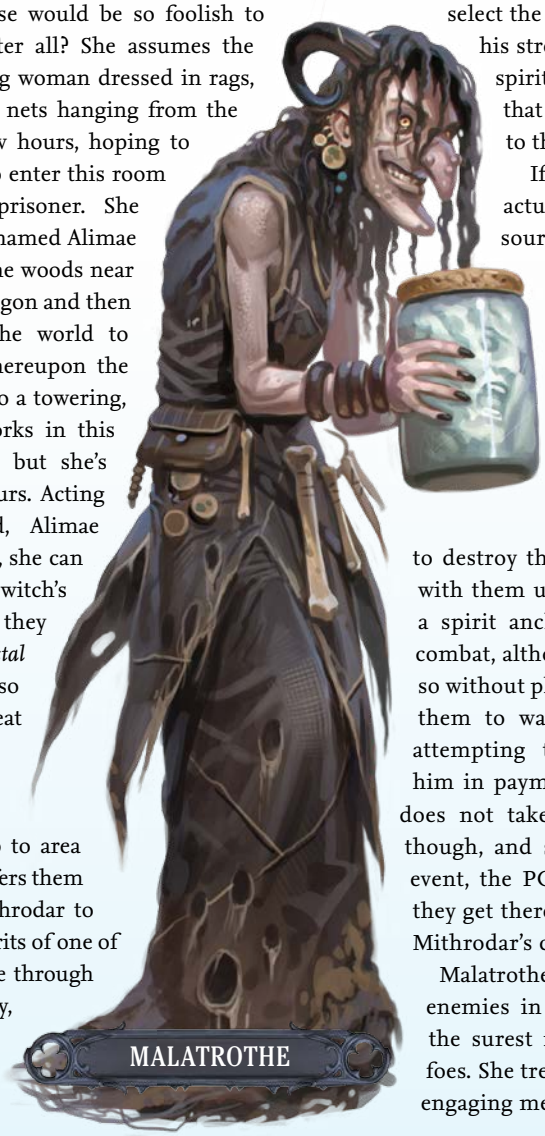
Innumerable bags of netting hang on the walls of this dismal room, holding bottles, clay jars, dried plants, desiccated bits of animals, and similar things. Tattered, gauzy curtains have been strung throughout, creating a kind of diaphanous maze. The whole place is choked with a dank-smelling smoke that is issuing forth from a pitted iron brazier set in the center of the chamber.

This chamber once served as the abode of Kazavon's apothecary and alchemist. Its latest inhabitant has strung it with accoutrements and decorations to remind her of her own home on Abaddon. The netting bags hold many kinds of herbs and animal organs. The brazier burns seaweed-charcoal made on the shores of the River Styx, and its fumes smell foul to most living creatures (but have no game impact).

Creature: The night hag Malatrothe currently resides in this room. She is a recent arrival to Scarwall, having traveled here to trade souls with Mithrodar, who has granted her protection from the castle's other inhabitants and the curse in general. Malatrothe has already negotiated several good deals and is currently trying to figure out how to claim one of the castellan's anchoring spirits to take back to Abaddon's soul markets.

If Malatrothe hears the sound of battle nearby, she quickly comes to the conclusion that adventurers have invaded Scarwall; who else would be so foolish to attempt such a stunt, after all? She assumes the form of a battered halfling woman dressed in rags, clambers into one of the nets hanging from the walls, and waits for a few hours, hoping to trick any adventurers who enter this room into thinking she's a prisoner. She claims to be an herbalist named Alimae who was snatched from the woods near her home by a horrific dragon and then carried halfway across the world to this nightmare castle, whereupon the dragon handed her over to a towering, evil witch. The witch works in this room, Alimae continues, but she's been gone for several hours. Acting nervous and frightened, Alimae says that, if the PCs hurry, she can lead them upstairs to the witch's home. If they're quick, they can break the witch's *crystal ball* there and weaken her so that she'll be easy to defeat when she returns.

Of course, all of this is a blatant lie. "Alimae" wants to lead the PCs up to area **C14**, where she proudly offers them all as new spirits for Mithrodar to claim in return for the spirits of one of his anchors. If the PCs see through and expose her trickery, Malatrothe returns to her true form with a cackle, but still doesn't attack.



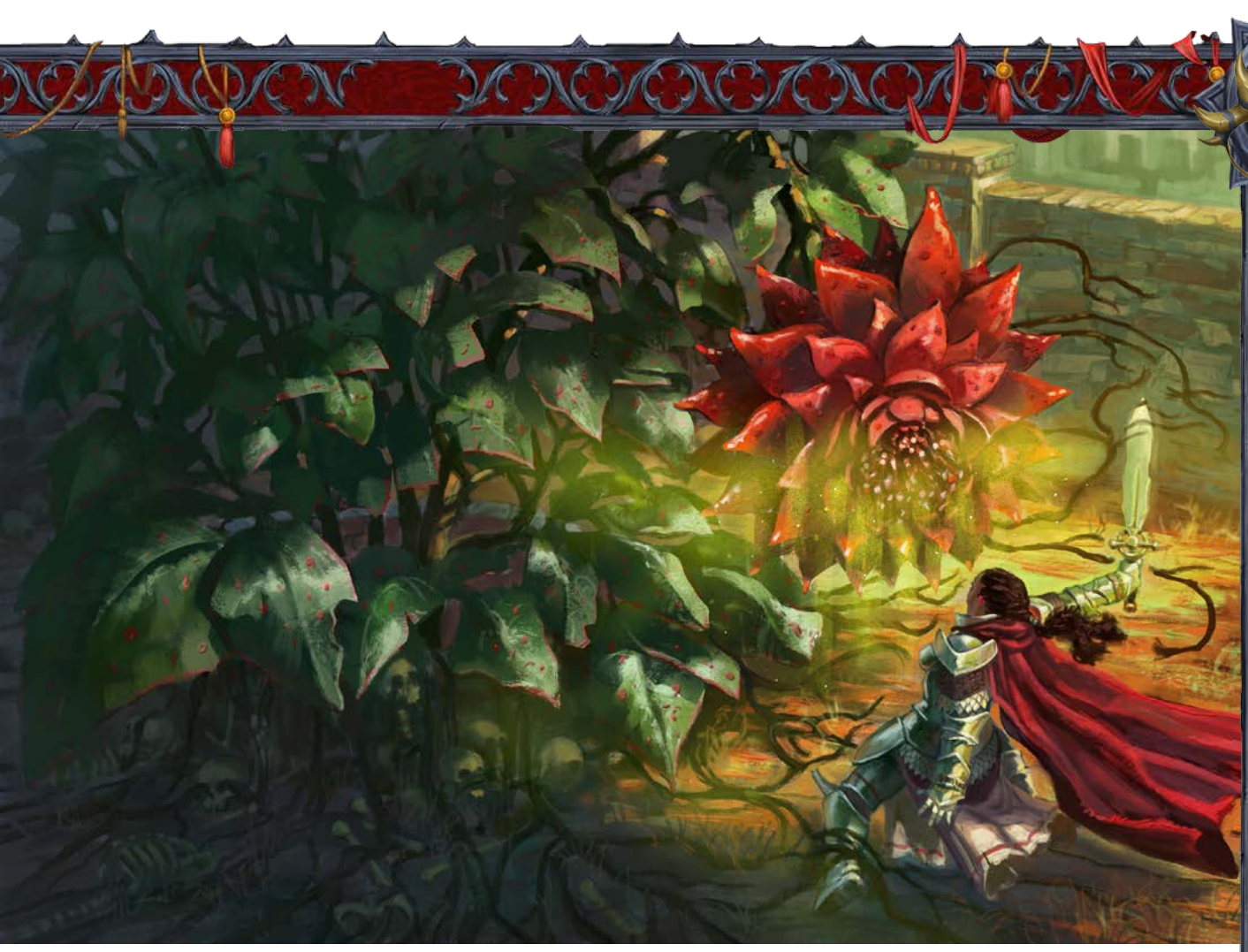
MALATROTHE

She compliments the PCs on their perception and caution, then asks them if they'd like to help her with a little project. She assumes they're here to defeat one, some, or all of the lords of Scarwall. All she wants is to be there when they defeat a spirit anchor so she can capture the soul and flee to Abaddon with it. She's worried that Mithrodar has no interest in relinquishing one of his anchors, and if she can't use the PCs as a bribe, she hopes to use them as tools to steal the spirit.

Malatrothe knows a little about Scarwall from her meetings with Mithrodar. She knows that the chained spirit's power is tied to four spirit anchors, and that as long as those anchors exist, he cannot be destroyed. She also knows that hundreds, if not thousands, of spirits are bound into the castle's walls by Mithrodar's presence. She can tell the PCs that Castothrane, Belshallam, and Nihil are spirit anchors. She'd prefer to catch Nihil's spirit but only knows the way to Belshallam's lair (she'd rather not select the powerful dragon as her target due to his strength). She's not sure who the fourth spirit anchor is, but suspects (correctly) that whoever it is lies within the chapel to the north.

If the PCs trust her, Malatrothe is actually one of the more forthcoming sources of information in Scarwall. The one thing sure to ruin an alliance with the night hag, though, is if she discovers the PCs are planning on destroying Mithrodar, for once he goes, the spirits bound here vanish as well, robbing the night hag of what she's decided is a very convenient place to harvest souls. If she learns that the PCs intend to destroy the chained spirit, she remains allies with them until they help her catch the soul of a spirit anchor (perhaps even aiding them in combat, although only when she feels she can do so without placing herself at risk), then abandons them to warn Mithrodar about the situation, attempting to secure a second anchor from him in payment for the information. Mithrodar does not take this attempt at embezzling well, though, and swiftly slays the night hag. In this event, the PCs find her body in area **C14** when they get there, and her spirit being tormented by Mithrodar's chains.

Malatrothe has met her fair share of deadly enemies in her planar travels, and knows that the surest route to defeat is to underestimate foes. She treats the PCs as dangerous, and avoids engaging melee with them at the start of a battle,



relying on *magic missile* and *ray of enfeeblement* to attack at range. As long as the castle's *dimensional lock* is in effect, she can't become ethereal unless she leaves Scarwall, so she does her best to keep a fast retreat path open, fleeing from battle if brought to fewer than 40 hit points. If she does so, she makes her way up to area **C19**, where her loyal nightmare mount waits patiently for her, then rides out of the castle onto the parapet at **C15** so she can flee to the Ethereal Plane as soon as possible. If she escapes from a fight with the PCs, she puts them "on her list." She doesn't return to Scarwall, but does spend some time researching the PCs and learning more about them. She may come back to dream haunt them as early as the next adventure.

MALATROTHE **CR 10**

XP 9,600

Advanced night hag (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 215)

hp 108

Treasure: Malatrothe's most prized possessions are her *soul jars*—special containers that night hags use to gather and transport souls. She brought four of them with her, and so far has filled two with insane spirits she's purchased from Mithrodar, harvesting them directly from the castle's walls via *soul bind* and the chained spirit's aid. *Soul jars* are detailed on page 436.

Malatrothe has no other treasure of note on her person, having traded anything of value away to Mithrodar in their prior dealings. In fact, before the PCs arrived, she was seriously considering doing a little secret looting of other parts of Scarwall to fund continuing business with the chained spirit.

B20 Wine Cellar

Racks along the walls here once contained hundreds of bottles of wine, but today, only a few bottles remain intact. Most lie in shattered shards of glass on the floor.

The shattered glass on the floor of this room functions as caltrops.

Treasure: Of the 16 surviving bottles of wine, a dozen have spoiled. The remaining four bottles of wine have been alchemically treated to keep the wine within at its peak age. While empty, these bottles are worth 100 gp apiece, but sealed, the preserved wine and bottles combined are worth 2,000 gp.

B21 Courtyard (CR 13)

This wide courtyard gives an inside view of the castle's looming walls and towers. A chill breeze whips through the courtyard, carrying a few dry leaves from scraggly scrub bushes that grow fitfully at the yard's edges. A broad, stone-rimmed well stands at the western end, though the stone lip is crumbling and has collapsed in places. Thick patches of vegetation grow in and around this well, despite the apparent lack of soil to root within. To the north, stairs rise to a platform fifteen feet above the courtyard. Atop it, a black double door provides entry into the castle donjon. A double door to the east stands open, creaking on its hinges, as if left open by someone leaving in a hurry. Bent, rusted, and in some cases partially broken spikes protrude from the walls of the courtyard, and here and there, holes in the hard-packed soil hint at long-missing structures or poles that once stood within.

The central courtyard connects all of the wings of the castle. Public executions were often held here under the watchful eye of Kuthite priests on the balcony above. Sometimes, prisoners were crucified on frames that once protruded from the holes in the ground. Others were hung from or impaled on the numerous wall spikes; some were hurled from the top of Scarwall's tallest towers into the courtyard below; and some were merely beheaded or publicly tortured to death by Kazavon himself. The well to the south is actually another execution device; a 30-foot-deep oubliette that Kazavon would use to simply let prisoners starve to death in a public place where passersby could drop in whatever filth, venomous vermin, or other torments they wished. The oubliette was used by Mandraivus to dispose of most of the bodies of Kazavon's minions after they finished their invasion, but is also now the lair of a dangerous creature.

The stairs here lead up to area **D15**.

Creature: The vegetation that grows around the oubliette is sustained magically by the curse of Castle Scarwall. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check confirms that the plants here, mostly nettles, poison oak, and brambles, shouldn't thrive. The largest of the plants is an immense flowering monstrosity that originally fed upon the bodies of those thrown into the well, but is now sustained by the castle's ambient malevolence. This is a towering corpse lotus, and as the PCs draw near, it opens its central bulb, blooming with a terrible beauty before it attacks. The monstrous plant does not pursue foes out of the courtyard.

CORPSE LOTUS **CR 13**

XP 25,600

hp 178 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 60)

Development: Unless combat here was remarkably silent or ended quickly, the sound of battle in the courtyard attracts the attention of the undead archers that dwell in area **C19**, overlooking the courtyard. One round after the battle here resolves, the baykoks there open fire on the PCs from the arrow slits in the west wall of that room.

B22 Caretaker's Quarters (CR 12)

The interior of this old livery contains thick swaths of shadowy cobwebs that hang from the walls and ceiling in clumpy sheets. A particularly large mound of the strange stuff lies heaped in the eastern part of the room, partially blocking a large archway.

Creatures: The wagons and tack for the castle's stables were once stored here, but it has become the den of a clutch of four tenebrous worms that seeped into Scarwall from the Shadow Plane when the boundaries between the two worlds grew thin several years past. Belshallam has since adopted the tenebrous worms as pets. The heap of shadowy silk in the western archway holds remnants from previous worms that cocooned, transformed into gloomwings, and were eaten by the dragon. The four remaining worms do not attack the dragon (who much prefers the flavor of gloomwing over worm, and is content to let these four grow up as a result), but immediately attack anyone else who enters the room.

TENEBROUS WORMS (4) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

hp 105 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 260)

B23 Belshallam's Lair (CR 14)

This large chamber, perhaps once a stable or kennel, has been gutted. Wooden partitions that may have been stalls lie shattered and burned, leaving only divots in the walls, floor, ceiling, and a few stone support pillars. The floor is a tangle of broken beams, dung heaps crawling with vermin, and the occasional gleam of polished bone. The whole chamber is shadowy and dim, the darkness an almost palpable thing.

This chamber did indeed once serve as a kennel for several of Kazavon's pets and favored mounts, but the remains of these creatures have long since crumbled to dust. Yet the chamber does not remain unoccupied.

Creature: Umbral dragons are beasts of shadow and darkness. While not directly tied to the faith of Zon-Kuthon, they do share many of the Midnight Lord's interests and goals, and in the nation of Nidal, a few umbral dragons serve the church of Zon-Kuthon as advisors, guardians, mounts, and assassins. While most

of these dangerous dragons remain unaffiliated with the religion, many are aware of Zon-Kuthon's works and the actions of his most powerful agents.

When the umbral dragon Belshallam first heard stories of Kazavon, a powerful dragon warlord who served Zon-Kuthon, he grew obsessed with the legend. What manner of treasure might such a champion of the Midnight Lord have owned? Certainly, much of it would have doubtless been claimed by now, but Belshallam clung to the hope that a hidden treasury may have remained undiscovered. He arrived in Scarwall many years ago. While he explored the ruins, slaying any undead that dared rise against him, Belshallam unwittingly fell into a trap. The chained spirit Mithrodar felt Belshallam's soul and approved of his strong links to the realm of shadow and the implied ties to Zon-Kuthon. When Belshallam destroyed one of Mithrodar's spirit anchors (an undead warrior named Gorstav, whom the castle's curse later reanimated as a much less powerful juju zombie), the chained spirit snared Belshallam as a replacement anchor.

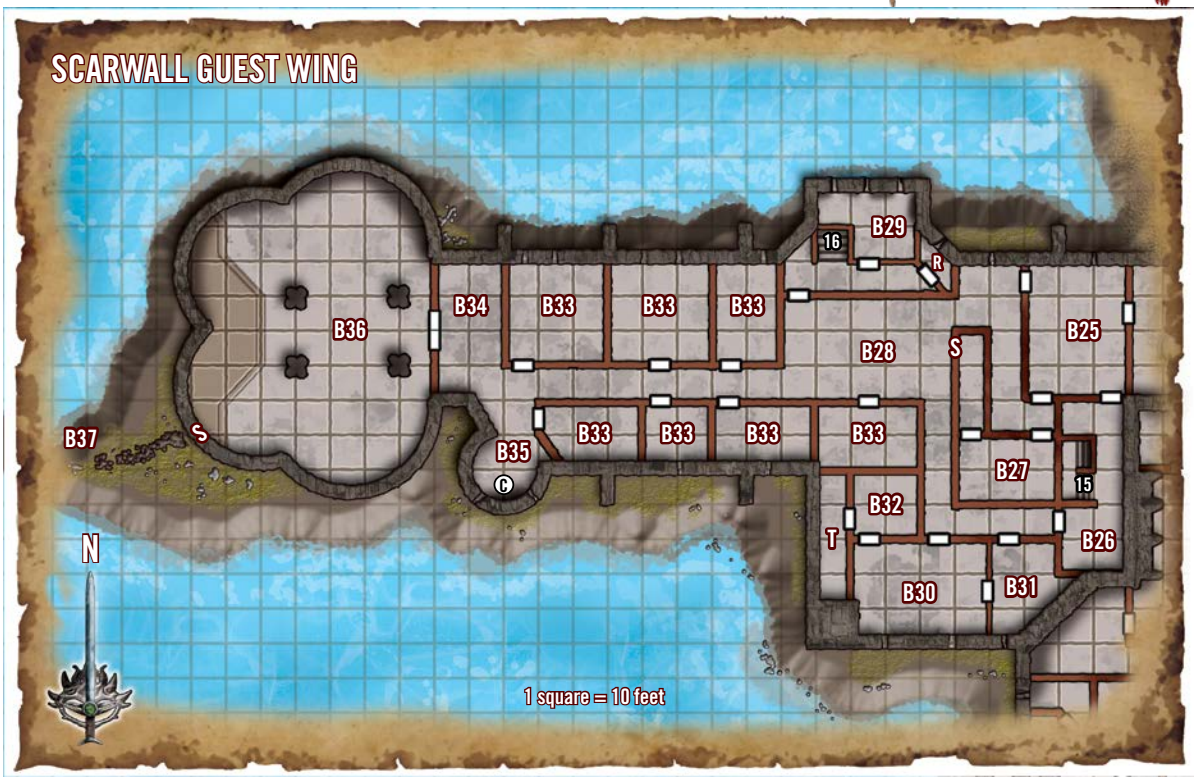
When Belshallam first discovered he couldn't leave Scarwall, his rage exploded. He damaged much of the castle and destroyed several potent undead guardians before he was dreadfully wounded and forced to retreat into this room to hide and think through the situation. Over the centuries, Belshallam has tried several times to escape, each attempt being more halfhearted than the previous, until the dragon finally came to accept his new fate. He has managed to accumulate a fair amount of treasure and magic from other areas of the castle, a feat that soothes his basic draconic avarice somewhat, yet the fact remains that the dragon is terribly bored and listless—and when a dragon grows bored, he grows increasingly dangerous.

As a living host with a need for food, Belshallam's restraints are more relaxed than those of other spirit anchors. Mithrodar allows the dragon limited mobility around the castle, to a radius of a few miles, so the dragon can hunt. The mainstay of Belshallam's diet were initially the fecund tarnworms in the crater lake, but lately, the wyverns, chimeras, and other creatures he finds in the surrounding hills have become his favored source for meals. Fortunately for the Deadwatcher orcs in the barbican, the dragon finds orc meat as unpalatable as worm meat, and has not grown hungry enough to indulge in them. The dragon's ennui is enough to keep him here in his lair for much of the time, and he spends an increasing portion of his life sleeping as a result.

Although Belshallam is likely to be slumbering when the PCs arrive at Scarwall, his Perception check is high enough that even with the –10 penalty for sleeping, chances are good that the sounds of combat in nearby areas wake him. Also, if the gargoyles in the minarets above attack the PCs (especially if they move to intercept PCs approaching the castle via flight), their loud shrieking and roars of excitement might alert Belshallam. If the dragon succeeds at a DC 10 Perception check, he wakes up and leaves his lair to take a few circling flights around Scarwall and see if something exciting is happening.

Once the dragon notices the PCs, he immediately roars in delight and moves to attack, eager for the thrill of combat. Yet despite his ferocity, Belshallam's greatest desire is to escape from Mithrodar and Scarwall's control. If the PCs manage to disrupt this control (either

BELSHALLAM



by accident with an antimagic effect, for example, or by design), the dragon screeches in victory and immediately breaks off his attack to flee the region—such is his relief that he even abandons the treasure he's accumulated in area **B24**.

Belshallam understands much of how the chained spirit and Scarwall function, and knows that if he perishes here, his soul will become bound even more firmly to the region. As a result, the dragon becomes particularly craven if brought to fewer than 40 hit points, attempting to flee back to area **B23** to hide and heal. If already cornered here, Belshallam resorts to begging for mercy. Mithrodar's influence prevents the dragon from openly joining forces with the PCs or discussing the nature of how his spirit is anchored, but anyone who speaks for at least 1 minute with the dragon can attempt a DC 20 Sense Motive check to notice that some sort of magical compulsion affects the dragon. Belshallam's only real bargaining chip is his treasure, which he offers to the PCs as a bribe if that will prevent them from killing him. If, on the other hand, the PCs make clear the fact that they are here to release the spirit anchor effect, he grows very still and quiet. Mithrodar's control isn't enough to force the dragon to attack, but it is enough to keep him from giving the PCs any clue as to how to release him. Belshallam's sudden silence is the best he can do to encourage the PCs that they're on the right track. If, in the end, the PCs decide that the dragon's death is the only option, a cornered Belshallam does his best to kill the PCs before they kill him and consign his soul to eternal imprisonment in Scarwall.

BELSHALLAM **CR 14**

XP 38,400

Adult umbral dragon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 102)

hp 195

Development: If the PCs manage to free Belshallam from servitude as a spirit anchor without killing him, the dragon is capable of thanks and gratitude, despite the fact that he is as evil as dragons come. If the PCs free him, his first goal is to escape Scarwall. He flies to one of the tors overlooking the central tarn and alights there, watching curiously to see if the PCs follow. If they do, he thanks them for freeing him from the place, and although he has little desire to return there and possibly fall prey to the castle's curse or Mithrodar's clutches again, he can certainly help the PCs with advice. Although he knows nothing of *Serithtial* (the sword was taken below long before his arrival), he does know a fair bit about the castle, its denizens, its layout, and the perils the PCs could face there. You can use Belshallam to give the PCs any hints you want about Scarwall, although he knows nothing about the donjon or the Star Tower and

very little about the guest wing. If the PCs ask him where they might find *Serithtial*, his only guess is the donjon or the Star Tower, the only parts of the castle about which he remains wholly ignorant.

B24 Dragon's Hoard

Battered weapons, breastplates, helms, shields, and a large number of skulls lie heaped on this chamber's floor. More importantly, chests overflowing with gold and silver coins occupy the center of the room.

Once the stable master's quarters, this chamber was converted into Belshallam's treasure vault. Some of the weapons and relics are in poor shape , having been taken from victims and heroes who dared to face him, while other treasures were stolen from denizens of the castle that Belshallam has confronted.

Treasure: The treasure here includes 7,030 gp, 18,445 sp, and 39,800 cp. Scattered among the coins are various gemstones worth a total of 5,800 gp, and among the battered gear are three masterwork greatswords, a masterwork halberd, a mithral breastplate, an adamantine battleaxe, a *+1 lawful outsider-bane greatsword*, a Small suit of *+3 chainmail*, and a *staff of necromancy* (5 charges).

B25 Guest Wing Entrance

A few torn tapestry fragments hang from the walls of this otherwise empty room. A message has been scrawled in blood across the western wall.

The western wing of Scarwall was known colloquially as the "guest wing," though there were relatively few actual guest rooms located in the castle and most of the chambers in this wing wound up being used as small, personal torture chambers. Even the honest guest rooms had doors that could be locked only from the outside and mountings on their walls where manacles could be hung. Frequently, guests of Kazavon's were allowed to participate in the many horrors perpetrated on the castle's prisoners as part of their entertainment. As such, the guest wing is steeped in as much or more blood than any other portion of the castle.

The message on the wall is written in Orc and reads, "Beware Ukwar!"

B26 Entertainer's Lodging (CR 8)

A flight of stairs leads upstairs in the middle of this room. To the south sits what may have once been a small apartment for two, but the ruined beds and desks leave nothing today for creature comfort.

Creatures: This room was where the castle's jesters Pegg and Loute lived when they weren't debasing themselves for Kazavon's (or his guests') amusement. If the PCs haven't run across the two ghosts yet as a random encounter, they do so here.

Pegg is no taller than a short halfling, while Loute towers at just over 7 feet in height. Both wear identical outfits of formfitting black leather with tight, black leather masks covering their heads. Each mask has a stitched seam running from forehead to jaw line to seal it in place. Pegg's left leg is missing, replaced by what appears to have been a chair or table leg. Loute has abnormally long arms that, when they hang at his side, reach to mid-calf. Although their clothing and the fake leg seem solid, they are as ghostly and immaterial to the touch as their incorporeal bodies are.

Despite their unusual appearances, both jesters were once human. Kazavon found their respective physical abnormalities and their pitiful attempts at poetry, literature, and displays of fanciful fighting techniques quite amusing. Rather than see them cruelly tortured to death, the warlord kept them on for several years as his pet entertainers. Most of Kazavon's soldiers found the pair to be unbearably irritating, and only the threat of Kazavon's wrath protected the pair from receiving shivs in their backs. Eventually, even Kazavon tired of their drivel and had them both executed in a fit of pique by having masks created to complement their normal grotesque attire and ordering them sewn closed over their heads. They were then condemned to a slow, agonizing suffocation as they hung from hooks driven through their collarbones, where they dangled for hours above the entrance to the castle. Many considered this final performance the highlight of their careers, giving them a standing ovation as their last spasmodic twitches finally ceased.

When Pegg and Loute are encountered, they rapidly approach the PCs and begin gesticulating and thrashing their arms about as if in a fit. These are mute attempts at pantomime and it seems as if the two are trying to tell the PCs something. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Perform (act) check realizes that there is no substance or meaning to the actions, they are merely the useless gestures of unfortunate souls whose deaths were agonizingly long enough for true madness to claim them before oblivion's mercy did. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Wisdom check realizes the danger inherent to the display as explained below; if possible, you should roll the Wisdom checks and Will saves for the PCs in secret until they are fully aware of the danger. The characters really have no better recourse than simply putting these two lost souls violently to rest. Despite their physical dissimilarities in life and death, their combat statistics are identical.

PEGG AND LOUTE **CR 6**

XP 2,400 each

Male human ghost expert 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 144)
CN Medium undead (incorporeal)
Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 15 (+5 deflection, +1 Dex)
hp 69 each (6d8+42)
Fort +7, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5; +4 bonus vs. channeled energy
Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, incorporeal, rejuvenation; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)
Melee corrupting touch +5 touch (6d6)
Special Attack horrific pantomime

TACTICS

During Combat The ghosts attempt to lull opponents into complacency using their horrific pantomime. If attacked, they fight back with their corrupting touches.
Morale These two never did know when to quit. They fight until they are destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 12, **Con** —, **Int** 11, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 20
Base Atk +4; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 20
Feats Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perform [act]), Toughness
Skills Bluff +14, Craft (poetry) +7, Diplomacy +14, Fly +9, Perception +17, Perform (act) +17, Profession (jester) +9, Stealth +18
Languages Common

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Horrific Pantomime (Su) Any living creature within 60 feet that views this ghost's attempt at pantomime (a standard action for one of the ghosts to perform) must succeed on a DC 18 Will save or immediately take 1d4 points of Intelligence damage, 1d4 points of Wisdom damage, and 1d4 points of Charisma damage. Insidiously, the ability damaging aspect of this attack is noticed only if the creature succeeds at a DC 20 Wisdom check (including any penalties for Wisdom damage). A creature that successfully saves against this effect cannot be affected by the same ghost's horrific pantomime for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.
Rejuvenation (Ex) If Scarwall's curse is lifted, these two ghosts are put to rest.

B27 Guest Wing Guard Post

Numerous oversized and long-ago-ruined bunks lie in various states of disrepair in this room.

As with areas **B7** and **B11**, this room used to house several of Kazavon's minotaur guards.

Phantasm: If a player has his character open the door into the hallway to the northwest that connects to area **B28** via a secret door, take him aside from the other players and inform him that a snarling 12-foot-tall minotaur leaps out of the hall beyond to swing a bloodstained axe down upon the PC's head. Roll a d20 out of sight of the player, then ask for his character's AC. Regardless of the d20 roll results, tell the player that the axe just barely missed, then return to the table with the player and ask that player what he wants to do. When he replies, write that action down on a piece of scrap paper (this helps to unsettle the players and the note you jot has no further bearing on play). No other PC in the room sees the minotaur, and as soon as the PC targeted by the phantasm takes any action, inform that player that there's nothing there to react to. The hallway is, and always has been, empty.

B28 Guest Dining Hall

A long banquet table runs the length of this large room. Portraits caked with dust and cobwebs hang from all the walls, while three chandeliers fitted with dozens of unlit candles hang from the ceiling above.

The secret door in the eastern wall can be spotted with a successful DC 25 Perception check.

Any loud sounds in this hall (such as any sort of noisy reaction the PCs may have to the room's phantasm) alert the wraiths dwelling in the nearby guest rooms (area **B33**), who come to investigate immediately. 1d4 rounds after that, the master of these undead, Ukwar, joins the battle from area **B29**.

Phantasm: As soon as you finish reading the descriptive text for this room, have all of the players roll 1d20 (the result of this roll is meaningless, meant only to distract the players). One at a time, take the players aside and tell each of them that the banquet table is covered with dusty plates and tarnished silverware, with the exception of the last character you talk to. Tell that player her character sees a banquet table set for a feast, filled with all manner of delicious-looking food and drink, and that an imperious but shadowy figure wearing a cloak of blue scales stands at the far end of the table—a figure who just drew a sword. When you return to the table with the last player, quickly ask for the PCs to roll for initiative, as if a fight were starting, and let the players respond as they might. Of course, there is no "shadowy figure" or table full of food, but unless the player specifically states that she doubts what she sees, let her carry out whatever action she wants against the phantasm. Take care to note how loudly the PCs react to this phantasm, as their actions may attract the attention

of the surrounding undead. In any event, once the PC reacts to the vision, she soon realizes it wasn't real and can recover her composure (doing so quickly enough to avoid using any consumable item, charge, ability, or spell in the process).

B29 Host's Chambers (CR 11)

This room was once a fine accommodation, but the bed and other furniture succumbed to mold and decay long ago. The air seems musty and foul, despite the wind blowing across three narrow arrow slits to the north that look out over the crater lake.

Creature: Once the home of the castle's host and attendant to all guests, this chamber is now the domain of Ukwar, the only Deadwatcher orc chieftain to ever become spirit-skulled. Ukwar lasted for a remarkable 7 days in Scarwall before she finally perished, and she rose the next night as a nearly unkillable undead marauder known as a fext. Unlike most fexts, Ukwar's languages are Common and Orc, and she fights with a *+1 conductive battleaxe*. If she hears any big noises in area **B28** (such as combat or a loud reaction to that room's phantasm), Ukwar moves to investigate in 1d4 rounds. Otherwise, if encountered here, the PCs find her staring out the central arrow slit, lost in thought. In this event, she does not attack until spoken to or she is attacked herself. Regardless of when she attacks, she does so with an eerie silence and impassive expression. If reduced to 0 hit points by anything other than a glass or obsidian weapon, she glares at the one who struck her down and utters, in Orc, "You shall join me in death soon." If at a later point she wakes, she leaves this room to seek out the one who "killed" her and does her best to avenge her death. If slain permanently via a glass or obsidian weapon, she sighs in relief and thanks the one who released her from her undeath.

UKWAR **CR 11**

XP 12,800

Advanced female fext (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 288, 115)

hp 157

Melee *+1 conductive battleaxe*[UE] +22/+17/+12 (1d8+10/19–20/×3 plus energy drain on first hit per round)

Feats Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (battleaxe), Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (battleaxe)

Treasure: If slain permanently, Ukwar's thankful spirit infuses her *+1 conductive battleaxe*, transforming it into a sinister but intelligent weapon that takes her name—see page 437 for more details.

B30 Bath (CR 13)

A large pool of fouled water fills much of the center of this room. Thick sheets of slimy algae cling to the edges of the pool, sending out dark green tendrils across the floor, while the waters churn and ripple as if something unseen wriggled in the foul-smelling depths.

This room was once a pristine bathing area made available to guests of the tower—one Kazavon was fond of turning into an abattoir when he grew tired of visitors.

The pool is only 3 feet deep, but the waters are foul and rancid smelling, and anyone who drinks the water is exposed to blinding sickness.

Creatures: The infection in the waters is the least of this room's dangers, for the collected spirits of many of Kazavon's guests who were staying at Scarwall when the Order attacked have infused the slimy stuff, forming into six festering spirits. The ghostly monsters lurk within the waters, but swiftly rise up to attack the first person who interacts with the pool or as soon as a group attempts to leave the room. The spirits do not pursue foes out of this chamber.

FESTERING SPIRITS (6) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

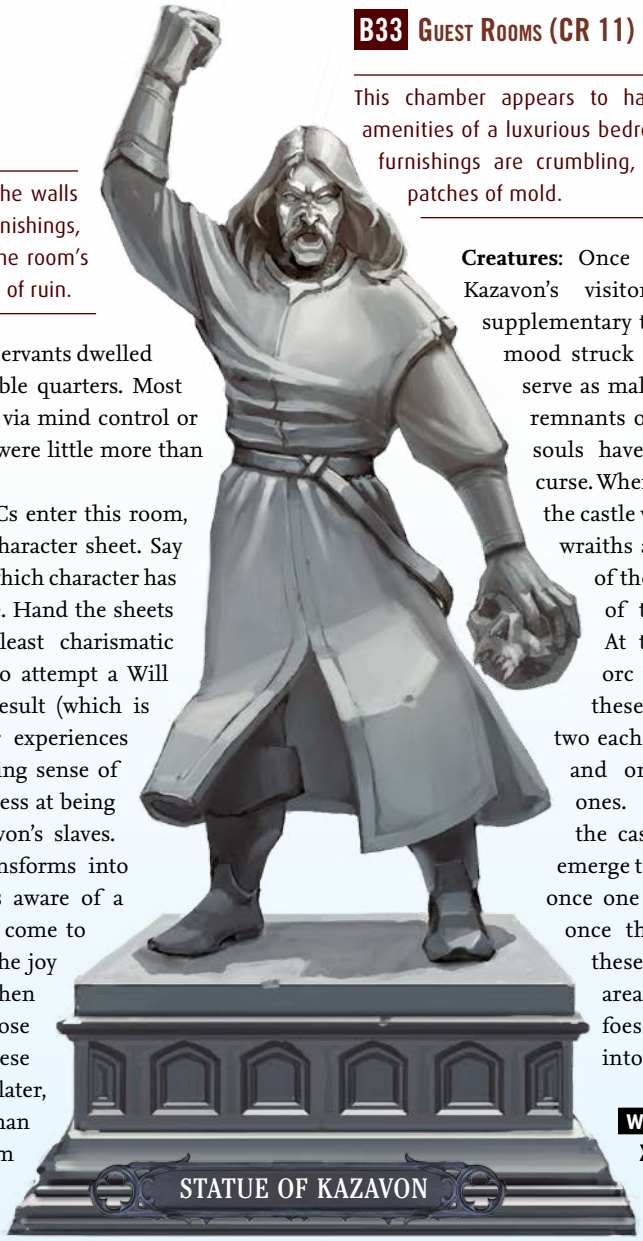
hp 58 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 98)

B31 Servants' Quarters

Several double bunks line the walls of this room. These furnishings, plus the wooden table at the room's center, are in a terrible state of ruin.

A number of Scarwall's servants dwelled in these cramped, miserable quarters. Most of them were kept in line via mind control or through sheer terror and were little more than unfortunate prisoners.

Phantasm: When the PCs enter this room, ask to see every player's character sheet. Say nothing, but take note of which character has the lowest Charisma score. Hand the sheets back, then inform the least charismatic character that he needs to attempt a Will save. Regardless of the result (which is irrelevant), that character experiences a sudden and overwhelming sense of oppression and hopelessness at being one of the warlord Kazavon's slaves. This awful sensation transforms into hope as the PC becomes aware of a band of heroes who have come to assassinate Kazavon, but the joy quickly turns to despair when the PC realizes that those heroes can't save him. These sensations pass an instant later, being nothing more than despondent echoes from the minds of the castle's serving staff.



STATUE OF KAZAVON

B32 Private Bath (CR 4)

A single large pool filled with slimy green water occupies the center of this square room. The air is filled with the musty stink of rotting vegetation, and moisture drips from the tiled walls.

Hazard: The pool of water here is 3 feet deep and gave favored guests a more private place to bathe than the main bath used by most guests in area **B30**. No phantasms or undead await the PCs here, but the "algae" that covers the pool is in fact a floating sheet of green slime (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 416).

B33 Guest Rooms (CR 11)

This chamber appears to have once contained all the amenities of a luxurious bedroom, except that now all the furnishings are crumbling, decayed, and spotted with patches of mold.

Creatures: Once used as guest rooms for Kazavon's visitors (and periodically as supplementary torture chambers when the mood struck him), these chambers now serve as makeshift lairs for the undead remnants of spirit-skulled orcs whose souls have succumbed to Scarwall's curse. When these orcs perished within the castle walls, they transformed into wraiths and gravitated to this wing of the castle to serve the greatest of their cursed kind, Ukwar. At the moment, there are 10 orc wraiths spread throughout these seven identical rooms, two each in the northern chambers, and one each in the southern ones. Psychically connected by the castle's curse, the wraiths all emerge to attack intruders in unison once one of them is confronted, or once they hear noise outside of these rooms, especially from area **B28**. They do not pursue foes out of the guest wing or into area **B36**.

WRAITHS (10) **CR 5**

XP 1,600 each

hp 47 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 281)

B34 Malice Aforethought (CR 10)

This area appears to have been a parlor of some sort, set at the intersection of a hall and an entryway marked by an elaborate mahogany double door. A pair of sagging, velvet-covered divans sit against the walls beneath a thick layer of dust. Standing against the northern wall is a marble statue of a man clad in elegant nobles' robes, though his head is hidden beneath a rough leather sack.

In his sadistic manner, Kazavon enjoyed tormenting his guests as much as his prisoners, and the hooded statue is just such a torment for overly curious visitors. Over the years, the leather sack has grown brittle, and it crumbles to fragments if anyone jostles it or otherwise attempts to remove it. Removing the sack reveals the stern, scowling face of a handsome human man with the flinty eyes of a warrior and a sneer of disdain over perfect, if somewhat overlarge, teeth. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (history) check identifies this as an image of none other than Kazavon in his human form.

Hazard: The statue bears a curse that affects anyone who looks upon its face. Such a character must succeed at a DC 22 Will save or be overcome by an irresistible to urge to climb the ladder in area **B35** into the Prison of Woe, where the curse compels the victim to remain in that room.

This curse is a mind-affecting compulsion. A victim can be prevented from following its dictates only by being physically restrained or by breaking the curse via magic (the curse itself functions at CL 20th). The compulsion also ends 1 minute after the victim is no longer looking at the statue's face, but should he look again, he must save again. Destroying the statue (hardness 8, hp 80, break DC 30) renders the curse ineffective, but each time a creature damages the statue, it must succeed at a DC 22 Will save to avoid being affected by *feeblemind* (CL 20th). Only one creature can be affected by this curse at a time, and if a new creature becomes cursed, the previous one is freed from the affliction. Any number of victims can be affected by the statue's *feeblemind* effect.

Kazavon delighted in seeing his guests fall victim to this curse, creating a sort of round-robin chain of prisoners as they stayed in his castle or attended one of the galas he hosted. Inevitably, someone would break free long enough to throw a cloak or blanket over the statue and end the game until the next time an event was held. Mandraivus's group placed the leather bag over the statue's head after divining its purpose.

Worshipers of Zon-Kuthon are immune to this curse.

Story Award: If the PCs manage to avoid or overcome this curse (whether or not the statue is destroyed), award them 9,600 XP.

B35 Prison of Woe

This small chamber is nondescript save for a trap door in the ceiling fifteen feet above, accessible via a wooden ladder that seems to be in remarkably sound condition given the state of the typical Scarwall furnishing.

This chamber is the focal point for Kazavon's cursed statue in area **B34**, which compels those who succumb to it to seek out this room and climb the ladder into a small chamber above. This upper room is a bare, 10-foot-diameter circular room with a 7-foot-high ceiling and no windows save for arrow slits looking southeast and southwest over the tarn. Once a cursed victim enters this room, the curse compels him to remain here forever as a severe case of agoraphobia prevents him from wanting to leave. Eventually, if the curse is not lifted or a new victim doesn't succumb, the victim dies of thirst, starvation, or old age—whichever doom comes calling first. The victim isn't prevented from taking any actions, so long as he doesn't exit this room. Once the curse is lifted, this restriction is lifted as well. The trap door in the floor opens easily, allowing access back down to area **B35** below.

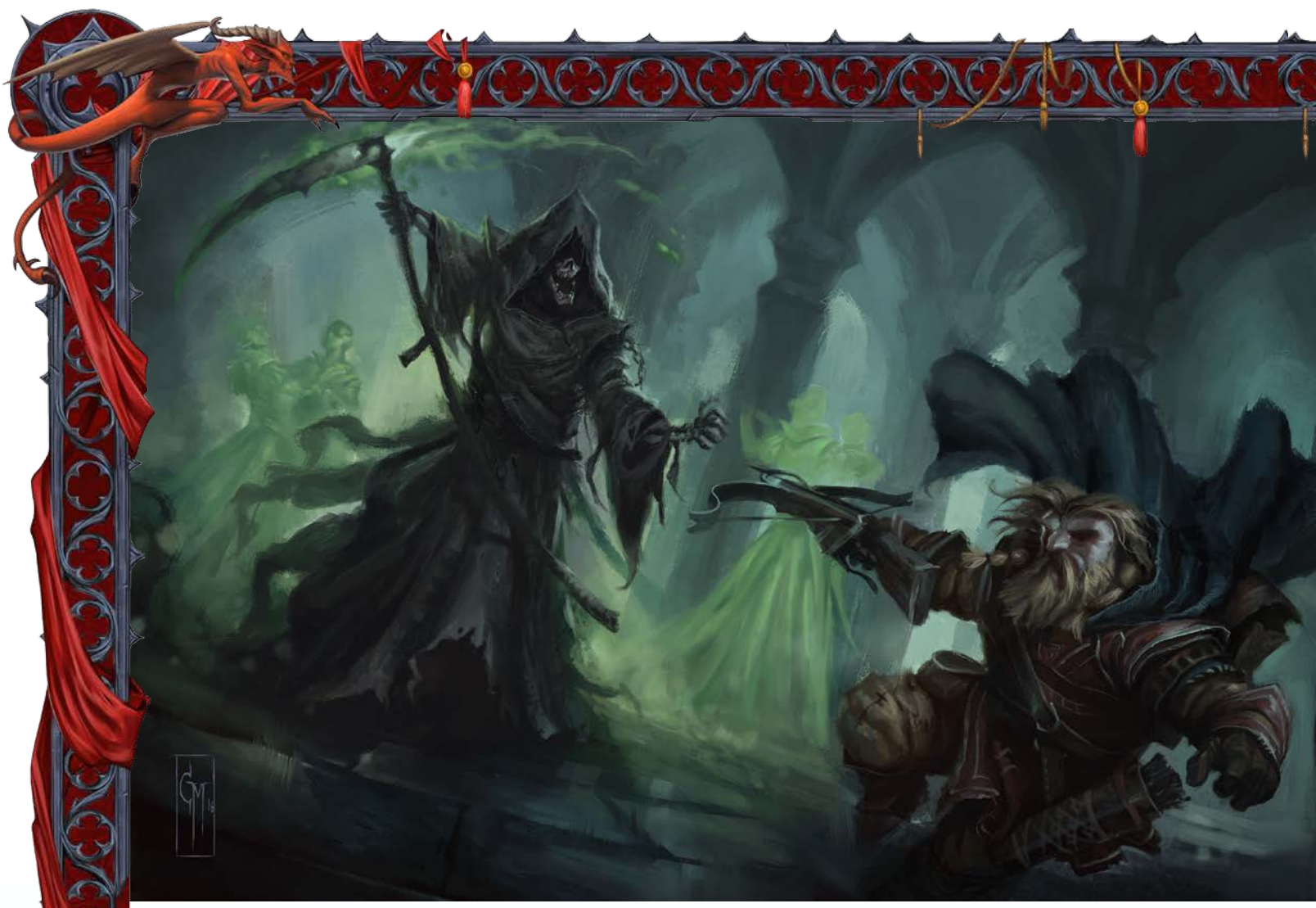
The mummified remains of a dwarven scholar (having been abandoned by his students 645 years ago after he was invited by Kazavon to conduct a lecture) are this room's only current contents. He managed to survive for 8 months by drinking rainwater and snaring local rooks with a bit of string; despite his best efforts, though, he finally starved to death.

Treasure: Most of the dead scholar's gear has rotted or rusted away, but a platinum and black sapphire ring bearing the sign of the Whispering Way etched inside the band sits on one finger. This ring is worth 5,500 gp.

B36 Rosette Observatory (CR 14)

This vast, grand ballroom is constructed in a floral shape with a high, vaulted roof of intricately wrought glass panes bearing a slight rose tint but still providing a breathtaking view of the sky. Clover-shaped pillars support key portions of the roof above the polished floor of stained cherry, and a wide dais provides room for an orchestra to play or stage performance to occur. A few broken chairs have been pushed into the corners, but otherwise this room is empty.

Kazavon hosted grand cotillions in this observatory. These affairs were always of utmost sophistication but varied from elegant dances and dramatic performances for his honored guests to absolute debauchery and orgies culminating in cannibal feasts visited upon his less fortunate visitors. Typically, the participants didn't even



know which sort of engagement it was going to be until too late. Thanks to the spirits of the castle, the room remains in perfect repair despite the many years since the last event was held there, but the wooden floor—composed of oak—has been indelibly stained a rich cherry color by the bloodshed here.

The secret door in the southwestern wall is rather well hidden, but can be located with a successful DC 35 Perception check. A character who locates the faint trail from area **B37** to this spot on the outside gains a +10 circumstance bonus on Perception checks to find this secret door.

Creature: More blood was spilled in this ballroom than anywhere else in the castle. As a result, the restless dead concentrated here have "fused" their spirits, becoming an undead horror of incredible menace. The very representation of death incarnate, this creature is known as a danse macabre. It lurks incorporeally near the ceiling of the room, and the rose color of the glass provides a camouflaging effect. The PCs must succeed at Perception checks opposed by its Stealth check in order to notice that it floats above them until it attacks or they detect it by some other means. Once all of the PCs appear to have entered the room, it begins its dance of death to compel them to join with its eternal existence.

DANSE MACABRE **CR 14**

XP 38,400

hp 203 (see page 470)

Treasure: Buried beneath the wooden floor of this chamber is the general that led Tamrivena's forces alongside Count Andachi to defeat Kazavon. After slaying the man, Kazavon placed his body here as a trophy. The corpse can only be found by magic or by tearing up a portion of the wooden floor to reveal the cavity beneath. A successful DC 35 Perception check (or at your discretion, any woodworking-related Craft or Profession check) reveals a section of floor that was removed and replaced at some point in the past, but that there is no method of easy access to the space below. Within the confined area, the skeleton still wears its *+2 full plate armor*. Clutched to its breast is a *+1 holy cold iron longsword*. His *+1 tower shield* still bears a rampant eagle coat of arms; a PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Knowledge (history or nobility) check identifies the corpse as Sir Echolt Crommerand of Tamrivena.

B37 Hidden Mooring (CR 13)

A faint, narrow path follows the rocky ridgeline of the castle's island, yet it hasn't been used in centuries, even by the rare wildlife in the area. A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Survival check can locate the remnants of this once-properly cleared trail, but most of it has eroded away over time, making it undetectable unless the PC is on the ground and looking for it. This was the exact route that Mandraivus and his cabal used to invade Scarwall, approaching invisibly via *water walk* from the west and entering Scarwall through the secret door revealed to them by Kleestad.

At the western edge of the island, where the trail ends, a few short stone columns sit just underwater in the shallows of the tarn, all that remains of a small quay that once stood here. The ruined quay is visible from above water with a successful DC 20 Perception check. Though Kazavon never seemed particularly worried about an escape route from Scarwall (something he paid for in the end), his chamberlain Kleestad was less confident and had this mooring and the secret door in area **B36** constructed in case the castle should ever be seriously threatened by Kazavon's many enemies.

Creature: One of the immense tarnworms that dwell in the crater lake has taken to lurking in the waters near the quay here. The lumbering, slimy creature surges up out of the water to attack anyone who comes within 20 feet of the shore, but retreats to the lake's depths if reduced to fewer than 30 hit points.

TARNWORM **CR 13**

XP 25,600

Advanced purple worm (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 230)

hp 232

Treasure: A successful DC 23 Perception check on the trail itself uncovers a rare platinum coin dropped for luck by Mandraivus before he and his cabal entered the castle. The coin was minted more than 700 years ago in ancient Ustalav. More significantly, a shard of Mandraivus's soul infused the coin when he died, transforming it into a lucky talisman identical in all ways to a *stone of good luck* that functions only for a good-aligned carrier.

C Second Floor

The second floor of Scarwall technically includes the upper level of the donjon, but this area is covered in a separate section beginning on page 318. Random encounters function normally on the second floor of Scarwall. All encounter locations are on the map of the second floor on page 299.

C1 Gate Winch (CR 10)

This oddly shaped chamber occupies most of the gatehouse's second floor. A large set of winches in the room seem to govern the gates and portcullises in the gateway below. Troughs run along the sides of the winches, just above a set of murder holes in the floor to the east and west of the winches. Arrow slits pierce the outer walls in several places, completing the room's defensive posts.

This room was the focal point of the main gate's defenses. Troops could be shuttled through here to reinforce different areas of the gatehouse, and the actual gates could be controlled by means of the winches. The troughs were normally kept filled with oil that could be brought to a boil and dumped into the room below in times of invasion. The Scarwall curse has infused the oil kept here, making it supernaturally cold instead. Ten minutes after the troughs are emptied, the freezing oil magically refills in these troughs.

Creatures: A total of four dread skeleton minotaurs are stationed here, minions of the castle and Captain Castothrane (who remains in the chambers above throughout any assault on the castle).

SCARWALL GUARDS (4) **CR 6**

XP 2,400 each

hp 61 each (see page 272)

C2 Guardhouses

This chamber is bare of furnishings other than a wooden table sized for large creatures and three similarly sized chairs. A stairway descends along the wall, and a ladder provides access to a wide trap door above. A door exits in one wall.

Both of these chambers served as guardhouses for those on duty defending the main gate. The stairs in **C2a** descend to area **B2a**, while those in **C2b** descend to **B2b**. Despite their age, the ladders leading to the trap doors remain sound, held together by the castle's curse. The trap doors in the ceiling provide access to the parapets above (areas **D2a** and **D2b**).

C3 Chamberlain's Quarters

This bedroom's furniture is in a dreadfully decomposed state, although the bed and large writing desk were obviously once of quite high quality.

This chamber served as Chamberlain Kleestad's home, yet the man hasn't been able to return here since

Mandraivus invaded the castle—he barely made it back to this room before being summoned by Kazavon, going into hiding, and eventually recovering *Serithtial* and being cursed by Zon-Kuthon.

Phantasm: The first character to attempt any search of these quarters must attempt a DC 20 Will save as sudden searing pain shoots through her ankles. If she fails the save, the pain is enough to knock her prone. Regardless of the save's result, she is filled with a terrible dread that Kazavon (who she also understands is who just broke both of her ankles) is about to kill her. A heartbeat later, this conviction passes, replaced by a yearning to burrow deep into the ground below Scarwall. One heartbeat after that, all of these convictions, as well as the ankle pain, fades away.

IRON GOLEM

Treasure: A successful DC 20 Perception check on the rubble in this room reveals a discarded ring of keys that once unlocked numerous doors in Scarwall. These keys fit the locks on all doors on the first and second floors (areas **B** and **C**), along with most of the doors on the third floor (areas **D1–D11**), but finding the right key on the large ring takes 1d6 rounds (or a single round with a successful DC 20 Disable Device check to know which key is most likely to fit a lock).

C4 Armory (CR 13)

The door to this room is locked (DC 35 Disable Device).

Armor stands and weapon racks once filled this room, but today, they have crumbled into rubble. Very few weapons remain apparent, and those that do remain have rotten wooden hafts or rusty, pitted blades.

Once Scarwall's Armory, the bulk of the weapons in here were used by defenders during Mandraivus's attack.

Creature: An iron statue of Kazavon in his human form appears to stand in the northwestern corner of this room, but this is actually an iron golem, one of the few guardians of Scarwall to have endured. It has survived since Kazavon's time relatively intact and unhindered by the curse. The golem immediately attacks anyone who enters the armory, despite the fact that there is little of value left (save for one magical weapon; see Treasure). Mandraivus and his followers left this room alone, and never had the time or reason to deal with the golem, which does not pursue foes out of this room.

IRON GOLEM **CR 13**

XP 25,600

hp 129 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 162)

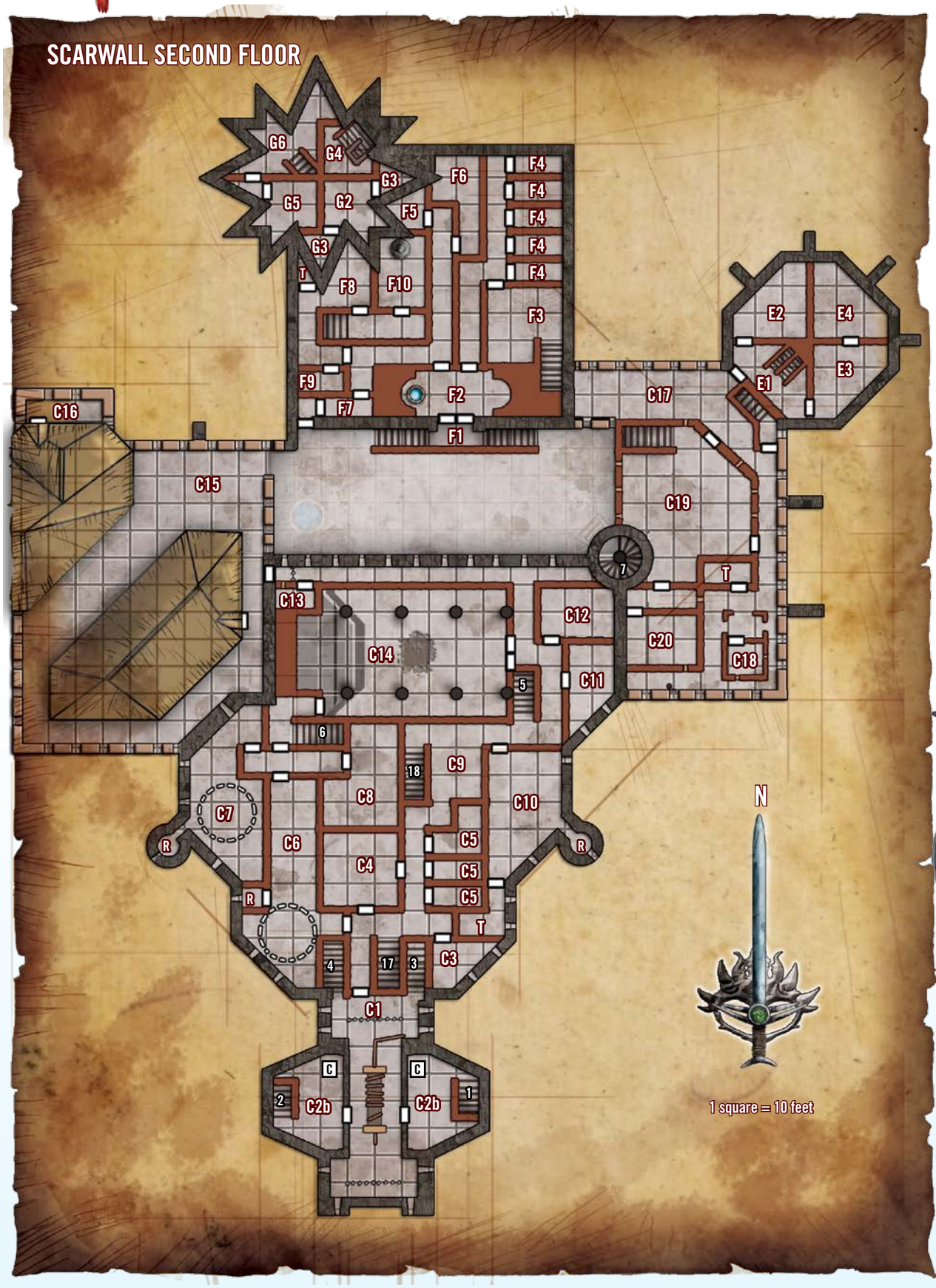
Treasure: Most of the weapons and armor here are ruined, but a successful DC 25 Perception check picks out a *+2 seeking composite longbow* (+4 Str) amid the debris.

C5 Clerks' Chambers

This relatively small room may have once been cramped, but now that its bed and dresser have fallen into ruin the chamber is almost sparse.

Each of these rooms was the home of one of the three clerks who served Kleestad directly in keeping Scarwall operational. All three attempted to flee Scarwall during Mandraivus's attack, only to be eaten by tarnworms.

Treasure: The clerks fled Scarwall so hastily that they left behind their last month's pay, totaling 35 gp and 385 sp, which can be scavenged from these three rooms.


SCARWALL SECOND FLOOR
G6
G4
G3
G5
G2
F5
F6
F4
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F4
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G3
T
F8
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E2
E4
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E1
F9
F2
C17
C16
F7
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C15
C19
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C12
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C11
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C7
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T
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17
3
C3
C1
C
C
2
C2b
C2b
1
N
1 square = 10 feet

C6 Servants' Lounge (CR 12)

Several chairs, couches, and tables hint at this room's original purpose as a communal living area. Judging by the low quality of the ruined furniture, castle servants were the likely occupants here.

Haunt: This room once served as the castle servants' lounge, but is now haunted by their tormented spirits. The haunt is relatively harmless, yet could cause great peril if multiple PCs succumb and are split up throughout the castle. As the haunt activates, ghostly images of harried, emaciated servants clad in rags manifest in the room and scurry about, frantic in their attempt to keep the castle presentable for their lord.

OBSESSION OF SERVITUDE **CR 12**

XP 19,200

CE haunt (20-foot-radius area in southern portion of area **C6**)

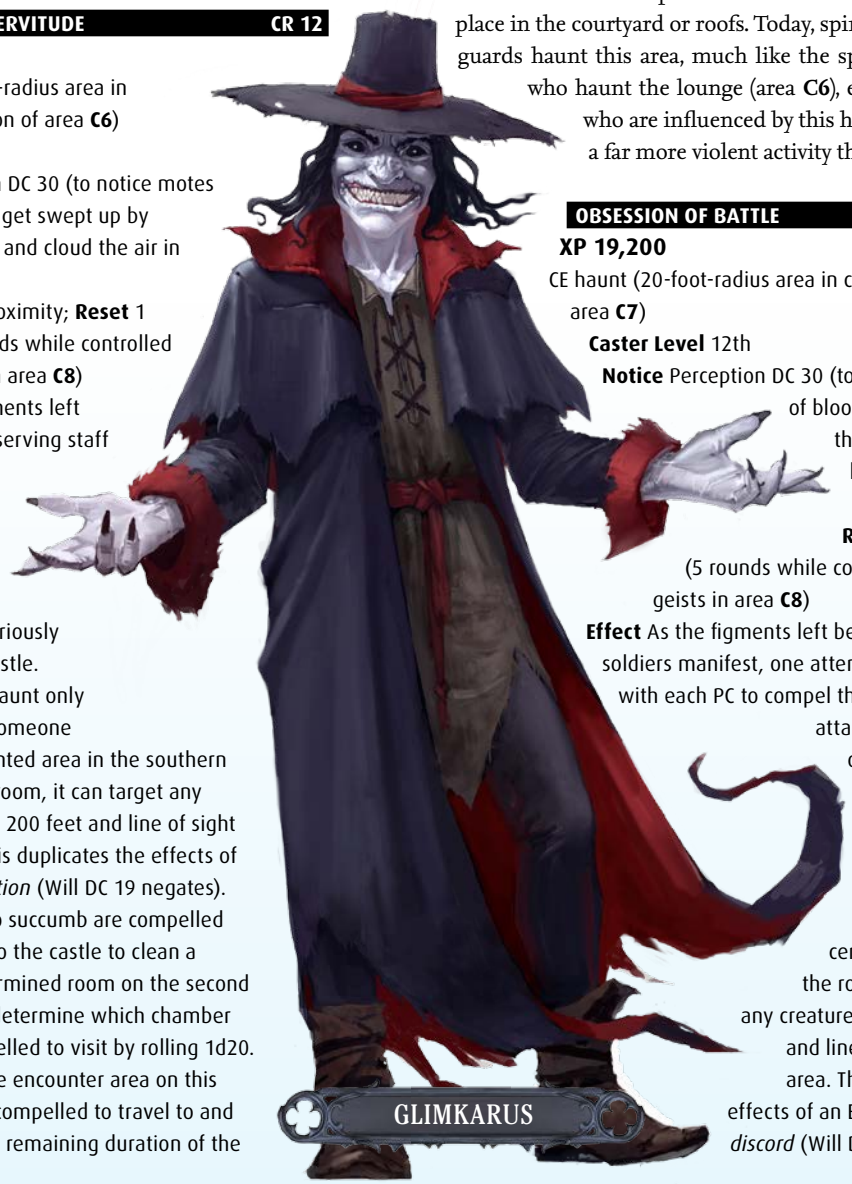
Caster Level 12th

Notice Perception DC 30 (to notice motes of dust start to get swept up by invisible hands and cloud the air in tiny gusts)

hp 24; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 minute (5 rounds while controlled by the geists in area **C8**)

Effect As the figments left behind by the serving staff manifest, one attempts to merge with each PC to compel the PCs to begin furiously cleaning the castle. Although the haunt only triggers once someone enters the haunted area in the southern portion of the room, it can target any creature within 200 feet and line of sight to this area. This duplicates the effects of a *mass suggestion* (Will DC 19 negates). Characters who succumb are compelled to head out into the castle to clean a randomly determined room on the second floor. You can determine which chamber the PC is compelled to visit by rolling 1d20. The result is the encounter area on this floor the PC is compelled to travel to and then spend the remaining duration of the effect cleaning. A character attacked along the way can fight back, but once a battle is completed must return to the task at hand. Characters prevented from following the *suggestion* do not resist violently, but do seek to obey the *suggestion* to the best of their abilities until the duration expires or the effect is dispelled.

Destruction If the curse affecting Scarwall is lifted and the geists in area **C8** are destroyed, this haunt fades away.



C7 Sparring Chamber (CR 12)

Several partially destroyed sparring dummies lie in heaps on the floor here amid a number of broken weapons and shields.

Haunt: This room was once used by Scarwall's guards to spar and practice weapon play on the many days where rain or other weather prevented such activities from taking place in the courtyard or roofs. Today, spirits of the castle's guards haunt this area, much like the spirits of servants who haunt the lounge (area **C6**), except characters who are influenced by this haunt succumb to a far more violent activity than cleaning.

OBSESSION OF BATTLE **CR 12**

XP 19,200

CE haunt (20-foot-radius area in central portion of area **C7**)

Caster Level 12th

Notice Perception DC 30 (to notice spatters of blood appearing on the floor and walls)

hp 24; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 minute (5 rounds while controlled by the geists in area **C8**)

Effect As the figments left behind by the soldiers manifest, one attempts to merge with each PC to compel the PCs to begin attacking each other. Although the haunt only triggers once someone enters the haunted area in the central portion of the room, it can target any creature within 200 feet and line of sight to this area. This duplicates the effects of an Extended *song of discord* (Will DC 17 negates).

Characters who succumb feel urges to attack the closest target as per the spell's effects.

Destruction If the curse affecting Scarwall is lifted and the geists in area **C8** are destroyed, this haunt fades away.

C8 Servants' Quarters (CR 13)

A large number of double bunks, each long past its prime and in advanced stages of disrepair, sag and slump in this room.

Creatures: Many of the castle's servants slept here in the few hours they were allowed to rest. When Mandraivus attacked, some of these servants, as evil as the soldiers who served Kazavon, took up arms only to be killed along with the rest of the castle's inhabitants. While the nonevil servants became the haunt in area **C6**, the four of them who were truly vile in nature instead became geists, undead abominations capable of controlling haunts. These geists already control the haunts in areas **C6** and **C7**, and can sense when either one activates. They swiftly move to investigate and attack foes they find there.

GEISTS (4) **CR 9**

XP 6,400 each

hp 114 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 124)

C9 Central Hall (CR 5)

This wide and twisting hallway runs between several stairwells through the heart of the keep. Numerous doors open from the sides of this hall, while divans and furnishings that once lined the hall have collapsed into splinters joined by the tattered remnants of what were once paintings and portraits on the walls. Among them can be seen the shattered remains of bones. A miasma of smoke hovers in the air and fills the hall with the stink of burning flesh.

Creature: This corridor has become the domain of a nightmare, the ally of the night hag Malatrothe (see area **B19**). It serves as her steed while traveling, but has taken this area as its lair during her stay, enjoying the manifestations of ghosts and undead that it then stomps into oblivion and playfully fleeing from the few it can't defeat. Living targets provide the opportunity to revel in gore that it hasn't enjoyed in several weeks, but as soon as it realizes how outclassed it is against the PCs, it flees downstairs to join its mistress if she still lives. Otherwise the creature attempts to smash its way through the door to area **C15** at the far end of the hall to escape.

NIGHTMARE **CR 5**

XP 1,600

hp 51 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 216)

C10 Torture Room (CR 11)

This room's furnishings leave no doubt as to its original purpose—racks, iron maidens, cages, and other implements of torture abound. Disturbingly, these objects are in remarkable condition and appear to be in fine working order, with not a speck of dust or mold to be seen.

Creature: Scarwall's curse keeps the torture implements in this room in perfect shape, preventing them from the disrepair that afflicts most other furnishings in the castle. This, plus the room's generally disturbing ambience, made an excellent home for a malicious fey creature named Glimkarus, a bogeyman who came to Scarwall after hearing whispers of the site's legends while tormenting the inhabitants of distant Lepidstadt in Ustalav. He found Scarwall to be more than he hoped for, the castle being a nearly endless font of inspiration for torments and scares. Yet when Glimkarus attempted to leave the castle after spending a few luxurious weeks skulking about the building, he found to his immense frustration that he could not, as he had been snared by the castle's curse. In time, Glimkarus convinced himself that it was his choice to remain in Scarwall, and his primary source of entertainment today is when a new orc goes spirit-skulled and enters the castle. If Glimkarus manages to catch such an orc, he brings it back up here to torture. Of course, the PCs make equally diverting playthings, and he uses *suggestion* and *hold person* to keep the party occupied while he focuses his attention on the PC with the highest Charisma score, who appeals to Glimkarus as the one most worthy of tormenting to madness.

Note that the ambient fear and dread suffusing all of Scarwall is enough to keep Glimkarus's terrible rejuvenation active at all times within the castle.

If reduced to 30 or fewer hit points, Glimkarus flees farther into the castle using a combination of *gaseous form* and *invisibility*. He hopes to lose the PCs, recover from his wounds, and then stalk the PCs via *nightmare* until he can orchestrate a rematch against them, preferably after recruiting one of Scarwall's other denizens to aid him.

GLIMKARUS **CR 11**

XP 12,800

Advanced bogeyman (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 290, 42)

hp 127

C11 Private Audience Chamber

A once-elegant desk sits to the northeast in this room, its top strewn with moldy scrolls, a human skull, a tarnished candelabrum, and other ornaments. A tall-backed but moldy

chair sits beyond the desk, while several smaller chairs lie strewn in disrepair throughout the room. An immense but sagging portrait of an armored man leading an army through rugged hills hangs askew on the north wall.

This chamber was used by Kazavon or his underlings to meet with special guests or important visitors to the castle. The painting on the north wall depicts Kazavon leading his army into Belkzen, identifiable as such with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (history) check.

Treasure: Most of the items in this room have been ruined by the passage of time, but a PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check discovers a silver signet ring that Kazavon kept here as a memento. This was once Andachi's signet ring, a *scholar's ring*[UE] that bears his family coat of arms (identifiable with a successful DC 30 Knowledge [nobility] check). Unfortunately, a shard of Andachi's spirit haunts the ring, manifesting as a curse that causes the ring's wearer to take a –4 penalty on saving throws against spells or effects generated by a creature that serves or worships Zon-Kuthon. This curse fades once the curse affecting Scarwall is defeated.

C12 Waiting Room

Several ratty, ruined couches sit against the walls here, interspersed by small tables or shelves containing broken bottles of wine or serving trays covered with sheets of mold.

This room is where those who wished to plead a case or otherwise present themselves to Kazavon in the great hall (area **C14**) awaited their turn.

Phantasm: After the PCs enter this room, have them all attempt Diplomacy checks. Whoever rolls the lowest becomes overwhelmed for a brief moment by the conviction that she has come to plead for mercy from Kazavon, but knows the warlord will not grant it. This is followed a heartbeat later by an urge to commit suicide by leaping from the castle walls. This phantasm passes quickly, but likely leaves the PCs disturbed nonetheless.

C13 Guard Post (CR 6)

This small room looks out onto the parapets.

Creature: A single Scarwall guard stands watch in this chamber. If the undead minotaur spots anyone entering the castle from area **C15**, it fires upon the intruders through the arrow slit after ringing a dented brass bell to raise the alarm. As a result, roll on the Scarwall Encounters table to see what nearby creature responds to the alarm.

SCARWALL GUARD **CR 6**

XP 2,400

hp 61 (see page 272)

C14 Great Hall (CR 15)

Thick wooden columns, their sides caked with dust, support the ceiling of this large hall. Between them, in the center of the room, sits a large fire pit, its ashes long cold. Many old stains mar the floor, some surely of spilled food and ale, though several darker ones appear more grisly in origin. At the western end of the hall, a wide dais rises where the lord's table could be set to oversee affairs in the hall. In the center of the dais is a great chair carved of oak and studded with iron rivets. Down one step and to the left of it is a smaller, less elaborate chair of oak.

Scarwall's great hall served as Kazavon's seat of power. It was here the warlord entertained his subjects (often at the extremely painful expense of prisoners, guests, or even his own guards). His great chair on the dais has stood empty for the past several centuries. The smaller seat belonged to a man almost as cruel as Kazavon—his castellan Mithrodar. The fire pit is only 2 feet deep and holds a foot of ash.

When Mandraivus and his cabal invaded Scarwall, they confronted Kazavon and several of his minions here. Mithrodar died on *Serithtial*'s edge, but his death bought Kazavon the time he needed to retreat to the castle donjon, a place he believed he would be protected due to his faith in Zon-Kuthon, when in fact this retreat only delayed the warlord's inevitable doom.

Creatures: Once second in command to Kazavon, Mithrodar now exists as a powerful ghostlike undead known as a chained spirit. He became the lord of Scarwall when Mandraivus was slain so long ago and the unquiet dead of Scarwall rose up. Mithrodar now maintains complete command of Scarwall, yet ironically he is also its most tightly bound prisoner. As with all chained spirits, he derives much of his power by investing fragments of his undead soul into four spirit anchors. With each spirit anchor that is defeated by the PCs, Mithrodar grows less powerful, and if all four are destroyed, the chained spirit himself can be destroyed as well. The four chains that descend from Mithrodar's ghostly body are physical manifestations of this link; each anchor destroyed removes one of these chains.

After all these years, little remains of Mithrodar's personality. He is now not much more than a malevolent intelligence eager to see the haunting of Scarwall continue, yet constantly in fear that a powerful force will cast him adrift by destroying his anchors. Mithrodar is at once in a position of power, for he commands much necromantic magic, and one of servitude, as he cannot directly influence events in Scarwall. In many ways, his condition is a punishment handed down from Zon-Kuthon himself, and

until Mithrodar fails at defending Kazavon's lair again, he is cursed to watch and wait.

Mithrodar is attended by five spectres who were once his personal retainers, and are now his eternally bound undead thralls. These normally lurk in the servants' entrance, but they respond to his mental summons in 1 round. As long as at least one spirit anchor remains, Mithrodar cannot be slain. As detailed under the chained spirit entry on page 468, the undead menace reforms at full strength 1 minute after his destruction if even one spirit anchor remains. Fortunately, Mithrodar is bound to this chamber and cannot leave it to pursue fleeing characters.

MITHRODAR **CR 14**

XP 38,400

Chained spirit (see page 468)

hp 200

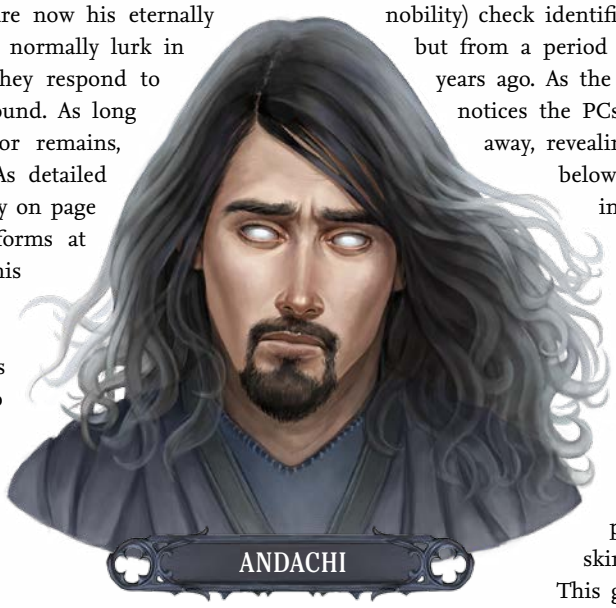
SPECTRES (5) **CR 7**

XP 3,200 each

hp 52 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 256)

Development: With the destruction of the chained spirit, the curse over Scarwall has nothing anchoring it to this location. Mithrodar wails and shrieks as he is defeated, and then his body twists and spirals as if caught in a vortex. A heartbeat later, he is gone. After a few moments, the walls of the castle begin to shimmer and brighten as the shadows that cling to every inch of the cursed structure fade. The sound of countless sighs whisper in the ear, and the oppressive sense of menace overlying the structure fades. At the same time, many of the undead in Scarwall collapse into lifelessness, including all of the undead on the random encounter table on page 272, all of the haunts scattered throughout the castle, and most of the undead encountered in various areas (the danse macabre in area **B36** is unaffected by this development). Living creatures, such as the gargoyles and devils that dwell in the towers above, sense this change in the castle's atmosphere, and in time they may move on to seek other lairs, but are not otherwise affected by the end of the curse. Any PCs whose souls are trapped in the walls of the castle are now freed as well. Zellara, if she succumbed to the castle's curse, is also freed, and her spirit returns to her harrow deck, restoring the magic item to full functionality.

A few moments later, a small luminescence forms before the PCs. It rapidly increases in brightness until a figure manifests before them, being that of a confused-looking human man in early adulthood. He wears finely cut, if long-out-of-style, clothing and is clearly a noble of some sort. A successful DC 30 Knowledge (history or nobility) check identifies his attire as Ustalavic, but from a period of time several hundred years ago. As the figure looks around and notices the PCs, his ghostly flesh strips away, revealing raw muscle and bone below as if he's being flayed by invisible knives. However, after being reduced in this horrible fashion, his skin reappears, only for the process to start all over again. The ghost seems to hardly notice his continuing mutilation, with only the occasional flinch as a particularly tender bit of skin is tugged away.



This grisly but harmless shade is that of Count Andachi himself, his soul finally freed from its long imprisonment in Scarwall. If any PC carries his skull or signet ring (from area **D14** or **C11**, respectively), she recognizes him immediately. While undead, Andachi is not malevolent, and he has just enough strength to maintain his manifestation for a few moments before moving on to Pharasma's Boneyard for judgment. But before he goes, Count Andachi has a message for the PCs. When he speaks, his accent is distinctly Ustalavic and archaic, yet his words are clear, manifesting as sounds as much as they do telepathic thoughts.

"You have done a great thing today. You have accomplished the conclusion of a legend. What has festered in Scarwall is no more, and in saving us all, you have returned honor to Tamrivena after these long years of shame—a shame I created, and a shame I was unable to lift. I sent Kazavon into Belkzen so many ages ago. Eventually, when even my coward's soul could no longer bear to hear tell of his cruelties, I came here to Scarwall to attempt to undo what I had done in asking for the Midnight Lord's aid in defending Tamrivena. Yet again I failed. My general, Kazavon, had me skinned alive and ate the strips raw before my dying gaze. And when I did die, my soul remained trapped here as surely as any prisoner.

"There came a time soon thereafter when Kazavon was finally slain, along with many of his cruel minions, by a powerful blade borne by a hero named Mandraivus. His blade Serithtial brought an end to Kazavon's rule, yet could not quench his spirit, for Kazavon was one of the Midnight Lord's chosen. Mandraivus wisely ordered the dragon's relics

taken away, then remained behind to watch over the castle. His faith, his strength of will, and most of all, Serithtial kept the spirits of the dead quiet, yet these did nothing to protect him from a baser threat. The orcs came down from the mountains and murdered him. As he fell, his soul became trapped in these cursed walls. Without his presence, the light of Serithtial went dark, and the spirits of Kazavon's legacy took hold. This is the blasphemy you have righted today, and now Scarwall will be left to crumble to dust as the ages march on.

"Yet I sense that your quest is only partially complete. I have dwelled in Kazavon's echo for too long not to feel his strength, his influence, take root in your queen, so far away. Strange names that I do not know are in my head. Korvosa. Ileosa. Sabina. Your own. Kazavon quickens in your home, and you must recover Serithtial if you are to cast him down as surely as you have cast down his presence here. Yet a fallen agent of the Midnight Lord still subdues the threat Serithtial poses to Kazavon. While the sacred blade cannot be destroyed so readily, nor even taken far from this place without invoking the wrath of Iomedae... it can remain hidden.

"I can still feel a presence in this place, a power linked to the Midnight Lord. It lurks deep below, in a vault accessible via the Star Tower, Kazavon's inner sanctum. I see that here, in the deepest heart of Scarwall, your goal awaits in the foulest of places. A fragment of Scarwall's curse lingers there, lodged and stubborn. When the curse held sway, Serithtial's power was blocked to you. But seek out the blade's crypt, and it shall lead you to your goal. Now, with my time here at an end, your time shall at last begin."

The end of his speech coincides with the completion of one of his ghostly mutilations, except this time his form does not rejuvenate. Instead it crumples and slowly fades from view. The House of Tamrivena is at last no more.

Story Award: If the PCs defeat all four spirit anchors and destroy Mithrodar, thus lifting Scarwall's curse, award them 25,600 XP.

C15 Western Parapet

This parapet offers a haunting view of the crater lake and the ragged cliffs beyond.

A narrow parapet runs from the guest wing roof above the courtyard to this small side entrance to the donjon. This out-of-the-way entrance was created for discreet visits by some visitors to the castle or kidnappings of other visitors.

The door in the eastern wall of the central roofline opens into a staircase that leads down to area **B26**. The heavy oak door leading into the donjon is firmly locked (Disable Device DC 40), and the seams around its edges are sealed with lead (break DC 30), part of Mandraivus's attempts to contain the evil within.

C16 Balcony

The door that opens onto this empty balcony provides access to the stairs that lead down to the hallway just outside of Ukwar's room (area **B29**).

C17 Eastern Parapet

The stone floor of this parapet is covered with a pale green lichen that looks eerie but is harmless. The door to the War Tower that opens into area **E1** is of remarkably well-preserved iron and firmly locked (hardness 10, hp 60, break DC 28, Disable Device DC 30). The only remaining key to unlock the door is carried by General Gorstav, who never leaves the tower's war room (see area **E11**). The door to the nearby stairwell is also locked but its key can be found on the key ring from area **C3**.

C18 Smithy

A long-cold forge sits in the southwest corner of this smithy. Nearby sits an old, dusty anvil, against which leans a plain-looking but remarkably clean blacksmith's hammer.

This smithy was once the domain of Anizora, the commander of Kazavon's hunters. Today, Anizora "lives" on as a degenerate dybbuk in area **C20**, and her days of forging armor and weapons for Kazavon are long gone.

Treasure: The blacksmith's hammer was once Anizora's pride and joy. Called *Banudor*, the hammer functions as a masterwork tool for any Craft check involving smithing, but also functions as a *+3 flaming burst warhammer*. Additionally, the first person to pick *Banudor* up can feel the presence of its previous owner nearby, and knows this hammer can strike particularly devastating blows against the corrupted monstrosity that owner has become. Used against Anizora, *Banudor* functions as a *ghost touch* good-aligned weapon that deals an additional 2d6 points of damage on a successful hit.

C19 Hunters' Quarters (CR 13)

Several partially collapsed bunks slump against each other in the western part of this room, while the eastern half is occupied by a collapsed table and several ruined chairs.

Creatures: This large room once housed an elite force of bounty hunters employed by Kazavon. A total of four of them were not present in the castle when Mandraivus struck, and when they returned 2 days after their lord's death, they attempted (and failed) to assassinate the paladin. When Scarwall's curse infused unlife to the dead

some time later, these four hunters rose from death as baykoks. These undead archers take note of the sounds of any combat occurring in area **B21** below, and as soon as that battle ends, they open fire on surviving PCs via the arrow slits in the western wall. Confronted here, they fight until destroyed, and pursue those who flee throughout the castle.

If the PCs confront the baykoks in melee here, Anizora (the degenerate dybbuk in area **C20**) joins the battle 1d4 rounds after possessing the taxidermy wyvern therein.

BAYKOKS (4) **CR 9**

XP 6,400 each

hp 97 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 35)

C20 Hunt Commander's Quarters (CR 14)

A ruined bed, a crumbled desk, and several tattered paintings of wild animals decorate this room, but the old taxidermic wyvern looming in the northeast corner is the chamber's most notable feature, intimidating despite the swaths of moldy stuffing and straw that protrude from its sagging frame.

Creatures: The commander of Kazavon's hunters, as well as Scarwall's resident armor and weapon smith, was a woman named Anizora. A devoted follower of Zon-Kuthon, Anizora helped to defend the donjon from Mandraivus but fell to the heroes in the end. When the curse of Scarwall raised the dead, Anizora was reborn as a dybbuk. She returned here to her quarters to linger, waiting patiently for a day that will never come—Kazavon's return to Scarwall. If combat breaks out in area **C19**, she possesses the taxidermic wyvern and joins the fight there in 1d4 rounds; otherwise, she remains here, brooding until the PCs confront her.

Anizora is not as powerful as a typical dybbuk, as her regret and self-doubt at failing to defend Kazavon has weakened her unliving resolve. She has the degenerate creature simple template, and cannot use her malevolence ability on living creatures as a result.

ANIZORA **CR 14**

XP 38,400

Female degenerate dybbuk (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 288, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 108)

hp 171

ANIMATED TAXIDERMIC WYVERN **CR —**

Large animated object (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 14)

N Large construct

Init –1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception –5

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 8, flat-footed 14 (–1 Dex, +6 natural, –1 size)

hp 52 (4d10+30)

Fort +1, **Ref** +0, **Will** –4

Defensive Abilities hardness 5; **Immune** construct traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +9 (1d8+9), slam +9 (2d6+6), sting +9 (1d6+6)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

STATISTICS

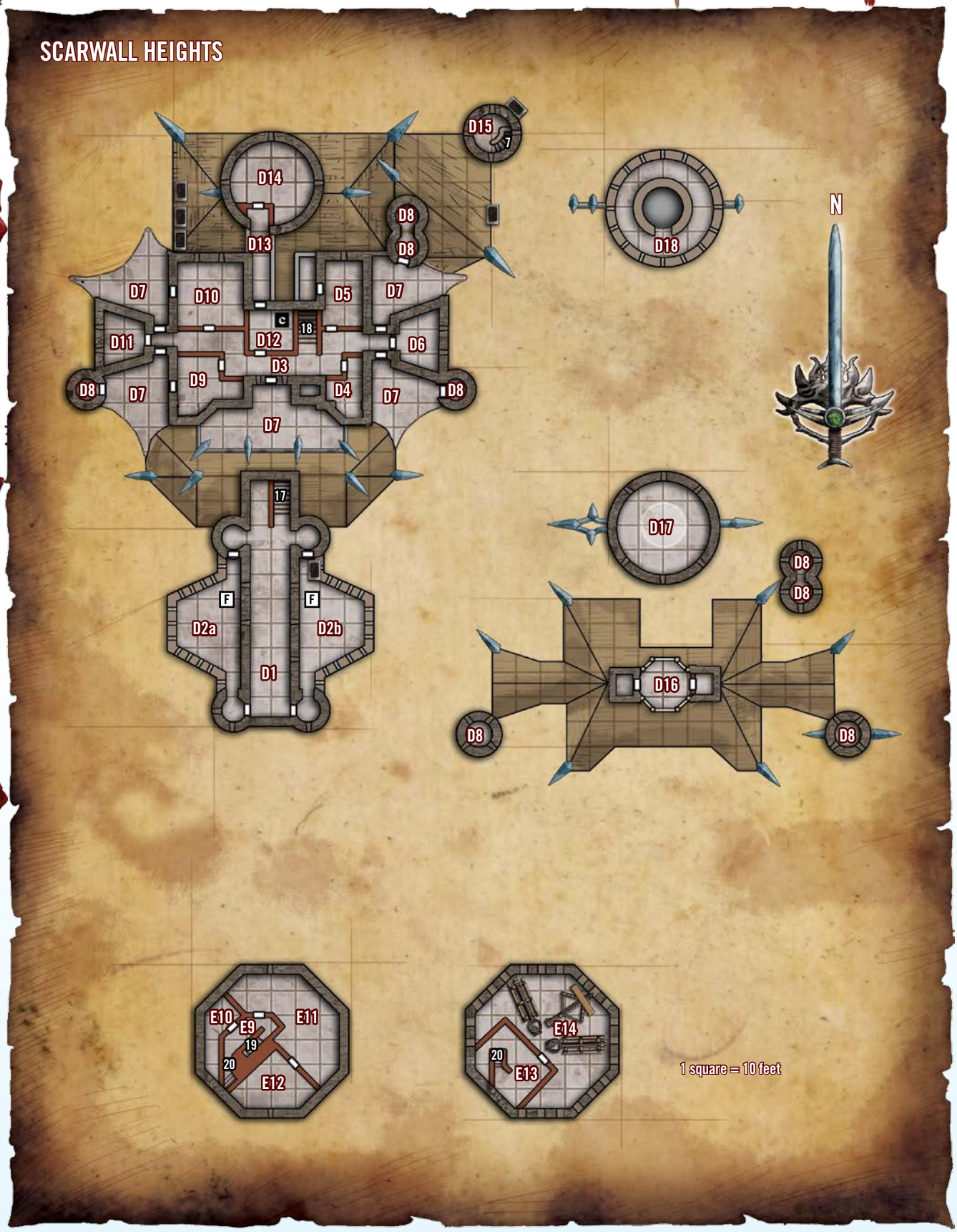
Str 22, **Dex** 8, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 20

D Scarwall Heights

The third floor of Scarwall's keep and its towers (excluding the War Tower, the donjon, and the Star Tower) consist of

ANIZORA


SCARWALL HEIGHTS
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E12
E14
20
E13
1 square = 10 feet

areas **D1–D18**. Random encounters function normally here, and all encounter locations are on the map of the heights on page 306.

D1 Gatehouse Loft (CR 13)

This long chamber has inward-slanting walls, like an attic. Many old barrels and boxes, broken and empty, are stacked at the base of the walls. Stairs descend to the north, near two small alcoves with conical roofs.

The gatehouse loft was once used to store supplies and armaments, and to provide access out onto the roof turrets for defense. When Scarwall fell to Mandraivus, one of its staunchest defenders was slain in personal combat with the hero of old.

Creatures: Captain Castothrane is one of the few castle guardians who was undead before Kazavon fell to Mandraivus. Although Castothrane was defeated by the cabal, when the spirits of Scarwall reclaimed the castle, they restored the skeleton warrior to his undead existence to become one of the chained spirit's anchors. His orders from Mithrodar are very specific, and he will not leave the gatehouse or the nearby parapets for any reason, even though he is tormented every second by the knowledge that his circlet is tantalizingly close (in area **D14** to the north).

Castothrane is attended by the undead spirits of his two bodyguards, transformed by Scarwall's curse into greater shadows. The low ceiling and many boxes ensure that any light sources brought in here create deep and tangled shadows, which are perfect places for these undead to hide in ambush.

If one of the characters carries or wears Castothrane's circlet, the skeleton warrior points to that character and says, "Mine... you have what is mine... give it back!" If the PC refuses, Castothrane attacks that character to the exclusion of all others; if that PC falls, Castothrane ignores all other potential targets in his mad search for the circlet. If he finds it, he sighs in relief and places it on his head; as he does so, both the circlet and Castothrane himself crumble to dust. Of course, Castothrane's spirit is simply reabsorbed by the castle, but he is now no longer one of Mithrodar's spirit anchors and is not an immediate threat to the PCs.

CASTOTHRANE **CR 12**

XP 19,200

Male human skeleton warrior fighter 11 (*Tome of Horrors Complete* 734)

LE Medium undead

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +7

Aura fear aura (DC 15)

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 11, flat-footed 27 (+10 armor, +1 Dex, +4 natural, +3 shield)

hp 142 (11d10+77)

Fort +15, **Ref** +7, **Will** +7 (+3 vs. fear)

DR 10/bludgeoning and magic; **Immune** channel energy, undead traits; **SR** 27

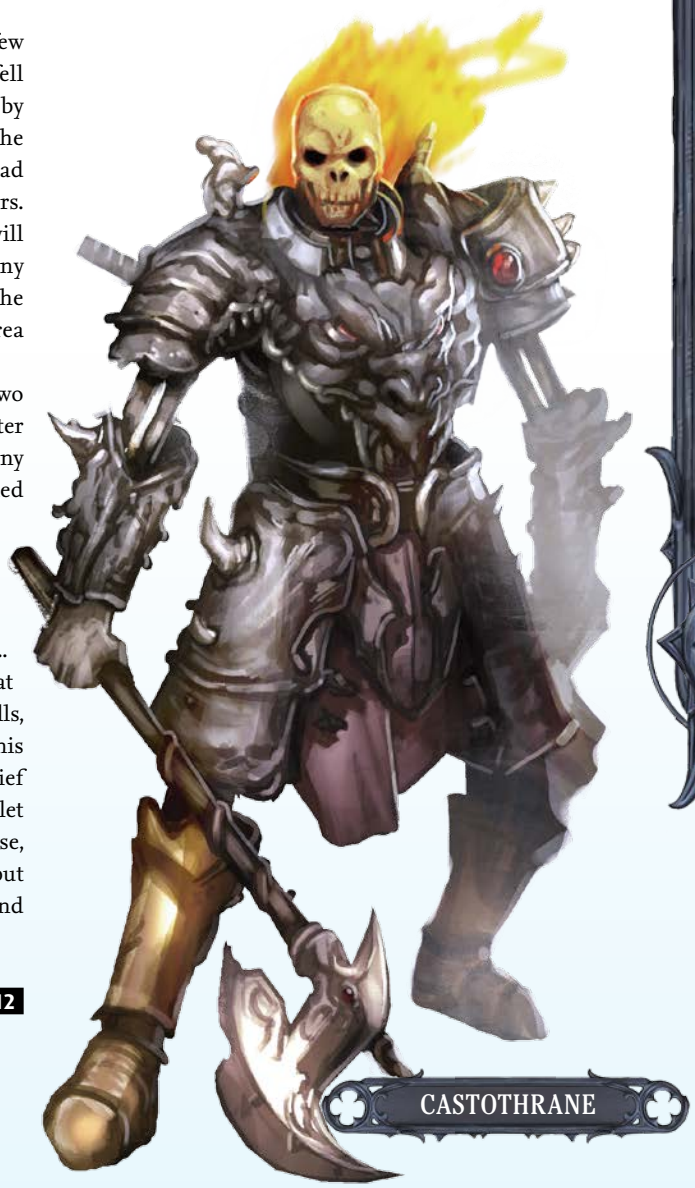
OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *+1 battleaxe* +20/+15/+10 (1d8+9/19–20/×3)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +14/+9/+4 (1d8+5/×3)

Special Attacks weapon training (axes +2, bows +1)



CASTOTHRANE

TACTICS

During Combat Castothrane uses Power Attack when he fights. As he does, he attempts to maneuver the battle out onto one of the nearby parapets, so he can attempt to bull rush enemies off the edge (anyone who topples from either parapet takes 6d6 points of damage from the fall to the rocky shoreline below). Although Castothrane would like nothing better than to pursue fleeing enemies, his orders are to remain on this floor of the gatehouse no matter what.

Morale Castothrane fights until destroyed, or until he receives his circlet.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 12, **Con** —, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +15 (+17 bull rush); **CMD** 26 (28 vs. bull rush)

Feats Cleave, Great Fortitude, Greater Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (battleaxe), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Point-Blank Shot, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Weapon Specialization (battleaxe)

Skills Intimidate +27, Perception +7, Ride +12, Sense Motive +7

Languages Common

SQ armor training 3, find target

Gear *+1 full plate*, *+1 heavy steel shield*, *+1 battleaxe*, mwk composite longbow (+4 Str) with 20 arrows, *cloak of resistance +1*, *ring of immolation* (see page 435)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Fear Aura (Su) Castothrane is shrouded in an aura of fear. Creatures with fewer than 5 Hit Dice and in a 30-foot radius must succeed at a DC 15 Will save or be affected as per *fear* (CL 11th).

Find Target (Sp) Castothrane can track and find the holder of his circlet unerringly, as though guided by *discern location* (CL 11th). Using this ability, he can also find the last person to hold his circlet. His caster level is equal to the total of his Hit Dice.

GREATER SHADOWS (2) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

hp 58 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 245)

D2 Gatehouse Turrets (CR 10)

Each of these rooftop turrets overlooks the approach to the castle's main gate. They are surrounded by crenellations that provide cover from below, and at the south end each has a guardhouse with arrow slits overlooking the causeway. These provide improved cover for those attacking through the arrow slits.

Creatures: Each turret is patrolled by two Scarwall guards. They shout an alarm to their captain at area **D1** if they notice the PCs attempting to enter the castle.

SCARWALL GUARDS (4) **CR 6**

XP 2,400 each

hp 61 each (see page 272)

D3 Upper Hall This dark hallway is made even gloomier by the presence of thick sheets of cobwebs that hang from above and drifts of dust and fragments of bone on the floor below. Portraits hang askew on the walls, but all of their subjects have been lost to a layer of mold and grime.

The flight of stairs in this hall leads down to area **C9**.

Phantasm: When the PCs first enter this area, have them all roll Perception checks. Whoever rolls the highest notices that one of the ruined portraits is in fact not ruined at all, and that its subject is singularly disturbing: the PC sees himself being beheaded by Kazavon. One blink later (or as soon as the PC draws attention to the image), the portrait reverts to its true state—a moldy sheet of ruined canvas on which no details can be discerned.

D4 Hidden Storeroom

This room contains a wealth of ruined crates, rotten firewood, moldy barrels, and other mundane supplies that are long past their prime.

Treasure: Nothing of import can be salvaged from the main storeroom here, but a successful DC 30 Perception check reveals a secret door in the west wall. This stone door (hardness 8, hp 60, break DC 38, Disable Device 40) is protected by *arcane lock* masked by a *magic aura*, and both spells function at CL 15th. This secret chamber's walls are lined with lead; the room was used by Kazavon to store various rare components and item crafting tools. Within is a roll top desk holding numerous rare spell components (of which 9,000 gp in gems and diamond dust remain usable) and sheaves of fine parchment and powders for making ink (these have all decayed to uselessness). Leaning against the desk is a *staff of conjuration* (8 charges) built to resemble a mundane walking stick.

D5 Wizard's Abode

This bedroom's contents are in shambles. A partially ruined circle of arcane marks has been inscribed on the floor in blood.

This room was the abode of a powerful wizard who once served Kazavon, and aided in conjuring some of the devils that remain here today. The wizard fled Scarwall when Mandraivus attacked, only to perish a few days later when a devil he conjured managed to turn against him. A successful DC 30 Knowledge (arcana) check confirms the arcane marks on the floor are a magic circle that was used

in the conjuration of devils via *planar binding*, although it no longer functions.

The small balcony to the west of this room has a stone railing surrounding it. The edges of this railing are sharpened to a razor's edge, and deal 1d6 points of slashing damage to anyone who climbs over them. A creature that is bull-rushed into one of these railings takes an amount of damage equal to 1d6 + the bull-rushing creature's Strength bonus.

D6 Library

A few shelves line the walls of this room, holding a modest collection of books and scrolls. A table with a comfortable, velvet-lined chair stands between the chamber's arrow slits. The melted stumps of two thick candles rest upon it. Two arrow slits to the east have rotting shutters that no longer serve to keep the damp out of the room.

Though not overly interested in literature, Kazavon did keep a small collection of writings. The books here have been maintained by the castle's haunted aura, but still feel brittle to the touch. Most are historical and geographical works relevant 7 centuries ago, from which the PCs could learn much about the history of Belkzen, Ustalav, and even the reign of the Whispering Tyrant, though this information plays no role in this adventure.

Treasure: One book, entitled *On Vaults and Treasure Chests*, is actually hollowed out and holds a small bag that contains five diamonds worth 500 gp each and a large onyx worth 200 gp. In addition, three scrolls are hidden on the shelf nearby: a *scroll of analyze dweomer*, a *scroll of animate dead*, and a *scroll of freezing sphere*. These items can be found with a successful DC 30 Perception check.

D7 Ledges

These balconies overlook the castle and surrounding area. Unlike the lower parapets, they have no railings to prevent falls, but serve as excellent landing platforms for flying steeds. Each of these ledges is watched by a gargoyle brute on a nearby perch (see area **D8**) which, if they see any intruders on one of these ledges, shriek an alarm and swoop down to attack.

D8 Gargoyle Minarets (CR 10 to 15)

Each of these small chambers forms the base of a towering, hollow tower of stone.

Creatures: A pair of gargoyle brutes dwells atop each minaret, which are open to the elements and allow the creatures to come and go with ease without opening any doors. It's unlikely for all eight gargoyles to react to intruders all at once, but feel free to have reinforcements join a battle that seems to be going in the PCs' favor.

GARGOYLE BRUTES (8) **CR 9**

XP 6,400 each

hp 117 each (see page 267)

D9 Abandoned Guardroom

The western door to this room is wedged shut from the inside, and the break DC to force the door from outside increases to 29 as a result.

A single ruined table sits in a heap in the center of this otherwise barren room. A gleaming red metal glaive has been impaled into the wood of the western door and wedged into a crack in the floor.

This guardroom was once attended by a small group of bearded devil guardians, but lies empty today.

Treasure: The glaive that is wedging the door shut has, over the many years, become infused with infernal energies left behind by the barbed devils that were slaughtered in the castle when Mandraivus stormed Scarwall. As long as the castle curse remains active, this weapon is an *unwieldy glaive*[UE], but once the curse is lifted, it becomes a regular *+2 glaive*.

D10 Castellan's Chamber

This elegant room's features remain striking and vibrant, as if the chamber had been decorated just yesterday. A stunning canopied bed sits against the north wall, while dressers, writing desks, wine cabinets, and other creature comforts adorn the remainder of the chamber.

This room was once the abode of Scarwall's castellan, Mithrodar. As the current lord of Scarwall, his presence in area **C14** keeps this chamber pristine, even though the chained spirit can never again visit his onetime home. Once Mithrodar is slain, this room remains well appointed, but its contents are no longer protected from the passage of time.

Treasure: Although the furniture in this room is elegant, it's relatively bulky and only worth 800 gp in all if the PCs want to go through the trouble of salvaging it. The contents of the wine cabinet are more portable, with seven bottles of preserved Tamrivenan red remaining within. These are incredibly rare, and each bottle is worth 1,500 gp to the right buyer.

D11 Seraglio

This chamber holds only a few rough cots and wardrobes containing all manner of women's garb ranging from elegant evening gowns to revealing nightwear, much of which is yellowed and crumbling with age.

Kazavon kept the occasional human woman locked away here, hoping to sire a half-dragon heir someday. Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately) for his brides-to-be, his more sadistic and gluttonous hungers saw them murdered before he achieved this plan.

Treasure: One of the articles of clothing in the wardrobe has weathered the passage of time better than the others: a suit of *+3 mithral glamered chainmail*.

D12 Guardroom (CR 13)

This sparsely furnished chamber appears to be a guardroom with a single table, two chairs, and a tarnished brazier. Hanging above the table is a bronze gong and striker.

The keep's third floor is the domain of a dangerous outsider, an ashmede devil named Nihil (see area **D14**). A gift to Kazavon from Zon-Kuthon, Nihil and her outsiders were gone from Scarwall when Mandraivus and his cabal struck, but have since returned, only to become trapped by Scarwall's curse.

Creatures: The bulk of Nihil's command were devils. At the height of Kazavon's rule, she commanded dozens of them, but now her reserves are down to just a few. Her two remaining barbed devils stand guard in this chamber. After hundreds of years of boredom, they're itching for a fight. The barbed devils keep Nihil apprised of the battle via telepathy, and as soon as one of them falls, the other is ordered to retreat to area **D14** to protect their mistress.

BARBED DEVILS (2) **CR 11**

XP 12,800 each

hp 138 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 72)

NIHIL THE ASHBRINGER

D13 Lord's Causeway (CR 7)

The railings on this causeway are razor sharp, akin to those in area **D5**.

Creatures: Perched upon the railings here are five invisible imps that serve the devil Nihil (area **D14**) as messengers and spies. If they notice the PCs, four of them begin following the party invisibly while the fifth flutters off to warn Nihil of the intruders. If the PCs enter combat with other castle denizens, the imps hang back and use *suggestion* to disrupt tactics by ordering PCs to drop their weapons, run away, or otherwise perform foolish tactical errors.

IMPS (5) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 16 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 78)

D14 Lord's Tower (CR 13)

The door into this tower is secured and locked with a superior lock (DC 40 Disable Device), and is heavily reinforced to keep people out (hardness 5, hp 90, break DC 35).

The interior of this tall, hollow tower is silent and menacing. A full forty feet overhead, an opening at the tower's peak lets in light, as do the arrow slits set into the walls, yet nothing seems capable of dispelling the gloom of ancient evil that looms here. A shallow pool of stagnant

water from past rains has formed in the center of a floor that is largely empty of furnishings. Near the far wall slumps a wide bed swathed in rotten and moldy bedclothes. The bed hangs a few feet off the floor, supported at its corners by chains hanging from a series of iron support beams above. To the side, a large gilt throne stands upon a short dais before a series of manacles inset into the floor. A nearby fire grate, long cold, holds a collection of branding irons and other torturer's tools. A series of alcoves climbs the walls of this tower in an ascending spiral. Within each stands a statuette, art object, or polished skull.

This vast hollow tower served the warlord Kazavon as home. Only his most trusted subjects knew that he was actually a blue dragon, as a consuming madness resulted in him preferring the human form over a draconic one. As a result, his lair is outfitted to accommodate a human as well as provide the space necessary to stretch out a bit away from prying eyes. A successful DC 23 Perception check turns up a few large scales of deep indigo color pushed into out-of-the-way corners, remnants of the chamber's former occupant and identifiable with a successful DC 30 Knowledge (arcana) check as having once belonged to a blue dragon. Despite Kazavon's long absence, the room reeks with the evil presence of the former lord of the castle. Most of the room's furnishings have been ruined by long exposure to the elements—Kazavon insisted on having a skylight accessing the tower top from which he could fly in dragon form—but some of his treasures have survived as described below.

Creature: The ashmede devils of Hell's deeper circles are relatively rare and almost never encountered on the Material Plane. In Hell, they function as judges and executioners, but on the Material Plane they are typically on missions of murder, sent by higher powers to assassinate heretics, traitors, and failures. The ashmede devil known as Nihil the Ashbringer was gifted to Kazavon by Zon-Kuthon to serve as an enforcer and a personal assassin. She filled this role admirably, creating a network of spies from among the many gargoyles and devilkin that occupied Scarwall during Kazavon's reign in order to keep tabs on all that went on in his realm. As the end drew near, Nihil's spies uncovered a plot involving one of Kazavon's field generals, who apparently was treating with a small group of heroes who were planning an assault on Scarwall. Eager to mete out punishment, she and her devils and gargoyles took flight. It took them several days to reach the fortress at which the supposed traitor was posted, and when the devils arrived, they took their time torturing and killing everyone there.

It wasn't until Nihil felt the sudden stabbing pain of Kazavon's death at the height of the assault that she realized she'd been duped, and that the actual traitor had been someone even closer to her master: Kleestad the chamberlain. Driven into a mindless frenzy, Nihil slaughtered everyone at the outlying fortress before teleporting back to Scarwall with her devils, only to find the place now under the control of Mandraivus and his cabal. She attacked several times, but was unable to reclaim Scarwall or avenge her master's death. Since each assault further eroded her army's numbers, the devil eventually went into hiding in the surrounding hills as she waited for her gargoyles to return from the long flight. A day after they did, the orcs came to Scarwall. Nihil saw her opportunity, and rather than immediately attack Mandraivus, she came here, to Kazavon's tower, to see what she could gather of his remains or his treasures. She was still here when Mandraivus was slain and Scarwall's curse manifested. Mithrodar seized the ashmede's soul immediately, affixing her to the castle by making her one of his four spirit anchors, and Nihil has remained here ever since.

As with most ashmedes, Nihil appears as a twisted, contorted humanoid with as much iron as flesh to her body. A huge pair of batlike wings unfurls from her back, and she wields a brutal magic scythe in combat. As the PCs begin exploring Scarwall's heights, Nihil pays close attention to various reports from gargoyles and invisible imps, but doesn't immediately enter conflict with the PCs. Telepathy allows her the luxury of real-time reports if the PCs confront her devils, but as long as she remains a spirit anchor, she cannot leave this tower. The fact that she need not eat or drink to survive resulted in a much stricter imprisonment than that imposed upon the umbral dragon Belshallam. As soon as one of her devils perishes, Nihil orders them all to retreat here to protect her.

NIHIL THE ASHBRINGER **CR 13**

XP 25,600

Female ashmede devil (*The Book of Fiends* 146)

LE Large outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +7; **Senses** *aura sight*, darkvision 60 ft., *detect magic*, see in darkness; Perception +19

Aura fear (30 ft., DC 19)

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 14, flat-footed 27 (+2 deflection, +3 Dex, +16 natural, –1 size)

hp 175 (13d10+104); fast healing 3

Fort +16, **Ref** +7, **Will** +11

DR 10/good; **Immune** fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 24

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee *+1 unholy scythe* +21/+16/+11 (2d6+11/19–20/×4), 2 wings +14 (1d6+3)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +15)

Constant—*aura sight*[ACG], *detect magic*

At will—*charm person* (DC 14), *dispel magic*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only)

3/day—*blasphemy* (DC 20), *greater invisibility*, *polymorph*, *prying eyes*

1/day—*chain lightning* (DC 19), *discern location*, *forcecage* (DC 20), *horrid wilting* (DC 21), summon (level 4, 1 barbed devil 50%)

TACTICS

Before Combat As soon as she receives reports that the castle is being invaded by the PCs, Nihil uses *prying eyes* to explore Scarwall's heights in search of the intruders. If she finds them, she watches their tactics to familiarize herself with their capabilities. As soon as it looks like the PCs are about to reach this chamber, she casts *greater invisibility* and attempts to summon a barbed devil to augment her defenses.

During Combat When Nihil attacks, any minions she has nearby attempt to isolate individuals and wear them down before switching to other targets, letting Nihil make as many final kills as possible. As soon as the PCs are all within this chamber, she casts *blasphemy*, followed in the next 2 rounds by *horrid wilting* and *chain lightning*. If one PC in particular seems to be far more dangerous than others (such as a heavily armored fighter with weapons that can penetrate her damage reduction), she uses *forcecage* to separate that character from the battle to be dealt with later.

Morale Nihil is unable to flee as long as she remains a spirit anchor, and thus fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 16, **Con** 26, **Int** 17, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 17

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +21 (+25 sunder); **CMD** 36 (38 vs. sunder)

Feats Flyby Attack, Greater Sunder, Improved Critical (scythe), Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (scythe)

Skills Bluff +19, Diplomacy +19, Fly +17, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (nobility) +12, Knowledge (planes) +13, Perception +19, Sense Motive +19, Stealth +15, Survival +19

Languages Celestial, Draconic, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

Gear *+1 unholy scythe*, *ring of protection +2*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Fear Aura (Su) A creature that succumbs to Nihil's fear aura cowers in fear for 1 round.

Treasure: Part of Kazavon's ability to successfully rule over his humanoid subjects lay in the fact that very few realized his true nature as a dragon. Many who willingly bow to a cruel tyrant would flinch at knowing service to an evil dragon. Additionally, Kazavon found great pleasure in the human form; the feel of fresh blood against soft skin was much more pleasing to the warlord than the same against cold scales. Finally, maintaining such a huge army as well as his extravagant needs and lifestyle all worked together to prevent Kazavon from amassing an immense treasury. In some ways, the vast amount of pain and suffering he surrounded himself with served as his hoard, being a wealth of treasures few others could (or would want to) understand.

Yet Kazavon could not completely abandon his kind's innate need to stockpile wealth. Instead of keeping a vast treasury, he compromised by building his hoard into this very chamber, where he could enjoy it without others discovering what it was. Mandraivus knew of the wealth in this chamber, but never had the chance to do anything about it before he met his own doom not long after Kazavon's defeat.

The gilt throne in this room is embedded with dozens upon dozens of gemstones, 200 in all, worth a total of 20,000 gp. The gold that covers his throne is worth an additional 2,500 gp if it is melted or scraped away. Though the many fine furs and fabrics that graced his bed have decayed over the years, the bed is not without value. Even in human form Kazavon could not resist the feel of coins beneath him as he slept. As such, what appears to be a down-stuffed mattress is actually filled with coins (readily apparent to the touch). In total, the mattress holds 460 pp, 15,500 gp, 24,200 sp, and 796,800 cp. The rest of his wealth is represented by the art objects in the alcoves. There are a total of 80 such alcoves, 34 of which hold polished (and now very brittle) skulls. Another 41 hold statues, jewelry, paintings, and other valuables worth a total of 15,300 gp. The remaining five hold magic items: a bejeweled *+2 icy burst light mace*; a *rod of splendor*; a *scarab of protection* (fully charged); a gold-and-ivory, gem-studded *lantern of revealing*; and a golden circlet. This circlet contains the soul of the skeleton warrior Castothrane (see area **D1**). Worth 2,500 gp, the circlet allows any who wear it to look through Castothrane's eyes. Since the skeleton warrior is bound in place by the chained spirit, the circlet doesn't grant the user the normal control over its skeleton warrior (as detailed in the *Tome of Horrors Complete*).

Despite all this material wealth, Kazavon's favored treasures were the skulls—trophies claimed from various foes he defeated in battle during his initial conquests as well as while defending his reign at Scarwall. Each skull has been granted a permanent *magic mouth* that states its name when anyone touches it. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (history) check identifies many of the names as those of persons of fame or importance in this region nearly a millennia ago. Notably, one skull says, "Andachi of Tamrivena." Each of the 34 skulls is worth 100 gp to a collector of the grim and grisly.

D15 Belfry (CR 13)

An immense iron bell sits on the floor of this room amid the rotten, crumbled remains of a wooden frame that once held it aloft.

The stairs lead down to the courtyard (area **B21**). This bell was once used as an alarm for the castle as well as a signal to alert the occupants to gather in the courtyard for announcements—one peal called for a gathering, while two peals warned of an attack.

Haunt: If intruders enter this room, the immense bell rises up from the ground to unleash two deafening peals to the castle as shrieking spirits race around the room in an indignant fury.

WARNING BELLS **CR 13**

XP 25,600

CE haunt (area **D15**)

Caster Level 13th

Notice Perception DC 30 (to notice the bell vibrating as it prepares to rise into the air)

hp 26; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 minute

Effect When the bell rings, it does so twice in rapid succession. The first ring serves to alert all of Scarwall's inhabitants, granting the denizens of the castle a +10 bonus on Perception checks for 24 hours. The second ring is even louder and focuses instead on the intruders in this room, permanently deafening them and dealing 10d6 points of sonic damage to all creatures in area **D15**. A successful DC 22 Fortitude save negates the deafness and halves the damage.

Destruction If the curse affecting Scarwall is lifted, this haunt fades away.

D16 Cupola (CR 13)

This cupola perched atop the main keep has wide windows overlooking its surroundings and two railed balconies extending from either side, yet there does not seem to be any actual access to the keep below via stairs, ladder, or otherwise.

Creature: A banshee haunts this cupola, eternally patrolling the room and stepping periodically out onto one of the balconies to the east or west to survey the surrounding crater, on constant watch for enemies approaching Castle Scarwall from the air. An elven magus named Aerilaya in life, this banshee lived downstairs in

area **B12**, but has not returned there since becoming undead. Aerilaya still carries an overwhelming hatred of orcs and their kind, even in unlife, and confronted with an orc or half-orc, she targets that creature specifically with her attacks and neglects using her wail at all, becoming speechless and distracted with anger at the sight of her hated enemy. Aerilaya pursues foes for up to 1 mile from the castle before returning to her vigil here.

AERILAYA **CR 13**

XP 25,600

Banshee (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 41)

hp 161

D17 Upper Tower

With no floor, this space is 20 feet above area **D14** and 20 feet below the hole that leads to area **D18**.

D18 Lord's Overlook (CR 11)

This balcony provides access to the upper entrance of Kazavon's lair. The open doorway leads to a sheer drop of 40 feet to the floor below.

Creatures: Nihil's last remaining bone devils are stationed here, with orders to stand guard invisibly. If PCs draw near, the devils immediately fly up to confront them. If a PC enters the tower interior via the opening here, one of the bone devils seals that opening with a *wall of ice*, hopefully trapping that PC inside with Nihil. In any event, the devils keep Nihil apprised of the battle via telepathy, and as soon as one of them falls, the other is ordered to retreat to area **D14** to protect its mistress.

BONE DEVILS (2) **CR 9**

XP 6,400 each

hp 105 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 74)

E War Tower

The War Tower is a self-contained portion of Scarwall accessible via its roof or a single door from area **C17**. Here, the leaders of Kazavon's armies plotted campaigns and the recruitment of new soldiers. The War Tower consists of areas **E1–E14**, and appears on the maps on page 275, 299, and 306.

The doors on the War Tower's first and second floor (areas **E1–E8**) all hang open and are unattended. Random encounters here are with the patrol of Scarwall guards from area **E3** or the Nessian hell hounds from area **E5** (50% chance of either); once one of these two encounters is defeated, it doesn't occur again. Random encounters do not occur at all in areas **E9–E13**, and all random encounters that happen in area **E14** are with gargoyle brutes if any still live; otherwise, no random encounters occur here.

E1 War Tower Entrance

Two flights of stairs, one leading up and the other down, provide exits from this entry room, as do a pair of doors to either side, both of which hang open.

The northwest flight of stairs leads up to area **E9**, while the southeast flight of stairs leads down to area **E5**. When the PCs enter this room, the Scarwall guards in area **E3** and the Nessian hell hounds in area **E5** can attempt Perception checks to notice them; any group that succeeds immediately comes to investigate.

E2 Dining Hall

A stout oak table sits in this room, surrounded by crumbling, rotten chairs. Moldy paintings of battlefield scenes hang on the walls.

This room was used by the War Tower officers to gather for meals and relax when they had time off. The 10 paintings on the walls all depict historic battles, yet each one has diverged from accepted historical lore by placing Kazavon in the role of leadership, be it as a vanguard for dwarves on the Quest for Sky or rallying troops in the Shining Crusade. One painting shows what appears to be Kazavon leading an army of crusaders against a demonic host in a blighted land, and a successful DC 15 Knowledge (geography) check confirms the area depicted is the Worldwound, despite the fact that Kazavon's time ended long before the Worldwound opened. The paintings are too ruined to be of any value, but a PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Perception check picks out the artist's signature, revealing that the same man painted all of these images: Zev Ravenka, bishop of Scarwall. How the lich managed to predict the Worldwound, however, isn't unrevealed by the painting.

E3 Guard Room (CR 10)

This is a plain, unadorned guard room.

Creatures: This chamber is watched over by a trio of particularly strong and murderous Scarwall guards—the undead remains of minotaurs that had, in life, proven themselves to be particularly devoted to Kazavon. These three guards spend most of their time standing patiently at attention here, but periodically patrol the rest of the War Tower. They will not pursue foes out of the War Tower.

ADVANCED SCARWALL GUARDS (3) **CR 7**

XP 3,200 each

hp 77 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294 and see page 272)

E4 Warlord's Chamber

This once finely decorated meeting chamber has fallen into disrepair. The padded silk cushions on a high-backed chair built from a tangle of bones are ratty, tattered, and spotted with mold, and the desk that sits before it has collapsed partially along one side, spilling a wealth of art objects and statuettes onto the floor. A black-and-red tapestry hangs in tatters behind the throne.

This room was used by Kazavon to meet with his commanders in small conferences as needed. The tapestry that hangs behind the throne was once an elegant work of art depicting Zon-Kuthon, but little remains of it.

Phantasm: Have the PCs roll Perception checks when they enter this room; note the results but then carry on with the encounter as normal, telling the PCs that no one notices anything unusual. When the PCs leave this chamber, the character who rolled the highest Perception check hears something unusual—a whisper in her ear, complete with the feel of breath against the cheek, that says, "Slay them all and you shall be rewarded..." If this character turns around immediately, for a brief instant she sees a faint misty shape seated in the throne, but one blink later the image is gone. Of course, no reward awaits the PC if she slays "them," nor is there any indication of who "they" are.

Treasure: A search of the scattered objects fallen from the desk reveals most of them have been broken or decayed, yet two mithral candelabra worth 1,000 gp each remain among the rubble.

E5 Sparring Room (CR 12)

The walls of this room bear scorch marks and smudges of smoke, while several mounds of ash lie strewn about the floor. Whatever furnished this chamber burned long ago.

Creatures: Once used as a sparring room for War Tower soldiers, the tower's two surviving "mascots" have long since destroyed the sparring dummies and weapon racks that were once located here. These mascots are a pair of advanced Nessian hell hounds that periodically wander into other chambers in the War Tower's lower two floors. If they confront foes, their howling and barking swiftly call the attention of the Scarwall guards in area **E3** if they remain. The noise is even sufficient to alert Gorstav in area **E11** above, although he does not descend to investigate. The hell hounds pursue foes throughout the War Tower, but do not chase prey into other parts of Scarwall.

ADVANCED NESSIAN HELL HOUNDS **CR 10**

XP 9,600 each

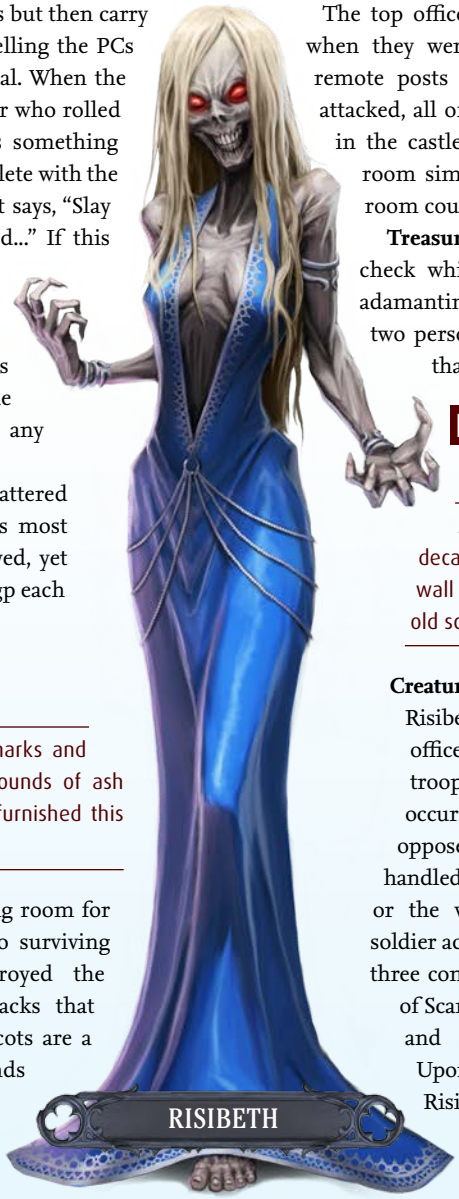
hp 150 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 173)

E6 Officers' Bunks

A tangle of collapsed bunks fills this room, and the dank smell of rot lies heavy in the air.

The top officers of Kazavon's army bunked here when they weren't out in the field or manning remote posts across Belkzen. When Mandraivus attacked, all of these officers were slain elsewhere in the castle, and over time, the bunks in this room simply fell apart. Moving through this room counts as difficult terrain.

Treasure: A successful DC 20 Perception check while searching this room reveals an adamantine dagger and a +2 *buckler*, the only two personal items left behind in this room that haven't rusted or decayed away.



E7 War Commander's Quarters (CR 12)

A single bunk, its mattress sagging and decayed, slumps against the southwest wall of this bedroom. A desk covered with old scrolls sits to the north.

Creature: This room served as home to Risibeth, Scarwall's war commander, the officer responsible for coordinating all troop movements and activities that occurred outside of Scarwall's walls (as opposed to the hunt commander, who handled skirmisher and individual missions, or the watch commander, who controlled soldier activities inside the castle walls). Of the three commanders, only Risibeth was outside of Scarwall at the time Mandraivus attacked, and she thus survived that slaughter. Upon hearing of her master's fate, Risibeth approached the orc tribes out of desperation. It was her arrival as much as anything else that resulted

in the swift attack on Scarwall by the orcs in the days after the Esoteric Order agents fled Scarwall to the ends of the world with Kazavon's relics, yet she underestimated the grudge the orcs held for Kazavon. When one of the orc priests learned the truth of Risibeth's identity—that she was a blood-drinking, undead sayona posing as a living woman—he used his ability to command undead to seize control of her. The sayona never intended to return to Scarwall, but found herself among the vanguard of the orcs when they attacked the castle a few days later.

Risibeth views the curse of Scarwall as a sort of freedom as a result, for when the curse drove off the orcs, she was freed from their control. Unable to leave Scarwall, the sullen woman would likely remain here in the War Tower basement even if she weren't compelled to do so. The one thing she regrets is the lack of fresh blood to drink, and it has been many centuries since Risibeth has felt "alive." Although Risibeth is as bound to the curse as any other denizen of Scarwall, she has accepted her fate with a level of melancholic stoicism. She believes that Scarwall is doomed to be forever cursed, and does not expect that even a group of powerful adventurers like the PCs can do much to change that. She feels no compulsion to defend the castle as a result, and confronted by the PCs, finds their zeal and eagerness to do so both amusing and pitiful. Risibeth is, in fact, willing to answer any questions the PCs may have about Kazavon's last days or the doom that came to Mandraivus—yet not for free. Her price is blood. If a PC allows her to drain blood from him for a minimum of 1 round (Risibeth asks for 4 rounds but is open to negotiation), she can assume her living form for 24 hours. In return, she agrees to answer questions the PCs may have; whether she tells the truth is up to you, but you can use this encounter to give the PCs answers to whatever questions you wish them to have. In particular, if they seem lost or overwhelmed by Scarwall, Risibeth's answers and advice can set them on the right course. She doesn't expect them to defeat Mithrodar, but does believe their attempts to do so will be entertaining.

If the PCs leave this encounter with Risibeth still alive, the sayona decides to stalk the party via *invisibility* and *gaseous form*; having tasted blood for the first time in centuries, she's not ready to give up a new supply anytime soon. Once a PC is alone, she uses *dominate person* to lure him back to this room so she can feed from him; she does her best to keep the PC alive but helpless, as a dead PC can't give her any blood.

GORSTAV

RISIBETH **CR 12**

XP 19,200

Advanced sayona (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 288, 231)

hp 195

E8 War Tower Armory

Wooden weapon racks and armor stands slump in varying stages of ruin in this nearly empty armory, although three weapons—a shortspear, a sword, and a spiked chain—can be spied among the rubble.

Treasure: Most of the weapons that were once stored here are long missing, but three that were left behind have become suffused with Scarwall's curse. The cursed weapons include a cursed *backbiter spear*, a *berserking sword*, and a –2 *cursed spiked chain* (functions otherwise as a –2 *cursed sword*). These cursed weapons become nonmagical once Scarwall's curse is lifted.

E9 Upper Hall

The doors on this floor and above remain closed and locked (hardness 8, hp 60, break

DC 26, Disable Device DC 30), unlike those on the War Tower's lower floors.

E10 Records Room (CR 13)

Several sagging bookshelves line the walls of this room, while other have crumbled to ruin altogether. A writing desk and a collapsed chair sits in a nook to the south. Old, musty scrolls and books alike lie strewn in disarray, save for one scroll on the desk that seems to be in fine shape.

This served as a records room for all of Kazavon's conquests and triumphs, along with records of significant foes slain, their methods of execution, and master lists of all soldiers who served under his banner. None of the scrolls have survived or contain anything of note, with a single exception—the scroll on the writing desk.

Haunt: The scroll on the desk once contained information about Scarwall's chamberlain, Kleestad, including a description of his duties, his personal history, and information on his compensation for jobs well done. None of this information remains, as bloodstains smeared across the surface of the scroll, seemingly only a few minutes old, obscure most of the text. A reader can make out the name "Kleestad" and "chamberlain" and a few other words here and there to piece together the scroll's original use, but reading the scroll also triggers a dangerous (but very informative) haunt.

CURSE OF THE WORM **CR 13**

XP 25,600

CE haunt (area **E10**)

Caster Level 13th

Notice Perception DC 30 (to see the blood on the scroll start to glisten and soak through the parchment)

hp 26; **Trigger** touch; **Reset** 1 minute

Effect When a character touches the scroll, a sense of panic wells up inside him as the conviction takes hold that he is Scarwall's chamberlain and was just caught by Kazavon in the act of betraying the castle to its enemies. Pain shoots through the PC's feet as he experiences the agony of both ankles breaking, and then experiences a panicked crawl through Scarwall while it's under attack, seeking shelter in a cave deep below ground. Days or weeks seem to pass with nothing but worms to eat and muddy water to drink, and then the PC experiences another painful crawl up to the castle, where he finds a gleaming sword amid dozens of freshly slaughtered orcs and humans. Yet as he grasps the sword, that sense of panic fills him again—this time, he knows it is not Kazavon whom he has betrayed, but Zon-Kuthon himself, and as his body twists and transforms into a monster, the PC flees back into the caverns below with his prize. All of this seems to take place over several weeks for the victim of the haunt, when in fact only a few seconds pass in real time. As the complex vision ends, the PC must succeed at a DC 23 Will save or be afflicted with a potent curse (as if afflicted by *bestow curse* heightened to 9th level): he thinks of himself as a worm and no longer believes he can or even deserves to walk, and must drop prone and crawl wherever he travels.

Destruction Unlike the other haunts in Scarwall, lifting the castle's curse does not destroy this haunt. To do so, Kleestad himself, in his new incarnation as a pharmakos, must be slain (see area **H4**).

E11 War Room (CR 13)

This large room's walls are festooned with ancient, crumbling maps of the surrounding regions marked with fortifications and troop placement. Pushed to one side of the room is a wide table, its top fashioned into a large sandbox containing a number of small wooden tokens apparently representing troop types and concentrations.

The many military campaigns waged by Kazavon were planned in this room, which was the nerve center of the War Tower, and the room that gave the tower its name.

Creature: For many centuries, Gorstav served as a spirit anchor for Mithrodar, but after he was destroyed by the umbral dragon, the castle's curse brought him back as a much diminished undead guardian. Since then, General Gorstav has had little reason to leave this room.

General Gorstav, now a mere juju zombie, resembles a regular zombie but with a grayish cast to his flesh and eyes burning with hate.

GORSTAV **CR 13**

XP 25,600

Half-orc juju zombie fighter 13 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 291)

NE Medium undead

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 14, flat-footed 24 (+10 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural)

hp 154 (13d10+78)

Fort +14, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4 (+3 vs. fear)

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, orc ferocity; **DR** 10/magic and slashing; **Immune** cold, electricity, *magic missile*, undead traits; **Resist** fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *+2 thundering warhammer* +26/+21/+16 (1d8+18/19–20/×3)

Special Attacks weapon training (hammers +3, bows +2, close +1)

TACTICS

During Combat Although Gorstav retains his military training, he fights without emotion of any kind, almost as if he were little more than a construct programmed to mimic an accomplished fighter's skills. He wields his warhammer two-handed in order to maximize his Strength bonus to damage.

Morale Gorstav fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** 8, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +19 (+21 bull rush); **CMD** 33 (35 vs. bull rush)

Feats Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Greater Weapon Focus (warhammer), Greater Weapon Specialization (warhammer), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (warhammer), Improved Initiative, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Staggering Critical, Toughness, Weapon Focus (warhammer), Weapon Specialization (warhammer)

Skills Climb +12, Handle Animal +13, Intimidate +6, Ride +10

Languages Common, Orc

SQ armor training 3, orc blood

Gear *+1 full plate, +2 thundering warhammer, belt of giant strength +2, ring of protection +1*

E12 General's Quarters

This once-elegant bedroom is in a shambles, much more than one might expect from mere neglect. No piece of furniture is intact, with the largest remaining section being a portion of headboard from the bed that's been partially wedged into an arrow slit in the southern wall.

This was once the abode of General Gorstav. The half-orc's furious destruction of his belongings was the last (and only) act he performed after being brought back as a juju zombie by the castle's curse. He has not returned to this room since his outburst.

Phantasm: When the PCs enter this room, have them all roll initiative checks. Take whoever rolled the highest away from the table and tell that player that her character has experienced a rush of intense fury, accompanied by a flash of insight—that this room once belonged to someone important at Scarwall, and the remaining headboard is the last bit of recognizable furniture that reminds that person of his or her former existence. Not only that, but the headboard must be destroyed, as it is anchoring the person's spirit to Scarwall. When you return to the game table, have the PCs take their actions in initiative order as if combat has begun, but there is nothing of danger here and the headboard has no strong ties to Gorstav; simply let the PCs play out the results of your mysterious advice. If the player who received the insight asks you for clarification, tell her that her character can't remember why she felt so angry, but that whatever it was is gone now.

E13 Guard Post (CR 11)

This room was once manned day and night by guards who were trained to utilize the siege engines should Scarwall ever come under attack.

Creatures: Today, the restless spirits of these guards linger in the form of four spectres that slide out of the walls to attack anyone who enters the room. These undead fight until destroyed.

SPECTRES (4) **CR 7**

XP 3,200 each

hp 52 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 256)

E14 Battlements

The top of this octagonal tower gives a breathtaking view of the crater lake and the stark walls of the volcanic cliffs beyond. A squat stone bunker sits in the southwest portion, while the rest of the area is dominated by three crumbled and ruined siege engines—a pair of catapults and a ballista.

All three of the siege engines have long since fallen into disrepair. The outer walls of the War Tower are particularly smooth, and scaling them requires a successful DC 30 Climb check.

Development: If the PCs haven't defeated all of the gargoyle brutes or the banshee Aerilaya, one of those two likely comes to attack the PCs here if they aren't stealthy in their actions.

F Donjon

Scarwall's donjon, which served as its central fortification and chapel, consists of areas **F1–F14**. Although technically part of the donjon, the unusually shaped Star Tower is considered a different part of the castle. Any random encounters that occur in this area are proximity encounters (see page 273). All encounter locations appear on the maps of the first floor on page 275 or the second floor on page 299.

This donjon, unlike those in most castles, was not set aside as a final bastion, but built as the castle's horrific chapel devoted to Kazavon's patron, Zon-Kuthon. Only the initiated and their sacrificial victims were allowed into these unhallowed chambers, and the victims never emerged. The donjon was firmly under the control of a deadly lich priest of Zon-Kuthon, a man who secretly pledged his service to Kazavon as Scarwall was being constructed—Bishop Zev Ravenka, who was the only inhabitant of Scarwall to rival Kazavon's inhuman cruelty.

The donjon itself was constructed by a special team of laborers, and during construction, only Kazavon and a few shrouded priests were allowed inside. Once construction was completed, the laborers were sacrificed, and only Kazavon and the priests themselves were ever allowed entrance to the donjon thereafter.

The entire donjon (and the nearby Star Tower) is warded via conflicting *forbiddance* effects—one placed by Zev Ravenka, and another placed by Mandraivus's allies to seal the occupants of the donjon in. The interplay between these two spells has resulted in a somewhat unstable pair of magical effects. The *forbiddance* effect within both areas is keyed to the lawful evil alignment, and any non-lawful-evil creature that attempts to enter must succeed at a DC 24 Will save to do so. Failure results not only in standard *forbiddance* damage, but also a *repulsion* effect that pushes the intruder back out. Conversely, any nongood creature that attempts to leave the donjon or the Star Tower must succeed at a DC 24 Will save to avoid damage and the *repulsion* effect from the second *forbiddance* effect. These effects apply only when a creature attempts to enter or exit the donjon or Star Tower from outside (direct travel between the two areas is unaffected). If a creature of the alignment attuned to either spell passes through, the effects falter for 2d4 rounds, during which creatures of any alignment may come and go freely. If the PCs are accompanied by the Brotherhood of Bones, their presence makes entering this part of Scarwall simple. Note that these effects are separate from the castle's curse, and this *forbiddance* effect remains in place even after Mithrodar is destroyed. All of these spell effects function at CL 20th.

Mandraivus and his followers never fully explored the donjon. He intended to make securing it one of his first tasks after his companions scattered with Kazavon's relics, but the orc assault came and finished him off before he had the chance.

F1 Grand Entrance

This bronze double door is so tarnished that it appears almost black. Gruesome images of devils and priests cavorting among the corpses and tortured souls of the damned are cast in bas-relief on its exterior. A skull and spiked chain overlook the entire scene from the center of the doors. A heavy wheel is set into the center of each door.

In Kazavon's day, these doors could be opened only by bypassing an intricate lock and then turning the wheels. However, scrutiny of the doors and a successful DC 15 Perception check reveals that the stone door jamb has been magically altered (via *stone shape*) to form a seal around the edges of the doors. The central seam has likewise been sealed with lead. These steps were taken by Mandraivus's men in their attempt to contain the evil inside the donjon until some point in the future when Mandraivus's resources were recovered enough to tackle what they feared was within. The doors can now be opened only by breaking through them (hardness 8, hp 150, break DC 34).

F2 Donjon Foyer (CR 12)

The floor of this foyer is tiled in blood-red marble. An altar resembling a skull, its lower section wrapped in iron chains and its top cut off flat to form a level surface, stands in an alcove to the east. A ten-foot-diameter pool of what appears to be stagnant water, its rim fashioned of white marble, sits in the western alcove opposite the altar.

An examination of the altar reveals a small knife with rusty stains on its blade. The pool of water to the west is 5 feet deep. On reentering the donjon after a visit outside, a priest would cut himself on the knife to release some blood, then bathe in the water to cleanse himself of the "impurities" of the outer world before returning to the sacred chambers within. Any PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check knows what is expected of this obscure Kuthite ritual.

Creature: If none of the PCs cleanse themselves in the manner described above within 3 rounds of a living creature entering the foyer, the waters of the pool churn and thrash before exploding upward in a torrent of rage as a fiendish elder water elemental. The creature fills much of the western portion of the room when it appears, and does not pursue foes out of the area.

If a PC does complete the cleansing ritual as described, the elemental remains dormant in the pool for 10 minutes, during which time anyone can come and go through this room without being contested.

FIENDISH ELDER WATER ELEMENTAL **CR 12**

XP 19,200

hp 152 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 127)

F3 Common Room (CR 13)

A worn but colorful carpet covers most of the floor of this room, and a number of wooden tables and comfortable chairs are spaced about the chamber for informal gatherings and meals. A small kitchen has been set up by a low stone fireplace alongside a cupboard holding some dishes and utensils as well as a few desiccated remains of foodstuffs.

The bishop and prelate took their meals separately, typically in their own quarters, but the five acolytes of the

chapel used this room as a combination lounge, study, kitchen, and dining area.

Creatures: When the Esoteric Order sealed the donjon, the five acolytes that served here took their own lives during a particularly vile ritual, transforming their spirits into spectres to guard the donjon from intrusion even better than they could in life as mere low-level clerics of Zon-Kuthon. Their black robes and religious accoutrements appear rotten and threadbare with age, even though the material is as ghostly as their flesh. The five have spent the last several hundred years here, waiting for the call to service in the temple below and unaware of the passage of time. If disturbed by the PCs, they shriek and move forward to claw at them, fighting until destroyed.

ADVANCED SPECTRES (5) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

hp 68 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 256)

F4 Priests' Cells

Each of these dingy, empty cells once acted as a home and private shrine for the acolytes of the Dark Shrine of Midnight (area **F11**). All five have since become spectres (see area **F3**) but their bodies remain here as desiccated, brittle skeletons wearing fragments of black robes and rusty links of chain.

MINGORC

Treasure: The gear on the bodies is mostly ruined, but a successful DC 25 Perception check in the northernmost cell uncovers a single dose of *incense of meditation*.

F5 Chapel Larder

A number of glass jars, their contents hidden by murk, sit on shelves in this small larder.

This small chamber served as a private pantry for Prelate Aruth who was a practicing cannibal in addition to being a priest of Zon-Kuthon. Many slaves and prisoners of the chapel ended up on his plate, and several tidbits still remain in the jars here. Within each are pickled human organs.

Phantasm: The first PC to enter this room feels a sudden urge to eat one of the contents of these jars. The compulsion passes quickly, but regardless of how the PC reacts to the disturbing urge, make a show of jotting a "secret note" on a scrap of paper. This note means nothing, but should help to make the PCs nervous.

F6 Prelate's Suite

This chamber is opulently furnished with items of furniture, all swathed in folds of black cloth. A lamp of silver and onyx hangs from the ceiling and a silver-framed mirror hangs on one wall. A table bearing a black cloth still holds silver dishes with dark stains.

Prelate Aruth resided here. He also often partook of his cannibalistic meals—usually an unfortunate slave—in this chamber.

Treasure: The silver-and-onyx lamp is worth 2,500 gp, while the silver-framed mirror is worth 1,500 gp and is suitable for use with *scrying* spells.

F7 Side Entrance

This entrance was generally used by the priests when they wished to come and go from the donjon on personal matters. It was also where servants were allowed into the donjon once per day to clean and provide supplies. The door opening to the parapet has been sealed with *stone shape* and lead in the same way the doors at area **F1** are sealed, although the exterior door here is smaller (hardness 8, hp 75, break DC 28).

F8 Porter's Station (CR 13)

A few partially collapsed cabinets lie along the walls of this oddly shaped room. A circular black rug,

its center caked with long-dried gore, lies strewn haphazardly on the floor.

Creature: While servants from the castle itself visited the donjon daily to clean and supply, one special minion was kept within the walls of the chapel to attend to the needs of the clergy at all hours, particularly when it came to carrying struggling sacrifice victims down to the chapel or hauling the bodies back up for disposal. This was the chapel porter, an ash giant named Mingorc who was kept servile via constant charm spells. When the Esoteric Order sealed the donjon, Prelate Aruth sacrificed Mingorc as part of his own ritual to rise as a mummy, but when Scarwall's curse took hold, it animated Mingorc's remains. Now a juju zombie, Mingorc shambled back up to this room to await new orders—ones that will never come. Of course, once he starts bellowing in a fight, Prelate Aruth next door in area **F10** quickly comes to investigate.

MINGORC **CR 13**

XP 25,600

Advanced ash giant juju zombie (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 290, 126, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 291)

LE Large undead

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +20

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 14, flat-footed 24 (+5 Dex, +15 natural, –1 size)

hp 105 (14d8+42)

Fort +6, **Ref** +9, **Will** +12

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, rock catching; **DR** 10/magic and slashing; **Immune** cold, electricity, *magic missile*, undead traits; **Resist** fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee 2 slams +24 (2d6+15 plus disease)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks disease (DC 17), rock throwing (120 feet)

TACTICS

During Combat Mingorc stands in the center of the room, where he has fallen into a torpor. The undead giant remains motionless for 2 rounds after any PCs come into view, after which point he rouses and attacks. If the PCs attack before this, they gain an automatic surprise round before Mingorc reacts normally.

Morale Mingorc pursues foes throughout the donjon, but will not exit the structure. Otherwise, he fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 41, **Dex** 20, **Con** —, **Int** 13, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +26; **CMD** 41

Feats Catch Off-Guard, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Point-Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Self-Sufficient, Toughness

Skills Climb +37, Heal +21, Intimidate +19, Perception +20, Survival +21

Languages Common, Giant

SQ oversized weapon, wild empathy +16

F9 Prison Cell

The iron door to this 10-foot-by-20-foot room has a narrow window set with bars. The room within is empty, save for a thin scattering of moldy straw on the floor.

This cell was used to keep sacrifices on hand for rituals in the chapel. Nothing remains here today.

Phantasm: If the PCs investigate this room by entering it, nothing seems amiss until the party leaves the chamber. The last PC to leave the room is suddenly hit with an overwhelming wave of fear that, if he leaves, he'll be punished even more severely than if he'd remained in the cell to be sacrificed; the name "Zev Ravenka" seems to burn in his mind for a moment. The sensation passes quickly, but make a show about asking if the PC really wants to leave the cell. When the PC finally does exit, pretend to look something up in this book, then shrug your shoulders and continue to play.

F10 Private Chapel (CR 13)

This chamber is shrouded in writhing shadows. A ten-foot-tall humanoid figure stands motionless deeper in the room.

This chamber served as a private chapel for small ceremonies attended to by the prelate to which the other priests were only occasionally invited. Magical darkness fills the chamber, preventing illumination levels within from rising above dim light. A *daylight* spell (or any 4th-level or higher spell with the light descriptor) nullifies this effect for that spell's duration, but does not dispel the darkness.

The tall figure is a 10-foot statue of Zon-Kuthon represented as a cloaked humanoid with a skull for a head and a spiked chain dangling from its eye sockets. Behind the statue is a secret door that gives access to area **G2** of the Star Tower. It is cunningly constructed and requires a successful DC 40 Perception check to locate. Even then, it's locked tight (Disable Device DC 40).

Creature: As with the chapel's acolytes, Prelate Aruth took his own life in ritualistic suicide rather than suffer the indignity of capture when Mandraivus sealed the donjon. Yet unlike the lesser acolytes, Prelate Aruth retained power over his body and maintained his faith and link to the Midnight Lord. Rather than rise as a mere spectre, he came back as a powerful mummy lord; yet even then this existence is little more than that of a glorified guardian. He stands silently behind the statue, stepping

out to attack with his spells as soon as the PCs enter. The prelate wears elaborate robes woven of the darkest silks, and his teeth have been filed to points.

If Prelate Aruth hears combat nearby in area **F8**, he investigates swiftly and joins any fight there.

PRELATE ARUTH **CR 13**

XP 25,600

Human mummy lord cleric of Zon-Kuthon 12 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 176)

LE Medium undead (humanoid, human)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +20

Aura great despair (30 ft., DC 23)

DEFENSE

AC 32, touch 16, flat-footed 30 (+10 armor, +4 deflection, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)

hp 165 (12d8+108)

Fort +17, **Ref** +7, **Will** +15

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, death's embrace, *freedom of movement*, rejuvenation; **DR** 10/—; **Immune** cold, electricity, undead traits; **SR** 24

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.; *air walk*

Melee *+2 keen spiked chain* +15/+10 (2d4+8/19–20 plus insidious mummy rot) or
slam +8 (1d6+2 plus insidious mummy rot)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 10/day (DC 23, 6d6), channel rot, insidious mummy rot, sandstorm wrath (8d8 fire and slashing, DC 23), undead mastery (DC 23)

Cleric Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +17)
8/day—*bleeding touch* (6 rounds), *touch of darkness* (6 rounds)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 12th; concentration +17)
6th—*blade barrier* (DC 21), *create undead*[D], *harm* (DC 21)
5th—*plane shift* (DC 20), *slay living*[D] (3, DC 20), *spell resistance*
4th—*air walk*, *freedom of movement*, *poison* (DC 19), *shadow conjuration*[D], *unholy blight* (DC 19)
3rd—*animate dead*, *bestow curse* (DC 18), *deeper darkness*[D], *dispel magic* (2), *invisibility purge*
2nd—*blindness/deafness* (blindness only)[D] (DC 17), *hold person* (2, DC 17), *resist energy*, *sound burst* (DC 17), *spiritual weapon*
1st—*command* (3, DC 16), *obscuring mist*[D], *sanctuary* (2, DC 16), *shield of faith*
0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 15), *light*, *mending*, *read magic*
D domain spell; **Domains** Darkness, Death

TACTICS

Before Combat Prelate Aruth casts *air walk*, *freedom of movement*, *shield of faith*, and *spell resistance*.

During Combat Prelate Aruth prefers to cast spells in melee combat, favoring *slay living* and other touch spells, but does cast *spiritual weapon* on the first round of a fight, targeting an enemy healer. If he kills a PC and feels he has the upper hand in combat, the prelate isn't above gloating and taking actions in combat that are more for cruelty's sake (such as animating a fallen PC into a zombie) than tactically sound, but when facing dangerous foes, he makes a fighting retreat toward area **F11** so he can gain the support of the bishop therein.

Morale The prelate fights until destroyed but does not pursue foes out of the donjon.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 13, **Con** —, **Int** 12, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 24

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 25

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Command Undead, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Selective Channeling, Toughness

Skills Intimidate +30, Knowledge (religion) +16, Perception +20, Sense Motive +13, Spellcraft +16, Stealth +5

Languages Common, Shadowtongue

SQ eyes of darkness (6 rounds/day)

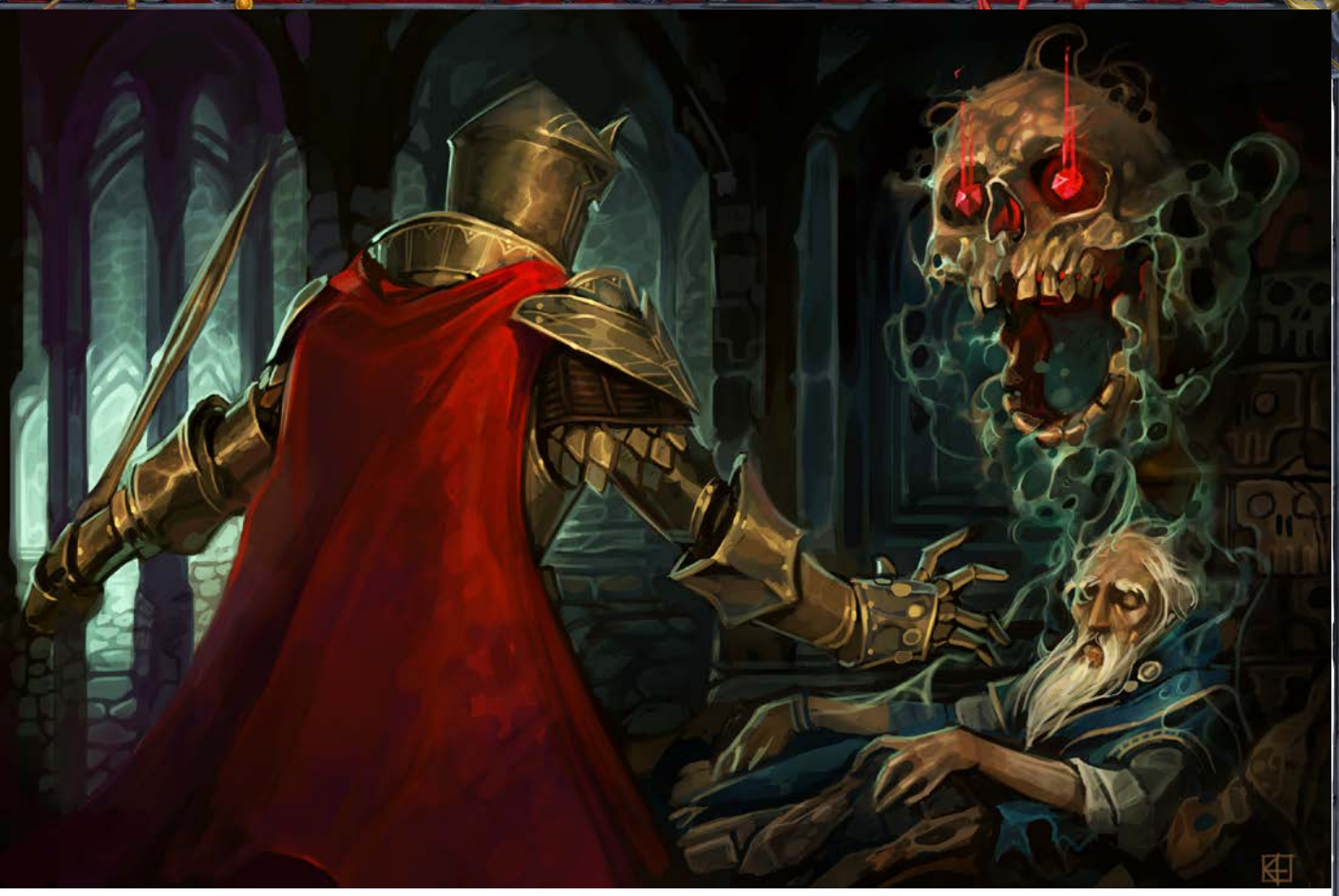
Gear *+4 chainmail*, *+2 keen spiked chain*, *cloak of resistance +2*, *headband of mental prowess +2* (Wis, Cha), pouch of two dozen onyx gems (worth 2,800 gp total), iron unholy symbol of Zon-Kuthon

F11 Dark Shrine of Midnight (CR 14)

This vast chamber is floored in gray slate and supported by thick pillars of obsidian. Torches mounted on the pillars burn, yet their flames are strangely dim, barely lighting the cathedral-like space. White pinpoints of light seem to dance in the eye sockets of each skull that decorates the pillars. To the northwest, a tall statue of a skull-headed man dressed in dark robes stands behind a black marble altar, on which lies heaped mounds of ashes, bits of bone, and a single skull, its teeth and eye sockets set with glittering gemstones. Jagged, barbed chains dangle from the statue's eye sockets. Thick black curtains hang from the chamber's walls.

This chamber housed the main temple of Zon-Kuthon at Scarwall. The torches on the pillars are similar to everburning torches except they exude a dark illumination that provides only dim light in a 20-foot radius that overwhelms any other light sources brought into their area of effect (4th-level or higher spells with the light descriptor can cancel out the shadows for the spell's duration). Beyond the southwest curtain in area **F11a** is a smaller statue of Zon-Kuthon used in certain ceremonies but is otherwise mundane. The lights in the skulls' eye sockets are unnerving, but are little more than a harmless physical manifestation of the evil in this chamber.

Creature: The night of Mandraivus's raid, Bishop Zev Ravenka received a dark premonition of the invasion from the Midnight Lord. When Mandraivus infiltrated



Scarwall, Bishop Zev Ravenka enacted his plan to protect himself and his chapel, and called upon Zon-Kuthon to ward the entrances and exits with a potent *forbiddance* spell that kept the cabal from entering the donjon. Ravenka assumed that Kazavon would defeat the cabal. When he didn't, the lich's plan backfired as Mandraivus and his spellcasting allies wove *forbiddance* magic of their own to keep the lich and his followers trapped inside. Ravenka ordered his followers to commit ritual suicide so they would rise again as powerful undead to aid him in the coming battle, but rather than eventually face Mandraivus, the bishop was caught off guard by the rise of Scarwall's curse. The donjon became the focus of the resulting explosion of undeath and necromantic power, and Zev Ravenka—himself already undead—underwent an even more vile transformation. His body was blasted apart to dust, and the curse of Scarwall transformed the bishop into a demilich.

Bishop Ravenka's mortal remains are the ashes, bone fragments, and gem-studded skull that sit atop the altar. As long as these remains are not disturbed, the dangerous undead guardian remains quiet, unaware that his chapel has been invaded. Bishop Ravenka is one of the four spirit anchors, but due to his inert state, clever PCs don't need to physically destroy him. As with the other spirit anchors, a successful casting of *dispel evil* or *dispel law* (or an antimagic effect) removes the spirit anchor, but attempting to do so counts as disturbing the demilich's remains.

ZEV RAVENKA **CR 14**

XP 38,400

Male demilich (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 66)

hp 142

TACTICS

During Combat It takes the demilich 1 round to fully awaken once his remains are disturbed. During this round, his skull floats into the air, and the ashes and bone fragments scatter as if caught in a vortex around the altar. On the second round, Zev Ravenka chooses a target in range and attempts to trap that creature's soul, continuing to attempt to trap souls every round until he is reduced to fewer than 20 hit points, at which time he uses his *wail of the banshee* spell-like ability. He saves his *greater bestow curse* to use against foes who have attacks that particularly damage him.

Morale Zev Ravenka attacks until destroyed.

Treasure: The demilich's eyes and teeth are all huge rubies. Each of his eyes is worth 2,500 gp, while each of his 10 teeth is worth 1,000 gp. The demilich's ashes cover two

other valuable objects on the altar, and once the creature awakens and the ashes fly into the air, these become apparent. The first is a *greater strand of prayer beads* and the second is a *+2 speed spiked chain*.

F12 Refectory

A dust-covered table surrounded by several chairs sits in this room. Spaces for seven have been set on the table, yet whatever foodstuffs may have once adorned the plates have long since faded to dust.

Treasure: The bishop, prelate, and five priests took their meals here. When cleared of dust, the silverware on display on the table is worth a total of 2,500 gp.

F13 Chapel Library

A single reading desk sits in the center of this room, while the surrounding walls contain a large number of dusty tomes.

The books in this room once constituted a vast repository of lore concerning the worship of Zon-Kuthon, the Shadow Plane, and various methods of torment and torture. Unfortunately for the Brotherhood of Bones (whose members are very excited to find a library in Scarwall that appears intact), the pages of most of these books crumble to dust if not handled with care. The preservation and extraction of the lore in these pages would take many months of painstaking work. Whatever secrets might lie in these tomes are left for you to determine, but are beyond the scope of this campaign.

Treasure: Among the many crumblings books and scrolls in this room are three intact *pages of spell knowledge*[UE], each of which contains one the following arcane spells: *shadow projection*[APG], *shadow evocation*, and *temporary resurrection*[UM].

F14 Bishop's Quarters

This austerely decorated room contains a single iron bedframe (missing its mattress), an iron kneeler studded with short spikes, a gold-plated skull with its cap removed that has been mounted on a stand so that it serves as a font, and a single wooden cabinet that remains upright only because it leans feebly against the wall.

This chamber was once used by Bishop Zev Ravenka, but none have visited the chamber since his transformation into a demilich. The man kept nothing of value (save the skull font) in here. The door to area **F14a** is made of iron and locked tight (hardness 10, hp 60, break DC 28, Disable Device DC 40); this contains a small stone altar atop which sits the bishop's now-defunct lich phylactery.

Treasure: The gold-plated skull was used to hold unholy water; it's not magical, but is worth 2,500 gp to a collector of grisly decor. Zev's phylactery is a small wooden box decorated with carvings of kytons and skeletons cavorting; it's lost all magical properties but its fine construction makes it worth 4,000 gp.

G STAR TOWER

The Star Tower of Castle Scarwall consists of areas **G1–G8**, which appear on the maps on pages 275, 299, and 324. Any random encounters that occur in this area are proximity encounters (see page 273).

Succeeding at a DC 20 Knowledge (engineering) check while examining the Star Tower (from inside or out) reveals the fact that it is not an original part of Scarwall. It is actually a mind-bogglingly old structure that was ancient beyond reckoning even during the birth of Thassilon. The structure is in fact an immense megalith much like a massive nail driven deep into Golarion, its deepest point reaching far into the Darklands below. Other Star Towers exist elsewhere on Golarion, although most of them are completely buried now. Only happenstance and ancient volcanic activity saw this one exposed to the surface world. These mysterious structures are remnants of an ancient war between Rovagug, the Rough Beast, and the gods of Golarion. While Sarenrae and Asmodeus are the two deities most directly associated with Rovagug's imprisonment (Sarenrae cut open the world to fashion an oubliette for Rovagug and drove him into the prison, while Asmodeus used a special key to lock the Rough Beast within), other gods played parts in the war as well. Zon-Kuthon's role was to reinforce the "stitching shut of the world" with several Star Towers along key nexus points above Rovagug's deep oubliette. These towers were intended to block the faithful of the Rough Beast from being able to contact their deity, but time has not treated the structures well. Most have been destroyed over the millennia, either by tectonic forces or the unknowing acts of Darklands miners or monsters, to the extent that Rovagug's faith has become potent in the world once again. Fortunately, his prison still holds him fast. Recognizing the Star Tower for what it is (as well as its physical strength and near-indestructible nature; see below) requires a successful DC 40 Knowledge (religion) check.

Yet little of this ancient history mattered to Kazavon. He just knew that the site was sacred to the Midnight Lord, and that it would thus make a suitable place for his castle. The Star Tower stands 110 feet tall where it emerges from the waters of the tarn until it peaks at its battlement above the donjon roof, while its foundation plunges many more hundreds of feet into the ground to a deep set of lava tunnels near what was once the ancient volcano's core. There are no obvious methods of entry along this length.

The Star Tower is warded by the same *forbiddance* effect that guards the donjon, and as long as Scarwall remains haunted, these effects cannot be dispelled. The effects linger still after the chained spirit is defeated, but at this point the *forbiddance* effect can be dispelled (CL 20th). Furthermore, even though the stonelike material composing the tower was not as eternal as it could have been, it remains incredibly difficult to damage—a 5-foot section has hardness 20, hp 2,400, and SR 32. There are only three entrances into the Star Tower: the roof entrance (area **G1**), a secret door on the second floor (from area **F10** to area **G2**), and a passage from the Darklands deep below (from area **H2** to area **G8**).

When Mandraivus and his cabal attacked Scarwall, they pursued a badly wounded Kazavon down from the Star Tower roof to area **G7**, where the draconic warlord finally assumed his true form before being slain.

G1 Roof Entrance

A single stone building with no obvious entrance sits atop this towering star-shaped rooftop. The marble of both the building and the surrounding tower show no seams and are polished to a sheen, almost as if the entire structure were carved from a single immense shaft of stone. Only on the southeastern wall of the small stone building atop this tower is the smooth polish marred. Here, a carving of a ten-foot-wide skull with spiked chains dangling from its eye sockets looks out over the castle below.

The large symbol of Zon-Kuthon on the southeastern wall is a permanent *phase door* that can be triggered to allow access to the room inside only at the touch of a cleric of Zon-Kuthon of no less than 9th level. A successful DC 35 Use Magic Device check can also trigger the door's activation. As long as Scarwall remains haunted, the building remains under a *dimensional anchor* effect, and this *phase door* cannot be opened at all. The chamber inside is empty, save for a curving, 5-foot-wide flight of stairs that leads down to area **G4**.

G2 Antechamber

The Star Tower was once protected by an appointed curate, and this floor was to be used by him or her for various personal reasons; yet with no curate active in the Star Tower for many years, most of the rooms on this floor have been abandoned. Three secret doors allow access to this room from adjoining chambers. The one to area **F10** is much better hidden than the others (Perception DC 40), while the other two (to areas **G4** and **G5**) can be spotted with successful DC 30 Perception checks. The door to the eastern cell is unlocked. The key to the locked door that leads to the southern cell is long gone (DC 40 Disable Device to open).

G3 Prisons

Black metal manacles hang from the left and right walls of this triangular room, dangling above an ancient bloodstain to which adhere a few clots of dried flesh.

Each of these rooms was used to hold prisoners for the curate's use, but neither has been occupied in some time.

Treasure: The manacles (two pairs hang in each prison) are made of adamantine, and if removed from the wall (a difficult task, considering the hardness of the Star Tower itself) are worth 1,000 gp per set and function as masterwork manacles.

G4 Stairwell

The stairs in this room ascend to the Star Tower's roof entrance (area **G1**).

G5 Curate's Chamber

This chamber was obviously once somebody's quarters. It is sparsely furnished with a small table holding a wooden bowl and cup and a pile of bedding lying in the center of the floor where someone appears to have been brutally murdered, judging from old bloodstains that cover a good portion of it.

A strange hermit known only as "the Curate" made this chamber his home during Kazavon's time. A prophet of Zon-Kuthon, he relied on his divine spellcasting abilities to provide food and water for himself as he kept watch over the Star Tower. Kazavon had little patience for the eccentric man, and soon after the construction of Scarwall was completed, he murdered him and ate the remains.

G6 Stairwell

A stairwell descends into the depths of the tower (area **G7**) from this unadorned chamber.

G7 Chamber of the Well (CR 14)

The walls and floor of this chamber have a strange organic texture, appearing almost like black mummified flesh streaked with glistening swaths of ancient blood. Four pillars carved to look like coils of entwined arteries and spinal cords support the ceiling, with nails and surgical tools embedded in these pillars at key and painful-looking positions. At the base of the stairs is a ten-foot-diameter open shaft, entirely filled with thick bluish mist.

This level of the Star Tower was constructed to harness the devotional energy of the worshipers of Zon-Kuthon to power the entire structure as a ward to help block the prayers of Rovagug's faithful. With the Star Tower failing, the once-living walls of this chamber have died and become mummified.

This chamber is also where Mandraivus and his cabal finally confronted Kazavon, who fled into this corner of his lair in hopes that, here at the heart of his power, he could resist Mandraivus and his holy sword. That hope died when Mandraivus and his allies managed to force Kazavon (very much against his will) into his true form. With his mobility limited, the Esoteric Order was able to finally defeat the dragon.

The shaft is filled with cold blue fog, and while it is only 50 feet deep, any creature that falls into it experiences a plummet of unexpected and vertiginous length, as if falling for miles and miles. Each round the fall continues, the falling character must attempt a DC 20 Will save. Once a character succeeds at this save, she suddenly finds herself landing in area **G8**, taking 5d6 points of falling damage per round she perceived herself to be falling (maximum 20d6). A character that can fly must attempt the same Will save each round she continues to fly down into the pit, but on a success, finds herself in flight in area **G8** and takes no falling damage. No matter how long a flying character has been flying down, she always finds that the rim of the shaft above is no more than 30 feet up.

Creature: Several weeks after Scarwall's curse awakened, Zon-Kuthon sent one of his minions, a nightwing named Ildervok, to this chamber to await the arrival of a replacement curate to induct into service. For hundreds of years, the immense shadowy undead has waited patiently for a new candidate to arrive. When the PCs enter this chamber, the nightwing greets them, speaking to them telepathically while invisible, and welcoming them to the Star Tower. He then idly asks which of them wishes to take on the honor and glory of becoming the Star Tower's new curate. The nightwing would certainly much prefer someone volunteer for it, and hopes to find someone who's already a worshiper of Zon-Kuthon. Either Shadowcount Sial or Laori Vaus would make perfect candidates (see Development on page 327). If neither of them are present, Ildervok selects the character whose alignment or personality most closely matches that of Zon-Kuthon (a lawful evil sadist is the best choice) as his nominee to court for the role. If asked what being the curate entails, Ildervok is brief and somewhat metaphorical in his reply: "The curate is the living soul of this Star Tower. The curate watches over the Star Tower and lives until the End Times—or until violence necessitates a replacement. The curate is the Star Tower. It is an honor even to be considered for the role, and to be selected and reject it is to spit in the Midnight Lord's eye."

If no characters volunteer, the nightwing swiftly grows angry. He demands that one of the PCs step forth to

become a curate, and if none do, his patience snaps and he attacks. Ildervok hopes to force one of them to beg for his life (or for the life of another), a mercy the nightwing is all too willing to grant in return for acquiescence and a trip to the Midnight Lord's palace on the Plane of Shadow.

Becoming a curate is a process that requires the character to voluntarily accept Zon-Kuthon as his patron and to accompany Ildervok to the Plane of Shadow via *plane shift* to be indoctrinated in the Midnight Lord's palace. This is a grueling, torturous process intended to convince the victim to agree, if only to escape the threat of greater torture. The result is a near-mindless devotee of Zon-Kuthon who is then returned to this Star Tower, now immortal (save for death by violence) as long as he does not leave the confines of the tower itself. Since the acquisition of a new curate is the only way Ildervok can escape his servitude here (apart from being forced off the plane by an effect like *banishment*), the nightwing is naturally eager to see someone assume the role.

A character taken away by Ildervok is effectively out of the campaign. You may wish to create a new set of adventures in which the other PCs pursue a stolen ally into the Shadow Plane to rescue him, but that is beyond the scope of Curse of the Crimson Throne.

ILDERVOK **CR 14**

XP 38,400

Nightwing nightshade (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 203)

hp 195

Development: Either of the Brotherhood of Bones members who may be traveling with the PCs would make ideal candidates for the role of curate; unfortunately, as honorable as the post may be, it's also not something they would wish for themselves, since to become the curate is to abandon all other goals, ambitions, and pleasures. If either Shadowcount Sial or Laori have become an Ally, the Enemy has bristled at the Ally's easy friendship with the PCs and feels that the Ally has drifted from the faith. The Enemy proclaims as much at this time, telling the Ally that agreeing to the role of curate is the only way to atone for straying from the Midnight Lord's side. Afraid that rejecting the idea would give the Enemy's words strength, the Ally turns the argument back at the Enemy, accusing him or her of constantly obstructing their overall goal of seeing the fangs of Kazavon returned to Nidal. The argument swiftly blooms into a fight between the two. The PCs are free to take sides as they wish, but the nightwing merely hangs back and watches in amusement. As soon as it becomes obvious to the Enemy that he or she is about to die, he or she sees no other option but to accept the role of curate, and begs Ildervok for protection from the Ally and the PCs.

Ildervok will come to the Enemy's aid, but if the PCs slay the Enemy, the nightwing breaks off the fight and offers the role of curate to the Ally one last time. If Sial remains alive, he finally relents and accepts the task. Laori, however, does not wish this role and will ask the PCs to help protect her from being taken away by the Nightwing against her will.

If the nightwing takes Sial away (or if the PCs help restrain Laori), Ildervok admits at this point that he knows the PCs are here to reclaim *Serithtial* and hope to use it to drive Kazavon's spirit from Queen Ileosa, something he has learned from visions sent recently by the Midnight Lord himself. Ildervok reassures the PCs that they have nothing more to fear from Zon-Kuthon. He desires that Kazavon's spirit be removed from the petty young queen as much as anyone, for such a fate does not befit even a fragment of one of his mightiest warlords. Ildervok tells the PCs the blade has been taken, but it is not far from here. He states it is currently held in the clutches of the "Children of Rovagug" deep below the Star Tower, and that by stepping into the shaft, the PCs will be transported to these deep chambers where *Serithtial* has languished for so many years.

G8 Deep Chamber

The air in this empty chamber is cold and still. The jagged walls of the tower are broken to the northeast by a single stone door, and the floor is polished to a reflective sheen. Thirty feet above, the ceiling is completely obscured by a roiling bank of glowing blue mist.

A character who climbs or flies up into the mist above suddenly finds herself emerging from the edge of the shaft in area **G7**, despite the fact that this chamber is nearly 1,500 feet underground. This is the Star Tower's foundation, and the door once provided access to an ancient temple of Zon-Kuthon. This temple was not built of the same ageless material as that of the Star Tower, and volcanic activity and the passage of ages have erased most remnants of this complex but for a few twisting caverns and a large underground lake. This door is heavy, but can be opened with a successful DC 16 Strength check.

H Scarwall Caverns

The Scarwall caverns are accessible via the lowest chamber within the Star Tower. These caverns are lightless, and consist of areas **H1–H4**, all depicted on the map on page 324. Any random encounters that occur in this area are proximity encounters (see page 273) with the gugs from area **H3**. At your discretion, though, another Darklands native may have wandered up into the caverns via area **H2**.

H1 Caverns

The walls of these tunnels look moist, yet are strangely dry to the touch, being covered with a sheen of glittering mineral deposits. The ceiling averages fifteen feet in height.

This short network of caverns is unlit and slopes downward slightly as one travels toward area **H3**. Although once serving as part of a temple to Zon-Kuthon, the remaining tunnels are now settled by a small group of gugs. There are four gugs currently dwelling in the caverns, and while most of them spend the majority of their time in area **H3**, periodically one wanders into these caves; there's a 20% chance of encountering a lone gug in this tunnel as a result.

H2 Entrance to Sekamina

This corridor ends at a fifteen-foot-wide shaft that plummets into the darkness. A faint warm breeze flows up from the pit, carrying with it strange mineral scents. What appears to be a set of three-foot-wide handholds runs down along the closest side of the shaft—a crude, primitive ladder, perhaps, but judging by the length between holds, one sized for a creature almost three times as large as a man.

This shaft drops over 500 feet into the Darklands realm of Sekamina, opening into a warren of caverns inhabited by additional gugs. Clambering down the side of the shaft requires many successful DC 10 Climb checks if the gug ladder is used (DC 20 otherwise). The gug warren below is too far away for the gugs here to rely upon for reinforcements, but if the PCs fail to retrieve *Serithtial* on their first try, any gugs they have slain are replaced within a few hours of their death by more from below.

H3 Sacred Lake (CR 15)

The rank odor of decay, filth, and wet fur clings to this cool chamber with a palpable tenacity. The chamber is an immense, twenty-foot-high cavern that fades into the dark to the north. A wide rocky shelf sits in the southern portion of the cavern, and upon this shelf are four crude, domed hovels, each nearly twenty feet tall and built from rough stone blocks mortared together with a nasty mix of mud, hair, and assorted debris. Each stone hovel has a large arched opening into its darkened interior. To the east, a silent lake of black water stretches into the distance. Few ripples disturb its surface, giving it the appearance at times of a massive sheet of polished obsidian. Far out in the water to the northeast, a single point of light glows just above the surface, a bright star with a radiance that illuminates several stony islands about seventy feet out in the lake, though the source of the glow isn't discernible from shore.

Creatures: For many years, this chamber has served as a site of religious significance for the warren of gugs that dwell deeper in Sekamina (see area **H2** above). Lurking in the lake is an immense and monstrous creature (see area **H4** below) that the gugs have come to view as one of the many god-children of Rovagug. Periodically, a gug might toss a sacrifice into these waters so they can gather and watch the inhabitant of the lake feed. But for the most part, these four gugs see themselves as the lake's guardians, dwelling here to ensure that their god's slumber in the lake is not disturbed.

The gug hovels are dirty and hold little more than their few collected treasures, disgusting clumps of shed fur, and the bony remains of many past meals. Four gugs dwell here currently, and while infighting and bickering is common among their kind, they set all differences aside as soon as intruders are detected, immediately attacking in an all-out rush to establish feeding rights over the slain. They fight to the death to protect their sacred lake and its denizen. Faced with foes who use flight to avoid melee combat, these gugs have a large supply of javelins they can hurl at enemies, but rely primarily on their booming howls of anger to rouse Kleestad from the lake to attack flying foes.

GUGS (4) **CR 10**

XP 9,600 each

hp 127 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 151)

Ranged javelin +11 (1d8+7)

Treasure: Scattered among the gug dwellings are a total of 19 assorted gemstones worth 250 gp each. One of the gugs recently caught a svirfneblin in the deep caves below this area while on a hunt, and the deep gnome's mostly eaten body still lies in the westernmost hovel, along with much damaged gear (little of which remains functional). The gnome's still-working Small *+3 aberration-bane heavy pick* lies against the northern wall where the gug threw it after accidentally slashing his tongue on the surprisingly sharp weapon.

H4 The Inhabitant of the Lake (CR 15)

Originally formed as a magma chamber before the volcano went extinct, the chamber has slowly filled over the ages with water cloudy with sediment. The lake's submerged walls are a nearly 200-hundred-foot vertical drop to a longer waterway that winds through the ground for miles. The point of light out in the lake is, in fact, the blade *Serithtial*, embedded point-first into a stony rock outcropping in the lake's northeast area.

Creature: As detailed in the Chapter Background, Zon-Kuthon cursed Kleestad for betraying Kazavon, transforming him into a horrific wormlike monstrosity called a pharmakos and casting him down into this pit to guard *Serithtial*. Of course, now that the holy sword is required to "cleanse" Kazavon from Queen Ileosa, Zon-Kuthon no longer cares if Kleestad continues to guard it. In a way, the PCs are now Kleestad's executioners, arriving on the scene to carry out a duty (unknowingly or otherwise) to end the life of this traitor.

If the PCs venture out on the water, step foot on the stony rock that holds the sword in its grip, or otherwise attempt to retrieve the sword, *Serithtial* senses them and its glow grows brighter. If there are any worshipers of Iomedae in the party, they hear a faint singing in their ears and a sudden feeling of urgency from the weapon. Unfortunately, after his long association with the weapon, Kleestad senses these changes as well, and quickly slithers to the lake's surface to investigate. He also emerges if the gugs on the shore howl and roar at flying PCs.

Kleestad is a disgusting creature that is part immense worm and part humanoid. He is just over 80 feet in length, with sickly pale flesh infested with rot and pustules. Dozens of spiky legs twitch along the length of his body, while his upper torso, bloated and pallid, is still vaguely human. Kleestad's first act upon erupting from the lake is to use his breath weapon on the largest concentration of PCs. He then moves in to engage them in melee, using *air walk* as needed and focusing his wrath on anyone who seems to be attempting to take *Serithtial*. If he survives the fight, Kleestad pursues foes to the end of the world to reclaim the blade.

KLEESTAD **CR 15**

XP 51,200

Pharmakos (see page 475)

hp 232

Treasure: Although *Serithtial* has been embedded in the stone of the rocky islet here, it can easily be withdrawn and claimed by any creature (although the weapon prefers to be claimed and wielded by a good-aligned character—see page 435 for more details on this powerful artifact).

The lake is deep enough that *detect magic* doesn't reveal the additional treasures that lie 200 feet down—offerings made by the gugs over the years to Kleestad. Many of these offerings, thrown into the lake from the shore after being taken from duergar, drow, and other denizens of the Darklands, have decayed over time. However, three magical items lie strewn across the lake bed for those persistent enough to seek them out: a *+2 speed battleaxe*, a *rod of wonder*, and a mithral *staff of life* with 5 charges.

CHAPTER CONCLUSION

With the destruction of the chained spirit Mithrodar and the claiming of the sacred blade *Serithtial*, the PCs have accomplished a marvelous feat. Yet for all the terrors and trials they endured in Castle Scarwall, what awaits them back in Korvosa will prove their greatest test yet. Still, exploring, enduring, and surviving the curse of Scarwall and its horrific occupants is a task worth celebrating, and you should give the PCs a well-deserved chance to rest and recover before moving on!

Unlike the other chapters in this Adventure Path, the completion of this chapter has little direct impact or repercussion on the overall campaign plot, other than by providing the PCs with a weapon capable of besting Queen Ileosa. Once the PCs have recovered *Serithtial*, they are ready to return to Korvosa. Armed with the weapon that laid Kazavon low before, they can sunder the *Crown of Fangs* and truly defeat the queen. Yet they have already struck a potent blow against the ancient warlord's legacy, for Scarwall now lies empty of the unquiet dead. One of Belkzen's most notorious ruins is now merely that—a ruin. The orcs of Belkzen discover the castle has become habitable soon enough, and before the end of the year several tribes are warring for control of the structure. Yet for the PCs, the clash of bickering orc tribes should be the furthest thing from their minds, as they have a city to save.

OPTIONAL: A SWIFTER SCARWALL

This chapter is a significant stylistic departure from the previous chapters of Curse of the Crimson Throne, in that it focuses entirely on the exploration of an enormous castle. Even the final chapter, which features another large castle as an adventure site, doesn't expect the PCs to spend a significant amount of time exploring rooms. When the assault on Castle Korvosa occurs, the PCs are more likely to make multiple surgical strikes into the fortification, and battles there will tend to spread quickly as the castle's defenders mobilize to confront the PCs.

This isn't quite the case in Scarwall, which is presented in a much more classic "dungeon crawl" format. Few monsters will rouse themselves to join battles in neighboring rooms, and the entire chapter is constructed in a way so as to all but force the PCs to explore much of the castle in order to defeat its creatures, lift its curse, and recover the sword they seek. Compared to the attack on Castle Korvosa (during which the PCs are likely to have maps of the castle layout in order to aid their assault), for some groups, the exploration of Scarwall may well end up feeling more like a slog than high adventure, especially if the PCs are eager to return to their beloved Korvosa or worry about what dire acts the queen may be inflicting upon the city while its heroes are "distracted" by a haunted castle hundreds of miles away.

You know your group best, and if you feel they're eager for an extended dungeon crawl or the old-school experience of exploring a haunted castle, let them take their time wandering through the halls and rooms of Scarwall. Care has been taken to ensure that as many rooms and locations in Scarwall as possible have significant events, treasures, or combats to justify each and every encounter. But if you feel your group is eager to return to Korvosa, you can modify the contents of this chapter in several ways to speed things along and make it less of an endurance test. In such a case, consider using some or all of the following options to expedite this chapter.

Simplify the Chained Spirit: One easy way to simplify this chapter is to reduce or entirely remove the presence of spirit anchors in Scarwall. At its simplest, lifting Scarwall's curse may be as easy as confronting Mithrodar in area **C14** and defeating him, with no need to first defeat the spirit anchors to which he's tied. Alternatively, you can say that only one or two spirit anchors need to be defeated before the PCs can confront Mithrodar and finish him off. Once the chained spirit is eliminated and the curse on the castle is gone, many of its guardians and haunts vanish, making exploration of the castle much easier.

Remove Phantasms: The phantasms included in this chapter are intended to add flavor to otherwise empty rooms, and help the PCs learn a bit about Castle Scarwall's history in an interactive and unusual way. They can take time to resolve, though, particularly if your players tend to get distracted easily. You can speed the exploration of Scarwall by removing all phantasms from this chapter (if you do so, feel free to gloss over these rooms if the PCs come across them). Just give a brief description and let the players know that there's little more to learn from the room so they can move on to the next encounter.

Manage Random Encounters: By limiting or even entirely removing random encounters from Scarwall, you can speed play along as well; in this case, combats in this chapter will end up being focused on set encounters. This may result in the castle feeling "underpopulated," but if that doesn't bother your PCs and they prefer the faster pace, removing or decreasing random encounter frequency could be a good thing.

Allow Side Trips Back Home: High-level PCs have plenty of methods of fast travel like *teleport* or *wind walk*. If the PCs have allied with the Brotherhood of Bones, Laori can use *shadow walk* to help them come and go between Korvosa and Scarwall. Certainly, the tactic of teleporting back to Korvosa to rest, recover, and resupply before teleporting back to Scarwall makes a lot of sense. If the PCs have the resources to do so, let them! This gives you an excellent opportunity to keep Korvosa front and center in the game, after all. You can use the PCs' frequent visits back to Korvosa to relieve any concerns that they might miss out on a big event or occurrence, and you might well find that such frequent trips back home even extend the amount of time the players (and thus their characters) may be comfortable spending in Scarwall. You can also consider having the raid on Deathhead Vault from the third part of Chapter 4 or the events from the first part of Chapter 6 play out during these trips back home, blending scenes from all three chapters together. Some encounters may end up being too difficult or too easy for your group, depending on their level and the order in which they tackle the encounters in question, but as long as you stay loose and are willing to adjust the encounters along the way, this can be a particularly rewarding method to tie Scarwall to the rest of the campaign's story arc.

Move the Goal: One final way you can shorten this chapter is by merely moving where *Serithtial* is hidden away. Instead of leaving it in the deep caverns, placing the blade in the treasure of one of Scarwall's more powerful foes located aboveground in the castle proper shortens the amount of time the PCs are required to spend in the castle. You don't have to make this decision immediately either. Keep an eye on your players' interest levels, and if you feel they're getting tired of the castle and are eager to "get on with the story" and return to confront Ileosa in Korvosa, then perhaps *Serithtial* is discovered in the next significant encounter as treasure. In this case, you should consider having the weapon's powers not be blocked by Scarwall's curse. This way, the PCs can liberate the magic sword and leave the castle's curse in place, perhaps for a later excursion or maybe even for an entirely different party of adventurers.

KAZAVON

THE FINAL GOAL

Regardless of how you present Scarwall to your group, keep in mind that in the end you need to ensure two things occur: the PCs need to retrieve the blade *Serithtial*, and they need to earn enough experience points so that by the time they're assaulting Castle Korvosa they're at least extremely near 16th level, if they haven't already reached it. Assuming both of these conditions are met by the time your group completes this penultimate chapter of Curse of the Crimson Throne, how they get there is irrelevant—as long as you all have fun along the way!

REDEMPTION

When the PCs encounter the nightwing in area **G7**, their alliance with Laori and Sial inevitably changes. It's unlikely that Shadowcount Sial remains alive or on the Material Plane after this encounter resolves, but Laori Vaus has a stronger chance to come through intact and alive, especially if the PCs choose to support her choice to not become the curate. Regardless, this brush with a direct emissary of Zon-Kuthon gives the Brotherhood agent much to think about. Whether or not the agent's faith is shaken or bolstered by this encounter depends in large part on how the PCs have interacted with the character up until now. In Laori's case in particular, she may view this as a turning point, and if a PC has been particularly friendly or supportive of her, she may well choose to abandon her faith for a new deity. Laori's path to redemption should be a long one—at the very least lasting through the end of this campaign. But in the end, if she does change faiths, she likely views the PCs as friends forever.

CROWN OF FANGS

BY TITO LEATI

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER BACKGROUND 334

PART 1: STREETS OF CHAOS 336

PART 2: ASSAULT ON THE CASTLE 344

PART 3: LEGACY OF BLOOD 378

CHAPTER CONCLUSION 390

MAPS

CASTLE KORVOSA 349
(DUNGEON, FIRST FLOOR, GROUNDS, AND SIDE VIEW)

CASTLE KORVOSA 356
(SECOND TO FOURTH FLOORS, ATTIC, AND TOWERS)

THE SUNKEN QUEEN 380

CHAPTER BACKGROUND

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

The PCs should begin Chapter 6 well into 15th level.

16 The PCs should reach 16th level at some point during the assault on Castle Korvosa.

17 The PCs should be 17th level before confronting Ileosa in the Sunken Queen.

Despite the actions of a stalwart band of heroes, Queen Ileosa's plans for Korvosa have met, in large part, with grisly success. Korvosa's military has been replaced by her loyal and cruel Gray Maidens. The city government is in shambles, with the remaining magistrates and arbiters cowering in their homes while they hope for things to get better. And the people of Korvosa are shattered—the victims of riots, plagues, and oppression. A resistance movement struggles to maintain its foothold against the queen, but with the introduction of devils and dragons to her legions, Korvosa slips further and further from salvation. As it does, Queen Ileosa draws closer to her goal of immortality.

Queen Ileosa hasn't been idle while the PCs continued to oppose her minions and build their resources for an eventual confrontation. By the time this final chapter of Curse of the Crimson Throne begins, the PCs may have struck a blow against the Red Mantis and the Gray Maidens that was powerful enough to force Queen Ileosa to back off from keeping Korvosa under oppressive

martial law, but her presence continues to cast its long shadow over the city nevertheless. Great new statues of the city's vain queen are being raised in her honor via the sweat and blood of an enslaved populace, and while the Gray Maidens no longer patrol the streets in as much force as before the raid on Deathhead Vault, those patrols have grown more violent in nature, and devils and perhaps even a dragon have joined them. Even rumors that Magnimar is preparing an intervention to put an end to the madness fall on deaf ears—Ileosa won't need Korvosa much longer, as she plans on ascending to immortality well before Magnimar can make a direct move to stop her. What little resistance remains is bottled up below Gray District, nervously awaiting the return of the heroes who have pledged to rescue them all.

Queen Ileosa's unprecedented rise in power is attributable to several factors, the most important of which is the *Crown of Fangs*. Fashioned from the fangs of Kazavon with the aid of powerful devils, the artifact increases the raw potency of the fangs themselves. Not only does the *Crown of Fangs* protect Ileosa and strengthen her, but it also allows fragments of Kazavon's memories and experiences to empower her, resulting in a rapid increase in her level. Yet Ileosa hasn't stopped there; she's also secured the aid of a devil named Sermignatto, allowing her, among other things, to bind the essence of an erinyes devil to her to even further increase her power. Yet these are little more than steps toward her true goal: to follow in the footsteps of Runelord Sorshen and achieve eternal youth and unlimited power through the blood sacrifice of thousands. While much of the runelord's details remain shrouded in mystery, Ileosa has been able to confirm that Sorshen ruled as Runelord of Lust from the dawn of Thassilon to its fall, a span of well over a thousand years. That Sorshen did so without resorting to undeath intrigued Ileosa, and the idea of eternal youth has increasingly become an obsession for the queen.

Ileosa hasn't actually explored the deeper chambers below Castle Korvosa yet, but she knows that Sorshen once held the seat of her power there thousands of years ago. Thanks to a combination of research, communion with otherworldly powers, and the advice of wise and intelligent advisors, Ileosa hasn't attempted to explore the deep chambers where Sorshen's hold remains strong, knowing that even with her newfound power, she may well be getting in over her head with the dangers that dwell so close to home. However, Ileosa has also determined that she need not directly confront Sorshen's most dangerous minions and remaining legacies in order to get what she wants, for the secret to Runelord Sorshen's immortality lies not below Castle Korvosa but at a site to the northwest—at a place known today as the Sunken Queen.

The final stage of Ileosa's mad quest has taken her to the Sunken Queen, a Thassilonian ruin in the Mushfens some 160 miles west of Korvosa, where she must enact a complex and lengthy ritual to link her soul to the souls of her oppressed followers—loyal and downtrodden alike. Yet she knows she cannot leave Korvosa unguarded during this time, and has left the city in the charge of her devilish minion, Sermignatto, and her bodyguard, Sabina Merrin. To further the illusion that she is still in Korvosa, Ileosa used the magic of the Sunken Queen to create a *simulacrum* of herself out of blood, then installed the false queen on the Crimson Throne. If she can complete the ritual in the Sunken Queen, the additional power she would gain should be more than enough to allow her to raid Sorshen's chambers deep below Castle Korvosa and thus empower herself above and beyond anything that has been seen in Varisia since Thassilon's fall so many ages ago.

To the populace of Korvosa, Queen Ileosa has never left the city—the belief that their petty ruler has simply ensconced herself in her castle holds firm, and that belief, combined with her increasingly visible aid from dragons and devils, keeps the citizens of Korvosa in check. The budding rebellion the PCs are involved in, headed by such notables as Cressida Kroft and Bishop d'Bear, is more than ready to move against the queen as this final part of the Curse of the Crimson Throne begins, but until the PCs are ready to strike down the threats in the castle, they must hold their blades in check.

The time to rebel against Queen Ileosa and take back Korvosa has come, but it falls to the heroes of Curse of the Crimson Throne to be the ones to lead the charge!

NPC DEVELOPMENTS

Use the following notes to expand the roles of NPCs encountered in the previous chapter as you see fit if the PCs seek them out during "Crown of Fangs."

Thousand Bones: If the PCs impressed his people in Chapter 4, the Shoanti shaman Thousand Bones may return to Korvosa at this time, knowing that the city is on the precipice of a great change. He brings with him several other Shoanti from various tribes, including Krojun and Tekrakai, both so these notable Shoanti can witness the heroism of the PCs, and so they can aid the rebels in battle as needed. Feel free to have one or two or more Shoanti NPCs the PCs have befriended join them in their cause and aid in the raid on Castle Korvosa.

Vencarlo Orisini: This chapter assumes one of the PCs has taken on Blackjack's role, with Vencarlo continuing to lie low among the rebels. If no PC has taken on the role, the confrontation with the efreeti on page 338 makes a perfect point for Vencarlo to step in and have one last appearance in the campaign.

PART 1

STREETS OF CHAOS

The beginning of the Korvosan rebellion is presented in Part 3 of "A History Of Ashes." In that section of the campaign, the PCs can take preliminary steps to oppose some of Ileosa's more mundane servants, such as the Red Mantis and the Gray Maidens. Yet although the PCs may have forced most of the Red Mantis agents to abandon support of Ileosa's plan and driven the Gray Maidens out of the Longacre Building and into the castle itself, Ileosa's power has only grown.

With the Sable Company gone, the Korvosan Guard reduced to little more than a shadow of its former glory, the silence of the noble houses, the retreat of the Hellknights and the wizards of the Acadamae into their respective fortresses, and finally the church of Abadar's public declaration of support of the city's new ruler, the formerly vibrant city has dulled. Merchants still come and go from Korvosa, but they are taxed heavily and tend not to stay overnight. Locals no longer have to fear riots, plagues, or even much in the way of thievery, but the Gray Maidens (who if anything have become more aggressive after abandoning the Longacre Building) have little patience for lawbreakers of any sort. Compounding this are Queen Ileosa's numerous new and often ridiculous laws, which force the city's citizens into ever-increasing debt and despair.

THE FINAL HARROWING

The last of Zellara's harrowings should occur soon after the PCs liberate *Serithtial* but before they've had a chance to reply to the rebels' call for help. The primary goal of this final harrowing is to encourage the PCs to turn their attention toward Castle Korvosa and to prepare them for the final confrontation against Queen Ileosa. Cards that come up representing the past should symbolize various important events that have occurred during this Adventure Path. Cards representing the present should speak to the oppression that currently stifles Korvosa, of the growing rumors of devils and a dragon in the city, and of the Gray Maidens. Cards representing the future should foreshadow encounters in Castle Korvosa or the climactic battle with Ileosa; they should not indicate the Sunken Queen, since you don't want the PCs to skip straight to the end of the chapter without first recovering several important pieces of information and magic from Castle Korvosa. Use these cards to imply to the PCs that force of personality will be important in their immediate future, and that they should embrace their hero status and become figures to follow in battle.

PREPARING FOR THE FINAL BATTLE

As this final chapter begins, the Korvosan rebels remain based in the Dead Warrens, with the church of Pharasma helping to hide their presence. When you're ready to begin this final chapter, have one of the PCs receive a *sending* spell from Bishop Keppira d'Bear that invites them to return to the Dead Warrens to meet with their allies to plan the final liberation of Korvosa.

Upon arriving in the ossuary (area **D1** of the Dead Warrens; see page 60), the PCs are reunited with Cressida, Neolandus, Vencarlo, and any other NPCs of note who have become important parts of the rebellion. As the PCs arrive, they are quickly greeted by a joyful and thankful Cressida Kroft, a bit more ragged and rough-looking than before but no less friendly and supportive. Others like Amin Jalento or Grau Soldado also reunite with the PCs at this time. After the reunion, Cressida asks for updates on the PCs' adventures in Scarwall (or perhaps even the Cinderlands if they've not returned to Korvosa since then)—feel free to play this scene out as much as you want. The goal here should be to reinforce the PCs' ties to Korvosa and its citizens and to give them a chance to feel like what they've accomplished so far is worthy of praise. In other words, they should be made to feel like heroes.

Eventually, Cressida gets to the problem at hand. She explains to the PCs that things are rapidly approaching a critical point in Korvosa, and that if the move against the queen is to happen, it must happen before she and her forces are too entrenched. The relatively minor victories the PCs may have had earlier against the Red Mantis and Gray Maidens have helped, but now the remaining assassins and Gray Maidens have retreated into Castle Korvosa, where they are free to plot with impunity.

Cressida's plan represents a final legal gambit—she intends to publicly reveal that seneschal Neolandus yet lives, and that Queen Ileosa attempted to have him assassinated. With him still alive, Korvosa's nobles and other government agencies beyond the queen have a legal

Listed here are several issues that need resolution before I'm comfortable revealing to Korvosa that Neolandus still lives. I leave to you the methods for solving these problems.

1. *A new "hero of the people" has been fighting rebels in the streets. These rebels are false; they're not my people, and I suspect that this hero, a man named Trifaccia, is false as well. Find out who or what he is.*
2. *I have it on good authority that the rumors of a black dragon taking nest in Castle Korvosa are legitimate. If the rumors prove true, the dragon must be defeated.*
3. *The role of castle seneschal is currently held by a bloated wizard named Togomor. If you can defeat him or secure his surrender, we'll avoid a long legal complication over the revelation that Neolandus still lives.*
4. *Our friend Ishani Dhatri, Abadaran priest and vocal opponent of his church's public endorsement of Ileosa, has vanished. My initial investigations indicate that he was last seen approaching the castle. Perhaps some clues to his fate lie hidden within?*
5. *Rumor holds that a new group of Red Mantis assassins, along with a more powerful leader, have taken up residence in the castle after you besieged their previous den. If you can find proof that Ileosa is the reason the Red Mantis has come to Korvosa in the first place, this will go a long way toward undermining the queen's position in the city.*
6. *The Gray Maidens are a menace, and they need to be disbanded. Kordaitra's defeat at Longacre dealt them a blow, but the Maidens' commander Sabina Merrin and their chief indoctrinator, a mysterious woman whose identity remains unknown outside of the organization, have likely retreated to the castle. If you can secure the defeat or surrender of these two remaining leaders, the Gray Maidens will lose much of their command structure. It will throw the entire organization into chaos long enough for us to reclaim the streets from them.*
7. *Rumors of devils involved with the monarchy disturb me as well. If you can find proof that Ileosa is trafficking with devils, or that devils dwell within Castle Korvosa, that should significantly help our case against her in the eyes of the city's government.*
8. *Ileosa must answer for her crimes. She hasn't been seen publicly recently except for brief appearances on the castle walls. She's in there, somewhere. If we can capture her, a lot of our work will be easier.*

HANDOUT #6–1

option beyond open rebellion to depose Ileosa. Cressida hopes that this will rally the noble houses, arbiters, and magistrates, but she also fears that doing so will spur Ileosa to step up the violence to even greater levels.

Therefore, before the rebels can take to the streets and seek out the support of the city, they need someone to take the initiative against the monarchy. At first, this means that they need intelligence from the castle. Cressida has heard numerous rumors about what has been going on inside Castle Korvosa: that the Gray Maidens have withdrawn into the keep with their remaining leaders, that devils and a dragon dwell within, that the Red Mantis are now secretly in control of the building, and that Ileosa has transformed into a monster. What Cressida needs are heroes willing to infiltrate Castle Korvosa to not only find out what exactly they're all up against, but also to do their best to undermine and defeat Ileosa and her minions. Leadership is the key to control, and without it, Ileosa can't remain in power.

Cressida has prepared a list of tasks for the PCs to accomplish. She's hesitant to make her move with Neolandus to reclaim control until the majority of these tasks are accomplished, but in the end listens to the PCs' advice as to when it's safe to do so. The list of Cressida's tasks is presented as Handout #6–1 above.

It would be best if the PCs didn't draw too much attention to the Dead Warrens by lingering within the area for long, and if the PCs can find another place in the city to hide out when they need to recover and regroup between forays into the Castle, that would be best for all involved. To aid the PCs in this, Cressida supplies them with three *scrolls of mage's magnificent mansion* she's gathered expressly for this purpose.

If the PCs speak with Vencarlo or Grau about Sabina, both offer the same observation: the Sabina they knew loved Korvosa but was honorable to a fault. It was her rigidity of thought and personality, Vencarlo muses, that

held back her progress back when she was his student. Both Grau and Vencarlo have a hard time believing Sabina could condone what Ileosa has done to Korvosa. They suspect the queen uses some sort of magic to control the Gray Maiden, and urge the PCs to try to use nonlethal methods in dealing with her.

TRIFACCIA

The Korvosan Rebellion

As the PCs work to provide the proof Cressida wants and to undermine Ileosa's power in the city, they earn Rebellion Points (abbreviated "RP"). These points track the city's general attitude and citizens' willingness to rise up against Ileosa's regime. Korvosa isn't truly safe again until Ileosa is defeated, but since she is currently not in the city, accomplishing these lesser goals can start returning Korvosa to normal.

Point totals should be awarded as follows for each of the major tasks at hand.

- Blackjack defends the city's citizens: 1 RP
- Defeat all major devils in the castle: 1 RP
- Defeat Sabina Merrin: 1 RP (increases to 3 RP if her life is spared and she is recruited to the rebellion's cause)
- Expose Trifaccia as an efreeti in Ileosa's employ: 1 RP
- Publicly defeat the dragon Zarmangarof: 2 RP
- Recover the infernal contract from area **A90**: 1 RP
- Remove Togomor from power: 1 RP
- Secure proof that Ileosa hired the Red Mantis: 2 RP

As these points accumulate, the city's rebels grow more and more active and bold, as summarized below. Use these notes as background flavor and descriptions—Curse of the Crimson Throne doesn't place the PCs in the actual action of the fighting on the streets, as their role as the heroes who face the queen and her powerful minions should consume their resources, but if you wish to involve the PCs more, feel free to do so!

0–2 RP: The rebels must continue hiding under Gray District; the PCs are considered enemies of the city and cannot openly travel the streets without being accosted. Use the city's Korvosa (Unrest) statistics (see page 399), unless the PCs failed to disrupt Deathhead Vault, in which case continue using Korvosa (Martial Law).

3–5 RP: The rebels stage swift strikes against various strongholds under Ileosa's direct control. At this point, the key NPCs in the castle take aggressive steps to assassinate the PCs if their places of rest and recovery are known. Scrying and other magical attempts to locate the PCs might be used, depending on which key NPCs still survive. Surviving NPCs in the castle contact Ileosa via magic, who tells them to hold their ground while she completes her task in the Sunken Queen. Use the city's Korvosa (Martial Law) statistics (see page 399).

6–7 RP: Rebellion! Riots and battle fill the streets as the rebels begin taking back neighborhoods from remaining Ileosan loyalists, Gray Maidens, and other holdouts. The PCs can show their faces publicly and don't have to worry about assassination attempts, as the remaining key NPCs in the castle now switch to a defensive stance, intending to hold out long enough for Ileosa to return. Use the city's Korvosa (Anarchy) statistics (see page 399).

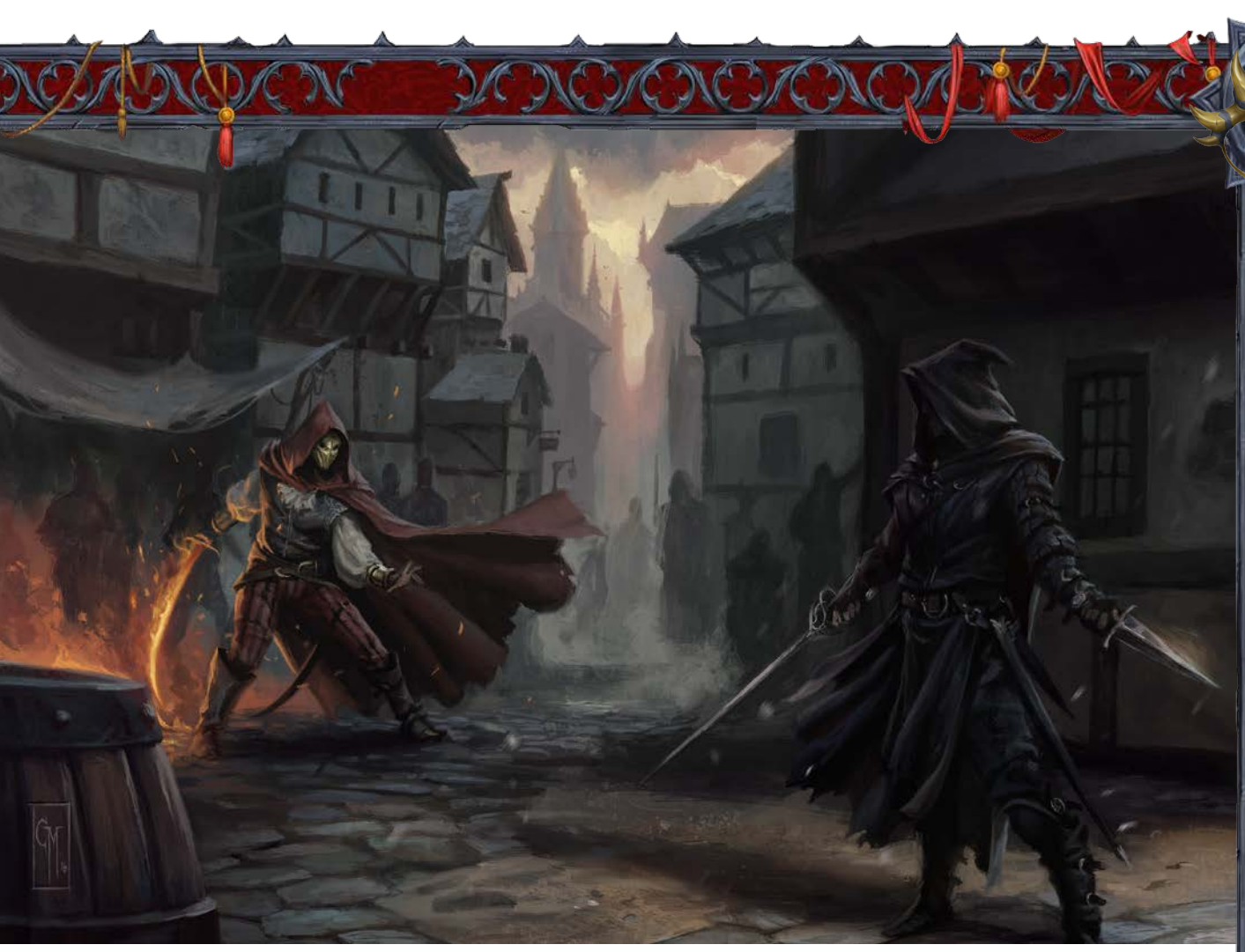
8+ RP: The rebellion is successful as long as Ileosa does not return; agents of the queen can no longer show their faces in public, but until Ileosa is dealt with, the threat of civil war remains. The PCs do not need to fear assassination attempts or other violence if they publicly walk the streets. At this point, if the PCs have determined that Ileosa herself is not in Castle Korvosa, their attentions should turn to tracking her down. Use the normal statistics for Korvosa.

Story Award: Once the PCs reach 8 or more Rebellion Points, award them 76,800 XP.

EVENT 1: KORVOSA'S NEW HERO (CR 15)

Queen Ileosa is not actually in Korvosa at this time, but her presence can still very much be felt. She's left a *simulacrum* in Castle Korvosa, along with several powerful and dangerous subordinates. Once it becomes obvious that the PCs have returned to Korvosa, these underlings realize that they face their greatest challenge yet. Now that his services are no longer in as much demand for the crafting of Gray Maiden arms and armor, the efreeti Yzahnum heads out in the guise of a new defender of the people, the faux hero Trifaccia, to work against the PCs' rising popularity.

In the form of a masked, robed swordfighter, Yzahnum spent the last few weeks engaged in a war of propaganda and false information—the PCs may have heard rumors of Trifaccia during previous visits to Korvosa, in fact. Posing as Blackjack's replacement, Yzahnum as Trifaccia has been taking steps to protect and aid the oppressed common folk, helping them out where needed against a small group of "rebels." Typically, these alleged rebels (actually a particularly loathsome gang of Chelish thugs eager for a semi-regular payday from Ileosa's coffers) move into a region and cause trouble—robbing citizens, beating them, and worse. Just when things are about to



pass the point of no return, Trifaccia swoops in to "save" the commoners from the violent rebels, then hands out small bags of gold and silver to help them recover from these "trying times." His goal is to bring the common folk of Korvosa around to seeing the rebels as violent thugs, and believing that Queen Ileosa might not be as bad as they thought. Certainly, in areas where her Gray Maidens patrol regularly, things are much safer!

Creatures: This encounter can occur anywhere in Korvosa, but should probably wait until a bit after the PCs have done something particularly obvious to indicate their presence to the city—perhaps not until they make their first foray into the castle. If they slaughter a patrol of Gray Maidens or openly demand Ileosa show herself in a public square, Yzahnum takes note. The encounter begins as a group of about a dozen "rebels" surround the PCs and begin shouting taunts and flashing weapons. The thugs threaten the PCs, insulting them and demanding they leave the city, saying that if they truly were here to defend Korvosa, they would never have left the city to go adventuring in the wilds in the first place. As the thugs taunt the PCs, they also make some of their wishes known—unfortunately for the PCs, Yzahnum waits nearby, disguised in his human form as Trifaccia and hidden in an alleyway as he watches the spectacle. As each of the thugs makes a *wish*, the efreeti grants it for them, hitting the party with up to three potent effects. You can use the three sample wishes below, or come up with your own insult wishes to inflict on the PCs. If you work to come up with your own, the *wishes* should manifest as the effects of established spells that don't create an obvious link between the hidden efreeti and the target. All spell effects from these *wishes* function at CL 12th.

"I wish you'd go to Hell!" A random PC is targeted by a *plane shift* spell (Will DC 22) that, if successful, transports that character to Hell.

"I wish you looked more like the ungrateful pig you are!" A random PC is targeted by a *baleful polymorph* (Fortitude DC 22) that, if successful, transforms that PC into a small pig.

"I wish you'd just up and die!" A random party member is affected by a *finger of death* spell (Fortitude DC 22).

Once all three *wishes* have been used, or once the PCs have either defeated the thugs or have noticed the lurking Yzahnum, the efreeti steps out to confront the PCs. In his disguise, he appears as a slender human man dressed in black clothes and a long flowing hooded cloak. His features are obscured by a brass mask with stylized

features, including frowning brows, sharp cheekbones, and a goatee. He wields a golden scimitar that flickers with fire. As he enters the conflict, his mocking laughter is strong and clear.

As soon as he has the PCs' attention, the masked man salutes the PCs by raising his scimitar; at the same time, any surviving "rebels" cry out in panic and flee into the city with cries of "It's Trifaccia! Let's get out of here!" As they flee, the disguised efreeti addresses the PCs.

"Greetings, heroes of yesterday! My name is Trifaccia. Have you heard of me? No matter. I'm the true hero of the people of Korvosa, for I defend the loyal citizens of our beloved queen instead of fomenting chaos in the streets. As you can see, with the exception of a few clots of filthy rebels, Korvosa is at peace now, and soon prosperity and happiness will smile over it again. I dare say that harmony first began to return not long after you vanished from our streets, and judging by the nature of the divine retribution visited upon you just now, I would say that even the gods might agree. We do not want further trouble in our town, but since I know you mean to continue disrupting the tranquility in my fair city, it looks like I'll have to stop you. But instead of a fight that would end in your humiliation, perhaps you'll agree to a duel? Me against one of you, with the winner agreeing to leave Korvosa for good, along with all allies?"

YZAHNUM

Yzahnum is a potent foe, but he'd rather face off against one PC in a duel than take them all on at once. His overall goal is to be able to either defeat that PC, or force the other PCs to step in to save their ally, therefore exposing their inherent lack of honor before a gathering crowd of gawkers. He hopes to make the PCs seem like part of the problem facing Korvosa, rather than a solution. His great weakness is, of course, his true nature; if the PCs can expose the efreeti for what he really is (perhaps via *antimagic field*, or using enchantment magic to make him reveal his true form), his work as Trifaccia comes crumbling down.

YZAHNUM **CR 15**

XP 51,200

Male efreeti fighter 4/rogue 7 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 140)
LE Large outsider (extraplanar, fire)
Init +10; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *detect magic*; Perception +25

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 18, flat-footed 23 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +6 Dex, +1 dodge, +8 natural, –1 size)
hp 238 (21 HD; 7d8+14d10+130)
Fort +15, **Ref** +19, **Will** +13 (+1 vs. fear)
Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; **Immune** fire; **Resist** cold 10
Weaknesses vulnerable to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft. (perfect)
Melee (as Trifaccia) Medium *+1 flaming scimitar* +29/+24/+19/+14 (1d6+15/15–20 plus 1d6 fire)
Melee (as Yzahnum) Medium *+1 flaming scimitar* +26/+21/+16/+11 (1d6+15/15–20 plus 1d6 fire), slam +21 (1d8+4 plus 1d6 fire) or
2 slams +26 (1d8+8 plus 1d6 fire)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Special Attacks heat, sneak attack +4d6
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +15)
Constant—*detect magic*
At will—*plane shift* (willing targets to the Elemental Planes, Astral Plane, or Material Plane only, DC 21), *produce flame*, *pyrotechnics* (DC 16), *scorching ray*
3/day—quickened *invisibility*, quickened *scorching ray*, *wall of fire*, *wish* (to non-genies only)
2/day—change size
1/day—*gaseous form*, *permanent image* (DC 20)

TACTICS

During Combat As Trifaccia, Yzahnum avoids the use of his spell-like abilities. When he fights in human form, his size is Medium, making his AC is 1 higher, and he uses his "Melee (as Trifaccia)" attack. If he is reduced to fewer than 150 hit points, he reverts to his true form so he can use flight, cast *scorching ray* and *wall of fire*, and use change size to shrink foes. He reverts to melee only as necessary.

Morale Yzahnum knows when he's outmatched. If reduced to 50 hit points or fewer, he attempts to escape via *invisibility* and flies back to Castle Korvosa—the terms of his current bargain with Ileosa prevents him from using *plane shift* to do so. If he escapes, the PCs might encounter him again once they begin to explore the castle.

STATISTICS

Str 26, **Dex** 23, **Con** 22, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +19; **CMB** +28; **CMD** 47

Feats Blinding Critical, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Deceitful, Dodge, Improved Critical (scimitar), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*invisibility*), Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*scorching ray*), Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (scimitar), Weapon Specialization (scimitar)

Skills Bluff +32, Craft (weapon) +23, Diplomacy +22, Disguise +27, Fly +12, Perception +25, Sense Motive +19, Spellcraft +25, Stealth +20

Languages Aquan, Auran, Common, Ignan, Terran; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ armor training 1, change shape (humanoid or giant; *alter self* or *giant form I*), rogue talents (combat trick, offensive defense[APG], resiliency), trapfinding +3

Gear Medium *+1 flaming scimitar, bracers of armor +4, minor ring of cold resistance, ring of protection +2*

FALSE REBELS (12) **CR 3**

XP 800 each

Charlatans (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 145)

hp 21 each

EVENT 2: THE GRAY MISTRESS (CR 15)

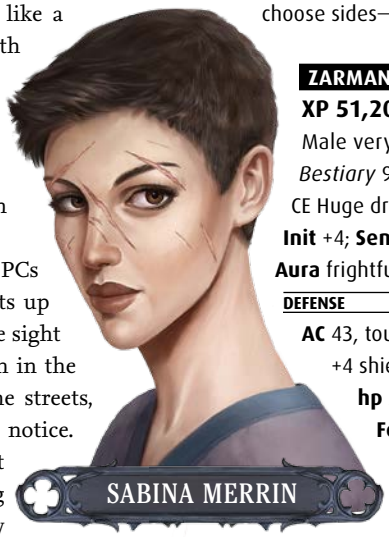
The rumor of a dragon nesting in Castle Korvosa is quite true. Queen Ileosa first encountered the black dragon Zarmangarof living near the Sunken Queen, and after charming the creature, she invisibly brought him back to Castle Korvosa to serve as a guardian. Originally, Ileosa hoped to use the dragon to quell uprisings and generally add to her arsenal of terror against Korvosa's citizens. However, Sabina Merrin stepped in with a different plan—she requested the use of the dragon as a mount, explaining to Ileosa that with such a creature held in reserve, she could quell a large and organized uprising with ease. Ileosa agreed, and with his permission (and magical compulsion via a *geas*), Zarmangarof agreed to serve Sabina. To date, Sabina's been careful to take the dragon out only during the night—she's been saving a public unveiling of her new mount for the right moment when she can engineer the dragon's defeat. Her first confrontation with the PCs is just such a moment.

There's more to Sabina Merrin than most of Korvosa suspects, for she represents one of Ileosa's greatest mistakes. While Ileosa was quick to secure the loyalty of her followers via magic (*charm monster* and *geas* being favorite methods), she knew that magic could be dispelled, and that true loyalty was a much stronger bond. With Sabina, she felt she had just such loyalty; furthermore, Sabina's devotion and honor, both to Korvosa and to the queen, gave Ileosa a perfect creature to leech off of with her *misdirection* spells.

Sabina is not blind. As early as Ileosa's attempt to execute Trinia Sabor for the assassination of Eodred II, Sabina began to suspect that something was dreadfully wrong with her idol. Her fears were confirmed after Ileosa moved forward with the establishment of the Gray Maidens. Sabina certainly didn't object to the foundation of a new military wing, but she did object to the use of magic and torture to force loyalty. Yet Sabina had seen enough to know that openly opposing the queen was no solution either. Instead of taking direct action against Ileosa, Sabina accepted the charge of leading the Gray Maidens. Where she could, she lessened the impact of the queen's cruel methods with secret kindnesses. Ironically, these acts of compassion proved the most effective at securing loyalty. Yet still, many women who were drafted into the service proved too headstrong. Ileosa executed some of them until Sabina convinced the queen that it would be better to imprison them under the Longacre Building, arguing that "some of them, given time, might well realize that serving as Gray Maidens is the better choice." Unable to authorize their release, Sabina did the next-best thing—she made regular secret trips to the Longacre dungeons to ensure that the imprisoned women were as comfortable as conditions would allow, and that they weren't being abused by the Gray Maiden guards.

Yet the forced recruitment of Gray Maidens was only one of the ways that Ileosa had turned against Korvosa. With each passing week, Sabina learned of a new atrocity: the introduction of blood veil into the city, Ileosa's bargaining with devils to gain more power, the appointment of Togomor as seneschal, cold-blooded murders, and the enslavement of a hateful and destructive dragon. Sabina long ago realized that Ileosa never loved her—further, that Ileosa has never loved anyone, with the possible exception of herself. Yet by that point, Sabina was in too deep. She felt powerless to change Ileosa's unceasing brutality on her own, so she continued to take advantage of her close proximity to temper the queen's cruelty whenever she

could. The stress has become nearly overwhelming, and when she learns that the PCs returned to Korvosa—those same heroes she met what feels like a lifetime ago on the eve of Eodred II's death and who, perhaps, helped to rescue some of the women imprisoned below the Longacre Building—Sabina realizes they might be her only chance for redemption and to save the city from the woman she thought she loved.



No more than half an hour after the PCs publicly defeat Yzahnum, Sabina mounts up on Zarmangarof and takes to the air. The sight of a Gray Maiden mounted on a dragon in the skies above Korvosa causes panic in the streets, and it shouldn't be long before the PCs notice. This is what Sabina desires. She doesn't want to spend too much time seeking out the PCs, and instead hopes they come to her. She never flies far from the castle, so she's fairly close if she learns that the PCs have invaded the stronghold. Once she spots the PCs, she swoops down to confront them.

The battle with the dragon-mounted leader of the Gray Maidens is destined to play out rather differently than first impressions might indicate. Sabina knows that on her own, she likely wouldn't be able to defeat the dragon Zarmangarof. However, if she can recruit the PCs to help her in that job, together they have a hope of slaying one of the worst monsters that has come to call Korvosa home.

SABINA MERRIN **CR 14**

XP 38,400

hp 193 (see page 454)

TACTICS

Before Combat As she mounts her dragon, Sabina drinks her *potion of barkskin*.

During Combat Sabina doesn't directly attack the PCs. Instead, she swoops low to confront them with her dragon mount, urging him through her Ride skill (since she and the dragon don't share a language) to land amid the PCs rather than pursue a more tactically sound aerial assault. As the battle commences, Sabina continues to use Ride to maneuver the dragon into awkward positions; if she succeeds at a DC 25 Ride check as a standard action, her tugging and kicking distract the dragon, rendering him flat-footed and giving him a –4 penalty to AC and on attack rolls. Eventually, the dragon realizes what she's up to (see Zarmangarof's tactics below) and begins attacking her, at which point she dismounts (Ride DC 20 to fast dismount) and cries out, "We need to kill this beast fast, before it realizes it has an entire city at hand to destroy!" She then focuses all of her attacks on the dragon, working with the PCs as best she can to kill it.

Morale Once Zarmangarof is defeated, Sabina casts aside her arms and removes her helm. The time has come for her to choose sides—see Development on page 343.

ZARMANGAROF **CR 15**

XP 51,200

Male very old black dragon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 92)

CE Huge dragon (water)

Init +4; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +31

Aura frightful presence (270 ft., DC 23)

DEFENSE

AC 43, touch 8, flat-footed 43 (+4 armor, +27 natural, +4 shield, –2 size)

hp 250 (20d12+120)

Fort +18, **Ref** +12, **Will** +16

DR 15/magic; **Immune** acid, paralysis, sleep; **SR** 26

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.

Melee bite +29 (2d8+15 plus 2d6 acid), 2 claws +28 (2d6+10), tail slap +26 (2d6+15), 2 wings +26 (1d8+5)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks acidic bite, breath weapon (100-ft. line, DC 26, 18d6 acid), crush (Small creatures, DC 26, 2d8+15)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th; concentration +23)

Constant—*speak with animals* (reptiles only)

At will—*darkness* (90-ft. radius), *plant growth*

1/day—corrupt water

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 9th; concentration +12)

4th (4/day)—*hallucinatory terrain* (DC 17), *phantasmal killer* (DC 17)

3rd (7/day)—*major image* (DC 16), *slow* (DC 16), *suggestion* (DC 16)

2nd (7/day)—*glitterdust* (DC 15), *mirror image*, *web* (DC 15), *whispering wind*

1st (7/day)—*alarm*, *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 14), *shield*, *silent image* (DC 14)

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 13), *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *mage hand*, *message*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*

TACTICS

Before Combat Zarmangarof casts *mage armor*, *mirror image*, and *shield* before combat.

During Combat Zarmangarof is under a *geas* to serve as Sabina's mount and is charmed to be an ally to Queen Ileosa and her minions. These magical effects ensure his cooperation, and he follows Sabina's commands via her Ride skill as demanded, but since he doesn't speak Common and Sabina doesn't speak Draconic, they have limited communication. While he would rather stay in the air and use magic and acid against foes on the ground, he lands as directed by his rider. Once melee begins, each

time Sabina attempts a Ride check to render Zarmangarof flat-footed, the dragon gets to attempt a free Sense Motive check opposed by the result of Sabina's Ride check to realize what she's up to. In any event, once the dragon is reduced to fewer than 100 hit points, his frustration gets the better of him anyway and he turns on Sabina in anger. Once the dragon lashes out at Sabina, he immediately takes a –3 penalty to each of his ability scores from the *geas*. If, at any time, the *charm monster* effect on the dragon is dispelled, he takes to the air and uses breath weapons and magic against the PCs and Sabina alike unless he feels confident that he can finish the party off without putting himself in danger.

Morale Zarmangarof fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 31, **Dex** 10, **Con** 23, **Int** 16, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +20; **CMB** +32; **CMD** 42 (46 vs. trip)

Feats Alertness, Combat Expertise, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Multiattack, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth), Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Fly +15, Handle Animal +23, Intimidate +26, Knowledge (arcana) +26, Knowledge (history) +26, Perception +31, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +26, Stealth +21, Swim +41

Languages Aklo, Boggard, Draconic, Thassilonian

SQ speak with reptiles, swamp stride, water breathing

Development: After Zarmangarof is defeated, the PCs have a decision to make. Sabina has surrendered to them, throwing herself upon their mercy. If they give her a chance, she confesses to the PCs the full extent of her participation in Queen Ileosa's cruelty, but begs them to give her a chance to undo what she allowed to happen through her inaction. Her first request, though, is to find somewhere safer to speak. If the PCs suggest the Dead Warrens, Sabina implores them to pick another site that won't be put at risk when the queen's minions come for her. There are agents within Castle Korvosa who know nothing of kindness or pity, and if they don't already know of Sabina's surrender (which is unlikely, especially if this event happens in a public location after an eye-catching dragon fight), they will soon enough when she doesn't return to her quarters in the castle.

Assuming the PCs accept Sabina's surrender and grant her asylum, she has plenty to offer them. The start of the next part of the chapter outlines the various ways she can help prepare the PCs for an assault on Castle Korvosa. Sabina would rather not accompany the PCs into Castle Korvosa, however—she instead wants to aid the rebellion in retaking Korvosa. While the Gray Maidens ensconced in the castle are completely loyal to the queen, some of those in the city proper still see Sabina as their commander. If she can use this loyalty to gain their aid, the rebels suddenly gain a potent fighting force on their side when the time comes. That said, if you feel that the PCs could use some help, feel free to send Sabina with them into Castle Korvosa; as detailed in the next part, her knowledge of the castle isn't as exhaustive as one might hope, but at the very least, having one more strong sword and shield could make the difference between success and failure.

Story Award: If the PCs ally with Sabina, award them XP as if they had defeated her in combat.

ZARMANGAROF

PART 2

ASSAULT ON THE CASTLE

The foundation upon which Castle Korvosa is built is much older than the castle itself, dating back thousands of years to ancient Thassilon. Other remnants of that time still stand as well, the Gatefoot and the Pillar Wall being notable examples. In those days, the Grand Mastaba served as Runelord Sorshen's home. The chambers below were her laboratory and, eventually, where she went into hibernation. Sorshen sleeps still, unsuspected and unknown, in a deep vault under Castle Korvosa.

After Thassilon collapsed, much of Sorshen's nation sank into the sea. Over the thousands of years to follow, erosion saw to the destruction of most of Xin-Eurythnia, and what erosion didn't claim, the Shoanti did. They first came to the area to ensure that all memory of the hated runelord remained buried, but did their job so well that after several generations they forgot why they had chosen this region as home. When one of the Shoanti shamans returned from the crusade against Kazavon, the strange chambers her tribe had discovered under the central pyramid seemed to be a perfect place to hide the fangs of Kazavon, for the Shoanti knew only that the structure served to mark a site of ancient evil.

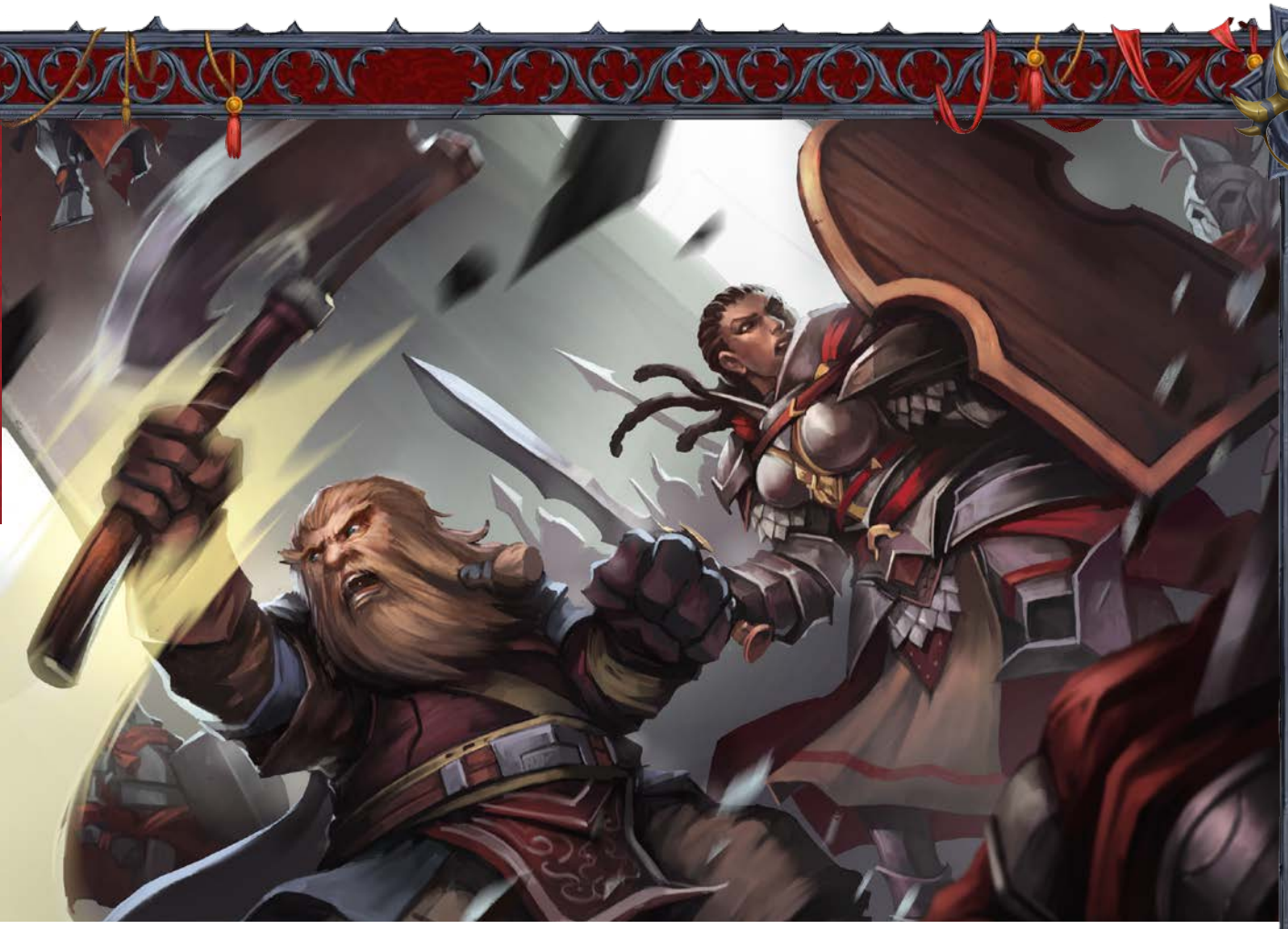
PRELIMINARY RESEARCH

Cautious PCs can seek information about Castle Korvosa before simply walking up to the front door. Unfortunately, one of the tasks Ileosa set before Togomor soon after she appointed him castle seneschal was to see to the confiscation of all known maps of the castle, as well as the assassination of any retired servants or guards with extensive knowledge of the castle's layout. While Togomor did well enough at the task—making it all but impossible to secure a map of the castle interior in Korvosa (or even to get an accurate description from those who have been inside)—three sources are likely to be available to the PCs: Neolandus, Sabina, and Trinia.

General Knowledge: It's a relatively simple matter to learn basic information about the castle grounds, as these areas are open to observation. Many of Korvosa's citizens (including most of the rebels) have a working knowledge of the castle's third floor, primarily the main stairway (area **A12**), the entrance hall (area **A46**), the antechamber (area **A51**), and the throne room (area **A52**); the PCs themselves have been here at the start of "Edge of Anarchy." Cressida and a few of the guards are decently familiar with the rest of the chambers on the castle's third floor, but have never been on any of the lower or upper floors.

Neolandus, Sabina, and Trinia: When Trinia was commissioned to paint King Eodred II's portrait, she was escorted up to the castle's fourth floor; she can sketch for the PCs the most direct route from the entrance hall (area **A46**) to the art gallery (area **A49**) as a result. She can also describe the cell she was held in while she was awaiting execution (area **A22**), but she was blindfolded during her trips to and from that prison.

Neolandus's and Sabina's knowledge of the castle is much greater. They can provide a rather detailed map of the castle for the PCs to use to plan out their attack, including secret doors and hidden chambers. Of course, knowing the castle's layout is only part of the solution. While Neolandus has been out of the castle too long to be able to provide useful information about its current guardians, Sabina can provide the PCs with information about many of the major NPCs they will face within. Over the past several months, she's been spending more and more of her time outside of the castle, as she's been feeling increasingly unwanted therein; she hasn't ventured beyond the third and fourth floors much at all. She knows that Ileosa's been recruiting devils to aid her, but isn't sure how the queen's been able to pull this off—she initially suspected a link to the Acadamae, but her investigations into that theory have shown no support. She knows Ileosa has some large hell hound pets, that a horned devil named Mavrokeras guards the towers (although she's not sure where he lurks), and that three barbed devils known as the Yallops have been increasingly annoying and disruptive. The belier devil Sermignatto has concealed his presence from her entirely. Sabina also knows that a few Red Mantis agents have recently claimed portions of the fourth floor and that a powerful new leader has arrived from the distant south to reorganize them after their recent troubles, but Sabina avoids contact with them and knows little else about the assassins. Finally, she explains that Ileosa has grown even more cold and grim of late, and for the past several weeks she has rarely left her chambers. She certainly hasn't called for Sabina's companionship since she started wearing that "ugly new



crown," and Sabina has finally admitted to herself that Ileosa likely never loved her—an admission that has driven her to finally turn against the monarchy.

A CASTLE KORVOSA

Castle Korvosa is built of black marble; the walls and ceilings are made of stone, although a significant part of the fourth floor and most of the attic level are made of wood. The roofs are tiled with burnished brass shingles. Many rooms feature both arrow slits and larger windows, although the larger windows are protected by bars. The doors, where not specified otherwise, are made of strong wood (hardness 5, hp 20, break DC 23) and can be locked (Disable Device DC 40), although most of the doors remain unlocked. The ceilings are typically 20 feet high.

The maps for Castle Korvosa can be found on pages 349 and 356. The aerial view of the castle grounds on page 349 shows the layout of the main features of the complex. These areas, while constantly under the watch of guards in the castle itself, are mostly abandoned today, and can provide cover to parties seeking a stealthy approach.

1. Public Courtyard: This terrace, built for public festivals, is where the climactic scene of "Edge of Anarchy" occurred.

2. Grand Mastaba: This ancient Thassilonian pyramid serves as the castle's foundation.

3. The Castle: The interior of Castle Korvosa is presented in detail on the following pages, but keep in mind that although Castle Korvosa might look like a standard "dungeon crawl," it is not. Since the PCs can get details on the castle's interior from their allies (particularly Sabina and Neolandus), its layout is no mystery—the focus should be its occupants, not exploration. Treat Castle Korvosa as a set of extended encounters with numerous foes. Let the walls serve to keep fights manageable, not just to funnel PCs through specific routes. Don't be too disappointed if your group teleports into the throne room and attacks the queen but then never even bothers to explore the other floors. Sure, they'll miss clues and treasure here and there, but you should let the PCs determine the course for this part of Curse of the Crimson Throne. Let them decide where and how they're going to achieve their list of goals. They've come a long way from fighting against decrepit old crime lords and running errands for the city guard. They're heroes now (hopefully), so don't be afraid to let them take charge of the plot.

4. Great Ramp: A more recent construction, the Great Ramp was built to facilitate wagon traffic to the castle.

5. Gardened Terraces: Mature green areas of small size but remarkable beauty, the Gardened Terraces were commissioned by Queen Domina.

Getting Inside

Castle Korvosa is a big structure, and there are numerous ways to enter it, not all of which are under guard (although most are). Sabina can provide the following list of potential approaches for the PCs, although she warns them that by the time they move on the castle, the inhabitants are quite likely to have changed some guard patterns or traps to account for her betrayal.

Physical Entry: There are numerous physical entrances into the castle via doors, windows, arrow slits, or even chimneys or soil pipes. Some of these might require characters to be gaseous or to break bars, and most of them have guards posted nearby. Wise characters take the time to scout out physical entrances before risking them. Sabina recommends the secret entrance via the armory (area **A28**) if the PCs ask her opinion, although approaching via flight while invisible gives them the option to enter the castle from any number of locations (in which case Sabina's recommendation changes to the hole in the floor of area **A79**).

Teleportation: With a map provided by allies, PCs might wish to simply pick a room to teleport into. A map provided by an ally like Sabina or Neolandus is enough to allow blind teleportation via *dimension door* or *greater teleport*—this method of entering the castle is in fact the safest and most efficient.

Ethereal Entrance: While walking into the castle via the Ethereal Plane might sound like a good plan, it actually just forces an early encounter with Sermignatto, a battle that the PCs might not be prepared for (see area **A59**).

A Note on Castle Defenses: Castle Korvosa's defenses may seem lackluster when it comes to preventing powerful intruders such as the PCs from getting inside. This is intentional. For Ileosa, there's little left of import in Castle Korvosa; by the time the PCs invade Castle Korvosa, everything she needs to complete her goals has been moved to the Sunken Queen (which is much better defended—see Part 3). While there are certainly secrets and resources that can help the PCs in Castle Korvosa, Ileosa believes that they won't be of much use to her enemies. In addition, allowing the PCs to revel in their ability to enter and leave the castle without having to exert many resources overcoming its defenses helps them feel like the high-level heroes they've spent the entire campaign becoming. The true focus of the challenges awaiting the PCs in Castle Korvosa are key fights against the castle's powerful occupants, not the castle's defenses. Feel free to bolster Castle Korvosa's defenses if you wish, but keep in mind that, sandwiched between Scarwall and the Sunken Queen as it is, it's okay for this fortress to be one where the PCs don't have to expend all of their resources just to enter.

GRAY MAIDEN PALACE GUARD

Patrols

Three types of guards make regular patrols through Castle Korvosa: erinyes devils, Gray Maidens, and Red Mantis assassins. A fourth "patrol" exists in the castle's upper works—the ghost of Eodred's half-brother, Venster Arabasti.

Erinyes Devils: There are six erinyes devils stationed in the lower guardroom (area **A17**) on the castle's first floor. Periodically, the devils use *greater teleport* to pop into other rooms on this floor, spending a few minutes in each room to look it over and ensure that everything's okay. Once an erinyes spots intruders, she immediately begins alerting all other devils, Togomor, and other castle guardians via telepathy, raising the castle's alarm to full readiness in a matter of seconds.

Gray Maidens: There are 26 Gray Maiden palace guards active in Castle Korvosa, and once Sabina abandons the order to ally with the PCs, leadership of them falls to Vavana Dhatri, Ishani's sister and the so-called "Arbiter of Allegiance" for the organization (see area **A52**). Vavana does not patrol, though the 12 Gray Maidens who quarter in the two barracks (areas **A30** and **A38**) do. A patrol of Gray Maidens consists of four palace guards who move as a group in clockwise rotations through all unlocked areas of the castle, remaining for a few rounds in each room to ensure all is well. At all times, one patrol is active on the second floor and another is active on the third floor. You can have the PCs encounter a floor patrol when you feel the drama of the game warrants it, or you can simply say that there's a 10% chance of encountering a patrol every 5 minutes. Keep in mind that since a patrol of four palace guards is merely a CR 12 encounter, it alone won't significantly threaten the PCs—but having a patrol raise an alarm or join an already active encounter in progress can be another matter entirely!

GRAY MAIDEN PALACE GUARDS (4) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

Female human fighter 9

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 11, flat-footed 23 (+10 armor, +1 Dex, +3 shield)

hp 99 each (9d10+45)

Fort +11, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5 (+2 vs. fear)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *+1 longsword* +15/+10 (1d8+7/17–20)

Ranged *+1 composite longbow* +12/+7 (1d8+4/×3)

Special Attacks weapon training (heavy blades +2, bows +1)

TACTICS

During Combat Gray Maidens prefer to fight in melee, but they are trained to support their sisters with ranged weapons if no opportunity for melee presents itself.

Morale Gray Maiden palace guards fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 12, **Con** 18, **Int** 10, Wis 8, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +11 (+13 bull rush); **CMD** 22 (24 vs. bull rush)

Feats Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Point-Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Shield Wall[APG], Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

Skills Intimidate +14, Perception +8, Sense Motive +8

Languages Common

SQ armor training 2

Gear *+1 full plate, +1 heavy steel shield, +1 composite longbow* (+2 Str) with 20 arrows, *+1 longsword, cloak of resistance +1*, 31 pp, 4 gp

Red Mantis: After the PCs defeated the Red Mantis in Deathhead Vault during Chapter 4, the surviving assassins left in the city fled to Castle Korvosa. The queen graciously gave them the castle's fourth floor as a new hideout, pending the securing of another base elsewhere. Soon thereafter, the commander of their previous leader Cinnabar arrived from Mediogalti Island. This new arrival is Mistress Kayltanya, a remorseless assassin eager to salvage what she can of the Korvosa operation. Unwilling to admit defeat yet, Kayltanya and her remaining eight assassins (plus any survivors from the Deathhead Vault) hope to be able to see things through to the end and thus return to the Crimson Citadel far to the south with stories of a successful mission. The assassins are largely in control of the castle's fourth floor, where they patrol the halls, keeping to the shadows and moving stealthily. At any one time, five Red Mantis assassins are at rest in area **A72**. Each of the suspended bridges (areas **A83a** and **A83b**) are patrolled by one assassin, as is the catwalk (area **A71**).

RED MANTIS ASSASSINS (4) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

hp 78 each (see page 144)

Venster: Although the ghost of King Eodred II's bastard half-brother is hardly a patrol, he does have a limited ability to sense the arrival of new minds in the castle. Now and then, he attempts to contact the PCs, guiding them as best he can toward his prison in area **A89**, although his ability to do so is limited to whispers (grant a PC a DC 20 Perception check to hear a brief voice say something like "…save me…" or "…game room…"), minor manifestations of his presence (such as those that take place in area **A69** or **A88**), or dream sendings (he can create these only if the PCs actually sleep somewhere in the castle, and even then his dreams are confusing—the sleeping PC dreams that Ileosa comes to seduce him into poisoning his brother, the king). Contacting and communicating with Venster is not one of Cressida's goals for the PCs (she doesn't know of his existence as a ghost in the castle, after all), but it should be something that the PCs eventually seek out, as there is much the ghost can tell them of what has taken place within the castle walls.

DUNGEON

Very few know of the existence of this lowest level of Castle Korvosa; traditionally, knowledge of its existence was restricted to the royal family, the seneschal, and a few high-ranking officers in the military. These chambers were thought to be unholy by the Shoanti, and even the builders and modern dwellers of Castle Korvosa found the chambers to be oppressive and grim. The dungeon was used mostly as vaults to store the castle's wealth and

dead, but today relatively little of value remains here. After looting these chambers, Ileosa had no use for them, and most of what remained of the Arabasti fortune has been relocated to the Sunken Queen (see area **B2** on page 382). As a result, the dungeons of Castle Korvosa are perhaps the safest place to hide. Ceiling height ranges from 15 feet in the corridors to 30 feet in the larger chambers.

A1 Vault of Fangs

The secret door that provides access to this room hangs open, and the air within feels cold and clammy. The ceramic floor, walls, and ceiling are lined with light brown tiles that form gentle geometric patterns. To the southwest, an ancient coffer sits atop a low plinth of stone.

This room served for many hundreds of years as the repository for the fangs of Kazavon. The chill in the air is all that remains of the ancient relics. The coffer was used to store the fangs, and while it is empty now, a glance inside reveals several fang-shaped shadows burnt into the interior.

A2 Emptied Treasury

This huge chamber has a very high ceiling supported by pillars decorated with a spike motif. The floor of the chamber is a mess of empty treasure chests, upturned urns, and other containers; here and there a single coin or tiny gem glitters.

Treasure: In all, 53 gp, 23 pp, and 3 cracked garnets worth 30 gp apiece can be gathered from this chamber—the rest of the castle's treasury has been relocated to area **B2** in the Sunken Queen.

A3 Royal Crypts

Burial niches line the walls of this large crypt, but only five of the seven contain sarcophagi.

Originally a crypt for Sorshen's favorite consorts, the tomb now serves the Korvosan monarchy as a burial site. Each of the five sarcophagi bears the name of a deceased king or queen. Starting from the westernmost coffin, in counterclockwise order, they are Lord Arbust, King Eodred I, Queen Domina, King Eodred II, and (far from the others) King Cardraith. An inspection of each sarcophagus reveals that all of them have been opened relatively recently; Ileosa pried them open to plunder the valuables the previous monarchs were buried with not long after her husband, Eodred II, died. The bodies within the four older repositories are leathery and long-dead, but should the PCs investigate the contents of Eodred II's sarcophagus, they are in for a shock, for his body is not the only thing within. Ileosa has placed dozens of dead stirges, their bodies crushed and broken, throughout the coffin with his corpse—a final insult to the man once known as the Stirge King for his spendthrift ways. Attempts to use *speak with dead* don't reveal Ileosa's role in the king's death, for even as he died he did not suspect his wife of ill-doing. Attempts to use *resurrect* on the king are likewise fruitless, as Eodred II has been judged by Pharasma and gone on to his role in the Great Beyond, and is thus beyond the reach of mortal magic.

A4 Empty Vaults

These seven rooms share similar dimensions and features to area **A1**, save that the entrances to these vaults aren't secret doors. These chambers were used to store various treasures, but each has long since been emptied by Queen Ileosa to fund her various cruelties and projects.

A5 The Hidden Way Below

This circular chamber has a sixty-foot-high ceiling supported by a huge greenish-gray pillar in the middle. Part of the southeast wall has collapsed, leaving one quarter of the floor space blocked by a ten-foot-high pile of rubble.

An investigation of the huge central pillar reveals that it is cooler to the touch than the surrounding walls. A successful DC 45 Perception check is enough to reveal something unusual: the pillar seems to extend through the floor into a recess. The pillar is in fact an immense plug that seals the entrance to the deeper dungeons below—dungeons still haunted by the undead and immortal slaves of Runelord Sorshen. No simple method to remove this pillar is apparent.

There are deeper chambers much farther below Castle Korvosa, sealed 10,000 years ago by Runelord Sorshen. Four extensive dungeon levels exist below Castle Korvosa's dungeon, the topmost of which is 500 feet below the ground (and 100 feet below the water table). The primary inhabitants of these dungeons are several clans of powerful vampires, each of which once served Sorshen in a different capacity in life. After she went into hibernation on the deepest level, however, these vampires fell to bickering and infighting. The vampires are ancient now, and haven't emerged (or grown much in power) since Thassilon's fall—as a result, they are all insane in one way or another.

These lower four dungeon levels are, in fact, a complex puzzle built to someday awaken and begin siphoning blood down to the lowest level to slowly rouse Runelord Sorshen from stasis. One of the middle dungeon levels is a large menagerie of strange and exotic beasts and creatures, each of whose blood contains a different element of the

A. CASTLE KORVOSA

DUNGEON
1 square = 5 feet

FIRST FLOOR
1 square = 5 feet

GROUNDS

SIDE VIEW OF CASTLE KORVOSA

required combination needed to awaken Sorshen. The deepest dungeon is a huge magical machine built to leech blood from this menagerie when the time is right; bound demons and constructs toil here still to keep the machinery and blood channels clear and ready for an activation that might never occur. Full details on these deeper levels are beyond the scope of the Curse of the Crimson Throne Adventure Path.

A6 Secret Staircase

This spiral staircase leads 70 feet up to area **A24**.

A7 Ancient Guardroom

A passageway leading to the southwest seems to have once been closed off after only a few feet by an ancient brick wall, but a human-sized hole has been smashed through it.

The brick wall in the passageway leading to area **A8** was put in place after the Chelish conquerors of the region encountered the deadly trap therein; unable to disarm it and unwilling to risk more deaths destroying it, they decided to wall up the passageway. Ileosa knocked the passageway back down and wasted several servants and minions investigating the chamber beyond, but eventually decided to give up on the area when it became apparent that there was nothing but death within.

A8 Shining Statues (CR 16)

The walls of this elongated chamber are decorated with bas-reliefs depicting a great market in a bustling city. The floor is littered with debris and fragments of ceramic, glass, and bronze, as if hundred of containers were smashed to pieces a long time ago. Four alcoves in the southwest wall each contain a statue of a kneeling servant with an oversized head, but the statues are too crumbled to be otherwise recognizable.

This hallway served as the antechamber to the crypt of Sorshen's first consort. In a rare display of devotion, Sorshen ordered the creation of these four statues as a trap to destroy any who would try to despoil the tomb beyond.

Trap: Whenever any form of light is shed on the statues, they begin glowing. One round later, all characters in area **A8** feel what can only be described as a much more powerful and overwhelming mind brush against their own—a brief contact that could potentially leave everyone in the room held in place, paralyzed, in a combination of awe and humility. On the round after that, the glowing energy on the statues detaches and resolves into a group of four shining children, called in by Sorshen's ancient magic to destroy those who would intrude upon her first consort's resting place.

PARALYTIC PULSE **CR 16**

XP 76,800

Type magic; **Perception** DC 33; **Disable Device** DC 33

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity (any light source); **Onset Delay** 1 round; **Reset** automatic (after 2 minutes)

Effect spell effect (*mass hold person*, CL 20th, Will DC 23 negates, affects all creatures in area **A8**) and summons four shining children (the summoned shining children vanish in 20 rounds as the trap resets)

SHINING CHILDREN (4) **CR —**

hp 152 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 245)

A9 Kusasfa's Tomb

The ceiling of this chamber is covered by mosaics depicting a huge constellation of seven-pointed stars. A huge limestone sarcophagus lies at the northeast end of the room. The sarcophagus is open, and its heavy lid lies on the floor, broken into three pieces. On the lid is the carved image of a regal man with a drum-shaped hat.

This was the tomb of Kusasfa, Sorshen's first consort. The limestone sarcophagus contains an inner coffin of basalt. The inner sarcophagus is open as well, and the lid lies shattered in a multitude of fragments near the north corner of the room. Investigation of the interior reveals disconcerting evidence that the sarcophagus and basalt coffin were broken from the inside. There is no sign of the occupant.

A10 Collapsed Passageway

Three passages leading further out from these chambers have long since crumbled to rubble; additional attempts by previous monarchs to clear these passageways kept ending in further collapse and tragedy, and eventually the passages were left alone.

A11 Venster's End

The entrance to this repository has been sealed shut by a brand new brick wall. Breaking down the brick wall is possible with a little work (hardness 8, hp 60, break DC 30). Once the wall is down, a thick stench of decay erupts from the opening.

A partially decomposed corpse, mouth agape in a painful death scream, lies slumped against the wall at the entrance to this otherwise empty room. The corpse, which is clad in a rich, dark purple outfit, is that of a thin, bearded humanoid with pointed ears and a pair of vestigial horns sprouting from his brow.

This is the body of Venster Arabasti, the late king's bastard half-brother and one of Ileosa's first victims. True to her nature, Ileosa robbed Venster before walling him into this room to die of thirst. Venster's ghost haunts the heights of the castle above; the PCs need to recover his body if they wish to gain his aid and advice. See area **A89** for more details.

FIRST FLOOR

The first floor of Castle Korvosa is encased in massive walls. With the exception of the chapel, only a few arrow slits let natural light inside, so most of the rooms are illuminated by lamps containing continual flames.

A12 Main Entrance Stairs

A wide flight of stairs trails upward along the side of the castle, passing under the gatehouse archway and arriving at a square landing before turning right to reach the main entrance gate.

A direct approach up the main stairs is the best way to ensure that the PCs attract the attention of numerous castle defenders at once. Five Gray Maidens stationed in area **A54** keep watch at all hours of the day and night. In addition, Togomor has placed a permanent *alarm* spell on the stairs here. If either the *alarm* or the Gray Maidens raise the alert, Togomor begins casting preparatory spells as detailed in area **A44** before he travels via *dimension door* to area **A45** to greet the PCs as detailed in that encounter area. The Gray Maidens in area **A54** wait for the PCs to enter **A26** before beginning their attack. If the PCs bypass area **A26**, perhaps by flying or climbing up to area **A45**, the Gray Maidens instead begin attacking through the arrow slits at once.

A13 Chapel

The large wooden doors that open into the chapel from the exterior are locked with an *arcane lock* (CL 16th) placed by Togomor.

The decoration of this large chamber is dense and elaborate, with numerous tapestries hanging from the walls and two long pews facing a small pulpit. In a niche in the middle of the southwest wall stands a marble statue of a tall man, arms held wide as if to welcome his flock. The two windows are tall and large, and feature stained-glass, full-figure images of the same man. Heavy layers of dust cover everything, and cobwebs hang thick in the corners.

The man depicted in the stained-glass window and by the statue is the dead god Aroden (identifiable as such with a successful DC 15 Knowledge [religion] check). Originally meant to offer guidance to lower-class worshipers, this locale saw less and less use once several actual temples were built in the city proper. With Aroden's death, this chapel fell even further into disuse, and since Ileosa's ascent to the throne, the monthly cleanings have ceased.

A14 Fountain Chamber

Faded tapestries hang from the walls of this room. An empty, semicircular stone basin stands against the southeast wall, while a low bench sits against the southwestern wall.

The door to the stairwell is locked; the stairs beyond ascend to area **A40**.

A15 Epochal Tower Stairs

This major flight of stairs is the foundation of the castle's tallest tower. The stairs ascend from this point all the way to area **A92**, with landings at every floor in between.

A16 Laundry

The air in this room smells of soap and lavender. A large washbasin dominates the southeastern part of the room, while elsewhere stand numerous racks for drying clothes, dress forms, stools, and tables strewn with sewing notions. A cold fireplace sits against the opposite wall.

This room was used as a laundry (and occasionally as a tailor and dressmaker's shop), and contains all the tools and raw materials of the trade.

A17 Lower Guardroom (CR 14)

This spacious guardroom contains a large fireplace, a central table, and numerous armor and weapon racks (all of which are empty).

Creatures: The guardians of this level of the castle, placed here by Sermignatto at Ileosa's request, are six advanced erinyes devils. The devils spend much of their time here, idly chatting or tormenting poor victims given to them by the Gray Maidens from the numerous dissidents, vagrants, and other rabble-rousers taken off the streets of Korvosa. The erinyes have become quite skilled at preserving the lives of their victims, but invariably the poor souls eventually expire, whereupon the remains are fed to the dragon Zarmangarof. It's been a few days since the erinyes have had a plaything, and they are now dangerously bored.

Roll 1d6 to determine how many erinyes are in this room when the PCs enter, adjusting the result as necessary to account for devils the PCs might have defeated already. Erinyes not present are patrolling this floor of the castle.

Once combat begins, the erinyes use telepathy to alert any of their sisters, who arrive via *greater teleport* on their initiative roll the next round. At the same time, the erinyes quickly alert all other defenders in the castle in the same manner, putting the entire structure on full alert.

Note that when the PCs first assault the castle, one of Ileosa's furies (herself a more powerful erinyes) is stationed here as well, but as soon as word spreads of the PCs' attack, this fury teleports back to the Sunken Queen to join her companions there and report to Ileosa. If the PCs manage to catch this fury off guard here, she does not stay here to fight but immediately teleports away—see page 386 for her statistics if they become necessary.

ADVANCED ERINYES DEVILS (6) **CR 9**

XP 6,400 each

hp 112 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 75)

A18 Justice Chamber (CR 14)

This large chamber smells of seasoned wood. It contains a long table with four wooden chairs on one side and a single stool on the other. Torture implements, including a rack, an iron maiden, and a complex pulley machine, are arranged near the walls, together with a wide range of crafty restraining devices.

Only with Togomor's appointment as castle seneschal did this justice chamber gain its macabre collection of torture instruments. Before, this was a much more innocuous interrogation chamber.

Creature: One of Togomor's triumphs guards this chamber: a cruel and hateful construct known as an akaruzug. This golem-like creature stands against the southwestern wall, motionless and appearing to be little more than a grisly frame for Ishani Dhatri's body, which is crucified on the monster. The akaruzug begins to move once the PCs enter the room, and as it lurches to life, Ishani's dead body screams in mindless pain.

AKARUZUG **CR 15**

XP 51,200

hp 220 (see page 466)

Development: Ishani is quite dead, but if the PCs defeat the akaruzug and retrieve his body, they can restore the Abadaran priest to life using *raise dead* or similar magic. The poor man screams and wails in grief upon being restored to life, but soon recovers his composure and can tell the PCs his sad tale—upon hearing rumors that his sister Vavana Dhatri still lived and had taken up with the Gray Maidens (perhaps something he may have learned from the PCs if they discovered this information during their raid on Deathhead Vault in Chapter 4), he contacted her via a *scroll of sending*. She answered in a way that made him fear she was being held against her will and lured him into the castle, where she captured him. Ishani knows now that his sister is beyond redemption, for it was at her hands he was bound and then sacrificed to the akaruzug, yet he holds her no ill will. He does not seek revenge, and wants only to escape. If the PCs make their goals obvious, he asks them to be swift in their dealings with Vavana, but warns them she is not to be trusted. If she would sacrifice her own brother, who can say what betrayals she might seek to inflict on those who have caused the organization she's helped to build so much trouble?

Beyond this information, Ishani can't actually reveal much more about the castle's defenders to the PCs; he met his sister in the chapel (area **A13**) but was knocked out when she betrayed him there. He woke again in this room, only to die upon the akaruzug's chest. He does have one important piece of information to reveal, though. He knows that Queen Ileosa isn't actually in the castle, and that the woman who seems to be her is in fact some sort of illusion or magical creation—information his sister mockingly revealed to him just as she betrayed him. Davana didn't reveal where Ileosa was, but only that she was at a "place of great power, and when she returns, those of us who served her loyally will earn incredible rewards."

ISHANI DHATRI **CR 4**

XP 1,200

hp 36 (see page 81)

Story Award: If the PCs raise Ishani from the dead and learn what he knows, award them 38,400 XP.

A19 South Prison Room

Five cramped-looking cages stand in the northwest half of this room. Each cage is empty.

Each of the cages is empty and unlocked; Togomor has the keys, and he might place PC or NPC prisoners in here once he finishes torturing them for information. The cages themselves are quite sturdy and well-constructed. Picking the lock to a cage requires a successful DC 40 Disable Device check, while breaking one open requires a successful DC 28 Strength check.

A20 North Prison Room

Five cramped-looking cages stand in the northwest half of this room. In one of them is a long-dead corpse of a man.

This room is similar to area **A19**, but the cage that contains the body is locked. The body is that of Gaveten

Veen, the castle jailer. Ileosa found it amusing to keep him here, a victim of his own cages, for many months. The man went insane and eventually starved here after he was forgotten. In life, Gaveten was a 4th-level expert—if *speak with dead* is cast on his body (or if he's brought back to life), he has little he can tell the PCs that they don't already know.

A21 Jailer's Room

This room contains a bed, a chair, a desk, a chest of drawers, and a lamp, and is in a pitiful state of disarray.

Once occupied by the keep's jailer, this room hasn't been used in months.

A22 Oubliette

This lone cell contains a wooden stool, a small pool of water, and a moldy swath of straw. The chamber is dark and cold and forbidding—little hope can be found here.

This chamber is the most remote of all Castle Korvosa's prisons, one set aside for special prisoners to live out an entire life sentence. Their only hope at a change of scenery was that some other poor soul would vex the king or queen so much as to be placed within this oubliette, in which case the previous victim would be transferred to a regular cell, released, or executed, depending on the ruling monarch's whim. Ileosa kept Trinia (or the false Trinia) prisoner in this cell.

A23 Garderobe Shaft

Soil pipes from throughout the castle carry away waste from various garderobes and deposit the waste in this shaft, which is periodically cleaned from the outside by the castle servants. The lead pipes that connect this shaft to the various toilets on the floors above present a foul but unguarded entrance into the castle, but their 2-inch diameter makes this route unlikely for anyone not in *gaseous form* or of Fine size.

A24 Wood Storage

This storage room contains an orderly stack of firewood, a dozen small kegs of tallow, and numerous flasks of oil.

The secret door in the southeast wall can be discovered with a successful DC 35 Perception check; the stairs beyond lead down to area **A6** and up to area **A36**.

A25 Cellar

Mostly empty wine racks line the walls of this wine cellar, while three large kegs sit on the floor.

Treasure: While most of the wine once stored here is long gone, a few samples of the finest Varisian and Chelish spirits remain here, including three bottles of 20-year-old "Cayden's Gab" brandy. Each bottle is worth 200 gp.

SECOND FLOOR

The second floor of the castle is similar to the first floor, but somewhat richer in furnishing and details. External light sources are scarce. Unlike the lower floors, this floor and those above are relatively clean and dust-free; two dozen imps have been pressed into service to keep the place tidy with promises from Sermignatto that their work will not go unrewarded. The imps generally remain invisible and avoid accosting intruders due to their cowardly natures, but whenever fights start, feel free to have a couple of opportunistic imps flitter in to sting distracted PCs if you wish.

A26 Gatehouse Archway

Anyone using the main stairs to approach the castle must pass through this archway landing en route to the main entrance (area **A46**). This passage connects two segments of ascending stairs to the keep's main entrance. The ceiling is 20 feet high and features four murder holes (see area **A54**) and a portcullis. When the PCs approach, the portcullis is down (hardness 10, hp 60, lift DC 25). It can be raised from area **A54**. The Gray Maidens in that area wait for at least two PCs to come into range before they upend green slime through the murder holes.

A27 Sentinel Post

The door to this small room is not lockable but can be bolted from the inside (break DC 25, Disable Device DC 35). The door has a shuttered eyehole. Inside are just a small table and a chair; this post is currently unguarded.

A28 Armory

Wooden weapon racks featuring an assortment of weapons from longswords to daggers to maces line the walls of this armory. An elongated table sits in the middle of the room, and a long wooden ladder is stowed below the table.

A secret door in the southeast wall leads to the keep's postern, where a second secret door grants an escape route. Both doors are kept locked (Disable Device DC 35) and can be discovered with a successful DC 35 Perception check. From the outside, the door is 15 feet above the ground (hence the ladder under the table).

The weapons stored on the racks here are mundane, non-masterwork weapons. If the PCs are looking for a particular type of weapon, any non-exotic weapon can be found here with a few minutes of searching.

Togomor knows about the secret door here, and placed a silent mental permanent *alarm* spell on the exterior door. If this *alarm* goes off, he (and by extension Sermignatto) immediately realizes what's going on and raises the castle's general alarm. The trio of barbed devils known as the Yallops (see area **A37**) are informed swiftly, and they teleport into this room 1d3 rounds after the alarm goes off to attack anyone they find herein.

A29 Seawatch Tower Stairs

These stairs lead up to area **A76** and then continue up to areas **A93** and **A95**; they bypass the third floor of the castle entirely.

A30 West Barracks (CR 12)

This chamber seems to have once served as a food preparation area, judging by the shelves lining the walls.

Creatures: Before Ileosa closed off the castle to the public, the few guards who bunked in the castle took their rest in the guardroom on the floor below (area **A17**). Recently, she has ordered two groups of Gray Maidens to take up residence in the castle, with barracks here and in area **A38**. Twelve Gray Maidens can rest here, although generally there are only four in this room at a time while the other eight are on shift.

GRAY MAIDEN PALACE GUARDS (4) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

hp 99 each (see page 347)

A31 Kitchen

This room is dusty with flour and contains a large oven built with flint and clay. Flour has been scattered over several of the tables here, and tiny clawed footprints crisscross through the white mess. Two large fireplaces sit in the northeast wall; their stovepipe chimneys angling up toward the wall to the northwest.

There is a 30% chance of encountering a patrol of Red Mantis assassins, a patrol of Gray Maidens, or Togomor's familiar Pudgyknuckles here (determine which randomly), all of them having come down to the kitchen for a quick snack (or in the imp's case, to fetch food for his master) before returning to their duties.

A32 Gray Tower Stairs

These stairs lead up to area **A61**.

A33 Pantry

The crates stored here and the shelves that line the room contain all manner of spices, herbs, and preserved foodstuffs such as spiced pork, salted meat, smoked salmon, cheese, jams, honey, nuts, and dried figs.

A34 Workshop

This small workshop for wood-, wicker-, and leatherworking is supplied with all the tools and equipment necessary to create and repair objects for everyday use.

A35 Smithy

A huge angular fireplace and two anvils create a compact but well-equipped forge in this chamber. One of the anvils is a black iron, ordinary-looking implement, while the other is made of polished steel and shaped like a grotesque, squatting dwarf. Smithy tools hang on the walls and line the shelves.

A36 Workshop Storage

The secret door in the northeast wall can be discovered with a successful DC 35 Perception check; the stairs lead to area **A24**.

A37 Mess Hall (CR 14)

The occupants of this room enjoy using illusions to mask the room's actual appearance. The text below reveals the room's actual appearance, but feel free to add illusory trenches of burning damned souls or other hellish obstacles in here as you see fit to add flavor and perhaps opportunities for concealment against those who don't realize the images are illusory.

Four stone pillars support the ceiling of this large mess hall. Between each pillar stretches a long table lined on either side by high-backed chairs, although many of the chairs are slashed and savaged, or in some cases little more than ruins heaped on the floor. The table is piled with old pieces of rotting meat, broken bones, shattered weapons, bits of armor, and dozens of long barbs and quills. A fire burns in the large fireplace in the west corner, slowly cooking what appears to be a mostly plucked and skinned hippogriff. The scent of the cooking meat from the hippogriff isn't quite enough to mask the rancid stink of decay.

Creatures: Recently, this mess hall became the favored haunt of three barbed devils who collectively refer to themselves as the Yallops. Unless specifically ordered to come to the castle's defense (such as if the alarm in area **A28** goes off), these devils ignore any telepathic alarms in favor of their slowly cooking feast, passing the time by singing loudly and using *major image* to create eerie visual and sound effects for their own amusement, transforming much of the room into a hellscape of burning pits of tar and flesh, cauldrons of tormented souls, and trenches of the howling damned. As the PCs approach this room, they can distinctly hear three voices singing a nearly incomprehensible song in Infernal about the pleasures of banqueting. The refrain, however, is in the Common tongue.

"Who would say a single beast could give us such a double feast? Yes, my friends, we've meat and fowl—cooking up from arse to jowl!"

The voices are off-key, at times guttural and deep, at times jeering and squeaky. All the PCs can make out from casual bits of conversation is that the voices seem to belong to three fiendish brothers named Frentes, Jhaun, and Peveer.

The Yallops are a trio of barbed devils bound to Sermignatto's service ever since the belier devil hand-picked the tormented souls of the three brothers from a trench of scalding lead deep in Hell. In life, the Yallop brothers were cowardly opportunists who exploited child labor and cared about nothing but their illicit business. Sermignatto was taken by their camaraderie, even in their torment, and cashed in several favors to have them promoted from the damned into devils. The Yallops remember their names and the brotherly bond they shared as mortals, but have no actual memories of their previous lives. They have continued to prove their usefulness to Sermignatto, rising quickly through the infernal ranks over the past several centuries to their current position as hamatulas. The devils are quite excited by their recent catch—hippogriffs have grown exceedingly rare in the Korvosa region of late, after all.

As with all the castle's devils, the Yallops know and recognize the PCs for who they are unless the characters are disguised. If they aren't, the barbed devils yelp in shock, saying things like, "They're here!" or "It's them!" Each Yallop attempts to summon an additional barbed devil during the first round of combat; they send any devils they summon into melee with the PCs to give themselves a chance to hang back and use their destructive spell-like abilities.

As soon as one of the Yallops is reduced to 20 hit points or fewer, or if one of them feels the holy bite of *Serithtial*'s

A. CASTLE KORVOSA
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET
A26
A27
A43
A44
A40
A39
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A38
A37
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A36
A33
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A31
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A29
SECOND FLOOR
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THIRD FLOOR
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A72
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A74
A73
A76
A77
FOURTH FLOOR
A89
A88
A79
A87
A78
A86
A80
A84
EPOCHAL TOWER
A82
A81
A85
A83b
A83a
A90
SEAWATCH TOWER
ATTIC
A94
A95
A93
A92
A91
GRAY TOWER
SEAWATCH TOWER
EPOCHAL TOWER

blade ("Yaaa! Yallops, it hurts like heaven!"), the barbed devils' bravery collapses and they teleport to Sermignatto's side in area **A59**.

THE YALLOPS (3) **CR 11**

XP 12,800 each

Barbed devils (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 72)

hp 138 each

A38 North Barracks (CR 12)

The room is fitted with six bunk beds, each one with a wooden bedside table. Woolen tapestries hang on the walls, and folding screens of wood and canvas are stacked near the beds.

Creatures: Like area **A30**, this room is used as a barracks for 12 Gray Maidens, although generally there are only four in this room at a time, with the other eight on patrol.

GRAY MAIDEN PALACE GUARDS (4) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

hp 99 each (see page 347)

A39 Public Parlor

This little junction room contains a table with two stools and a wooden cupboard embellished with gilt designs. The cupboard contains a reserve of candles, matches, torches, and oil lamps.

A40 Old Tower Guardroom

The stairs in the northeast wall lead down to area **A24**.

A41 Archive

This small room seems to be some sort of archive; on the wall opposite the door is storage for vellum, paper, and writing implements. The other two walls are fitted with shelves that sag with rows of books and scrolls.

This room holds some of the archives of the Arabasti family. More than a century of Arabasti rule of Korvosa is recorded and arranged chronologically here. The documents include decrees, acts, reports, and records of all kinds about the city and the royal family. A search of the archive's more recent entries reveals that after King Eodred II's death, no further documents have been stored here.

A42 Second-Floor Garderobe

This garderobe is mostly used by guards and servants, but also by the seneschal. Its soil pipe discharges waste into the garderobe shaft below (area **A23**).

A43 Scriptorium

This room contains two well-equipped writing desks with comfortable armchairs and matching lecterns. A large map of Korvosa hangs on one wall over a wooden box full of rolled parchments, and in the south corner, stairs ascend.

This room is used by the royal scribes to write documents on the seneschal's behalf. The map in the showcase is marked with red ink in several areas to record the queen's ambitious building plans, including the creation of her four statues throughout the city. The plans contain no indication of her projects' purpose, however. The stairs lead up to area **A50**.

Treasure: The rolled parchments are all highly detailed maps of Korvosa and Varisia (worth a total value of 400 gp). One of the maps is of the eastern Mushfens and provides an accurate marking of the Sunken Queen's position. The map was drawn by Togomor during his early adventuring days and indicates a path named "Trail of the Frog" that leads to the Sunken Queen from a coastal site named "Greenrust Reef." With this map (reproduced as Handout #6–2 on page 138), the PCs should have no problem reaching the secluded site in Part 3 of this chapter.

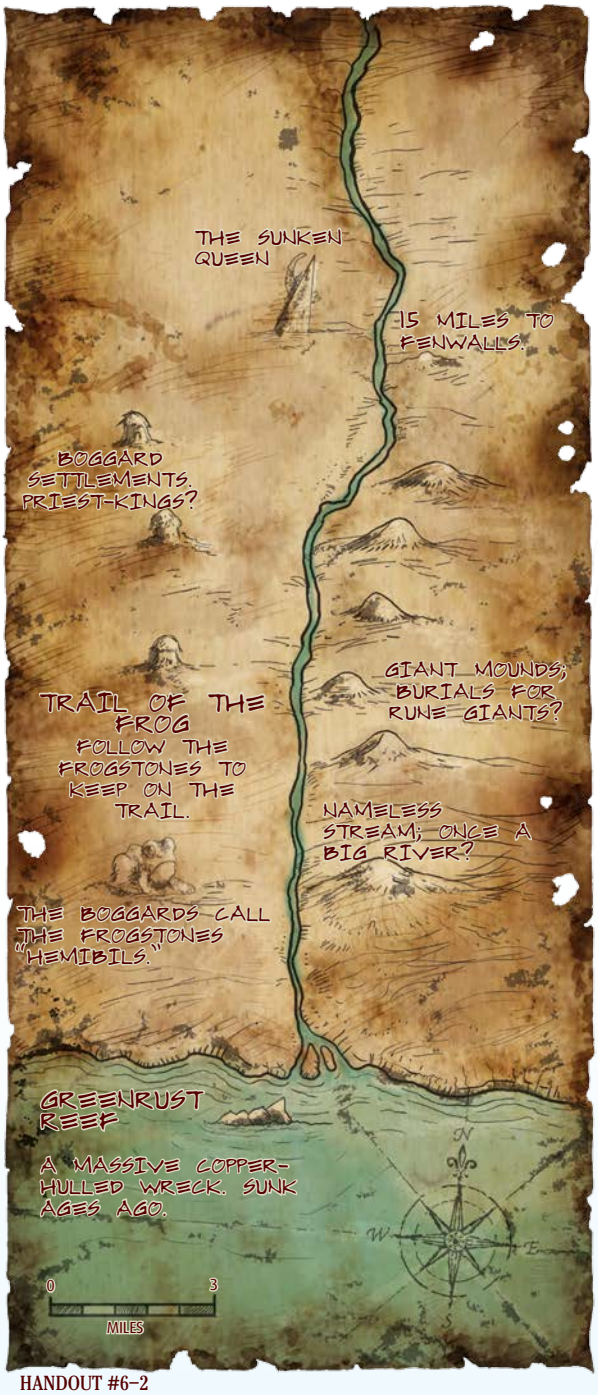
A44 Seneschal's Apartment (CR 15)

This room contains a canopied bed, a desk, a trunk, and a large cupboard. Colorful woolen tapestries hang from the walls, while exotic carpets decorate the floor. To the northeast, three narrow barred windows have been covered with additional tapestries. A standing lamp in a corner looks like a strange swamp plant with wrought-iron leaves and a single, oversized fruit of amber-colored glass. The stink of discarded food—bread crusts, chunks of moldy cheese, and bones with tattered remnants of meat—competes with the stale smell of body odor and sweat that fills this room.

Creatures: This room, furnished to a high standard by Neolandus Kalepopolis, is now occupied by a foul and obese man named Togomor. A *continual flame* spell cast within the lamp's globe illuminates the room with a soft orange glow at all times. Togomor's poor personal habits and hygiene are the cause of this room's nastiness.

If the PCs haven't already encountered Castle Korvosa's current seneschal elsewhere, they find the huge, bloated man here, sitting on the sagging bed amid a collection of chicken carcases, loaves of bread, wheels of cheese, and a few large bottles of wine. Togomor's gluttony keeps the man quite busy in his off hours.

A middle-aged obese man with a bald head, the Magnimarian wizard Togomor was quite the adventurer



HANDOUT #6–2

in his youth. Many of his early adventures took place in the Mushfens—it was there that he first learned of hemotheurgy from a group of bloatmages. Impressed with the power of their magic, Togomor abandoned his adventuring party and sought out the secrets of hemotheurgy, a quest that eventually led him to the city of Kaer Maga. There, Togomor found more than he bargained for. While he learned the initial secrets of bloat magic and even became a bloatmage initiate, he also came to the attention of the devil Sermignatto, who had recently lost interest in his then-current project (manipulating a violent schism among the Brothers of the Seal). Impressed with Togomor's skills, Sermignatto possessed the man and sent him down to Korvosa to begin the long and delicate process of investigating the true nature of the headmaster of the Acadamae.

Togomor hasn't been under his own control for years. Now that Sermignatto is firmly ensconced in Castle Korvosa's command structure, Togomor's use to the devil is little more than as a "public face" to show around the city until Ileosa's plans are complete. As such, Sermignatto allows the bloated man more time under his own control, as long as he doesn't leave this chamber save to defend the castle from intruders. Togomor relies on his imp familiar, Pudgyknuckles, a corpulent creature in its own right, to keep him supplied with food and drink. Apart from answering its master's calls for food, though, Pudgyknuckles spends little time with its master due to a mixture of jealousy and disgust at Togomor's girth. Pudgyknuckles is a chubby, broad-grinned imp that roams the castle halls in rat form or perches on its battlements in raven form. It immediately returns to Togomor's side as soon as the castle alarm is raised.

TOGOMOR **CR 15**

XP 51,200

Male human wizard 7/bloatmage 9 (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: City of Strangers* 61)

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** *arcane sight*, darkvision 60 ft., *see invisibility*; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 9, flat-footed 19 (+4 armor, –1 Dex, +2 natural, +4 shield)

hp 162 (16d6+103)

Fort +10, **Ref** +4, **Will** +10

Defensive Abilities contingency, corpulence

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft. (average)

Special Attacks hand of the apprentice (9/day)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 16th; concentration +22)

8th—*horrid wilting* (DC 24), *telekinetic sphere* (DC 25)

7th—quickened *displacement*, *prismatic spray*, *project image* (DC 23)

6th—*disintegrate* (DC 22), *greater dispel magic*, quickened *invisibility*, *summon monster VI*

5th—*cloudkill* (DC 21), *cone of cold* (DC 22), *feeblemind* (DC 21), quickened *magic missile*, *overland flight*

4th—*dimension door* (2), *fear* (DC 20), *greater invisibility*, *illusory wall* (DC 20)

3rd—*dispel magic*, extended *false life*, *lightning bolt* (2, DC 20), *nondetection*

2nd—*bear's endurance*, *blindness/deafness* (DC 18), *glitterdust* (DC 18), *mirror image*, *scorching ray*, *spider climb*

1st—*charm person* (DC 17), *feather fall*, *grease* (DC 17), *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*

0 (at will)—*light*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 16)

TACTICS

Before Combat Togomor casts extended *false life*, *overland flight*, *mage armor*, and *nondetection* on himself every morning. Once the castle's alarm is raised, Togomor takes the time to cast *shield* and *bear's endurance* before he responds to the alarm.

During Combat It's unlikely for the PCs to actually encounter Togomor here, unless this room happens to be their first target on visiting the castle. If confronted here before he prepares a defense, Togomor uses *dimension door* to travel to area **A59**, casts his preparatory spells, and then either waits for the PCs to confront him there or waits for them to trigger an alarm elsewhere, whereupon he casts *greater invisibility* and then uses *dimension door* to that location to offer aid. See area **A45** for sample tactics tailored to that location; you can use most of these tactics anywhere else in the castle with a little modification.

Morale Togomor doesn't have control of his actions as long as he remains possessed, but Sermignatto doesn't take unnecessary risks with his puppet. If reduced to fewer than 30 hit points, Togomor flees via *dimension door* to area **A59**, where he makes his last stand.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 8, **Con** 20, **Int** 22, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 18

Feats Bloatmage Initiate (evocation), Craft Construct, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Staff, Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell, Improved Familiar, Improved Initiative, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (evocation)

Skills Acrobatics +12, Craft (armor) +23, Diplomacy +10, Fly +0, Knowledge (arcana) +25, Knowledge (local) +25, Knowledge (nobility) +25, Knowledge (planes) +25, Perception +16, Spellcraft +25, Use Magic Device +20

Languages Aklo, Common, Draconic, Infernal, Shadowtongue, Shoanti, Varisian; *tongues*

SQ arcane bond (imp named Pudgyknuckles), bloat, blood pool, hemophilia, permanent spells, possessed

Combat Gear *scroll of break enchantment*, *scroll of greater dispel magic*, *scroll of greater teleport*, *scrolls of stoneskin* (2), *scroll of wall of force* (CL 10th), *staff of evocation* (10 charges); **Other Gear** *handy haversack*, *headband of vast intelligence +4* (grants ranks in Acrobatics and Use Magic Device), *necklace of adaptation*, ring of keys (opens all locks in the castle unless the lock's description says otherwise), spell component pouch, 20 gp, 12 cp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bloat (Su) Togomor can exert himself up to three times per day as a free action to gain 1d12 blood points to use with his blood pool ability (see below). This can fill his blood pool to a point beyond his normal limit of 9 blood points, but as long as his blood pool contains more than 9 blood points (but fewer than 18 blood points), Togomor is sickened. If this ability fills his blood pool to 18 blood points or more, he flies into a homicidal range and attacks randomly with his most damaging attacks and abilities at friends and foes alike for 1d6 rounds or until his blood point total is reduced to 0 (whichever comes first); at the end of this rage, Togomor's hit points drop to –1 and he begins dying.

Blood Pool (Su) Togomor has a blood pool that represents an overload to his system of excess blood to extend his arcane abilities beyond their normal level. Togomor's blood pool consists of 9 blood points that can be spent at

TOGOMOR

the time of casting to cast a spell without using that spell's spell slot, leaving it available for further use later in the day. When he does so, Togomor spends blood points equal to the spell slot being retained. Togomor's blood pool refills to its normal maximum of 9 when he rests to regain spells; if he has more than 9 points at this time (due to use of his bloat ability), he gains no additional points from rest. Some bloatmages conduct constant rituals involving leeches or exsanguination in an attempt to regulate their systems and to minimize the results from using the bloat ability (and to help prevent overbloating), but Togomor does not use these rituals. Instead, he simply avoids using his bloat ability until his blood pool is at 5 or lower.

Contingency If Togomor snaps his fingers (a swift action as long as he has a hand free), a *stoneskin* spell activates on him.

Corpulence (Ex) Togomor is so massive that his rolls of fatty, blood-laden flesh grant him a +2 natural armor bonus but reduce his base speed by 10 feet—combined with the fact that his weight results in him carrying a medium load, this means his speed is effectively 10 feet.

Hemophilia (Ex) Togomor is particularly susceptible to bleed effects, and the DC of any Heal check to stop a bleed effect on him is 5 higher than normal. In addition, if Togomor takes bleed damage, he loses 1 blood point from his blood pool; this loss of blood points is cumulative for multiple bleed attacks, but not each time he takes damage from the same attack.

Permanent Spells Togomor has made the following spells permanent on himself: *arcane sight*, *darkvision*, *see invisibility*, and *tongues*.

Possessed (Su) Togomor is possessed by the belier devil Sermignatto, who languishes on the Ethereal Plane as long as he controls the bloatmage (see area **A59**).

PUDGYKNUCKLES **CR —**

Imp familiar (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 78)

hp 73

Treasure: Besides his equipment, Togomor keeps his personal treasure hidden behind a secret panel in the wall above his bed. A successful DC 26 Perception check reveals this panel; inside are a pouch containing 70 pp, a *scroll of greater teleport*, and all of Togomor's spellbooks. These books contain all of his prepared spells, plus 2d6 additional spells of your choice for each spell level (including *arcane sight*, *darkvision*, *see invisibility*, *tongues*, *contingency*, *permanency*, all three *planar binding* spells, and all the spells necessary for the creation of an akaruzug—*enervation*, *magic jar*, and *limited wish* [to duplicate the effects of *unhallow*]). The spellbooks contain additional notes on topics such as hemotheurgy, the creation of several constructs (including the process of creating an akaruzug), rejuvenating blood baths, and other ways to achieve immortality as a construct, an undead, or an outsider. These last notes indicate that Ileosa has some sort of plans to use blood as an element to aid in immortality, but to date, she has not revealed to Togomor how she intends to achieve this goal, despite his intense curiosity. Finally, Togomor's books contain scores of unfinished drawings of wormlike monsters with three faces at one end and a fanged mouth at the other. These sketches are a manifestation of Sermignatto's possession over the wizard, since whenever Togomor began scribbling notes in his spare time on how he might escape being possessed, Sermignatto took over and Togomor later discovered what he thought he'd been writing were only lovingly drawn sketches of his tormentor. With a successful DC 30 Knowledge (planes) check, a PC can identify the creature illustrated as a belier devil.

Development: If Togomor is slain, a strange smile of relief spreads on his face—if able, he speaks a few dying words: "Thank you...." Long a slave of Sermignatto, Togomor doesn't quite realize he's escaped one torment only to begin an eternity of another in Hell.

If the PCs can remove Sermignatto's possession without killing Togomor, though, the man immediately ceases fighting and drops to his knees, begging for mercy and protection from "that horrible three-faced worm!" Togomor is willing to say or do anything to aid the PCs in killing Sermignatto, for he knows that if he simply flees, the devil will just track him down and capture him again. After having been possessed for so long, Togomor has learned a lot about Sermignatto, and he can describe to the PCs most of the devil's history and reasons for being here, as well as much about Sermignatto's strengths and weaknesses (see area **A59**). He can also verify that Queen Ileosa signed some sort of pact with several devils to bind an erinyes to her soul to gain additional power—Togomor was present at the contract signing and knows that the contract is kept in area **A90**. He can tell the PCs how to enter area **A90** using the *phase door* in area **A77**, and urges the PCs to do so, since the contract might contain information they can use.

Once Sermignatto has been slain, Togomor's loyalty to the PCs dwindles fast; he attempts to escape (likely via *dimension door*) as soon as he can. If the PCs don't have his spellbooks, he returns to his room to collect them first—otherwise, he flees Korvosa as soon as possible and does not return.

THIRD FLOOR

This level of the castle is where the monarchy lives and receives official visits. It is characterized by spacious and well-lit interiors decorated with magnificent tapestries and other furnishings, although the only chair used on

the floor is the Crimson Throne. The floors and pillars are made of polished marble and fine ceramics, the wooden furniture is made of oak and mahogany, and the metalwork is made of silver and brass.

A45 Main Entrance Landing (CR 18)

This landing is where the main stairway (area **A12**) turns to lead up to the main entrance (area **A46**). This balcony is empty and uninhabited—at least, it is as the PCs approach. If their approach is noticed by the guardians (either by the Gray Maidens in area **A54** or by Mavrokeras from above), Togomor waits to greet them.

Creatures: While the tactics presented here for the Gray Maidens, Togomor, and Mavrokeras assume the PCs are openly approaching the castle via the stairs, you can adapt the tactics described here as needed to run a battle between the PCs and the castle's initial group of defenders at any point during the PCs' approach to the structure.

Five Gray Maidens (stationed in area **A54**) guard this area. If the alarm is raised, Togomor is located in area **A54** as well, and the horned devil Mavrokeras waits invisibly at area **A67**.

MAVROKERAS **CR 16**

XP 76,800

Male horned devil (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 76)

hp 217

TACTICS

During Combat On the first round of combat, Mavrokeras attempts to summon three barbed devils, placing them among the PCs in melee if he's successful. On the following rounds, he uses *persistent image* to create illusions of more devils (of increasing power) appearing to fight the PCs. He waits to hit them with a *fireball* or *lightning bolt* when he thinks the sudden blast of energy might kill a wounded PC, then takes the next round to turn invisible again by activating his ring. He doesn't engage in melee unless a PC discovers him hiding and confronts him.

Morale Mavrokeras teleports to area **A94** to regenerate if brought below 30 hit points. Once he's restored to full health, he begins flying in circles above the castle, keeping an eye out for the PCs or waiting for a telepathic call to come aid in a battle below.

TOGOMOR **CR 15**

XP 51,200

hp 162 (see page 358)

TACTICS

During Combat Togomor casts *project image* from area **A54** to create an image of himself at the head of the stairs here, and uses the image to order the PCs to abandon their "foolish assault on enemies who vastly outstrip their paltry capabilities." If the PCs do not abandon the assault immediately, he begins casting spells at them through the image, beginning with *prismatic spray* and quickened *magic missile*, and following up during the next rounds with his other devastating spells. If the PCs discover his actual location, he casts quickened *invisibility* and then teleports via *dimension door* to area **A67**. The next round, he casts *greater invisibility*, after which he flies up into the air and circles the area, peppering the PCs with some more spells.

Morale Togomor fights until he's reduced to 30 hit points or fewer, at which point he casts *dimension door* to flee to area **A59** to recover.

PUDGYKNUCKLES **CR —**

Imp familiar (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 78)

hp 73 (see page 360)

TACTICS

During Combat For this combat, Pudgyknuckles remains perched on Togomor's shoulder. It can't cast spells through Togomor's *projected image*, but if any PC realizes where Togomor is actually located, the imp uses *suggestion* on that PC to suggest that she not speak until the next sunrise.

Morale Pudgyknuckles flees when its master does.

GRAY MAIDEN PALACE GUARDS (5) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

hp 99 each (see page 347)

TACTICS

During Combat The Gray Maidens take turns firing arrows through the arrowslits in area **A54** at the PCs below, taking 5-foot steps out of the way after firing as needed to let the others have shots.

Morale The Gray Maidens fight to the death.

A46 Entrance Hall (CR 10)

This entrance hall is furnished with several side tables on which stand marble busts of previous seneschals, kings, and queens of Korvosa. To a one, each has been defaced with magic to make it appear hideous and foolish—oversized noses, gaping snaggletoothed grins, and bulging eyes being common insults.

Queen Ileosa used a *wand of stone shape* to vandalize these busts not long after she ordered the castle closed to the public.

Creatures: Two Gray Maidens guard this chamber at all times, standing at attention before the southern doors. They give cry to the alarm if they see anyone entering this room, possibly obtaining additional aid from the Gray Maidens in area **A54**. They do their best to hold up the PCs in this area as long as possible to give the castle more time to react to the alarm.

GRAY MAIDEN PALACE GUARDS (2) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

hp 99 each (see page 347)

A47 Cloakroom

This room is furnished with wooden wardrobes, which contain an assortment of cloaks, hats, and galoshes.

A48 Third-Floor Garderobe

This garderobe is similar to area **A42**, but the interior is tiled with fine ceramic and furnished to a higher standard.

A49 Art Gallery

The walls and ceiling of this room are plastered with mortar and decorated with stucco works and frescoes. Portraits of kings and queens hang on the walls as well. All of the works of art have been defaced with magic to be rendered hideous in some way or another—a particularly well-executed portrait of King Eodred II has even been slashed to ribbons.

This room was once a harem, but King Eodred II repurposed it as an art gallery after he married Ileosa. Ileosa has recently been at work here ruining the works of art; the shredded portrait of Eodred II bears Trinia's signature in the lower right corner.

A50 Chair Storage

This storeroom seems primarily used to store chairs—at least two dozen of them, from plain stools to comfortable armchairs—some piled one atop the other and others draped with linen.

The chairs have been removed from most rooms of this floor on purpose, and testify to the humiliating discipline Ileosa likes to foist on her subjects—the Crimson Throne is the only chair in use on this floor of the castle.

A51 Antechamber (CR 4)

This room contains memorabilia of the Arabasti family, such as the Arabasti battle standard and a set of jousting lances on a rack.

Creatures: Two invisible cleaning imps always perch on the lances here; if they see any intruders, they quickly flap into area **A52** to warn the false queen before hiding from the battle to come.

IMPS (2) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 16 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 78)

A52 Throne Room (CR 15)

This magnificent room is lavishly decorated with frescoes, mosaics, and hanging tapestries of crimson silk embroidered with gold thread. Three colorful stained-glass windowpanes present scenes of past kings and queens. A huge fireplace stands in the east corner, its mantle shaped like an enormous stone tree that has spread its branches up to the ceiling. Against the southwest wall, on a low dais of granite, sits the Crimson Throne, an iron throne draped with deep red silks and crimson velvet cushions.

Creatures: Although the real Queen Ileosa is not present in the castle, only two (the Gray Maiden Vavana Dhatri and the devil Sermignatto) know that she is elsewhere. Playing the part of Ileosa here in the castle is a cunning *simulacrum* created from the queen's own blood and the potent magic of the *Everdawn Pool* hidden in the Sunken Queen. The false Ileosa spends much of her time alone in the royal suite (areas **A57–A59**). The *simulacrum* has done an excellent job masquerading as the real Ileosa so far, primarily by avoiding extended contact with the Red Mantises, Togomor, and the Gray Maidens, claiming variously to be working on her memoirs, entertaining special guests, or refining her grand plan for Korvosa. In truth, the *simulacrum* is not impeded by passions or a sense of restlessness, and is content to spend much of its time simply sitting in the royal bedroom, venturing out periodically to speak with guests or receive the increasingly few callers.

When the castle alarm goes off, the false Ileosa swiftly relocates to this chamber, taking her seat upon the Crimson Throne and patiently awaiting the arrival of the intruders. Normally, Sabina would be in attendance as well, but by this point, the commander of the Gray Maidens should have already defected to the PCs' cause (if not, then she should do so soon after the PCs exit the castle following this encounter)—in her place, Vavana Dhatri, the Arbiter of Allegiance of the Gray Maidens, commands a group of three palace guards here, along with three glowering and growling Nessian hell hounds.

When the PCs enter the room, the false Ileosa smiles and greets them as if they were long-lost friends, thanking them for finally seeking her out. She claims to have been observing their progress over the past few months, and commends them for the assistance they have provided the people of Korvosa. Then her demeanor turns cold. She informs the PCs that their services are no longer required, and that if they leave Korvosa immediately and never return, she will not seek their execution as traitors to the crown. If the PCs allow the false Ileosa to speak this long, she weaves a *suggestion* into her oration via bardic

performance, targeting the party's strongest fighter with a suggestion to drop his weapons and leave Korvosa.

FALSE ILEOSA **CR 9**

XP 6,400

Female human simulacrum aristocrat 1/bard 9

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 23, flat-footed 25 (+5 armor, +10 deflection, +3 Dex)

hp 87 (10d8+39)

Fort +6, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6; +2 morale bonus vs. charm and fear, +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

Defensive Ability redirection; **Immune** illusions, mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *+1 returning dagger* +12/+7 (1d4+5/19–20)

Special Attacks bardic performance 25 rounds/day (move action; countersong, dirge of doom, distraction, fascinate [DC 19], inspire competence +3, inspire courage +2, inspire greatness, suggestion [DC 19])

Bard Spells Known (CL 9th; concentration +14)

3rd (4/day)—*charm monster* (DC 19), *confusion* (DC 19), *displacement*, *slow* (DC 18)

2nd (5/day)—*hold person* (DC 18), *mirror image*, *misdirection*, *suggestion* (DC 18)

1st (7/day)—*feather fall*, *grease*, *hideous laughter* (DC 17), *saving finale*[APG] (DC 16), *silent image* (DC 16)

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *open/close* (DC 15), *prestidigitation*

TACTICS

During Combat The false Ileosa starts combat by using inspire courage on all her allies, then maintains that performance as she casts spells using Harmonic Spell, starting with *displacement* on the first round. In each subsequent round, she casts *suggestion* on one PC, suggesting he abandon his weapons and leave Korvosa. She relies on her guardians to prevent anyone from engaging her in melee, but if this tactic fails, she draws her dagger and fights back as best she can.

Morale The false Ileosa fights until destroyed. Once reduced to 0 hit points, she suddenly becomes rigid and motionless. A moment later, her features run red as she melts swiftly into a pool of blood. A character who succeeds at a DC 27 Spellcraft check recognizes she was some form of variant *simulacrum*, although further details are not available until the PCs can study the *Everdawn Pool* in the Sunken Queen.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 9, **Wis** 7, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 19

Feats Arcane Strike, Fencing Grace, Harmonic Spell[ISWG], Spell Focus (enchantment), Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Intimidate +18, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (nobility) +9, Perception +10, Perform (oratory) +18, Perform (sing) +18, Use Magic Device +18

Languages Common

SQ bardic knowledge +4, lore master 1/day, versatile performances (oratory, sing)

Gear *+1 glamered chain shirt*, *+1 returning dagger*, replica nonmagical *Crown of Fangs* worth 5,000 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Crimson Throne (Su) As long as she remains seated in the

FALSE ILEOSA

Crimson Throne, the false Ileosa gains a +10 deflection bonus to her AC and is immune to illusions and mind-affecting effects.

Redirection (Su) As long as this *simulacrum* lives, any divination spell that attempts to locate or otherwise target the real Queen Ileosa is instead redirected to target this *simulacrum*. The caster of the divination spell has a small chance to notice the redirection with a successful DC 40 Spellcraft check as the divination spell is cast, but even if the redirection is noted, it remains impossible to tell where the effect was redirected from. This effect also affects long-distance spells like *demand*, *dream*, *nightmare*, and *sending*, but not mental communication such as telepathy.

VAVANA DHATRI **CR 9**

XP 6,400

Female human enchanter 9

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +9

Aura despair (30 ft., 9 rounds/day)

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 17, flat-footed 22 (+4 armor, +3 defending dagger, +1 deflection, +3 Dex, +4 shield)

hp 88 (9d6+54)

Fort +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *defending dagger* +3 (1d4–1/19–20)

Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +13)

7/day—*dazing touch*

Enchanter Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +13)

5th—*dominate person* (DC 21), *feeblemind* (DC 21)

4th—*charm monster* (DC 20), *crushing despair* (DC 20), *dimension door*, *phantasmal killer* (DC 18)

3rd—*dispel magic*, *displacement*, *fireball* (DC 17), *hold person* (DC 19), *suggestion* (DC 19)

2nd—*acid arrow*, *cat's grace*, *hideous laughter* (DC 18), *mirror image*, *scorching ray*, *touch of idiocy*

1st—*charm person* (DC 17), *grease*, *mage armor*, *shield*, *silent image* (DC 15), *unseen servant*

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *arcane mark*, *light*, *prestidigitation*

Opposition Schools divination, necromancy

TACTICS

Before Combat Vavana casts *mage armor*, *shield*, *cat's grace*, *false life*, and *unseen servant* and uses a charge from her *wand of bear's endurance* before combat.

During Combat Vavana uses her *+3 defending dagger* to bolster her Armor Class but remains within 5 feet of the false Ileosa at all times. She casts *displacement* on the first round of combat, followed by *mirror image*. She uses a *scroll of mind fog* on the third round. On the fourth round, she uses her offensive spells against the PCs, using *dominate person* on non-spellcasters (ordering them to leave the combat and await further instructions to serve, later, as her personal assistants) or *feeblemind* on spellcasters. She's fond of using *suggestion* and charms to compel victims to discard their gear or remove armor—discarded items are carried away by her *unseen servant*. She saves the use of her wands for tormenting prisoners or training new Gray Maidens, and is loath to use them in combat.

Morale Vavana retreats to area **A56** via *dimension door* if the false Ileosa is slain, or if she herself is reduced to fewer than 20 hit points. From there, she gathers her spellbooks before attempting to flee the castle and seek shelter with the Arkonas.

VAVANA DHATRI

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 16, **Con** 18, **Int** 18, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 20

Feats Combat Casting, Craft Wand, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Greater Spell Specialization[UM], Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Specialization (*suggestion*)[UM], Toughness

Skills Bluff +14, Diplomacy +14, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Perception +9, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +16

Languages Common, Elven, Infernal, Shoanti, Varisian, Vudrani

SQ arcane bond (*wand of pain strike*), enchanting smile, wealth

Combat Gear *scroll of mind fog* (2), *wand of bear's endurance* (10 charges), *wand of disfiguring touch*[UM] (15 charges), *wand of magic missile* (CL 9th, 20 charges), *wand of pain strike*[APG] (32 charges); **Other Gear** *+3 defending dagger*, *cloak of resistance +2*, *ring of protection +1*, spell component pouch, 49 pp, 3 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Wealth Vavana's position among the Gray Maidens has allowed her increased wealth

and potent gear, and her CR is 1 point higher than normal as a result.

NESSIAN HELL HOUNDS (3) **CR 9**

XP 6,400 each

hp 114 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 173)

TACTICS

During Combat Called by Togomor to serve as guardians with *planar binding* spells, these three Nessian hell hounds move forward to engage any intruders immediately upon the false Ileosa's command. They're smart enough to aim their breath weapons to not catch the simulacrum or any Gray Maidens when they breathe.

Morale The hell hounds fight to the death.

GRAY MAIDEN PALACE GUARDS (3) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

hp 99 each (see page 347)

TACTICS

During Combat These Gray Maidens do not leave their positions in front of the Crimson Throne and do their best to prevent anyone from entering melee with the false Ileosa. If the false Ileosa is destroyed and her body melts, any surviving Gray Maidens are shocked at the sight, losing a round of actions as they try to cope with what they've just seen.

Morale The Gray Maidens fight to the death.

Treasure: The tapestries in this room are magnificent—there are six in all, and each is worth 1,000 gp. The Crimson Throne is a work of art worth 10,000 gp, but finding a buyer willing to risk the wrath of the Korvosan public should prove difficult. Those willing to pay for the throne likely do not have Korvosa's best interests at heart, and certainly heroes who seek to loot the throne would be looked upon almost as traitors by the citizens and nobles of Korvosa, despite the cruelty and evil of the current queen.

The Crimson Throne is not a magic item, but Ileosa has placed magical effects on it with the aid of her infernal allies. Anyone of the royal bloodline (including simulacrums like the false Ileosa) who sits in the Crimson Throne gains a +10 deflection bonus to her Armor Class and is immune to illusions and mind-affecting effects. Anyone else who sits in the Crimson Throne is affected by a potent curse—one of Ileosa's design that duplicates the effects of a *robe of powerlessness* (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 542). A successful DC 25 Will save negates this curse, but a creature must attempt a new save each round it remains seated on the throne. The effects on the Crimson Throne can be removed with a successful casting of *break enchantment*, *dispel evil*, or *remove curse* (but not *dispel magic*); if they're removed the Crimson Throne reverts to its normal nonmagical state. In any event, the legendary curse that Korvosans believe befalls whoever sits upon the Crimson Throne is nothing more than that—a legend.

A53 Royal Reception Room

The walls of this room are covered with tapestries and the ceiling is embellished with florid fretwork. A long table, perhaps a dining table, stands in the room, yet there are no chairs to be seen.

This table was used as a meeting room when the seneschal or other notables needed to meet; the lack of chairs ensured meetings here were swift and to the point. The stairs here lead up to area **A64**.

A54 Gatehouse Lower Gallery (CR 13)

This gallery contains a missile weapon rack and several baskets full of ammunition. Four sturdy ceramic urns with lids sit next to a set of four trapdoors to the northeast.

The four trapdoors in the floor cover murder holes that overlook area **A26**.

Creatures: A group of five Gray Maidens are stationed here at all times. Depending on the situation, they can support Togomor in his battle before the keep's main entrance (area **A45**), the Gray Maidens stationed in the entrance hall (area **A46**), or the false Ileosa in the throne room (area **A52**). Against foes in the gatehouse below (area **A26**), they upend the urns of green slime.

GRAY MAIDEN PALACE GUARDS (5) **CR 8**

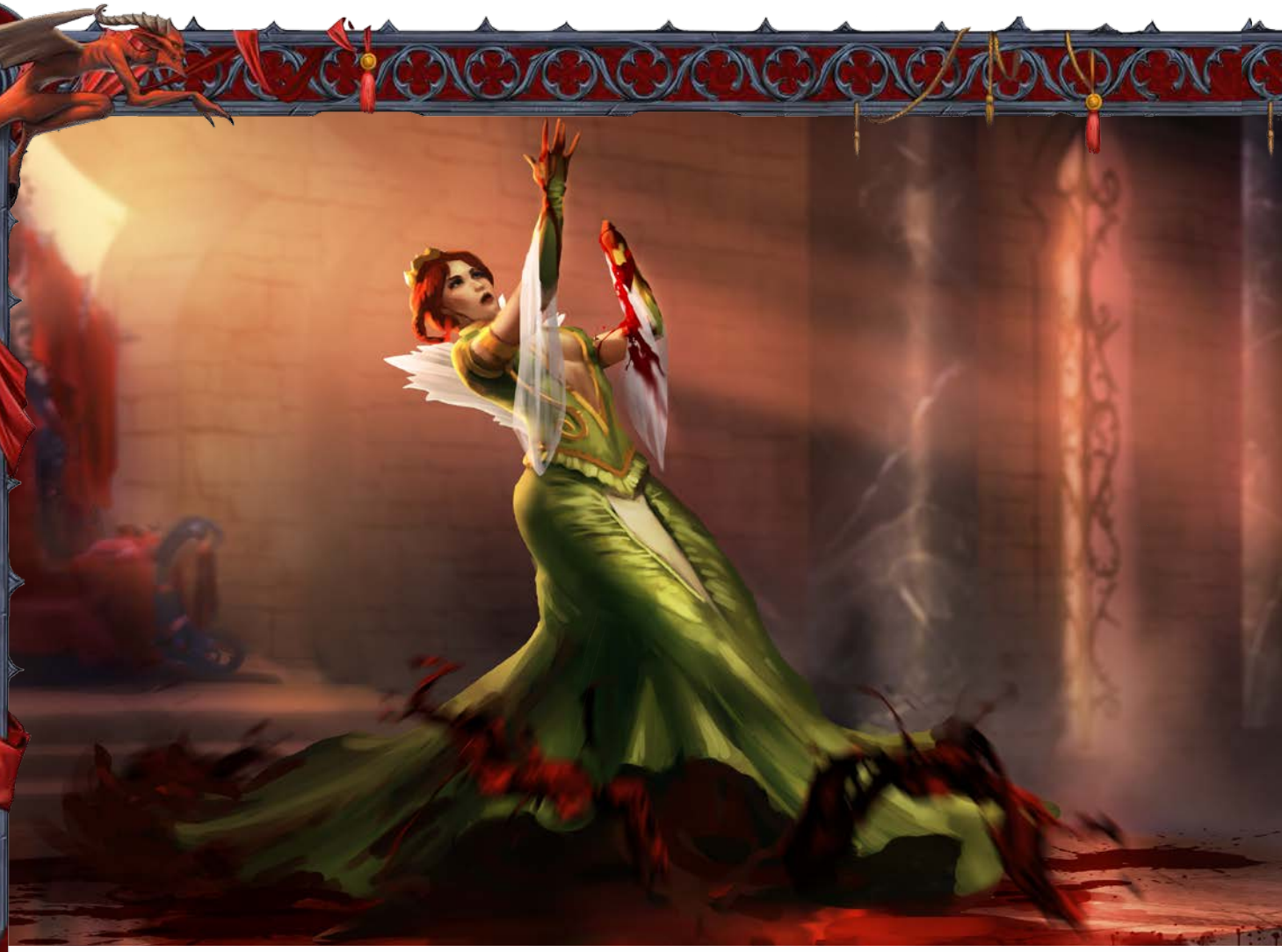
XP 4,800 each

hp 99 each (see page 347)

Hazard: Near each murder hole are ceramic urns, every one filled with a colony of green slime (*Core Rulebook* 416). Upending an urn through a murder hole is a standard action. Alternately, a solid blow against an urn that shatters it (hardness 4, hp 8) causes the green slime within to splash out in a 5-foot spread around the urn.

A55 Stage Hall

The ceiling of this hall is open, revealing the polished balustrade of a balcony thirty feet above and the interior of a lantern dome an additional thirty feet above the balcony. A colonnade along the room's perimeter supports the balcony and casts a deep shadow on the walls of this hall. Along the southwest side of the room is a theatrical stage built atop a wooden platform.



This hall is used to host small, private shows in the keep for standing guests or seated monarchs to enjoy. The stage was also used as a place for musicians to perform; their music wells up into the grand salon above (area **A72**).

A cleverly hidden peephole from the royal bedchamber (area **A59**) looks out over the stage; the hole can be discovered with a successful DC 30 Perception check.

A56 Arbiter's Chambers (CR 9)

Colorful tapestries depicting complex geometric and spiraling patterns adorn the walls of this room, and the floor is carpeted with a deep scarlet rug. A large bed sits against the southeastern wall, while a reading desk with several candles and books atop it sits opposite the only door into the chamber.

Creature: Once an area used to store props for the stage hall, this room is now the personal quarters of Arbiter of Allegiance Vavana Dhatri, the woman responsible for the training and torment of new Gray Maidens. Although she wasn't present in Deathhead Vault when the PCs invaded it back in Chapter 4, they may well have investigated her room there and no doubt will recognize her decor.

Vavana is most likely to encounter the PCs in the throne room (area **A52**), but if they find her here, she's poring over her spellbooks or relaxing on her bed. She reacts to intruders with rage and indignation and attacks on sight.

Once, long ago, Vavana loved her brother Ishani, but those days are long behind her. She's spent the past several years facing prejudice and sexism during her grueling time as a student at the Acadamae, and without her mother's support to help bolster her through these tough times adjusting to her new life in Korvosa, she emerged from her training a bitter and cruel woman. She isn't sure who recommended her talents to Queen Ileosa, but she took to the role she was offered with eagerness. As Arbiter of Allegiance, Vavana helped craft the methods of torture, blackmail, and mind control Ileosa uses to ensure loyalty among her Gray Maidens—and Vavana's enjoyment of that task increasingly led her to clash with the order's leader, Sabina.

When Ishani contacted her recently in an attempt to reconcile with her, Vavana saw it not as a chance at redemption but an opportunity to provide a particularly ironic soul to one of Togomor's latest creations. If the PCs happen to be accompanied by her brother Ishani, or if they confront her about what she's done to her

brother, she laughs disdainfully and observes merely that Togomor will need to build a new "house" for her brother's soul now.

VAVANA DHATRI **CR 9**

XP 6,400

hp 88 (see page 364)

Treasure: Vavana's spellbooks are on the table—they contain all of the spells she has prepared plus an additional 1d4 spells of each level she can cast. The eight tapestries on the walls are each worth 500 gp.

A57 Royal Foyer

The door to this room is made of strong wood and locked with an *arcane lock* (CL 16th) that can be bypassed with the passphrase "Long live the queen!" The door is decorated with the Arabasti crest.

This cozy foyer is furnished with tapestries, carpets, and a fine mahogany bench. A table near the bench displays three silver platters of cheeses, fruits, and small loaves of fresh bread. A crystal decanter of deep red wine sits next to the platters.

Treasure: The three silver platters are minor magical items that keep any foodstuffs placed on them fresh and unsoiled; each platter is worth 500 gp. The decanter of wine is worth a further 500 gp, although the wine within is unremarkable.

A58 Royal Baths

This chamber is dominated by a lavishly decorated marble bath filled with steaming water. A large silver mirror hangs on the southwest wall above a short counter covered with vials of perfume, unguents, and grooming tools. To the northeast, a long but shallow planter box gives a leafy green vine a place to root—the vine grows along the walls of the chamber, and its deep crimson flowers fill the room with a sweet floral scent. A stained-glass window featuring the Arabasti crest is set in the wall to the southwest.

This bath chamber served Queen Ileosa well over the past several months, giving her a private place to relax after long days of despotism and cruelty. The chamber is protected by a permanent *mage's private sanctum* effect (CL 16th). The marble bathtub is a magical item that cannot be removed from the room without destroying it. The tub remains full of water at all times, and the water's temperature, scent, and purity can be controlled by anyone within the tub as a standard action.

Treasure: The exotic perfumes, creams, and grooming devices on the counter are worth 1,200 gp in all.

A59 Royal Bedroom (CR 16)

The walls of this bedroom are paneled with darkwood planks and decorated with elaborate tapestries and hanging silks. A canopied bed looms to the northeast, while to the southwest stand a desk and a stuffed armchair. Stained-glass windows along the southwest wall depict complex patterns of swirling reds, fiery oranges, and bright yellows.

A peephole on the wall over the bed (hidden by a hanging crimson tapestry but obvious to anyone who moves the tapestry aside) looks out over the stage in area **A55**. Although the chamber appears lived in, Ileosa has moved most of her personal effects to her temporary domicile in the Sunken Queen. The bed here serves the false Ileosa as a place to rest, but the chamber is also the lair of a far more dangerous menace.

Creature: Sermignatto is the most insidious villain in the castle. This belier devil patrols the keep from the Ethereal Plane, peering out into this world through the eyes of his favorite puppet, the bloatmage Togomor. Sermignatto prefers to watch the PCs do battle so he can learn their tactics before physically manifesting. If that means they kill off several devils, the false Ileosa, or even Togomor before he chooses to make himself known, Sermignatto is fine with that—it's far better to know your enemies than to expose yourself too early to unknown powers, after all! He confronts the PCs early if they attempt to infiltrate the castle via the Ethereal Plane, but otherwise he waits until either the PCs reach this chamber or they defeat both the false Ileosa and Togomor before attacking. Although Sermignatto and his tactics are presented here, he could in theory be encountered anywhere in the castle. If the PCs fight the belier devil elsewhere, use his tactics here as a baseline for running an encounter with him.

Known in some dusty, moldering texts as the Lord of Bloody Quicksands, Sermignatto is an ancient evil indeed. As with many of his fellow belier devils, his name has another meaning: just as Malacoda means "Bad Tail" and Rubicante means "Red One," Sermignatto means "Leech Master." Sermignatto enjoys meddling with the mortals of the Material Plane, and has done so for a very long time. His interests in this region date back to Thassilon, where he served for a time at Runelord Sorshen's side. The bloatmage Togomor is Sermignatto's latest project, a detestable man already consigned to Hell. With a bit of subtle guidance, Sermignatto hopes to cultivate Togomor for a particularly painful afterlife by encouraging him to make certain horrific decisions. He encouraged the bloatmage to approach Ileosa and offer her his services as seneschal, but now the devil has become far more

entranced by Ileosa than by Togomor, seeing in her many parallels with his ancient mistress, Sorshen.

SERMIGNATTO **CR 16**

XP 76,800

Belier devil (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 85)

hp 212

TACTICS

During Combat Sermignatto remains hidden on the Ethereal Plane until Togomor is slain, at which point he manifests here in the Material Plane. As soon as he does, he uses *demand* on a PC he's familiar with (possibly via Togomor) to attempt to compel that PC to seek the devil out here, alone. If the PC manages to do so, Sermignatto tries to possess that PC to wreak havoc on the party from within. If forced into combat, the belier devil uses his spell-like abilities, keeping his distance from the PCs if he can via flight. If forced into melee, he uses *mass suggestion* to suggest to the PCs that they fight him one at a time—the belier devil enjoys one-on-one fights, since they give him more time to enjoy the sensation of strangling mortal throats.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 40 hit points, Sermignatto decides it is time to abandon the Material Plane for a while and attempts to escape back to Hell via *plane shift*. He does not consider returning to Korvosa for many years to come—certainly not as long as the PCs live.

SERMIGNATTO

A60 Sabina's Room

This bedchamber seems almost clinical in its sparse decor. A dressing table, an empty armor stand, an empty sword rack, and a narrow bed are the only furnishings here.

This chamber belongs to Sabina, although the leader of the Gray Maidens did not spend much time here before she staged her bogus attack on the PCs earlier. She returned here only to catch a few fitful hours of sleep each night, spending the majority of her days on patrol.

The secret door in the west corner can be found with a successful DC 30 Perception check.

A61 Gray Tower Landing

The stairs here descend to area **A32** and ascend to the wide balcony at area **A76**.

A62 Gray Tower Oubliette

The iron door to this cell features a shuttered eyehole that can be opened from the outside. Inside, the nearly empty room is decorated with a straw pallet, a small table, and a stool.

Although currently empty, this oubliette was built to hold special prisoners of the crown. Over the years, few of Korvosa's monarchs had reason to use this room, but Ileosa imprisoned enemies she wished to keep close for personal torment many times. If during the course of your particular game an NPC has been captured by Ileosa, he could be found here, shaken and on the verge of starvation.

The room is warded by a permanent *dimensional lock* (CL 16th).

A63 Reservoir

A pool of water stands in the middle of this chamber. A pair of stone basins stands in the west and south corners, and a series of stone cisterns take up most of the southeast wall.

As the castle reservoir, the 120-foot-deep cistern is filled with water. Numerous lead pipes branch off from the shaft, leading to various chambers on the lower floors to provide running water to kitchens, baths, and other areas.

FOURTH FLOOR

The fourth floor features several large balconies that house siege machines and a fair amount of grotesque statuary. The central portion, built entirely from wood, once served as a barracks for the Sable Company and as a place for the royalty to host gala events. Of late, this section of the castle has been claimed by the queen's few remaining Red Mantis allies.

A64 Break Room

This room is furnished with tables, chairs, and stools, and was used as a place for servants to gather and rest while working on either the third or fourth floor. The stairs here lead down to area **A53**.

A65 Gatehouse Upper Gallery

This long hall seems to have once been used as an armory, for several empty weapon racks still stand along its walls in places. However, a huge, fetid heap of rags, marsh grass, and partially eaten bodies fills the far end of the room, and deep scratches mar the walls. A large section of ceiling over the heap has been ripped open.

The mound of rags and filth served the black dragon Zarmangarof as a lair. Much to the dragon's impotent rage, Ileosa did not allow him to keep any treasure here. The fact that Zarmangarof barely fit in the relatively narrow hall and was rarely allowed the opportunity to go outside to stretch his wings only served to further frustrate the charmed dragon.

A66 Trophy Hall

The walls here are covered by dozens of trophies ranging from deer and elk to aurochs and wyvern heads.

A67 Main Entrance Balcony

This large balcony overlooks the stairs to the gate and the northeast side of the Grand Mastaba. Several large gargoyles crouch on the battlements, looking down the walls like watchful sentinels. A catapult sits near the battlement edge to the northeast.

The catapult, as with those placed elsewhere on the castle's balconies, is fully functional and has a dozen rounds of ammunition stacked nearby. This is where the horned devil Mavrokeras (see area **A94**) lies in wait if the alarm is raised and the PCs approach via the main stairs. If the PCs wander out here without being stealthy, the devil has a relatively good chance of spotting them if he's on one of his patrols (20% chance when the PCs enter this area).

A68 Empty Library

The walls of this dusty room are lined with empty oak bookcases emblazoned with the crest of the Sable Company.

A69 Game Room

This polygonal room is illuminated by three windows set in deep, tall niches. To either side of each niche are two white marble statues on high pedestals. Each of the six three-foot-tall statues depicts a woman in the same pose, hands high above her head and clutching an object. The statue on the left of the northwest niche grasps a large key, while the one to the right holds an open book. Proceeding clockwise through the room, the statues near to the northeast niche hold a shield and a star, and the ones near the southeast niche hold a hammer and a crown. In the middle of the room is a round table with six chairs. A small wooden case sits on the table.

The statues symbolize the suits of a harrow deck. This is where King Eodred II often met with his half-brother Venster to play cards or entertain each other by performing harrow readings. The small case on the table contains a simple and well-worn harrow deck. If the case is opened, a sudden wind blows through the room, causing the cards to fly into a vortex near the ceiling in the north corner of the room for a moment before they flutter to the floor. All of the cards land face down except for the Midwife card, which lands up on the ceiling in strange violation of gravity until it is plucked away from its resting spot. With a successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check, a character recalls that this card represents the arrival of new life or new information. This strange manifestation is created by Venster's ghost in the room above in a desperate attempt to get the PCs' attention and lure them upward; see areas **A88** and **A89** for more details.

This room was once connected to Venster's attic apartment above via a ladder in the north corner. After Venster's "disappearance," the ladder and trapdoor in the ceiling were removed and the resulting hole closed with *stone shape*. A successful DC 35 Perception check reveals the different texture here (a PC examining the ceiling gains a +10 bonus once the Midwife card attaches to the spot). A PC who succeeds at a DC 23 Spellcraft check recognizes the use of *stone shape* to close an opening in the ceiling.

A70 Buttress Balcony

This balcony lies atop the castle's garderobe shaft. A trapdoor in the middle of the floor allows waste to be dropped down the shaft. One of the light catapults of the castle is positioned here. The chances of being spotted by Mavrokeras here are the same as for area **A67**.

A71 Catwalk (CR 8)

This open-topped catwalk overlooks a sloping section of roof. The edge of the balcony is hedged by a brass railing.

Creatures: A Red Mantis assassin is always posted here as a guard; the assassin clings to the roof just 7 feet above the door in area **A72** and, unless noticed, does not attack the PCs as they pass through but rather stalks them, awaiting a good chance to strike one character who becomes separated from the group. If discovered, the assassin tries to flee to area **A72** to join the group there.

RED MANTIS ASSASSIN **CR 8**

XP 4,800

hp 78 (see page 144)

A72 Grand Salon (CR 16)

The wooden floor, walls, and ceiling of this large hall present a rich and harmonic scheme of decorations. The twenty-five-foot-high ceiling is supported by pillars inlaid with ivory and partially hidden by a hanging forest of silk draperies in the colors of autumn. Near the walls, these draperies reach down to the floor in cascades of deep red and yellowish-orange silk. Circular crimson couches sit around the base of the pillars, with matching stuffed stools and low ebony tea tables with stained-glass tops. In the middle of the hall are an empty space that serves as a dance floor and a balustrade opening to the stage hall below.

This large space, once a mess hall and mustering area for the Sable Company, was converted by Ileosa into a great salon for private parties and celebrations. The opening in the floor overlooks the stage hall below (area **A55**).

Creatures: After the PCs raided Deathhead Vault during Chapter 4, Ileosa extended an invitation to her Red Mantis allies to take up residence on this floor of Castle Korvosa. The assassins readily agreed, and were soon thereafter joined by Mistress Kayltanya, the commander of their previous leader, Cinnabar. The assassins who have remained in Korvosa have been itching for a chance to exact revenge, yet Kayltanya has forbidden any such action. The PCs have already proven adept at defeating Red Mantis agents, so she has ordered her subordinates to remain patient until Ileosa finishes her work in the Sunken Queen and Kayltanya can secure additional funds from the queen to justify calling in more assassins from the south. Of course, the PCs' arrival in the castle changes everything, and if they can take out the PCs, Kayltanya will have a much less embarrassing report to issue to the Blood Mistress of the Red Mantis when she returns home to Mediogalti.

The Red Mantises have erected large hammocks high up along the ceiling, concealed by the hanging silks. If the castle's alarm has not been raised, 1d4 of the assassins sleep in their hammocks while the others stand against the walls, hidden and observant. Otherwise, all five assassins wait near the ceiling in their hammocks for the chance to strike. Kayltanya herself waits in area **A73**, but once she hears combat erupt here, she swiftly joins the battle. Once a fight begins, the assassins do their best to fight in pairs, with the fifth assassin holding back in hiding if possible to line up a sneak attack with a thrown dagger at a spellcaster, timing the throw in an attempt to disrupt a spell being cast.

KAYLTANYA **CR 15**

XP 51,200

hp 159 (see page 446)

RED MANTIS ASSASSINS (5) **CR 8**

XP 4,800

hp 78 (see page 144)

A73 Bar

The doors opening into this enclosed area are made of wood-framed stained-glass. The room is furnished with sturdy tables and high stools, and numerous bottles, crystal goblets, mugs, and other drinking implements are stored on the shelves lining the walls. The air here is strangely cool and moist. A hammock hangs from the rafters of the chamber.

The temperature and humidity of this room are regulated by a minor but permanent magical effect designed to keep the room from becoming too hot, allowing this small room to double as a wine cellar. Most of the good alcohol once stored here is long gone. The hammock is where Kayltanya sleeps, but she is encountered here only if the PCs manage to avoid raising any alarms and engaging the assassins in area **A72**.

A74 Smoking Hall

Two long benches face each other across this hall. Next to each stands a pair of brass, ivory, and glass hookahs, all of which are empty.

This section of the grand salon has been set aside for smoking pleasures, although it hasn't been used since Ileosa closed off the palace.

A75 Sunset Room

This room has three large fretwork windows that open on the northwest wall. There are benches along the walls and a round tea table in the middle.

This room is where Eodred II observed the sunset during his last days, unknowingly sipping more of his wife's poison in his final cups of tea.

A76 Great Balcony

The largest balcony of the castle, this L-shaped open space connects the main towers of the keep with the great salon of the fourth floor. Three of the keep's catapults stand on the balcony. The chances of being spotted by Mavrokeras here are the same as for area **A67**.

A77 Domina's Tower Entrance

An iron door blocks the entrance to this small tower—the door is kept locked with an *arcane lock* (CL 16th). The room inside is empty, but is the only easy way to enter the hidden chamber above; a permanent *phase door* in the ceiling 20 feet above acts as a hidden trap door. Anyone touching an Arabasti family symbol (be it from a signet ring, banner, scroll, shield, or other source) to the *phase door* can use it to enter area **A90** above.

Attic and Towers

The attic of the keep is a huge, wooden structure that was rebuilt three times during the rule of the Arabasti dynasty. Due to its dry and airy environment, the attic is used as extra storage space for perishable raw materials.

A78 Vinegar Attic

This room smells of vinegar and herbs. Scores of numbered wooden caskets placed in rows on long wooden stands line the walls, along with many glass bottles and ceramic jugs of various sizes.

The caskets contain 10 gallons of balsamic vinegar, and are marked with numbers from 1 to 25 (years of aging). There's nothing of any real value here, so the room is rarely, if ever, patrolled, and makes a relatively good hiding place.

A79 Construction Storage

This room contains several kegs full of tar, wooden planks, metal roof plates, ceramic tiles, and other spare construction material.

A section of floor at the far end of the room has been torn away, leaving a gap that overlooks the main entrance. This relatively recent modification allowed the dragon Zarmangarof access to and from his lair in area **A65**.

A80 Wool Storage

This long room is stacked full of wool bales. There are also a pair of floor looms; several castle spinning wheels with ivory finials; and racks of carders, extra bobbins and shuttles, warping boards, and other spinning and weaving equipment.

A81 Empty Attic

This attic contains only a sorghum broomstick, a couple of upturned empty kegs, and a pile of old mattresses infested with lice.

A82 Grain Storage

This room contains an emergency supply of grain (corn, wheat, rye, and so on) for the keep.

A83 Suspended Bridges (CR 8)

These two identical wooden bridges (areas **A83a** and **A83b**) are suspended 30 feet over the roofs and balconies of the castle below, and respectively connect the Gray Tower (area **A95**) to the castle's main body and the Seawatch Tower (area **A93**) to the Epochal Tower.

Creature: A Red Mantis assassin is always posted at each bridge, hiding in the shadows near the entrance to the towers. Unless noticed, she watches PCs as they pass, then stalks them and awaits an opportune moment to strike at a lone PC. If discovered, the assassin attempts to flee to area **A72** to join the group there.

RED MANTIS ASSASSIN **CR 8**

XP 4,800

hp 78 (see page 144)

A84 Main Attic

This airy, pillared area under the keep's roof is almost empty. The excellent construction of the roof plating and of the dormer windows keeps the room dry.

A narrow hallway to the southeast leads to a large circular stair that ascends the Epochal Tower to areas **A91** and **A92**.

A85 Pigeonry

Half of this room is filled with pigeon cages, empty except for a thick layer of pigeon corpses lining the bottoms.

A86 Junk Storage

This room is packed with old and dusty odds and ends from a century of the keep's history. The clutter in the room includes old clothes, toys, tools, pieces of furniture, lamps, extra lumber, and broken tools.

The clutter in this room is heaped high against the northeastern door, hiding it completely from view. A successful DC 20 Perception check reveals the door's presence; clearing the junk away from the door takes an hour of work.

A87 Low Ceiling

The ceiling here is just five feet tall, and the room is full of cobwebs and dusty, blackened beams that jut here and there from the walls.

A88 Venster's Apartment

This room is dusty and has been abandoned for a while, but it shows an unexpected level of comfort. A large bed sits in a corner, and there are a nice table with two chairs, a desk with a stuffed armchair, a lamp, and a stove. On the northwest wall is a glass showcase full of rare decks of cards. Within the showcase are at least fifty different decks, all displayed with care and competence, usually with several pieces laid face up and with a matching leather, ivory, or wooden case. What looks like a partially melted stone trap door sits in the floor in the northern corner, and a chamber pot sits behind a partially folded screen to the south.

This room once served Venster Arabasti as home. The shut-in typically left this room only to visit with his brother in the game room below (area **A69**), which was also where the servants generally left his meals. Venster kept his own chambers clean and rarely, if ever, allowed anyone into this room; it took Ileosa many months to secure his trust enough that he allowed her to visit him here, although even then he kept the existence of area **A89** secret from her.

The secret door leading to area **A89** is very cleverly hidden, requiring a successful DC 40 Perception check to discover. Yet only a few moments after the PCs arrive here, a furtive scratching sound comes from this wall at the door's location. If the PCs don't discover the door on their own, Venster uses his telekinesis ability to open the door a crack, hoping to lure them into area **A89** where he can contact them directly.

Treasure: The card collection in the showcase is worth 2,000 gp.

A89 Venster's Boxroom (CR 6)

This dusty room contains a bed, a large armchair, a one-legged table, and a silver lantern. On the table, near the lantern, sits a dusty harrow deck in an elegant redwood case.

As the PCs enter this cleverly hidden room, the temperature drops by several degrees. A few moments later, a strange, roiling mist rises from the cards in the case, causing them to flutter and dance on the table as if in a small breeze. The mist takes on a vaguely humanoid form—that of an older man with horns on his brow. This is the ghost of the tiefling Venster Arabasti.

Creature: Venster's spirit is tormented by guilt at his role in the death of his half-brother. Unfortunately, he is unable to fully manifest at this time because he is trapped here while his mortal remains fester in the dungeons below. As he spies the PCs, he reaches out to them and whispers in a gravelly voice, "Bring me my bones… they rot so far below… bring me my bones… I can help you if you bring me my bones…"

Until the PCs gather Venster's remains from area **A11**, he can do little else (unless he's attacked—see his tactics on page 373). The strain of speaking (and possibly of opening the secret door to this room) swiftly causes the ghost to fade away, but after a few hours he can manifest again for a similarly short time. Fortunately for the PCs, Venster's close ties to the harrow and the mysterious forces surrounding it allow Zellara a bit more insight into the situation. She uses empathy to urge the PC who carries her harrow deck to seek out Venster's bones; once Venster's manifestation here occurs, she can sense where those bones lie, and if the PC follows her empathic urgings, she can lead the party directly to area **A11** (although this might lead the PCs through other dangerous areas in the castle).

VENSTER ARABASTI **CR 6**

XP 2,400

Male tiefling ghost aristocrat 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 264, 144)

N Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14 (+4 deflection, +3 Dex)

hp 57 (6d8+30)

Fort +6, **Ref** +5, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, incorporeal, rejuvenation; **Immune** undead traits; **Resist** cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee corrupting touch +7 touch (6d6)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +10)

1/day—*darkness*

Special Attacks telekinesis (DC 17)

TACTICS

During Combat If attacked, Venster is able to focus his undead nature enough to fight back, using his telekinesis ability to force intruders out of his abode or lashing out with his corrupting touch.

Morale Venster fights until destroyed, only to rejuvenate swiftly after such destruction. When he rejuvenates, he does not attack again until he is himself attacked.

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 21

Feats Deceitful, Skill Focus (Disguise), Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Bluff +17, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +18, Fly +11, Perception +18, Sense Motive +10, Stealth +25

Languages Common, Infernal, Shoanti, Varisian

SPECIAL ABILITY

Rejuvenation (Ex) Venster's rejuvenation works more swiftly than that of most ghosts. When destroyed, he rejuvenates after 2d6 rounds. His method of permanent destruction is detailed below, under Development.

Development: Once Venster's remains are brought into this room, the ghost manifests again, but this time not as a vague misty outline. Venster can now manifest as a full ghost, appearing as a translucent elderly tiefling man with a deck of harrow cards that periodically flies out of his hands to spiral around him before returning to his clutches. He regards the PCs with kind but sorrowful eyes before he speaks. His first words are thanks for taking his bones out of that "dreadful dark room below." He goes on to speak of Ileosa, of how she murdered his half-brother with poison, and of his own shameful role in that act. As long as Ileosa continues to live, he remains bound here, incapable of emerging from this room. He is imprisoned here by his own shame and guilt and thus unable to directly move against her.

The PCs can be Venster's salvation. While the ghost can fill them in on how Ileosa murdered Eodred II, providing proof of something the PCs likely already suspect anyway, his true value is in what he knows of her plans. Although he is imprisoned here, he could sometimes sense the queen's thoughts and desires when she was in the castle. The knowledge tormented him, but now he realizes that it was all simply preparing him for this day, for his chance at redemption. If what he can tell the PCs can undo what he helped set into motion, he feels that he can move on to face Pharasma in the afterlife and accept his fate.

In particular, Venster knows that Ileosa plans on using potent magic found in a place called the "Sunken Queen" to achieve eternal youth. Although he doesn't know exactly what this entails, he does know that the ritual is based on

VENSTER ARABASTI

ancient magic that requires the lifeblood of an army of unknowing sacrifices. In short, he fears that Ileosa has been grooming the citizens of Korvosa to be those sacrifices she needs to achieve immortality. He urges the PCs to seek her out at the Sunken Queen and stop her before she can complete the ritual, warning them that even now he can feel strange and potent forces gathering in the spirit world as she makes ready to take the final step.

Venster quickly grows frustrated if the PCs begin asking more questions; his grief, madness, and undead state have wreaked havoc on his mind, and he finds it difficult not only to remember what he knew in life, but also to speak aloud of what he's learned by spying on the snatches of Ileosa's desires and thoughts he's been able to "overhear." He does suggest that the PCs seek out his "mother's tower," a place where the monarchs of the Arabasti line could go for peace and solitude. He speaks of Domina's study (area **A90**)—he has sensed Ileosa in this location several times, and often her most notable bursts of sudden inspiration and power occurred in this chamber. If you wish, you can use Venster's insight into Ileosa's mind to answer any other lingering questions the PCs may have.

The greatest gift that Venster Arabasti can offer the PCs is the grace of the spirit world. He explains that many have died in Korvosa due to Ileosa's whim and cruelties, and that each death has bolstered his grief and desire to set things right. Further, the PCs themselves carry with them a spirit of their own—Zellara. At this point, the owner of *Zellara's harrow deck* suddenly feels an empathic burst of excitement and fear from Zellara, for she has suddenly realized her final role in the protection of Korvosa. Venster explains further that by using *Zellara's harrow deck* as a focus, he and Zellara can harness the spiritual power and energy of those who have died at Ileosa's hand or through her orchestration into that deck, transforming it into a powerful tool and method for the spirit world to grant the PCs further insight and power.

Venster goes on to warn the PCs that not all of the spirits are kindly ones: many were insane or cruel in their own lives, and there is, unfortunately, no way to exclude them from this infusion of power. He and Zellara can moderate their influence, though, by focusing them through the traditions and mysticism of the harrow. In effect, Zellara and Venster can use their own undead natures and the psychic energy of all those dead who blame Ileosa for their fate to transform *Zellara's harrow deck* into a powerful and unique *harrow deck of many things*.

If the PCs agree to this, Zellara and Venster both manifest in the room, and the cards of *Zellara's harrow deck* fly out of their container to spiral and spin in the air between them. As the ghosts concentrate, the anger and wrath of the city's dead siphon through them to infuse the cards, which begin glowing brighter and brighter. After only a few rounds, with a final flash of light, the cards settle in a neat and tidy stack on the table, at which point both ghosts vanish.

At this point, both Zellara and Venster have bonded with the haunted harrow deck, which has transformed into a *harrow deck of many things*—see page 426 for more details on this potent magical item. If the PCs choose not to draw any cards at all from the deck, this does not bar the ghosts from moving on, and their spirits still continue to the Boneyard for their final rewards.

Once all of the PCs who wish to have drawn from the deck, Zellara manifests one last time before them. Her expression is one of hope as she smiles at each of the PCs and gives the one who's carried her deck through the campaign a single ectoplasmic kiss before she fades from view. Her final purpose served, Zellara finally receives her eternal rest. Her harrow deck is now nothing more than a standard, nonmagical deck of cards. Unspent harrow points from this chapter's initial reading remain available for the PCs, but the deck itself can never again be used to perform a similar special harrow reading.

Story Award: If the PCs learn what Venster has to tell them and manage to lay his spirit to rest, award them 51,200 XP.

A90 Domina's Study

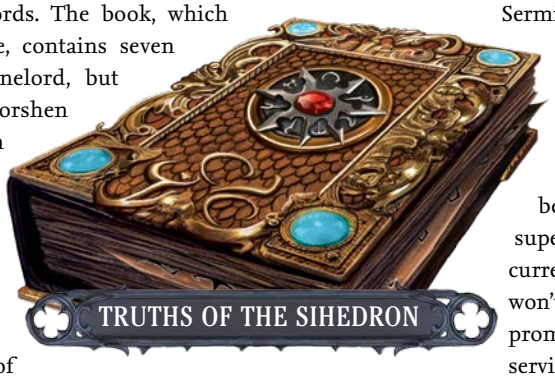
This room contains a large bookshelf filled with dozens of books and scrolls. A desk and chair stand nearby. Sitting on the desk is a single large book with a black leather cover. The walls of this study have been decorated—recently by the look—with dozens of spiky runes.

This room has long served the Arabasti family as a secret retreat—only a few knew of this place's existence. The only method of entering and leaving this room is via the *phase door* at area **A77**, although teleportation works as well once a character knows of the room's existence.

Ileosa was fond of using this remote and secure chamber as both a place to meditate on the strange urges growing in her mind and a meeting room where she could interact with infernal callers. It was here that she first met with Sermignatto, where she (with the aid of the bdellavritra and Togomor) incorporated the fangs of Kazavon into the *Crown of Fangs*, and where she signed the contract to bind an erinyes to her soul. She first developed her plans to poison the king here, drafted her initial letter of contact to the Red Mantis here, and plotted out the use of blood veil to murder many of Korvosa's undesirables at this very desk. Many of the scrolls and books here are on subjects connected to Ileosa's plans, and the PCs can use this information

to not only prove the depths of her cruelty, but also to answer any lingering questions about earlier events in the campaign as you see fit.

The large book on the desk is an immense volume titled, in Infernal, *Truths of the Sihedron*. The book's contents (also written in Infernal) were penned by none other than Sermignatto himself, and chronicle the various cruelties and torments inflicted upon the people of Thassilon by the runelords. The book, which smells faintly of brimstone, contains seven chapters, one for each runelord, but the chapter on Runelord Sorshen has been heavily notated in Ileosa's impeccably fine penmanship. Ileosa seems to have been particularly obsessed with something called the *Everdawn Pool*, a device she believes still exists today in the ruins of the Sunken Queen. According to her many notes, this magical artifact granted Sorshen her immortality, and the gathering of samples of blood from thousands of "supplicants" is but the first step to replicating this achievement. Once the *Everdawn Pool* is ready, it can draw forth the lifeblood of these thousands to infuse a single creature with eternal youth. In short, Ileosa intends to sacrifice many of Korvosa's citizens to attain immortality. Among the papers are lists of all the people whose blood she has surreptitiously gathered. Feel free to include the PCs or some of their allies on this list, with indications that Ileosa's agents (or perhaps the queen herself) gathered the few drops needed from any one of the countless battles the PCs engaged in during the course of their time in Korvosa.



Treasure: A search of the scrolls in this room turns up several powerful magic items, including a *scroll of banishment*, two *scrolls of binding*, a *scroll of etherealness*, a *scroll of gate*, a *scroll of greater planar ally*, a *scroll of greater planar binding*, and a *scroll of plane shift*. A copy of Ileosa's agreement with the Red Mantis assassins is found here as well—a document that has little monetary value but is priceless as hard evidence of Ileosa's true nature even to her most devoted followers. An elegant teak and ivory potion rack (itself worth 900 gp) contains 3 doses of fool's leprosy (see page 432) left over from the king's poisoning, along with a short note on how to administer the venom.

Another piece of treasure here might go unseen. Sitting on the top shelf of the bookcase inside a permanently invisible gold and ruby scroll tube worth 3,000 gp is an infernal contract between Ileosa and Sermignatto. A PC who succeeds at a DC 40 Perception check locates the scroll tube without using *see invisibility* or similar methods. Inside the scroll tube is a sheet of human-skin parchment containing a contract written in blood. The parchment is presented as Player Handout #6–3 on page 376.

While much of the contract is, by design, unknowable by mortal minds, a PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Knowledge (planes) check determines that, essentially, the devil Sermignatto has agreed to provide Ileosa with infernal aid, minions, and even a bound devil to augment Ileosa's body and mind in return for her promise to turn over part or all of Korvosa to the bdellavritra and his unspecified superiors once she has finished her current goals. Destroying the contract won't free Ileosa from the payment she promised or release the devils from her service, since a copy of the contract has been safely filed away in the Fallen Fastness in Dis.

A91 Epochal Tower Clockworks

This large, high-ceilinged room contains the mechanisms of the tower clock. The main body of the mechanism hangs from the middle of the ceiling and occupies most of the room's space. At floor level, the mechanism splits to join the gearboxes behind the three clock faces. A ladder leads up to a trap door above.

The wooden stairway runs down to the Epochal Tower stairs below, while the ladder leads up to the tower roof above (although the trap door is locked—see area **A92**). The mechanism must be manually wound once a month in order to stay operational. Of late, that duty has fallen to the horned devil Mavrokeras.

A92 Epochal Tower Roof

The top of the Epochal Tower is a massive, unfinished space built by Eodred II to accommodate a new, more grandiose clock for the castle—a project that may likely never see completion. This huge place is almost completely bare. The walls are partially fitted with wooden scaffolds and the floor is littered with construction materials and tools. A trap door leads down to area **A91**; this trap door is augmented by an *arcane lock* (CL 16th).

A93 Sable Company Guard Post

This open area once served as a watch post for the Sable Company. The stairs lead down to the tower at area **A83b**, while a ladder leads up to a trap door in the ceiling that leads to area **A94**.

MATERIAL PLANE, being the FOURTH Incarnation of the THIRD Cycle of Mortality, on file in Fallen Fastness 9485784,3728:7845,9888495.

This is a lawful contract between SERMIGNATTO, Lord of the Bloody Quicksands, and ILEOSA ARABASTI, honored Queen of the Mortal City of Korvosa.

HEREAFTER shall all agents of SERMIGNATTO be consigned to the rule of ILEOSA, such that the following agents of the Nine be bound by her word: MAVROKERAS; the brothers known as YALLOPS; the erinyes DECABBARA, EVEANIE, SUISHANI, and VERASIA; and all Imps and Lesser Bodies who report directly to the agents listed above.

IN ADDENDUM shall the erinyes heretic ZANZINARIA be BOUND body and mind to ILEOSA, forthwith to augment her flesh and spirit against all things vexing and unforeseen until such time as she might wither and die, whereupon such bondage shall be null and void.

In recompense, shall all pending debts held betwixt these agents of the Nine and SERMIGNATTO be declared null and cancelled by SERMIGNATTO in case of ILEOSA'S successful commitment to perform the following services on a forfeit basis:

1. Support and preparation for future expansion as deemed necessary and desirable to one whose name shall be found on file in Fallen Fastness 4420,40200:0,88490 upon the Salt Towers of Dis, whose name is struck from this contract yet known by the undersigned to be one whose hand guides these words.

2. Pursuant to her own goals, ILEOSA pledges the fundament and development of Korvosa as open ground and fertile soil for infernal use, as recorded by the Infinitium Charters and the Voiceless Vexations of the First-Flensed.

In code 9485784,3728.7845,9888495. Subject to Asmodeus's veto, honor to his name.

Signed in blood and bound by soul—

Ileosa Arabasti

HANDOUT #6-3

A94 Seawatch Tower (CR 16)

The top of the Seawatch Tower is the highest point in Korvosa. Here, tall windows provide a panoramic view of the surrounding city. The room contains a cumbersome bull's-eye lantern used for visual signaling. The door that opens onto the narrow, circular catwalk outside the tower is sealed with an *arcane lock* (CL 16th).

Creature: The landing is the favored perch of the horned devil Mavrokeras, who is under command to remain unseen via his *ring of invisibility* so as to not overly alarm the citizens of Korvosa during his frequent airborne patrols of the castle grounds. This cornugon serves Ileosa to pay an ancient debt to Sermignatto. Mavrokeras belongs to the so-called Needlehearted, a sect of philosophical devils that idealizes the concept of pain as the "Great Goad," the supreme urge of existence. Mavrokeras sees his spiked chain as an artist's tool, and makes elaborate compliments to it during combat, such as "Rip the veils of fasciae, Flesh Shredder! And flood the way to truth with waves of healing blood!" Mavrokeras is also the fiendish patron of the Black Horn, a cult of cannibals in the distant nation of Ustalav, although he hasn't had much contact with this cabal as of late.

MAVROKERAS **CR 16**

XP 76,800

Male horned devil (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 76)

hp 172

Gear *+1 unholy adamantine spiked chain, ring of invisibility*

A95 Gray Tower

The top of the Gray Tower, second-tallest tower of the keep, is currently abandoned. The door to the stairwell bears an *arcane lock* (CL 16th); the stairs beyond lead down to area **A83a**.

Aftershocks

Once the PCs defeat Castle Korvosa's defenders and have accomplished Cressida's goals, Castle Korvosa stands more or less empty. The Red Mantis assassins who remain in the region officially retreat, returning to Mediogalti Isle to report their failure to their commanders. The Gray Maidens disband, but the survivors do not vanish entirely. New sects of mercenaries will eventually rise, some seeking to avenge their fallen queen and some seeking other causes far beyond Korvosa's walls, but for the remainder of this campaign the Gray Maidens cease to be a threat. Of course, if the PCs don't press the advantage and continue to fight Ileosa, she will eventually return to reclaim her castle, but for now, the fate of Korvosa's most distinctive landmark is in the PCs' capable hands—or more likely, in the hands of their allies. As the PCs turn their attention west toward the Mushfens and the Sunken Queen, Cressida Kroft mobilizes the remnants of the Korvosan Guard to reestablish order. Other leaders, such as Neolandus or Endrin, can step forward to help as well, but for the moment Sabina remains in the shadows. Korvosa's citizens have been through a lot lately, and until Ileosa is defeated for certain, they aren't quite ready to celebrate, but Cressida is swift to note that it's not too early to begin the job of rebuilding. For the most part, you can assume that the task of repairing damage to the city, reinstating the Korvosan Guard, and bringing order back to the streets is handled by the various NPCs the PCs have allied with over the campaign, leaving them to focus their unique powers and skill sets where they're most needed: the Sunken Queen and its latest inhabitant, Queen Ileosa.

MAVROKERAS

PART 3

LEGACY OF BLOOD

Although reaching 8 or more Rebellion Points as a result of numerous assaults on Castle Korvosa can bring the heroes great fame and the city's support, the PCs should have also learned by this point that Ileosa is attempting to become immortal, and they might even know that the true threat to Korvosa has yet to be averted—if Ileosa is allowed to finish her ritual, thousands in Korvosa will die to grant her eternal youth. To stop this, the PCs must travel into the swamplands known as the Mushfens to confront Ileosa in a final battle at the Sunken Queen.

Clues regarding Ileosa's plans and her current location are scattered throughout Castle Korvosa, but the PCs could also learn that information through the use of divination magic. Some of this magic is blocked by the Sunken Queen's magical properties or the presence of the false Ileosa, but a tenacious or cunning party can still determine that their true quarry isn't in Castle Korvosa at all. Of course, bypassing the castle before assaulting the Sunken Queen is a foolish tactical move, since Ileosa can (and will) call upon her allies in the castle once she realizes the PCs are after her. A fight against Ileosa and her few current guardians at the Sunken Queen is tough enough, but if she gains the help of Togomor and several additional devils, who can teleport to the surrounding region and then swiftly come to their queen's aid, battles there might quickly grow out of control. Worse, such an attack enrages Ileosa enough that she orders her remaining minions in Korvosa to punish the citizens for the PCs' moves. Waves of executioners, be they Gray Maidens, Red Mantises, or devils, begin a city-wide massacre that ends only with the PCs' or the queen's death.

RUNE OF LUST

A far better plan would be to neutralize her allies who remain in Castle Korvosa and return the city to the rule of her nobles, arbiters, and magistrates; with things somewhat stable again in Korvosa, the PCs can effectively corner Ileosa in the Sunken Queen. When the PCs first start this final part of Curse of the Crimson Throne, a timer of sorts begins. Queen Ileosa needs only 10 more days to finish her ritual to gain extended youth, at which point thousands of Korvosans (and likely the PCs as well) will drop dead, their lives absorbed to grant the queen an equal number of years of vitality. You can adjust this deadline as you wish, and the PCs can (through their actions or inaction) adjust it as well. For example, if they attack the queen and she decides to spend some of the *Everdawn Pool*'s charges to create a replacement taniniver guardian, she'll need to spend a few extra days rebuilding the expended charges to continue her ritual. See area **B20** and the entry for the *Everdawn Pool* on page 433 for more details.

THE MUSHFENS

The Mushfens are a wild, dangerous region, and while the Sunken Queen is an infamous site, the shifting waterways make the exact route to its location difficult to track. The map drawn by Togomor found in the castle's scriptorium (area **A43**) places it in relation to a commonly known coastal landmark, the Greenrust Reef. With the map, a PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (geography) check can determine the route—without it, a successful DC 40 Knowledge (geography) check is required to find the pyramid. Flight makes locating the Sunken Queen easier, for spotting the structure from the air is relatively simple; a flying party gains a +30 bonus on the Knowledge (geography) check to successfully navigate to the Sunken Queen. A failed Knowledge (geography) check represents a loss of 12 hours—too many failed checks can thus put the queen dangerously close to finishing her ritual.

The Greenrust Reef is an odd, rocky formation on a sand bank a few hundred yards from the swampy coast of the Mushfens, 30 miles directly south of the Sunken Queen. The path indicated on the map as the "Trail of the Frog" is in fact a boggard route marked periodically by 18-inch-tall stones shaped like squatting, humanoid frogs. This trail leads north through the swamp. Following it on

foot with the aid of Togomor's map allows the PCs to make the journey without needing to attempt Survival checks; otherwise, a traveler along the Trail of the Frog must succeed at a DC 25 Survival check each hour to progress to the next marker on the trail. You can use the Mushfens Encounters table on page 465 to liven up this journey as you see fit, but eventually the PCs should find themselves drawing near to the ancient Thassilonian ruin known as the Sunken Queen. Of course, powerful PCs can use flight, *shadow walk*, or teleportation to shorten these distances and travel times.

B THE SUNKEN QUEEN

In ancient times, the Thassilonian monument known today as the Sunken Queen served Runelord Sorshen as a symbol of her enduring power and as the site for one of her greatest discoveries: the *Everdawn Pool* (see page 433).

In Sorshen's heyday, the majority of her realm of Eurythnia was fertile farmland. With the fall of Thassilon, much of her nation slipped into the sea, and most of what remained above the surface became the vast wetland known now as the Mushfens. Over the ages, the Sunken Queen began to capsize into the Mushfens, tilting 20 degrees toward the southeast before coming to rest on a shelf of solid bedrock under the swampland. The magical reinforcements that girded the structure kept it mostly intact—over the centuries, only one of its three metallic horns has collapsed into the surrounding swamp. As the PCs arrive at the site, read or paraphrase the following.

Surrounded by a grove of primeval mangroves and draped in sheets of moss and vines, the immense horns that top the Sunken Queen seem to claw at the sky like the talons of an gargantuan monster drowned in an abyss of mud. On the east side of the pyramid, which leans heavily into the marshy slough, one of the three original horns has collapsed, leaving a jagged, metallic stump. On the south side, barely dented by the elements and millennia of neglect, is a giant relief of a standing, naked woman, her lean, idealized figure immersed in murky water up to the knees.

The Sunken Queen is surrounded by a murky pond that acts much like a castle moat; the water drops to a depth of 40 feet along the deepest side of the structure. When Ileosa first arrived, she found the site to be the lair of an enormous devilfish named Beirawash that had grown too large to make it back to the sea. Trapped in the waters surrounding the Sunken Queen and bolstered by decades of exposure to the site's latent magical energies, this devilfish had long been worshiped as a god by a local tribe of boggards. Ileosa used her magic to charm Beirawash and several of the boggard tribe's champions, and in so doing became their new goddess. The boggards have taken to calling her "Mother Queen" and believe her to be the living incarnation of the figure carved on the side of the Sunken Queen. With their aid, Ileosa cleared away much of the undergrowth, mud, and debris surrounding the Sunken Queen and managed to find the original entrance about 40 feet underwater. Since then, she has created a smaller tunnel into the second level to allow quicker access to the interior, but had Togomor hide this entrance with a permanent *illusory wall* (CL 16th) months ago.

Aside from the main entrance and this smaller hidden side entrance, there are a few other methods the PCs can use to enter the structure. Air vents allow gaseous creatures to enter most rooms on the third level, but spotting these exits from outside is tricky, requiring a successful DC 40 Perception check. The structure's walls are enhanced via magic, increasing the stone's hardness to 24 and tripling its hit points to 1,620 hp per 5-foot square. In addition, the walls have the *ghost touch* special ability; they cannot be bypassed by incorporeal creatures or via passage through the Ethereal Plane. Finally, any attempt to teleport within, into, or out of the Sunken Queen requires a successful DC 32 caster level check. Otherwise, the spell fails and the teleporting creature takes 20d6 points of damage as his body is wrenched and twisted by the violently disrupted magic (a successful DC 24 Fortitude save halves this damage). Creatures that have bathed in the *Everdawn Pool* (this currently includes only Ileosa and her four erinyes furies, but back in the day it included Sorshen and a select few of her minions) can teleport into and out of the structure without risk.

The Sunken Queen's interior is made of hewn basalt blocks. The floors, walls, and ceilings are finished in white or green marble tile, and despite the structure's age, they are clean and unscathed. Unless otherwise indicated, there is no lighting in the chambers, although some of the rooms on the third floor receives dim natural lighting during the day. While the steep angle of the chamber's floor is unlikely to matter much to flying characters or to swimming characters in the flooded areas, it does make it navigating through the pyramid on foot difficult. The floor slopes down toward the southeast at a 20-degree angle. Movement along the floor requires a successful DC 15 Acrobatics check—remember that when a creature balances in this way, it is considered flat-footed. Whenever a walking creature fails one of these Acrobatics checks by 5 or more, it falls prone and slides to the southeast until it strikes a wall, taking 1d6 points of damage.

Unless otherwise noted, the ceiling height in the chambers averages 50 feet, while the ceiling height in passageways averages 25 feet. The first level of the Sunken Queen is completely flooded with swamp water, and the southeast section is buried entirely under layers of

SECOND LEVEL
B9
B10
B11
down
B8
B12
B13
up
B14
B7
THIRD LEVEL
up
B16
B19
B15
B17
B18
down
FOURTH LEVEL
N
down
B20
B. THE SUNKEN QUEEN
FIRST LEVEL
B5
B6
up
B2
B4
B1
B3
ONE SQUARE = 10 FEET

mud and silt. The second level is partially flooded, and non-flooded areas are clammy and damp. The third and fourth levels are dry and cozy, with their temperature and humidity maintained at comfortable levels by the structure's ancient magic. The Sunken Queen's design made flight, teleportation, or other alternate modes of movement a necessity, for the floors are connected only by open shafts without stairs or ladders to aid in navigation. Sorshen herself relied on magic items for flight in the Sunken Queen (as she couldn't cast transmutation spells like *fly* or *levitate*), but considered this an acceptable minor inconvenience—especially since she usually used teleportation spells to come and go from the structure.

Ileosa is currently undergoing a lengthy attunement process with the *Everdawn Pool* in area **B20**. As long as this process continues, her senses extend throughout the entirety of the Sunken Queen; she effectively has an unlimited number of *clairaudience/clairvoyance* sensors in all of the complex's chambers. She can still be fooled by Stealth, but her *true seeing* ability extends through these sensors. As soon she notices the PCs inside the Sunken Queen, she alerts her four erinyes furies, who in turn telepathically rally the structure's defenders. The primary guardians of the Sunken Queen are six boggard champions—these are the most powerful barbarians from several regional tribes, and were each initially recruited to Ileosa's cause via *charm monster*. The boggards are now loyal to their new queen, and swiftly move to intercept the PCs once they are ordered to do so.

BOGGARD CHAMPIONS (6) **CR 10**

XP 9,600 each

Boggard barbarian 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 37)

CE Medium humanoid (boggard)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 8, flat-footed 17 (+6 armor, +3 natural, –2 rage)

hp 150 each (11 HD; 3d8+8d12+85)

Fort +15, **Ref** +3, **Will** +8; +2 resistance bonus vs. confusion, insanity, polymorph, and lawful effects

Defensive Abilities fortification 25%, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2; **DR** 1/—

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee *+1 thundering greatclub* +19/+14 (1d10+11/19–20), sticky tongue +12 touch (special)

Special Attacks rage (22 rounds/day), rage powers (chaos totem[APG], clear mind, knockdown[APG], lesser chaos totem[APG])

TACTICS

During Combat The boggards rage on the first round and use their terrifying croak as soon as they encounter the PCs; the volume is enough to alert all nearby areas to the event. They use their tongues to keep archers, rogues, flying enemies, and spellcasters from gaining ranged advantages, and generally focus on one target per two boggards.

Morale The boggard champions fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 11, **Con** 23, **Int** 6, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 25

Feats Improved Critical (greatclub), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (greatclub)

Skills Escape Artist +2, Perception +17, Stealth +8 (+16 in swamps), Swim +13; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception, +8 Stealth in swamps

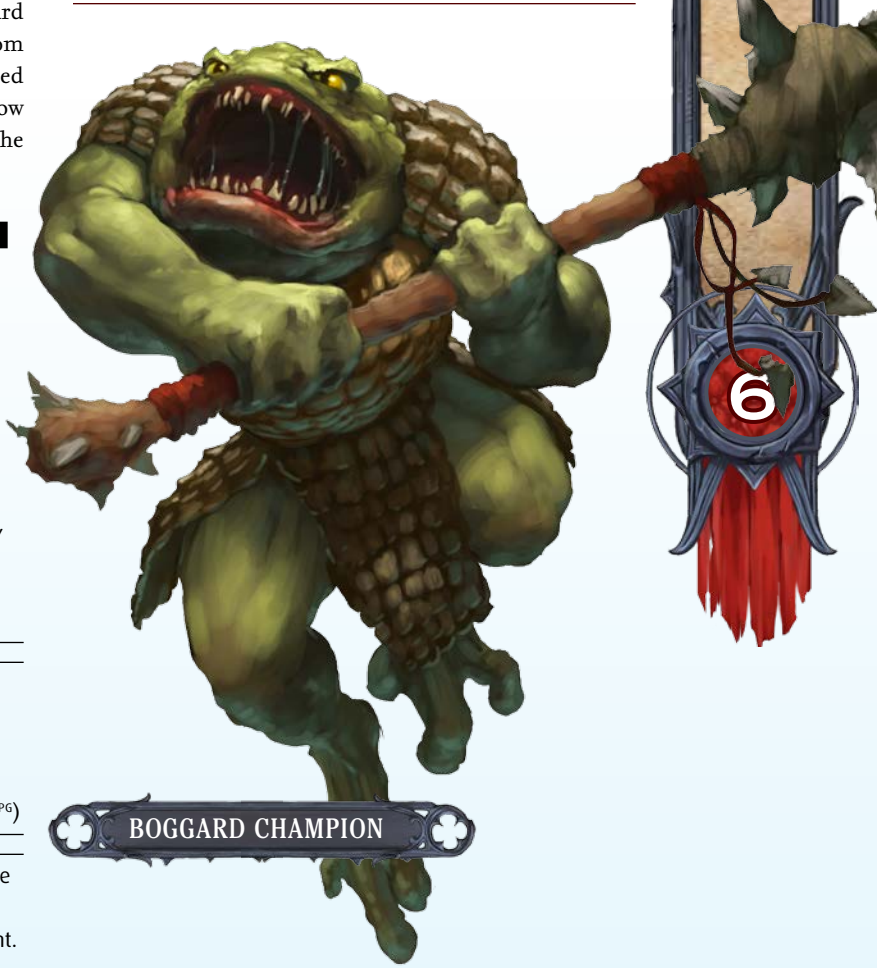
Languages Boggard

SQ fast movement, hold breath, swamp stride, terrifying croak

Gear *+2 hide armor, +1 thundering greatclub*

B1 Entrance Hall (CR 15)

A set of stairs descends to a submerged hall. Near the bottom, the tilted stairway drops into a horizontal layer of silt. The walls and the four massive pillars supporting the ceiling are decorated with hundreds of stylized images of the same beautiful woman carved onto the pyramid's face.



BOGGARD CHAMPION

Creature: This large chamber is the lair of an enormous devilfish named Beirawash. Swept deep into the Mushfens decades ago by a winter storm, the already huge creature ended up lost in the swamp. After navigating the deeper waterways, he eventually discovered the large pool at the base of the Sunken Queen—and the boggard tribe that dwelled nearby. After eating several members of the tribe, Beirawash (being unusually smart for a devilfish) realized that the surviving frog-folk were bowing down before him in supplication. For the next several decades, Beirawash lived as the god of this tribe, which pleased him mightily.

That arrangement is over now. When Ileosa arrived, she swiftly charmed the devilfish and several of the boggards, changing Beirawash's role in the region from living god to guard dog.

BEIRAWASH **CR 15**

XP 51,200

Variant advanced devilfish (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 292, 88)

NE Gargantuan magical beast (aquatic)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, see in darkness; Perception +20

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 12, flat-footed 24 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +18 natural, –4 size)

hp 273 (15d10+135)

Fort +18, **Ref** +14, **Will** +8

Resist cold 10

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee tentacles +25 (8d6+21/19–20 plus grab)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks poison (DC 26), savage bite (6d6+21/18–20 plus poison), unholy blood (DC 26)

TACTICS

During Combat Beirawash attacks intruders on sight, jetting up to engage them if necessary. He pursues foes throughout the Sunken Queen. Unlike most devilfish, Beirawash's body is particularly malleable and he can move through areas as narrow as 5 feet wide without squeezing, but he does not pursue foes out of the water or beyond 100 feet from the Sunken Queen itself.

Morale Even after being subjected to countless *charm monster* spells, the immense devilfish secretly rankles at the change in his status; if the PCs can dispel Ileosa's current *charm monster* effect, the devilfish breaks off combat and attempts to escape. Barring that, he might try to bargain with the PCs, offering up his treasure in area **B3** as a bribe to let him escape. Without being freed from the enchantment, he fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 38, **Dex** 20, **Con** 28, **Int** 7, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 12

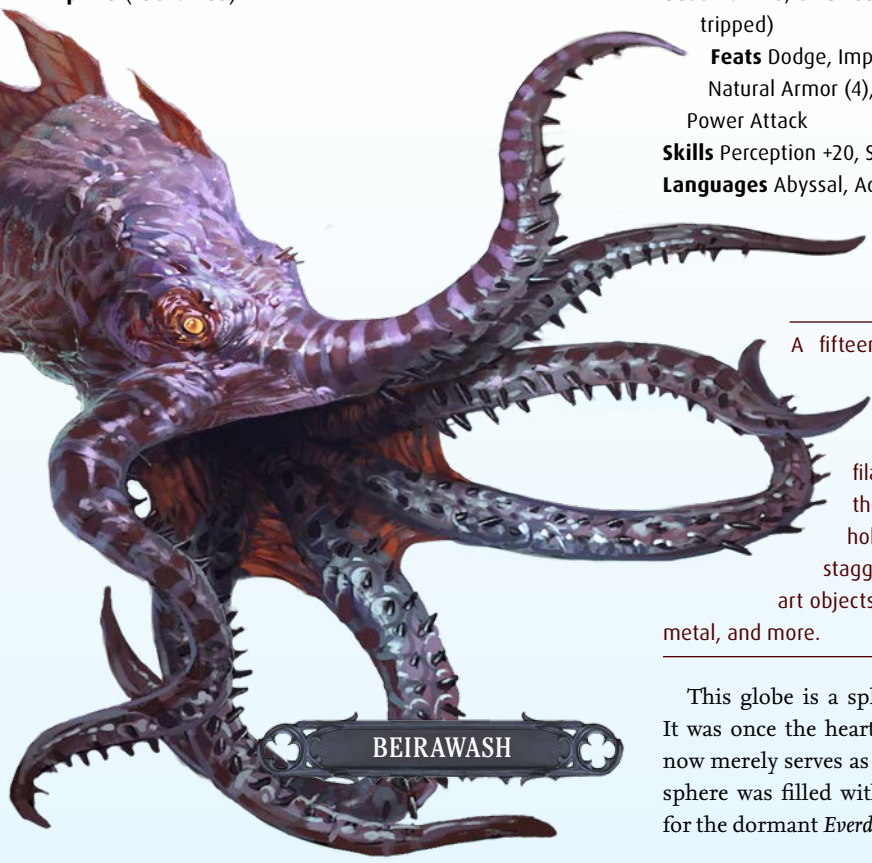
Base Atk +15; **CMB** +33 (+37 grapple); **CMD** 49 (cant be tripped)

Feats Dodge, Improved Critical (tentacle), Improved Natural Armor (4), Improved Natural Attack (tentacle), Power Attack

Skills Perception +20, Swim +26

Languages Abyssal, Aquan, Common

SQ compression, water dependency



BEIRAWASH

B2 Treasury

A fifteen-foot-diameter crystal globe hangs between two square pillars in this room, connected to them by thousands of glittering crystalline filaments. A crystal tube extends up from the eastern side of the sphere through a hole in the ceiling. Inside the sphere is a staggering amount of treasure: coins, gems, art objects, rolled-up tapestries, bars of precious metal, and more.

This globe is a sphere of magically enhanced crystal. It was once the heart of the Sunken Queen's power, but now merely serves as a treasury. When Ileosa arrived, this sphere was filled with bloodseed, stored magical energy for the dormant *Everdawn Pool* in area **B20** above. After she

reawakened the *Everdawn Pool*, the bloodseed drained into the chamber above. Realizing that the crystal vessel was both an excellent display and a strong container, Ileosa filled it with the remaining treasure stolen from Castle Korvosa's treasury.

Apart from being transparent, the crystal of the globe has the same statistics as the stone that makes up the Sunken Queen's walls. The only physical entrance is via several thin pipes that lead down from area **B20**, pipes that eventually empty into the central tube—a route requiring *gaseous form* or other similar magic to navigate. Ileosa uses *dimension door* to enter and exit the treasury as needed, and transports wealth via *portable hole*. The globe is filled with air, and if broken, the sphere floods quickly.

Treasure: The vast majority of the treasure in the globe consists of art objects and coins—in all, the collection is worth 215,000 gp. Of course, all of this treasure technically belongs to the city of Korvosa; characters who abscond with it are likely to find an entire city government or an irate evil queen after them. The only magical item in the collection is a single empty *portable hole*, folded and draped over the original Korvosan crown (an art object worth 5,000 gp on its own) near the southern edge.

Development: If Ileosa senses the PCs looting her treasure, she sends her furies down to investigate (see area **B16**). If they find intruders, the furies attack at once, but they retreat to Ileosa's side if reduced to 80 or fewer hit points.

B3 Beirawash's Lair

A five-foot-wide tunnel ends in a spherical chamber formed from the surrounding mud, silt, and stone.

Beirawash dug out this small area from the silt that clogs the hallway to serve as a nest. The devilfish has to squeeze to enter this room, but he finds the embrace of the compact area comforting.

Treasure: Ileosa let the devilfish think it was allowed to keep the treasure it had accumulated over the decades of being worshiped by the boggards, when of course she can change her mind and claim the loot here whenever she wishes. The treasure hoard consists of 7,304 gp, 1,300 pp, 12,400 gp in various minor art objects, a gold statuette of Sorshen worth 2,500 gp, a *headband of mental prowess +4* (Int and Cha; Bluff and Diplomacy), a *+2 dancing dagger* in a *scabbard of keen edges*, and a *medallion of thoughts* bearing the image of the Sihedron rune.

B4 Beirawash's Larder

This ancient chamber's flagstone floor is almost completely covered by a bed of rotting swamp algae, which is piled up in a ten-foot-high heap in the south corner. The mangled, rotting carcass of a fifteen-foot-long alligator floats in the north corner near a huge pile of strange bones.

The alligator and bones are remnants of Beirawash's last meals; the skeletons are all of boggards, their bones crushed to splinters in many cases as if they had been subjected to great pressure.

B5 Chamber of the Lynx

This ancient square room is littered with pottery shards and fragments of rusted metal, which form a pile in the eastern portion of the chamber. The northwest wall is decorated with a large mosaic depicting a lynx on a dark background surrounded by floating globes of light.

This room was the lair of one of Sorshen's favorite pets, a hallowed lynx. The mosaic still retains a fragment of the long-extinct magical beast's power—anyone who touches the mosaic immediately gains a +5 insight bonus on all Charisma-based skill checks and Will saving throws for 1 hour. The magic dissipates after one touch, but replenishes itself naturally after 24 hours. Any creature that touches the statue can benefit from its effect only once per month.

B6 Second-Level Access Shaft

The walls and ceiling of this silt-floored chamber are crossed by hairline cracks. An archway in the southwest ceiling opens into a steeply angled shaft that leads upward.

The shaft that opens in the ceiling southwest of this chamber leads up 40 feet to area **B10**. In Sorshen's time, flight was required to navigate this shaft, but now that it is flooded, swimming works as well.

B7 Surface Entrance (CR 10)

Cleverly concealed by mangrove shrubs, this entrance to the Sunken Queen was created via *disintegrate* spells. The entrance is hidden by an *illusory wall* spell (CL 16th); once this illusion is penetrated, spotting the entrance through the mangroves still requires a successful DC 30 Perception check.

Creatures: A single boggard champion stands in the center of the hallway here. If he sees PCs approaching, he abandons his post to alert the other boggards who wait in area **B8**.

BOGGARD CHAMPION **CR 10**

XP 9,600

hp 150 (see page 381)

B8 Boggard Quarters (CR 15)

The northwestern portion of the sloping flagstone floor of this chamber has been fitted with a crude horizontal wooden platform. On the platform are nine filthy straw mats, leather bags, and fishing rods.

The wooden platform built by the boggards is 2 feet above the stone floor at the edge. Movement on the platform is not penalized because of the structure's slope.

Creatures: The boggard champions recruited by Ileosa dwell here. One of the six is stationed at area **B7** to keep watch on the entrance, but as soon as the alarm is raised, they all seek out the PCs to attack.

BOGGARD CHAMPIONS (5) **CR 10**

XP 9,600 each

hp 150 each (see page 381)

B9 Storage

A horizontal wooden platform has been built into the northwest portion of this chamber. On the platform are a large barrel and a heavy wooden chest. Several big fillets of smoked, spiced fish hang from a row of pegs along the wooden platform's edge.

The boggards store their food in this room. The fish fillets come from a giant gar and are quite delicious. The barrel contains boggard cranberry liquor mixed with honey and foul-tasting herbs—any non-boggard who drinks it must make a successful DC 14 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1d10 rounds and then sickened for 2d6 hours. The chest contains more than 100 pounds of groundnut tubers and other swamp legumes, but there is nothing of any real value stored here.

B10 Shaft Down

This shaft leads down to area **B6**. Beyond this point to the southeast, the water is too deep for a Medium creature to wade through.

B11 Flooded Chamber

The walls of this flooded square chamber are thick with reddish algae. Dozens of light yellow tadpoles the size of a human hand swim in all directions throughout the room.

Neither the reddish algae nor the tadpoles are dangerous, although boggards find both rather delicious. The water level in this room is 35 feet deep in the deep end, leaving 15 feet of air above.

B12 Crystal Tube

A crystal tube emerges from a dark hole in the floor up to the ceiling, where it splits into dozens of small tubes that wind along the walls and ceiling above until finally sinking into the stone, presumably burrowing upward to a level above.

The crystal tube is connected to the larger sphere in area **B2** below, and is made of the same tough material. The smaller tubes wind up through the stone to empty into the rim of the *Everdawn Pool* in area **B20** above. The water in here is 15 feet deep at its deepest point.

B13 Water Storage

The east corner of this chamber is fitted with a wooden platform that seems to float on the water's surface. A few barrels sit on the platform.

The water level in this room is the same as for area **B11**. The platform contains three barrels of drinking water (while the boggards are fine simply drinking swamp water, Ileosa is not).

B14 Shaft Up

A soft, purplish light illuminates the northeastern part of this flooded chamber, where a large, square shaft opens in the ceiling.

This shaft leads up 35 feet to area **B15**. The walls of the shaft are very smooth—climbing them requires a successful DC 30 Climb check.

B15 Great Hall (CR 17)

The air in this large room is warm and pleasant. The floor, walls, and ceiling are tiled with polished, rose-colored marble slabs. Climbing from the floor to the ceiling above and weaving in and out of the walls are dozens of thin crystal tubes. One shaft drops away in the floor to the southwest, while a second shaft rises up through the ceiling to the northeast.

The shaft to the southwest drops down to area **B14**, while the one to the northeast rises up to **B20**. The tubes in the walls lead up to the *Everdawn Pool*.

Creature: During the height of Thassilon, the runelords made use of numerous strange and otherworldly creatures as minions and guardians. This chamber contains one such ancient creature, a particularly powerful arachnid scarlet walker named Ithier. When Sorshen initially created the *Everdawn Pool* well over

11,000 years ago, she drew in many scarlet walkers from the nightmare realm of Leng to serve as resources and advisors. Ithier is the sole remaining member of that group, an ancient and essentially immortal monster bound forever to the Sunken Queen as a guardian. It initially resented Ileosa's presence here, but the queen managed to win Ithier's allegiance over by proving her skill at manipulating the energies within the *Everdawn Pool* and promising to release it from servitude to return to Leng once she has finished here.

ITHIER **CR 17**

XP 102,400

Advanced sorcerer scarlet walker (*Pathfinder RPG Monster Codex* 248, *Pathfinder Adventure Path: Rise of the Runelords Anniversary Edition* 414)

LE Huge outsider (evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +11; **Senses** bloodsense, darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +29

DEFENSE

AC 32, touch 20, flat-footed 20 (+11 Dex, +1 dodge, +12 natural, –2 size)

hp 272 (19d10+152); fast healing 10

Fort +13, **Ref** +22, **Will** +18

Defensive Abilities evasion, unusual anatomy (50%); **Immune** acid, cold, poison; **SR** 27

Weaknesses vulnerable to electricity

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.; *air walk*

Melee 2 claws +28 (3d6+9/19–20 plus bleed), tentacle +23 (4d6+4 plus paralysis and bleed)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 30 ft.

Special Attacks bleed (1d6), blood-draining gaze, long limbs (+15 ft.), paralysis (1d4 rounds, DC 26)

Scarlet Walker Spell-Like Abilities (CL 16th; concentration +25)
Constant—*air walk*, *detect thoughts* (DC 21)
At will—*sending*
3/day—*confusion* (DC 23), *demand* (DC 27), quickened *lesser confusion* (DC 20)
1/day—*feeblemind* (DC 24), *insanity* (DC 26), *true seeing*

Sorcerer Creature Spell-Like Abilities (CL 19th; concentration +28)
12/day—*acidic ray* (1d6+8 acid)

Sorcerer Creature Spells Known (CL 19th; concentration +28)
6th (3/day)—*greater dispel magic*
5th (4/day)—*dominate person* (DC 24), *mind fog* (DC 24)
4th (4/day)—*enervation*, *greater invisibility*

TACTICS

During Combat Ithier casts *mind fog* on the first round of combat and uses quickened *lesser confusion* each round on a fighter, a barbarian, or another well-armed PC. The scarlet walker casts *greater invisibility* on the second round, following that up with its mind-affecting spells and spell-like abilities. It keeps Ileosa informed of the battle via telepathy. It pursues foes throughout the Sunken Queen, but not into the flooded areas. If it manages to affect the target of the soultrapping gem in area **B19** with *dominate person* or *demand*, it orders that person to go fetch the gemstone and thus fall victim to the gem's effects.

Morale Ithier fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 33, **Con** 25, **Int** 18, **Wis** 24, **Cha** 29

Base Atk +19; **CMB** +30; **CMD** 52 (60 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Natural Attack (claw), Mobility, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*lesser confusion*), Spring Attack, Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +33, Climb +17, Intimidate +31, Knowledge (arcana) +26, Knowledge (nature) +26, Knowledge (planes) +26, Perception +29, Sense Motive +29, Spellcraft +23, Stealth +25, Use Magic Device +28

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Infernal, Thassilonian; telepathy 300 ft.

SQ bloodline arcana (+50% duration on polymorph effects), compression, no breath

Creatures: Ileosa has taken to calling her four powerful erinyes—Decabbara, Eveanie, Suishani, and Verasia—her "furies." These four erinyes, once Sermignatto's elite assassins, were gifts from the bdellavritra to Ileosa in return for allowing Sermignatto such an open-ended free reign over Korvosa in the contract they both signed once Ileosa loses interest in the area. These four erinyes sit in meditation on the chairs here when at rest; as soon as the Sunken Queen goes on alert, the four of them wait for Ileosa to notify them when the PCs reach this floor, or teleport to her side if the PCs confront her in area **B20**.

ILEOSA'S FURIES (4) **CR 12**

XP 19,200

Erinyes devil fighter 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 75)

LE Medium outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness, *true seeing*; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 14, flat-footed 23 (+7 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)

hp 166 (13d10+95)

Fort +18, **Ref** +17, **Will** +11 (+1 vs. fear)

DR 5/good; **Immune** bleed, fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 19

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (good)

Melee *+1 flaming returning trident* +22/+17/+12 (1d8+10/19–20 plus 1d6 fire)

Ranged *+1 flaming returning trident* +24 (1d8+10/19–20 plus 1d6 fire) or
rope +22 touch (entangle)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +19)
Constant—*true seeing*
At will—*fear* (single target) (DC 21), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *minor image* (DC 19), *unholy blight* (DC 21)
1/day—summon (level 3, 2 bearded devils 50%)

TACTICS

During Combat The furies prefer to fight in melee, wielding their tridents two-handed and using Power Attack, but each round one of them hits the largest group of enemies she can with an unholy blight; if their foes prove resistant to this tactic, the erinyes instead joins her companions in melee. If a single foe proves particularly troublesome, the four devils target that foe with fear spells, hoping at least one of the spells will take effect—but keep in mind the furies are forewarned of the PCs's abilities and won't

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blood-Draining Gaze (Su) All creatures within 20 feet of a scarlet walker are subject to the monster's eerie blood-draining gaze. Affected creatures must succeed at a DC 26 Fortitude save or thin streams of blood pour from their eyes, flowing through the air and into the eye-socket-like pits in Ithier's face. This does not impact the victim's vision, but deals 1 point of Constitution damage and sickens the victim for 1 round from the hideous pain. A creature already suffering from a bleed effect takes a –4 penalty on the saving throw. This is a bleed effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Bloodsense (Su) Ithier can sense living creatures with blood in their veins and undead creatures that feed on blood (such as vampires). This ability functions like blindsight to a range of 60 feet.

B16 Ileosa's Furies (CR 16)

The northwestern portion of this room is occupied by a wooden platform. Several wooden chairs—the armrests, legs, and back fitted with straps and buckles—sit on the platform. At the northeast end is an empty weapon rack.

The platform is 2 feet above the floor at the lowest edge.

bother trying to cast fear on a paladin or other character they know is immune to this effect. They generally use their rope attacks against clerics or other healers. They avoid using their summon devil spell-like ability, saving that for emergencies or for a fight at Ileosa's side.

Morale Bound by contract, the furies fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 28, **Con** 24, **Int** 12, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 24

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 40

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (trident), Iron Will, Mobility, Point-Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run, Weapon Focus (trident), Weapon Specialization (trident)

Skills Acrobatics +21, Bluff +19, Diplomacy +16, Escape Artist +12, Fly +19, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (planes) +7, Knowledge (religion) +7, Perception +16, Sense Motive +10, Stealth +15

Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ armor training 1, entangle, *Everdawn* infusion

Gear *+1 chainmail, +1 flaming returning trident, cloak of resistance +1*, silk rope (50 ft.)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Everdawn Infusion (Ex) The furies have bathed in the *Everdawn Pool* recently. As a result, they can teleport in the Sunken Queen without restriction, modify their hit point totals with their Charisma modifiers rather than their Constitution modifiers, and are immune to bleed effects.

B17 Magical Workshop

The western portion of this room is occupied by an L-shaped wooden platform. All sorts of laboratory equipment and tools for crafting magical items lie haphazardly atop the platform.

Treasure: Ileosa used this room to research the *Everdawn Pool*, but also to work on magical items to further augment her power. Currently, she has a set of *ring gates* about halfway through the process of creation (without access to *gate*, the DC to craft these items for Ileosa is 27, a result she automatically achieves). A PC who meets the requirements can pick up where Ileosa left off. The various magical components in the area, worth 10,000 gp in all, are all ready to be used for this project.

B18 Ileosa's Room

Three globes of fire hang suspended from the ceiling to illuminate this room with a soft, pleasant light. The southern portion of the floor is occupied by an L-shaped wooden platform. The platform is furnished with a double bed, fine carpets, an angular cupboard, and a chest of drawers. Atop the chest of drawers stands a crystal vase with fresh violets and lotus flowers. Next to the bed stands a beautiful harp with a matching stool.

The globes that light this chamber are crystal spheres containing *continual flames*. Ileosa stayed in this room when she first arrived here, but hasn't spent much time here since she began her attunement ritual in area **B20**.

Treasure: The cupboard and chest of drawers contain beautiful clothes and precious jewelry worth a total of 12,000 gp—Ileosa's less favored attire. The harp on the platform is a magical harp that combines the powers of a *harp of charming* and *pipes of sounding*. The harp weighs 65 pounds and is worth 9,000 gp.

B19 Blood Repository (CR 17)

This chamber smells of blood. The eastern portion contains a large square basin, the rim of which is decorated with a convoluted bas-relief that resembles a jumble of snakes and slugs. Within the basin is a drop of three feet to the surface of a pool of what appears to be blood. Numerous thin crystalline tubes extend out of the wall above the basin, pass through its rim, and emerge along the inner rim, each one protruding like a tiny spigot over the pool below.

A wooden platform to the southwest of the basin is cluttered with various alchemical supplies and surgical tools. A small iron stand sits on the platform—cradled in it is a dark blue gemstone the size of a child's fist.

Creature: This pool of blood is "overflow" from the *Everdawn Pool* in area **B20**—in the event of an emergency shortage of blood, the pipes and siphons in the Sunken Queen could originally replenish the *Everdawn Pool's* expended charges with blood drawn from here. The basin radiates faint necromancy magic—this is from the magical property that keeps blood held within fresh, warm, and unclotted. Ileosa avoided using the blood here to refill the *Everdawn Pool*, though, for she discovered a fascinating side effect—over the ages, the blood that has gathered here has achieved sentience of a sort and can no longer recharge the *Everdawn Pool*. Instead, it functions as an immortal ichor, but unlike most of these powerful oozes (which generally form from the spilled blood of a dead evil deity), this particular immortal ichor formed from potent residue left behind from Runelord Sorshen's personality and mind. In time, Ileosa hopes to use this fragment of the Runelord of Lust to further empower herself, but for the moment she has allowed the strange mass to remain here, and has even set up a cunning and dangerous trap for the immortal ichor to use. The monster rises up into a semi-human form when it senses the PCs, appearing as a vague approximation of Runelord Sorshen (a PC who succeeds at a DC 35 Knowledge [arcana or history] check recognizes

the resemblance). The immortal ichor can tell which of the PCs Ileosa has chosen as the target of the room's trap. If it manages to charm that PC, it orders him or her to pick up the gemstone and thus fall victim to its effects. Unlike most immortal ichors, this one understands Thassilonian instead of Undercommon, but still cannot speak.

IMMORTAL ICHOR **CR 17**

XP 102,400

hp 270 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 156)

Trap: The gemstone is an immense sapphire on which Ileosa used a *scroll of trap the soul* to lay an insidious trap for one of the PCs, using the trigger object variation of the spell to inscribe that PC's name on the crystal. Which PC she chooses for this doom depends on whom, in your campaign, Ileosa has the biggest grudge against—if possible, this should be the PC who has claimed *Serithtial* as his own. If the immortal ichor still lives when this trap is activated, it swiftly grabs the gemstone (using *telekinesis* if needed) and attempts to retreat to area **B20** to hand it over to Ileosa.

SOULTRAPPING GEM **CR 9**

XP 6,400

Type magic; **Perception** DC 33; **Disable Device** DC 33

EFFECTS

Trigger touch

Effect spell effects (*trap the soul*, CL 20th)

Treasure: The sapphire is worth 20,000 gp.

B20 The Everdawn Pool (CR 22+)

This huge, lofty chamber is illuminated by braziers at the four corners. A soft light also filters from two very high oval windows on the southwestern wall. The twin windows are fitted with panes of blue crystal that filter in some light from outside. Below these crystal "eyes," a band of mosaics on the south wall forms a huge map of an ancient, unknown land. The map features a river valley with many villages, each one labeled in a strange language. To the northeast, a shaft drops away in the floor. Yet the most unusual feature of the room floats and undulates at its center—an amorphous blob of blood, over thirty feet wide, hovers and ripples in the air. Shapes periodically form on its turbulent surface: faces, hands, buildings, and figures that last only long enough to melt back into the horrific mass. Dozens of thin crystal tubes extend from the upper walls of the room to a point just above the shifting mass of blood.

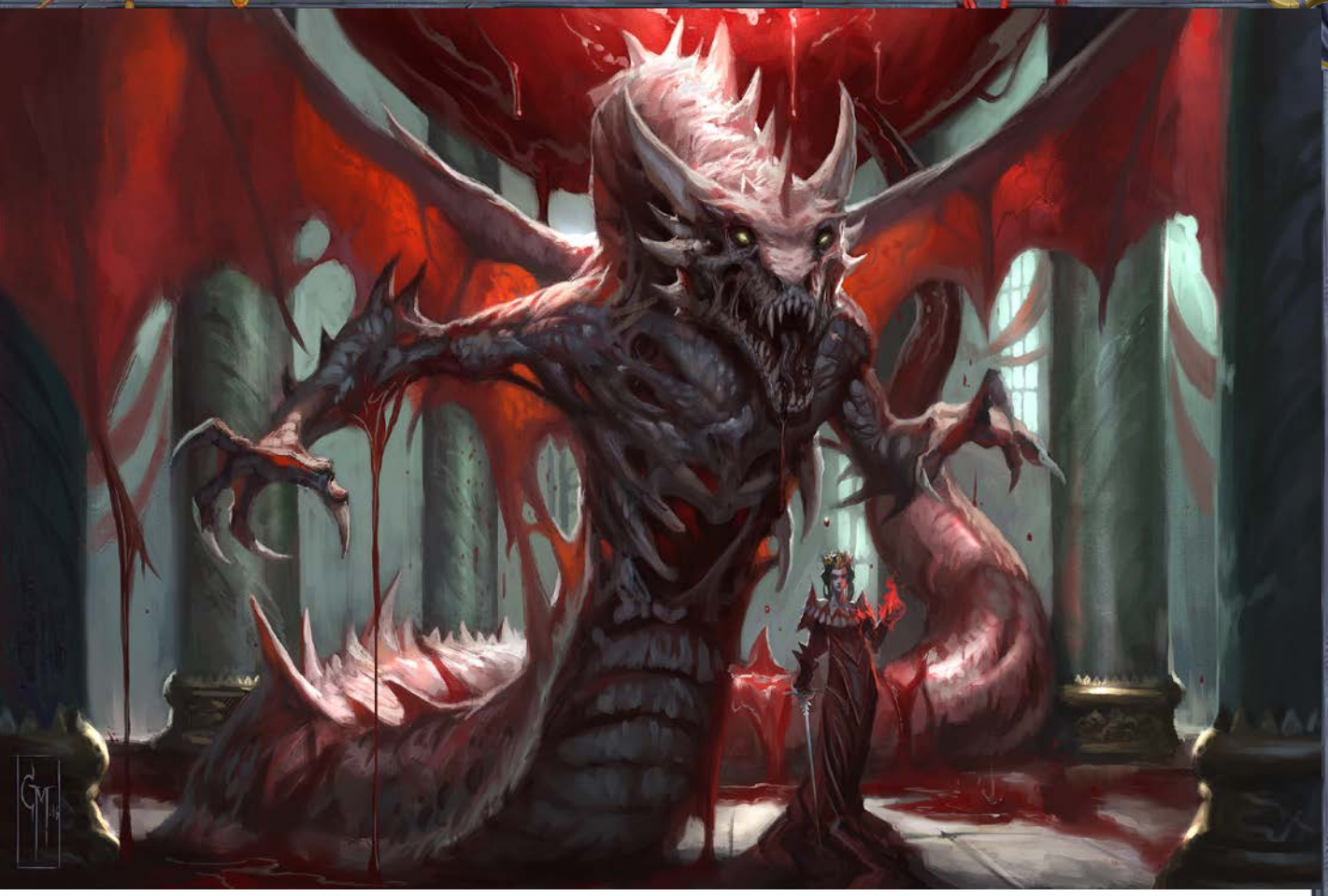
The oval windows in the wall correspond to the eyes of the carving of Sorshen on the face of the Sunken Queen outside. While from the outside her eyes are opaque, they serve as windows here, allowing those within to look out over the swamp. The mosaic map on the wall is a pictorial map of the nation of Eurythnia at the height of Sorshen's rule; the depiction of the pyramid on the map coincides with the eye windows, and the coastline falls at the base of the wall. The map is extremely detailed, but few of its features are recognizable today, with the exception of the Grand Mastaba and the Sunken Queen (though it is shown fully upright in the map).

The floating mass of blood is the *Everdawn Pool* (see page 433), one of Runelord Sorshen's greatest discoveries. Fully glutted on the blood of thousands of unknowing donors and by Ileosa's regular blood offerings (from herself and sacrifices she has undertaken here), the pool is a powerful tool that can be used to manipulate life and death.

Creatures: Ileosa is here, suspended at the heart of the *Everdawn Pool* in a state of semi-trance. Inside the pool, she has no need to breathe or eat. As she is slowly infused with magical power, her youth becomes more and more permanent. Each of her sessions in the *Everdawn Pool* lasts a day, after which a charge is expended and she grows closer to finalizing her ritual. This chapter assumes that when the PCs arrive, Ileosa has 10 days left before she completes the ritual, but the actual time she requires is left to you to decide. It's best to pick a duration that shouldn't force the PCs to rush through this chapter, but is short enough to preserve a sense of impending doom for the PCs if they use spells like *commune* and *divination* to determine how much time they have left. A good rule of thumb is to assume that the PCs have enough time to attempt to defeat Ileosa twice—if they confront her two times and are forced to flee a second time before they destroy her, she'll finish her attunement and eternal youth will be hers—at a tragic price for the people of Korvosa (see What If Ileosa Wins on page 391).

When the PCs enter this room, Ileosa takes note immediately unless the PCs are particularly stealthy. If the PCs can reach her at the center of the room without her knowing they're here, they get an automatic surprise round at the start of combat. Once she notices them, the *Everdawn Pool* shakes and rumbles. It ripples briefly into a familiar shape—the Korvosa skyline—only to crumble as if during an immense earthquake. A moment later, Ileosa's beautiful but furious face appears in the blood as she shrieks in rage at the interruption—she has no speech prepared for the PCs at this point, only fury.

Unfortunately for the PCs, Ileosa isn't the only creature in the *Everdawn Pool*. She already used it to create six additional simulacrums of herself, and keeps them stored in the pool until she needs them. As her face shrieks at the PCs, she unleashes the simulacrums against them. In addition, all of her surviving erinyes minions immediately teleport in to aid her when a fight begins, and if it still



lives, the scarlet walker Ithier clambers up into this chamber from below to join the fight as well.

Yet Ileosa's most dangerous guardian is the spirit of Kazavon itself. As the battle begins, the blood of the *Everdawn Pool* explodes as it gives body to an enormous, diseased, serpentine dragon—a physical manifestation of Kazavon infused with the source of the greatest pain and blight the queen inflicted on the city: blood veil. This manifestation takes the shape of a creature called a taniniver, but one that can exist only as long as the *Everdawn Pool* feeds it blood. Manifesting the taniniver of Kazavon costs the *Everdawn Pool* 5 charges. If the *Everdawn Pool* has enough charges available, it can create a brand new taniniver once the previous one is slain as a standard action (the *Everdawn Pool* takes this action at the start of the round after the previous taniniver is slain), but can never have more than one taniniver in existence at any one time. The taniniver follows Ileosa's commands without pause, but cannot travel further than 1 mile from the *Everdawn Pool* in pursuit of fleeing PCs.

FALSE ILEOSAS (6) **CR 9**

XP 6,400 each

hp 87 each (see page 363)

QUEEN ILEOSA ARABASTI **CR 21**

XP 409,600

hp 391 (see page 444)

TANINIVER **CR 17**

XP 153,600

hp 270 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 258)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease (Ex) This taniniver's natural attacks always inflict blood veil (DC 27) on those affected.

Treasure: The *Everdawn Pool* is this room's greatest treasure. The abilities of this major artifact are detailed in full on page 433.

Development: If Ileosa is slain, the energies she has been building in the *Everdawn Pool* swiftly grow unstable. If the PCs manage to defeat the queen without slaying her, these energies similarly grow unstable soon thereafter as they sense the change in the mad queen's soul. If the PCs don't act quickly, these volatile energies could well go haywire and begin rebuilding Kazavon himself! See the Chapter Conclusion on the next two pages for details on this final climactic encounter of Curse of the Crimson Throne.

CHAPTER CONCLUSION

The ritual for lasting youth that Queen Ileosa has spent the last several weeks performing in the *Everdawn Pool* has built power within the ancient artifact. While Ileosa was able to leave the pool for short periods of time (be it to rest or to confront the PCs), once she's defeated, the energy within the pool quickly grows unstable. With the target of its power suddenly removed from the equation, the Everdawn Pool is forced to refocus this energy elsewhere—into Kazavon's soul!

Just as the *Everdawn Pool* was infusing Ileosa, so were the fangs of Kazavon infusing their power into the pool, and when Ileosa's attunement ritual ends prematurely, the backlash of magic interacts with the fragment of Kazavon's soul in a horrifying way—it begins to rebuild the dragon's body in much the same way that it created the taniniver, save that this time, the pool is recreating Kazavon himself!

RISE OF THE DRAGON (CR 25)

When the *Everdawn Pool* begins this process, the pool shudders and shakes. A draconic talon lances out from one side, an immense skeletal wing from another. The entire room trembles and heaves, and a growing roar fills the air, quickly rising to deafening levels. With each passing round, an immense shape of blood and darkness emerges from the *Everdawn Pool*, assuming the form of a blue dragon from the skeleton out. Lightning crackles and iron chains (identifiable with a successful DC 20 Knowledge [religion] check as a manifestation of Zon-Kuthon's favor) writhe and snap through the room. Each round, more and more of the dragon's body reforms as the chains seem to wrap around its form and transform into flesh, organs, and muscles. If nothing is done to prevent the growing manifestation, the blood of the *Everdawn Pool* exhausts itself and goes dormant once again as a new life—Kazavon reborn—appears.

Each round that this process continues, every PC in the room must attempt three saving throws—a Fortitude save, Reflex save, and Will save. The DC for each is 25.

Fortitude: This save is to resist being stunned for 1 round by the cacophonous noise echoing through the room.

Reflex: This save is to avoid the blasts of lightning and thrashing chains. Each round, anyone in the room takes 5d6 points of bludgeoning damage and 5d6 points of electrical damage—a successful Reflex save halves the damage taken.

Will: This save is to avoid having fragments of thought stolen; each failed saving throw results in 2 points of damage to Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma.

There are several ways the PCs can stop this event from reaching its awful conclusion. A *dispel evil* or *dispel law* spell cast on the *Everdawn Pool* causes the process to suddenly halt if the caster succeeds at a DC 30 caster level check. Antimagic can stop the effect, but only if the *antimagic field* can encompass the entire *Everdawn Pool*. While *dispel magic* has no effect, a *mage's disjunction* disrupts the effect immediately, as can a *wish* or a *miracle*. Perhaps the easiest method, though, is to plunge *Serithtial* into the *Everdawn Pool*—if this is done, the pool suddenly explodes in a blast of gore that is just as quickly consumed by a nearly blinding radiance. The radiance deals no damage and leaves *Serithtial* unscathed, but all creatures in the room must succeed at a DC 20 Fortitude save or be permanently blinded.

The creation of the great wyrm takes only 10 rounds. If the PCs haven't stopped it by then, they have a legendary CR 25 blue dragon on their hands—see Kazavon's statistics on page 448 for more guidelines on what to do in this event.

KAZAVON **CR 25**

XP 1,638,400

hp 573 (see page 448)

IMMEDIATE REPERCUSSIONS

With the defeat of the manifestation of Kazavon, things finally grow silent in the Sunken Queen. Likewise, things quickly stabilize in the city of Korvosa, for the PCs have been victorious! Ileosa has been vanquished, and any remaining devils that linger in Castle Korvosa swiftly depart as they are drawn back to Hell (fleeing with Sermignatto if he still lives). Yet one thing remains to be addressed.

Although Ileosa has been defeated, the *Crown of Fangs* remains, and Kazavon's spirit remains strong in the evil artifact. The *Crown of Fangs* can be sundered with a strong blow from *Serithtial*, shattering it into splinters with a flash of light, yet even then the indestructible fangs of Kazavon lie cold and motionless on the stone floor. The fangs can be truly destroyed only by reuniting them with the six other relics of Kazavon, allowing the dragon to be

reborn, and then once again defeating him—see page 394 of Continuing the Campaign for more details. For the moment, the fangs of Kazavon are again quiet, their ability to influence the world lessened for a time (as determined by you). For now, the fangs can be handled safely, without fear of Kazavon's malign influence.

When the PCs return to Korvosa, their success is already known to the public, if only because Neolandus and the rebels have likely reclaimed control of Castle Korvosa. Cressida is able to rebuild the Korvosan Guard, and by the time the PCs arrive, the remaining Gray Maidens have gone into hiding and talk of restoring the Sable Company is on many lips. Cheering crowds await the PCs' return, and where things go from here depends largely on the desires of Korvosa's newest heroes. Consult the Continuing the Campaign section for several additional adventures that might await the PCs.

WHAT IF ILEOSA WINS?

If the PCs fail to stop Ileosa before she finishes her final attunement ritual in the *Everdawn Pool*, a horrific tragedy strikes the city of Korvosa. As the ritual ends, Ileosa draws upon the lifeblood of all those whose blood she fed to the *Everdawn Pool*—including all of the Gray Maidens and perhaps even some of the PCs. Thousands of Korvosan citizens are wracked with sudden pain. Blood pours from their bodies and just as swiftly evaporates into the air. Within a mere few seconds, these thousands lie dead and bloodless on the ground, while in the Sunken Queen, Ileosa enjoys her first taste of eternal youth.

Of course, the mad queen's plans do not cease when she gains immortality. Ileosa has always viewed Korvosa as a backwater, a fly-speck barely worth her attention. Now that eternal youth is hers, she turns her attention elsewhere—Cheliax is likely her first target, as she uses her newfound powers to enslave an army from Korvosa's ragged survivors. Ileosa doesn't seek the glory of rulership as much as she does the blind adoration of a captive nation; yet a creature as fickle and powerful as she quickly grows bored. If not stopped, she might well become one of Avistan's greatest villains.

If you wish to continue using Ileosa as a villain, treat the completion of this ritual as her mythic ascension (*Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures* 10). She retains the benefits of the devil-bound template, but she also gains a mythic tier as a trickster, selecting surprise strike as her trickster attack and mythic spellcasting as her first path ability. Where she goes after this is left for you to determine!

APPENDIX

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDIX 1: CONTINUING THE CAMPAIGN	394
APPENDIX 2: KORVOSA AND BEYOND	396
APPENDIX 3: THE HARROW	416
APPENDIX 4: BLOOD AND PAIN	430
APPENDIX 5: EQUIPMENT AND MAGIC	432
APPENDIX 6: NPC CODEX	438
APPENDIX 7: BESTIARY	464

APPENDIX 1

CONTINUING THE CAMPAIGN

The city of Korvosa is saved and mad Queen Ileosa is defeated, yet these events need not coincide with the end of your Curse of the Crimson Throne campaign. After all, there are always more stories to tell! If your players are eager to continue their characters' adventures, numerous additional plot seeds introduced by Curse of the Crimson Throne remain available for exploration and expansion. Some of those mentioned below may serve you well if you wish to extend the campaign.

If your players are particularly compelled by a dangling, unanswered plot thread, you should absolutely give them the opportunity to seek a satisfying conclusion. In addition to the potential campaign continuations discussed below, the actions your players' characters have taken during your play-through of Curse of the Crimson Throne may well suggest other ongoing storylines that they may wish to pursue. Following such a thread could also lead to an entirely new adventure—perhaps one of those mentioned below!

THE EVERDAWN POOL

The Sunken Queen likely lies empty of guardians after the final adventure concludes, yet the *Everdawn Pool* may very well retain a fraction of power. Charged with ancient magic by Ileosa, the pool has many more uses than granting eternal youth. While the pool is probably close to being drained of power once this campaign ends, as long as the artifact still exists, it can pose a future threat. It can also grant the PCs a potent source of power, but the more the *Everdawn Pool* is used, the more repercussions could manifest from beneath Castle Korvosa in the ancient chambers still ruled by Sorshen's most powerful minions—see Sorshen's Legacy on page 395. In the end, the destruction of the *Everdawn Pool* may be the best bet, but as detailed on page 434, destroying this powerful artifact will push high-level PCs to the limits of their capabilities.

ILEOSA'S REVENGE

Great evil rarely seems to stay down for long. In Ileosa's case, her death sends her soul spiraling into the depths of Hell—her contract with Sermignatto all but ensures such a fate. Yet mythology is thick with stories of those who escape from Hell. If Ileosa manages to do so, perhaps by using her silver tongue to bargain with an archdevil for a second chance, revenge against the PCs who disrupted her bid at immortality should loom large in her mind. If you wish to use this plot, you should probably hold off for a few levels. Let the PCs think Ileosa is gone and fill your sessions with plots drawn from other suggestions on these pages or ones of your own creation, and then have them learn of a strangely familiar-sounding enemy who has led an army of devils against a distant town. Upon arriving, they might find Ileosa reborn and ready for a rematch! One excellent way in which you can have Ileosa return is not as a living enemy but as one of the undead. Her dabbling with the strange blood magic of the *Everdawn Pool* could result in her return as a powerful vampire. If you choose this route, feel free to give Ileosa a few extra class levels in bard to make her more powerful as needed for your game. You can even use the rules for mythic vampires on pages 220–221 of *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures* to make a particularly powerful undead queen!

KAZAVON RISES

Even if Ileosa is defeated and the *Crown of Fangs* is destroyed, the fangs of Kazavon remain—as do the other six relics fashioned from the legendary blue dragon's remains. Ileosa's use of the fangs might have set a series of events into motion that ripples across the face of Avistan, causing the owners of the other six relics to begin converging. Statistics for Kazavon appear on pages 448–449 of this book, and complete rules for the other six relics built from his remains (the *Armor of Skulls*, the *Bound Blade*, the *Howling Horn*, *Shredskin*, the *Staff of the Slain*, and the *Throne of Nalt*) are detailed in full on pages 36–39 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Artifacts & Legends*.

LORTHACT'S PLOT

Keen-eyed characters who study the infernal contract found in Castle Korvosa doubtless note that an unnamed individual seems to have had a role in the matter of Ileosa's rise to power. The "unnamed individual" spoken of in the contract is none other than the exiled Infernal Duke Lorthact, whose plans for Korvosa might only be kicking into action with Ileosa's defeat—perhaps it is the evil queen's soul that Lorthact requires to make his bid to return to Hell. Of course, Lorthact's many enemies are

unlikely to want this to occur, and in true wheels-within-wheels fashion, they might contact the PCs to step in and defeat the hidden ruler of the Acadamae before he can engineer his return. Additional information about Lorthact appears in the *Pathfinder Module: Academy of Secrets*, and the exiled devil's statistics are found on pages 26–27 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Bestiary*.

A New Crimson Peril

The Red Mantis may not take their humiliating defeat at the PCs' hands lying down, and the secretive assassin group's headquarters, the Crimson Citadel, certainly has plenty of resources remaining to threaten the PCs. A raid on this dangerous fortress should challenge even the most powerful of heroes, and the perils within would make those the PCs faced in Scarwall seem like child's play.

Rulers of Korvosa

With the death of Queen Ileosa, the city of Korvosa is without a monarch for the first time in a century. The repercussions of this vacancy have swift and unexpected effects on the city. In a time when Korvosa should be spending its energy recovering from recent events, the government instead grows more unstable as various factions vie for control over the city or seek to place a new monarch on the Crimson Throne. Neolandus Kalepopolis has his hands full in tending to the day-to-day dealings of restoring Castle Korvosa, and he might well turn to the PCs for aid. Do they have any suggestions for who should ascend to the throne? Does one of them want to be king or queen? The political machinations of Korvosa's wounded government, noble houses, and power factions could make for the basis of a very intriguing political campaign for years to come. *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Campaign* has extensive rules to help you run a campaign where the PCs themselves become the rulers and shapers of a nation.

Sorshen's Legacy

Ileosa is hardly the first mortal in the region to seek eternal youth. In fact, her methods follow almost exactly the route laid out 10,000 years before by Runelord Sorshen. Although the PCs have defeated Ileosa, her reactivation of the *Everdawn Pool* and other actions taken in Castle Korvosa have awakened dangers in the deep and forgotten dungeons below the Grand Mastaba. Dozens of Sorshen's vampiric followers remain there still, and as she quickens in her domain, a plague of bloodthirsty undead could rise throughout the city. Of course, in this case, the undead are but precursors to the true danger brewing deep below Korvosa. In this adventure seed, the PCs must delve into treacherous dungeons to deactivate the blood-powered ancient magic before one of the deadliest of all the runelords rises from her ages of sleep. This particular plot works quite well when paired with Ileosa's Revenge above, as you can have the vampiric incarnation of Queen Ileosa become one of the more powerful minions the PCs might face in the depths far below Castle Korvosa. Runelord Sorshen is an incredibly dangerous foe, one of the most powerful wizards to have ever ruled on Golarion, and facing her might require heroes of mythic power. In fact, she may feature in a prominent role in an upcoming Pathfinder product, so if you'd rather hold off on the return of the Runelord of Lust in your game until then, using her vampiric minions and an undead Ileosa can serve as an excellent foreshadowing of a potential future campaign!

ILEOSA THE VAMPIRE

KORVOSA AND BEYOND

This appendix presents information on Korvosa and other key areas important to the Curse of the Crimson Throne Adventure Path, particularly how these areas pertain to specific events during the course of this Adventure Path. While these notes are sufficient to help run other adventures set in Korvosa or the surrounding region, some of the city's features that don't have significant roles to play in this campaign are merely summarized or briefly mentioned. If you're seeking to expand the role of the city in your campaign, consult *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Guide to Korvosa* for additional information on Varisia's largest city.

Korvosa sits at the end of Conqueror's Bay, where the Jeggare River spills into the sea. The city fills the spit of land formed by two sharp turns in the Jeggare River and Endrin Isle (which splits the river at its mouth), with a few outlying areas on the river's far shore. Korvosa stands on two hills: Garrison Hill on Endrin Isle and Citadel Hill on the mainland. The Narrows of Saint Alika separate Endrin Isle from the shore. Off the coast to the south of Citadel Crest rises Jeggare Isle, a small rock jutting from the sea that provides the foundation for a small fort.

Five landmarks give Korvosa a distinctive skyline. Three of these landmarks exist on a truly colossal scale and have survived for millennia. Castle Korvosa stands atop the Grand Mastaba, a massive pyramid that rises to a flattened top. The Pillar Wall stretches across most of the southern end of Citadel Hill, a 100-foot-tall remainder of what once must have been a magnificent barrier. Just beyond the western terminus of the Pillar Wall stands the Gatefoot, which obviously originally belonged to a part of the wall and that likely served as part of a gateway of some kind. The other two landmarks, while impressive, do not come close to the size or grandeur of the ruins. Standing at the northernmost point of the Merciless Cliffs, the Great Tower reaches 270 feet in the air and serves several military roles for the city. Directly south of it stands the equally impressive Hall of Summoning, the center of operations for the Acadamae.

KORVOSA'S HISTORY

Long before the first Chelaxian set foot on the shores of Conqueror's Bay, the native Shoanti lived in relative peace throughout the region. They centered their lives around the Grand Mastaba, which their oral history warned contained a great evil that should never again see the light of day. For generations, the Shoanti held the area, never encountering a single challenge that truly threatened their hold. That all changed in 4407 AR, soon after the Everwar wound down and Field Marshal Jakthion Korvosa led a small army through the Bloodsworn Vale and into the southeastern reaches of untamed Varisia. The Shoanti fought the invading Chelaxians tooth and nail, but in time Korvosa's army was bolstered by another Chelish expedition, this one led by one Montlarion Jeggare. A bitter battle ensued between the Chelish soldiers and the Shoanti natives, but in the end, the Chelaxians won and drove the Shoanti northeast up into the Cinderlands. The natives defeated, the Chelish explorers settled in and founded Fort Korvosa.

For the next 22 years, Fort Korvosa acted as the center of a network of trappers, hunters, anglers, and adventurers who came from Cheliax to exploit the resources of the untamed lands of Varisia. The fort had its share of trials and setbacks, including regular clashes with the Shoanti, boggards, and on 13 Neth in 4429 AR, a disastrous fire that burned down half the city. In the aftermath, the Sable Company rose like a phoenix to become the potent defender of the city during its reconstruction and into the centuries to follow. In 4462 AR, the great Shoanti chieftain Galstak Sevendeaths (who was resurrected six times) brought together the Sklar-Quah and Skoan-Quah to form a small army that laid siege to Fort Korvosa for a week, launching 26 years of renewed hostility and war between the two peoples. Finally, in 4488 AR, Sevendeaths was killed for the final time (and thus cementing his name and legacy in history). The alliance he formed crumbled, and the quahs quickly fell to in-fighting, and were driven once again back into the Cinderlands.

With this conclusive defeat, Fort Korvosa's leading families at last felt safe enough to lay claim to the surrounding hinterlands. More flocked to the city, and over the next 12 years, the population of Fort Korvosa nearly doubled, bringing it to almost 8,000 citizens. Then, in 4502, strife nearly tore the settlement apart from within during a time known today as the Cousins' War, when noble turned against noble and the common folk suffered. Eventually, the infighting came to an end with the aid of arbiters from Cheliax, and when the city reaffirmed its allegiance to the Chelish crown, a new era of peace and prosperity arrived. In order to put its past tragedies behind it, the town officially dropped the word "fort" from its name, becoming simply Korvosa. This new era of plenty came to an end in 4606, with the advent of the Age of Lost Omens.

When Cheliax fell into civil war, Korvosa officially became an independent and free city, yet it clung to many Chelish traditions. This change of power, coupled with the unrest brought by Aroden's death and unusually powerful storms, racked Korvosa and threatened to hurl the city back into civil war. Yet Korvosa managed to avoid repeating the Cousins' War, and in the end, two factions remained: a majority of royalists loyal to a crown (regardless of who wore it) and a faction of traditionalists (who rejected Cheliax's new, infernal ways). The traditionalists eventually left Korvosa en masse to travel west and found the city of Magnimar. Those who remained behind decided that, with no crown in Cheliax to follow, Korvosa should have its own royalty. Lord Arbust Arabasti paved the way for the ascension of his son, Eodred, who took over leadership of the town upon Arbust's death in 4624. A fine and popular ruler, Lord Eodred reclaimed abandoned parts of Korvosa, strengthened its rural holdings, and improved relations with Cheliax. In 4633, the people finally voted to change their lord's title to king. A great throne was commissioned for the Korvosan nobility—a work of art made of iron and clad in the finest of crimson satin and velvet. None predicted that this Crimson Throne would eventually come to be associated with a horrible curse: that all who claimed it would bear no more children and die of unnatural causes.

MODERN KORVOSA

Those who live in Korvosa both respect and admire ostentatious displays of wealth, power, or knowledge. They consider confidence and competence the greatest of assets, and they deride or heckle those who display weakness, indecisiveness, or lack of ability. Korvosans are quick to judge and slow to forgive. They like to capitalize

words, and many feel this minor trait gives their works and creations an air of greatness and importance.

In addition to power, Korvosans love predictability. They like to regulate their lives, creating strict regimens for themselves that they then slavishly follow. Upsetting a Korvosan's routine can ruin his entire day and is likely to make him cranky and belligerent. To this end, Korvosa militantly enforces its laws (which often have harsh punishments far in excess of those of other nonevil governments) and rewards those who play by the rules.

KORVOSA'S COAT OF ARMS

Regulation and law dominate daily life in Korvosa. The city's charter, an officially sanctioned document created by Emperor Halleck IV of Cheliax in 4406 AR, bears 247 amendments. These amendments add to and complicate the city's myriad laws (which no leader can modify, except by additional amendment) and are considered as binding and official as the charter itself. In addition, a thick, multivolume body of work spells out Korvosa's many other regulations, as well as the punishments for violating them. The complexity of Korvosan law is in some ways akin to the language of an infernal contract—overly convoluted and easy for a person in power to abuse for their own needs.

By charter amendment, Korvosa does not allow merchants, laborers, or artisans to form guilds (yet it ironically does allow for a thieves' guild—currently the Cerulean Society). This practice prevents these groups from price-fixing and allows the city to maintain control over much of the labor force. Most workers within the city are self-employed or work for a master to whom they apprenticed in their youths. The city relies on these cottage industries and the skilled workers who make them profitable, so of course it has one entire volume of laws and regulations devoted to the protection and rights of workers. Thanks to the Korvosan drive to succeed, though, the city's merchants also do well for themselves.

These mind-sets go a long way toward giving a corrupt ruler the exact tools she needs to seize control of a city, and make it more important than ever for a band of heroes to rise and stand against such abuse of power.

KORVOSA STAT BLOCKS

The city of Korvosa undergoes numerous dramatic shifts over the course of Curse of the Crimson Throne, and suffers from periods of unrest, plague, martial law, and outright anarchy. As a result, the city's stat block fluctuates significantly as key events occur to shift Korvosa's tenor from one stage to another. As the campaign starts, use the baseline Korvosa statistics, but as indicated during the course of each chapter, you'll shift from this initial stat block to one of four others—Anarchy, Martial Law, Plagued, or Unrest. Note that for these four variant stats, information on population and items remain unchanged from the baseline statistics, and thus aren't repeated. Information on significant NPCs of Korvosa appears on pages 438–463. Take care to keep an eye on how Korvosa's settlement modifiers change between city conditions.

Corruption: This modifies Bluff checks against city officials and guards, and Stealth checks attempted outside on city streets, alleys, or in the Shingles.

Crime: This modifies Sense Motive checks to avoid being bluffed and Sleight of Hand checks to pick pockets.

Economy: This modifies Craft, Perform, and Profession checks to generate income.

Law: This modifies Intimidate checks to make an opponent friendly and Diplomacy checks against government officials.

Lore: This modifies Diplomacy checks to gather information or rumors, and Knowledge checks using city resources (such as schools or libraries) to research topics.

Society: This modifies Disguise checks and Diplomacy checks to alter the attitude of any citizen of Korvosa who is not a government official.

Danger: This modifies all rolls for random encounters in Korvosa (including the sewers and the Shingles). See page 465 for these encounter tables.

KORVOSA

LN large city

Corruption +2; **Crime** +0; **Economy** +4; **Law** +5; **Lore** +4; **Society** +0

Qualities academic, holy site, magically attuned, prosperous, strategic location

Danger +10

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government overlord (monarch)

Population 18,486 (16,637 humans, 739 dwarves, 371 elves, 369 halflings, 184 half-elves, 186 other)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 12,800 gp; **Purchase Limit** 85,000; **Spellcasting** 9th

Items see page 408

KORVOSA (ANARCHY)

CN large city

Corruption +6; **Crime** +9; **Economy** –5; **Law** –6; **Lore** +3; **Society** –2

Qualities riotous, strategic location

Danger +30; **Disadvantages** anarchy, shutdowns

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government none

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 8,800 gp; **Purchase Limit** 50,000 gp; **Spellcasting** 6th

KORVOSA (MARTIAL LAW)

LN large city

Corruption +2; **Crime** –2; **Economy** –3; **Law** +7; **Lore** –1; **Society** –4

Qualities despondent, strategic location

Danger +20; **Disadvantages** martial law, shutdowns

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government overlord (monarch)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 4,400 gp; **Purchase Limit** 25,000 gp; **Spellcasting** 3rd

KORVOSA (PLAGUED)

LN large city

Corruption +4; **Crime** –2; **Economy** –1; **Law** +3; **Lore** +1; **Society** –2

Qualities despondent, strategic location

Danger +10; **Disadvantages** plagued, shutdowns

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government overlord (monarch)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 7,200 gp; **Purchase Limit** 50,000 gp; **Spellcasting** 6th

KORVOSA (UNREST)

LN large city

Corruption +6; **Crime** +0; **Economy** +1; **Law** +5; **Lore** +3; **Society** +0

Qualities despondent, strategic location

Danger +10; **Disadvantages** shutdowns

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government overlord (monarch)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 8,800 gp; **Purchase Limit** 50,000 gp; **Spellcasting** 6th

Despondent: A city with a despondent population has little cause or drive for hope or joy in life; its citizens spend less money and its guards are more prone to bribes and less likely to notice suspicious activity. (*Corruption +2, Economy –2*)

Martial Law: As long as Korvosa remains under martial law, a 6:00 P.M. to 6:00 A.M. curfew is in effect. Additionally, as long as the citizens must follow the edicts and proclamations put in place by Queen Ileosa, the city stifles and suffers. (*Corruption –4, Crime –2, Economy –4, Law +2, Lore –4, Society –4; Danger +10; halve all values for Marketplace entries; government retains access to 7th-level spellcasting resources*)

Riotous: The streets of Korvosa are filled with rioters, looters, and opportunists eager to take advantage of the city's lawlessness. (*Crime +2, Law –2, Economy –4*)

Shutdowns: The Acadamae closes its doors during certain conditions, closing off access to its resources to all non-enrolled members and enforcing strict curfews on its students. Korvosa's temples and other institutions of learning never fully close their doors to the same extent as the Acadamae, but they do become more guarded and limit access to their resources. Whenever shutdowns are in effect, Korvosa doesn't gain the benefits of its academic, holy site, or magically attuned qualities, nor does it gain replacement qualities for these in the interim. (*Reduce spellcasting by 1 level*)

NAVIGATING KORVOSA

A map of Korvosa appears on the following page, along with a comprehensive list of significant locations within the city. These locations are organized into six categories, as summarized below.

Government and Military Buildings: These locations, detailed on page 405, include sites under the control of the city government or ones that have significant military value.

Homes and Inns: Korvosa has numerous public houses, ranging from high-class inns to shabby flophouses. This category also includes private residences that play key roles in the Curse of the Crimson Throne Adventure Path. See page 407 for more information, including details on the safety and cost of these services.

Restaurants and Taverns: Korvosa's most notable taverns and restaurants are listed here. See page 407 for more information about these locations, including details on the safety and cost of these services.

Shops and Services: The most significant shops and services available in Korvosa are gathered in this category. See page 408 for more information about these locations, including information on notable magic items for sale in Korvosa.

Schools and Temples: Temples, schools, and other places of learning are listed here. See page 409 for more information about these locations, including information about purchasing spellcasting services.

Sites of Interest: This final catchall category includes public works, landmarks, marketplaces, and other unique venues of interest throughout the city.

KORVOSA
Crocker of Scurk
0
Feet
1,000
N
Trail's End
GARRISON HILL
OLD DOCK
FORT KORVOSA
OLD KORVOSA
MAINSHORE
THE NARROWS
North Bridge
BRIDGEFRONT
RIDGEFIELD
NORTH POINT
NORTHGATE
FIVE CORNERS
CITADEL CREST
UNIVERSITY
Thief Camp
THE HEIGHTS
MIDLAND
Jeggare River
SLOPE
WEST DOCK
EAST SHORE
CLIFFSIDE
PILLAR HILL
High Bridge
HIGH BRIDGE
GRAY
SOUTH SHORE
SOUTHERN KORVOSA
G1
H5
R1
R2
S1
S2
H4
V2
H1
V1
T1
T2
R3
V3
S3
V4
H2
S4
H3
S5
S6
H7
S7
H8
G2
G3
V5
H6
G5
T3
T4
G4
R4
T5
R5
V6
S8
H9
G7
H10
S9
T6
G8
H11
S11
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S10
T9
H13
S12
H17
H12
H14
G6
G12
G9
R8
S16
H15
V7
G10
S14
S13
H16
R9
T8
R6
R7
V8
G11
V10
S15
V9
V11
S17
H18
R10
T11
V12
G13
T10
V13
H19
S18

IMPORTANT KORVOSAN LOCATIONS

The locations of key Korvosan locations are listed below.

G. Government and Military Buildings

G1. Jeggare Light
G2. Longacre Building
G3. City Hall
G4. Korvosa's Mercy
G5. Great Tower
G6. Castle Korvosa
G7. Scrapper Hall
G8. Riverside House
G9. Hospice of the Blessed Maiden
G10. Citadel Volshyenek
G11. Dawnflower House
G12. Little House
G13. Jeggare Isle

H. Homes and Inns

H1. Arkona Palace
H2. Vencarlo's Home
H3. Salvator's Home
H4. Pilts's Palace
H5. Soldado Home
H6. Posh and Turtle
H7. Laughing Wave Inn
H8. Whitecaps
H9. Upslope House
H10. Frisky Unicorn
H11. Wise Dragon Inn
H12. Tenna's
H13. Trinia's Flat
H14. Girrigz's Den
H15. Zellara's Home
H16. Creaky Hammock
H17. Bard's End
H18. Leftover's
H19. Carowyn Manor

R. Restaurants and Taverns

R1. Sticky Mermaid
R2. Jeggare's Jug
R3. Traveling Man
R4. Three Rings Tavern
R5. Jittery Quill
R6. Overlook
R7. Crested Falcon
R8. Bailer's Retreat
R9. Shoreline Drinkhall
R10. Jade Circle

S. Shops and Services

S1. Reefclaw Run Market
S2. Copper-Beater Hall
S3. Eel's End
S4. Hessim, Newby, and Sage Paint Manufactory
S5. Giotorri's Toys
S6. Ironworks
S7. Dock Trade
S8. All the World's Meat
S9. Lavender
S10. Gilded Orrery
S11. Bookmaker
S12. Old Fishery
S13. Gold Market
S14. Eodred's Walk
S15. Pestico's Dolls and Figurines
S16. Horse Shop
S17. Orkatto's Feathers and Fur
S18. Green Market

T. Temples and Schools

T1. Orisini Academy
T2. Endrin Military Academy
T3. Bank of Abadar
T4. Sanctuary of Shelyn
T5. Acadamae
T6. University of Korvosa
T7. Temple of Asmodeus
T8. Temple of Sarenrae
T9. Theumanexus College
T10. Pantheon of Many
T11. Grand Cathedral of Pharasma

V. Sites of Interest

V1. Old City Hall
V2. Exemplary Execrables
V3. Temple of Aroden
V4. Wreck of the *Direption*
V5. Avenue of Arms
V6. Jeggare Museum
V7. Marbledome
V8. Gatefoot
V9. Kendall Amphitheater
V10. Eodred's Square
V11. Pillar Wall
V12. Great Tomb of Leadership
V13. Dead Warrens

KORVOSAN DISTRICTS AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Korvosa is divided into six distinct districts, each with its own subdivisions of neighborhoods, as summarized below.

East Shore: Home to a handful of noble houses, East Shore has no subdivisions within its borders.

The Heights: Nearly all of Korvosa's power players reside in the Heights, Korvosa's administrative heart.

- *Citadel Crest*: The wealthiest neighborhood in the city.
- Cliffside: Second only to Citadel Crest in affluence, Cliffside hosts much of Korvosa's aristocracy.
- *University*: Those who dwell here may not own a lot of wealth, but they are undeniably rich in knowledge.

Midland: Cosmopolitan and friendly, Midland is the social heart of Korvosa.

- *High Bridge*: The primary inhabitants of this residential district are laborers or the families of those working in the Korvosan Guard or Sable Company.
- *Pillar Hill*: This is Korvosa's most demographically diverse neighborhood.
- *Slope*: This neighborhood features a large number of small and private libraries, museums, and other bastions of culture.
- *West Dock*: This rugged neighborhood contains no significant residences, and instead features several warehouses and food processing buildings.

North Point: The seat of Korvosa's municipal power, this was first section of the mainland settled by the city's Chelish founders.

- *Five Corners*: A crowded residential ward, this neighborhood caters to the city's politicians and their underlings.
- *Mainshore*: Once the site of some of the bloodiest battles in Korvosa's early history, this area is where Korvosa's truly old money still resides.
- *Northgate*: Many of Korvosa's non-noble elites and old-money families dwell in this residential neighborhood.
- *Ridgefield*: This is the most crowded of North Point's neighborhoods, plagued with poverty and desperation.

Old Korvosa: The original site of the city, the oldest district in Korvosa is its most crowded and least affluent today.

- *Bridgefront*: Crowded but narrow, Bridgefront is a dismal and filthy slum.
- *Fort Korvosa*: Once the heart of Korvosa's military strength, this neighborhood is a decaying remnant of its former glory.
- *Garrison Hill*: Cramped and bustling with activity, Garrison Hill fights a constant battle to avoid the decay and destitution of its neighboring wards.
- *Old Dock*: Only the awful state of Bridgefront's slums keeps decaying Old Dock from being Korvosa's most run-down and least-desirable neighborhood.

Southern Korvosa: This is the newest district officially added to the city.

- *South Shore*: Much more open than most of the rest of the city, South Shore hosts many of Korvosa's new nobility.
- *Gray*: Once considered its own district, the city's sprawling cemeteries are now considered to be part of Southern Korvosa.

ONGOING EVENTS

During Curse of the Crimson Throne, three significant events play out in the background. While these events have no direct bearing on the campaign as it unfolds, the PCs may hear rumors regarding them. Feel free to expand upon these ongoing events as you wish to build encounters of your own design to the Adventure Path!

The Blooding: This sinister program is overseen by the Temple of Asmodeus, starting near the end of Chapter 1. Queen Ileosa tasks High Priest Ornher Reebs to collect a single vial of blood from as many of Korvosa's citizens as he can. His priests meticulously catalog each "donor" and then deliver the vials to the queen, who stores them in a *portable hole*. Eventually, these vials will help fuel the queen's bid for nearly eternal youth in the Sunken Queen.

Dismantling of the Great Tower: Numerous laborers and engineers pick apart this tower from the top down, harvesting the stone that composes this famous Korvosan landmark for the four statues Ileosa has commissioned (see below). Working conditions here are terrible, with deaths and injuries from falls being common, and the steadily diminishing tower is a depressing symbol of the city's drastic decline to all who watch.

Ileosa's Statues: Ileosa commissions the creation of four immense statues of herself in Korvosa. Moving the huge blocks of stone into position is a task to which she has put many of the city's laborers, under the watchful eye of the Gray Maidens. Largely a vanity project meant to distract Korvosa as much as it is meant to appeal to the queen's pride, each statue is to be made of stone with copper highlights. The statues are being built in Endrin Square, Eodred's Square, Jeggare Circle, and South Shore Square.

KORVOSA UNDER ILEOSA

The remainder of this appendix focuses on the city of Korvosa as it exists at the onset of Queen Ileosa's rule. As the Adventure Path progresses, Ileosa's rule becomes increasingly despotic and cruel, and the repercussions of this development can be seen in how Korvosa's city stat block evolves during play (see page 399). As things become more dire, certain areas in Korvosa change for the better or, in most cases, for the worse. Notes on how these locations transform during the course of the Curse of the Crimson Throne Adventure Path are presented for each location, beginning on page 411. Feel free to use any of these developments to expand your own game. None of the rumors on the following pages point to these minor events, so if you do wish to expand further on these mysteries and adventure hooks, you'll need to include mention of them on your own while play unfolds.

RUMORS

Throughout this Adventure Path, the PCs will have numerous opportunities to learn and overhear rumors about current events in Korvosa. Some of these rumors are intended to convey the tenor and ambient political situation currently affecting the city, but others tie directly into plot points in which the PCs will become involved. The Curse of the Crimson Throne Adventure Path builds in leads and pointers to all major missions and quests the PCs will be expected to undertake during the course of the campaign, but sometimes they may hear of a mission or quest before an NPC alerts them to the situation. In such a case, should the PCs wish to investigate on their own without being told to do so by an NPC, let them! It's possible for the PCs to attempt and even complete individual scenes in this campaign out of order. If the PCs do attempt a mission before they are officially assigned it, they should still receive the reward for the mission (if one exists) as if they had been sent there, of course; don't punish the PCs for being aggressive in their defense of Korvosa!

Of course, not every rumor is a font of facts. Information in parentheses after each rumor indicates whether the rumor is simply general gossip or whether it links to a specific event or encounter later in the campaign. If the PCs seek to follow up on one of these rumors early, refer to the page cited for more information. If you roll an encounter-based rumor the PCs have already resolved, you should adjust the rumor to account for that. Having the PCs hear a growing number of rumors about how they solved a problem is a great way to give them in-game feedback about their growing success.

The PCs can learn rumors in numerous ways. Helpful NPCs might volunteer information about things they have heard, particularly in thanks for aid, or perhaps allies the PCs make during the course of play might seek out the party between adventures to convey some new bit of news. Of course, the PCs can go looking for rumors as well—a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check to gather information (remember to adjust this check by Korvosa's current Lore modifier) and 1d4 hours of investigation reveal one random rumor from the tables below.

Chapter-specific rumors cannot be heard until your game reaches that chapter. The PCs can learn chapter specific rumors by rolling either a 17–20 when determining a general rumor or a duplicate general rumor they've already heard. Alternatively, if you roll a duplicate rumor the PCs have already heard, feel free to roll up a replacement rumor for a chapter-specific rumor from a prior chapter you've already finished—just because the PCs have moved on doesn't mean Korvosa's citizens stop gossiping about recent events!

RUMORS IN KORVOSA

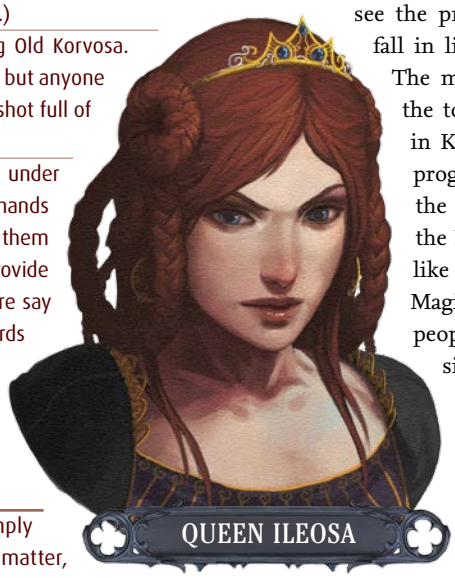
d20	General Rumors
1	"King Eodred always did have a weakness for young women. Even after he married Ileosa, he continued to pursue idle dalliances with attractive artists, performers, and debutantes who visited the castle." (*False; while Eodred was indeed a womanizer, he abandoned this habit once he married.*)
2	"King Eodred had a deformed brother who died at birth. The deformed baby is kept in the castle attic, preserved in a jar of alcohol!" (*False; the king does have a tiefling half-brother named Venster, but he lives to an old age until Ileosa murders him at the start of the campaign—see page 373 for more details on Venster Arabasti.*)
3–4	"King Eodred didn't die of old age—he was made sick and thus murdered by someone he trusted! My money's on the castle seneschal, Neolandus. Why else would he flee Korvosa after Eodred's death?" (*Partially true; Eodred was murdered, but by his wife, Ileosa, not Neolandus.*)
5–6	"Rumors that King Eodred was murdered are false; he died of old age, and anarchists are using the tragedy to damage Ileosa's reputation and perpetuate unrest in the city." (*False.*)
7	"No one's seen Blackjack in action for years, and things are as bad now in Korvosa as they ever were. So either he's retired, or someone finally killed him!" (*Partially true; Blackjack has retired but comes out of retirement at the end of Chapter 1.*)
8	"They never caught the Key-Lock Killer; he just vanished after killing nine people in their own locked homes back in 4797. They say that seven of the nine had ties to nobles who opposed the arbiters and that the Key-Lock Killer was on the arbiter payroll. I think the Key-Lock Killer was one of the arbiters themselves, and I think he's still alive, serving as a judge to this day! It's all a conspiracy!" (*False; the Key-Lock Killer is Rolth Lamm, and the PCs will face him in Chapter 2; see page 452 for his statistics.*)
9–11	"No Korvosan monarch has ever died of old age. No Korvosan monarch has ever produced an heir after being crowned. They call it the 'Curse of the Crimson Throne.' No way in hell would I ever sit in that chair if I got crowned!" (*False; while it's true that no king or queen of Korvosa has died of old age or produced a legitimate heir, this is chance, not the influence of a curse.*)
12	"King Eodred kept up his secret affairs to the day he died. Ironic, in a sense, if what I've heard is true—that he was murdered in his sleep by one of his paramours!" (*False, but if you roll up this rumor after the queen makes public her pursuit of a scapegoat, this rumor explicitly names Trinia Sabor as the supposed murderer; see page 38.*)
13–14	"The Acadamae's closed its doors and says the doors will stay closed until the troubles in Korvosa die down. Can't say I blame them!" (*True.*)
15	"All sorts of unsavory groups are capitalizing on the unrest. Thieves, anarchists, wererats, and even cultists of the goddess of undeath are plotting against us in the shadows!" (*True.*)
16	"There've been more and more otyugh attacks lately; it's like the monsters know things are bad up above and are clambering up from the sewers for fresh food!" (*True.*)
17–20	Roll on a chapter-specific rumor table below.

d20	Chapter 1 Rumors
1–4	"The Hellknights of the Nail/Korvosan Guard/Sable Company are giving up on Korvosa and are making plans to leave the city." (Choose one organization; *true for Hellknights, false otherwise.*)
5–6	"Most of the visiting ambassadors in Korvosa have fled the city; those few who are staying behind are doing so because of personal issues at home. I've heard that Ambassador Amprei from Cheliax is one of the latter; there's something he's hiding from that's keeping him from returning to Cheliax." (*Partially true; see page 54.*)
7–12	"The Shoanti aren't here to broker peace. They're just sizing us up in preparation for war!" (*False.*)
13–14	"Been more sightings of river ghosts lately; you know, the little blue spirits that sneak around in the alleys and abduct drunks or others foolish enough to sleep on the streets!" (*Partially true, the "river ghosts" are in fact derros; see page 59.*)
15–16	"Food's growing scarce fast in the city. Hope the queen gets things under control soon. I've heard a butcher in North Point's been handing out free meat, but who knows how long that generosity will last?" (*True; see All the World's Meat on page 44.*)
17–18	"Eel's End has something the rest of Korvosa lacks of late: loyal guards. The place may be unsavory, but it's one of the safest places you can be these days—provided you don't annoy the King of Spiders, of course!" (*True; see page 49.*)
19–20	"The Korvosan Guard is stretched thin and is desperate for help; they've taken to hiring common thugs and money-grubbing mercenaries to police us!" (*Partially true.*)

d20	Chapter 2 Rumors
1	"They tried to resurrect the king, but it backfired. That's what's causing the plague!" (*False.*)
2	"Arbiter Zenobia Zenderholm has turned her back on tradition in offering up the Longacre Building for the queen's use. I wonder how much the crown paid her off for this treason?" (*False; as Zenderholm died of blood veil and came back as a penanggalen, her allegiance to the queen is a side effect from her new loyalty to Urgathoa.*)
3–6	"The plague came from that ship that sailed upriver a few nights ago. The Guard sank it, but someone must have made it to shore to spread the sickness!" (*False.*)
7	"Blood veil is our just deserts for being a citywide blot of sin and materialism. Give up all your worldly possessions, and the gods will save you!" (*False, although ironically close to the truth, considering how the plague's initial vector was tainted coins.*)
8	"Those Queen's Physicians might look eerie in those long coats and creepy masks, but don't let that fool you. They really are here to help!" (*False.*)
9	"The queen blames the Sable Company and the Korvosan Guard for failing to keep us safe. These Gray Maidens are her response—a group of guards that can actually help protect us! Thank the gods!" (*True, but misinformed; the Gray Maidens are not actually here to protect the citizens of Korvosa.*)
10	"The Queen's Physicians have set up a hospice to provide comfort to the plagued and to search for ways to fight the illness, but I wouldn't set foot in that building. Think of all the sickness concentrated in there." (*Partially true; see page 110.*)
11	"Doctor Davaulus was the queen's personal physician, and he helped her escape a terrible life in Cheliax. In a way, he's sort of responsible for why she ended up being the queen of Korvosa!" (*False.*)
12	"The churches are in on it! They aren't trying to cure the plague—they're just saving those they want rather than the rest of us! They're hoarding the cure!" (*False.*)
13	"Did you hear? Some of the nobles down in Southern Korvosa are "fighting" blood veil by hosting exclusive shut-ins where they and their friends wall up in a manor to wait out the plague during a days-long party. What I wouldn't give to be rich!" (*True; see details on Carowyn Manor on page 103.*)
14	"Blood veil started in Old Korvosa, and the queen's sending her Gray Maidens to burn the bridges of the Narrows to quarantine the entire island!" (*Partially true; the queen does intend to quarantine the island, but blood veil actually started with tainted coins.*)
15	"The sickness came from the sewers—in particular, from all those filthy wererats. They're using it to try to kill us all off; everyone knows wererats are immune to the sick! If they have their way, we'll all die, and they'll inherit Korvosa!" (*False; see page 92.*)
16	"The new seneschal of Castle Korvosa, Togomor, is a bloatmage from Kaer Maga. Can't say that's the type of person I would have chosen to be the steward of my home, but hey, I'm not royalty, so what do I know?" (*True; Togomor has been assigned the role of castle seneschal, but remains relatively quiet out of sight for the majority of this campaign.*)
17	"There are plenty of folks out there who are peddling 'cures' for blood veil, but one of them actually works! It's going on sale at a place called Lavender, but don't tell anyone—they won't have enough supplies for us all, so get there early!" (*False; see page 97.*)
18	"You can make a fair amount of coin hauling bodies these days, but a lot of the folks the church of Pharasma is hiring to do the job are lazy, shiftless crooks. They're taking the money and just dumping bodies in out-of-the-way corners rather than hauling them all the way south to Gray and one of the mass graves there." (*True; see page 101.*)
19	"The cult of the goddess of undeath and disease is behind the plague! They see Korvosa as nothing more than a sacrifice to the Pallid Princess!" (*True.*)
20	"The leader of the Gray Maidens is Sabina Merrin, the queen's own bodyguard." (*True.*)

d20	Chapter 3 Rumors
1–3	"Blood veil is still very much on the loose in Old Korvosa. Everyone there will be dead by the end of the month. The quarantine is the only thing that saved the rest of us!" (*False.*)
4	"The Arkonas aren't the philanthropic heroes of the people they would have us believe them to be. They're secretly controlled by the Cerulean Society." (*Partially true, but in fact, it's the Arkonas who control the Cerulean Society.*)
5–8	"There's a new lord of Old Korvosa—a sadistic man who calls himself the emperor and who carries a magic scepter capable of creating outrageous and dangerous magical effects on his whim!" (*True.*)
9–10	"As if things weren't bad enough, I spotted one of those Red Mantis assassins folks whisper about. She was talking to someone in an alley, all dressed up in her bug armor. I didn't hang around to find out more, but if the Red Mantis is in town, that's bad news for anyone who's got rich enemies." (*True; see page 143.*)
11–12	"Endrin didn't die when his attack on the queen backfired. He's still alive, but he's languishing in some deep hole in some prison!" (*True; see page 246.*)
13–14	"The queen's new crown is a powerful magic item that she's using to control the Gray Maidens, the Red Mantis, and who knows what else?" (*False.*)

15–16	"Folks should just calm down. Queen Ileosa's taken a hard line because the people of Korvosa can't be trusted. If we just let her get things under control, things will get back to normal. She wants Korvosa to be safe, just like we all do." (*False.*)
17–19	"The Gray Maidens are watching Old Korvosa. They don't really care if you go in, but anyone who tries to come back out gets shot full of arrows." (*True.*)
20	"The Arkonas want to get things under control in Old Korvosa, but their hands are full. If someone were to go to them to offer help and could actually provide the help the Arkonas need... I dare say those nobles would give out rewards for services provided to make the queen herself jealous!" (*Partially true; see page 162.*)


QUEEN ILEOSA

d20	Chapter 4–6 Rumors
1–4	"Whether Blackjack is dead or simply fled the city entirely doesn't matter, since a new hero's come to help folks out. They call him Trifaccia; he wears a gold mask and a red cloak, and defends us common folk from rioters and gangs!" (*Partially true, though Trifaccia is an agent of the queen, and not a champion of the people; see page 338.*)
5–6	"Red Mantis assassins are here at the queen's behest. They've teamed up with the Gray Maidens to handle things in the dark that the soldiers can't (or won't) handle in public." (*True.*)
7–11	"Ever since they were run out of town, a cabal of Shoanti shamans has been rallying their people in the Cinderlands to go to war on Korvosa! We're sitting ducks the way we are now, and we need to prepare for the inevitable!" (*False.*)
12–13	"The Cerulean Society's been awfully quiet these days. Some folks say that's because they're just waiting things out, but I think they're the architects behind all this mayhem! Thieves are the worst!" (*Mostly false; see page 235.*)
14	"The queen isn't entirely human anymore; she's used some sort of magic to become a vampire/demon/devil/ghost." (*Choose one; mostly false, but in the case of "devil," partially true.*)
15	"As if we didn't have enough troubles, folks have been saying they've spotted a dragon in the night sky above the city or devils dancing on the towers of Castle Korvosa!" (*True.*)
16–20	"The end is near! The plague and riots were only symptoms of a greater evil! Korvosa's days are numbered!" (*Potentially true!*)

GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY

Korvosa's government consists of a number of different factions, but with Queen Ileosa's rise to power, many of these groups are disbanded, abandon the city, or simply see the proverbial writing on the wall and fall in line with the new queen's dictates. The monarchy has traditionally been at the top of the political power dynamic in Korvosa, but as the Adventure Path progresses, military organizations like the Sable Company or the Order of the Nail fade from view while agencies like the Arbiters (the city's judges) and Magistrates (representatives of the people and various civic programs) simply lack the will to stand up to the increasingly powerful and intimidating queen. This is in no small part due to the public perception that key members of the government have fled the city (such as seneschal Neolandus Kalepopolis) or thrown in with the queen's agenda (such as arbiter Zenobia Zenderholm).

Government Buildings

Military structures, administrative buildings, orphanages, prisons, and more compose the numerous official government structures of Korvosa.

G1. Jeggare Light (Outskirts): Early in the Adventure Path, this low lighthouse's sole keeper, Veranada Mezzerae, is murdered by the cult of Urgathoa and then transformed into a penanggalen[B3] with orders to maintain the light but to allow to the *Direption* safe passage. Left to her own devices, Veranada could well remain in charge of Jeggare Light until after the events of Crimson Throne pass, for her ability to masquerade as human and her gift at bluffing serve her well in her new role.

G2. Longacre Building (North Point): The Longacre Building, also known as Arbiter's Hall, is an imposing building that serves as both a jail and a courthouse. During Chapter 2, the Longacre Building is seized for use as the headquarters for the Gray Maidens—the PCs invade the lower level, Deathhead Vault, in Part 3 of Chapter 4.

G3. City Hall (North Point): When Ileosa seizes power, she shifts much of the workings of the government out of this building and to Castle Korvosa. By the time Chapter 3 begins, City Hall is abandoned and boarded up.

G4. Korvosa's Mercy (North Point): The largest of Korvosa's state-run orphanages, Korvosa's Mercy has a long-standing association with the military.

G5. Great Tower (The Heights): This incomplete tower serves the Sable Company as an armory, a barracks, and

a stable for their hippogriffs, but even before the Sable Company is disbanded at the start of Chapter 3, Ileosa starts dismantling the tower for stone to build her statues (see the Ongoing Events sidebar on page 402).

G6. Castle Korvosa (The Heights): Castle Korvosa is detailed in full in Part 2 of Chapter 6.

G7. Scrapper Hall (Midland): Although this building is relatively small, the highly regimented work hours that orphans endure here push the limits of legality, and the orphanage's staff members often clash with the priestly inspectors from both Abadar and Sarenrae's faith.

G8. Riverside House (Midland): This mid-sized orphanage is also Korvosa's oldest. Tragically, the wooden building burns to the ground early in Chapter 1, and many of its young wards return from death as attic whisperers[B2] or tiyanaks[B5] to haunt the partially collapsed ruins. The onetime headmaster of Riverside, a man named Osten Vendiger, himself returns from death as a particularly cruel ghost that the undead children greatly enjoy tormenting.

G9. Hospice of the Blessed Maiden (Midland): Until Chapter 2 begins, this building serves the Arkona family as a warehouse, but once the plague hits Korvosa, the city turns this site into a front for its secret Urgathoan allies. See Part 3 of Chapter 2 for more details.

G10. Citadel Volshyenek (Midland): This impressive citadel houses the headquarters and main garrison of the Korvosan Guard. As the campaign progresses, the Korvosan Guard suffers increasing attrition as their members are lost, be they killed in action, "recruited" to the Gray Maidens, or deserting their duty. Some remain loyal, but by the time Chapter 4 begins, Citadel Volshyenek feels all but abandoned. Field Marshal Cressida Kroft maintains a skeleton crew of guards at the citadel from this point on, but their role in the city is largely just for show, with the expectation that the queen could well dissolve the Korvosan Guard at any moment.

G11. Dawnflower House (Midland): While all five of Korvosa's orphanages are inspected regularly by the churches of Abadar (to ensure everything is running efficiently and legally) and by Sarenrae (to ensure the children are safe and comfortable), Dawnflower House is the only one of the five to be run by actual clerics.

G12. Little House (East Shore): The smallest of Korvosa's orphanages is also the newest. Administered by a philanthropic halfling named Bek Blerkian, the Little House focuses primarily on non-human orphans.

G13. Jeggare Isle (Outskirts): A single squat fort sits atop this low, rocky isle, its roof adorned with several siege engines. These days, Jeggare Isle is in large part a nostalgic historical site from the city's violent past, and while its defenses still function, its skeleton crew can hardly man them with efficiency should the need arise.

HOME AND HEARTH

The cost of living in Korvosa varies widely depending on which neighborhood where one chooses to dwell. In a slum like Bridgefront or Ridgefield, one can get by on a few coppers a day or even squat in an abandoned house, while in affluent areas like South Shore or Citadel Crest, one can easily spend dozens of gold pieces a day on rent and food.

In Curse of the Crimson Throne, the PCs earn the right to use Citadel Volshyenek early on once they join forces with the Korvosan Guard, but in time, they'll need to find their own hidden headquarters as they become more and more hunted by the queen's agents. It's easiest to simply use the cost of living rules (*Pathfinder Core Rulebook* 405) to determine each PC's expenditures (especially for PCs who wish to be homeowners in the city), but feel free to have the PCs choose inns or other locations as headquarters during play.

Inn and Tavern Prices: Korvosa's inns and taverns are organized into one of three categories: luxurious services, standard services, and squalid services.

Luxurious Services: These high-end inns and taverns have prices that are double those listed in the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* for food, drink, and lodging, and there is no chance of a dangerous encounter while at such a location.

Standard Services: These locations feature standard prices. Normally, there's effectively a 0% chance of a dangerous encounter at such a location, but this chance is modified by Korvosa's danger rating when the city is in anarchy, under martial law, plagued, or even in unrest.

Squalid Services: A squalid tavern or inn has prices that are half of those listed in the *Core Rulebook*, but there's a 20% chance of a dangerous encounter here (modified by the city's danger rating when in anarchy, under martial law, plagued, or in unrest).

Dangerous Encounters at Inns and Taverns: Check for a dangerous encounter once each visit, if appropriate, by rolling d%. If a dangerous encounter occurs, roll on the Korvosa Street Encounters table on page 465 to determine what danger occurs. At standard services, there's a 75% chance this encounter takes place on the street and does not directly threaten those inside, while at squalid services, that chance drops to 25%. If the encounter takes place outside, the PCs should notice the danger and have the option of stepping out to provide aid or confront the danger as they see fit. If you roll an encounter that seems improbable (such as an otyugh indoors, or an encounter with the Queen's Physicians before the group is founded), treat the result as no encounter. At your discretion, a dangerous encounter could simply be a confrontation with a belligerent drunk or surly customer, and need not lead to an actual fight.

Homes, Inns, Restaurants, and Taverns

Be they the homes of citizens important to the campaign, inns the PCs might seek shelter in, or merely places to grab a quick meal, the most significant taverns, inns, and residences of Korvosa are as follows.

H1. Arkona Palace (Old Korvosa): This manor houses Old Korvosa's de facto ruling family, the inscrutable, but feared, House Arkona. Arkona Palace and its dangerous guardians are detailed in full in Part 3 of Chapter 3.

H2. Vencarlo's Home (Old Korvosa): This solid, comfortable house may look old from the outside, but within, it is in excellent repair—at least, until the events chronicled in Part 1 of Chapter 3 play out!

H3. Salvator's Home (Old Korvosa): This run-down house, typical of so many old and decaying homes in Old Korvosa, belongs to one of the city's most eccentric artists. It is detailed in Part 1 of Chapter 3.

H4. Pilts's Palace (Old Korvosa): Up until Old Korvosa is quarantined, the buildings destined to become Pilts's Palace are a set of ramshackle tenements. This location is detailed in Part 2 of Chapter 3.

H5. Soldado Home (Outskirts): This humble home, located in the heavily Varisian outlying neighborhood of Trail's End, is one of the first points of outbreak for blood veil. It features prominently in Part 1 of Chapter 2.

H6. Posh and Turtle (North Point; luxurious): The Posh and Turtle is the finest inn and tavern in all of Korvosa. Upon entering the establishment, it is difficult not to notice the glass flooring overlooking a wide but shallow sea cave, within which lives a 20-foot-long sea turtle named Old Tom. The owner of the establishment, Thaviun Rigulus, is a noted wizard.

H7. Laughing Wave Inn (North Point; standard): The Laughing Wave is the oldest surviving inn on the mainland. It remains a favorite destination of visitors thanks to its long history and the legends surrounding the Barbarian Princess, the ghost of a Shoanti woman said to appear on certain nights of the year.

H8. Whitecaps (North Point; squalid): Whitecaps is an inn more than a century past its prime. It looks old, it smells old, and it even feels old to those inside it.

H9. Upslope House (The Heights; luxurious): This fine inn can accommodate up to 22 people in its 10 rooms.

H10. Frisky Unicorn (The Heights; standard): The rooms in this comparatively low-priced (for the Heights) inn afford breathtaking views of Conqueror's Bay.

H11. Wise Dragon Inn (The Heights; luxurious): Normally, this inn caters to students who haven't yet secured housing at the Acadamae, but as the Adventure Path gets underway, all of the rooms in this inn remain empty. By the end of Chapter 2, management is desperate, and this inn's category changes from luxurious to standard.

H12. Tenna's (The Heights; luxurious): While it's the most expensive inn in the Heights, Tenna's makes up for its prices by offering the most amenities in Korvosa: scented baths, massages, manicures and pedicures, valets, and three lavish meals per day, to name the highlights.

H13. Trinia's Flat (Midland): Located on the top floor of a sprawling tenement, this small flat is the home of Trinia Sabor, a woman singled out as a scapegoat by the queen in Part 2 of Chapter 1.

H14. Girrigz's Den (Midland): This underground wererat den is detailed in Chapter 2.

H15. Zellara's Home (Midland): This humble abode is where the campaign begins—see Chapter 1 for more location details.

H16. Creaky Hammock (Midland; standard): Decorated with a nautical theme, the Creaky Hammock tends to serve ships' crews in port for a few days.

H17. Bard's End (Southern Korvosa; standard): Standing just a block from Kendall Amphitheater, Korvosa's largest inn provides a place to stay for those who have traveled long and far.

H18. Leftover's (East Shore; standard): Leftover's is East Shore's only inn. It contains a dozen two-person rooms in addition to its large, cozy common room, and it charges standard rates.

H19. Carowyn Manor (Southern Korvosa): One of many of Korvosa's high-class, expensive, and beautiful aristocratic estates, Carowyn Manor faces a grisly fate during the campaign, as detailed in Part 2 of Chapter 2.

R1. Sticky Mermaid (Old Korvosa; squalid): A fixture of Old Dock for more than 2 centuries, the Sticky Mermaid is an unwholesome tavern that serves an unruly clientele made all the rougher by fishjack, a particularly potent spirit served only here and garnished with fermented eggs of Jeggare River salmon.

R2. Jeggare's Jug (Old Korvosa; squalid): One of the many small pubs that fill Old Dock, Jeggy's Jug (as it's frequently called) maintains a not-always-peaceful rivalry with the Sticky Mermaid. The clientele at the Jug tends to be made up of cranky dockworkers and surly laborers.

R3. Traveling Man (Old Korvosa; standard): This small tavern's main claim to fame is its proximity to the largest of the otyugh plugs used by the city to feed its sewer-cleaning "allies."

R4. Three Rings Tavern (North Point; standard): This tavern is low-key and quiet, serving as much coffee and tea as mead and wine. In addition to its extensive variety of beverages—alcoholic and not—the Three Rings also gathers a regular breakfast clientele with its Varisian sweetbreads and cream-filled pastries.

R5. Jittery Quill (The Heights; standard): This low-key establishment serves both ale and coffee, making it the favorite haunt of university students and faculty alike.

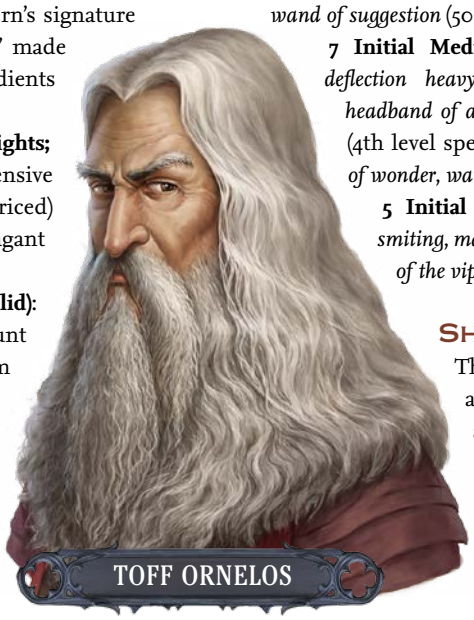
R6. Overlook (The Heights; luxurious): Teetering on a cliff edge, the Overlook gets a little closer to falling into the raging surf below every year due to erosion. This hint of danger carries over to the tavern's signature offering: a drink called "this-'n'-that," made from whatever castoff or leftover ingredients happen to be on hand at the time.

R7. Crested Falcon (The Heights; luxurious): One of the most expensive restaurants (and easily the most overpriced) in Korvosa, the Crested Falcon's extravagant (and pricey) menu changes each day.

R8. Bailer's Retreat (Midland; squalid): This rough tavern is a favorite haunt of recently released prisoners from Citadel Volshyenek's jails. Brawls, and resultant visits from the Korvosan Guard, are frequent occurrences here as a result.

R9. Shoreline Drinkhall (East Shore; standard): The most popular of the few taverns in East Shore, the Shoreline Drinkhall has a reputation for fair prices and stiff drinks, although its meal offerings taste more like military rations than tavern food.

R10. Jade Circle (Southern Korvosa; luxurious): Taking much of its decor from Tian Xia, the walls of this green-painted, domed teahouse glitter like giant emeralds in the sun. By day, young nobles accompany their parents here for a spot of exotic fragrant teas, while by night, young bravos bolster their spirits with mulled wines and tales of derring-do.



Shopping in Korvosa

While Korvosa has many shops, for the PCs, the big question is "what magic items are available?" When this campaign begins, use the following items as a starting point for what items are available in the city. As the situation in Korvosa grows bleaker, opportunities for new items to show up and be restocked become few and far between—as a general rule, you can assume that 1d4 minor items, 1d2 medium items, and 1 major item are added to those available for each month that passes in play, up to the maximum available in that category. Note that while items under Korvosa's base value have a 75% chance of being "in stock," at times, certain items will be scarce or even entirely absent from Korvosa's markets. In particular, *potions of remove disease, restorative ointment, wands of remove disease,* and other items capable of curing illness become incredibly scarce soon after Korvosa becomes plagued in Chapter 2.

10 Initial Minor Items (max 16): *+1 ghost touch flaming spear, +1 spell resistance (13) full plate, +2 light fortification chain shirt, +2 merciful warhammer, +2 rapier, +3 studded leather armor, ring of animal friendship, wand of cure serious wounds* (50 charges), *wand of remove blindness/deafness* (50 charges), *wand of suggestion* (50 charges).

7 Initial Medium Items (max 12): *+3 arrow deflection heavy wooden shield, +3 greatsword, headband of alluring charisma +4, pearl of power* (4th level spell), *ring of major fire resistance, rod of wonder, wand of dimension door* (50 charges).

5 Initial Major Items (max 8): *mace of smiting, mantle of faith, ring of wizardry (I), rod of the viper, staff of illumination.*

Shops and Services

The most notable markets, shops, and service providers of Korvosa are summarized below.

S1. Reefclaw Run Market (Old Korvosa): Fresh seafood remains the order of the day at this market, as it has for almost 3 centuries.

S2. Copper-Beater Hall (Old Korvosa): The employees of this forge abandon their post during the riots at the start of Part 2 in Chapter 1, and this building remains abandoned until Chapter 3, when it becomes one of several structures that burn to the ground during Old Korvosa's quarantine.

S3. Eel's End (Old Korvosa): Eel's End is a tangle of five ships moored to at the eastern end of the Narrows, a clot of decommissioned crafts ruled by a man named Devargo Barvasi, known to many as the King of Spiders. This notorious site is detailed in full in Part 3 of Chapter 1.

S4. Hessim, Newby, and Sage Paint Manufactory (Old Korvosa): This building caters to Korvosa's struggling artist community, offering hundreds of tiny jars and pots, brushes, canvases, and easels.

S5. Giotorri's Toys (Old Korvosa): Located near Racker's Alley, an area known to be a haven for illicit exchanges, Giotorri's Toys was never intended to be a place for children. Giotorri's Toys appears in Part 2 of Chapter 2.

S6. Ironworks (Old Korvosa): More a factory than a smithy, the Ironworks focuses on simple and functional wrought-iron goods, emphasizing quantity over quality.

S7. Dock Trade (North Point): This market of questionable legality offers goods that appear brand new, although most have some amount of minor damage to them. Many of the merchants at the Dock Trade have ties to the Cerulean Society or other criminal organizations.

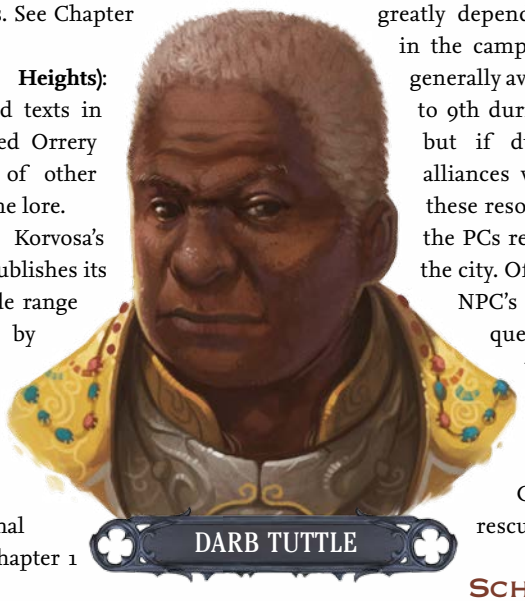
S8. All the World's Meat (North Point): This butcher shop has been closed for nearly a year but reopens early in Part 2 of Chapter 1. This location is detailed further in Part 3 of Chapter 1.

S9. Lavender (The Heights): Lavender is a relatively new establishment devoted to the sale of perfumes and other distractions aimed at the rich and elite, and its proprietor becomes part of the problem facing Korvosa when the plague strikes. See Chapter 2 for more details.

S10. Gilded Orrery (The Heights): Specializing in magic items and texts in support of conjuring, the Gilded Orrery also stocks a wide selection of other magical wares and books of arcane lore.

S11. Bookmaker (Midland): Korvosa's largest bookstore, this site also publishes its own small-press tomes on a wide range of specialized subjects written by local scholars.

S12. Old Fishery (Midland): Known primarily for producing low-cost, no-questions-asked fish slurry, the Old Fishery is the secret lair of aging criminal Gaedrin Lamm. See Part 1 of Chapter 1 for full details on this site.


DARB TUTTLE

S13. Gold Market (Midland): Korvosa's largest marketplace serves as the main attraction in Midland. All manner of foods and handicraft from Korvosa's holdings and the rest of Varisia appear in the Gold Market.

S14. Eodred's Walk (Midland): Fourteen shops form the semicircular face of Eodred's Walk, offering a variety of goods and services, including books and maps, harrow readings, tack and barding, jewelry, minor magical trinkets, haberdashery, fishing supplies, bait, haircuts and grooming, knives, smoked foods, clocks and clockwork trinkets, trapping and hunting supplies, and watered-down alcohol.

S15. Pestico's Dolls and Figurines (Midland): A doddering but gentle old man little more than a loud noise away from the grave, Vadid Pestico has lived and worked his entire life in Korvosa, crafting exquisite dolls for the city's children.

S16. Horse Shop (East Shore): A no-frills shop (as its simple name testifies), this combination livery stable and equestrian supply shop has fair prices.

S17. Orkatto's Feathers and Fur (Southern Korvosa): Animal collectors and wealthy nobles of South Gate acquire exotic pets or oddities to add to their menageries from Orkatto's.

S18. Green Market (Southern Korvosa): This small, fully enclosed market specializes in food, clothing, and commodities that the residents of the city need to survive, but it also provides jewelry and other luxuries for the nobles of the city. Merchants here are expressly forbidden from selling weapons, armor, or magic items.

SPELLCASTING AND RESEARCH

There are plenty of divine and arcane spellcasters in Korvosa who hire out their services for those with the right amounts of coin, but spell availability varies greatly depending on the progress of events in the campaign. The maximum spell level generally available varies from 3rd all the way to 9th during the course of the campaign, but if during play the party secures alliances with powerful NPC spellcasters, these resources should remain available to the PCs regardless of the current status of the city. Of course, if word of such an allied NPC's support of the PCs reaches the queen's ears, you should feel free to have that NPC arrested on some trumped-up charge and put into custody in Deathhead Vault or, more likely, under Castle Korvosa for the PCs to rescue late in the campaign!

Schools and Temples

Korvosa's schools and temples cover a wide range of beliefs and agendas.

T1. Orisini Academy (Old Korvosa): This famed sword school stands in the heart of the city's ancient center district. Within its walls, men and women—mostly young scions of noble houses—practice the many elegant skills of fencing and the grandiose arts of mobile swordplay. This building is destined to be burned to the ground by the Red Mantis at the start of Chapter 3 in their pursuit of the academy's owner, Vencarlo Orisini.

T2. Endrin Military Academy (Old Korvosa): These whitewashed buildings act as overflow barracks for Fort Korvosa's small garrison of Korvosan Guards and Sable Company trainees, and also contains classrooms and sparring rings. By the time the plague is in full swing in Chapter 2, Endrin Military Academy is entirely abandoned.

T3. Bank of Abadar (North Point): More than just a temple to the god of cities, the Bank of Abadar also serves as Korvosa's main financial institution. During the plague, a schism grows in the church as some of its followers push to provide free healing for the poor (or at least at a reduced cost) to help protect the city—a stance many of the bank's elder members, particularly its leader, Archbanker Darb Tuttle, see as a significant threat to the faith's resources and traditions.

T4. Sanctuary of Shelyn (North Point): The Sanctuary of Shelyn is the smallest of the independent temples in the city. Its priests do their best during the plague to aid the city's desperate, but their small numbers have relatively little impact on combating the contagion overall.

T5. Acadamae (The Heights): Students of the Acadamae are expected to specialize in a school of magic, but the primary focus under the ever-scowling headmaster Toff Ornelos is conjuration. As Curse of the Crimson Throne begins, the Acadamae senses a time of trouble and closes its doors tightly to visitors. They and their relatively powerful faculty members play no significant role in this campaign as a result.

T6. University of Korvosa (The Heights): While it pales next to the grandeur of the Acadamae, the University of Korvosa proudly offers classes in all manner of subjects, and its faculty members are eager to point out that they don't limit their scholastic pursuits to only magic—a thinly veiled jibe at their greatest competitors.

T7. Temple of Asmodeus (The Heights): This star-shaped temple hosts a relatively small number of priests. As such, the temple of Asmodeus offers very little support during the plague in Chapter 2, its worshipers and clergy grossly underestimating the magnitude and severity of the event and taking a stance of self-preservation over charity.

T8. Temple of Sarenrae (The Heights): During Chapter 2, the priesthood of this many-turreted, white-marble temple provides the most support of all Korvosa's churches in combating the spread of blood veil, yet even their significant aid is unable to stem the tide of the virulent sickness.

T9. Theumanexus College (East Shore): This small school focuses on arcane magic, with a specific concentration on generalist magic that often puts its professors and students at odds with their competitors at the Acadamae.

T10. Pantheon of Many (Southern Korvosa): The Pantheon of Many holds shrines to 17 different deities within its white-marbled walls. Of the 20 main deities of Golarion, only Gorum, Lamashtu, and Rovagug do not have shrines present, for these three deities have traditionally been unpopular in Korvosa. Of late, the shrine to Norgorber has gone untended as well. The Pantheon's caretakers rally to fight the plague in Chapter 2, but their relatively small numbers, combined with unfortunate bickering between faiths, severely limit the aid they can provide.

T11. Grand Cathedral of Pharasma (Southern Korvosa): As in many cities, Pharasmins are the keepers of the dead and the monitors of fate in Korvosa, so when the plague hits in Chapter 2, this clergy is more focused on properly disposing the diseased bodies than tending to sick but still-living victims. By the time the queen declares martial law, the leader of the church of Pharasma makes her choice and secretly allies with the growing rebel force, turning over portions of the city graveyard to the rebels to use as a hideout.

Sites of Interest

Beyond Korvosa's shops, taverns, schools, and temples are numerous other sites of potential interest. Two regions in particular lie above and below the city at large—the Shingles and the Vaults.

The Shingles

In many ways, the area known as the Shingles is like its own sub-ward of the city of Korvosa. Here, in shanties built atop roofs, on the upper floors of otherwise abandoned tenements, and amid jungles of chimneys, peaked roofs, and eroding gargoyles, are vagabonds, thieves, monsters, and other perils equal to those found in the most dangerous slums. Stirges and nests of imps haunt the gutters. The house drakes that lair here often cause nearly as many problems as the imps they seek to exterminate. Criminals use the Shingles as a highway to move about while remaining unseen by the Guard. Worst of all are the chokers—hideous aberrations with long, boneless arms—which have taken to the Shingles with tenacity, having resisted all eradication attempts. Stories of chokers reaching arms down through chimneys or upper windows are common and serve as the primary reason most citizens avoid going above the second floor in regions overshadowed by the Shingles.

The Vaults

Most cities have sewer systems of some sort. Some can even claim dungeons and deep caverns beneath them. Few cities, though, have a complex system of subterranean tunnels quite like the Vaults of Korvosa. Modern Korvosa stands atop the remains of at least two other civilizations and integrates both of them in its design. As a result, the origins of the Vaults of Korvosa can be divided into three primary categories.

Burial Mounds: The Shoanti who lived in Korvosa prior to its Chelish colonization dug tombs into the earth to bury their rulers, heroes, and shamans. The Korvosans then made these tunnels into sewers without any regard for the dead Shoanti buried there. Today, the sewers under much of mainland Korvosa make little sense, twisting randomly into numerous festering dead ends, thanks to the haphazard layout of the Shoanti burial mounds.

Sewage Tunnels: The most recent of the vaults are those constructed specifically to serve as sewer tunnels or storm drains. In many cases, the city's architects took advantage of existing tunnels, repurposing them for this use. In others, though, relatively new brick-lined sewer tunnels adjoin or connect via these existing tunnels, with barred walls blocking off unexplored avenues.

Thassilonian Ruins: The oldest, deepest, and most dangerous of the vaults date back to Thassilon, when the region above served as the sprawling capital of the nation

of Eurythnia, the realm of Runelord Sorshen. Many of these tunnels collapsed in the wake of Earthfall, but enough exist and maintain their links to the Darklands to ensure that the threats awaiting explorers here are the most dangerous of all those to be encountered in the Vaults of Korvosa.

Individual Sites

Listed below are areas of importance in the city of Korvosa that serve as landmarks, public works, entertainment venues, or mere curiosities. A few of these locations are detailed more fully in the text of the adventure itself, but all of the others could serve as the location of additional adventures of your own design.

V1. Old City Hall (Old Korvosa): This dark-brick building, sometimes affectionately called the Charcoal Palace, served as the city hall for 60 years, but it is largely abandoned today save for a tiny staff of caretakers.

V2. Exemplary Execrables (Old Korvosa): Refurbished with gaudy, gold-colored paint and massive glass "gems," this looming building is the home of a perverse and detestable theater of all things foul, gore slicked, and unnaturally pornographic. Volunteers at performances here often went missing after a show, and the theater had an unusually high turnover rate for young and pretty assistants. Exemplary Execrables is one of the first buildings to burn during the quarantining of Old Korvosa, and by the time Chapter 3 begins, the theater's manager, a man named Pilts Swastel, has relocated to Pilts's Palace and taken on the mantle of "Emperor of Old Korvosa."

V3. Temple of Aroden (Old Korvosa): Old and crumbling, Korvosa's Temple of Aroden has lost almost all of its former splendor. When blood veil hits Korvosa during Chapter 2, the three caretakers do their best to help fight the disease, only to succumb early on, their lack of magical healing ability being a death sentence. By the time Chapter 3 begins, the temple has become a favorite nest for a small tribe of particularly brutal chokers.

V4. Wreck of the Direption (Jeggare River): It is here that the false plague ship *Direption* comes to rest at the start of Chapter 2.

V5. Avenue of Arms (North Point): This bizarre landmark of the city extends from just east of the Great Tower along the riverfront to Burnt Bridge Boulevard. All along the wide thoroughfare, exactly 127 human-looking stone arms reach up from the rocky soil along the road at an even distance. No two arms look the same, but despite variations, all of them have a few things in common: they face the same direction, with their elbows bending away from shore to point toward the road; they all look like the arms of human adults; all are evenly spaced at exactly 2 feet, 3-1/2 inches apart; and they share the strange Thassilonian feature of resisting erosion or vandalism. All attempts to learn more about these curiosities have met with failure, other than to confirm that the arms protrude from a single, solid length of buried basalt. Any attempt to dig up or damage the arms causes strange shrieks of pain and terror, as well as the welling up of brackish black water where the wound in the stone occurs. Damage inflicted on the arms heals over time. Today, the people of Korvosa have come to accept the Avenue of Arms as just another ancient curiosity—one that is better left alone.

V6. Jeggare Museum (The Heights): Built and operated by House Jeggare, this large museum displays hundreds of objects pulled from ruins and archaeological sites scattered across Varisia. Mercival Jeggare, the museum's curator, happily buys treasures and items from "freelance treasure hunters" for reasonable prices. **V7. Marbledome (The Heights):** This gleaming fixture is home to Korvosa's opera company, a poorly managed affair known for producing mediocre performances that bleed gold.

V8. Gatefoot (The Heights): All that remains of what was once an immense statue of Runelord Sorshen is this well-proportioned but immense stone foot. As with all Thassilonian structures, old rumors hold that the foot marks the uppermost reaches of an extensive underground complex, yet no evidence of such has ever been found. To all appearances, the massive foot is nothing more than a remnant from a prior age.

V9. Kendall Amphitheater (The Heights): The church of Abadar and a team of dwarven architects repurposed a massive sinkhole here into a sprawling amphitheater. The sinkhole itself disgorged a large number of particularly aggressive ankhegs back in the day, a blight of monsters that was put down thanks to the heroism of Mina Kendall. She perished in the attempt, and the city honored her deed by naming the building after her.

V10. Eodred's Square (Midland): Forming a plaza just past the west end of High Bridge, the square makes a popular venue that locals and visitors alike use to set up meetings or to simply orient themselves within the ward.

V11. Pillar Wall (Southern Korvosa): One of Korvosa's many Thassilonian ruins, this row of 100-foot-tall stone pillars was once a small part of a much larger and more grandiose city defense, but it now serves as little more than a landmark.

V12. Great Tomb of Leadership (Southern Korvosa): One of the largest crypts in Gray is the Great Tomb of Leadership, a heavily secured and constantly guarded building that holds the bodies of past military leaders and the city's most-decorated soldiers.

V13. Dead Warrens (Southern Korvosa): One of many compact underground crypts below Korvosa's Gray neighborhood, the Dead Warrens are detailed fully in Part 3 of Chapter 1.

Curse of the Crimson Throne Overland Map
Scarwall
HOLD OF BELKZEN
THE CINDERLANDS
House of the Moon
Acropolis of the Thrallkeepers
Flameford
Cindermaw's Feeding Grounds
Kaer Maga
Kallow Mounds
Sirathu
Abken
Biston
Melfesh
Janderhoff
Harse
Baslwief
VARISIA
Area Enlarged
The Sunken Queen
Palin's Cove
THE MUSHFENS
Veldraine
KORVOSA
Citadel Vraid
0
100
Miles
THE INNER SEA REGION

KORVOSAN HINTERLANDS

Korvosa does not—much to its constant chagrin—reign supreme within Varisia or even its immediate vicinity. While its long-standing feud with Magnimar is a matter of record, Korvosa shares control of its own hinterlands with the following three power centers.

Citadel Vraid: Built at Korvosa's expense for the Hellknight Order of the Nail, this impressive structure stands atop a narrow table within the southern arm of the Mindspin Mountains. In theory, the Hellknights of Citadel Vraid are allied with Korvosa and frequently act as shock troops when the Korvosan Guard feels outmatched or doesn't want to risk its own soldiers. Truthfully, the Order of the Nail serves only itself and remains on Korvosa's side provided only that the city pays it. The Hellknights retreat from Korvosa during Chapter 2, and their presence is minimal in Korvosa for the remainder of Curse of the Crimson Throne. Citadel Vraid is explored in greater detail in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Castles of the Inner Sea*.

Janderhoff: The dwarves of the Sky Citadel of Janderhoff have lived in the region since they emerged here during their Quest for Sky, yet have never expanded significantly beyond Janderhoff's walls. Most of the stone and metal used by Korvosa comes from Janderhoff, and in return the dwarves depend heavily on Korvosa for luxury goods, exotic foods, and other nonessentials. Janderhoff can survive without Korvosa's support, although in less comfort. Its inhabitants avoid getting directly involved in the matters of Curse of the Crimson Throne other than to offer shelter to Vencarlo and Neolandus when the fugitives flee here at the start of Chapter 4.

Kaer Maga: When the people of Korvosa began to explore the region around them, they eventually came across the walled-in city of Kaer Maga, along the edge of the Storval Plateau. The respective leaders of each city instantly took a dislike to one another, but in the past several decades since the Treaty of Sirathu, the two cities have existed in an increasingly cooperative state of peace, with (mostly illicit) trade growing between them with each passing year. Kaer Magans note events during Curse of the Crimson Throne with curiosity, but the distance from Korvosa limits their interaction to mere observation. More information on Kaer Maga can be found in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: City of Strangers*.

KORVOSAN HOLDINGS

Despite the presence of Citadel Vraid, Janderhoff, and Kaer Maga, Korvosa exerts direct control or strong influence over much of southeastern Varisia. Its power stretches as far west as the Fenwall Mountains and Ashwood Forest and as far north as the Storval Rise, and encompasses a number of settlements.

HARSE

Harse, the only Korvosan holding the PCs are likely to visit, is a narrow village located on a strip of land at the point where Sarwin River empties into Falcon River. The village itself consists of just a few dozen buildings, including a church dedicated to Erastil, two general stores, two taverns (the Spotted Pony and the somewhat dingier Nag Bag), a large inn (Rancher's Retreat), and a bustling ferry service. There isn't much for the PCs in Harse, and the villagers have little to offer high-level characters apart from rumors. Times aren't quite bad in Harse, but neither are they good. The village, as with all of the Korvosan holdings in the region, relies upon trade from the city as well as regular support of patrols and the like from the Korvosan Guard and the Sable Company. Whispers of what's going on in Korvosa are on everyone's lips, especially since the number of refugees fleeing the city seems to be growing. If locals become aware the PCs are recently fled from Korvosa, word spreads quickly and the PCs find themselves the center of attention. While this might appeal to their egos, word gets back to Korvosa relatively quickly, and if the PCs don't move on soon, feel free to have a group of Red Mantis assassins show up in town looking for them.

HARSE

NG small town

Corruption +0; **Crime** +0; **Economy** +1; **Law** +0; **Lore** +2; **Society** +0

Qualities rumormongering citizens, strategic location

Danger +0

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government autocracy (lord mayor)

Population 828 (671 humans, 83 halflings, 33 dwarves, 25 half-elves, 8 gnomes, 8 other)

Notable NPCs

Lord Mayor Bikalus Zane (LN male human expert 4/ranger 1)

Mother Tasa Seganni (LG female half-elf cleric of Erastil 7)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 1,100 gp; **Purchase Limit** 5,000 gp; **Spellcasting** 4th

Minor Items *+2 sling, +1 undead-bane gauntlet, ring of protection +1, page of spell knowledge*[UE] (2nd); **Medium Items** *+1 keen thundering short sword, +1 shadow breastplate, scroll of call lightning storm, wand of see invisibility* (50 charges)

OTHER HOLDINGS

The following page contains some brief descriptions that touch on Korvosa's other major holdings and how they relate to the city.

Abken (population 298): Abken was founded as a commune by "peace-loving riffraff." Its existence continues to baffle and chafe at Korvosa's militaristic leadership.

Baslwief (population 405): The mining performed in Baslwief augments the flow of metals out of Janderhoff.

Biston (population 286): The town of Biston long held a strong sense of independence, which resulted in conflict in 4658 AR, when a group of separatists attempted (and failed) to break free of Korvosa's rule.

Melfesh (population 955): Korvosa's largest inland holding, Melfesh controls the Runtash River with its massive, heavily guarded drawbridge.

Palin's Cove (population 1,896): For roughly the first century of its existence, the strategically vital Palin's Cove relied extensively on food and supplies from Korvosa. Today, the town bristles with catapults, ballistae, and trebuchets, which also constitute its primary exports.

Sirathu (population 440): The poorest of Korvosa's holdings, Sirathu only recently came under the city's control, as Korvosa wrested it from Kaer Maga with the Treaty of Sirathu in 4663.

Veldraine (population 2,360): The second-oldest Chelish settlement in Varisia, Veldraine has long depended on Korvosa for trade and support, even as Korvosa has relied on it for naval protection.

THE CINDERLANDS

By far the least hospitable landscape in Varisia, the Cinderlands have been written off as worthless by most of the region's residents—fit only for the crazed Shoanti barbarians displaced over the centuries by immigration from Cheliax. Yet such views are shortsighted, for within the Cinderlands' borders lurks a surprising display of life and geologic diversity.

These badlands are rugged, inhospitable terrain formed by long periods of drought and heavy wind erosion. Odd rock formations, canyons, gullies, and hoodoos fill the landscape, separated by twisting valleys and crags. Deep gorges create natural wind tunnels; the sound of the wind howling through them can carry for miles. Many of the rock formations have alternating tiers of sandstone and ash rock, creating a stark, contrasting ambience of red and black layers. The wind's effect is everywhere—the geological formations are smooth and curving, mimicking the sand dunes of a desert. Large areas are solid rock, but other areas have stretches of leached soil and silt. Short, weedy scrub grows in patches throughout the badlands, interspersed with succulent plants.

In addition to a host of dangerous monsters and wildlife (see the Hinterland Encounters table on page 464), the environs themselves are perilous. Food and water

can be difficult to secure in this region, and as a result, characters take a –5 penalty on Survival checks to progress in the wild. Other significant threats those wandering through the Cinderlands can expect to face include the following dangers.

Cinder Cones: The Cinderlands are spotted with cinder cones—hills of volcanic fragments built up around volcanic vents. During the eruptions of these magma fountains, earthquakes shake the land and the small volcanoes vent incredible amounts of ash, cinders, and explosive projectiles through their flanks and summit craters. The majority of the material expelled by cinder cones consists of massive quantities of miniscule ash particles, which is dispersed across the Cinderlands by the constant winds. The largest cinder cones can eject buckler-sized globs of half-cooled molten rock and trapped volcanic gases with enormous force, potentially shooting them great distances. Cooling as they fly through the air, these natural bombs solidify into elongated tear-shaped rocks, making them aerodynamic enough to travel up to a mile. The impact of one of these bombs causes it to shatter explosively, dealing 3d6 points of piercing damage and 3d6 points of fire damage to everything within 15 feet of the point of impact (Reflex DC 20 half).

Emberstorms: An emberstorm can form in the aftermath of a particularly large wildfire. Because the generated heat is so great, the surrounding oxygen burns swiftly, creating inward-facing wind currents. Once this occurs, a perpetual cycle of oxygen, ash, and embers feeds the fire and intensifies its heat, giving it its own renewable source of fuel. The winds produced by this phenomenon can reach hurricane-force gales that cause an emberstorm to grow to devastating sizes. With a good wind behind it, the storm can travel hundreds of miles, appearing from afar like a black blizzard that flickers with fire. An emberstorm consists of two parts: the edge (up to 100 feet inside the storm's borders) and the heart (the area more than 100 feet into the storm). Within the edge, the ash-choked winds function as a dust storm with severe winds. In the heart, these winds increase to windstorm levels, functioning as greater dust storms—but whenever a creature takes nonlethal damage from this dust storm, it also takes 1 point of fire damage. See page 438 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* for dust storm rules.

Cinderlands Flora

Although the Cinderlands are arid, they nevertheless host a wide range of hardy flora. Apart from the wiry grasses that are common along riverbanks and large open plains (a favorite staple of the aurochs that wander the region), the following unusual plants can be found here.

Ember Poppy: A waxy substance that combusts upon exposure to high heat coats the seed banks of the dark-petaled ember poppy. Once a fire passes through an area, the plant sprouts and germinates. Its seeds remain buried in the soil for years, awaiting the next fire.

Flask Tree: At first glance, flask trees appear to be dead, but upon closer inspection one learns that this is simply a surprisingly successful camouflage system. Many creatures walk right past a substantial store of water, thinking the trees to be just burned chunks of wood. A flask tree gets its name from the shape of its trunk—the water stored at its base engorges the wood there, giving it the appearance of a potion bottle.

Galtroot Bush: This short bush grows in red clay and often sheds its crimson leaves during drought periods to tolerate the loss of water. Containing a powerful narcotic, the galtroot has many uses, both medicinal and recreational. The Shoanti tribes mix the dried leaves with wood ash to create barbarian chew, which invigorates their warriors' ferociousness during battle.

Lotra Tree: These short trees have adapted tough, thick bark laced with oil that is resistant to fire. Younger trees burn in severe blazes, but the mature trees survive relatively unscathed, showing only bole scorching at most.

Scrub: This short, stunted vegetation grows in patches throughout the Cinderlands. While scrub refers primarily to dry, straggly weed, the term encompasses much of the vegetation, including trees and bushes.

The Hold of Belkzen

The primary dangers travelers face in the Hold of Belkzen are its denizens. The orc tribes of Belkzen are ferocious, as are the predatory monsters and megafauna that hunt the orcs. Even the region's herbivorous inhabitants tend to be large, ill-tempered, and prone to violence. This Adventure Path assumes that the PCs use magic to travel through this hostile realm and, unlike in the Cinderlands, do not spend much time exploring or traveling this region. If your players spend additional time within these borders (or merely camping outside while engaging in forays into Scarwall), use the Hinterland Encounters table on page 464 to generate encounters. A wealth of additional information on Belkzen appears in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Belkzen, Hold of the Orc Hordes*.

The Mushfens

As it does with Belkzen, *Curse of the Crimson Throne* doesn't expect the PCs to spend much time in the sodden expanse of the Mushfens, Varisia's largest swampland. The Hinterland Encounters table on page 464 can help you generate encounters here; in addition, consult the rules for marshes on page 427 of the *Core Rulebook* for guidance on handling encounters in the Mushfens.

APPENDIX 3

THE HARROW

The Varisian people have long believed the fifty-four cards of the harrow deck hold mystical power over destiny and fate. In Curse of the Crimson Throne, the harrow serves as an enduring theme and plays an important role as the campaign unfolds. Beyond these expanded rules for integrating the harrow deck into play, additional rules for plagues, a new eidolon subtype, and a wealth of new magical items and alchemical tools await discovery!

Harrowing is a Varisian method of fortune-telling, wherein past, present, and future are laid bare. With a harrow deck, a trained reader draws upon the knowledge of spirits beyond the mortal world. In Curse of the Crimson Throne, the harrow plays an integral part. This campaign begins with a harrow reading for the PCs, and the results of this grant them the ability to manipulate and influence fate throughout the campaign using Harrow Points (see page 424).

DIVINING WITH A HARROW DECK

The harrow deck is a prop for GMs to create colorful fortune-telling encounters. Near the beginning of each chapter of this campaign, you'll be performing a harrow divination for the PCs, playing the role of the ghostly harrower Zellara. If you have a *Pathfinder Cards: Deluxe Harrow Deck*, use this to perform the divination (known as a harrowing)—otherwise, you can simulate the cards with regular playing cards or dice as detailed on page 418.

As each card in the harrow reading comes up, feel free to use its themes and definitions to add flavor and mystery to the reading. You know what's in store for the PCs in the chapter of the Adventure Path they're about to start, so use this as an opportunity to drop vague hints about what's to come. You don't want to give away surprises, nor do you want to indicate the probability of an outcome determined by a player's choice or a die roll—instead, focus on the adventure's themes and certain encounters or events you know will occur, cloaking them in mystery and metaphor linked to the type of card you drew. Ideally, when the event you predict comes to pass, players will feel a sense of satisfaction that at last they understand how the prediction related to the story.

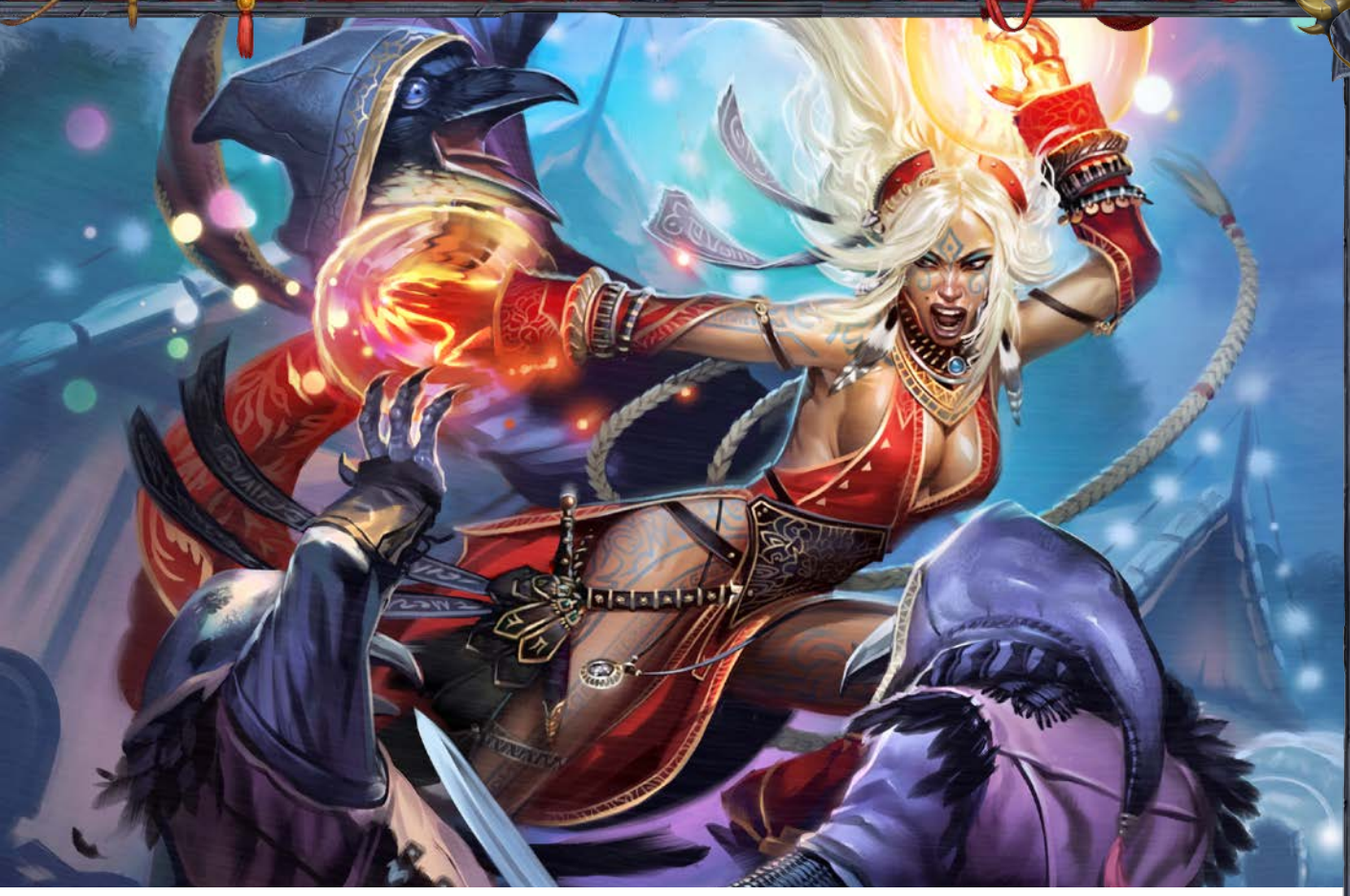
Before you perform a chapter's harrowing, pull out the nine cards representing the current chapter's suit (see the sidebar). These cards are used to conduct the "Choosing," wherein each player determines his or her individual role in the harrowing to come. Once you're ready to begin, follow these steps to perform the harrowing.

Step 1—The Choosing: Shuffle the nine cards for the Choosing, then have each player randomly select one of these nine cards. As each player reveals his or her Choosing, record that card next to the player's character's name—if this card comes up during the harrowing itself, it has great importance. Feel free to interpret each card as the players turn them over. If a card matches a player's character's alignment or highest ability score, call out the Choosing as being particularly fortunate. If a card is oppositional to the character's alignment or matches the character's lowest ability score, indicate that the Choosing poses an unseen threat or danger. Once you've recorded all the Choosings, replace the cards into the deck and shuffle it. In addition to possibly granting additional Harrow Points (see Step 6), a character's Choosing automatically grants a benefit during a certain encounter in that chapter (see Harrow Points, starting on page 424).

Step 2—The Spread: Draw nine cards and place them facedown in a three-by-three square. This arrangement relates to each of the nine alignments and implies an aspect of the past, present, or future of the topic of the reading.

Step 3—The Past: The left column of three cards represents the secrets of the past. This column also represents law, for the past is unchangeable and set in stone. Reveal the three cards in this column starting from the top and interpret their meanings (see Interpreting a Spread on page 417). Since you're describing the past, you should focus your interpretation of the cards on the PCs' backgrounds or the events of previous chapters.

Step 4—The Present: The central column of three cards represents the events of the present. This column also represents neutrality; the present is the sum total of the events of the past yet opens up to the infinite possibilities of the future, and as such is a crossroads between order and entropy. Reveal the cards from top to bottom and interpret their meanings. Since you're speaking about the present, you should focus your interpretation of the cards on the current situation in



which the PCs find themselves, and the current situation in Korvosa.

Step 5—The Future: The right column of three cards represents future events that might, or might not, come to pass. This column also represents by chaos, for the future is not set and anything is possible. Reveal the three cards in this column starting from the top and interpret their meanings. Since you're divining the future, you should focus your interpretation of the cards on events in the chapters to come. This final step completes the harrowing, but make sure you leave all nine revealed cards on the table so you can proceed with the next step.

Step 6—Calculate Harrow Points: Jot down how many of the nine cards in the harrowing are of the suit associated with the current chapter (see the Adventure Suits sidebar). This number determines how many Harrow Points each PC receives. In addition to Harrow Points received from these cards, each PC gains an additional Harrow Point for the card drawn during the Choosing, effectively guaranteeing each PC at least 1 Harrow Point to spend during the chapters, even if the spread resolves without any cards of the current chapter's suit. If any player's Choosing is revealed during the spread, that player's character gains 1 additional Harrow Point. Harrow Points can be spent during the course of a chapter to gain various benefits relating to the suit—see page 424 for more details. Harrow Points unspent at the end of a chapter are lost.

ADVENTURE SUITS

Each chapter in Curse of the Crimson Throne is linked thematically to one suit of the harrow deck and the approach by which the PCs can influence their fates.

Chapter	Harrow Suit	Ability Score
"Edge of Anarchy"	Keys	Dexterity
"Seven Days to the Grave"	Shields	Constitution
"Escape from Old Korvosa"	Books	Intelligence
"A History of Ashes"	Hammers	Strength
"Skeletons of Scarwall"	Stars	Wisdom
"Crown of Fangs"	Crowns	Charisma

Interpreting a Spread

As you reveal cards during the spread, consult the card meanings on the following pages for the cards' significance. In most cases, you'll use the traditional meaning for the card to influence your interpretation, but if an evil-aligned card is revealed in the top row (the row symbolizing goodness) or if a good-aligned

card is revealed in the bottom row (the row symbolizing wickedness), the card is misaligned, and you should use the misaligned meaning to interpret the card. Cards that are neither good nor evil can never be misaligned.

How you interpret the cards themselves is entirely theatrics and flavor; the only rules mechanics involved are the determination of how many Harrow Points each PC earns for that chapter. As such, you should feel free to get as mystical and mysterious as you wish with your reading, but take care to avoid revealing too much about the adventures to come! It's generally best to keep your interpretation to a single sentence, so that the reading goes quickly and the adventure can proceed. A little hint can go a long way!

There are placements within a harrow spread where certain cards have increased or altered significance, as summarized below.

True Matches: Any card that has the same alignment as its placement in the spread is of extreme importance.

Opposite Matches: If a card's alignment is exactly opposite of its placement in the spread—such as a chaotic good card appearing in the lawful evil (lower left) position—it is always misaligned and infers a momentous happening.

Partial Matches: When one part of a card's alignment matches its placement (such as if a neutral good card is in a lawful good position), the card has increased importance. Partial matches can sometimes be misaligned.

Choosings: If a player's Choosing card comes up, this card has a special significance to the player in relation to the card's meaning and its position in the spread. Rather than interpret the card's significance as it relates to the party, focus on that particular player instead.

HARROWING WITHOUT A DECK

If you don't have or don't wish to use a Pathfinder Cards: Deluxe Harrow Deck to perform the harrowings in your Curse of the Crimson Throne game, you can substitute in a simple deck of playing cards in place of harrow cards. If you do so, write the names of the 54 harrow cards on the tops of those playing cards (you'll need to use both jokers in the deck).

You can also simulate drawing a harrow card with dice by rolling a d6 and a d10. Every time you would flip a card, instead roll 1d10 to determine its alignment (1 = LG, 2 = LN, 3 = LE, 4 = NG 5 = N, 6 = NE, 7 = CG, 8 = CN, 9 = CE, 10 = reroll) and 1d6 to determine the card's associated ability score (1 = Strength, 2 = Dexterity, 3 = Constitution, 4 = Intelligence, 5 = Wisdom, and 6 = Charisma). If you use dice, write down the results and placements of the rolls as there are no cards to serve as placeholders. Do so in full view of the players on a large sheet of paper so the results are available for all to see.

THE AVALANCHE
(LE, DEX)

Traditional: Unrelenting disaster.
Misaligned: Disaster can be averted.

The Avalanche symbolizes the crush of the rioting mob, be they looters, members of Pilts's mob, or simply panicked Korvosan citizens.

THE BEAR
(N, STR)

Traditional: Brute force reigns.
Misaligned: Never misaligned.

The immense tribe-eating worm known as Cindermaw is represented by The Bear, as a remorseless engine of raw physical power and force.

THE BEATING
(NE, STR)

Traditional: Attack from all sides.
Misaligned: Hidden strength.

Two of the leaders of the Gray Maidens, Warden Tisharue and second-in-command Kordaitra, are symbolized by The Beating.

THE BETRAYAL
(NE, CHA)

Traditional: Selfishness leads to ruin.
Misaligned: Noble self-sacrifice.

This card represents Sabina's eventual betrayal of the Gray Maidens, which begins as she recruits the PCs to slay her dragon mount, Zarmangarof.

THE BIG SKY
(CG, STR)
Traditional: Freedom from bondage.
Misaligned: New shackles replace the old.

The Big Sky foreshadows the Trial of the Totems, when the PCs must endure a grueling ordeal under the relentless sun in the Cinderlands.

THE BRASS DWARF
(LN, CON)
Traditional: Invulnerability to peril.
Misaligned: Never misaligned.

The Brass Dwarf revels in chaos and enjoys smoke, just as the elf Jolistina does—though Jolistina's smoke bombs are more perilous in nature.

THE CARNIVAL
(CN, WIS)
Traditional: Illusions and false dreams.
Misaligned: Never misaligned.

The mad dance of The Carnival and its cacophonous but delightful music symbolize the peril and grace of the danse macabre in Scarwall.

THE COURTESAN
(CN, CHA)
Traditional: Political intrigue.
Misaligned: Never misaligned.

The Courtesan, with its associations with political intrigue, is linked to Sabina Merrin in her role as Queen Ileosa's lover and bodyguard.

THE CRICKET
(NG, DEX)
Traditional: Speed and quick passage.
Misaligned: The journey goes poorly.

The Cricket symbolizes the speed and alacrity needed in perilous chases across Korvosa, particularly in the pursuit of Trinia across the Shingles.

THE CROWS
(NE, DEX)
Traditional: Taking of loved ones or items.
Misaligned: Thievery can be stopped.

The derro Vreeg has long taken from Korvosa's dead, be it a theft of dignity or a theft of burial trinkets, and as such is symbolized by The Crows.

THE CYCLONE
(CE, STR)
Traditional: Tumultuous, evil plots.
Misaligned: Renewal after a trial.

The spectacle and overwhelming power of The Cyclone presages the confrontation between the PCs and the tentacles of the otherworldly havero.

THE DANCE
(LG, DEX)
Traditional: Staying in harmony.
Misaligned: Lockstep is perilous.

The eerie grace of the skittering spider or the long-limbed ettercap Chittersnap evokes the leaping and lithe motions shown in The Dance.

THE DEMON'S LANTERN
(CE, DEX)
Traditional: An impossible situation.
Misaligned: A guide lights a way out.

The Demon's Lantern evokes the many difficult situations that await the PCs, particularly unnecessary confrontations with those who should be allies.

THE DESERT
(CG, CON)
Traditional: Traversing a bleak passage.
Misaligned: A passage with little hope.

Although The Desert might seem to have little to do with a river, this card symbolizes bleak voyages, such as the journey the *Direption* makes upriver.

CURSE OF THE CRIMSON THRONE
APPENDIX 1: CONTINUING THE CAMPAIGN
APPENDIX 2: KORVOSA AND BEYOND
APPENDIX 3: THE HARROW
APPENDIX 4: BLOOD AND PAIN
APPENDIX 5: EQUIPMENT AND MAGIC
APPENDIX 6: NPC CODEX
APPENDIX 7: BESTIARY

A

THE ECLIPSE
(LE, WIS)
Traditional: Self-doubt.
Misaligned: Unheralded abilities.

The Eclipse symbolizes the dark triumph of mind over body seen within the endless existence of the demilich Zev Ravenka.

THE EMPTY THRONE
(LG, CHA)
Traditional: Loss brings good fortune
Misaligned: Loss brings bad tidings

The Empty Throne represents the Crimson Throne, for Queen Ileosa is no true ruler of Korvosa, but rather its greatest danger.

THE FIEND
(LE, STR)
Traditional: Many losses in a calamity.
Misaligned: Salvation from a calamity.

The Fiend consumes hope, just as the Mother of Thorns toils below the Longacre Building to destroy the hope of Gray Maiden "recruits."

THE FOREIGN TRADER
(N, INT)
Traditional: An informative pact.
Misaligned: Never misaligned.

Laori Vaus can be a bridge between faiths, as surely as The Foreign Trader bridges two cultures, and a pact with her may be informative.

THE FORGE
(LN, STR)
Traditional: Strength through diversity.
Misaligned: Never misaligned.

The Forge symbolizes the Maiden's Nursery below the Longacre Building, where new recruits are trained and forged into Gray Maidens.

THE HIDDEN TRUTH
(LG, INT)
Traditional: Seeing past the obvious.
Misaligned: A dangerous secret.

The Arkonas hold many secrets; among the rakshasas of Korvosa, Vimanda is likely be the first to reveal The Hidden Truth about herself.

THE IDIOT
(NE, INT)
Traditional: Grave foolishness and greed.
Misaligned: Clever feigning of idiocy.

Not so much a game as cruel bloodsport, blood pig is a perfect manifestation of foolishness—a violent pastime created by The Idiot.

THE INQUISITOR
(LN, INT)
Traditional: Immutable reality.
Misaligned: Never misaligned.

The Arkonas employ the beatific one Senshiir as a tormentor, and just as The Inquisitor can draw out answers, so can her torturous attentions.

THE JOKE
(CG, INT)
Traditional: Danger overcome by artifice.
Misaligned: The joke is on you.

Although he styles himself as an emperor, in truth Pilts Swastel is akin to The Joke—a living embodiment of a sham taken several steps too far.

THE JUGGLER
(CG, DEX)
Traditional: Fate is on your side.
Misaligned: Fate is not on your side.

One must often perform multiple roles at once, and The Juggler embodies such circumstances, particularly the potential for combat during chases.

THE KEEP
(NG, STR)
Traditional: Unshakable to threat.
Misaligned: Temptation is stronger.

The Red Mantis have created a fortress below the Longacre Building; their temple is not a traditional instance of The Keep, but is certainly secure.

THE LIAR
(CE, CHA)
Traditional: Love at its most treacherous.
Misaligned: A new relationship begins.

The devil Sermignatto manipulates truth at the highest level, and The Liar presages his role during the events of the campaign's endgame.

THE LOCKSMITH
(LN, DEX)
Traditional: Keys to a new destiny.
Misaligned: Never misaligned.

Gaedren Lamm is ultimately the one who enables Ileosa's end, for like The Locksmith, he holds the keys to the PCs' fate as Korvosa's heroes.

THE LOST
(CE, WIS)
Traditional: Loss of identity.
Misaligned: Clarity of mind.

Tormented soul Kleestad has lost more than his identity—his very humanity and soul have been forfeit, as foreshadowed by the Lost.

THE MARRIAGE
(LN, CHA)
Traditional: Union of persons or ideas.
Misaligned: Never misaligned.

The Marriage symbolizes more than a mere lovers' union—it also symbolizes the union between Togomor and the devil that possesses him.

THE MIDWIFE
(NG, WIS)
Traditional: New life or new information.
Misaligned: Dangerous new arrivals.

The Midwife ushers in new life, just as the nightwing Ildervok seeks to bring a new life to Scarwall by selecting a Star Tower curate.

THE MOUNTAIN MAN
(CN, CON)
Traditional: An external physical power.
Misaligned: Never misaligned.

The Mountain Man symbolizes the mountain of humanity that perishes to blood veil, as seen in the heaped dead within Racker's Alley.

THE MUTE HAG
(NE, WIS)
Traditional: Blood pacts and dark secrets.
Misaligned: Unwavering loyalty.

Just as The Mute Hag forges pacts, the night hag Malatrothe has forged a tenuous treaty with Mithrodar, the chained spirit of Scarwall.

THE OWL
(N, WIS)
Traditional: Wisdom of the natural order.
Misaligned: Never misaligned.

The Owl watches over the world, just as the chained spirit Mithrodar watches over his narrow world, the cursed castle of Scarwall.

THE PALADIN
(LG, STR)
Traditional: Standing fast under adversity.
Misaligned: Standing fast is foolhardy.

Although he is no holy warrior, the barbarian Krojun Eats-What-He-Kills stands fast in the face of adversity as surely as The Paladin.

THE PEACOCK
(N, DEX)

Traditional: Sudden personal shift.
Misaligned: Never misaligned.

Verik Vancaskerkin has shifted his allegiance as surely as The Peacock changes its plumage, yet where does his true loyalty lie?

THE PUBLICAN
(CG, WIS)

Traditional: Fellowship and camaraderie.
Misaligned: Refuge cannot be found.

Castothrane was one of Scarwall's great leaders, and now his fellowship with Mithrodar is merely a different aspect of The Publican's theme.

THE QUEEN MOTHER
(LN, WIS)

Traditional: Knowledge through fealty.
Misaligned: Never misaligned.

The devil Nihil is the only woman among the spirit anchors of Scarwall, although she is an unusual Queen Mother.

THE RABBIT PRINCE
(CN, DEX)

Traditional: Capriciousness of combat.
Misaligned: Never misaligned.

While Devargo is a king of spiders, his capriciousness and the violent whimsy of his favorite game, knivesies, certainly evoke The Rabbit Prince.

THE RAKSHASA
(LE, INT)

Traditional: Dominance and mind control.
Misaligned: Enslavement is shaken off.

Among the 54 harrow cards, none so clearly symbolizes an aspect of Korvosa's plight as The Rakshasa, which speaks directly to Bahor's nature.

THE SICKNESS
(NE, CON)

Traditional: Disease of body or soul.
Misaligned: Great health in an epidemic.

The Sickness certainly presages the advent of blood veil, but the card is specifically tied to the conditions in the Hospice of the Blessed Maiden.

THE SNAKEBITE
(CE, INT)

Traditional: Poisonous powers or ideas.
Misaligned: Mental leap or discovery.

The envenomed symbolism of The Snakebite is portrayed by the Red Mantis assassins and the exotic toxin known as fool's leprosy.

THE SURVIVOR
(NG, CON)

Traditional: Rebirth through ordeal.
Misaligned: Tragic news or profound loss.

The Survivor symbolizes rebirth, and no card could better represent Lady Andaisin's horrific return from the dead as a daughter of Urgathoa.

THE TANGLED BRIAR
(LE, CON)

Traditional: Ancient triumphs return.
Misaligned: Old evils endanger present.

Like the wary denizens of The Tangled Briar, the wererats of Korvosa weave a complex web and dwell where humanity dare not.

THE TEAMSTER
(N, CON)

Traditional: Driving external pressure.
Misaligned: Never misaligned.

The Teamster is in many ways a product of society, just as Vendra Loaggri is the result of a sickened society's desperation for a savior.

THE THEATER
(NG, CHA)

Traditional: Prophecy is true.
Misaligned: Prophecy is unreliable.

The Theater symbolizes the immense devilfish Beirawash, which has styled itself as a god of the boggard tribe it has come to rule.

THE TRUMPET
(LG, CON)

Traditional: Declaration of power.
Misaligned: Power for power's sake.

Given new power by the queen, Doctor Davaulus is an example of how not all declarations of power, as shown on The Trumpet, are for the greater good.

THE TWIN
(N, CHA)

Traditional: Duality of purpose.
Misaligned: Never misaligned.

The efreeti Yzahnum is akin to The Twin—as the false hero Trifaccia he claims to serve Korvosa's people, but in truth he serves its evil queen.

THE TYRANT
(LE, CHA)

Traditional: Paternal influence brings pain.
Misaligned: A dark influence is overruled.

The Tyrant symbolizes Queen Ileosa, particularly in her incarnation as a cruel queen empowered by the spirit of the blue dragon Kazavon.

THE UNICORN
(CG, CHA)

Traditional: What you seek is yours.
Misaligned: Friends are untrustworthy.

The Unicorn is triumph in finding what you seek, particularly triumph against one of the queen's greatest allies, Kayltanya of the Red Mantis.

THE UPRISING
(CN, STR)

Traditional: Overwhelming groundswell.
Misaligned: Never misaligned.

When The Uprising occurs, many diverse people work together to fight oppression, as seen when the Shoanti of Flameford fight at the PCs' sides.

THE VISION
(CN, INT)

Traditional: Arcane knowledge.
Misaligned: Never misaligned.

The Vision strikes in different ways—but in the sad case of Salvator Scream, visions from beyond have shattered a talented mind.

THE WANDERER
(NG, INT)

Traditional: Finding worth in cast-offs.
Misaligned: Inability to see value.

The Wanderer embodies a duality in home and body, just as Sivit has traveled from Hell and is herself of a body both bestial and human.

THE WAXWORKS
(CE, CON)

Traditional: Helplessness and entropy.
Misaligned: Abundance of energy.

The Waxworks symbolizes helplessness, a feeling that the cruel necromancer Rolth Lamm revels in creating in his unfortunate victims.

THE WINGED SERPENT
(LG, WIS)

Traditional: Knowing when to strike.
Misaligned: Failing to seize the moment.

The Winged Serpent is illustrated as a colorful couatl, but is often interpreted as a dragon—in this case, it represents the dragon Belshallam.

Harrow Points

The PCs can spend Harrow Points as a free action. As long as a PC has enough points, there is no limit to how many points she can spend in a round. As soon as a chapter's harrowing ends, inform the players of how they can spend their Harrow Points for the remainder of that chapter.

Also, the specific cards from the Choosing play additional roles in each chapter. The extra boon granted by each of these cards automatically activates for the PC whose player drew it once the indicated encounter begins and lasts for the duration of that encounter. Do not inform the players of these boons before the encounters occur, but once the encounter does begin, tell the player the details of his or her character's boon.

Edge of Anarchy

In "Edge of Anarchy," the PCs are faced with numerous situations where they need to be quick on their feet or skilled with their hands. During this chapter, a character can spend his Harrow Points in the following ways.

Dexterity Rerolls: A PC can spend a Harrow Point to reroll an initiative check, Reflex save, attack roll modified by Dexterity, or Dexterity-based check. The PC must abide by the new result (although if he has additional Harrow Points, he can use them for additional rerolls).

Dodge Bonus: A PC can spend a Harrow Point to gain a +1 dodge bonus to his Armor Class for one encounter. He can spend up to 3 Harrow Points per encounter to increase his Armor Class in this manner.

Speed Increase: A PC can spend a Harrow Point to increase his base speed by 10 feet for one encounter.

The Chosen

When a PC whose player drew one of the following nine cards during the Choosing reaches the corresponding encounter in "Edge of Anarchy," he gains a +2 bonus on all Dexterity-based checks and a +1 dodge bonus to his Armor Class.

The Avalanche: All City in Turmoil events (page 29).
The Cricket: Non-combat Shingle Chase checks (page 41).
The Crows: Combat with Vreeg (page 64).
The Dance: Combat with Chittersnap (page 57).
The Demon's Lantern: Combat with city guards.
The Juggler: Combat during the Shingle Chase (page 41).
The Locksmith: Combat with Gaedren Lamm (page 24).
The Peacock: Combat with Verik Vancaskerkin (page 47).
The Rabbit Prince: All knivesies fights or fights against the King of Spiders (page 53).

Seven Days to the Grave

In "Seven Days to the Grave," the PCs are faced with situations where health and resolve win the day. During this chapter, a character can spend Harrow Points in the following ways.

Constitution Rerolls: A PC can spend a Harrow Point to reroll a Fortitude saving throw, stabilization check, or other Constitution-based check. She must abide by the new result (although if she has additional Harrow Points remaining, she can use them to attempt additional rerolls).

Damage Reduction: A PC can spend a Harrow Point to gain DR 3/—. This damage reduction persists for the duration of the encounter in which she spent the Harrow Point. A PC can't spend multiple Harrow Points to increase this damage reduction.

Fast Hit Point Recovery: A PC can spend a Harrow Point after resting for 1 minute to recover from her recent ordeals. She regains a number of hit points equal to her character level and 1 point of ability damage each time she does so (this does not remove ability drain). She can spend a Harrow Point in this manner once after each encounter.

The Chosen

When a PC whose player drew one of the following nine cards during the Choosing reaches the corresponding encounter in "Seven Days to the Grave," she gains a +2 bonus on all Constitution-based checks and a number of temporary hit points equal to twice her character level.

The Brass Dwarf: Combat with Jolistina (page 104).
The Desert: Combat with Yvicca (page 90).
The Mountain Man: The Hungry Dead (page 101).
The Sickness: The Sick Ward (page 113).
The Survivor: Combat with Lady Andaisin (page 126).
The Tangled Briar: Combat with Girrigz (page 95).
The Teamster: The Color of Death (page 97).
The Trumpet: Combat with Reiner Davaulus (page 116).
The Waxworks: Combat with Rolth Lamm (page 120).

Escape from Old Korvosa

In "Escape from Old Korvosa," the PCs are faced with numerous situations where reasoning, logic, and attention to detail can save lives. During this chapter, a character can spend his Harrow Points in the following ways.

Arcane Wrath: A PC with levels in a class that grants bonus spells based on his Intelligence score can spend a Harrow Point to increase the power of a spell from that class's spell list as he casts it. He increases the DC of that spell by 2 and gains both a +4 bonus on caster level checks to overcome spell resistance and a +2 bonus on any attack rolls for that spell.

Flash of Insight: A PC can spend a Harrow Point to attempt a check for a skill that requires training and in which he has no ranks. He gains a one-time +5 insight bonus on this check.

Intelligence Rerolls: A PC can spend a Harrow Point to reroll an Intelligence-based check. He must abide by the new result (although if he has additional Harrow Points remaining, he can use them to attempt additional rerolls).

The Chosen

When a PC whose player drew one of the following nine cards during the Choosing reaches the corresponding encounter in "Escape from Old Korvosa," he gains a +2 bonus on all Intelligence-based checks. In addition, he treats his caster level as 1 higher when casting spells he has gained from a class that grants bonus spells based on his Intelligence score.

The Foreign Trader: Encounters with Laori Vaus (page 147).

The Hidden Truth: Combat with Vimanda (page 177).

The Idiot: Games of blood pig (page 159).

The Inquisitor: Combat with Senshiir (page 185).

The Joke: Encounters involving Pilts Swastel (page 151).

The Rakshasa: Encounters with Bahor (page 163).

The Snakebite: Red Mantis assassin combats (page 144).

The Vision: Encounters with Salvator Scream (page 158).

The Wanderer: Combat with Sivit (page 179).

A History of Ashes

In "A History of Ashes," the PCs are faced with numerous situations in which might and muscle determine destiny. During this adventure, a character can spend her Harrow Points in the following ways.

Brutal Strike: A PC can spend a Harrow Point to gain a +5 bonus on damage rolls with all melee or natural weapons for the duration of one combat. Alternatively, brutal strike allows the PC to ignore an object's hardness for 1 round.

Mighty Thews: A PC can spend a Harrow Point to be treated as a creature one size category larger than normal for the purposes of attempting grapple combat maneuver checks, wielding weapons, lifting heavy objects, and determining whether a hungry monster can swallow her whole; this adjustment lasts for one encounter (but no more than 10 minutes).

Strength Rerolls: A PC can spend a Harrow Point to reroll a Strength-based check. She must abide by the new result (although if she has additional Harrow Points remaining, she can use them to attempt additional rerolls).

The Chosen

When a PC whose player drew one of the following nine cards during the Choosing reaches the corresponding encounter in "A History of Ashes," she gains a +2 bonus on all Strength-based checks and an additional +4 bonus on grapple combat maneuver checks and Strength checks to break objects.

The Bear: Battle against Cindermaw (page 224).

The Beating: Battle involving Tisharue or Kordaitra (page 248 or 251).

The Big Sky: The Trial of the Totem, including the battle against the bulettes (page 228).

The Cyclone: Battle against the havero (page 211).

The Fiend: Battle against the Mother of Thorns (page 245).

The Forge: Any battle that occurs in the Maiden's Nursery (page 249).

The Keep: Battles against Cinnabar or Koriantu (page 239 or 245).

The Paladin: All conflicts dealing with the Shoanti warrior Krojun Eats-What-He-Kills (page 202).

The Uprising: Battles during the defense of Flameford (page 230).

Skeletons of Scarwall

In "Skeletons of Scarwall," the PCs are faced with situations where faith, perception, and willpower determine destiny. During this adventure, a character can spend his Harrow Points in the following ways.

Divine Wrath: A PC with levels in a class that grants bonus spells based on his Wisdom score can spend a Harrow Point to increase the power of a spell from that class's spell list as he casts it. He increases the DC of that spell by 2 and gains both a +4 bonus on caster level checks to overcome spell resistance and a +2 bonus on attack rolls for that spell.

Greater Channeling: A PC can spend a Harrow Point to enhance his channeled energy; his effective level for determining the effects of his channeled energy increases by 2, and the save DC to resist its effects increases by 2. He doesn't expend one of his daily uses of channeled energy when he spends a Harrow Point to enhance it.

Wisdom Rerolls: A PC can spend a Harrow Point to reroll one Wisdom-based check or Will saving throw. He must abide by the new result (although if he has additional Harrow Points remaining, he can use them to attempt additional rerolls).

The Chosen

When a PC whose player drew one of the following nine cards during the Choosing reaches the indicated encounter in "Skeletons of Scarwall," he gains a +2 bonus on all Wisdom-based checks. In addition, he treats his caster level as if it were 1 higher when casting spells gained from a class that grants bonus spells based on his Wisdom score.

The Carnival: Combat with the danse macabre (page 295).

The Eclipse: Combat with Bishop Zev Ravenka (page 322).

The Lost: Combat with Kleestad (page 328).
The Midwife: Combat with Ildervok (page 326).
The Mute Hag: Combat with Malatrothe (page 285).
The Owl: Combat with Mithrodar (page 302).
The Publican: Combat with Castothrane (page 307).
The Queen Mother: Combat with Nihil (page 310).
The Winged Serpent: Combat with Belshallam (page 288).

Crown of Fangs

In "Crown of Fangs," the PCs are faced with numerous situations where leadership, diplomacy, and fast-talking can determine destiny. During this adventure, a character can spend her Harrow Points in the following ways.

Charisma Rerolls: A PC can spend a Harrow Point to reroll a Charisma-based check. She must abide by the new result (although if she has additional Harrow Points remaining, she can use them to attempt additional rerolls).

Destiny Shall Not Be Denied: A PC can spend a Harrow Point as an immediate action to force the GM to reroll a d20 roll. She must abide by the new result (although if she has additional Harrow Points remaining, she can use them to force additional rerolls).

Psychic Wrath: A PC with levels in a class that grants bonus spells based on her Charisma score can spend a Harrow Point to increase the power of a spell from that class's spell list as she casts it. She increases the spell's DC by 2 and gains a +4 bonus on caster level checks to overcome spell resistance and a +2 bonus on attack rolls for that spell.

The Chosen

When a PC whose player drew one of the following nine cards during the Choosing reaches the indicated encounter in "Crown of Fangs," she gains a +2 bonus on all rolls modified by Charisma. In addition, she treats her caster level as 1 higher when casting spells gained from a class that grants bonus spells based on her Wisdom score.

The Betrayal: Combat against Zarmangarof (page 341).
The Courtesan: Combat against Sabina Merrin (page 341).
The Empty Throne: Combat with a false Ileosa (pages 362 and 388).

THE FOREIGN TRADER

The Liar: Combat against Sermignatto (page 367).
The Marriage: Combat against Togomor (page 357).
The Theater: Combat against Beirawash (page 381).
The Twin: Combat against Yzahnum (page 338).
The Tyrant: Combat against Queen Ileosa (page 388).
The Unicorn: Combat against Kayltanya (page 370).

Harrow Deck of Many Things

Near the end of *Curse of the Crimson Throne*, the PCs have a chance to transform *Zellara's harrow deck* into a *harrow deck of many things*. When this event occurs, each PC can declare up to four draws from the deck. While there are many opportunities to receive unfortunate or disastrous draws from the deck, the lingering presence of allied spirits stack the deck in the PCs' favor. If a PC draws an undesirable card, any PC can spend a Harrow Point to allow that PC to discard that card and draw again from the deck. This does not reduce the total number of draws each PC decides to take. Each time a new PC begins his draws from the *harrow deck of many things*, all cards used or discarded by other players in previous draws are shuffled back into the deck. Once all of the PCs have drawn the amount of cards they desire, the deck becomes nonmagical.

The full rules for a *harrow deck of many things* appear on pages 24–27 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Artifacts & Legends*, but in this Adventure Path, the *harrow deck of many things* the PC use has different potential results. These cards can't affect the surrounding environment, and can provide boons or banes only to the PC who draws the card. When a PC draws a card, consult the list of results below.

The Avalanche: The character is imprisoned, either by the *imprisonment* spell or some powerful being.

The Bear: The character gains the lycanthropy corruption (*Pathfinder RPG Horror Adventures* 28).

The Beating: While in combat, the character is always considered to be flanked.

The Betrayal: The character's animal companion, familiar, mount, or cohort is alienated and forever after hostile. If the character has no such companion but has forged a strong alliance with a key NPC like Vencarlo, Cressida, or Trinia, that NPC instead betrays the PC (and can be found at Ileosa's side at the adventure's climax).

The Big Sky: Once per day, the character can gain a +10 bonus on combat maneuver checks or to his CMD for 1 round. When he does so, a nearby metal object shatters.

The Brass Dwarf: The character becomes immune to one energy type of her choice. She also gains vulnerability to another energy type of the GM's choice.

The Carnival: When this card is drawn, it is set aside and the GM draws nine cards from the remaining cards in the deck. These cards are laid face up for the user to view, then flipped over and rearranged randomly by the GM. The PC selects one card, taking that card's effects as normal—a player with quick eyes may be able to keep an eye on the card whose effects he most wants to gain.

The Courtesan: The character's favorite item—preferably a magic weapon—becomes intelligent. Use the rules for intelligent items on page 532 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* to randomly generate the item's abilities. If the character wields *Serithtial*, she instead draws three new cards and picks which one of the three to have affect her, discarding the other two.

The Cricket: Upon drawing this card, the character can draw up to 3 additional cards. In addition to those cards' effects, the character's base land speed permanently increases by 10 feet for each additional card he draws.

The Crows: The character must make a choice between his most valuable item or a major ally of the GM's choice. Whichever the character does not select is destroyed or slain and cannot be restored by any mortal means.

The Cyclone: The character is drawn into the card, appearing in an arena-like chamber surrounded by ghosts. There, the character must fight an elder air elemental alone. If she can't defeat the elemental in 1d6+1 rounds, she is instantly transported to the Elemental Plane of Air.

The Dance: From this point on, whenever the character attempts an initiative check, he rolls twice and selects whichever result he prefers.

The Demon's Lantern: The character's body disintegrates. All that remains are her items and a glowing gem containing her soul. This gem is worth an amount equal to the character's level × 2,500 gp. A *miracle*, *resurrection*, *true resurrection*, or *wish* is required to restore the character; doing so destroys the gem.

The Desert: This card grants the character the one-time ability to travel to any location on the same plane instantly, bringing with him up to 10 allies and 2,000 pounds of goods. The character must know exactly where he wishes to travel. This transportation ignores all barriers against teleportation or other magical effects. The character can use this card's effect as a free action, but only once.

The Eclipse: From the hours of dusk to dawn, the character is treated as being 1 level lower than normal. If the character has multiple classes, she must decide upon drawing this card which class is affected.

The Empty Throne: The character is seized with an urge to sit upon the Crimson Throne, but the magic of the card does not force this action. If the PC decides to sit on the throne, reality is warped so that everyone save for the PCs always recalls this character as having been a member of Korvosa's aristocracy. The PC knows that his manor house awaits in Korvosa, and that within are a staff of servants—the names of these servants and the shape, size, and location of the manor house are left to the GM to decide, but the 15,000 gp in inheritance the PC can gather from his home is up to the player, who can spend this gold on any combination of items from *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* (subject to GM approval, of course).

The Fiend: Lorthact the Unraveler, the secret controller of the Acadamae, takes note of the character and sets plans to destroy her. An immolation devil (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 87) arrives at the Sunken Queen to pledge his aid to Ileosa, and when encountered, informs the PC that Lorthact has his eye on her. In time, Lorthact himself may take steps to destroy the PC after this campaign comes to an end—statistics for Lorthact appear on pages 26–27 of *Pathfinder RPG Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Bestiary*.

The Foreign Trader: The Foreign Trader appears and offers the PC any treasure she wishes in return for years of her life. If the PC accepts, she must choose to age a number of age categories (*Core Rulebook* 169). The PC takes all the ability score penalties for her new age, but gains none of the benefits. For each age category she advances, she gains 20,000 gp worth of credit with The Foreign Trader, which can be spent on any non-unique magic item. Any credit a character does not spend is lost. After the character is done spending her credit, The Foreign Trader vanishes. Years taken by The Foreign Trader can be restored only by deific intervention. The Foreign Trader doesn't trade with characters who cannot die of old age.

The Forge: The PC must choose armor or a weapon he owns to be reforged into another suit of armor or weapon of equal or lesser gp value. Any gp value not spent is lost.

The Hidden Truth: This card grants the PC the ability to call upon an omniscient spirit to answer a question or solve a puzzle. The character can use this card's effect whenever he wishes as a free action, but only once.

The Idiot: The character's Charisma, Intelligence, and Wisdom scores are all reduced by 1d4 points. Roll individually for each ability score.

The Inquisitor: This card grants the PC the ability to force another creature to answer a single question truthfully. The card does not grant the character or creature questioned any special insight, and if the creature is truly ignorant, it informs the character that it doesn't know the answer and this effect is wasted. The character can use this card's effect whenever she wishes, but only once.

The Joke: The character selects another PC. Three new cards are then drawn by the GM and revealed. The selected PC must choose one of these cards and immediately gains the effects. The original PC then selects one of the remaining two cards and gains that card's effects. The final card is discarded.

The Juggler: The PC gains a +2 bonus to two ability scores of his choice, but must then swap them with one another.

The Keep: The PC gains a personal demiplane, as per a permanent *create demiplane* (*Ultimate Magic* 213).

The Liar: The character's favorite magic item manifests a curse. Roll on Table 15–27: Common Item Curses on page 537 of the *Core Rulebook* to generate this effect.

The Locksmith: This card grants the ability to open any one door, lock, set of bindings, or other locked barrier. This includes magical gates or portals that have specific requirements to activate. When the character arrives at the Sunken Queen, she instinctively knows she can use this ability to remove the restriction on teleportation into and out of the Sunken Queen for 24 hours. The character can use this card's effect whenever she wishes, but only once.

The Lost: The PC cannot gain another level in whichever class he currently has the most levels. This effect can be circumvented if the character is killed and returned to life, but the next time he is restored to life he is affected as if by the spell *reincarnate*, regardless of what spell or effect was used.

The Marriage: A comely genie of the PC's preferred gender appears and proposes marriage to the PC. Should the PC accept, she must organize a lavish ceremony by the end of the week and ever after be committed to this exotic outsider. If the character declines or breaks her wedding vow, the genie is heartbroken and returns to his or her home plane, and the associated elemental court is outraged. The genie's personality, actions, and possible retribution are determined by the GM.

The Midwife: The character gains exactly enough experience to advance to the next level.

The Mountain Man: The character grows one size category, but his equipment does not increase in size.

The Mute Hag: The character permanently becomes blind, deaf, or mute (player's choice). This affliction cannot be cured by any effect short of a *miracle* or *wish* spell.

The Owl: This card grants the ability to scry on a target for 1 minute. The target, however, is immediately aware that it is being scried upon by the character. If the PC chooses to scry on Ileosa and the false Ileosa still lives, this scry effect is not redirected to the simulacrum but instead reveals the real Ileosa. The character can use this card's effect whenever he wishes, but only once.

The Paladin: The PC is granted a *holy avenger*. If the character who gains this card's effect currently wields *Serithtial*, this card has no effect and the player instead gains a permanent +2 increase to an ability score of her choice.

The Peacock: The character's skin hardens, becoming rigid and pebbled. He gains a permanent +2 bonus to his natural armor, but takes a –2 penalty to his Dexterity score.

The Publican: The GM chooses one of the character's enemies (other than Queen Ileosa). This enemy has a complete change of heart and now favors the character. If this enemy is dead, it has been restored to life by a mutual ally. The new ally seeks the character out at once, and serves the PC as an ally.

The Queen Mother: When the character draws this card, a formian myrmarch (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 109) appears and professes its devotion to the PC—this creature can affect the PC and his entire party with its inspire hive special ability.

The Rabbit Prince: All attacks the PC makes or that are made against the PC that threaten a critical hit are automatically confirmed.

The Rakshasa: The character receives a "gift" from Bahor. The nature of this gift depends on the standing of that character's relationship with the rakshasa. If she has a good relationship, the gift manifests

THE RABBIT PRINCE

as the ability to call upon a rakshasa once per week as if the PC had summoned one via *summon monster VIII*, used as a spell-like ability (caster level equals the PC's character level). If the PC has a bad relationship (or has never met Bahor), then the Arkona patriarch's "gift" is to send a tataka rakshasa (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 230) to seek the PC out and attempt to assassinate her within the next 24 hours. If Bahor is dead, the PC's hands transform so that her thumbs appear on the opposite sides and her finger bend backwards—the PC permanently gains DR 5/piercing, but no other benefit.

The Sickness: The PC becomes afflicted with incurable blood veil. The disease cannot be cured by any effect short of a *miracle* or *wish* spell.

The Snakebite: Anyone who touches the character must succeed at a Fortitude save or be poisoned by greenblood oil. The save DC is equal to 10 + the character's Hit Dice + his Constitution modifier. This poison affects even those who touch the character to administer aid or healing magic or who successfully grapple the PC, but it cannot be deliberately inflicted by the character via a touch attack.

The Survivor: The next time the character is reduced to negative hit points (even if it was enough damage to kill her), she is instantly restored to full hit points. If she is killed by an effect that slays her without dealing hit point damage (such as *phantasmal killer*), the effect fails to kill her and she is restored to full hit points. If she is killed by damaging environmental effects (such as a lava flow or when teleporting to a dangerous plane), she is transported to her last safe location and restored to full hit points.

The Tangled Briar: Once per day, the character can use *speak with plants* to ask a single question of a plant. Using this ability upsets the surrounding flora, however, causing 1d4+2 shambling mounds with the fiendish creature template to erupt from the ground and attack the character, regardless of the surrounding terrain.

The Teamster: When the character draws this card, he receives a vision of a beautiful ghost. With a successful DC 35 Knowledge (arcana or history) check, he recognizes the woman as Sorshen, Runelord of Lust. The ghost informs the PC that Ileosa intends to destroy her legacy, and commands the PC to defeat Ileosa before the passage of 7 days. If Ileosa has not been defeated in this time, Sorshen is displeased and the PC gains a negative level that cannot be removed—a new negative level is gained each additional week that passes without Ileosa's defeat. If the PC is slain by accumulated negative levels in this way, he becomes a wraith. As soon as Ileosa is defeated, any negative levels imparted by this card vanish and the character immediately gains a permanent +2 bonus to his Charisma score.

The Theater: The next time the character defeats a creature, she is granted a +2 bonus to the same ability score as the creature's highest ability score.

The Trumpet: This card grants the PC the ability to summon an outsider of his alignment once per day. This outsider must be of a CR equal to or less than the PC's HD and serves for a number of rounds equal to the PC's level.

The Twin: A duplicate of the PC manifests at Ileosa's side—this duplicate does not have any knowledge about the PCs that Ileosa doesn't already know, but does have duplicates of that PC's gear (with the exception of minor artifacts like *Serithtial*), as if created via a *mirror of opposition*. The duplicate is completely loyal to Ileosa, and is encountered at her side as a bodyguard. The PC who drew this card understands what has happened immediately.

The Tyrant: The character realizes that she has attuned her soul to Kazavon. She instinctively knows the location of the closest of Kazavon's relics (in this case, the *Crown of Fangs*), and is immune to all offensive effects caused by such relics. She also gains immunity to all mind-affecting effects generated by any creature currently wearing or using one of Kazavon's relics.

The Unicorn: This card grants the PC the ability to undo one past choice or action. The fabric of reality is respun, potentially restoring creatures to life or altering the course of history, depending on how the character acted and how he wishes he would have acted. The player chooses in which situation he would have acted differently and the GM determines how reality changes to reflect that act. The change primarily affects the character, affecting others as little as possible. The character can use this card's effect whenever he wishes, but only once.

The Uprising: Upon drawing this card, 3d6 unruly, accident-prone, 1st-level commoners appear to serve the character. If these followers are killed, the character takes the usual penalties on attracting further followers. Knowledge of these commoners' mistreatment or death spreads far, with the GM determining any repercussions.

The Vision: The PC receives two visions and the knowledge that only one is true, though she does not know which is which. The GM determines the specifics of these visions. The visions may be views of the past, present, or future; cryptic omens; or total fantasies.

The Wanderer: One of the character's mundane possessions (chosen by the GM) becomes a magical item worth 20,000 gp or less (also chosen by the GM).

The Waxworks: Upon drawing this card, 1d6 exact duplicates of the character appear within a 20-mile radius. These duplicates have an alignment opposite to that of the original character and oppose his goals. At least one of them arrives at the Sunken Queen to join forces with Ileosa before the PCs arrive at that location.

The Winged Serpent: The character is granted a single *wish*. This *wish* functions similarly to the spell *wish* when it comes to affecting rules and statistics. The GM decides what the *wish* can and cannot accomplish.

APPENDIX 4

BLOOD AND PAIN

Mundane and magical maladies can imperil even hardy bands of adventurers, and the common folk are far more vulnerable. Although healing magic greatly aids in the treatment of diseases on the individual level, it does little to make the threat less terrifying. And when a plague spirals out of control, those who revel in the pain it causes are never far behind. Worshipers of Urgathoa and Zon-Kuthon play their roles, and many summoners of the Midnight Lord have unusual eidolon followers.

Korvosa has an initial population of 18,486 people when blood veil first strikes in Chapter 2, and most of these citizens can't wield curative magic. Clerics constitute the largest number of those capable of casting *remove disease* in Korvosa, followed by alchemists, oracles, and rangers. Representatives of other classes with access to this spell, such as adepts, druids, shamans, and witches, can be found within the city in even smaller numbers. In total, even factoring in visiting spellcasters and paladins who can use their lay on hands ability to cure disease, less than 1 percent of the city's population is able to use healing magic. To a certain extent, wands and potions and scrolls can bolster these numbers, but only as long as supplies hold out. Unfortunately, such magic offers no protection against a victim contracting the illness again, so the city's healers are quickly overwhelmed. Furthermore, because the disease spreads by contact, each time a magic-user casts *remove disease*, she exposes herself to the sickness as well. With the illness spreading quickly, Korvosa has a serious problem on its hands.

BLOOD VEIL

Blood veil is no natural malady. Created by plague-shaping cultists of Urgathoa who were funded by the Red Mantis, blood veil is a refined form of Vorel's phage, an unnatural disease that first came into being deep under Foxglove Manor, on Varisia's coast (see Chapter 2 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path: Rise of the Runelords Anniversary Edition*). The arcane and alchemical manipulations of these two nefarious organizations have altered the potent necromantic infection into a weaker but more virulent weapon—it no longer creates undead from those it slays, but it is much more contagious and difficult to recover from.

Blood veil takes its name from its most apparent symptoms: a rash and mask of blisters that cover the face. In its initial stages, the disease is characterized by headache, fatigue, coughing, and the aforementioned rash. As it progresses, the cough becomes more obtrusive; the rash spreads to the neck, face, and limbs and develops into poxlike blisters; and the lymph glands swell into painful buboes. At its most advanced stage, the blisters grow to the size of grapes or larger, internal bleeding creates black patches on the skin, and the victim expectorates blood. Ultimately, a bloody, wheezing death occurs. If left untreated, blood veil kills the average human in 7 days.

The PCs are exposed to blood veil early in Chapter 2 of this Adventure Path, and will continue to be exposed for much of the duration of that chapter. As the disease is passed through contact and injury (and via a number of disease-tainted coins that have leaked into the local economy), simply being among victims of the plague has a chance of infecting the PCs. As Chapter 2 progresses, the PCs likely spend more time among the diseased and in areas that might be thick with infection. During this time, the PCs have a 15% chance of being exposed to blood veil over the course of each day—perhaps by brushing up against a victim on the street, by taking an infected coin, or through any of a hundred other everyday interactions. This chance of being randomly exposed to blood veil increases by a cumulative 5% with every day that passes. This chance of random exposure never increases beyond 50%. The GM should check every morning to see whether any of the PCs were exposed to the disease the previous day. Those who were must succeed at a Fortitude save to resist or take immediate damage as the incubation period ends. Of course, daily castings of *remove disease* can help protect the PCs from blood veil, but doing so also reduces the resources they have available to aid others who fall ill during the adventure.

BLOOD VEIL

Type disease, contact or injury; **Save** Fortitude DC 16 (the first time ethnically Varisian humanoids, including human, half-elves, and half-orcs with Varisian parentage, are exposed to blood veil, each such character has a flat 5% chance that she is immune to the disease)

Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d4 Con damage and 1d4 Cha damage

KYTON EIDOLON SUBTYPE

The kyton eidolon presented below is available to characters of the summoner class presented in *Pathfinder RPG Pathfinder Unchained*. Although used by Shadowcount Sial in this campaign (see page 456), this subtype can be used by PC summoners as well, at your discretion.

Scholars of the exquisiteness of agony and explorers of the limitations of the flesh, kytons understand the mortal form is a blank canvas aching for transformation. They appear as humanoids, save that they are covered in piercings, draped with chains, and bear grisly body modifications. Kyton eidolons gain access to the tentacle and web evolutions, but kyton eidolon tentacles and webs always appear as animated chains.

Alignment: Lawful evil.

Base Form: Biped (improved natural armor, limbs [arms], limbs [legs]).

Base Evolutions: At 1st level, kyton eidolons gain the resistance (cold) and skilled (Heal) evolutions. They also gain proficiency with the spiked chain.

At 4th level, a kyton eidolon adds 1 point to its evolution pool.

At 8th level, a kyton eidolon gains an unnerving gaze that manipulates the perceptions of those who look upon it. Unlike typical gaze weapons, a kyton eidolon's unnerving gaze can affect only one creature per round when the kyton directs its gaze at the target on its turn as a free action. An unnerving gaze has a range of 30 feet, and can be negated by a successful Will save. Any creature that fails the save becomes sickened by the kyton's grisly modifications for 1 round. A kyton eidolon is immune to the unnerving gazes of other kytons, and the kyton's summoner is immune to its unnerving gaze. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

At 12th level, a kyton eidolon gains DR 5/good. The effects of a kyton eidolon's unnerving gaze now persist for 1d3 rounds, and as a free action, a kytons can target up to two creatures per round with its gaze on its turns.

At 16th level, a kyton eidolon loses the resistance (cold) evolution, and gains the immunity (cold) evolution in its place. The effects of a kyton eidolon's unnerving gaze now stagger the target for 1 round, and as a free action, a kyton eidolon can target up to three creatures per round with its gaze.

At 20th level, a kyton eidolon gains regeneration 5 (good weapons, good spells). It is still banished to the Shadow Plane as normal for an eidolon if it takes enough damage.

APPENDIX 5

EQUIPMENT AND MAGIC

Be they strange toxins, legendary artifacts, intelligent weapons, or haunted treasures, a wide range of strange and unusual items both magical and mundane play key roles in Curse of the Crimson Throne. As a general rule, the items detailed on the next several pages should be encountered organically during the course of play, and should not be made available for the PCs to merely purchase for their own use at the local marketplace or magic shop.

EQUIPMENT

While fool's leprosy isn't available for purchase, most alchemist shops have smoke bombs for sale.

FOOL'S LEPROSY

PRICE 10,000 GP

Type poison, ingested; **Save** Fortitude DC 20
Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day for 6 days
Effect 1d2 Cha damage and 1d2 Con drain; **Cure** 3 consecutive saves

This cunning supernatural venom was originally engineered by Red Mantis alchemists. Fool's leprosy is a slow-acting but ultimately fatal ingested toxin that, once it takes hold in its victim's system, closely mimics the effects of a fast-moving form of leprosy. An attempt to divine its nature via *detect poison* fails unless the caster succeeds at a DC 25 caster level check, and use of a spell like *diagnose disease*[UM] always misidentifies the venom as a disease unless the caster succeeds at a DC 25 caster level check. In either event, the GM should roll for these caster level checks in secret. *Neutralize poison* and *slow poison* function normally on a person suffering from fool's leprosy, but spells like *remove disease* do not, as the condition is a poison effect, not a disease effect. *Heal* can cure the effects of fool's leprosy but does nothing to educate the caster about the nature of the effect it removes. As long as the truth about fool's leprosy remains hidden, a successful DC 35 Heal check is required to recognize that someone suffering from its effects is affected by poison, not a disease.

SMOKE BOMB

PRICE 100 GP
WEIGHT 1 lb.

A smoke bomb appears as a polished ceramic sphere that can be held comfortably in one hand. Many crafters of these alchemical weapons take pride in painting or etching these bombs with complex scenes, or even making them look like small humanoid skulls, despite the fact that the bombs shatter when thrown. When thrown as a splash weapon, a smoke bomb bursts and fills the 5-foot square it detonates in with a cloud of thick, foul-smelling gray smoke (treat this area as if affected by a *fog cloud* spell, except that the cloud lasts only 1 round before dissipating). A creature that is struck by a smoke bomb or that passes through the cloud a bomb creates must succeed at a DC 12 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1 round and sickened for 3 rounds after that. Creatures within 5 feet of where the flask hits are sickened for 1 round if they fail this saving throw. This is a poison effect. Crafting a smoke bomb requires a successful DC 22 Craft (alchemy) check.

MAGIC ITEMS

Numerous rare and unusual magic items and powerful artifacts await discovery in this campaign.

CROWN OF FANGS

MAJOR ARTIFACT

SLOT head	**CL** 20th	**WEIGHT** 4 lbs.
AURA strong enchantment, illusion, and necromancy		
Alignment lawful evil	**Senses** 30 ft.	
Int 10	**Wis** 10	**Cha** 12	**Ego** 20
Language empathy		

The eponymous fangs set into this jeweled golden circlet are those of the dragon Kazavon. The crown grants its wearer a +6 enhancement bonus to her Constitution and Charisma scores, as well as regeneration 20. Only a blade capable of destroying the crown, like *Serithtial* (see page 435), can bypass this regeneration. The wearer gains the personal benefits of *foresight*, while the crown itself can cast each of the following spells three times per day: *alter self*, *dominate person* (DC 17), *major image* (DC 17), *mirror image*, and *mislead* (DC 19).

Queen Ileosa and this crown are bound together, and she retains its bonuses to her ability scores and regeneration even if she isn't wearing the crown, regardless of the distance between the two. She prefers to wear the crown because that allows it to use its spells in her defense—and because of her vanity and pride.

DESTRUCTION

The *Crown of Fangs* is destroyed if struck (while unattended) by a holy sword forged by a once-mortal god—the blade *Serithtial* is one such blade.

DEATH'S HEAD COFFER

PRICE 1,000 GP

SLOT none	**CL** 5th	**WEIGHT** 5 lbs.
AURA faint necromancy		

Typically engraved with numerous skulls, this small metal coffer allows the safe transport of infectious substances of up to Tiny size. Closing the lid seals in the contents and holds them in stasis, rendering them immune to aging or any damage. In addition, any infectious material—such as the body of a creature that died of disease—is preserved for as long as the coffer is closed. A *death's head coffer*'s dimensions are approximately 4 inches by 4 inches by 6 inches, so it can potentially hold several Tiny items.

A *death's head coffer* can spread infections between items. Any item placed into a coffer with a disease-ridden item (something capable of spreading a disease by contact) becomes infected with the same disease. For 1 week after being removed from the coffer, the newly infected item can spread the same affliction as the disease-ridden item to any creature that touches it. For example, if a coin is placed into a *death's head coffer* with a rat infected with the shakes, any creature that touches the coin must succeed at a DC 13 Fortitude save or become infected with the shakes as well.

After a *death's head coffer* is closed and then reopened, its magic dissipates, rendering the box completely mundane. Some *death's head coffers* feature complex locking mechanisms, which require successful Disable Device checks with a DC of 30 or higher to open.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS | **COST** 500 GP

Craft Wondrous Item, *contagion*, *gentle repose*

EVERDAWN POOL

MAJOR ARTIFACT

SLOT none	**CL** 20th	**WEIGHT** 1,200 lbs.
AURA strong enchantment, illusion, and necromancy		

The runelords of Thassilon had a long tradition of placing power into pools, liquefying and containing raw magic to harness for a multitude of goals. Their runewells are perhaps the most notorious of these artifacts, though others, like the Runeforge, exist. But they learned this technique from the artifacts of those who preceded them. The *Everdawn Pool* is one such artifact. Unlike magical pools created by the runelords, it needs no well as a container—it is a 30-foot-diameter sphere of roiling, churning blood in which brief glimpses of limbs and faces (not all of them humanoid) constantly form and dissolve.

Records of where Sorshen first discovered the *Everdawn Pool* have been lost, if indeed they ever existed in the first place, along with any hint of who or what may have created this potent font of magical power (although certain obscure sources hint at Leng and the creatures known as the scarlet walkers that dwell in that nightmare realm). What seems certain is that she—and later, other runelords—were able to reverse engineer some of the *Everdawn Pool*'s properties and build pools of power of their own. In many cases, these pools even surpassed the *Everdawn Pool*. Certainly, the power of Karzoug's *Runewell of Greed* exceeds that of the *Everdawn Pool*, as would, one would guess, the runewells created by those more powerful than him (Xanderghul, Alaznist, and Sorshen). Yet the *Everdawn Pool* remains the first. It provided a legacy that helped shape all of Thassilon, and was a significant part of what gave Sorshen the boost in power to claim and keep the role of Runelord of Lust for the duration of that ancient empire.

The *Everdawn Pool* requires specially prepared blood to function. A single drop of blood and one 12-hour ritual performed by any character capable of casting 9th-level spells who succeeds at a DC 30 Spellcraft check is enough to awaken the pool and grant it 1 charge. Additional charges can be stored in the Everdawn Pool by performing this ritual multiple times, but only one such ritual can be performed at any one time (effectively limiting the *Everdawn Pool's* capacity to be recharged to a rate of no more than 2 charges per day). The pool can store up to 25 charges at a time, but when the PCs start Part 3 of "Crown of Fangs," Queen Ileosa has used most of what she stored within and the *Everdawn Pool* has only 10 charges stored within it.

A creature that spends 10 minutes bathing in the blood of the *Everdawn Pool* becomes infused with its power for 1 week, during which time the creature is immune to bleed effects and modifies its total hit points with its Charisma modifier rather than its Constitution modifier. While immersed, a creature has no need to eat, drink, or breathe, and can see into every chamber of the Sunken Queen as if using an unlimited number of *clairaudience/clairvoyance* sensors. The creature can still observe only one location at a time, but can switch locations as a move action. As a side effect, a creature that has been so infused can use teleport effects within the Sunken Queen without restriction. The *Everdawn Pool* must have at least 1 charge stored to grant these boons to those that bathe within its waters, but granting these boons does not deplete its charges.

Once a creature is infused with the *Everdawn Pool's* power, it can spend the pool's charges to use the following abilities, as long as the creature is fully immersed in the pool at the time.

Blood Simulacrum: A creature infused with the *Everdawn Pool's* power can spend 2 of the pool's charges to create a blood simulacrum of itself. This creation takes 12 hours to complete and functions the same as that created by the spell *simulacrum*, save that the simulacrum's creator can choose at the time of creation to grant a blood simulacrum the redirection ability (see the False Ileosa statistics on page 363). Up to seven blood simulacra can exist at any one time, but only one can have the redirection ability at a time.

Create Life: Once per day, a creature can use the *Everdawn Pool* to manifest a living creature to serve as a loyal minion—the type of creature created is determined by the combined power of the user's soul and personality, but as a general rule the pool creates a minion whose CR is 3 lower than the creator's CR. In Ileosa's case, life created using this power manifests as a taniniver (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 258). Creatures created by other NPCs (or even PCs) should be selected and customized as needed by the GM to represent the source. Only one life can be created by the *Everdawn Pool* at a time, and as long as the created life lives, it remains loyal to its creator unless it's subjected to mind control effects. Creating life costs 5 charges but requires only a standard action.

Eternal Youth: The ritual to gain eternal youth requires blood samples from numerous mortals to be mixed into the *Everdawn Pool*. Once this step is completed, a creature must immerse itself in the *Everdawn Pool*, soaking in the pool's power. At the end of each day, the pool expends 1 charge. Once the user has spent 100 charges in this manner, and as long as all 100 charges were spent within the span of a single year, all of those creatures that provided blood samples drop dead, and for each donor that dies, the user ceases to age for 1 year. Ileosa has infused the *Everdawn Pool* with blood harvested from thousands of Korvosans, so if she completes this ritual, she'll remain young for thousands of years—more than enough time to repeat the ritual as she needs to extend her effective immortality. This adventure assumes that she is only 10 days (and thus 10 charges) away from completing her ritual when the PCs begin Part 3 of Chapter 6—see page 388 for more details. Note that using this function of the *Everdawn Pool* is an evil act and may have alignment repercussions for the user.

Manifest Magic: At a cost of 20 charges, a creature can activate the *Everdawn Pool* as a standard action to cast *wish*, but only in that spell's capacity to duplicate an existing spell. Sorshen often used this ability to cast necromancy or transmutation spells, magic her specialization normally forbade her from using. The pool currently doesn't have enough charges remaining for Ileosa to use this ability.

DESTRUCTION

To destroy the *Everdawn Pool*, fresh samples of blood drawn from a titan, a demon lord, an infernal duke, an empyreal lord, and a mythic vampire must be introduced into the pool simultaneously (in the same round). Once these five blood samples have been added to the pool, a mortal creature that has lived at least 10 times as long as its natural lifespan would normally allow must enter the pool and use the pool's ability to manifest magic to cast *plane shift*, moving itself and the pool to the Negative Energy Plane. The *Everdawn Pool* can attempt to save against this effect (it has a total Will save bonus of +18 against this specific effect). If it resists, the *Everdawn Pool* absorbs the mortal, effectively destroying the mortal as if via a *sphere of annihilation*; in this event, further attempts to destroy the pool require new samples of blood drawn from different creatures than those whose blood was used for the previous attempt. If the *Everdawn Pool* is successfully plane shifted to the Negative Energy Plane, the energies of that plane swiftly destroy the pool and deal 20d20 points of negative energy damage to the creature that transported the pool in the first place (Fortitude DC 30 half).

MASK OF THE MANTIS		PRICE 6,000 GP
SLOT head	**CL** 3rd	**WEIGHT** 1 lb.
AURA faint divination		

A *mask of the mantis* is the traditional headgear of a Red Mantis assassin. Designed to both conceal the wearer's identity and give the wearer a ferocious appearance, this mask has three daily charges that can be used to gain additional bonuses. As a standard action, the wearer can spend a charge to gain either darkvision to a range of 60 feet, the effects of *see invisibility*, the effects of *deathwatch*, or a +5 competence bonus on Perception checks. Once a charge is spent, the effect granted persists for 30 minutes. Multiple effects can be active simultaneously. Charges automatically replenish in 24 hours.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS | **COST** 3,000 GP

Craft Wondrous Item, *darkvision*, *deathwatch*, *see invisibility*

PLAGUEBRINGER'S MASK

PRICE 2,000 GP

SLOT head | **CL** 5th | **WEIGHT** 2 lbs.

AURA faint conjuration

Resembling the more common nonmagical doctor's mask, a *plaguebringer's mask* grants a +2 resistance bonus on saving throws against nauseating scents and immunity to one specific disease (the disease must be chosen at the time of the mask's creation—the ones in this adventure grant immunity to blood veil). The mask also veils the wearer's alignment, making her aura register as neutral to alignment-detecting effects.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS | **COST** 1,000 GP

Craft Wondrous Item, *misdirection*, *remove disease*

RING OF IMMOLATION

PRICE 12,000 GP

SLOT ring | **CL** 10th | **WEIGHT** —

AURA moderate evocation (fire)

A *ring of immolation* is made of pumice and hardened ash but is as strong as metal. As a free action, the wearer can activate the ring to create a *fire shield* (warm) on himself. The wearer of a *ring of immolation* can activate a *fire shield* on himself for up to 10 rounds each day (these rounds need not be used consecutively). If the wearer would take magical cold damage and any rounds of duration remain, the ring automatically activates for 1 round and protects the wearer from the cold damage as per *fire shield*.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS | **COST** 6,000 GP

Forge Ring, *fire shield*

RING OF SPLENDID SECURITY

PRICE 180,000 GP

SLOT ring | **CL** 16th | **WEIGHT** —

AURA strong abjuration

This extravagant ring is heavy with precious jewels. As fashions change (or as the wearer's fancy shifts), the wearer can alter the appearance of her armor, clothing, and even weaponry at will as a standard action; this change is illusory and doesn't affect the actual abilities of gear or weapons (although drastic changes in size are beyond the scope of this ability).

A *ring of splendid security's* primary purpose, though, is to grant the wearer protection from harm. As long as it is worn, the ring grants the wearer a +5 deflection bonus to her AC, a +5 resistance bonus on saving throws, and spell resistance 22.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS | **COST** 90,000 GP

Forge Ring, *minor image*, *resistance*, *shield* or *shield of faith*, *spell resistance*

SERITHTIAL

MAJOR ARTIFACT

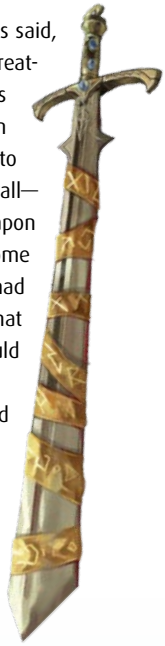
SLOT none | **CL** 17th | **WEIGHT** 5 lbs.

AURA strong abjuration

Alignment lawful good | **Senses** 60 ft.

Int 13 | **Wis** 10 | **Cha** 13 | **Ego** 16

Language empathy



Serithtial is a *+4 holy bastard sword* crafted, it is said, by Iomedae herself as a gift to Mandraivus's great-grandfather, a man who led several crusades against Nidal. The sword was handed down through the generations, finally coming into the hands of a well-respected hero of Lastwall—Mandraivus. *Serithtial* was the perfect weapon for Mandraivus's assault on Scarwall, and some scholars of history now believe that Iomedae had foreseen its need and forged it early to ensure that Mandraivus not only would inherit it, but would respect its traditions all the more.

Although made of steel, *Serithtial* is treated as if made of both cold iron and silver for the purpose of penetrating damage reduction. *Serithtial* glows with the equivalent of a *continual flame*, but its wielder can extinguish or ignite this glow as a move action. In addition, it gains a further +2 enhancement bonus and deals an extra 2d6 points of damage against foes who serve or worship Zon-Kuthon, as if it had the *bane* weapon special ability against such foes. This effect also functions against Queen Ileosa and those who directly serve her—including creatures like the dragon Zarmangarof (who serves her under magical compulsion) and the Red Mantis assassins (who serve as paid mercenaries). While *Serithtial* was forged as a bastard sword and reverts to this shape when no one wields it, when held in the hand, the sword immediately transforms into the type of blade its owner is most proficient with (choosing from dagger, short sword, longsword, scimitar, falchion, greatsword, rapier, or bastard sword—the GM can add additional sword-like weapons as she sees fit).

Serithtial can cast *cure moderate wounds* and *zone of truth* three times per day each, and usually reserves its healing power to use on its wielder when he is reduced to 1/4 his total hit points.

Serithtial's wielder gains the benefits of *death ward* and *freedom of movement* against attacks and effects generated by followers of Zon-Kuthon (and by extension, Queen Ileosa and her followers).

Although *Serithtial* is lawful good, as long as its wielder is dedicated to the defeat of Kazavon and those he has corrupted (such as Queen Ileosa), the sword does not attempt to seize control of its wielder. If its wielder does go against its wishes,

Serithtial tries to force him to relinquish the blade to a more appropriate wielder. As with all holy weapons, *Serithtial* imposes 1 negative level on any evil creature attempting to wield it. The negative level remains as long as the creature holds the weapon in its hand and disappears when the weapon is no longer wielded. A worshiper of Zon-Kuthon who wields *Serithtial* takes 4 negative levels and is nauseated as long as these negative levels persist. The negative levels and any additional side effects cannot be overcome in any way (including by *restoration* spells) while the weapon is wielded.

DESTRUCTION

Serithtial can be destroyed only if Kazavon—restored to life—or a great wyrm shadow dragon worshiper of Zon-Kuthon uses its breath weapon on the blade while *Serithtial* is unattended.

SHOANTI WAR PAINT		PRICE varies
SLOT none	**CL** 7th	**WEIGHT** —
AURA moderate (school varies)		

The Shoanti have developed numerous types of magical *war paint*, each providing a specific benefit to aid their hunters, warriors, and heroes in a variety of tasks. *Shoanti war paint* can be applied to any visible part of the body—typically the face, shoulders, legs, or arms. Applying a dose of war paint is a full-round action that provokes an attack of opportunity. *Shoanti war paint* does not take up a magic item slot, but you can benefit from only one color of *Shoanti war paint* at a time and applying a dose of a different color replaces the effects of the previous application. Once *Shoanti war paint* is applied, its effects last for 24 hours.

Below are the eight most common colors and their effects.

Black (1,800 gp): The wearer becomes cloaked in shadows and smoke, gaining the effects of a *blur* spell.

Blue (900 gp): The wearer gains a 30-foot enhancement bonus to her base move speed.

Green (900 gp): When the wearer uses bardic performance to inspire courage, the morale bonus she grants increases by 1.

Orange (900 gp): The wearer gains damage reduction 1/—. This effect stacks with damage reduction gained via a character class, such as barbarian.

Red (900 gp): The wearer gains fire resistance 10.

Silver (900 gp): The wearer gains a +3 deflection bonus to her AC.

White (1,800 gp): The wearer gains a +4 resistance bonus on all saving throws against energy drain and negative energy. As soon as the wearer takes a negative level from an energy drain attack, the *white war paint* absorbs the negative level and then fades away, ending the ongoing duration of the paint's effect immediately.

Yellow (900 gp): The wearer gains a +5 competence bonus on Perception checks.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST varies

Craft Wondrous Item; *blur* (black), *clairaudience/clairvoyance* (yellow), *death ward* (white), *expeditious retreat* (blue), *heroism* (green), *resist energy* (red), *shield of faith* (silver), *stoneskin* (orange); **Cost** 900 gp (black and white paints); 450 gp (all other paints)

SOUL JAR		PRICE 5,000 GP
SLOT none	**CL** 15th	**WEIGHT** 2 lbs.
AURA strong necromancy		

An empty *soul jar* can be used to contain a soul that has been successfully trapped in a black sapphire via *soul bind*. Holding the gemstone against the *soul jar's* lid for 1 full round transfers the soul in the gem to the *soul jar* (which can hold the soul of a creature of up to 20 Hit Dice), leaving the black sapphire unharmed 50% of the time. The rest of the time, transferring the soul from gem to jar shatters the black sapphire. A creature that can use *soul bind* as a spell-like ability (and thus does not use a focus) can automatically place a captured soul in a held *soul jar* as the spell-like ability is used. A soul in a *soul jar* cannot travel to the Boneyard to be judged, but can be restored to life via *resurrection* or more powerful magic. A *soul jar* can contain only one soul at a time. *Soul jars* are fragile (hardness 1, hp 10); if a *soul jar* is broken, the soul held within immediately escapes to the Boneyard.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 2,500 GP

Craft Wondrous Item, *soul bind*

THIRD EYE		PRICE 20,000 GP
SLOT none	**CL** 11th	**WEIGHT** —
AURA moderate divination		

As part of the process of crafting a *third eye*, the creator grafts an actual eye into the palm of the recipient's hand. Once an eye is grafted into a palm, it is undetectable while closed and doesn't hinder the user's manual dexterity in the slightest. When in use, the eye opens.

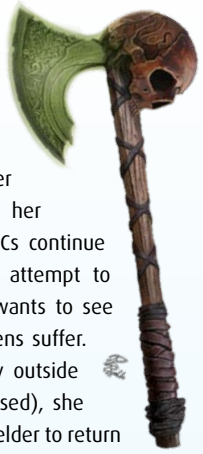
The owner of a *third eye* can use it to see through the donor creature's remaining eye. The *third eye* can also be attuned to specially prepared bloodstones, allowing the user to observe things in each bloodstone's vicinity as if the bloodstone were an eye as well. Preparing a bloodstone in this manner requires soaking it in a potion of *clairvoyance/clairaudience* for a week, at the end of which the owner drinks the potion and spits the bloodstone into the hand bearing the *third eye*. These bloodstones are often incorporated into magic items like phylacteries, rings, and amulets, allowing the user to gift such items to other creatures and thus gain a new viewpoint. This remote viewing ability functions at any range as long as the owner is on the same plane at the bloodstone. It also allows the owner to cast *clairaudience/clairvoyance* up to three times per day.

As long as the *third eye* is open in a hand that isn't holding an object, the owner has all-round vision, gaining a +4 bonus on Perception checks and making it impossible to flank the owner. Rakshasas, whose fingers bend backwards, can use the powers of their *third eyes* while holding objects since their *third eyes* effectively look out of the "backs" of their hands.

A *third eye* cannot be transferred between creatures—if removed from the owner's body, a *third eye* is destroyed. A *third eye* that remains in the owner's palm but is damaged or otherwise permanently blinded becomes useless until a *remove blindness* spell is cast upon it.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 10,000 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, *clairvoyance/clairaudience*, access to obscure traditions and lore	

UKWAR			PRICE 23,335 GP
SLOT none	**CL** 8th		**WEIGHT** 6 lbs.
AURA moderate necromancy			
Alignment chaotic evil		**Senses** 30 ft. (darkvision)	
Int 10	**Wis** 14	**Cha** 10	**Ego** 10
Language speech (Common and Orc)			



Ukwar is a *+1 conductive*[UE] *battleaxe* infused with the angry spirit of a Deadwatcher orc leader named Ukwar. After perishing in Scarwall and rising soon thereafter as a fext, Ukwar spent decades longing to be free of her curse. When she is permanently slain, her spirit enters her axe. As long as the PCs continue to adventure in Scarwall, she doesn't attempt to exert influence over her wielder—she wants to see each and every one of Scarwall's denizens suffer. If her wielder spends more than 1 day outside of Scarwall (and the castle remains cursed), she attempts to take control and force her wielder to return and finish this job.

As long as *Ukwar* remains intelligent, the blade grants weapon proficiency with the battleaxe to her wielder. If the wielder is already proficient with battleaxes, he instead gains a +1 bonus on all attack rolls and damage rolls made with *Ukwar*. She imposes negative levels on nonchaotic evil wielders only when they are outside of Scarwall. She can cast *rage* once per day, and does so on her wielder the first time each day he attacks one of the spirit anchors or the chained spirit—she can be convinced to cast *rage* on her wielder at another time with a successful DC 20 Diplomacy or Intimidate check (a standard action).

Ukwar's special purpose is to lift Scarwall's curse, and as long as her wielder is engaged in this quest and is within Scarwall, the weapon functions as a *+1 conductive*[UE] *undead-bane battleaxe*. If Scarwall's curse is lifted, Ukwar's spirit leaves the axe behind, and this weapon returns to being an unintelligent *+1 conductive*[UE] *battleaxe*.

Ukwar is a unique weapon created through a nonstandard method, but a character who wishes to create an identical weapon can do so using the guidelines below.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 14,335 GP
Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *rage*, *spectral hand*, *summon monster I*	

ZELLARA'S HARROW DECK			PRICE —
SLOT none	**CL** 10th		**WEIGHT** 1 lb.
AURA moderate divination			
Alignment chaotic good		**Senses** 60 ft.	
Int 10	**Wis** 13	**Cha** 13	**Ego** 8
Language empathy (but see below)			

Hand-painted images decorate this harrow deck, and the cards frames are gilded in silver so that they sparkle and flash under lighting. Despite the worn condition of the card backs, the images on the faces are so vibrant they seem to move when viewed out of the corner of the eye. The deck handles with surprising ease, almost shuffling itself. A bent, torn, or lost card always seems to mend itself or reappear when no one is looking.

These features are subtle manifestations of the spirit that haunts the cards. In life, Zellara lived by this deck, and in death, she has become the deck. Although this magical harrow deck wasn't created using the standard method for creating magic items, it should nonetheless be treated as an intelligent magic item. Zellara can sense the world around the deck via sight and sound, and she can communicate with anyone who holds the deck via empathy. She can create a *major image* once per day, often doing so to generate an image of herself manipulating the cards—in this manner, she can carry on conversations with other creatures in Common or Varisian. She can also cast *identify* for anyone who holds one of the cards of the deck to his forehead (a move action) up to three times per day.

Zellara's harrow deck has a special purpose as well: to defend and protect the city of Korvosa, her home in life and in death. In order to attain this purpose, she can periodically perform powerful harrow readings for those she has chosen as Korvosa's defenders—the PCs. These harrowings grant those who benefit from them a number of Harrow Points that can be used to manipulate fate and chance. See The Harrow on page 416 for more details on this complex power.

Zellara can suppress the deck's powers at will and doesn't hesitate to do so if anyone attempts to sell the deck or otherwise displeases her. At best, a foolish character could possibly sell the cards as a standard harrow deck for about 50 gp—thus, no pricing information for the deck is needed.

APPENDIX 6

NPC CODEX

Curse of the Crimson Throne introduces many NPCs—some friendly, some antagonistic, and some who switch back and forth between those attitudes over the course of the campaign. Several of the NPCs in this appendix feature unique rules or new character options. These options should not be initially available to the PCs, but once they interact with these NPCs, the PCs might have the chance to learn these new feats, spells, or techniques, at your discretion.

Not all of the NPCs the PCs encounter are summarized on the following table, which focuses on significant characters who play key roles in the campaign—roles that can have repercussions far beyond the initial encounter area where the NPC is first met. The NPCs are organized alphabetically by name. After each NPC's name is a short description of that NPC's role in the campaign and the page number where the NPC's statistics appear. If an NPC has no statistics listed, the page number instead refers to the page where the most information for that NPC is given.

The remainder of this appendix focuses on the dozen most important NPCs in Curse of the Crimson Throne, ranging from primary enemies like Ileosa and Bahor to significant allies like Cressida and Vencarlo to characters like Laori and Sial who could become friends or foes. These NPCs, more than any others in the campaign, play key roles throughout the Adventure Path.

PRIMARY NPCS

NPC	Role	Page
Akram	Lyrune-Quah truthspeaker	222
Amin Jalento	Noble student of Vencarlo Orisini	32
Andachi	Tormented dead count from Ustalav	303
Andaisin	Leader of the cult of Urgathoa	127
Asyra	Sial's loyal kyton eidolon	456
Ausio Carowyn	Last surviving Carowyn after Jolistina's rampage	108
Bahor	Rakshasa leader of House Arkona, Glorio Arkona's true form	440
Belshallam	Umbral dragon spirit anchor in Scarwall	290
Blackjack	Infamous masked Korvosan folk hero	462
Boule	Guildmaster of the Cerulean Society	235
Brienna Soldado	One of the first victims of blood veil	78
Castothrane	Skeleton warrior spirit anchor in Scarwall	307
Cinderlander	Shoanti-hating survivalist	198
Cinnabar	Second-in-command of the Korvosa Red Mantis assassins	240
Cressida Kroft	Leader of the Korvosan Guard	442
Darvayne Gios Amprei	Chelish ambassador with an embarrassing secret	37
Devargo Barvasi	King of Spiders of Eel's End	55
Deyanira Mirukova	Ruan Mirukova's worried sister	103
Eodred II	Previous ruler of Korvosa	28
Eries Yelloweyes	Nervous, apologetic wererat	92
Gaedren Lamm	Criminal mastermind of the Old Fishery	25
Gaekhen	Thousand Bones's murdered grandson	42
Girrigz	Vengeful, human-hating wererat	96
Grau Soldado	Drunken guard and ex-student of Vencarlo Orisini	33
Ileosa Arabasti	Queen of Korvosa	444
Ishani Dhatri	Charitable cleric of Abadar	81

Jabbyr	Pilts Swastel's gnome executioner	154
Jasan Adriel	Owner of Blackbird Ranch in Harse	76
Jolistina Susperio	Crazy elf obsessed with Rolth Lamm	105
Kayltanya	Red Mantis mistress	446
Kazavon	Ancient dragon warlord	448
Keppira d'Bear	High priestess of Pharasma	234
Kleestad	Cursed chamberlain of Scarwall	329
Kordaitra Destaid	Second-in-command of the Gray Maidens	251
Koriantu	Cleric of Achaekek, agent of Red Mantis	242
Krojun Eats-What-He-Kills	Hothead Shoanti hero	204
Laori Vaus	Cheerful cleric of the Brotherhood of Bones	450
Majenko	House drake prisoner at Eel's End	54, 474
Mandraivus	Slayer of Kazavon, now a wraith	279
Marcus Endrin	Leader of the Sable Company	246
Mithrodar	Chained spirit in Scarwall, once its castellan	303
Mother of Thorns	Supernatural torturer for the Gray Maidens	245
Neolandus Kalepopolis	Exiled seneschal of Castle Korvosa	186
Nihil	Devil spirit anchor in Scarwall	311
One-Life	Chieftain of the Skoan-Quah	202
Pilts Swastel	Emperor of Old Korvosa	153
Pudgyknuckles	Togomor's imp familiar	360
Ramoska Arkminos	Nosferatu vampire ally of the cult of Urgathoa	123
Ready-Klar	Chieftain of Flameford	226
Reiner Davaulus	Leader of the Queen's Physicians	117
Rolth Lamm	Necromancer and ally of the cult of Urgathoa	452
Ruan Mirukova	Talented (and missing) ocarina player	124
Sabina Merrin	Leader of the Gray Maidens	454
Salvator Scream	Half-mad artist inspired by Kazavon	159
Sermignatto	Belier devil ally of Ileosa Arabasti	368
Sial	Grim summoner of the Brotherhood of Bones	456
Sivit	Darksphinx master of the Vivified Labyrinth	180
Sorshen	Runelord of Lust	335
Sun Shaman	Spiritual leader of Flameford	226
Tayce Soldado	Worried mother of Brienna Soldado	78
Tekrakai	Moon Maiden leader	219
Thousand Bones	Shoanti shaman and ambassador	458
Tisharue	Gray Maiden warden of Deathhead Vault	248
Togomor	Bloatmage seneschal of Castle Korvosa	358
Trinia Sabor	Artist and queen's scapegoat	460
Ury Sevenskulls	Chieftain of Deadwatcher Orcs	266
Vavana Dhatri	Gray Maiden Arbiter of Allegiance	364
Vencarlo Orisini	Swordplay trainer and secret vigilante	462
Vendra Loaggri	Snake-oil seller, owns Lavender	98
Venster Arabasti	Eodred's (now ghostly) tiefling half-brother	373
Verik Vancaskerkin	Leader of the Cow Hammer Boys	48
Vimanda	Rakshasa leader of House Arkona, Meliya Arkona's true form	178
Vreeg	Derro ally of Rolth Lamm	65
Yvicca	Sea hag ally of the cult of Urgathoa	90
Yzahnum	Efreeti minion of Ileosa Arabasti	340
Zarmangarof	Black dragon enslaved by Ileosa Arabasti	342
Zellara Esmeranda	Ghostly harrower ally of the PCs	14
Zenobia Zenderholm	Lead arbiter of Korvosa	249
Zev Ravenka	Bishop and demilich spirit anchor in Scarwall	323

BAHOR

Since seizing control of the Arkona family after working with his sister Vimanda to murder their rakshasa parents, Bahor has successfully masqueraded as Glorio Arkona, patriarch of one of Korvosa's most powerful noble families.

BAHOR **CR 14**

XP 38,400

Male rakshasa rogue 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 231)

LE Medium outsider (native, shapechanger)

Init +12; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +26

DEFENSE

AC 36, touch 19, flat-footed 27 (+4 armor, +8 Dex, +1 dodge, +9 natural, +4 shield)

hp 207 (18 HD; 8d8+10d10+116)

Fort +11, **Ref** +21, **Will** +12

Defensive Abilities evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2; **DR** 15/good and piercing; **SR** 25

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee *+2 kukri* +27/+22/+17/+12 (1d4+7/15–20), bite +22 (1d6+2), claw +22 (1d4+2)

Special Attacks detect thoughts, sneak attack +4d6 plus 4 bleed

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 7th; concentration +12)

3rd (5/day)—*fly*, *lightning bolt* (DC 18)

2nd (7/day)—*invisibility*, *scorching ray*, *web* (DC 17)

1st (8/day)—*charm person* (DC 16), *mage armor*, *obscuring mist*, *protection from good*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 16)

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *arcane mark*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

TACTICS

Before Combat Bahor casts *mage armor* as soon as the prospect of combat looms (such as upon hearing a palace alarm activated). He uses his *third eye* to check the various rooms in his palace for intruders. As soon as his foes seem to be drawing near, he casts *shield* and *protection from good*.

During Combat Bahor favors spellcasting in combat, and reverts to his true form only if his enemies know that he isn't human. If his spells are exhausted or proving useless, he uses a charge from his *wand of haste*, then resorts to melee tactics. He prefers to fight with allies so he can perform sneak attacks. In such a situation, Bahor tries to remain mobile, moving in and out of combat by using Spring Attack to make a single bleeding sneak attack against a foe each round. On his own, he tries to make full attacks so he can add a bite and a claw to his kukri strikes, using Arcane Strike to gain a +1 bonus on all damage rolls.

Morale Bahor has little interest in risking everything on bad luck. If reduced to fewer than 100 hit points, he attempts to flee with the aid of *invisibility*. If he escapes, he retreats to the Cerulean Society guildhall below Old Korvosa to wait things out, and may end up seeking revenge on the PCs at a later date—especially if the PCs interact with the Cerulean Society. Bahor stays behind to fight to the death only if his enemies show that they know of his true nature; allowing anyone to escape his clutches with this knowledge is the thing he fears the most.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 26, **Con** 22, **Int** 15, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +16; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 40

Feats Arcane Strike, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (kukri), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Mobility, Multiattack, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (kukri)

Skills Acrobatics +29, Bluff +30, Diplomacy +26, Disguise +34, Fly +18, Intimidate +26, Knowledge (local) +17, Knowledge (nobility) +14, Perception +26, Sense Motive +22

Languages Common, Infernal, Undercommon, Vudrani

SQ change shape (any humanoid; *alter self*), rogue talents (bleeding attack +4, combat trick, finesse rogue, weapon training), trapfinding +4

Combat Gear *scroll of sending* (3), *wand of haste* (19 charges), *wand of illusory script* (12 charges), *wand of shield* (23 charges); **Other Gear** *+2 kukri*, *third eye* (see page 436), keys to all Arkona Palace locks, 19 pp, 2 gp

Although Korvosa knows him by the name "Glorio Arkona," the ageless and violent creature that is Bahor is a powerful rakshasa rogue. Bahor is the son of a mated pair of rakshasas named Mapras and Dandra, but in 4704 AR, Bahor and his sibling Vimanda (see page 178) murdered their parents and assumed control of the Arkona interests in Korvosa.

Although a fiend in human guise, Bahor has done much to further his power as the oldest and wealthiest of Old Korvosa's families. Many of his actions as Glorio are philanthropic or even kindly in appearance, but in truth the rakshasa is merely buying loyalty. Those he saves from poverty or debt become his people, and he's taken a fair amount of control over several of Korvosa's shadier organizations, including the city's thieves' guild, the Cerulean Society. Trade with distant Vudra remains another significant source of income and power for the Arkona name. To this day, Bahor maintains contact with other rakshasa clans and shadowy societies in cities on the other side of the world, and whenever a ship bearing the black-and-white flags of the Arkona family crest sails into Korvosa, Glorio's coffers soon thereafter swell with profits as spices, artwork, rare woods, ivory, precious gems, and many other costly imports from his homeland flood Korvosa's markets.

As Curse of the Crimson Throne begins, Bahor has already started to grow bored with his current success. The Arkonas have been ruled by rakshasas for approximately 2 centuries, but Bahor has been in charge for only a few years now. To sate his appetite for decadence and cruelty, Bahor had already set into motion plans to seize control of all of Korvosa for his own delights when Queen Ileosa threw those schemes into jeopardy by murdering her husband. Although Bahor may claim to have Korvosa's best interests at heart when he meets with the PCs, in truth he wants the city all to himself.

Bahor hopes to continue to play the role of Glorio Arkona for many years to come, but with Queen Ileosa putting Korvosa in peril (particularly with the advent of blood veil and the quarantine of Old Korvosa), the rakshasa realizes that the time to recruit aid beyond his family has come—see page 164 of Chapter 3 for details on the deal he hopes to arrange with Korvosa's new heroes.

Glorio Arkona

When Bahor manifests in human form, he typically does so in the guise of Glorio Arkona, a handsome Vudrani man with shoulder-length black hair and a trimmed goatee and mustache (see page 164 for a depiction of him in this form). Of course, Bahor is not limited to this appearance when he uses his change self ability, and when needed can appear as any human ethnicity. Regardless of his appearance when in human form, Bahor's statistics are the same; his statistics when in human form are presented below for ease in game play, should they become needed for any reason.

"GLORIO ARKONA"

Rakshasa rogue 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 231)
LE Medium outsider (native, shapechanger)
Init +12; **Senses** Perception +26

DEFENSE

AC 36, touch 19, flat-footed 27 (+4 armor, +8 Dex, +1 dodge, +9 natural, +4 shield)
hp 207 (18 HD; 8d8+10d10+116)
Fort +11, **Ref** +21, **Will** +12
Defensive Abilities evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee *+2 kukri* +27/+22/+17/+12 (1d4+7/15–20)
Special Attacks detect thoughts, sneak attack +4d6 plus 4 bleed
Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 7th; concentration +12)
3rd (5/day)—*fly*, *lightning bolt* (DC 18)
2nd (7/day)—*invisibility*, *scorching ray*, *web* (DC 17)
1st (8/day)—*charm person* (DC 16), *mage armor*, *obscuring mist*, *protection from good*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 16)
0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *arcane mark*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

TACTICS

Before Combat Same as Bahor's tactics.
During Combat When appearing as Glorio (or in any human guise, for that matter), Bahor prefers to avoid combat if at all possible, since his human form lacks some of his true form's key defenses (particularly damage reduction and spell resistance). If he must fight, he does so with his kukri, relying on allies to flank foes as possible. Against foes he feels confident he can defeat quickly, or who already know his secret, he reverts to his true form as soon as possible.
Morale If faced with a combat not to his advantage, yet in a situation where he does not wish to reveal his true shape, Glorio flees at once, using *invisibility* if able. He hopes to return to Arkona Palace. If confronted there, he has additional allies upon whom he can rely.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 26, **Con** 22, **Int** 15, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 20
Base Atk +16; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 40
Feats Arcane Strike, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (kukri), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Mobility, Multiattack, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (kukri)
Skills Acrobatics +29, Bluff +30, Diplomacy +26, Disguise +34, Fly +18, Intimidate +26, Knowledge (local) +17, Knowledge (nobility) +14, Perception +26, Sense Motive +22
Languages Common, Infernal, Undercommon, Vudrani
SQ change shape (any humanoid; *alter self*), rogue talents (bleeding attack +4, combat trick, finesse rogue, weapon training), trapfinding +4
Combat Gear *scroll of sending* (3), *wand of haste* (19 charges), *wand of illusory script* (12 charges), *wand of shield* (23 charges); **Other Gear** *+2 kukri*, *third eye* (see page 436), 192 gp

CRESSIDA KROFT

Cressida Kroft is the leader of the Korvosan Guard. Her position grows increasingly complex and untenable, as it puts her civic patriotism at increasing odds with her intolerance for the queen's growing cruelty.

CRESSIDA KROFT **CR 9**

XP 6,400

Female human aristocrat 1/fighter 9

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; **Senses** Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 10, flat-footed 23 (+8 armor, +5 shield)

hp 97 (10 HD; 1d8+9d10+39)

Fort +8, **Ref** +3, **Will** +10 (+2 vs. fear)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor)

Melee *+1 longsword* +16/+11 (1d8+7/17–20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +11/+6 (1d8+3/×3)

Special Attacks weapon training (heavy blades +2, bows +1)

TACTICS

During Combat Cressida prefers to fight in melee if possible, saving her arrows for foes who avoid hand-to-hand combat. In a fight, Cressida uses Power Attack (taking a –3 penalty on attack rolls but gaining a +6 bonus on damage rolls); if she misses a foe entirely for 2 rounds of combat, though, she switches back to regular attacks.

Morale Cressida prefers to save her potion of *cure moderate wounds* to aid allies, but if she's reduced to fewer than 20 hit points and escape isn't an option, she drinks the potion and fights defensively until the odds change in her favor or she sees an opportunity to escape. She won't abandon friends or her subordinates to certain death; if presented with overwhelming odds, she works with allies to make a fighting retreat to safety, but brings up the rear herself, and is willing to give up her life to buy her allies a chance to flee.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 10, **Con** 15, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 21

Feats Greater Shield Focus, Greater Weapon Focus (longsword), Improved Critical (longsword), Iron Will, Persuasive, Power Attack, Shield Focus, Steadfast Personality[ACG], Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

Skills Diplomacy +16, Intimidate +16, Perception +14, Sense Motive +10

Languages Common

SQ armor training 2

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** *+2 chainmail, +1 heavy steel shield, +1 longsword,* mwk composite longbow (+2 Str) with 20 arrows, *belt of mighty constitution +2,* 64 gp

Originally a ranking member of the Guard who moonlighted as an adventurer, Cressida Kroft foiled a deadly plot during the weeks-long festivities celebrating the city's third centennial in 4707 AR. When she stopped a small group of Norgorber cultists poisoning the food of a grand feast to be held in Eodred's Square, she not only saved the lives of hundreds, but drove the cult of Norgorber from Korvosa entirely. Cressida's star rose high among Korvosa's common folk and elite alike, and she was swiftly appointed to the position of Field Marshal—leader of the Korvosan Guard—by King Eodred.

Ever since her promotion, Cressida has had little time for adventuring, and she increasingly misses the lifestyle. As she can't imagine abandoning her duties, she mollifies her desire for action by hiring adventurers to take care of problems and dangers that the Korvosan Guard simply cannot handle efficiently. Such problems often require stealth, subtlety, magical knowledge, or even more frequently, a willingness to bend the law in order to aid the common good. Cressida has earned a reputation for being fair and supportive of those she brings on to augment the Korvosan Guard to protect her beloved city from threats within and without.

THE KORVOSAN GUARD

The Korvosan Guard serves the city of Korvosa first, its leader second, and the church of Abadar third. Traditionally, the Guard has worked closely with both the monarch and the high priest of Abadar, but as the events in this campaign unfold, the Guard is increasingly on its own. Queen Ileosa uses the Guard almost as a disposable resource, cutting funding and luring many of its most promising women away to be indoctrinated into the Gray Maidens. High Priest Darb Tuttle has his own problems to handle between the riots, the plague, and his grudging assent to Queen Ileosa's rule. By the time the PCs rescue Neolandus and have the legal resources to oppose the queen, the Korvosan Guard is essentially disbanded, with its few remaining members forming a loosely organized band of rebels that uses the city graveyard and the warrens beneath as a fortress. This fall from grace shames Cressida Kroft, but never to the extent that she gives up. Her support of the PCs grows over time, and she increasingly sees them as not only the saviors of the Guard, but also the true heroes of the city of Korvosa.

Cressida Kroft is eager to share the Korvosan Guards' history with anyone who asks. The Guard itself was descended from the regular army troops brought to Endrin Isle so long ago by Field Marshal Jakthian Korvosa, the city's founder. Ranks in the Guard closely match traditional ranks in an army, with the position of Field Marshal being in overall command while generals are charged with oversight of Korvosa's districts.

Joining the Guard

The PCs have an opportunity to join the Korvosan Guard during Chapter 1. If you wish, you can use the Organizational Influence rules found on pages 109–114 of *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Intrigue* to track the PCs' place in the organization, using the stats below. The rate at which the PCs can earn influence points and favors in the Guard is left to you.

KORVOSAN GUARD

LN strong (Chapter 1), moderate (Chapters 2–3), or weak (Chapters 4–6) organization

Size 700 members (at start of Chapter 1)

Key Members

Field Marshal Cressida Kroft (LN female human aristocrat 1/fighter 9)

Values The Korvosan Guard values order, bravery, and honor, but also appreciates those who can think for themselves and do not blindly follow orders.

Public Goals The Korvosan Guard seeks to protect the citizens of Korvosa and the city itself from all dangers.

Private Goals The Guard wishes to prevent any one person or organization from achieving too much power in Korvosa; during this campaign, this increasingly places the Guard at odds with the monarchy.

Allies Church of Abadar, Church of Pharasma, Sable Company

Enemies Queen Ileosa, Gray Maidens, Queen's Physicians, Red Mantis

Membership Requirements Membership into the Korvosan Guard normally requires months of training, but in the PCs' case, Cressida grants membership during Event 9 of Chapter 1 (see page 36).

Influence Limitations In order to achieve Rank 2, the PCs must show that they are not Queen Ileosa's agents (helping Trinia escape at the end of Chapter 1 achieves this). In order to achieve Rank 3, the PCs must perform a great service to Korvosa's citizens (helping to end blood veil at the end of Chapter 2 certainly counts). If the PCs wish to advance to Rank 4, they must take a personal stance against the queen that puts their own lives at risk (publicly accusing her of engineering blood veil is not enough unless the PCs have indisputable proof, but rescuing Neolandus Kalepopolis at the end of Chapter 3 also counts).

Benefits The following benefits don't include the specific rewards written in the adventure.

Rank 1: borrow resources (100 gp), gather information

Rank 2: borrow resources (500 gp), recovery 1, retrain

Rank 3: borrow resources (1,000 gp), command team (1d6 3rd-level martial NPCs), recovery 2

Rank 4: borrow resources (2,500 gp), recovery 3

New Benefits The Guard grants the following uncommon benefits.

Recovery 1: If the PCs spend a night recovering in Citadel Volshyenek (Chapters 1–3) or the Dead Warrens (Chapters 4–6), healers among the Guard restore all lost hit points and each PC can benefit from one of the following spells: *lesser restoration*, *remove blindness/deafness*, *remove curse* (CL 5th), or *remove disease* (CL 5th). This benefit isn't available during Chapter 2 due to limited resources.

Recovery 2: Add *break enchantment*, *restoration*, and *raise dead* to the spells available to a PC during a night of recovery. The borrow resources benefit can be used to cover or defray the cost of expensive material components for spellcasting.

Recovery 3: Add *heal*, *greater restoration*, and *resurrection* to the spells available to the PCs during recovery.

Retrain: See page 117 of *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Intrigue*.

CRESSIDA KROFT

ILEOSA ARABASTI

The queen of Korvosa has never had the city's best interests at heart, but it isn't until Kazavon's influence augments her worst attributes that she becomes Korvosa's greatest threat.

ILEOSA ARABASTI **CR 21**

XP 409,600

Female erinyes-bound human aristocrat 2/bard 18 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 56)

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +10; **Senses** *arcane sight*, darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness, *true seeing*; Perception +26

DEFENSE

AC 43, touch 26, flat-footed 34 (+8 armor, +5 deflection, +9 Dex, +2 insight, +9 natural)

hp 391 (20d8+298); regeneration 20 (*Serithtial*)

Fort +21, **Ref** +28, **Will** +22; +4 morale bonus vs. charm and fear, +4 vs. poison, +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

Defensive Abilities *freedom of movement*; **DR** 10/adamantine (70 hp); **Immune** bleed; **Resist** fire 30; **SR** 22

Weaknesses contract bound, susceptible to *Serithtial*

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee *+4 glamered human-bane icy burst speed rapier* +32/+32/+27/+22 (1d6+21/15–20 plus 1d6 cold)

Special Attacks bardic performance 51 rounds/day (swift; countersong, dirge of doom, distraction, fascinate [DC 32], frightening tune [DC 32], inspire competence +5, inspire courage +4, inspire greatness, inspire heroics, mass suggestion [DC 32], soothing performance, suggestion [DC 32])

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th; concentration +33)

3/day—*fear* (single target) (DC 26), *unholy blight* (DC 27)

1/day—summon (level 9, 1 lemure, 1 bearded devil, 1 erinyes, 1 bone devil, 1 barbed devil, or 1 ice devil 100%)

Bard Spells Known (CL 18th; concentration +31)

6th (5/day)—*geas/quest*, *getaway*[APG], *irresistible dance* (DC 31), *project image* (DC 29)

5th (7/day)—*greater dispel magic*, *mind fog* (DC 30), *shadow walk* (DC 28), *song of discord* (DC 30)

4th (8/day)—*cure critical wounds*, *dimension door*, *dominate person* (DC 29), *freedom of movement*, *hold monster* (DC 29)

3rd (8/day)—*charm monster* (DC 28), *confusion* (DC 28), *displacement*, *gaseous form*, *haste*, *slow* (DC 26)

2nd (8/day)—*cure moderate wounds*, *detect thoughts* (DC 25), *hold person* (DC 27), *mirror image*, *misdirection*, *suggestion* (DC 27)

1st (9/day)—*cure light wounds*, *feather fall*, *grease*, *hideous laughter* (DC 26), *saving finale*[APG] (DC 24), *silent image* (DC 24)

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*

TACTICS

Before Combat Ileosa casts *stoneskin* (from her *ring of spell storing*) and *freedom of movement* before combat, and activates the flight power of her *crimson gown*. She prepares herself, her four erinyes furies, and five of her six false Ileosas with a *getaway* spell, using area **B19** of the Sunken Queen as the designated location.

During Combat When combat starts, Ileosa activates her inspire courage bardic performance and casts *project image* to create a duplicate of herself amid the PCs while she flies out of melee range. She uses her *eyes of charming* each round against foes she knows have poor Will saves (her knowledge of the PCs allows her to choose her targets appropriately). The *Crown of Fangs* casts *mirror image* on her on the first round, recasting it as necessary as the combat goes on or casting *dominate person* otherwise. On the second round, she uses her *greater quicken metamagic rod* to cast quickened *mind fog* and then summons an ice devil to join the fight. On the third round, she uses her projected image to target a PC with *irresistible dance* while she casts quickened *displacement*. She saves her last quickened spell from the rod to cast *greater dispel magic* to cancel any particularly vexing spell effect. If she manages to control a foe's mind, she's fond of issuing orders like "Lay down your arms and bow before me!" or (to the appropriate PC) "Return to the floor below to find and take the largest gem you discover." Once confronted in melee, she fights back with her rapier and uses Arcane Strike when attacking (the bonus damage is included above).

Morale Ileosa triggers her *getaway* spell if reduced to 60 or fewer hit points (bringing along any furies or false Ileosas within 30 feet of her) to retreat to area **B19** of the Sunken Queen, then uses the *heal* spell from her ring and other spells to recover quickly before returning to the fight. Once she rejoins the battle, she fights to the death, unwilling to abandon her plans this close to fruition.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 28, **Con** 28, **Int** 16, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 36

Base Atk +14; **CMB** +22; **CMD** 44

Feats Arcane Strike, Craft Wondrous Item, Fencing Grace[UI], Forge Ring, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Harmonic Spell[ISWG], Improved Critical (rapier), Spell Focus (enchantment), Toughness, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Acrobatics +37, Appraise +4, Bluff +37, Climb +5, Diplomacy +37, Disable Device +8, Disguise +14, Escape Artist +10, Fly +37, Handle Animal +27, Heal +3, Intimidate +33, Knowledge (arcana) +36, Knowledge (history, local, nobility) +26, Linguistics +12, Perception +26, Perform (dance) +37, Perform (oratory, sing, string instruments, wind instruments) +27, Ride +10, Sense Motive +27, Sleight of Hand +10, Spellcraft +27, Stealth +10, Survival +3, Swim +5, Use Magic Device +32

Languages Aklo, Common, Elven, Giant, Infernal, Shadowtongue, Thassilonian, Varisian; *tongues*

SQ bardic knowledge +9, contingency, contract-bound, Everdawn infusion, exceptional stats, inherent bonuses, jack-of-all-trades, lore master 3/day, permanent spells, versatile performances (dance, oratory, sing, string, wind)

Combat Gear *greater quicken metamagic rod, major ring of spell storing* (contains *heal, stoneskin*), *wand of magic missile* (CL 9th, 34 charges); **Other Gear** *+4 glamered*[UE] *human-bane icy burst speed rapier, amulet of natural armor +5, belt of physical might +6* (Str, Dex), *boots of teleportation, bracers of armor +8, crimson gown* (as *wings of flying* but takes up the body slot, not the shoulder slot), *Crown of Fangs* (see page 432), *crystal ball* with *true seeing, eyes of charming, gloves of arcane striking*[UE], *handy haversack, headband of mental prowess +4* (Int, Wis; grants ranks in Knowledge [arcana] and Spellcraft), *iridescent spindle ioun stone*[UE], *pale green prism ioun stone*[UE], *portable hole, ring of splendid security* (see page 435), *vibrant purple prism ioun stone (cure serious wounds)*, gold-and-ruby earrings worth 5,000 gp for the pair, gold anklet set with rubies worth 4,000 gp, gold armband set with rubies worth 3,500 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Contingency Ileosa used a *scroll of contingency* to set up this effect: if she is ever brought to fewer than 30 hit points, *heal* (CL 20th) is cast on her.

Contract Bound (Ex) Queen Ileosa forged a contract with an erinyes devil, gaining the benefits of the devil-bound template. If Ileosa dies, she cannot be brought back to life without Sermignatto's permission; if that devil is slain, the contract itself reverts to Sermignatto's hidden master, the Duke of Hell known as Lorthact.

Everdawn Infusion (Ex) Ileosa can cast *teleport* in the Sunken Queen without restriction. She calculates her hit points using her Charisma modifier rather than her Constitution modifier, and is immune to bleed effects.

Exceptional Stats (Ex) Queen Ileosa was destined from birth to achieve greatness. Her ability scores were generated using 25 points, rather than the standard array. Additionally, she has a potent artifact and her gear was determined as if she were a PC rather than an NPC to account for her vast wealth. These advantages increase her total CR by 1.

Inherent Bonuses With the aid of genie-granted *wishes* and other expenditures of her wealth, Ileosa has the following inherent bonuses to her ability scores: Strength +3, Dexterity +4, Constitution +4, Intelligence +3, Wisdom +3, Charisma +5.

Permanent Spells Ileosa has *arcane sight* and *tongues* as permanent spells, both functioning at CL 16th.

Susceptible to Serithtial (Ex) The infusion of Kazavon into Ileosa's soul allows *Serithtial* to suppress her regeneration. Each time she takes damage from *Serithtial*, she must succeed at a DC 25 Fortitude save or gain a negative level as the sacred blade carves away at the power granted to her by the dragon's fangs.

True Seeing (Su) Queen Ileosa continuously benefits from *true seeing*, as a benefit from her infernal contract.

Queen Ileosa is no longer the woman she was before she found Kazavon's fangs. She is now something much more, and until the *Crown of Fangs* is destroyed, she has no interest in even the idea of atonement or redemption.

ILEOSA ARABASTI

KAYLTANYA

Mistress Kayltanya is a lethal commander among the Red Mantis assassins, a loyal and focused murderer who reports directly to the cabal's leader, the Blood Mistress of the Crimson Citadel far to the south on Mediogalti Island.

KAYLTANYA **CR 15**

XP 51,200

Female human aristocrat 2/rogue 4/Red Mantis assassin 10 (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide* 282)

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** Perception +22

DEFENSE

AC 33, touch 21, flat-footed 27 (+6 armor, +5 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural, +1 shield)

hp 159 (16d8+84)

Fort +11, **Ref** +15, **Will** +10

Defensive Abilities evasion, fading, red shroud, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *+5 shocking burst sawtooth sabre* +19/+14/+9 (1d8+12/17–20 plus 1d6 electricity), *+5 shock sawtooth sabre* +19/+14 (1d8+10/17–20 plus 1d6 electricity)

Ranged mwk dagger +18 (1d4+3/19–20 plus large scorpion venom)

Special Attacks prayer attack, sneak attack +6d6

Red Mantis Assassin Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +12)

3/day—*mantis doom*

1/day—*summon mantis*

Red Mantis Assassin Spells Known (CL 10th; concentration +12)

4th (1/day)—*dimension door, greater invisibility*

3rd (3/day)—*displacement, fly, haste, secret page*

2nd (5/day)—*bear's endurance, bull's strength, cat's grace, mirror image, see invisibility*

1st (6/day)—*disguise self, feather fall, jump, reduce person* (DC 13), *true strike*

TACTICS

Before Combat As soon as the castle alarm is raised, Kayltanya coats her two sabres with doses of *oil of greater magic weapon +5*. Before combat begins, she casts *bear's endurance*, *cat's grace*, and *bull's strength*, then drinks a *potion of barkskin +5* and a *potion of shield of faith +5*.

During Combat When combat begins, Kayltanya casts *greater invisibility*, then moves to a new location and casts *haste* on the second round, affecting herself and as many allies as possible. On the third round, she summons 1d3 fiendish giant praying mantises into the battle, placing them in flanking positions around intruders. She throws poisoned daggers if a PC is within 10 feet; otherwise, she moves to strike with her sabres. She assumes mantis form before entering combat if there's room for her size increase. She holds off using *mantis doom* until she is sure she can use it to kill off a wounded PC.

Morale Kayltanya fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 22, **Con** 20, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 36

Feats Alertness, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (sawtooth sabre), Great Fortitude, Greater Weapon Focus (sawtooth sabre), Greater Weapon Specialization (sawtooth sabre), Improved Critical (sawtooth sabre), Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Iron Will, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (sawtooth sabre), Weapon Specialization (sawtooth sabre)

Skills Acrobatics +25, Bluff +21, Diplomacy +13, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (religion) +7, Perception +22, Sense Motive +22, Stealth +25

Languages Common

SQ mantis form, resurrection sense, rogue talents (finesse rogue, weapon training), trapfinding +2

Combat Gear *mask of the mantis*, *oil of greater magic weapon +5* (3), *potion of barkskin +5* (2), *potion of shield of faith +5* (3), large scorpion venom (10); **Other Gear** *+3 studded leather*, *+1 shock sawtooth sabre*[UE], *+1 shocking burst sawtooth sabre*[UE], mwk daggers (10), 55 pp, 5 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Fading (Su) Up to five times a day, Kayltanya can become ethereal for an instant as she is attacked by a weapon or is forced to attempt a Reflex saving throw. She must choose to activate this ability before the weapon's attack roll or the spell's effects are adjudicated. This grants her a 50% chance to avoid taking damage from the attack or effect.

Mantis Doom (Sp) Kayltanya can cast *creeping doom* as a spell-like ability three times per day. This version of the spell summons swarms of venomous praying mantises, but the effects are otherwise the same as the spell.

Mantis Form (Su) Once per day as a standard action, Kayltanya can transform into a blood-red giant praying mantis, as if using *vermin shape II*[UM] (CL 10th). In addition to the normal adjustments to Strength, Dexterity, and natural armor provided by this spell effect, she gains the giant mantis's 60 feet of darkvision, as well as its grab, lunge, mandibles, and sudden strike extraordinary abilities, but not its immunity to mind-affecting effects or its racial modifiers on Perception or Stealth checks. If she wields a magical sawtooth sabre in her hand when she transforms, the magical enhancements for that weapon apply to her corresponding claw attack—if she wields two of them, then the enhancements from each weapon apply to a different claw attack. She gains DR 10/good in mantis form, and her mandibles impose 1 negative level on a hit (she gains 5 temporary hit points each time she inflicts a negative level in this way). A successful DC 25 Fortitude save removes this negative level.

Prayer Attack (Su) A successful DC 19 Will save resists the effects of Kayltanya's prayer attack. See page 145 for more details on this signature Red Mantis assassination style.

Red Shroud (Su) Kayltanya's red shroud persists for 10 rounds when she activates it—she can use this ability 5 times per day. See page 145 for more details on this Red Mantis defense.

Resurrection Sense (Su) Kayltanya senses if a creature she has slain within the last year has been restored to life, as long as they are both on the same plane.

Summon Mantis (Sp) Once per day, Kayltanya can summon an advanced fiendish giant mantis, 1d3 fiendish giant mantises, or 1d4+1 giant mantises, as per *summon monster V*. She can mentally direct the actions of these summoned vermin as a free action. All mantises summoned by this spell-like ability are blood red, and gain no racial bonus on Stealth checks in forests.

Kayltanya is a member of the Vernai, the ruling caste of the Red Mantis, yet she has not been a member of this level of command for long. Of Chelish descent, Kayltanya was her parents' third daughter, and despite being part of the powerful Chelish House of Vyeron, she soon realized that her opportunities for greatness were limited. Not long after she came of age, she engineered the deaths of her two older sisters, an act that caught the eye of the Red Mantis assassin who had been tasked with doing the same by one of House Vyeron's enemies, the Arvanxi family. Rather than finish her task with Kayltanya's murder, the assassin took the young woman under her wing and returned to the Crimson Citadel, where Kayltanya absorbed the indoctrination and training with a natural ease. Though the Red Mantis was forced to refund part of the cost of the mission to the Arvanxis, time would prove this to have been a wise investment.

Once she had been promoted to the Vernai, Kayltanya was eager to make a name for herself and become a favored minion of the Blood Mistress. She perceived Varisia as a region relatively untouched by Red Mantis attentions, and began investigating opportunities to spread the group's reputation into this new frontier. Shortly after, Queen Ileosa secretly contacted Kayltanya to secure the allegiance and aid of the Red Mantis. Kayltanya accepted the job at once, and charged one of her most merciless minions—the assassin Cinnabar—to lead the group north to Korvosa to serve their newest contract. The fact that Ileosa's family originally hired the Red Mantis to assassinate the Vyeron children has not escaped Kayltanya's notice, but she views the act of serving the queen of Korvosa as an expression of gratitude. For if the Arvanxis had not sent assassins after her so long ago, Kayltanya would have never been discovered by the Red Mantis in the first place. As a result, Kayltanya feels a strange sense of debt to Ileosa, and would never think of betraying her trust. When Cinnabar threatens the mission and puts the contract in peril after failing to assassinate the queen's latest enemies (the PCs, in Chapter 4), Kayltanya swiftly travels to Korvosa herself to pick up the pieces and attempt to salvage the job. At this point, seeing to the assassination of the PCs becomes her primary mission. At your discretion, if the PCs take too long to confront the Red Mantis in Castle Korvosa, Kayltanya comes to them in the night, as they sleep, with her blades drawn.

KAYLTANYA

KAZAVON

One of the most notorious warlords of the Hold of Belkzen was no orc, nor was he (as many remember him) humanoid at all.

KAZAVON **CR 25**

XP 1,638,400

Male advanced great wyrm blue dragon fighter 1/eldritch knight 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 94)

LE Colossal dragon (earth)

Init +3; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +43

Aura electricity (10 ft., 2d6 electricity), frightful presence (360 ft., DC 34)

DEFENSE

AC 45, touch 5, flat-footed 42 (+3 Dex, +40 natural, –8 size)

hp 573 (33 HD; 5d10+28d12+364)

Fort +31, **Ref** +20, **Will** +26

Defensive Abilities rejuvenation; **DR** 20/magic; **Immune** electricity, paralysis, sleep; **SR** 36

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., burrow 20 ft., fly 250 ft. (clumsy)

Melee bite +43 (4d8+27), 2 claws +43 (4d6+18), tail slap +38 (4d6+27), 2 wings +38 (2d8+9)

Space 30 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft. (30 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks breath weapon (140-ft. line, DC 35, 24d8 electricity), crush (Large creatures, DC 35, 4d8+27), desert thirst (DC 35), sandstorm, storm breath (DC 35, 2d8 electricity), tail sweep (40-ft. radius, 2d8+27, DC 35)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 28th; concentration +38)

At will—*create water*, *ghost sound* (DC 20), *hallucinatory terrain* (DC 24), *minor image* (DC 22), *mirage arcana* (DC 25), *veil* (DC 26), *ventriloquism* (DC 21)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 20th; concentration +30)

9th (7/day)—*gate*, *shapechange*, *time stop*

8th (7/day)—*binding* (DC 28), *demand* (DC 28), *maze*

7th (7/day)—*plane shift* (DC 27), *project image* (DC 27), *greater teleport*

6th (8/day)—*chain lightning* (DC 26), *greater dispel magic*, *geas/quest*

5th (8/day)—*contact other plane*, *feeblemind* (DC 25), *telekinesis* (DC 25), *wall of force*

4th (8/day)—*black tentacles*, *charm monster* (DC 24), *detect scrying*, *greater invisibility*

3rd (8/day)—*displacement*, *haste*, *keen edge*, *nondetection*

2nd (9/day)—*darkness*, *detect thoughts* (DC 22), *false life*, *glitterdust* (DC 22), *mirror image*

1st (9/day)—*alarm*, *grease*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*

0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *bleed* (DC 20), *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *open/close* (DC 20), *prestidigitation*

TACTICS

Before Combat Normally, Kazavon casts *mage armor* and *shield* well before combat begins, but the way he is likely to be encountered in the final adventure's climax gives him little time to do this. Those effects are not calculated into the stats above.

During Combat Kazavon opens a fight in draconic form with *time stop*, then places *walls of force* to control the battlefield. He casts *greater invisibility* on the last round of the *time stop* spell's effect. Kazavon saves his melee attacks for when he's surrounded, and tries to remain mobile, using flight to stay far from foes and hitting them with spells from a distance each round between uses of his breath weapon. Every few rounds, he casts *time stop* again to recover, reposition, and take control of the battlefield. Kazavon does not assume his human form until he has access to new equipment to use in that form.

Morale Kazavon knows now that he cannot be killed, but is not eager to return to the limbo he endured after his previous defeat. If reduced to fewer than 50 hit points, he casts *greater teleport* to relocate or *gate* to flee to the Shadow Plane, where he spends a few days recovering and plotting his revenge before returning.

STATISTICS

Str 46, **Dex** 16, **Con** 33, **Int** 26, **Wis** 25, **Cha** 30

Base Atk +33; **CMB** +59 (+63 disarm, +63 trip); **CMD** 72 (74 vs. disarm, 78 vs. trip)

Feats Arcane Armor Mastery, Arcane Armor Training, Arcane Strike, Combat Expertise, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Critical Focus, Eschew Materials, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Greater Disarm, Greater Trip, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Iron Will, Power Attack, Quicken Spell, Staggering Critical, Still Spell, Weapon Focus (spiked chain)

Skills Bluff +46, Diplomacy +46, Disguise +43, Fly +23, Intimidate +46, Knowledge (arcana, religion) +44, Knowledge (geography, history, local, nobility) +22, Linguistics +13, Perception +43, Sense Motive +43, Spellcraft +44, Survival +43, Use Magic Device +46

Languages Aklo, Common, Draconic, Giant, Infernal, Necril, Orc, Shadowtongue, Shoanti, Undercommon, Varisian

SQ change shape (fixed human form, *alter self*), mirage, sound imitation

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Change Shape (Su) This ability, granted to Kazavon by Zon-Kuthon, allows the blue dragon to assume the form of a human man at will. He always assumes the same form—stats for Kazavon in this guise appear on page 449.

Rejuvenation (Ex) If Kazavon is killed, his body crumbles swiftly, and is soon reduced to little more than dust. Any of the relics absorbed into his body remain behind amid the dust. As long as Kazavon's relics continue to exist, there is always a chance the great blue wyrm can manifest again. If Kazavon was restored to life via the *Everdawn Pool* (as described in Rise of the Dragon on page 390), all that remains are his fangs.

KAZAVON (HUMAN FORM) **CR 25**

XP 1,638,400

LE Medium dragon (earth)

Init +5; **Senses** Perception +43

DEFENSE

AC 36, touch 20, flat-footed 31 (+11 armor, +5 deflection, +5 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 441 (33 HD; 5d10+28d12+232)

Fort +27, **Ref** +22, **Will** +26

Defensive Abilities death transformation, fortification 75%; **DR** 20/magic; **SR** 36

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *+5 keen unholy wounding adamantine spiked chain* +50/+45/+40/+35 (2d4+21/19–20) or *+5 wounding armor spikes* +49/+44/+39/+34 (1d6+16)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 28th; concentration +38)
Same as draconic form stats.

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 20th; concentration +30)
Same as draconic form stats.

TACTICS

During Combat Kazavon relies on his spells for ranged combat and, if he can, generally takes a few rounds at the start of a battle to cast *mirror image* and *shield*. He doesn't bother with *haste* unless he's fighting alongside allies. If reduced to 200 hit points or fewer, he casts *time stop*, and then casts *black tentacles*, *greater invisibility*, and *wall of force* to regain battlefield dominance. In melee, he always uses Power Attack.

Morale Kazavon fights to the death in human form (but see death transformation)

STATISTICS

Str 32, **Dex** 20, **Con** 25, **Int** 26, **Wis** 25, **Cha** 30

Base Atk +33; **CMB** +44 (+48 disarm, +48 trip); **CMD** 64 (66 vs. disarm, 66 vs. trip)

Feats same as draconic form

Skills Fly +40; all other skills listed in his draconic form stats

Languages same as draconic form

Gear *+5 spiked heavy fortification mithral breastplate*, *+5 keen unholy wounding adamantine spiked chain*, *amulet of natural armor +5*, *ring of protection +5*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Death Transformation (Ex) If reduced to 0 hit points, Kazavon immediately transforms into his draconic form, destroying his armor in the process. The transformation takes place quickly and fully heals him, but leaves Kazavon staggered for 2d4 rounds.

Kazavon is unlikely to manifest in this campaign unless things go very badly for the PCs. If the PCs are that unfortunate, they first face Kazavon in his draconic form. Only if Kazavon defeats the PCs or is driven away does he seek out new equipment for his human form. It takes him 2d6 weeks to secure the powerful items listed in his human form stats above. At your discretion, Kazavon can secure additional magic items over time. His primary goal upon returning to the world at this point is to reclaim Scarwall and rebuild his empire—a task that may take months or even years, but should he succeed, will catapult him back into the role of one of the Inner Sea region's most dangerous warlords. How this impacts your campaign is left up to you.

KAZAVON

LAORI VAUS

Rarely without a wide grin of delight, Laori Vaus is an enigma to her companions in the Brotherhood of Bones, who are perhaps even more disturbed by her joyous attitude than are her enemies.

LAORI VAUS **CR 10**

XP 9,600

Female elf cleric of Zon-Kuthon 11

LE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +5

Aura destructive aura (30 ft., +5, 11 rounds/day)

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 13, flat-footed 21 (+8 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural)

hp 108 (11d8+55)

Fort +11, **Ref** +5, **Will** +10; +2 vs. enchantments

Immune sleep; **SR** 23

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee *+2 spell-storing spiked chain* +13/+8 (2d4+6) or armor spikes +7/+2 (1d6+3)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 2/day (DC 14, 6d6), destructive smite (+5, 6/day)

Cleric Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +14)

6/day—*touch of darkness* (5 rounds)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 11th; concentration +14)

6th—*blade barrier* (DC 19), *shadow walk*[D] (DC 19)

5th—*flame strike* (DC 18), *spell resistance*, *summon monster V*[D] (summons 1d3 shadows)

4th—*air walk*, *cure critical wounds*, *greater magic weapon*, *shadow conjuration*[D]

3rd—*deeper darkness*[D], *dispel magic*, *magic vestment*, *remove disease*, *sadomasochism* (DC 16), *speak with dead* (DC 16)

2nd—*bear's endurance*, *blindness/deafness*[D] (blindness only) (DC 15), *bull's strength*, *cure moderate wounds*, *lesser restoration*, *silence* (DC 15)

1st—*command* (DC 14), *cure light wounds* (2), *divine favor*, *obscuring mist*[D], *sanctuary* (DC 14)

0 (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *mending*, *stabilize*

D domain spell; **Domains** Darkness, Destruction

TACTICS

Before Combat Every morning, Laori casts *greater magic weapon* and *magic vestment* on her spiked chain and armor. If she has a chance before combat begins, she also casts the following spells as well: *air walk*, *bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, and *spell resistance*.

During Combat Laori's first act in combat is to cast *sadomasochism* on herself (see the sidebar on page 451). Next, she summons 1d3 shadows with *summon monster V*; on the second round, as her shadows appear, she hits the thickest concentration of her enemies with *blade barrier* or *flame strike*. She moves into melee against foes on the third round, using her destructive smite and unleashing the *inflict serious wounds* from her *spell-storing spiked chain* on her first attack. As she fights, she hums or whistles as if she were merely doing some pleasant chore, periodically punctuating a particularly solid blow with a giggle or wink.

Morale Laori enjoys pain, but would rather not give up her life before she has a chance to see Kazavon's relics recovered. If brought to fewer than 20 hit points, she flees (via *shadow walk* if possible), returning at her convenience to finish unresolved business.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 14, **Con** 18, **Int** 12, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 24

Feats Blind-fight, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Diehard, Dodge, Endurance

Skills Acrobatics +9 (+5 when jumping), Knowledge (religion) +15, Perception +5, Spellcraft +15

Languages Common, Elven, Shadowtongue

SQ elven magic, eyes of darkness (5 rounds/day)

Combat Gear *wand of cure moderate wounds* (11 charges), *wand of sending* (6 charges), *wand of sound burst* (19 charges); **Other Gear** *+2 spiked chainmail*, *+2 spell-storing spiked chain* (currently contains *inflict serious wounds*), *amulet of natural armor +3*, *headband of inspired wisdom +2*, scrap of Neolandus's uniform, silver holy symbol of Zon-Kuthon, 31 gp, 6 sp, 7 cp

Laori displays her allegiance to Zon-Kuthon openly in her choice of weapon and armor (a spiked chain and spiked chainmail), yet her demeanor and attitude are anything but grim. Laori is chronically cheerful, always brimming with delight and quick to laugh. This affectation has somewhat damaged her reputation among the church, as many of the more conventional worshipers of Zon-Kuthon find her attitude to be irreverent or even sacrilegious, yet none deny her contributions to the faith. Even when she's discussing the finer methods of skinning a living man, self-flagellation, torture, or her open admiration of all things diabolical, her plucky attitude remains. As a result, Laori can be unsettling to be around, for both her fellow worshipers of Zon-Kuthon and those who see her faith as a horror to be stamped out.

As with many Forlorn elves, Laori never knew her birth parents. She grew up on the rough streets of Riddleport, and although she suspects her family dwelled in the nearby town of Crying Leaf, she never bothered to contact them. She first learned of Zon-Kuthon in Riddleport, and the Midnight Lord's teachings quickly grew into an obsession for her. Armed only with her indomitable optimism and an appetite for pain, she made the pilgrimage down to the shadowy nation of Nidal, and over the course of several decades, became an accomplished priestess of Zon-Kuthon, despite the other priests finding her attitude

grating. The culmination of her work saw her induction into the Brotherhood of Bones, and her familiarity with Riddleport and Varisia made her a natural choice to take the search for Kazavon's relics there.

Despite her sadistic outlook on life, Laori values allies, if not friends, and has endless patience when dealing with those who consider themselves good or seek to spread kindness through the world. Her methods of conversion to the faith of Zon-Kuthon are not those normally utilized by the church—she views the torture of sentient creatures as a way to pass the time or to share the intimacy of pain rather than as a method to extract confessions or secure alliances. Her cheerfulness and generosity may seem to be born of an inner kindness, but in fact they are among her greatest weapons, and many would-be enemies of the church have been wooed away from their beliefs to the worship of Zon-Kuthon after spending time in Laori's company. She is always eager to share her favorite spell with others, and while she can't create scrolls herself, she's quick to volunteer her time to others who can scribe scrolls so that she can teach them the wonders of *sadomasochism*.

Her cheerfulness is certainly unusual for a worshiper of Zon-Kuthon, yet it is not a weakness other than in the way it distances and annoys would-be supporters in the church. This ostracization from her brothers and sisters has merely encouraged her to seek companions beyond the church—inevitably, these friendships end when the companions either grow tired of her (and sometimes attack her out of loathing) or when the allies fully convert and begin to see her cheerful attitude as a liability or even sacrilegious. Laori's constant upbeat attitude may well be a long-standing defense mechanism against crippling and overwhelming loneliness, but to date, none have managed to penetrate her armor of smiles.

This could well change if Laori survives the events in Castle Scarwall and takes on the role of the Ally during Chapter 5. If one of the PCs has been particularly friendly toward or understanding of the elf, this marks the first time in Laori's life that she's managed to maintain a friendship for any significant duration. She may even finally begin to consider that, perhaps, worship of Zon-Kuthon isn't the best choice for her and could abandon her faith for a new deity. In such an event, she is likely to seek comfort in the teachings of a goddess who promotes individuality, such as Calistria or even Desna. Certainly, the support of a PC (and perhaps a PC-sponsored *atonement* spell) can aid her redemption, but whether or not this is just a passing phase or a true new step in her life depends on her allies.

SADOMASOCHISM

School necromancy [pain]; **Level** antipaladin 3, cleric 3, inquisitor 3, magus 4, sorcerer/wizard 4, witch 4
Casting Time 1 standard action
Components V, S
Range personal
Target you
Duration 1 minute/level (D)
Saving Throw Will negates, see text; **Spell Resistance** yes
While subject to this spell, anytime you are dealt damage, your attacker must roll damage for the attack twice and take the higher result, but the attacker must also succeed at a Will saving throw or be demoralized (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 99) for 1 round. Each time you deal damage to a creature demoralized by this spell, you roll damage twice and take the higher result. This spell originally appeared in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Gods*.

LAORI VAUS

ROLTH LAMM

As the son of one of Korvosa's most hated criminals and the man behind the city's most recent unsolved serial killings, Rolth Lamm is unrelentingly despicable.

ROLTH LAMM **CR 8**

XP 4,800

Human rogue 1/necromancer 8

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** life sight (10 feet, 8 rounds/day); Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 19 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +4 shield)

hp 94 (9 HD; 8d6+1d8+58)

Fort +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +7

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *+1 dagger* +4 (1d4/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

Necromancer Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +13)
8/day—*grave touch* (4 rounds)

Necromancer Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +13)
4th—*animate dead*, *dimension door*, *enervation*, *infuse decay*
3rd—*dispel magic*, *hold person* (DC 18), *lightning bolt* (DC 18), *ray of exhaustion* (DC 20), *vampiric touch*
2nd—*false life*, *ghoul touch* (DC 19), *scorching ray*, *touch of idiocy*, *spectral hand*
1st—*charm person* (2, DC 16), *chill touch* (DC 18), *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 18), *shield*, *unlock flesh* (DC 16),
0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *light*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 17)
Opposition Schools illusion, transmutation

TACTICS

Before Combat Rolth casts *shield*, *mage armor*, and *false life* before combat.

During Combat Rolth prefers to let allies fight in melee, so he can hang back and use spells at range. He prefers to leave foes alive but incapacitated so he can kill them at leisure with his knife. A successful casting of *hold person* is his favorite method of enabling sneak attacks.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 15 hit points, Rolth flees via *dimension door*; if he escapes, he can become a recurring antagonist who seeks to add the PCs to his collection of undead servants.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 14, **Con** 16, **Int** 20, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 16

Feats Combat Casting, Craft Construct, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy), Toughness, Turn Undead

Skills Bluff +13, Craft (alchemy) +17, Disable Device +17, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (local) +10, Perception +12, Profession (locksmith) +12, Sleight of Hand +9, Spellcraft +17, Stealth +14

Languages Common, Elven, Necril, Shoanti, Undercommon, Varisian

SQ arcane bond (Runkus the rat), power over undead, trapfinding +1

Combat Gear *scroll of teleport*, *wand of magic missile* (CL 3rd, 43 charges); **Other Gear** *+1 dagger*, *belt of mighty constitution +2*, *cloak of resistance +1*, *headband of vast intelligence +2*, *ring of protection +1*, *unguent of timelessness* (6), mwk thieves' tools, fine mortician's tools (worth 100 gp) , 6 black onyxes (worth 150 gp), spellbook (contains all cantrips save those of the illusion and transmutation schools plus *detect thoughts*, *grease*, *ice storm*, *magic missile*, and 2d4 additional spells of your choice for each level from 1st to 4th), extensive notes on blood veil, 50 gp, 5 sp

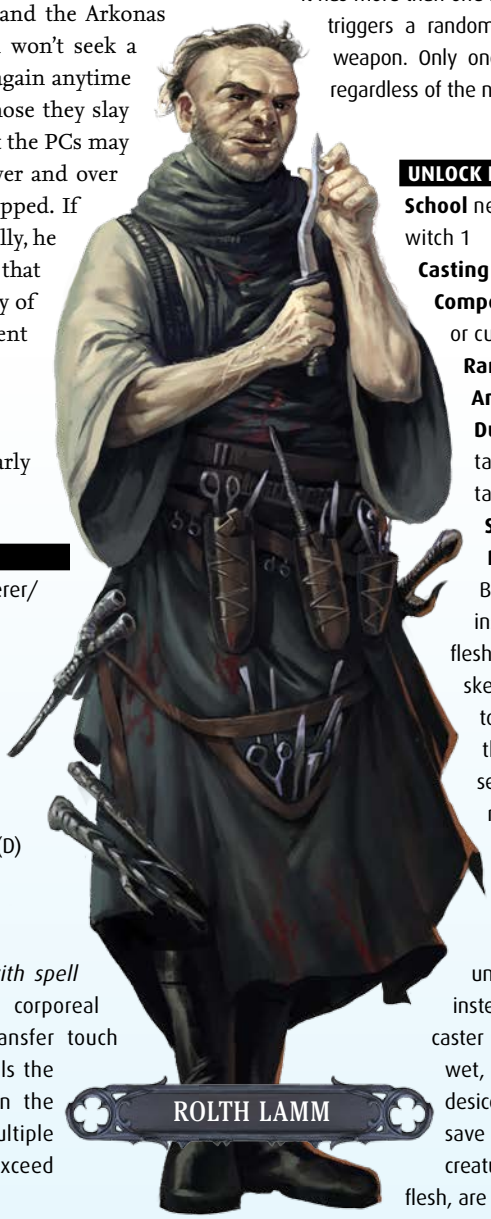
Rolth is a foul man by any definition of the term. Pale and blotchy from scars caused by various diseases he's exposed himself to (either by accident or design), Rolth wears thick leather robes lined with dozens of pockets that bulge with surgical and mortician tools, and is always ready and eager for new opportunities to study the ways in which flesh can be altered, enhanced, and cut away. To Rolth, every portion of a living body is an incomplete work of art, and if knives are the tools he uses to prepare his medium, then the colors, scents, and textures that decay brings are his tools to finish the job.

Rolth's childhood with his abusive father, Gaedren, primed him for a life of crime and the spread of misery. Although Rolth often ran away from home, Gaedren always managed to track him down and return him to work in another illicit venture. It wasn't until Rolth began to study necromancy and afflicted his father with a disturbing spell of his own design, *unlock flesh*, that Gaedren finally afforded his son the fear Rolth sought. The next time Rolth left home, Gaedren did not follow.

Soon after, Rolth embarked on one of his most notorious pursuits: haunting Korvosa's streets at night as a fearful murderer who specialized in home invasion and used sharpened keys (and later masterwork daggers cut to resemble keys) to "open" his victims as they lay in bed, asleep. Rolth always left his victims in gruesome tableaus in their homes before locking the house back up tightly as he left. Rolth preferred to kill efficiently and silently, so that family members slept through the murder and woke to find a loved one mutilated and no indication that their home had been invaded in the first place. When a spouse or child did wake, Rolth merely widened his canvas to incorporate the new subjects in the display, leaving none alive. Yet even then, he always made sure to leave no trace behind and to secure the building behind him.

These horrific crimes soon earned him a nickname among the Korvosan Guard—the "Key Lock Killer," so called for the sharpened keys he left behind in many of his victims and for the fact that he never left a murder site unsecured. Rolth was never caught, mostly because he abandoned the serial killer's lifestyle after a close call with the Korvosan Guard. Today, Rolth has abandoned home invasion in favor of necromancy and crafting hideous constructs from discarded parts; his recent alliance with the cult of Urgathoa has allowed him more resources than ever before in the pursuit of his sickening hobbies.

If Rolth escapes the PCs' justice at the end of Chapter 2, he can serve well in the role of recurring villain. Just as he joined forces with the cult of Urgathoa, Rolth may offer his services to other groups the PCs are destined to clash against—the Red Mantis and the Arkonas being two likely candidates. Rolth won't seek a direct confrontation with the PCs again anytime soon, but will certainly seek out those they slay to animate them as zombies so that the PCs may well find themselves facing foes over and over again until Rolth can finally be stopped. If Rolth can murder and animate an ally, he takes particular care in preparing that corpse for its role as a future enemy of the PCs, using *infuse decay* to augment the zombie's slam attacks.



ROLTH LAMM

Rolth's Magic

Rolth has devised two particularly sinister spells, both detailed below.

INFUSE DECAY

School necromancy [evil]; **Level** sorcerer/wizard 4, witch 4
Casting Time 10 minutes
Components V, S, F (a set of fine mortician's tools worth 100 gp)
Range touch
Area corporeal undead touched; see text
Duration permanent until discharged (D)
Saving Throw Will negates (harmless); **Spell Resistance** yes (harmless)

This spell functions as per *imbue with spell ability*, except it can only target corporeal undead creatures, and can only transfer touch spells. The number and level of spells the subject can be granted depends on the undead creature's Hit Dice; even multiple castings of *infuse decay* can't exceed this limit.

HD of Undead	Touch Spells Infused
5 or lower	One 1st-level spell
6–10	One or two 1st-level spells
11 or higher	One or two 1st-level spells and one 2nd-level spell

Once you cast *infuse decay*, you can't prepare a new 4th-level spell to replace it (see *imbue with spell ability* on page 299 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* for further details). The infused spell is automatically triggered the next time the undead creature makes a successful touch attack or attack with a natural weapon. An intelligent undead can choose not to trigger the spell on a hit. Only one infused spell can be triggered per attack. An intelligent undead can choose which spell to trigger if it has more than one infused spell. A nonintelligent undead triggers a random spell when it hits with a natural weapon. Only one spell can be triggered per round, regardless of the number of attacks the undead makes.

UNLOCK FLESH

School necromancy; **Level** sorcerer/wizard 1, witch 1
Casting Time 1 standard action
Components V, S,F (any slashing weapon or cutting tool)
Range touch
Area creature touched
Duration 1 round/level (living target) or instantaneous (undead target); see below
Saving Throw Fort negates; **Spell Resistance** yes

By touching a creature with a bladed instrument, you cause the creature's flesh to loosen and slide against its skeletal moorings. A living creature touched becomes staggered by the disturbing and uncomfortable sensation for 1 round per level. Each round on its turn, the subject can attempt a new saving throw to end the effect. This is a standard action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. A corporeal undead creature targeted by this spell instead takes 1d6 points of damage per caster level (maximum 5d6 at 5th level) as wet, oozing chunks of flesh slough off its desiccated bones (a successful Fortitude save halves this damage). Incorporeal creatures, or creatures that do not have flesh, are immune to this spell's effects.

SABINA MERRIN

Sabina Merrin is obsessed with Queen Ileosa's beauty and is always eager for a kind word from the woman she idolizes. Lately though, she is slowly coming to the painful realization that the woman she thought she loved is, in fact, a monster.

SABINA MERRIN **CR 14**

XP 38,400

Female human fighter 14

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 35, touch 15, flat-footed 32 (+12 armor, +2 deflection, +3 Dex, +5 natural, +3 shield)

hp 193 (14d10+112)

Fort +20, **Ref** +12, **Will** +10 (+4 vs. fear)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *+2 wounding falchion* +26/+21/+16 (2d4+16/15–20 plus 1 bleed)

Ranged *+2 composite longbow* +21/+16/+11 (1d8+9/×3)

Special Attacks weapon trainings (heavy blades +3, bows +2, close +1)

TACTICS

Before Combat Sabina usually relies on her ability to intimidate would-be foes to avoid physical conflict. She drinks a *potion of barkskin +5* if combat seems inevitable.

During Combat Once a fight begins, Sabina is merciless. She prefers to strike with her falchion, using Power Attack to hit hard, but almost always grants mercy to foes when it is asked for.

Morale Sabina fights to the death to defend Queen Ileosa until she finally realizes the truth near the end of the Adventure Path, at which point she fights to the death to undo the damage the queen has done.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 16, **Con** 22, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +14; **CMB** +19; **CMD** 34

Feats Critical Focus, Diehard, Endurance, Greater Weapon Focus (falchion), Greater Weapon Specialization (falchion), Improved Critical (falchion), Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Staggering Critical, Toughness, Weapon Focus (falchion), Weapon Specialization (falchion)

Skills Intimidate +18, Perception +13, Ride +17

Languages Common

SQ armor training 3, wealth

Combat Gear *potion of barkskin +5* (3), *potion of cure serious wounds* (4); **Other Gear** *+3 full plate*, *+1 animated heavy steel shield*, *+2 composite longbow* (+5 Str) with 20 arrows, *+2 wounding falchion*, *belt of physical perfection +4*, *cloak of resistance +5*, *ring of feather falling*, *ring of protection +2*, *winged boots*, 210 pp, 5 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Wealth (Ex) Sabina Merrin has been outfitted from the royal treasury with all the gear she needs—gear equal in value to that possessed by a 14th level PC. As such, her CR is 1 higher than normal.

Sabina was once the protege of the famed weaponmaster Vencarlo Orisini, but left the school under dubious circumstances after a bitter duel with her former teacher. Since her departure, she found her way into the Korvosan Guard. Her skills led to a swift rise through the ranks, and her ferocity in battle and her gothic beauty quickly caught Ileosa's eye. The queen requested Sabina be discharged from the Guard, then quickly reassigned her to her current role as royal bodyguard, handmaiden, and eventually lover. Whatever Sabina's actual relationship with Ileosa, she is rarely seen far from the queen's side.

Sabina has long been obsessed with Queen Ileosa, to the point where her loyalty borders on worship. Sabina has no interest in being a ruler herself, but she covets the role of being in charge of an army in service to a queen. She has seen the changes at work in her queen, brought on by Kazavon's influence, and although she does not yet know the extent or source of this influence, she approves of Ileosa's sudden uprising of self-confidence, courage, and military eagerness. She suspects that Eodred was stifling her, and that the king's death has finally allowed her queen to bloom into the ruler she was destined to become.

As Curse of the Crimson Throne progresses, Sabina grows more and more convinced that the Ileosa she fell in love with may well be gone, but she still harbors hope that the queen might be redeemed. She's come to suspect that Ileosa's new crown may be the source of the problem, but does not realize the fact that the *Crown of Fangs* was merely a catalyst—simply removing the crown from Ileosa's head will not magically restore her to a less antagonistic, less cruel personality. Nevertheless, Sabina hopes to engineer a way that the queen might be stopped from destroying both Korvosa and her own reputation—yet she is increasingly overwhelmed by the horrors she witnesses. By the time the PCs confront Sabina in Chapter 6, the woman is ready to abandon the Gray Maidens and her queen alike, having finally realized Ileosa may well be a lost cause. Yet Sabina also knows she alone cannot stop the events she has helped set in motion. If the PCs grant her mercy in Chapter 6 and manage to recruit her aid, Sabina may well join them in their quest to stop the queen. Of course, if you feel the PCs have things well in hand and don't require additional aid in Castle Korvosa or in the Sunken Queen, you should instead have Sabina stay behind with the other rebels. At the very least, the information she has about Castle Korvosa or the Gray Maidens should give the PCs an edge.

The Gray Maidens

The order of the Gray Maidens is primarily composed of human fighters, but all are women, regardless of class or race. The order itself uses the Longacre Building as its headquarters until the PCs disrupt the operations in the dungeon below the building at the end of Chapter 4, at which point the Gray Maidens take up residence in Castle Korvosa for the remainder of the campaign.

New recruits to the Gray Maidens are, at the onset of the order's foundation, selected from the Korvosan Guard, the Sable Company, and the Hellknight Order of the Nail. Once selected, a recruit is brought to the Longacre Building for indoctrination—a painful process intended to break down the recruit's personality and brainwash her into being a loyal servant to the queen. A significant part of this procedure involves extensive scarring of the face to mar the recruit's beauty.

The Gray Maidens have a command structure that roughly equates to seven different ranks. During this adventure, the four highest ranks are held by individuals, while the bulk of the Gray Maidens themselves fall into the lower three ranks. These ranks and some notes on those who fill the ranks are listed below.

Commander: Sabina Merrin's role as commander of the Gray Maidens is in some ways merely that of a figurehead. Between her other duties as Queen Ileosa's bodyguard and seeing to the security of Castle Korvosa, she cedes much of the day-to-day work of running the Gray Maidens to her second-in-command.

Second-in-Command: Kordaitra serves as a combination quartermaster and primary recruiter for the Gray Maidens. She has interviewed dozens of women for the role, and those she deems worthy of donning the armor are brought to the Longacre Building for indoctrination. Her stats appear on page 251.

Arbiter of Allegiance: As the primary engineer of the agonizing brainwashing torments endured by all new recruits, Vavana Dhatri is perhaps the cruelest of the Gray Maidens—she is also the only wizard in the order. Her statistics appear on page 364.

Warden: The elven woman Tisharue serves as the warden for the Gray Maidens. Although technically of a lower rank than second-in-command, Tisharue is perhaps more dangerous than Kordaitra. As warden, her charge is to keep the security of the Longacre Building, and also to watch over the recruits themselves. When she feels a Gray Maiden's loyalty is slipping, she brings the soldier back for a "refresher" in her training: more mind-numbing torments under Vavana's expert watch. Tisharue's statistics appear on page 248.

Palace Guard: The most powerful and loyal of the Gray Maidens are posted as guards within Castle Korvosa. They are rarely encountered outside of their posts therein. Gray Maiden palace guard statistics appear on page 347.

Guard: Gray Maiden guards compose the lower command rank of the organization, typically serving as guards at important sites such as the Longacre Building or commanding groups of footsoldiers. Statistics for Gray Maiden guards appear on page 247.

Footsoldier: The vast majority of the Gray Maidens active in the order function at this lowest rank. Footsoldiers are the Gray Maidens the PCs first encounter, and are the ones most likely to be encountered on the streets of Korvosa. Gray Maiden footsoldier statistics appear on page 74.

SABINA MERRIN

SIAL

Shadowcount Sial is among the Brotherhood of Bones's most gifted—and dangerous—diplomats.

SIAL **CR 11**

XP 12,800

Male human unchained summoner 12 (*Pathfinder RPG Pathfinder Unchained* 25)

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 18 (+6 armor, +2 deflection, +1 Dex, +4 shield)

hp 93 (12d8+36)

Fort +8, **Ref** +5, **Will** +9

Defensive Abilities greater shield ally

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee *+2 vicious spiked chain* +10/+5 (2d4+1 plus 2d6)

Special Attacks maker's call 2/day, transposition

Summoner Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +17)

8/day—*summon monster VI*

Summoner Spells Known (CL 12th; concentration +17)

4th (4/day)—*acid pit*[APG] (DC 20), *charm monster* (DC 19), *dimension door*, *greater invisibility*

3rd (5/day)—*dispel magic*, *fly*, *haste*, *rejuvenate eidolon*[APG]

2nd (6/day)—*barkskin*, *blur*, *create pit*[APG] (DC 18), *resist energy*, *lesser restore eidolon*[UM] (DC 18)

1st (7/day)—*endure elements*, *grease* (DC 16), *protection from chaos*, *ray of sickening*[UM] (DC 16), *lesser rejuvenate eidolon*[APG], *shield*

0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *read magic*

TACTICS

Before Combat Sial casts *endure elements* on himself each morning. If he suspects combat is looming, he casts *fly* and *shield* on himself.

During Combat Sial starts combat by casting *greater invisibility* on himself, and then uses his magic to create various pits and place swaths of grease to control the battlefield as long as he can do so without significantly inconveniencing his allies. If he fights with many allies, he instead switches to support tactics, starting with *haste* and then moving among his allies to augment them with *barkskin*, *greater invisibility*, and *resist energy* as appropriate. He avoids using his spiked chain if possible, saving it to make attacks against foes who are already wounded and might be dropped by a single blow from the *vicious* weapon.

Morale If Sial's hit points fall below 15, he uses his *scroll of teleport* to flee back to his home in Nidal. He spends a few days recovering, but then secures two new *scrolls of teleport* to return to the scene of the battle to track down those who defeated him, seeking revenge.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 12, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 21

Feats Arcane Strike, Augment Summoning, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Great Fortitude, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (conjuration)

Skills Diplomacy +15, Fly +11, Knowledge (planes) +11, Knowledge (religion) +11, Sense Motive +11

Languages Common

SQ bond senses (12 rounds/day), eidolon (unchained), life link

Combat Gear *scroll of dimensional anchor*, *scroll of dispel magic*, *scroll of lesser planar binding*, *scroll of teleport*; **Other Gear** *+2 chain shirt*, *+2 vicious spiked chain*, *bone house* (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Artifacts & Legends* 57) *ring of protection +2*, 187 gp, 5 sp, 1 cp

ASYRA **CR —**

Female bipedal eidolon (kyton eidolon subtype; see page 431)

LE Medium outsider (kyton)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 14, flat-footed 24 (+4 Dex, +14 natural)

hp 94 (9d10+45)

Fort +10, **Ref** +7, **Will** +8 (+4 morale bonus vs. enchantments); +4 bonus vs. poison

Defensive Abilities evasion; **DR** 5/good; **Immune** poison; **Resist** acid 10, electricity 10, fire 15; **SR** 23

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *+2 spiked chain* +18/+13 (2d4+11/19–20), chain +13 (1d4+3) or

2 claws +13 (1d4+3), chain +13 (1d4+3)

TACTICS

During Combat Asyra fight with her spiked chain and one of the animated chains that hangs from her body, reverting to her claws only if she's disarmed or caught unprepared.

Morale Asyra fights to the death to defend Sial.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 19, **Con** 18, **Int** 7, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 29 (can't be tripped)

Feats Improved Critical (spiked chain), Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (spiked chain)

Skills Acrobatics +16, Heal +12, Intimidate +12, Perception +12

Languages Common

SQ devotion

Gear *+2 spiked chain*, *belt of mighty constitution +2*

Even from a young age, Sial had a great faith in the divine. As a child growing up within Cheliax, it was only natural that his burgeoning faith would steer him toward the church of Asmodeus. He joined the church as a youth, already looking to his future and eager to leverage the political capital it would provide him in his native Cheliax.

As he studied, Sial quickly realized that his strengths lay not in scholastic studies or the interpretation of prayers, but in a method of soft-spoken diplomacy that was both unsettling and effective. As the years wore on, the man grew more and more dissatisfied with the politics and drawn-out bureaucracies of the church of Asmodeus, and he began to privately wonder if indeed there was any difference between a priest of the Prince of Darkness and a mere Chelish government official. His growing discontent with Asmodeus finally came to a head after he listlessly undertook a 1-year assignment to serve as an ambassador on the Cheliax-Nidal border. Sial took the post hoping to further his knowledge of the complex but poorly understood relationship between devils and the undead, but quickly became enraptured by the rituals he saw performed in Nidal. Here was the song of faith that had so long eluded him in the service to Asmodeus.

Sial's "defection" from Cheliax and Asmodeus to Nidal and Zon-Kuthon was not the first of its kind. The church of Zon-Kuthon faked his death and whisked him away to the heart of the nation, where he was put through torments and interrogations meant to test his devotion to the Midnight Lord. Among those who oversaw his defection was a shadowy agent not of the government, but of a secret society known as the Brotherhood of Bones. Rather than offer Sial a place among Nidal's leaders or the priesthood of Zon-Kuthon, the agent gave him the chance to join the secret order. Sial readily accepted, and within weeks, his knowledge of devil-binding and all things infernal markedly increased. His swift rise in the ranks to the vaunted title of shadowcount made him the pride of the Brotherhood, and over the following years, Sial swiftly became one of the organization's most trusted agents. Today, he acts as an elderly mentor to many within the secret society. He has since reestablished his name in Cheliax after several tense summits with the church of Asmodeus, and he now serves as an ambassador and diplomat when needed.

Sial comports himself with an air of superiority, always walking with his chin held high and an expression of knowing disdain. When interacting with those outside the Brotherhood, Sial typically speaks slowly and softly, as though addressing small children. To those in service to him, though, such as lower-ranking members of the Brotherhood of Bones or even some of his supposed equals (particularly Laori Vaus), Sial is harsh and biting, a leader who brooks no dissent. Sial is a fastidious dresser, wearing jet-black and crimson clothes, including a spotless hakama.

Sial never travels without his most loyal and devoted minion, the kyton eidolon Asyra, but with fellow Brotherhood member Laori Vaus, Sial has a less friendly relationship. Sial's methodical and deliberate personality is at great odds with Laori's spontaneity and mirth, and little bothers the man more than being forced to endure a mission at the elf's side. Laori understands this, but can't help pushing Sial's buttons in hopes of someday getting him to share a smile. Unlike Laori, there is little chance Sial will be open to an opportunity for redemption if he survives events in Scarwall as the Ally; instead, he is more likely to thank the PCs for their aid and depart once they've secured *Serithtial*, with the understanding that once the fangs of Kazavon are secured, the PCs will deliver them to his estate in Nidal. Should the PCs fail, Sial and the full force of the Brotherhood of Bones will spare no expense in tracking down the PCs and taking what they feel is their due.

SHADOWCOUNT SIAL AND ASYRA

THOUSAND BONES

Aged and wise, the Shoanti shaman known as Thousand Bones sees his people's traditional enemies not as foes, but as misguided children who can still be taught that war upon neighbors is not the best path to a safe and comfortable future.

THOUSAND BONES **CR 7**

XP 3,200

Male old human shaman 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide* 35)

CG Medium humanoid (human)

Init –1; **Senses** Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 9, flat-footed 13 (+4 armor, –1 Dex)

hp 39 (8d8)

Fort +0, **Ref** +1, **Will** +13

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee *+1 quarterstaff* +4/–1 (1d6–2)

Special Attacks hexes (bone ward, healing, tongues), wandering hex (intercessor)

Shaman Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +13)

4th—*cure critical wounds*, *divination*, *restoration*; *legend lore*[S] or *spiritual ally*[S, APG]

3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *create food and water*, *dispel magic*, *remove disease*; *heroism*[S] or *locate object*[S]

2nd—*animal messenger*, *calm emotions* (DC 17), *cure moderate wounds*, *hold person* (DC 17); *spiritual weapon*[S] or *tongues*[S]

1st—*charm person* (DC 16), *cure light wounds* (3), *detect undead*, *produce flame*; *identify*[S] or *unseen servant*[S]

0 (at will)—*create water*, *detect poison*, *light*, *stabilize*

S spirit magic spell; **Spirit** ancestors; **Wandering Spirit** lore

TACTICS

Before Combat Thousand Bones casts *unseen servant* every morning.

During Combat In battle, Thousand Bones relies upon his allies to handle the bloody details of combat; he uses his quarterstaff in a fight if forced to do so, but prefers to stay back, using spells like *hold person* and *spiritual weapon* to attack from range. His primary goal in combat, though, is to support and heal his allies, rather than to harm enemies. If he can, he avoids violent confrontations, relying on diplomacy or spells such as *charm person* to prevent fights from occurring.

Morale When even one ally still fights, Thousand Bones will not abandon the battle. On his own, the old man flees a fight or surrenders if he believes his foes to be honorable and capable of taking prisoners and treating them well. Otherwise, he fights to the death, secure in his faith that the spirit world will see to his comfort in the afterlife if he is slain by his foes.

STATISTICS

Str 5, **Dex** 9, **Con** 7, **Int** 16, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 12

Feats Iron Will, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Knowledge [history]), Totem Spirit[ISWG] (Skoan-Quah), Toughness

Skills Diplomacy +15, Heal +7, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (history) +14, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (religion) +14, Perception +13, Sense Motive +13, Spellcraft +14, Survival +16

Languages Common, Dwarven, Giant, Shoanti, Varisian

SQ ancestor's council, ancestral weapon, monstrous insight, spirit animal (crow named Eats-Eyes)

Combat Gear *potions of cure light wounds* (4), *potions of cure moderate wounds* (4), *potion of delay poison*, *potion of fly*, *potions of lesser restoration* (3), *potion of remove disease*; **Other Gear** mwk hide armor, *+1 quarterstaff*, 93 pp, 10 gp

Thousand Bones leans heavily on his walking stick, a reinforced length of wood and polished femur from some giant beast crowned with an imposing skull. While the Shoanti's eyes are milky as if he were blind, he sees better than most men half his age. Thousand Bones has spent much of his recent years living not among his people but in the city of Korvosa, where long, arduous talks with the traditional enemies of his people slowly move toward the possibility of peace. Thousand Bones hopes only to secure that peace before his people grow tired of waiting and brand him an outlander for his troubles, but after Ileosa takes the crown and his grandson is slain, the old man realizes his time may have been wasted and regretfully returns home to the Kallow Mounds.

ABOUT THE SHOANTI

The Shoanti have a rich and complex history—these people have dwelled in Varisia for thousands of years, and their oral traditions include legends of their time serving the rulers of Thassilon. The PCs may well be unfamiliar with many of the rules and traditions of Thousand Bones's people, but if they wish to learn more, the old shaman is eager to answer any questions they may have.

Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Races contains a fair amount of generalized information about the Shoanti overall, but the following additional notes focus in greater detail on the three quahs that have roles in this campaign: the Lyrune-Quah (Clan of the Moon), Sklar-Quah (Clan of the Sun), and Skoan-Quah (Clan of the Skull).

Lyrune-Quah (Clan of the Moon)

Known to be expert archers and hunters, the swift-footed and keen-eyed people of the Lyrune-Quah hunt by dusk and travel by the light of the bright moon. The Clan

of the Moon embraces wisdom as much as strength, knowing that one arrow loosed from a precisely aimed bow can fell a giant more effectively than a band of wildly swinging brawlers.

The Moon Clan's true traditional rivals are the Sun Clan, and centuries ago the two quahs fought bitterly to establish the borders of their respective territories. The two quahs are more alike than either cares to admit, and each quah respects the martial prowess of the other. Now that both have become irrevocably invested in battling their own separate wars with outsiders, they are far more frequently riding to each other's aid as allies. The members of the two quahs value nothing more than bragging rights gained by helping members of the other quah out of a tough scrape.

Sklar-Quah (Clan of the Sun)

More so than any other clan in recent memory, the Sklar-Quah find themselves embattled by their foes. Since its retreat over the Storval Rise from southern Varisia, the Sun Clan has found itself in a vise between orc marauders from the Hold of Belkzen and foreign invaders. The Sklar-Quah now acts as an unwitting buffer, protecting its two enemies from one another, a reality that has cost the blood of countless sons and daughters.

Sun Clan youth are taught to hate *tshameks* (non-Shoanti) at an early age. Their day-to-day prejudice is viewed as a necessary component of their well-honed survival instincts. Indeed, the xenophobia runs deep, and the Sklar-Quah's shamans are the most warlike among those of any quah.

Many Sklar-Quah warriors aspire to join the ranks of the Sklar-Quah's famed burn riders, members of an elite mounted cavalry who are able to coax their horses to race through the flames and wildfires of the Cinderlands. Burn riders frequently shave much more than just their heads to protect themselves from the flames, and tend to wear minimal armor and clothing.

The quah's oral history claims that its ancestors once inhabited the fertile lands east of the Fenwall Mountains, and honored their totems from a sacred site upon a massive pyramid (now the site of the city-state of Korvosa) but that they were driven into the Cinderlands by Chelish colonists after decades of battle.

Skoan-Quah (Clan of the Skull)

All six of the other quahs still shudder on occasion when they deal with the enigmatic Skull Clan and its mysterious skull shamans. The people of the Skoan-Quah are known to cake their bodies with a mixture of mud and ash, making their skin smoky white. This ritual is said to give them protection against the walking dead, whom they are sworn to destroy.

The Skull Clan is zealous in its protection and honoring of the dead. Many Skull Clan tribes sojourn far to consecrate the burial sites of their fellow Shoanti. This service is grudgingly appreciated by the other clans, who respect the power of the Skull Clan and their totems, even if their morbid shamans are quietly unnerving. The most honored dead of each tribe are entrusted into the Skull Clan's care, leaving the guardians of the dead to transport such heroes to the Shoanti's sacred burial grounds—the Kallow Mounds to the east and the Life Falls to the west. The Skoan-Quah also shoulder the duty of acting as the historians of the Shoanti as a whole. In this way, the memories of many Shoanti live on with the Skoan-Quah, long after their own quah might have forgotten. Many of the Shoanti who live in Korvosa are Skoan-Quah, and Thousand Bones has dwelled in this metropolis for some time to watch over the many old Shoanti tombs that still remain in the bedrock below that city.

THOUSAND BONES

TRINIA SABOR

Trinia is always ready with a compliment or a supportive smile, but her kind heart takes a serious hit when she is accused of King Eodred's murder. Yet despite her increasingly cynical outlook on life, she retains her faith in her friends.

TRINIA SABOR **CR 4**

XP 1,200

Female human bard 5

CG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 36 (5d8+10)

Fort +2, **Ref** +7, **Will** +5; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk mithral dagger +7 (1d4/19–20)

Special Attacks bardic performance 15 rounds/day (countersong, distraction, fascinate [DC 15], inspire competence +2, inspire courage +2)

Bard Spells Known (CL 5th; concentration +8)

2nd (3/day)—*animal messenger*, *cat's grace*, *minor image*

1st (5/day)—*cure light wounds*, *feather fall*, *hideous laughter* (DC 14), *saving finale*[APG]

0 (at will)—*daze* (DC 13), *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

TACTICS

During Combat Trinia prefers to avoid combat if possible, particularly if she's on her own. If she acts first in a fight, she casts *cat's grace* and flees, using *minor image* to misdirect pursuers. When fighting alongside friends, she uses her abilities to bolster her allies, using her bardic performance to inspire courage on the first round and then casting *cat's grace* on allies or healing their wounds as the battle progresses. She relies on *hideous laughter* against enemy spellcasters, and is always ready to cast *saving finale* whenever a nearby ally fails a critical saving throw.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 10 hit points, Trinia flees combat, but if she escapes, she puts all her resources into rescuing those she may have left behind. Only if she has built a strong relationship based on mutual respect or love with a companion does she remain at an ally's side and fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 16, **Con** 13, **Int** 12, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 16

Feats Acrobatic, Iron Will, Shingle Runner (see page 461), Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +15, Bluff +11, Climb +10, Craft (painting) +7, Fly +5, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (local) +11, Perception +7, Perform (comedy) +11, Sense Motive +7, Sleight of Hand +11

Languages Common, Varisian

SQ bardic knowledge +2, lore master 1/day, versatile performance (comedy)

Combat Gear *potion of jump*, *potion of shield of faith +3*, *wand of daze monster* (10 charges); **Other Gear** *+1 mithral shirt*, mwk mithral dagger, daggers (3), two bronze bracelets (worth 25 gp each), copper necklace (worth 100 gp), 18 pp, 8 gp

Trinia is a child of the streets. She never knew her parents, and spent her childhood in Scrapper Hall orphanage, where her sense of humor and knack for using sleight of hand for embarrassing practical jokes (such as smuggling pornography or other illicit materials into the possession of those who would be most scandalized at being caught with it) ensured she not only was constantly passed over for adoption, but always earned the least pleasant chores. She quickly learned that pickpocketing was no way to live after spending a frightening few weeks in jail, and turned to painting as a way to earn her keep. After Trinia spent years of barely scraping by, the windfall of being commissioned to paint the king's portrait should have been a turning point for the better in her life, but instead it proves to be the worst thing ever to happen to her.

After the PCs help Trinia reach the safety of Blackbird Ranch at the start of Chapter 2, Trinia swiftly grows bored with rural life. While the PCs fought blood veil and handled the situation in Old Korvosa, Trinia increasingly took to solo excursions into the wilderness around Harse, looking for adventure and excitement. For a time, she increasingly became a thorn in the side of a local gang of bandits called the Craghawks, but when she heard rumors of a group of green adventurers having gone missing in the hills to the southeast of Harse, she hastened to the rescue.

Trinia hired a Varisian tracker named Voris Albishar to aid in locating the missing adventurers, only to realize too late that the whole thing was a ploy engineered by the Craghawks to lure her into an ambush, and that her guide Voris was in fact the bandits' leader. He led her into a narrow gorge the bandits had been using as one of several hideouts, but things didn't quite go as planned when they sprung the attack. Trinia led the bandits on a perilous chase along the upper edge of the gorge, resulting in several bandits falling to their deaths before Trinia managed to throw off pursuit by dropping down a narrow cave opening. She found herself in a long-forgotten Shoanti tomb haunted by an ancient sorcerer's ghost, who had become frustrated at how the Craghawks had despoiled the gorge she had dwelled in while alive. Knowing she needed help to escape, Trinia agreed to a risky ploy—she allowed the ghost to possess her.

Free now to travel beyond her burial site while Trinia harbored her, the ghost emerged from the tomb and used

her magic to destroy the remaining Craghawks. True to her promise, the ghost (Trinia never learned the ancient sorcerer's name) released her from possession and even allowed the bard to take a magical headband from her remains as thanks. Trinia returned back to Blackbird Ranch and never told anyone of her adventures—Jasan continued to assume she had spent her time away from the ranch on overnight trips into the wild to paint, and with Trinia's knack at spinning tales, Jasan never suspected his guest had had such a close brush with death. The Craghawks were disbanded, in any event, and while Trinia takes pride in having made the Harse hinterlands a bit safer, the adventuring bug continues to gnaw at her and she's eager to set out again—this time, perhaps, with the PCs! She might simply serve as a GM-controlled companion, or a PC with the Leadership skill could well gain her as a cohort.

Training with Trinia

At your discretion, if Trinia joins the party as a cohort or companion, she can help train any PC who meets the prerequisites in the use of the Shingle Runner feat—this requires 5 days of training and practice under her direction (these 5 days can coincide with travel or regular adventuring, as long as Trinia remains with the PCs). At the end of this time, those PCs who accepted her training can swap out any existing feat they have for Shingle Runner; the feat to be swapped out cannot be one that serves as a prerequisite for another element (such as another feat or a prestige class) used by the character, and must be a feat the character gained as a result of gaining class levels, not a bonus feat granted by a class feature.

Shingle Runner

Many of those who dwell among the rooftops that span much of Korvosa become skillful at making bounding leaps and clambering up steep surfaces, and learn how to land more safely when they fall.

Prerequisites: Dex 13, Acrobatics.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on Acrobatics and Climb checks, and can take 10 on Climb checks even when distracted. If you have 10 or more ranks in one of these skills, the bonus increases to +4 for that skill. If you fall, you automatically reduce the damage taken by the fall by 1d6, as if you'd fallen 10 feet less. This reduction in damage stacks with the reduction from a successful Acrobatics check to soften a fall.

TRINIA SABOR

TRINIA SABOR **CR 8**

XP 4,800

Female human bard 9

CG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 71 (9d8+27)

Fort +5, **Ref** +9, **Will** +7; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *+1 mithral dagger* +10/+5 (1d4+1/19–20)

Ranged mwk shortbow +10/+5 (1d6/×3)

Special Attacks bardic performance 24 rounds/day (move action; countersong, dirge of doom, distraction, fascinate [DC 18], inspire competence +3, inspire courage +2, inspire greatness, suggestion [DC 18])

Bard Spells Known (CL 9th; concentration +13)

3rd (4/day)—*charm monster* (DC 17), *cure serious wounds*, *displacement*, *haste*

2nd (5/day)—*cat's grace*, *cure moderate wounds*, *glitterdust* (DC 16), *mirror image*

1st (6/day)—*cure light wounds* (2), *hideous laughter* (DC 15), *identify*, *saving finale*[APG] (DC 15)

0 (at will)—*daze* (DC 14), *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 19

Feats Acrobatic, Arcane Strike, Combat Casting, Iron Will, Shingle Runner (see above), Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +19, Bluff +16, Climb +10, Craft (painting) +7, Diplomacy +16, Fly +5, Handle Animal +16, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (arcana, dungeoneering) +9, Knowledge (local) +13, Perception +11, Perform (comedy) +16, Perform (wind instruments) +18, Sense Motive +7, Sleight of Hand +11, Use Magic Device +16

Languages Common, Varisian

SQ bardic knowledge +4, lore master 1/day, versatile performances (comedy, wind)

Gear *+1 mithral chain shirt*, *+1 mithral dagger*, mwk shortbow with 10 mithral arrows, *headband of alluring charisma +2*, flute, two bronze bracelets (25 gp each), copper necklace (100 gp), 48 pp, 2 gp

VENCARLO ORISINI (AKA BLACKJACK)

Vencarlo Orisini is well known among the nobility of Korvosa as a blistering critic of the government and a talented teacher of swordplay. Yet his masked identity as "Blackjack" is even more renowned throughout the city.

VENCARLO ORISINI/BLACKJACK **CR 10**

XP 9,600

Male middle-age human vigilante 10 (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Intrigue* 8)

CG/CG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 68 (10d8+20)

Fort +3, **Ref** +10, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities evasion, unshakable (+10)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 15 ft.

Melee *+2 keen rapier* +13/+8 (1d6+6/15–20) or *+1 rapier* +12/+7 (1d6–1/18–20)

Ranged mwk dagger +11 (1d4–1/19–20)

Special Attacks hidden strike +5d8/+5d4, startling appearance

TACTICS

Before Combat If confronted with peril in his social guise, Vencarlo does his best to retreat to a place of privacy and safety to assume his vigilante guise.

During Combat In his social guise, Vencarlo fights with his *+1 rapier* and does not use his lethal grace vigilante talent or his hidden strike ability; at these times, he fights defensively and attempts to escape to a place of hiding so he can become Blackjack. In his vigilante guise, Vencarlo is much more dangerous and aggressive. He begins fights with attempts to disarm his foes, but if reduced to fewer than 30 hit points, he uses Combat Expertise to bolster his Armor Class and focuses on simple attacks to defeat enemies.

Morale Vencarlo flees any battle where he's outnumbered more than three to one (unless he's attempting to right a great injustice). He also flees combat if reduced to fewer than 10 hit points, seeking out a place to hide and recover and thus live to fight another day.

STATISTICS

Str 11, **Dex** 16, **Con** 11, **Int** 15, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +10 (+12 disarm); **CMD** 21 (23 vs. disarm)

Feats Agile Maneuvers, Alertness, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Disarm, Toughness, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Acrobatics +21, Bluff +15 (+19 in social identity), Climb +20, Escape Artist +21, Intimidate +15 (+19 in social identity), Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Perception +16, Sense Motive +16 (+20 in social identity), Stealth +21, Swim +14

Languages Common, Elven, Varisian

SQ dual identity, exceptional wealth, seamless guise, social talents (gossip collector, great renown [Old Korvosa], renown, safe house [Orisini Academy], social grace [Bluff, Intimidate, Sense Motive]), vigilante specialization (stalker), vigilante talents (evasive, lethal grace, rogue talent [weapon training], rooftop infiltrator, up close and personal)

Gear *+2 slick leather armor*, *+2 keen rapier*, *+1 rapier*, mwk daggers (12), *amulet of proof against detection and location*, *bag of holding* (type I), *boots of elvenkind*, *cloak of elvenkind*, *gloves of swimming and climbing*, noble's outfit, gold signet ring (worth 250 gp), 34 pp, 29 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Exceptional Wealth (Ex) The value of Vencarlo's gear far exceeds that of most 10th-level NPCs—as a result, his CR is 1 higher than normal.

Vencarlo Orisini is a tall man of advanced years, yet he has a twinkle in his eye and a bounce to his step that hints at the inner fire of a man under half his age. He wears his salt-and-pepper hair pulled back tightly into a bravo's topknot. His eyes are a cast of deep green like the ocean after a storm. He is of old Chelish blood, and it shows. Orisini wears black leather gloves to ensure his touch doesn't rust the pommel of his shining rapier. In fact, he owns two similar rapiers: a *+1 rapier* and a *+2 keen rapier*. The latter is his true weapon, inherited from his mother, but he keeps it hidden along with the rest of his vigilante gear in his *bag of holding*. When he speaks of his rapier, even if it is merely his *+1 rapier*, he does so in tones normally reserved for a loved one. A successful DC 20 Perception check reveals that the two smaller fingers of his right hand never seem to bend—in fact, he's missing these two fingers, and his gloves contain short lengths of wood to disguise that fact. If asked about his fingers, Vencarlo pauses for a moment, then admits he lost them a while back in an unfortunate duel and says he'd rather speak no more on the subject. (In fact, he lost the fingers in a duel with one of his students, Grau—see page 33.)

Unknown to but a few, Vencarlo has long led a double life as a masked hero known to the people of Korvosa as Blackjack. Tales of Blackjack's moves against corrupt politicians, cruel nobles, and greedy merchants have been part of Korvosa's culture for 2 centuries, and although Blackjack hasn't made an appearance in the last decade, stories about him remain as popular as ever among the peasants. Because Blackjack has existed for centuries, few believe him to be a single person. The most popular rumor surrounding Blackjack is that his role has been filled by a series of human men, with one training a replacement each generation. This is, in fact, the case—Vencarlo is simply the latest Blackjack in the line.

Becoming Blackjack

In Part 1 of Chapter 3, the PCs have an opportunity to uncover Vencarlo's Blackjack gear, hidden in his home. If they miss this discovery, they learn about his secret soon enough, for Vencarlo is eager to find an heir to continue on as Blackjack. He doesn't care about the gender or race of his replacement; all he desires is that the new Blackjack must be capable of continuing the identity's swashbuckling traditions and as passionate about protecting Korvosa and her citizens from peril and corruption as he ever was.

The point in the campaign at which Vencarlo decides to pass on this torch is left up to you. If the PCs uncover his gear and confront him with it, he confesses the truth and proposes the transition of his secret persona to the new Blackjack at once. Otherwise, he likely waits until the transition between Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 to approach his chosen replacement among the PCs. He prefers to do so in private, so that the secret of the transition can be kept to as few as possible, but understands the bond of trust that an adventuring party forms. If his chosen PC wants to let the others know of this development, Vencarlo agrees as long as all of the PCs agree to keep the truth hidden—keeping the enigma of Blackjack as an ageless avenger is what's most important to Vencarlo.

As long as a PC wears Blackjack's cloak, mask, daggers, armor, boots, gloves, and rapier, he gains the Blackjack persona. With this persona comes the expectation of not only skill at wielding the weapons, but a fierce devotion to Korvosa's citizens. So long as a character does nothing to compromise these expectations, he gains a +10 circumstance bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate checks against Korvosan citizens of non-noble status (this includes Pilts Swastel, the Emperor of Old Korvosa).

Obviously, a PC with levels in the vigilante class makes the best choice for the new Blackjack, but a rogue, a swashbuckler, or even a fighter makes a good choice as well. Indeed, any dexterous character capable of wielding daggers and rapiers could fill the role. Once a PC accepts the role and Blackjack hands over the mantle, you should allow that PC's player the chance to rebuild his or her character, letting the player reallocate skill ranks, select different feats, and, if the character was a vigilante, select a new vigilante specialization and new vigilante talents as desired. This is a one-time opportunity; work with the player to ensure that the changes to his or her character reflect that PC's new role as Blackjack. If you feel this transition is too swift, consider having it take place over the course of a chapter, so that by the time the PCs infiltrate Deathhead Vault, the change is complete.

Once the role is passed, Vencarlo officially retires from the vigilante life. He won't go as far as to retrain his class levels, but barring some unforeseen development, he never again uses his vigilante talents, and seeks to live the rest of his life in his social guise. At your discretion, he may well come out of retirement in the future, particularly if the PC who took the role of Blackjack perishes or abuses the role, but given the choice, Vencarlo is eager to spend his days as a simple instructor of swordplay.

The continuing duties of his PC replacement are largely beyond the scope of this adventure, although there is one specific encounter at the start of Chapter 6 that's tailored to provide an opportunity for the new Blackjack to emerge onto the scene. If the new Blackjack is of an obviously different gender or race than the previous one, the city's reaction may be one of confusion for a time, but assuming the PC continues to play the role and honor the traditions Vencarlo has set, it won't be long before this new Blackjack becomes synonymous with the old.

APPENDIX 7

BESTIARY

Be it the sewers below, the Shingles above, or the streets sandwiched between, a surprising amount of dangerous beasts can be found in the city of Korvosa. Some of these foes are minor, like the pesky imps or house drakes that plague the city, but others, like the ravenous otyughs, can be dangerous to even a well-outfitted party. And when one ventures into regions like the Cinderlands, the Mushfens, or distant Belkzen, the opportunities to run afoul of monstrous menaces large and small only increase.

The following pages of this appendix present nine new monsters for use in Curse of the Crimson Throne. Some of these creatures, such as the house drake or the spiders, represent relatively minor threats that are quite common in Korvosa itself, while others, such as the chained spirit or the pharmakos, present exceedingly rare monsters that may not even exist elsewhere on Golarion at this time. Note that these monster entries use the universal monster rules, as presented in the appendices of the various *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* volumes.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

The following random encounter tables are provided to help you generate additional encounters for your game. The rate at which random encounters occur is up to you. The Curse of the Crimson Throne Adventure Path assumes a 20% chance of an encounter occurring during a day of travel or a night of rest, but you can adjust this rate as you see fit, increasing it if the party needs a few more encounters in order to gain some desperately needed experience points, or decreasing it if the number of combats per session begins to feel like a grind.

For all encounter tables taking place in Korvosa (sewers, streets, and the Shingles), remember to apply the city's current danger rating when rolling encounters. The danger rating will change as the campaign progresses, ranging from a bonus of +10 to +30, and as a result, not all of the encounters indicated on these tables will be possible results during some sessions. All of these tables are built so that the more dangerous encounters occur at the higher end of the number range, so if you wish to skew encounters to be less dangerous (as makes sense when Korvosa's streets are not plagued with sickness or shuddering under the trampling feet of rioters), feel free to halve the result of any d% roll before consulting the table.

Note also that random encounters in the large complex of Scarwall use their own rules and encounter table, as presented on page 272 of Chapter 5.

CINDERLANDS ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–5	1d6 venomous snakes	4	*Bestiary* 255
6–13	1 basilisk	5	*Bestiary* 29
14–18	1d4 giant scorpions	5	*Bestiary* 242
19–26	1d6 firepelt cougars	5	*Bestiary* 40
27–31	1d6 hippogriffs	5	*Bestiary 2* 156
32–36	1d6 horned spirestalkers*	5	*Bestiary 3* 290, 186
37–39	1d6 Ashwing gargoyles	8	See page 197
40–47	2d4 ankhegs	8	*Bestiary* 15
48–57	2d6 aurochs	8	*Bestiary* 174
58–60	1 roc	9	*Bestiary* 236
61–65	1d4 bulettes	9	*Bestiary* 39
66–68	1d4 chimeras	9	*Bestiary* 44
69–73	1 orc warband	9	*Monster Codex* 173
74–76	1d6 dragonnes	10	*Bestiary 3* 104
77–79	1d6 wyverns	10	*Bestiary* 282
80–81	1 ash giant	11	*Bestiary 3* 126
82–83	1d6 stone giants	11	*Bestiary* 151
84–87	1d8 hill giants	11	*Bestiary* 150
88–90	2d4 cave giants	11	*Bestiary 3* 127
91–97	4 Sklar-Quah thundercallers	11	See page 210
98–99	1 purple worm	12	*Bestiary* 230
100	1 adult red dragon	14	*Bestiary* 98

*A horned spirestalker is an advanced giant gecko.

HINTERLAND ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–5	1 wolverine	2	*Bestiary* 279
6–13	1d4 giant geckos	3	*Bestiary 3* 186
14–18	1d8 stirges	3	*Bestiary* 260
19–28	2d6 goblins	3	*Bestiary* 156
29–33	1d4 bugbears	4	*Bestiary* 38
34–41	1d4 firepelt cougars	4	*Bestiary* 40
42–46	1d6 ghouls	4	*Bestiary* 146
47–51	1 manticore	5	*Bestiary* 199
52–59	1d6 hippogriffs	5	*Bestiary 2* 156
60–69	1d8 wolves	5	*Bestiary* 278
70–85	1 bandit gang*	5	See footnote
86–88	1 ettin	6	*Bestiary* 130
89–91	1d4 harpies	6	*Bestiary* 172
92–94	1d6 ogres	6	*Bestiary* 220
95–96	1 bulette	7	*Bestiary* 39
97–98	1d4 trolls	7	*Bestiary* 268
99–100	1d4 hill giants	9	*Bestiary* 150

*A bandit gang consists of five cutpurses (*NPC Codex* 144) and a poacher (*NPC Codex* 129) as their leader.

HOLD OF BELKZEN ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–5	1d6 cockatrices	6	*Bestiary* 48
6–10	1 roc	9	*Bestiary* 236
11–30	1 orc warband	9	*Monster Codex* 173
31–35	1d6 bulettes	10	*Bestiary* 39
36–38	1 bhuta	11	*Bestiary 3* 41
39–58	2d6 orc scouts	11	*Monster Codex* 169
59–63	1d6 yrthaks	12	*Bestiary 2* 290
64–68	1d8 mastodons	13	*Bestiary* 128
69–73	2d6 arsinoitheriums	13	*Bestiary 2* 186
74–78	2d6 hill giants	13	*Bestiary* 150
79–83	2d6 troll brutes	13	*Monster Codex* 227
84–86	1 adult red dragon	14	*Bestiary* 98
87–91	1d4 athachs	14	*Bestiary 2* 33
92–96	1d6 ash giants	15	*Bestiary 3* 126
97–100	1 warsworn	16	*Bestiary 4* 272

JEGGARE RIVER ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–20	1 jigsaw shark	1	See page 23
21–35	2d4 drain spiders	1	See page 477
36–50	1 alligator (see crocodile)	2	*Bestiary* 51
51–55	1 bunyip	3	*Bestiary 2* 50
56–75	1d4 reefclaws	3	*Bestiary 2* 234
76–95	1d8 silt eels	3	See page 89
96–100	1 devilfish	4	*Bestiary 2* 88

KORVOSA SEWERS ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–5	1 spider swarm	1	*Bestiary* 258
6–8	1d4 dream spiders	1	See page 477
9–13	2d4 drain spiders	1	See page 477
14–16	1 alligator (see crocodile)	2	*Bestiary* 51
17–23	1 rat swarm	2	*Bestiary* 232
24–27	1 violet fungus	3	*Bestiary* 274
28–32	1d4 giant spiders	3	*Bestiary* 258
33–37	1d4 reefclaws	3	*Bestiary 2* 234
38–42	2d6 dire rats	3	*Bestiary* 232
43–45	2d6 goblins	3	*Bestiary* 156
46–53	1d8 cutpurses*	3	*NPC Codex* 144
54–56	1 centipede swarm	4	*Bestiary* 43
57–59	1 gray ooze	4	*Bestiary* 166
60–62	1d4 cave fishers	4	*Bestiary* 41
63–65	1d4 ratlings	4	*Bestiary 4* 226
66–70	1d6 ghouls	4	*Bestiary* 146
71–73	1 gibbering mouther	5	*Bestiary* 153
74–76	1 rat king	5	*Bestiary 4* 225
77–79	1d4 ettercaps	5	*Bestiary* 129
80–84	1d6 wererats*	5	*Bestiary* 197
85–92	1d4 charlatans*	5	*NPC Codex* 145
93–95	1 cytillipede	6	*Bestiary 5* 65
96–98	1d4 otyughs	6	*Bestiary* 223
99–106	1d6 derros*	6	*Bestiary* 70
107–109	1 chuul	7	*Bestiary* 46
110–112	1d4 bearded devils	7	*Bestiary* 73
113–117	1d4 freelance thieves*	8	*NPC Codex* 147
118–120	1 mohrg	8	*Bestiary* 208
121–123	1d4 ghoul stalkers	8	*Monster Codex* 82
124–125	1 vampire	9	*Bestiary* 270
126–130	1d4 Red Mantis assassins	10	See page 144

*If this encounter occurs during Chapter 2, there's a 25% chance these creatures are infected with blood veil.

KORVOSA SHINGLES ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–8	1 spider swarm	1	*Bestiary* 258
9–13	1d4 dream spiders	1	See page 477
14–23	2d4 shingle spiders	1	See page 477
24–31	1 bat swarm	2	*Bestiary* 30
32–36	1 hippogriff	2	*Bestiary 2* 156
37–46	1 rat swarm	2	*Bestiary* 232
47–58	1d8 cutpurses*	3	*NPC Codex* 144
59–63	1d8 stirges	3	*Bestiary* 260
64–68	2d6 dire rats	3	*Bestiary* 232
69–73	1d4 chokers	4	*Bestiary* 45
74–78	1d4 house drakes	4	See page 474
79–83	1d4 imps	4	*Bestiary* 78
84–86	1d4 ratlings	4	*Bestiary 4* 226
87–94	1d4 charlatans*	5	*NPC Codex* 145
95–99	1d4 dandasukas	7	*Bestiary 3* 225
100–109	1d4 freelance thieves*	8	*NPC Codex* 147
110–112	1 erinyes	8	*Bestiary* 75
113–115	1 bone devil	9	*Bestiary* 74
116–127	1d4 Red Mantis assassins	10	See page 144
128–130	1 barbed devil	11	*Bestiary* 72

*If this encounter occurs during Chapter 2, there's a 25% chance these creatures are infected with blood veil.

KORVOSA STREET ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–5	1d4 dream spiders	1	See page 477
6–13	1d6 dire rats	1	*Bestiary* 232
14–18	2d4 drain spiders	1	See page 477
19–21	1 rat swarm	2	*Bestiary* 232
22–26	1 accuser devil	3	*Bestiary 2* 84
27–29	1 ettercap	3	*Bestiary* 129
30–37	1d4 feral riding dogs	3	*Bestiary* 87
38–49	1d8 cutpurses*	3	*NPC Codex* 144
50–52	1 otyugh	4	*Bestiary* 223
53–57	1d4 house drakes	4	See page 474
58–62	1d4 imps	4	See page 78
63–67	1d4 wererats	4	*Bestiary* 197
68–77	1d4 charlatans*	5	*NPC Codex* 145
78–87	1d8 Gray Maiden footsoldiers	6	See page 74
88–97	1d8 Queen's Physicians	6	See page 86
98–102	1d4 dandasukas	7	*Bestiary 3* 225
103–107	1 erinyes	8	*Bestiary* 75
108–115	1d4 freelance thieves*	8	*NPC Codex* 147
116–123	1d6 Gray Maiden guards	9	See page 247
124–130	1d4 Red Mantis assassins	10	See page 144

*If this encounter occurs during Chapter 2, there's a 25% chance these creatures are infected with blood veil.

MUSHFENS ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1–20	1 goliath spider	11	*Bestiary 4* 252
21–35	1d4 dire crocodiles	11	*Bestiary* 51
36–40	1d4 mobogos	12	*Bestiary 3* 194
41–45	1 froghemoth	13	*Bestiary* 136
46–55	1 viper vine	13	*Bestiary 2* 279
56–65	1d4 hezrous	13	*Bestiary* 62
66–80	1d8 boggard champions	14	See page 381
81–90	2d6 marsh giants	14	*Bestiary 2* 129
91–95	1d6 omox demons	15	*Bestiary 2* 79
96–100	1 ancient black dragon	16	*Bestiary* 93

AKARUZUG

This stony guardian has been sculpted in the shape of a grim, horned angel, and a crucified corpse has been affixed to its chest.

AKARUZUG **CR 15**

XP 51,200

LE Large construct

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +24

Aura *unhallow* (40 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 16, flat-footed 27 (+4 deflection, +3 Dex, +14 natural, –1 size)

hp 220 (20d10+110)

Fort +8, **Ref** +11, **Will** +10

Defensive Abilities soul shield; **DR** 15/bludgeoning and good; **Immune** construct traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 40 ft. (perfect)

Melee 2 claws +27 (2d6+8/19–20), gore +27 (2d8+8/19–20), 2 wings +22 (1d8+4)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks soul steal

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th; concentration +24)

Constant—*unhallow*

1/day—soul slave

STATISTICS

Str 26, **Dex** 17, **Con** —, **Int** 15, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +20; **CMB** +29; **CMD** 46

Feats Ability Focus (soul steal), Blinding Critical, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (claws), Improved Critical (gore), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack

Skills Fly +32, Knowledge (religion) +22, Perception +24, Sense Motive +24

Languages Infernal

SQ soul engine

ECOLOGY

Environment any ruins

Organization solitary

Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Soul Engine (Su) An akaruzug draws the energy it requires to function from a living creature crucified upon its frame. An active akaruzug (or another creature working with an inactive akaruzug) can spend 1 minute to bind a helpless or willing creature to the construct. Once the victim is restrained, the akaruzug can attempt to draw the creature's soul into it once per round as a free action—the victim can resist with a successful DC 24 Will save. On a failure, the victim dies and the akaruzug becomes active. If the body crucified upon an active akaruzug is removed, the soul within the construct is freed and the akaruzug deactivates after 1d4 rounds. An akaruzug's victim cannot be resurrected while its soul is trapped within the construct, but destroying an akaruzug releases a trapped soul. While an akaruzug is active, attacks and effects directed specifically at the victim crucified to the akaruzug treat the attack or effect as if it targeted the akaruzug instead. However, a creature can attempt to remove a crucified body from the construct, but doing so first requires the creature to successfully pin the akaruzug. Once this occurs, the creature can attempt a combat maneuver check to wrench the body free. On a success, the corpse is removed and the akaruzug deactivates in 1d4 rounds. A deactivated akaruzug can take no action other than to attempt to draw in the soul of a creature crucified on its body to reactivate itself. It does not have an Intelligence score while deactivated, nor does it gain the benefit of any of its feats or skill ranks. It can't fly or move at all, and loses all benefits of its soul shield defensive ability. It retains its lawful evil alignment while deactivated. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Soul Shield (Ex) As long as an akaruzug is active, it gains bonus hit points equal to its Charisma modifier × its Hit Dice (80 hit points for a typical akaruzug), and gains a deflection bonus equal to its Charisma modifier to its Armor Class (+4 for a typical akaruzug).

Soul Slave (Sp) Using a trapped soul, an akaruzug can manifest a ghostly representation of its victim to attack its enemies. A soul slave appears as the akaruzug's victim did in life and wields a weapon favored by that individual, but otherwise functions as per *spiritual ally*[APG] cast by a 20th-level caster (and, as such, has an attack of +24/+19/+14/+9 and deals 1d10+5 points of force damage on a hit).

Soul Steal (Su) An akaruzug can draw additional soul energy into itself. Once every 1d4 rounds, the construct can unleash a blast of soul essence that seeks to flense the life force of any living creature within a 20-foot burst. Any living creature in this area must succeed at a DC 24 Fortitude save or gain 1d4 negative levels. A victim can remove those negative levels 24 hours later with a successful DC 24 Fortitude save. Each time an akaruzug successfully uses this ability, it regains a number of hit points equal to 5 times the number of creatures successfully affected by soul steal (regardless of how many negative levels any one creature suffers). The save DC is Charisma-based.

Unhallow (Sp) An akaruzug emanates a 40-foot aura of unholy energy, as per *unhallow*. The construct's creator determines what, if any, additional spell effects are tied to the akaruzug's unhallow aura at the time of its creation. The construct benefits from any spell effects tied to its *unhallow* aura. Common choices are *darkness*, *detect good*, *freedom of movement*, and *invisibility purge*. If this effect is dispelled and the akaruzug uses the spell-like ability to reactivate the effect, it also reactivates the associated spell effect (if any) set by its creator.

Akaruzugs are blasphemous constructs coveted by those who revel in the torment of their victims. Crafted in the appearance of grim, towering angels and creatures of warped beauty, these creations stand in mockery of light, life, and all that is good. By their very existence—powered by souls trapped in torment—they spread death and despair.

Most akaruzugs are 15 feet tall or larger, and weigh upward of 3 tons, depending on the materials used in their creation.

Ecology

To create an akaruzug, a powerful warrior is entombed alive within a massive sculpture of lead, granite, or iron. As the statue's shape is refined and empowered—a process involving the efforts of a skilled artisan and a magic-user adept at channeling diabolical powers—the warrior inside slowly expires, her weakening screams and futile struggles resounding through the sculpture. The statue is then bathed in hellfire, a process that reduces the body inside into a substance similar to packed ash. These remains and the magic woven over the construct prevent the escape of the lingering soul within. At this point, the akaruzug's "soul engine" is complete, but the construct still requires further spirit energy to become fully active. A second infusion of stolen life force activates the akaruzug, causing it to rise into the air and spread its profane aura.

With their ominous shapes, their unsettling abilities, and the corpse displayed upon their breasts, akaruzugs are often used as terrifying messengers, blasphemous retaliations against those who would stand against the constructs' creator. When the Taldan knight Arstlan besieged the tower of Vodcross—the home of the cruel wizard Cheseive, Poison Lady of Ganholm—he was not heard from for weeks. He reemerged crucified upon the breast of a serpent-winged akaruzug bearing his face. The thing laid waste to Ganholm, and hovered soundlessly above the ruins for 13 years before finally being felled by the adventurers known as the Order of Vermilion.

Habitat and Society

Even though they have intellects, akaruzugs have no society of their own. They are used to spread the dark works of devils and further diabolical agendas. Due to the cruelty required to create an akaruzug, becoming the master of one of these fiendish creations is in itself a damning act. As the plans for creating these creatures are well documented in the libraries of Hell, conniving devils often assure that these formulas fall into the hands of cruel, ambitious, and desperate spellcasters in answer to their vile wishes.

Construction

An akaruzug is created from a 15-foot-tall hollow statue of a fallen angel. More than 6,000 pounds of stone and iron are used in its creation, along with rare infernal admixtures and agents costing at least 15,000 gp.

AKARUZUG

CL 15th; **Price** 160,000 gp

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Construct, *enervation*, *magic jar*, *unhallow*, willing or helpless humanoid sacrifice, creator must be caster level 15th; **Skill** Craft (armor) or Craft (sculpture) DC 24; **Cost** 87,500 gp

CHAINED SPIRIT

This humanoid figure's body fades into mist below the hips, while its upper, ghostly torso is bound in lengths of writhing chains.

CHAINED SPIRIT **CR 14**

XP 38,400

LE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., spectral sight, spiritsense; Perception +30

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 30, flat-footed 26 (+8 deflection, +4 Dex, +8 profane)

hp 200 (16d8+128); fast healing 20

Fort +13, **Ref** +11, **Will** +17

Defensive Abilities incorporeal, spirit anchor; **Immune** positive energy, undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 60 ft. (perfect)

Melee incorporeal touch +17 (1d6 Charisma drain), 4 chains +23 (2d4+7/19–20 plus 1 Charisma drain)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (30 ft. with chains)

Special Attacks chain spirit, chains, Charisma drain, create spawn

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 19, **Con** —, **Int** 15, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 27

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 42

Feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (chain), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (incorporeal touch)

Skills Bluff +24, Diplomacy +24, Fly +31, Knowledge (history) +18, Perception +30, Stealth +23

Languages Common, Necril

SQ spectral bindings

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary plus up to 4 spirit anchors

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Chain Spirit (Su) As a standard action once per day, a chained spirit can attempt to chain any evil-aligned corporeal creature with an Intelligence score of 3 or higher that it can detect via spiritsense; it need not have line of sight or line of effect to such a creature. The targeted evil creature to must succeed at a DC 25 Will save or take 1d8 points of Charisma drain. On each successful attack, the chained spirit gains 5 temporary hit points. Any creature targeted by this ability is immediately aware of some malevolence attempting to take control of it. If a creature's Charisma score is drained to 0 by this attack, its fate depends on its Hit Dice. If the victim has half the Hit Dice or fewer of the chained spirit (8 Hit Dice for most chained spirits), it is slain by the attack. If the victim has more than 8 Hit Dice, it becomes a spirit anchor linked to the chained spirit (see below). Even though a chained spirit can use this ability once per day, it can create only one spirit anchor per week. In addition, a chained spirit can use this ability only if it currently has three or fewer spirit anchors, and it can never have more than four spirit anchors. A creature with more than half the chained spirit's Hit Dice whose Charisma score is drained to 0 by this attack and who doesn't become a spirit anchor is merely driven unconscious, as per normal for catastrophic Charisma drain. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Chains (Su) Numerous chains extend from a chained spirit. A number of these (one for every spirit anchor currently tethered to the chained spirit) are corporeal and can make melee attacks. These corporeal chains are treated as evil, magical, *ghost touch* weapons and deal bludgeoning damage in addition to Charisma drain. Each chain is treated as if wielded one-handed by a creature with a Strength score of 25. A sundered chain automatically reforms 1 round later.

Charisma Drain (Su) Any creature hit by a chained spirit's chains or incorporeal touch attack must succeed at a DC 25 Will save or take Charisma drain (1 point if struck by a chain, or 1d6 points if struck by a touch attack). The save DC is Charisma-based.

Create Spawn (Su) Any humanoid slain by a chained spirit becomes a spectre in 1d4 rounds. These spawn are under the command of the chained spirit that created them and remain enslaved until its death. They don't have any of the abilities they had in life.

Spectral Bindings (Su) A chained spirit is extremely mobile, with only one major hindrance: no matter how far it moves on its turn, as long as it has at least one spirit anchor, it automatically returns to its starting place when its turn ends. This immediate return does not count as an action and does not provoke attacks of opportunity, as the spirit simply reappears back in its original position. In essence, the chained spirit is eternally confined to a single square throughout its existence except the distance it can travel in a single round before returning to its starting position. If another creature occupies the space it has left, that creature is shunted to the closest available square. If a solid object occupies its starting square, the spirit's incorporeal nature allows it to return regardless. Even a force effect cannot thwart it as it simply reappears within the square, though if that square is surrounded by a force effect with no exit, the chained spirit is effectively trapped.

Spectral Sight (Su) A chained spirit can see and hear through the senses of any of its spirit anchors whenever it wishes, just as if it were using both effects of *clairaudience/clairvoyance*.

Spiritsense (Su) A chained spirit can detect both the living and the undead. It can detect living creatures within 100 feet, just as if it had blindsight. It can also sense the dead, as per *detect undead*, to a range of 500 feet.

A chained spirit is the tormented soul of one who was charged, cursed, or honor-bound to guard a certain place or object, only to be slain in the course of such duty. Such a dishonored spirit returns as a misty approximation of its living form, except now burdened by loops of constricting chains and inescapable locks, all representing its bonds of duty. Reaching out with these chains, these tormented undead claim allies, binding other unwilling sentinels to the same charge with which they are eternally cursed.

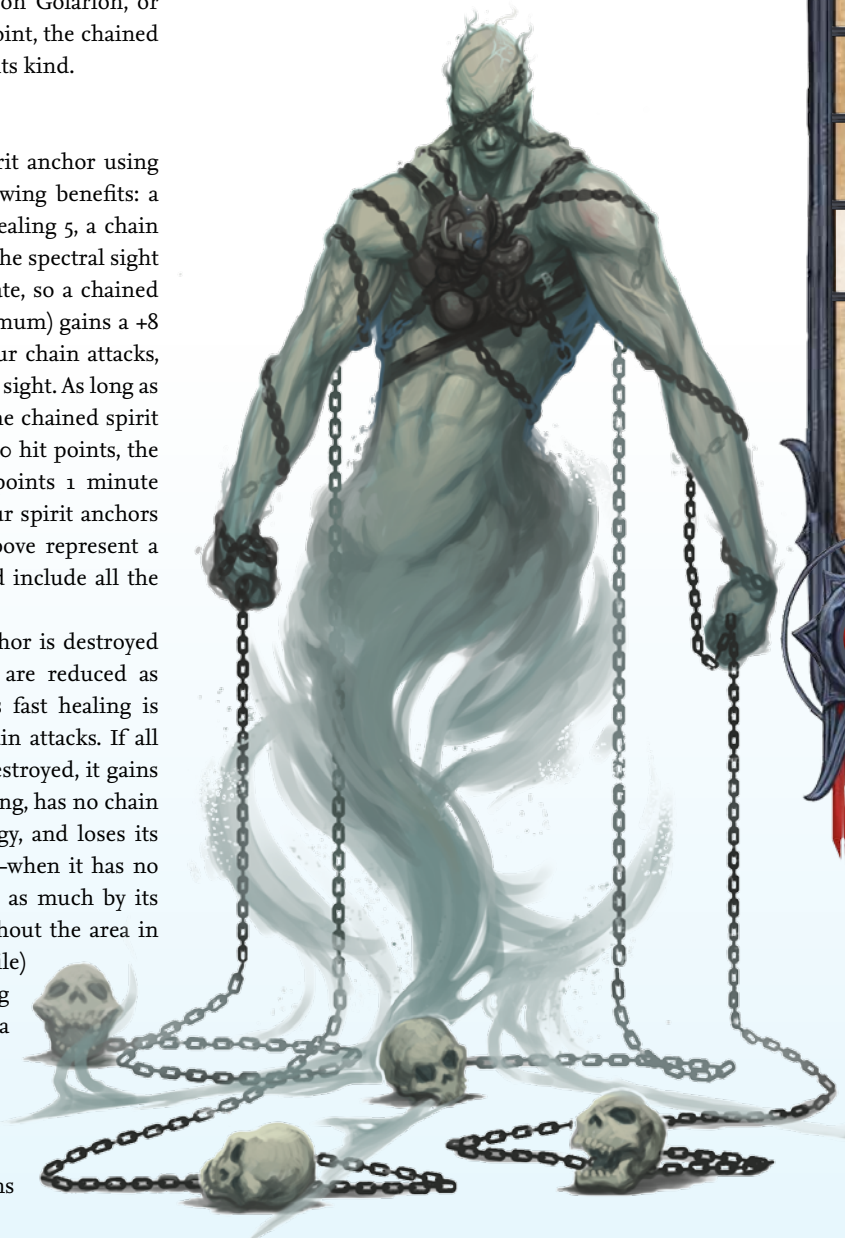
Among the rarest known manifestations of undead, the chained spirit can exist only in an area of extreme misery combined with a potent source of necromantic energy. In the case of Scarwall, the castle's history of violence, combined with the vengeful attention of Zon-Kuthon, made the castle the perfect cradle for the generation of a chained spirit. Others may well exist on Golarion, or could yet come to manifest, but at this point, the chained spirit of Scarwall may be the only one of its kind.

Spirit Anchors

Each time a chained spirit creates a spirit anchor using its chain spirit ability, it gains the following benefits: a +2 profane bonus to Armor Class, fast healing 5, a chain attack, immunity to positive energy, and the spectral sight ability. These benefits stack as appropriate, so a chained spirit with four spirit anchors (the maximum) gains a +8 profane bonus to AC, fast healing 20, four chain attacks, immunity to positive energy, and spectral sight. As long as at least one of its spirit anchors exists, the chained spirit itself cannot be destroyed. If reduced to 0 hit points, the chained spirit reappears with full hit points 1 minute later. A chained spirit can have up to four spirit anchors at any one time. The stats presented above represent a chain spirit with four spirit anchors and include all the associated benefits.

Losing a Spirit Anchor: If a spirit anchor is destroyed or released, a chained spirit's benefits are reduced as appropriate: its AC is reduced by 2, its fast healing is reduced by 5, and it loses one of its chain attacks. If all of a chained spirit's spirit anchors are destroyed, it gains no profane bonus to AC, has no fast healing, has no chain attacks, can be harmed by positive energy, and loses its spectral sight. It does gain one benefit—when it has no spirit anchors, it is no longer restricted as much by its spectral bindings, and can move throughout the area in which it is bound (up to a radius of 1 mile) without being returned to its starting point at the end of a round. Each time a spirit anchor is destroyed or killed, the chained spirit loses its chain spirit ability for 24 hours.

Spirit Anchor Effects: A creature that becomes a spirit anchor instantly regains any Charisma drained by the chained spirit to which it is tethered. It is also bound to the location it was at when it was reduced to 0 Charisma by the chained spirit. Spirit anchors typically cannot move farther than 100 feet from this spot, but in the cases of creatures that require wider mobility to fulfill their physical needs, a chained spirit can relax its grip, allowing them to range farther afield. However, the chained spirit can employ a compulsion similar to *geas/quest* at will, forcing such a spirit anchor to return to its anchor spot. A spirit anchor that ignores the compulsion takes 1d6 points of Charisma damage per day until it returns. The death of the spirit anchor, or the spells *dispel evil*, *dispel law*, *freedom*, *miracle*, or *wish*, can release a spirit anchor. Beyond this restraint, a chained spirit holds no special control over its spirit anchors.



DANSE MACABRE

Dozens of ghostly figures swirl and cavort, floating through the air as they follow the steps of an ancient, rhythmic dance—seemingly keeping time with the ebb and flow of life itself. Amid this eerie crowd of dancing specters looms a dark-cloaked figure wielding a scythe.

DANSE MACABRE **CR 14**

XP 38,400

NE Large undead (incorporeal)

Init +13; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., lifesense 60 ft.; Perception +29

Aura dance of death (40 ft., DC 27)

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 29, flat-footed 19 (+10 deflection, +9 Dex, +1 dodge, –1 size)

hp 203 (14d8+140)

Fort +14, **Ref** +13, **Will** +17

Defensive Abilities incorporeal, deathless; channel resistance +4; **Immune** cold, undead traits; **SR** 25

OFFENSE

Speed fly 40 ft. (perfect)

Melee incorporeal scythe +18/+13 touch (2d6/×4 plus 1d6 Constitution drain)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 28, **Con** —, **Int** 8, **Wis** 22, **Cha** 30

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 41

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Skill Focus (Perception), Spring Attack

Skills Fly +32, Perception +29, Sense Motive +23

Languages Common, Necril

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary

Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Dance of Death (Su) A danse macabre is constantly surrounded by a 40-foot aura known as the dance of death, an endless gala of dancing spectral figures. Any living creature that enters the area of the dance of death must attempt a DC 27 Will save. On a failed save, the victim joins the ghostly dancers, takes 1d4 points of Constitution drain, and is affected as per *irresistible dance* (CL 14th). A creature can attempt a new DC 27 Will save at the end of its turn to escape from the effects of a dance of death; otherwise, these effects persist for as long as the victim remains within the aura. The Constitution drain effect only occurs, however, after the initial failed saving throw. As victims cannot willingly move from the square in which they dance, the dance's effects end when the danse macabre moves to a point where the victim is no longer within its aura, the danse macabre is destroyed, or if the victim is physically removed from the area. A victim who succeeds at a save (whether from the original exposure or at a later point to successfully escape the effect) is immune to the dance of death of the same danse macabre for 24 hours. Dance of death is a visual, sonic, mind-affecting compulsion effect, and blindness or deafness can provide protection from the effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Deathless (Su) As a manifestation of death incarnate, a danse macabre is not itself subject to permanent destruction. If reduced to 0 hit points, it vanishes, only to rejuvenate at full hit points in 1d4 days. Only by destroying the creature and then casting *hallow* to consecrate the site it manifested upon prevents the undead monster's reappearance.

Incorporeal Scythe (Su) A danse macabre wields an incorporeal scythe in combat that leaves deep and horrific wounds on any creature it strikes. Attacks made with this scythe are touch attacks and deal slashing damage, but are not modified by any of the monster's ability scores. A creature hit by a danse macabre's incorporeal scythe attack must succeed at a DC 23 Fortitude save or take 1d6 points of Constitution drain. Each time a danse macabre drains Constitution from a target, the danse macabre regains 5 hit points, regardless of the total number of Constitution points drained by the attack. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Lifesense (Su) A danse macabre notices and locates living creatures within 60 feet, just as if it had the blindsight ability. It also senses the strength of life forces automatically, as per *deathwatch*.

Danse macabres are the embodiment of the inevitability of death. They represent the ultimate equalizer of station, revealing in their dance of death the futility of all life. It has been said that, in the end, all mortal beings must face the fateful piper and dance to its tune. If such claims are true, then surely the danse macabre is the personification of such a dreadful doom.

Danse macabres typically manifest as looming, black-cloaked skeletons, although they may appear in other sinister forms depending on personifications of death unique to the cultures near where they manifest, such as a fiery pillar, a pale child, or a man in a white mask. The crowd of dancing souls that surround these 10-foot-tall specters typically do little to dispel their ominous aura. While these ghostly images are entirely insubstantial and harmless, they also emanate faint, haunting music, as if a violin-led orchestra is playing along. When a victim succumbs to the creature's dance of death, the music becomes nearly deafening and the spectral figures appear almost real. The dancers and music cannot be interacted with, but visibly and audibly mark the boundaries of the danse macabre's dance of death aura.

Ecology

As undead creatures, danse macabres require nothing from their environments and contribute nothing in return. Their very presence typically suggests the murder of large numbers of creatures and, upon their horrifying manifestations, the deaths of others that happen too near. Yet a danse macabre will not simply form on the ruins of any battlefield or on the site of any mass murder. Instead, these malevolent spirits appear in areas where those who were slaughtered did not expect their deaths until, perhaps, the very last moment. At other times, a danse macabre (such as the one encountered in the ruins of Scarwall) manifests at a much later date in an area where revelry and sadism commingled, triggered into being long after those who died by a singularly potent pulse of necromantic energy or the vengeful thrashings of a bitter and angry god.

Habitat and Society

A danse macabre is a solitary creature that seeks nothing other than to call others to join its eternal celebration of the inevitable. It manifests only in locations tainted by untimely deaths—the sites of countless violent executions, estates overrun by deadly plagues, or battlefields where mass slaughters took place. In all of these locations, hundreds, if not thousands, of victims met their fates, often in rapid succession. None claim to know what terrible death count or measurement of psychic trauma is required to spawn a danse macabre, and indeed, some of the most gore-soaked sites on Golarion have never led to one of these beings' manifestations. An element of grim irony or communal revenge tends to inspire such hauntings, making it impossible to predict what catastrophe or massacre might cause one to appear.

Some scholars of the undead suggest that danse macabres harbor no hatred for the living, but have a natural drive to bring mortals to their final state on an accelerated schedule. Witnesses of danse macabres, however, tend to disagree, and the appearance of a danse macabre can quickly depopulate a location via both its depredations and the flight of any survivors. Fortunately, these morbid shades rarely move far from the sites of their initial manifestations, leading to numerous tales of haunted halls where the dead endlessly dance in their eternal revel.

Dance of Death

The danse macabre is perhaps the only fantasy creature to come with its own soundtrack. The best-known work of French composer Camille Saint-Saëns, *Danse macabre* is an orchestral retelling of a folktale wherein Death appears at midnight on Halloween, summoning skeletons to dance to his fiddle playing. This story was captured in the late 1800s by Henri Cazalis in the poem "Égalité, Fraternité..."

Zig, zig, zig, Death in a cadence,
Striking with his heel a tomb,
Death at midnight plays a dance-tune,
Zig, zig, zig, on his violin.
The winter wind blows and the night is dark;
Moans are heard in the linden trees.
Through the gloom, white skeletons pass,
Running and leaping in their shrouds.
Zig, zig, zig, each one is frisking,
The bones of the dancers are heard to crack—
But hist! of a sudden they quit the round,
They push forward, they fly; the cock has crowed.

HAVERO

An immense mass of flesh and a tangle of impossibly long tentacles, this entity boggles the mind with its immensity.

HAVERO **CR 24**

XP 1,228,800

NE Colossal aberration

Init +5; **Senses** all-around vision, blindsense 120 ft., see in darkness; Perception +47

DEFENSE

AC 43, touch 3, flat-footed 42 (+1 Dex, +40 natural, –8 size)

hp 527 (34d8+374)

Fort +24, **Ref** +14, Will +26

Defensive Abilities alien mind; **DR** 20/—; **Immune** cold, mind-affecting effects; **Resist** acid 30, electricity 30, fire 30; **SR** 35

Weaknesses light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (clumsy)

Melee 6 tentacles +34 (2d6+17/19–20 plus special)

Space 60 ft.; **Reach** 120 ft.

Special Attacks appendages

STATISTICS

Str 45, **Dex** 12, **Con** 32, **Int** 5, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 30

Base Atk +25; **CMB** +50 (+52 bull rush, +54 sunder); **CMD** 61 (63 vs. bull rush, 63 vs. sunder)

Feats Awesome Blow, Critical Focus, Great Fortitude, Greater Sunder, Hover, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (tentacle), Improved Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Lightning Reflexes, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Fly), Skill Focus (Perception), Staggering Critical

Skills Fly +11, Perception +47; **Racial Modifiers** +16 Perception

Languages telepathic savant

SQ no breath

ECOLOGY

Environment any (outer space)

Organization solitary

Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Alien Mind (Ex) Anyone who attempts to link minds with a havero (such as via *detect thoughts* or telepathy) risks the trauma associated with tapping into its raw alien consciousness. A character who attempts this must succeed at a DC 37 Will save or suffer the effects of *feeblemind* (CL 20th). The save DC is Charisma-based.

Appendages (Su) As a swift action, a havero can shape any or all of its 14 squirming tentacles into a variety of specialized appendages for various purposes. The options for tentacles a havero has at its disposal are listed below (at your discretion, some haveros may have developed even more unique or specialized tentacle options beyond these). An option's cost in transformation points (TP) is listed in parentheses. The total cost of a havero's tentacles can't exceed 20 TP (note that an ocular tentacle costs 0 TP). Damage listed for each tentacle is the base damage before the havero's Strength modifier is applied. A havero's appendages always function as primary attacks. The havero detailed above has devoted 18 TP to six constrictor tentacles, leaving the remaining eight to function as ocular tentacles. The save DCs for specialized appendage attacks are Constitution-based.

Acid Spewer (5 TP): The tentacle is tipped with a fluid-seeping pucker that cannot make melee attacks, but does grant the havero the ability to spray acid in a 180-foot line (8d6 acid damage, Reflex DC 38 half).

Armor Plated (3 TP): The tentacle is plated in thick scales and wraps around the havero's body, increasing its natural armor bonus by 2 per armor-plated tentacle. An armor-plated tentacle cannot attack.

Constrictor (3 TP): The tentacle is thick and covered with suckers; it deals 2d6 points of bludgeoning damage and has the grab and constrict (2d6) abilities.

Ghost (8 TP): The tentacle becomes insubstantial. It resolves attacks as touch attacks, and deals 6d6 points of negative energy damage on a hit; this damage is modified by the havero's Charisma modifier (+10 for a typical havero) but not by its Strength modifier. A creature damaged by a ghost tentacle must succeed at a DC 38 Fortitude save or take 1d6 points of Charisma drain.

Ocular (0 TP): The tentacle is studded with bulging eyes; it cannot attack, but grants the havero all-around vision and a +2 bonus on all Perception checks. The bonuses on Perception checks stack with those granted by other ocular tentacles. A blind havero that grows an ocular tentacle is no longer blind (although this doesn't grant immunity to additional blindness effects).

Poison Stinger (5 TP): The tentacle is tipped with a poisonous stinger that deals 4d6 points of piercing damage and injects venom on a successful hit. Poison stinger—injury; *save* Fort DC 38; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d6 Wisdom drain; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Slasher (3 TP): The tentacle has sharp talons; it deals 2d6 points of piercing and slashing damage and 2d6 bleed.

Vorpal (12 TP): The tentacle ends in a supernaturally sharp pincer that deals 6d6 points of slashing damage on a successful hit, has a 18–20 critical threat range, and has the *vorpal* weapon special ability.

Telepathic Savant (Su) A havero can transmit vague impressions of its thoughts across limitless distances to any creature it is aware of, including those that interact with its tentacles on distant worlds. A havero doesn't communicate using language and its thoughts are limited and often unintelligible to mortal minds, but it can certainly impart powerful basic emotions and primal urges. A havero contacting a creature using this ability does not subject the target to its alien mind.

The word "havero" has its roots in ancient Thassilonian, roughly translating into "smothering arms." The existence of haveros was first confirmed, accidentally, through divination magic used by stargazers of ancient Thassilon. Seeking larger, more potent beasts to conjure and command, Thassilonian sages among the order known as the Thrallkeepers gradually uncovered a massive creature capable of spawning unlimited clawed horrors that dwelled far beyond the range of most remote viewing devices. Intrigued by a new potential source of power buried somewhere in the night sky, the Thrallkeepers engaged in a foolish race to be the first to secure a havero.

Horrifically, haveros are not the mere imaginings of those sages who chronicle the heavens. They are entities of pure darkness, and on terrible occasions a lone havero has been drawn to Golarion, putting all the races of the world into reach of its ruinous arms.

Ecology

Although their thought processes are too alien to permit interpretation, haveros are decidedly malevolent. A havero's telepathy is theoretically limitless in range, although when sending its mind across galaxies, its mental projections require considerable time to travel. The Thrallkeepers theorized that the accidental interception of haveros' stray thoughts might be a cause for some forms of madness and inexplicable genius. Some scholars have even hypothesized that the ancient Thrallkeepers were able to transport haveros to Golarion not because of their own discoveries, but because the haveros quietly sent them the necessary ideas for how they might accomplish the feat.

Habitat and Society

An ancient tome of starry observations and occult lore titled *On Verified Madness* refers to the haveros' home as the farthest corner of the Dark Tapestry. Haveros have no natural niche on Golarion and they exist there only due to the machinations of those who once had both the power and the recklessness to transport them to this world.

Havero Tentacle

A single havero has the potential to overwhelm even experienced PCs. GMs who wish to model the threat of a havero without killing the entire adventuring party can use the statistics below for a lone havero tentacle, perhaps poking through an interdimensional portal or snaking up from a deep canyon. However, destroying a single one—or even a handful—of the havero's tentacles doesn't kill the horror, but only buys the PCs enough time to escape and live to see another day.

HAVERO TENTACLE **CR 6**

XP 2,400

NE Large aberration

Init +1; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft.; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 18 (+1 Dex, +9 natural, –1 size)

hp 66 (7d8+35)

Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +10

DR 5/slashing; **Immune** cold, mind-affecting effects, poison, vision-based effects; **Resist** acid 10, fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 0 ft.

Melee tentacle +13 (2d6+13 plus grab)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 60 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (2d6+9)

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 12, **Con** 20, **Int** —, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 26

SQ no breath

HOUSE DRAKE

The eyes of this purple-scaled dragon glint with a mischievous intelligence and the sting of its tail has a silvery sheen.

HOUSE DRAKE **CR 2**

XP 600

CG Tiny dragon

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent, *see invisibility*; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +2 natural, +2 size)

hp 19 (2d12+6)

Fort +6, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7

Defensive Abilities ferocious will; **Immune** paralysis, sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (good)

Melee bite +6 (1d4), sting +6 (1d4)

Space 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft. (5 ft. with tail)

Special Attacks breath weapon, silver strike

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +5)

Constant—*see invisibility*

3/day—*cure light wounds*

1/day—*alarm* (CL 12th), *obscuring mist*

STATISTICS

Str 11, **Dex** 15, **Con** 17, **Int** 12, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 12

Feats Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +4, Fly +15, Knowledge (local) +6, Perception +7, Sense Motive +7, Stealth +15, Survival +7

Languages Common, Draconic, Infernal

ECOLOGY

Environment urban (Korvosa)

Organization solitary, pair, or clutch (3–9)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Breath Weapon (Su) Up to three times per day and no more than once every 1d4 rounds, a house drake can breathe out a small cloud of silver mist in a 10-foot cone. All creatures in this area must succeed at a DC 14 Will save or be confused for 1 round. This is a mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Ferocious Will (Ex) House drakes have a stubborn streak of fierce independence and gain a +2 racial bonus on Will saves (this bonus is included in the stats above). In addition, the first time in a day that a house drake successfully saves against a mind-affecting spell or spell-like ability, the caster of the spell must succeed at a DC 13 Will save or be staggered for 1 round by a blast of magical, mental feedback. This feedback is a mind-affecting effect, and the save DC is Charisma-based.

Silver Strike (Ex) All of a house drake's natural attacks are treated as being silver for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction.

The Korvosan house drake is not a true drake, but rather an unusual local variant of the more common pseudodragon—an example of how a creature placed under extreme conditions might adapt and evolve to grow stronger. In this case, house drakes are the result of brutal and violent predations upon their pseudodragon ancestors by Korvosa's imps, who began to become a true infestation in the early years after the Acadamae was founded and its students began accidently releasing the little devils into the urban wilds after failing to claim them as familiars. These imps found Korvosa's indigenous pseudodragons to be a delightful (and delicious) population to torment, for there was little that the pseudodragons could do against an imp's defenses.

It wasn't long before the most able, wise, and stubborn of the city's pseudodragons began fighting back, chewing on silver coins to build up traces of the metal in their teeth and stings to be able to penetrate their enemy's supernatural skin, focusing their studies on magic to see through impish invisibility and recover from the constant fights, and gorging on fat dream spiders (see page 477) to develop a befuddling breath weapon. The evolution of the pseudodragon into the house drake took only a few generations, quickly enough that many scholars suspect the outside influence of a mysterious patron of some supernatural source.

A 7th-level chaotic good spellcaster with the Improved Familiar feat can gain a house drake as a familiar.

PHARMAKOS

The body of this monstrous creature is a foul mass of sore-covered flesh, a blubbery worm with the upper torso of a deformed man.

PHARMAKOS **CR 15**

XP 51,200

NE Gargantuan aberration (aquatic)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *see invisibility*, tremorsense 120 ft.; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 5, flat-footed 30 (–1 Dex, +25 natural, –4 size)

hp 232 (16d8+160)

Fort +15, **Ref** +6, **Will** +10

DR 10/magic and slashing; **Immune** acid, death effects, mind-affecting effects, pain, paralysis, poison; **Resist** cold 10; **SR** 26

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 40 ft.; *air walk*

Melee 2 claws +24 (3d6+16/19–20 plus pain), bite +24 (2d6+16 plus pain)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.

Special Attacks breath weapon, pain

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th; concentration +13)

Constant—*air walk*, *see invisibility*

STATISTICS

Str 43, **Dex** 8, **Con** 30, **Int** 5, **Wis** 7, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +32 (+34 bull rush); **CMD** 41 (43 vs. bull rush)

Feats Ability Focus (pain), Awesome Blow, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack

Skills Perception +9, Swim +35

Languages Common

SQ amphibious, compression, curse of eternal torment, no breath

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Breath Weapon (Su) Once every 1d4 rounds as a standard action, a pharmakos is able to spew a 50-foot cone of acidic blood, dealing 12d6 points of acid damage and imposing the nauseated condition for 1d4 rounds. A successful DC 28 Reflex save halves the acid damage and negates the nauseated condition. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Curse of Eternal Torment (Su) A pharmakos's abhorrent form is the result of a powerful curse, usually inflicted by a god. This curse grants immortality; a pharmakos does not need to eat, drink, or breath to survive, and cannot die of old age—nor can a pharmakos willingly end its own life. This curse also constantly racks the pharmakos with agony; the creature endures this torment to an extent that all other sources of pain are meaningless (including those caused by magical effects such as a *symbol of pain*).

Pain (Su) Any creature struck by a pharmakos's claw or bite becomes racked with waves of pain. The victim takes 1d4 points of Strength damage. A confirmed critical hit deals 2d4 points of Strength damage instead, and also afflicts the target with agony that imposes a –4 penalty on all attack rolls, skill checks, and ability checks for as long as the victim endures any Strength damage from the pharmakos's pain attack. A successful DC 20 Fortitude save reduces the Strength damage to 1 point. The save DC is Charisma-based.

When a worshiper of an evil god forsakes his faith, the deity being spurned sometimes takes note. In such a case, the betraying worshiper may not have the luxury of living the rest of his life and putting off divine punishment until some point after death. Sometimes, the god is so offended that the infidel is transformed into a pharmakos. While a pharmakos has much power, the metamorphosis into such a cursed creature is rarely one a worshiper seeks, for the pain and humiliation of the punishment is significant. That the altered worshiper can go on to serve the deity as a powerful guardian is of a secondary concern to the god in most cases, and regardless, when a pharmakos finally meets the end of its pain-filled life, then true divine punishment begins.

RED REAVER

Its stooped stance evoking a gorilla-like frame, this massive beast has six tiny eyes and atrophied wings.

RED REAVER **CR 13**

XP 25,600

N Large magical beast

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 7, flat-footed 29 (–2 Dex, +22 natural, –1 size)

hp 184 (16d10+96)

Fort +16, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8

Immune sleep

Weaknesses distracted by beauty

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 20 ft. (clumsy)

Melee bite +24 (2d6+9/19–20), 2 claws +24 (1d8+9)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks rend (2 claws, 1d8+13), roar

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 6, **Con** 23, **Int** 3, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +16; **CMB** +26 (+28 bull rush); **CMD** 34 (36 vs. bull rush)

Feats Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Survival), Vital Strike

Skills Fly –1, Perception +8 (+16 in territory), Survival +8 (+16 in territory); **Racial Modifiers** +8 Perception in territory, +8 Survival in territory

Languages Giant (cannot speak)

SQ flight, territorial

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate hills

Organization solitary

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Distracted by Beauty (Ex) With a successful Perform check, a character can attempt to fascinate a red reaver within 60 feet who is able to observe the performance (via sight or hearing, whichever is appropriate). The red reaver can resist the fascination effect with a successful Will save (DC = 1/2 the result of the Perform check), but once it becomes fascinated, it remains so until the performance stops, it takes damage, or it observes anyone damaging or stealing any of its treasures.

Flight (Su) A red reaver's ability to fly is supernatural.

Roar (Su) A red reaver can unleash a terrifying roar once every 1d4 rounds. All creatures except other red reavers within 120 feet must succeed at a DC 19 Will save or be shaken. Those within 30 feet who fail their saves become panicked. A creature who successfully saves can't be further affected by the same red reaver's roar for 24 hours. The shaken or panicked effect lasts for 4 rounds, but a character can end the effect early by succeeding at a DC 19 Will save at the end of any turn during which it was affected by the roar. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Territorial (Ex) Whenever a red reaver finds a region it regards as particularly beautiful or compelling, it can create a unique bond with that territory. This effect is automatic after the red reaver spends 1d4 days within the area, which cannot be larger than 1 square mile. Once a red reaver bonds to a territory, it gains a +8 racial bonus on Perception checks and Survival checks in that area. In addition, while in its territory, a red reaver doesn't fall unconscious when reduced to negative hit points and automatically stabilizes whenever it is at negative hit points.

Slow-witted but having a dangerous temper, red reavers are violent forces of nature. While red reavers don't seek out fights and they are rarely aggressive when not provoked, their territorial nature and tendency to misinterpret others' actions make approaching one an exceedingly dangerous proposition.

SPIDER, DRAIN

This brown spider's body is fist-sized, yet its long, spindly legs and oversized fangs make it appear quite fearsome.

DRAIN SPIDER **CR 1/4**

XP 100

N Tiny vermin

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

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

hp 4 (1d8)

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

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

Melee bite +4 (1d3–3 plus poison)

Space 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks poison

STATISTICS

Str 5, **Dex** 15, **Con** 10, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 7

Feats Lunge[B], Weapon Finesse[B]

Skills Climb +5

SQ compression, water skating

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary, pair, or colony (3–12)

Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 10; *frequency* 1/round for 4 rounds; *effect* 1 Str; *cure* 1 save.

Water Skating (Ex) A drain spider can move on the surface of calm water as if it were on land. A drain spider swimming at the water's surface can pull itself on top of the water with a successful DC 10 Climb check.

Already a tiny creature, the drain spider has the ability to compress its legs and body even further, allowing it to lurk in pipes, niches, and (its favorite hideout) sink or tub drains with ease. The sewers below Korvosa are infested with drain spiders in certain places. In the wild, drain spiders prefer to hunt in swamps or along river banks, but they have adapted readily to urban life in Korvosa and now infest numerous nooks and crannies in the city's lower-class quarters, particularly along the waterfronts.

A variant of the drain spider, known as the shingle spider, exists in Korvosa as well. Shingle spiders dwell in the upper reaches of the city, particularly enjoying the chimneys and gutters of abandoned buildings as a place to make their nests. Shingle spiders retain the drain spider's water skating ability, although they rarely have the opportunity to use it.

SPIDER, DREAM

The size of a human child, this shimmering spider has a blue-and-purple-striped belly.

DREAM SPIDER **CR 1/2**

XP 200

N Small vermin

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +1 size)

hp 5 (1d8+1)

Fort +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee bite +1 (1d4 plus poison)

Special Attacks dream web, poison, web (+3 ranged, DC 11, 1 hp)

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** —, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +0; **CMB** –1; **CMD** 11

Skills Climb +8, Perception +5, Stealth +6 (+10 when in its webs); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception, +4 Stealth when in its webs

ECOLOGY

Environment tropical forest or any urban

Organization solitary, pair, or colony (3–8)

Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Dream Web (Ex) A dream spider's webs have an iridescent hue, making them easier to notice than the typical spider's web (Perception DC 15). Any animal, humanoid, or monstrous humanoid that contacts these webs experiences strange hallucinations, taking 1 point of Wisdom damage per round of contact. A successful DC 11 Fortitude save negates this damage. If the webs of a dream spider are burned, they spread poisonous gas in a 10-foot radius. This gas deals 1d4 points of Wisdom damage to all creatures in the area (not just to those in contact with the webs). A successful DC 11 Fortitude save halves this damage. The cloud of colorful vapor remains for 1 round only before dissipating harmlessly. The Wisdom damage effect of a dream web is a poison effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 11; *frequency* 1/round for 4 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Wis; *cure* 1 save.

Transplants from the Mwangi Expanse (where these spiders can grow to truly enormous proportions), dream spiders have become a significant but valuable infestation in Korvosa's Shingles, for the venom of one of these spiders can be distilled into the popular but dangerous drug known as shiver.

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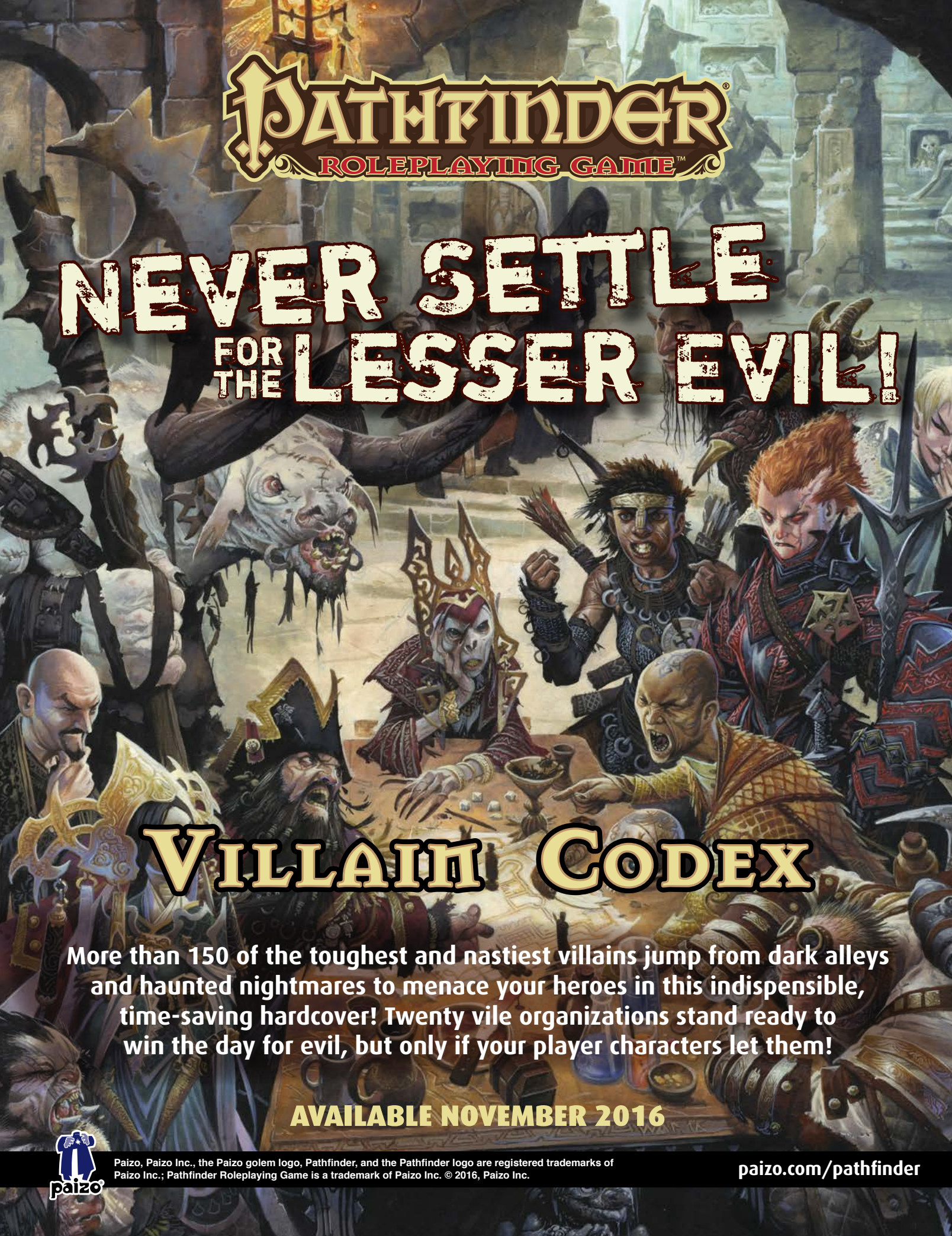
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