



## THE GRAY MAIDENS

**T**O AID IN THE DUTIES OF THE QUEEN'S PHYSICIANS, KNOW THAT THE ORDER OF THE GRAY MAIDENS HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED TO 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 WHEN SIMPLE CITY GUARDS WILL NOT SUFFICE. IMPEDING OR DISTRACTING THE DUTIES OF THE QUEEN'S PHYSICIANS OR THE GRAY MAIDENS IS PUNISHABLE BY IMPRISONMENT. IMPERSONATING A QUEEN'S PHYSICIAN OR A GRAY MAIDEN IS PUNISHABLE BY DEATH.

—FROM THE BLOOD VEIL DECREE



# THE GRAY MAIDENS

When Queen Ileosa ascended the Crimson Throne, many anticipated a reign filled with lavish balls, royal dalliances, and petty decadence. What the people of Korvosa didn't expect was the rise of a steel-souled tyrant. Although the queen's cruel whims were not entirely her own, her brief rule stands as the most violent in Korvosan history, a time of turmoil fraught with plague, genocide, narcissism, diabolism, and slaughter. Yet Ileosa did not enact these crimes alone—she transformed her own royal guard into a finely polished weapon that would reflect her dark ambitions as she used it to strike against her own people. This all-female army of deadly soldiers was the Gray Maidens.

Clad in identical suits of sculpted plate and lean chain, their faces hidden beneath the reflective steel of featureless helms, the Gray Maidens were chosen from among Korvosa's most able and beautiful swordswomen. The group served as the queen's personal agents, following her orders and ensuring her safety. But as the queen's cruelties took on more depraved forms, so did the Gray Maidens become increasingly corrupt. All members faced deliberate scarring and disfigurement—particularly of the face—as part of their indoctrination, ensuring that none of the queen's servants would rival her beauty.

The formation, cruelty, and fall of the Gray Maidens are detailed in the events of the Curse of the Crimson Throne Adventure Path, and a new story about Gray Maidens after Ileosa's fall, *Pathfinder Tales: Shattered Steel*, is available for free at [paizo.com](http://paizo.com). What else survives of that organization is presented here: memories of their darkest deeds, surviving and unaccounted for members, and details on threats the Gray Maidens continue to pose in Varisia and beyond.

## FORMER LEADERS OF THE GRAY MAIDENS

While Korvosa's mad queen Ileosa undeniably supplied the motivation, equipment, and merciless agendas for the Gray Maidens, blame for their deeds does not lie entirely with her. Others were integral in forming and training these soldiers, and ensuring their unquestioning obedience.

### SABINA MERRIN

#### LN female human fighter 14

Sabina Merrin was chosen from the ranks of the city guard by King Eodred's fiancé, Ileosa Arvanxi, coming to serve as the noblewoman's bodyguard, handmaiden, and, eventually, first true friend in Korvosa. Formerly a student of the city's famed weapon master Vencarlo Orisini, Sabina left her training to take up arms as a member of the city guard. As Sabina served Ileosa, their relationship became increasingly intimate, the guardswoman idealizing Ileosa as the liege of her fantasies. With Ileosa's ascension to the throne and her (unnaturally) bold shift in personality, Sabina became more

and more enamored with the queen and blind to her faults, even as they became increasingly heinous.

Suggesting the queen allow her to seek out other similarly gifted warriors—beautiful, deadly, and devoted—to serve as royal guards and direct agents, Sabina provided the inspiration for the group that would become the Gray Maidens. While she assembled the first several dozen devoted warrior women to serve as the queen's personal retinue, Ileosa became both inspired by the soldier's potential and jealous of the beauties constantly in her wake. While Sabina held the position of commander of the Gray Maidens, Ileosa increasingly distracted Sabina with business within Castle Korvosa and leisure activities. Beneath the royal castle and in the troop's other redoubts, though, the queen entrusted the indoctrination, training, and—later—physical disfigurement of new members to conscienceless lieutenants, transforming her personal bodyguard into a small army of vicious sadists and brainwashed killers.

Despite Ileosa's attempts to distance the Gray Maidens' commander from her troops and her own unwillingness to see the unnatural cruelty consuming her mistress, Sabina gradually came to accept that Ileosa was not the paragon she so desired to serve. In the final days of Ileosa's rule, Sabina turned against the queen, aiding rebels in slaying her personal black dragon mount, Zarmangarof, and in putting an end to the evil festering within Castle Korvosa.

In the aftermath of Queen Ileosa's death, Sabina was viewed as a hero by many and was made a leader among the city's new provisional government. She helped disassemble the Gray Maidens and make restitutions to many forced into the group, as well as those who suffered losses at the group's hands. Yet even as Sabina seeks to help set a new course for Korvosa, free from the corruption and dark dealings of the city's Chelish ancestry, there are still those who will never see the founder of the Gray Maidens as anything less than a traitor and a murderess.

### KORDAITRA DESTAID

#### LE female human cavalier 11

The death of King Eodred Arabasti II flooded the audience halls of Castle Korvosa with mourners and overtures of both sympathy and allegiance, but no display was grislier or more effective than that of Kordaitra Destaid, a knight-enforcer of the city's Church of Asmodeus. Sent to extend the church's condolences to the new monarch, she proved the depth of her and her brethren's sorrow by carving tears into her face and presenting the queen with the still bloody dagger. While Ileosa was originally horrified, her revulsion turned to respect when she noticed Kordaitra at the king's public funeral, her disfigurement unhealed nearly a week later.

After a time, the queen sent for Kordaitra, and asked why the knight had not entreated her temple brethren for healing. The Asmodean knight explained that doing



# SHATTERED STAR

## DEEDS OF THE GRAY MAIDENS

The Gray Maidens deserved their cruel reputation, and several of their many misdeeds stand out as crimes that will scar Korvosa for generations to come.

### THE MERCILESS WAY MASSACRE

Ordered to stymie the spread of the blood veil plague, Gray Maidens and royal physicians quarantined a block of Old Korvosa. Confused and frightened, the poor residents refused to comply and pelted the queen's guard with rubbish as they sought to escape. Devoted to their orders, the Gray Maidens attacked and slaughtered all of the residents of the block, nearly a hundred men, women, and children.

### THE QUARANTINE OF OLD KORVOSA

As the quarantines failed, Queen Ileosa ordered the destruction all of the bridges crossing the Narrows of Saint Alika. Only the stone causeway was spared, and this was heavily fortified to prevent escape. Any attempting to leave were assumed to be anarchists intent on spreading the plague, and so met the quarrels of Gray Maidens upon the bridge. Hundreds suffered and died as a result of the act.

### IDOLS OF THE MAD QUEEN

The Great Tower, a redoubt for the Sable Company, cast its shadow over much of Korvosa's Heights district. After the riders were disbanded following an attempt on Queen Ileosa's life, the Gray Maidens pressed workers to disassemble the landmark, using the stone to craft four gigantic statues of the queen—which were never completed and have since been torn down. Korvosans still remember whip-wielding Gray Maidens driving laborers through the city like slaves toiling at some dark Osirian monument.

so would be a sign of disloyalty and that her devotion was greater than vanity. Convinced of the knight's dedication, Ileosa requested Kordaitra's aid in instructing a new martial order, not just in the ways of steel, but also in such loyalty. The knight accepted with true Asmodean fervor.

Over the following months, Kordaitra poured her fanaticism into the worthiest of those the queen and Commander Merrin sent to her, dispensing lashings as lessons, scars as badges of loyalty, and brutal deaths to those found lacking. She became known as Lady Tearless, and fear of the impassively vicious instructor and her red steel scourge incited many Gray Maidens—both those training and those already in service—to commit atrocities of which they otherwise would never have been capable.

Kordaitra was not counted among those killed in the revolt that deposed Queen Ileosa, and Korvosa's city guard

maintains a reward for her capture. Many Korvosans believe the Church of Asmodeus shielded their fierce sister and smuggled her to Nidal, Cheliox, or Iser to impose her training methods on less-than-willing Asmodean crusaders.

## VAVANA DHATRI

### NE female human wizard 9

Seeking refuge from the outbreak of scarlet leprosy that took her husband, Abanmi Dhatri bargained for passage upon the Brightburn, a Korvosan ship on its return journey from Vudra. The price for passage: 13 years of indentured service to the ship's owners, the notorious Arkona family—a price Abanmi gladly accepted for the sake of her children, 6-year-old Vavana and newborn Ishani.

While her brother was young enough to learn the ways of and blend in with the people of Korvosa, the Dhatri's new home city, Vavana faced significant prejudice, first as a child and later during her enrollment at Korvosa's infamous Acadamae. Embittered but clever, she gravitated toward the study of enchantment magic and of wresting control over the minds of others. She never learned who recommended her talents to Queen Ileosa—perhaps the Acadamae's manipulative headmaster Toff Ornelos, one of the cunning Arkonas she'd served as a youth, or a more mysterious agent—but when she was summoned to put her magic to use for Korvosa's greater good, she eagerly rose to the task and accepted the title Arbiter of Allegiance of the newly formed Gray Maidens.

Vavana ensured that all those Ileosa and Sabina selected to serve in the Gray Maidens were absolutely faithful. For those who required coercion, a few enchantments revealed secrets enough to blackmail most into service, though certain particularly skilled and stubborn conscripts faced regular doses from the arbiter's collection of fang-studded wands.

Widely spread stories say that several former Gray Maidens tracked Vavana to the Arkona Palace in Old Korvosa after Queen Ileosa's fall, but reports of what happened within are confused and vary to a bizarrely wide degree. As such, the status of the Gray Maidens' most nefarious mindbender remains unclear.

## BEHIND THE MASK

Not all enforcers of the Crimson Throne served willingly. Through a combination of psychological and physical abuse, coercion, and enchantments, numerous Korvosans were made slaves of Ileosa's abominable regime. When the mad queen's power failed, these Gray Maidens removed their helms, but all scars are not so easily removed.

## FILARIO GRANTSUEM

### CG female human fighter 4

After 2 weeks of searching for his sister, Filario was shocked to find her clad in the anonymous iron of a Gray Maiden.



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More disconcerting was that she didn't recognize him, and struck him to the ground for his insistent and emotional questioning. Filario followed his sister back to the city's courthouse, the Longacre Building, and sought to find out what had happened to her, but was forbidden entry. When more subtle infiltrations failed, he attempted to join the Gray Maidens, but despite his lithe build, his gender betrayed him. Filario was fully prepared to use his knife to permanently improve his disguise's veracity, but friends within Korvosa's Cerulean Society found and sold him a cursed item that didn't seem so menacing to him: a *girdle of opposite gender*. With it, he gained admittance to the Gray Maidens and enough proximity to his sister to discover she was being magically compelled to serve. Before he was able to save her, though, she was cut down during the uprising against Queen Ileosa. Filario abandoned the Gray Maidens soon after, but has never attempted to remove his girdle, nobly refusing to do so until his sister is avenged—and maybe not even then, as he's become quite comfortable with his new gender.

## JIRVASLIE RHANAMORS

### NG female human ranger 5

Retired from a youth of adventuring, Jirvaslie prided herself on her daily training regime, but far more so on her two young children, Cemanda and Reglio. Stories of the former adventurer's exploits did not elude the Gray Maidens, who approached Jirvaslie about joining their ranks. Two days after she refused, her children vanished. Faceless members of the Gray Maidens made it clear that they had spirited away Jirvaslie's children, but that the two would be treated well so long as she lent her skill with blade and bow to the Crimson Throne's service. With no other choice, Jirvaslie served, trying her best to maim rather than kill and skirt the most lenient edge of her orders. But still she did much for which she is ashamed. During the rebellion, Jirvaslie managed to find her children, safe but scared in the basement of a Gray Maiden safe house. Although she forsook the crusade of Korvosa's ruler that day, she adopted another. Since then she has led a public campaign seeking to aid those women forced to serve the Crimson Throne and to punish those who served willingly. This has brought her into direct and very public opposition to Sabina Merrin, whom she condemns as the leader of the Gray Maidens and an opportunistic traitor rather than a rebel hero.

## THE SCARRED

For many enslaved or coerced to serve as Gray Maidens, Ileosa's fall meant an escape from the cold iron of the royal guards. For some, however, freedom was not so easily won. The Gray Maidens scarred their members

both physically and psychologically, shattered hopes and ambitions, and left many with little to return to after the legion's destruction. For some, the faceless helm of a Gray Maiden is the only face they have left.

## ERID SUULS

### LE female human fighter 5/Hellknight 3

Once presumed by her order to have defected to serve Korvosa's queen, Maralictor Suuls was found innocent of violating her oaths as an Order of the Nail Hellknight, being judged not guilty on the grounds of arcane ensnarement. With her personal fiend-faced Hellknight armor destroyed, Suuls retained her Gray Maiden armor even after regaining her freedom and returning to Citadel Vraid. Since then, she has embraced her fury at being enslaved and the dread her new armor evokes among the populace of nearby Korvosa. She used acid to etch her armor with the imagery of her order, so the shining steel now bears double diabolical visages upon both her breast and blank helm. Impressed by her apparently unflinching adoption of the armor that once imprisoned her—and the utter mercilessness she has exhibited since—Suuls's peers among the Order of the Nail have come to refer to her as Lady Styx.

## KELLES VEL

### LN female fighter 3/wizard 3

Unlike most Gray Maidens, Kelles had no talent with a blade and absolutely no experience in martial combat. A student at the University of Korvosa with a keen mind for both antiquities and magic, she dreamed of one day being a scholar of the Jeggare Museum. Those dreams were shattered when Kelles caught the attention of a domineering Gray Maiden admirer, who added the lovely scholar's name to the list of those to be inducted into the ranks of the royal guard. Separated from her spellbook and with few physical abilities with which to leverage an escape, the kidnapped Kelles suffered through training that nearly killed her. Although the training strengthened her body, it left her physically disfigured and fractured her sheltered vision of the world. Abuse and violence forged her into a Gray Maiden, and to survive she performed the terrible





deeds demanded of her. When rebellion swept Korvosa, Kelles's post upon the bridge isolating Old Korvosa was quickly overwhelmed by the rebels. Falling back into the ruined district, she soon found herself alone and left to make her own decisions for the first time in months. She retreated into the heart of Old Korvosa, confused and disgusted with what she had become. Deciding that the life she had known was over, she was now determined to use the skills she had learned as a Gray Maiden to redeem herself. Now Kelles Vel is gone, replaced by rumors whispered among the desperate of Old Korvosa, stories that tell of the Midnight Maiden, who hunts the worst criminals of Korvosa's underworld, seeking atonement for her own evils or perhaps an end with a bit of meaning.

## WOLCHINE SAVELTANA

**NE female cleric of Urgathoa 5**

The Church of Urgathoa's role in Queen Ileosa's plot to scour Korvosa of its unsavory lower classes ended with the demise of Lady Andaisin, a high priestess of that order. Yet this leader's death did not wipe Urgathoa's stain from the city completely. While the worshipers of the goddess of disease were scattered, several survived to continue their dark work. Using her penchant for duplicity and disguise, Wolchine took up the armor of a Gray Maiden and for months served as a member of the royal guard, spreading disease and corruption from behind a veil of steel. When the Gray Maidens were shattered, Wolchine once again sought to escape, fleeing into the tunnels beneath Korvosa and directly into the tentacles of one of city's notorious otyugh sewer dwellers. A combination of her quick tongue and the otyugh's fascination with the "shiny lady" saved her life, but left her the bloated monstrosity's prisoner. In the following months, the otyugh, Raxzhacmag, doted on Wolchine as a favored pet, keeping her in his cesspit palace and insisting she

eat the gifts he constantly lavished upon her—things an otyugh would enjoy, but poison and filth to a human. Wolchine survived through her magic and devotion to Urgathoa, but even as she has sought to manipulate her captor and worked to fashion him into the King Beneath the Streets—with the intention of drawing other creatures capable of assisting her escape—her captivity has unhinged her. Aside from narcissistically believing herself chosen by her goddess as a candidate for transformation into a daughter of Urgathoa, Wolchine has not removed her armor since the rebellion in the city above. In that time, through Raxzhacmag's hospitality, the false Gray Maiden has tripled in weight, leaving her a debilitated, demented creature trapped amid a slurry of steel, delusion, and impotent rage.

## SURVIVING SECTS

Not all Gray Maidens were in Korvosa when the Crimson Throne toppled. While the vast majority faced death at the hands of the city's rebelling populace or as a result of trials in the following days, several Gray Maiden platoons were fulfilling their queen's will elsewhere within the city-state's domain. Though some attempted to return and avenge their queen, such attempts proved largely fruitless. The shrewdest commanders led their troops away from the site of their queen's defeat, forging new paths away from the turmoil of Korvosa.

## ERINYES COMPANY

**Sworn to a New Queen**

**Commander:** Qualins Rachmirol (LE female human cavalier 8)

**Area of Operation:** Cheliox

**Troops:** Two dozen Gray Maidens, with more in training

By the time that Qualins Rachmirol received word of the uprising in Korvosa, it was already too late for her platoon of 26 Gray Maidens to intercede. Thinking swiftly, she ordered her soldiers on to Palin's Cove and commandeered a ship sailing for Westcrown. Their travels





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were long and treacherous, but eventually the surviving members of Rachmirol's troop reached the Chelish capital of Egorian, the home of Korvosa's onetime imperial rulers. Queen Abrogail took bemused note of the wayward knights from the empire's former frontier, but upon meeting with Rachmirol, the queen came to respect her devotion and prowess. Since then, Abrogail has seen fit to adopt Rachmirol and her platoon into the greater Chelish military, assigning the rogue Gray Maidens a variety of politically sensitive or particularly dangerous missions largely outside of Chelixa's borders. Their reputation of success and lethality has pleased the queen, who has since come to refer to these Gray Maidens as Erinyes Company.

## FACELESS KAID'S BAND

### *Pledged to Steel and Gold*

**Commander:** "Faceless" Kaid Brants (N female human fighter 4/rogue 2)

**Area of Operation:** Kaer Maga, Varisia

**Troops:** More than 30 diverse mercenaries

With her commander's brains bashed out by a gutter cleaner's shovel and her fellow Gray Maidens falling to rocks and quarrels around her, Kaid Brants slung a rope over the city wall she was assigned to defend and, cursing Ileosa for a Dis whore's daughter, told her squadmates that any who wanted to live should follow. Stealing horses, Kaid and 11 other Gray Maidens made their way to the only place any of them could think of where no one would care about their obvious pasts: Kaer Maga. Since then, Kaid and her squad have worked as mercenaries operating out of Downmarket in the City of Strangers. They've hunted Shoanti for 5 gold pieces per head, struck back against Hellknight bounty hunters, retrieved runaway slaves in the Bottoms, and looted lost halls in the Undercity. Since then, Kaid has lost nearly half of her original troop of Gray Maidens, but she has made a tidy profit as a mercenary leader and finds herself well suited to the role. She's replaced lost comrades with new members and even expanded her company. Now new members designate rank and seniority with pieces of Gray Maiden armor—each section of plate once belonging to fallen member. Only Kaid herself still retains a full set of Gray Maiden armor, lending her the moniker Faceless Kaid.

## MAIDENS OF THE LADY'S LIGHT

### *Ileosa's Avengers*

**Commander:** Oriana (CN female human fighter 8)

**Area of Operation:** The Lady's Light, Varisia

**Troops:** A dwindling number since leaving Korvosa

As her troops fell around her on the streets of Korvosa, Oriana called for retreat in the face of the rebel mobs and fled the city with her soldiers. In the time since, she has never forgotten her allegiance to Queen Ileosa and has

devoted herself to retaking Korvosa from its treacherous populace by any means. This goal has brought her and her troops to the Lady's Light at one of the farthest edges of Varisia, where she seeks to follow in her mistress's footsteps by seeking power amid the ruins of the Thassilonian realm of Eurythnia. More details on Oriana and her Gray Maidens can be found in this month's adventure, "Curse of the Lady's Light."

## GRAY MAIDEN TROOPS

The Gray Maidens were by no means uniform in their experience or abilities. Drawn from every walk of life, some were experienced soldiers while others were little more than street thugs in impressive armor. Over the course of the Curse of the Crimson Throne Adventure Path, Gray Maidens are presented at a range of skill levels, from CR 2 foot soldiers to CR 8 palace guards. The Gray Maidens presented in this month's adventure, "Curse of the Lady's Light," provide examples of Gray Maidens filling the majority of this range. GMs who wish to create their own Gray Maidens of any level should make use of the following role. Roles are a new rules element that debuted in *Pathfinder Player Companion: Varisia, Birthplace of Legends*. These character builds provide suggested rules and advice for creating new characters of a specific theme. For more information on roles and a variety of samples for characters from Varisia, see *Varisia, Birthplace of Legends*.

### GRAY MAIDEN

*Fanatical Agents of a Fallen Queen*

**Specialty** armored female soldiers, conscienceless killers

**Race** human; **Ethnicity** Chelaxian; **Gender** female

#### CLASS OPTIONS

**Class** fighter; **Class Features** weapon training (heavy blades)

**Class** cavalier (typically commanders); **Class Features** order (order of the cockatrice)

#### PREFERRED OPTIONS

**Skills** Intimidate

**Feats** Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword)

#### DESCRIPTION

The royal guard of a corrupt regime, the Gray Maidens enforced the will of Korvosa's notorious Queen Ileosa upon her beleaguered people. Fiercely devoted and willing to follow any command, no matter how heinous or inhuman, the Gray Maidens blend beauty and lethal skill behind emotionless steel visages. Since the death of Queen Ileosa, the Gray Maidens' numbers have dwindled, but most of those who survive cleave to vicious ambitions and dreams of avenging their fallen liege.

#### ROLEPLAYING

**Persona** absolutely loyal to leaders or cause, arrogant and superior, willing to fight dirty and win at any cost

**Preferred Equipment** full plate, heavy steel shield, longsword