

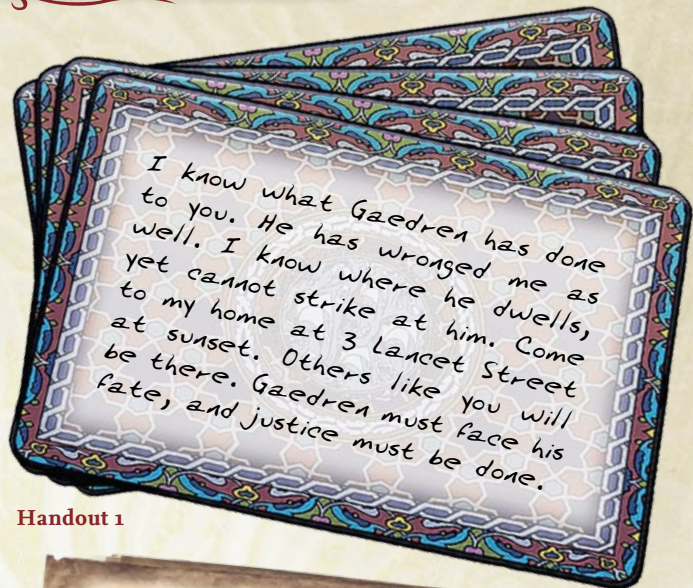
control. After dealing with guards gone rogue, handling a delicate political situation involving a local crime lord, and coping with all manner of chaos in the streets, the PCs are called upon to apprehend a woman named Trinia Sabor, who might just be the one who assassinated King Eodred II. After capturing her and turning her over to the Guard, the PCs must recover the missing body of a Shoanti warrior before his kin declare war on the city. The adventure ends as the PCs attend the supposed execution of Trinia Sabor, only to become caught up in the chaos of her unexpected rescue by one of Korvosa's most legendary heroes—a masked man named Blackjack.

PART ONE: HAUNTED FORTUNES

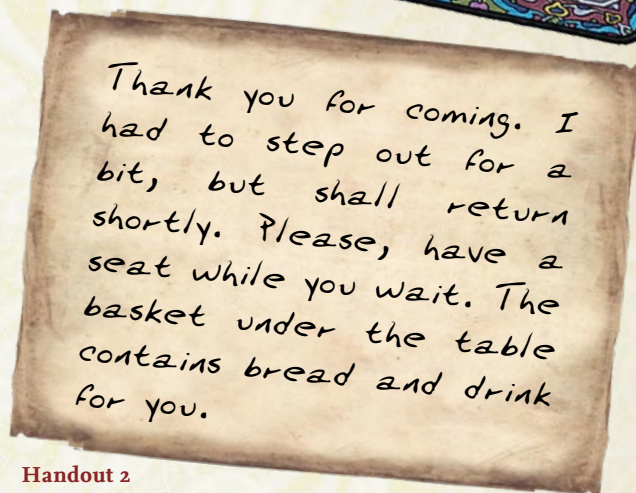
Curse of the Crimson Throne assumes that all of the PCs have a shared nemesis from the start: local crime lord and villain Gaedren Lamm, a deplorable crook well past his prime, yet possessed of a tenacious ability to stay one step ahead of the Korvosan Guard while maintaining complete control of his band of young pickpockets recruited from the city's street urchins and orphans. The *Curse of the Crimson Throne Player's Guide* lists several backgrounds players might choose for their characters—these traits grant small bonuses to their stats, but more importantly for the start of the campaign, they give the characters an in-game reason to come together. Each PC has been wronged in some manner by Gaedren Lamm, so each PC should have a built-in reason to reply to the mysterious Harrow card that appears in his life as this adventure begins.

The PCs aren't the only ones who have been wronged by Gaedren. Among his plentiful other victims is a Varisian woman named Zellara, a fortune teller who, a year ago, lost her only son to Lamm. After her Harrow deck (her only source of income and an heirloom handed down to her by her mother) was pickpocketed by one of Lamm's Little Lambs, Zellara's son Eran took it upon himself to get back the deck. He was murdered by Gaedren's thugs and his head and hands were returned to Zellara in a box as a gift and a threat. Zellara went to the Korvosan Guard, but they had little additional time or resources to devote to Lamm. The Guard told her, "We know he's trouble, and we're doing the best we can to find him—sorry for your loss, but that's all we can do for you now."

Frustrated, desperate, and harboring a growing need for revenge, Zellara took it upon herself to track down Lamm, drawing upon the Harrow's divinations for aid. Her latent magical skill, combined with her persistence and obsession, unfortunately gave her results. She discovered the location of Gaedren's current hideout, but was herself seen. Gaedren's thugs grabbed her and brought her below the old fishery to stand tall before the master. Old Lamm was impressed that she went through so much trouble, but when she spat on



Handout 1



Handout 2

him and cursed him, his anger got the better of him and he ordered her killed. Her body he fed to his alligator, but he saved her head. Now, he keeps it in a box in his lair alongside her stolen cards. These cards, bloodstained and discarded, became the focus for Zellara's anguish and despair. Her spirit infused them, haunted them, and now she intends to use her newfound supernatural power to bring down Gaedren Lamm.

Unlike a true ghost, Zellara's influence doesn't extend far beyond her cards and her home—they are her links to the living world. 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 down 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 minds of the PCs, using them as a focus for her 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 somewhere in some place only that PC is sure to notice it. A wizard might reach for his

Edge of Anarchy

Points of Interest



spellbook to see a card sitting atop its cover. A cleric might find the card resting atop an altar he has been tasked for the day with cleaning. A rogue could find the card in one of her pockets, 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 PC's alignment and highest ability score—if a character has equally high ability scores, choose the score that most closely associates with his class. The card image itself is unmarred, but written in bold ink on the back is a short message—see Handout 1.

A character who asks around about the address given on the card and makes a DC 10 Gather Information check learns that it is the home and fortune-telling shop of a Varisian woman named Zellara.

Zellara's Home

The cozy chamber within this small home is filled with a fragrant haze of flowers and strong spice. The haze comes from several sticks of incense smouldering in wall-mounted burners that look like butterfly-winged elves. The smoke itself seems to soften edges and gives the room a dream-like feel. The walls are draped with brocaded tapestries, one showing a black-skulled beast juggling men's hearts, 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, a flaming sword held 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 throwcloth 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 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 lived-in. 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 a DC 25 Will save to see through the powerful (if minor) illusions. Otherwise, allow the PCs to arrive at her home as they wish, giving them time to introduce themselves to each other and perhaps compare Harrow cards.

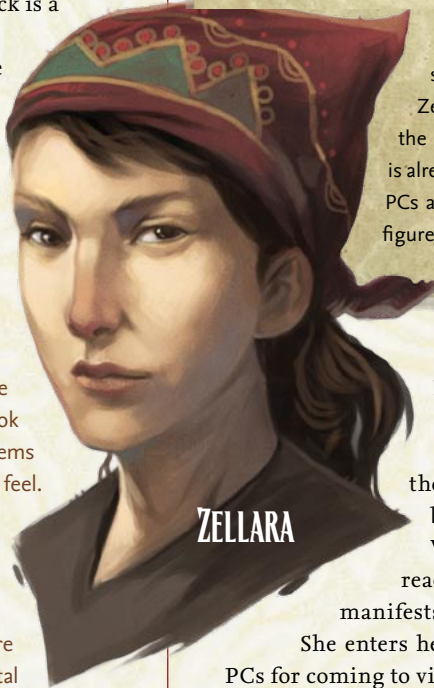


CURIOUS PLAYERS AND THE GHOST

With so much of the setup for *Curse of the Crimson Throne* hinging on illusion and haunts, you might be worried about what should happen if the PCs figure out the ruse early. *Detect magic*, *detect undead*, and successful saves against Zellara's illusions can all reveal her true nature. If this occurs, roll with it. Zellara's need doesn't change, and she's not evil—all the PCs miss out on in this development is the fun reveal later 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's not a big deal if your PCs are curious and persistent enough to figure her out early.

—James Jacobs



ZELLARA

Zellara is present when the PCs first arrive, but unseen. 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 when you're ready to start the adventure, 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 is an attractive middle-aged Varisian woman with long dark hair. She allows the PCs to introduce themselves as she produces her Harrow deck from a pocket and idly shuffles the cards. Her skill with the deck should be obvious to anyone who watches how the cards seem to float and dance over her hands and the table. 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.

"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 terrible man would see great harm done to me if he knew I was reaching out for help. This is a man you know, for he 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

ADVENTURE SUITS

Adventure	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

sole means of support. When pickpockets stole it, my son, Eran, tracked them down. The thieves were in the employ of Gaedren Lamm, and in reward for finding them, Gaedren murdered my son.

"I sought help from the 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 his abducted children to be pickpockets and counts his stolen treasures.

"And now, I need your help. I cannot hope to face this man on my own, and the Guard moves so slowly that if I were to go to them, Gaedren would certainly know of their coming well in advance. Even if they did arrest 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."

The Harrowing

At the beginning of each adventure of Curse of the Crimson Throne (save for the last one, "Crown of Fangs"), the PCs have a chance to perform a Harrow reading using Zellara's deck. 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.

Zellara exists primarily as a reason to draw together the PCs and to send them against Gaedren Lamm, so they discover the queen's broach the old man has stolen and keeps in his room. Portray her as a helpful but desperate woman, not as a sinister or suspicious force, and you should be able to keep your players focused on Gaedren. Once she finishes, she asks if the PCs would like a Harrow reading to guide them on their way—free of charge, of course. She would rather not answer too many questions, though. 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.

HARROW POINT USES

In "Edge of Anarchy," the PCs are faced with numerous situations where they need to be quick on their feet, from chasing down fugitives over rooftops to playing dangerous games of Knivesies to navigating rotting piers and ships. During this adventure, a character can spend his Harrow Points in the following ways.

Dexterity Rerolls: Spend a Harrow Point to reroll any one Initiative check, Reflex save, attack roll modified by Dexterity, or Dexterity-based skill check. You must abide by the new result (although if you have additional Harrow Points remaining, you can use them to attempt additional rerolls).

Dodge Bonus: Spend a Harrow Point to gain a +1 Dodge bonus to your Armor Class for one encounter. You can spend up to 3 Harrow Points per encounter to increase your Armor Class in this manner.

Speed Increase: Spend a Harrow Point to increase your base speed by 10 feet for one encounter—you cannot spend multiple Harrow Points to increase your speed multiple times in one encounter.

THE CHOSEN

In addition, the card a PC draws during the choosing has special qualities during this adventure. Each of these cards is tied to a specific encounter in "Edge of Anarchy," and when a PC who drew that card reaches that encounter, he gains a +2 bonus on all rolls modified by Dexterity and a +1 Dodge bonus to his Armor Class. These bonuses last for the encounter's duration.

The Dance: Combat with Chittersnap

The Cricket: Non-combat Shingle Chase checks

The Juggler: Combat during the Shingle Chase

The Locksmith: Combat with Gaedren Lamm

The Peacock: Combat with Verik Vancaskerkin

The Rabbit Prince: All knivesies fights

The Avalanche: All "City in Turmoil" encounters

The Crows: Combat with Vreeg

The Demon's Lantern: Unnecessary combat with guards

The best way to handle Zellara's Harrow reading is to perform an actual reading using a Harrow deck. If the PCs haven't returned the cards used to invite them, those cards surreptitiously find their way unnoticed back into Zellara's deck, the writing on their backs faded completely. The stages of her reading, as well as rules for simulating a Harrow reading without actually using a Harrow deck, can be found on page 58.

Although the Harrow reading is in large part purely flavor and vague foreshadowing, the magic of Zellara's deck does grant a game benefit as well. A Harrow deck has six suits, and each of the six adventures in Curse of the Crimson Throne is thematically tied to one of these suits (and by extension, to one of the six ability scores), as shown on the Adventure Suits sidebar.



Each time a Harrow reading from Zellara’s deck occurs in an adventure (usually near the adventure’s start), jot down how many of the cards in that reading’s spread are cards from the current adventure’s suit. This determines how many Harrow Points each PC receives. A player can spend Harrow Points during the course of the adventure to gain various benefits relating to the suit—each adventure presents a “Harrow Point Uses” sidebar that lists what the PCs can spend Harrow Points on. In addition, each PC gains an additional Harrow Point for the card he draws during the “choosing,” effectively guaranteeing him at least 1 point to spend during the adventure, even if the spread resolves without any cards of the current adventure’s suit.

Harrow Points unspent at the end of an adventure are lost.

The 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 Little Lambs 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 its 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 as a moneymaking scheme to augment what his Lambs pickpocket. The fishery is a place where desperate fishermen can sell off their less fetching catches (fish caught 3 days dead in the nets, or freakish specimens unfit for sale) and where fishmongers dump their old sun-tainted wares, fish reeking with the first hints of decay. Lamm’s little workforce of enslaved orphans toils 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 a fresh fillet of fish. Lamm himself lounges in his secret chambers in the fishery’s underbelly, accessible only by braving the scum-slick narrows beneath the structure itself. Here, he plays for hours at cards with his sick-witted companions and hurls buckets of chum to his beloved alligator Gobblegut.

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, since most of the business going through the place is handled at area **A7**. Knocking on the door (or non-stealthy 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 nearly to the river's surface to the east, where a second door provides a secondary entrance.

During the day, the double doors into area **A7** are kept ajar or even wide open. The demand for cheap fish slurry keeps the fishery busy, and they ship 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 (EL 1)

A slippery boardwalk clings to the side of the fishery, held together by barnacle-thick pilings that have been worn halfway through their thickness at the waterline.

This boardwalk remains about 10 feet above the water as it winds around the building. The dock itself is slippery—as long as someone navigates it no faster than one move action 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), he must make a DC 10 Balance 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 causes the wood to creak and groan alarmingly. If such a character remains in one spot on the pier for more than a round, the wood collapses, dropping the character into the water as well.

Creature: A fall into the water here is short enough, and the water deep enough, to prevent falling damage, but the waters themselves are the home of a jigsaw shark that's learned this is a great place to scavenge food left over from

the alligator in area **A13** or leavings cast aside from the operation in area **A8**. It's not above attacking anyone who falls into the water.

The jigsaw shark is 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

Medium shark (MM 279)

hp 16

CR 1

A4. Front Room (EL 1/3)

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

This room isn't used too often—in theory, this is where new customers for the fishery are met with 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: The nest under the table is where Yargin's grizzled dog, a foul-tempered cur named Bloo, spends most of his day sleeping. 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. 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

Dog (MM 271)

hp 6

CR 1/3

A5. Barracks

A pair of bunk beds sits against the far wall of this room to 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 (EL 1)

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

LAMM'S LITTLE LAMBS

Gaedren's little charges are tough kids, made rough as leather by Gaedren's quick hand and life on the street. They hate Gaedren, 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 a font of information on Lamm 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 can attempt 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 section of these encounters for ideas on how the kids might lend a hand if this check is successful. 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.

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 they manage to do so, give the PCs an Ad Hoc Experience Award as if they had defeated a CR 2 creature.

the east a cabinet slouches against the wall. To the south, a few moldy boards have been nailed over a door.

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.

Creature: Gaedren's right-hand man and his longest-lived accomplice is Yargin Balkro, a bitter human alchemist who's served variously as Gaedren's accountant, advisor, assassin, and fence for nearly a decade. Yargin's true obsession is acid—he carries several vials of the stuff with him wherever he goes. He 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 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 two decades out of style.

YARGIN BALKO

CR 1

Male human expert 2

LE Medium humanoid

Init +1; **Senses** Listen -1, Spot -1

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 12

(+2 armor, +1 Dexterity)

hp 9 (2d6+2)

Fort +1, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee dagger +1 (1d4/19-20)

Ranged *acid splash* +2 touch (1d3 acid) or alchemical item +2 touch (varies)

TACTICS

During Combat Yargin prefers to use his *wand of acid splash* in combat, but since he needs to roll a 13 to activate it with a Use Magic Device check, it's prone to failing him—each time it does, he erupts into a loud burst of profanity, shaking the wand in frustration. Once he fails the third time to use the wand, he gives up and switches to thrown vials of acid and tanglefoot bags. He's deathly afraid of melee combat, and fights with his dagger only if cornered.

Morale Once he's used up his alchemical items 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** 12, **Con** 13, **Int** 11, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +1

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

Skills Appraise +5, Craft (alchemy) +5, Disable Device +5, Forgery +5, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Search +5, Spellcraft +7, Use Magic Device +7

Languages Common, Gnome

Combat Gear *wand of acid splash* (28 charges), acid (3), tanglefoot bag (2), thunderstone; **Other Gear** leather armor, dagger, light crossbow with 10 bolts, garnet amulet worth 100 gp, key to cabinet in area A7

A7. Upper Workfloor (EL 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 seawater and fish blood stain the floor around this trough. A pair of wooden chutes lead from this trough through holes in the northern wall into a larger room to the

east. 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 must make a DC 10 Balance check. The trough itself is where the raw materials that make up the slurry are heaped when fishermen or merchants bring the stuff. The desk to the south is used to handle transactions, while the cabinet (which is locked, and can be opened with a DC 20 Open Lock check) contains petty cash.

Creatures: A dozen of 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 lower on 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, most of them, anyways). Hookshanks is quick to punish kids with his sap and threatens to "feed them to the dog"—even the kids bigger than Hookshanks have learned to shut up and follow the gnome's orders as a result. Hookshanks usually dresses the part of an orphan himself and appears as such unless a PC defeats his Disguise check with a Spot check (gnome PCs get a +5 on this check).

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 until Bloo shows up, at which point they try to flee.

LAMM'S LAMBS (3)

CR 1/3

Human child expert 1

N Small humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** Listen -1, Spot -1

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11

(+2 Dexterity, +1 size)

hp 3 each (1d6)

Fort +0, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee dagger -1 (1d3-1/19-20) or pitchfork -1 (1d6-1)



TACTICS

During Combat The orphans spend the first round of combat in shock and surprise. If Hookshanks is able to intimidate them into action with a DC 10 Intimidate check, the orphans attack the PCs with their pitchforks.

Morale An orphan who takes any damage attempts to flee into area A8. Once none of Gaedren's thugs are present or have been slain, the orphans quickly flee the fishery into the surrounding slums.

STATISTICS

Str 7, **Dex** 15, **Con** 10, **Int** 9, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +0; **Grp** -6

Feats Agile, Skill Focus (Sleight of Hand)

Skills Balance +8, Bluff +4, Climb +2, Escape Artist +8, Sleight of Hand +9, Tumble +6

Languages Common

Gear dagger or pitchfork

HOOKSHANKS GRULLER

CR 1

Male gnome rogue 1

NE Small humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +4, Spot +2

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14

(+3 armor, +2 Dexterity, +1 size)

hp 8 (1d6+2)

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

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft.

Melee kukri +0 (1d3/18-20) or

sap +0 (1d4 nonlethal)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st)

1/day—*speak with animals* (burrowing mammal, duration 1 minute)

TACTICS

During Combat Hookshanks orders the orphans to attack the PCs (requiring a successful DC 10 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 a real fight against intruders.

Morale If reduced to 4 hit points or less, 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 11, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +0; **Grp** -4

Feats Martial Weapon Proficiency (kukri)

Skills Bluff +3, Climb +3, Disguise +5, Hide +9, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (local) +4, Move Silently +5, Sleight of Hand +5

Languages Common, Gnome

SQ trapfinding

Gear studded leather armor, kukri, disguise kit, key to cabinet

THE FISHERY AT NIGHT

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 (Open Lock DC 20) and Yargin retires to area A5 for a full night's rest. The other two thugs, Giggles and Hookshanks, swap out semi-regular patrols through the fishery—one at about 9 at night, one at midnight, and one at 3 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 area A8 as he sees fit. His barks are quick to rouse the entire fishery.

Treasure: The cabinet contains six small pouches, four of which contain 50 cp. The remaining two each contain 50 sp.

A8. Fishery Floor (EL 3)

The floor here is slick with seawater, bits of seaweed, and fish blood—the air is thick with the accompanying scent. Wooden catwalks to the north and south allow access to the western part of the fishery, while the floor here is only five feet above the river below. An open bay to the south allows direct access to the sloppy, muddy water, while to the northwest stands an immense ten-foot-tall wooden vat, its sides caked and waterproofed with tar. Inside is a foul-looking mixture of chum, seawater, and who knows what else. To the east are stacked many barrels and crates, each marked in paint with a fish. Nearly two dozen small hammocks hang from under the catwalks, each with its own ratty blanket and pillow.

This room is where those of Lamm's Lambs who haven't earned enough of Gaedren's trust to go on pickpocketing excursions in the city spend much of their day. The immense vat is filled with a foul combination of seawater, seaweed, fish, and a weak acid 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, buckets of slurry are harvested and used to 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 as many orphans die to disease as they do to mistreatment at the hands of the thugs. A typical work day is 10 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 every Sunday Gaedren rewards the "good kids" with sweet pastries. These pastries are pretty much all the poor orphans have to look forward to—many of them have taken to eating the pastries one tiny bite a 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 for him. If no one has raised the alarm, Giggles does so when he spots the PCs and attempts to intimidate the orphans (Intimidate DC 10) into attacking them. Giggles lost an eye to a devilfish several years ago. His face still bears several angry pucker-shaped scars from the creature's suckers. He wears his scars with pride.

Although there are only eight orphans to be found in the fishery during the day, at night, all 26 of Gaedren's Lambs are here, 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.

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 make a DC 10 Balance check each round to avoid tripping over these brooms.

GIGGLES

CR 1

Male half-orc fighter 1

CE Medium humanoid

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +1, Spot +1

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14

(+3 armor, +1 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 12 (1d10+2)

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

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft.

Melee flail +5 (1d8+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.

Morale Giggles fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 6, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +4

Feats Weapon Focus (flail)

Skills Balance -1, Intimidate +3

Languages Common

Gear studded leather armor, light shield, flail

LAMM'S LAMBS (5)

CR 1/3

Human child expert 1 (see page 16)

hp 3 each

A9. Kraken's Folly

The rotten deck of the this ancient barge seems to be barely intact, its hull worn and thick with seaweed and barnacles. The barge 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. A single wooden door leading into the aft cabin bears a crude painting of a red fish on its surface.

This barge, the *Kraken's Folly*, was left moored here by the fishery's previous owners, and over the years it has become a part of the building—it's no longer seaworthy at all. Gaedren has little use for the ship, and no one's been out here since Gaedren moved in. With the exception of the deck within 10 feet of the stern, the surface here is quite weak. Any Medium or larger creature who walks upon the rotten wood breaks through. Unless he makes a DC 12 Reflex save, he falls 10 feet into the hold below (area A11), taking 1d6 points of damage.

A10. Spider Nest (EL 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. A narrow flight of stairs leads down to the south into the ship's hold.

Creatures: 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 that dwells in the *Kraken's Folly* hold. Highly aggressive, the spider lunges to attack the first person to enter the room.

DRAIN SPIDER

CR 1/4

Tiny monstrous spider (MM 288)

hp 2

A11. Kraken's Folly Hold (EL 1)

Dark and dank, the ship's hold smells of mildew. Several barrels, crates, and other containers lie stacked here and there, and a shallow layer of river water has collected in puddles. A soft scratching sound comes from behind a few of the crates.

The previous owner built a secret door into the hull of this ship, allowing access to area A12. Gaedren and his thugs don't know about this door, which can be discovered with a DC 22 Search check.

Creatures: A nest of four drain spiders dwells in this long abandoned hold—they're quite aggressive, and move to attack anything that enters this area.

DRAIN SPIDERS (4)

Tiny monstrous spider (MM 288)

hp 2 each

CR 1/4

A12. Underpier

A narrow space exists under the fishery, with about four feet of room between the floor of the building above and the languid, foamy river water below. Wooden pilings support the building, and moss and cobwebs hang thick from ropes and rusted chains between them. A wooden walkway floats on the river surface, winding along the inner wall of pilings that supports the building's frame above, leading from the sodden barge to the east all the way west to a wooden door that leads into an understructure below the fishery's landbound half.

When an orphan outlives his usefulness, it usually falls to Giggles to lower the poor child through the hole in the floor of area **A8** into a waiting skiff below, so he can be sent to area **A13** to speak to Gaedren. Such orphans are never seen again: after Gaedren expresses his displeasure, they're fed to his pet alligator.

If the jigsaw shark from area **A3** hasn't been dealt with, it could be spotted here, swimming in lazy circles under the fishery. It won't attack anyone in a skiff or on the walkway, but anyone who enters the water is fair game for the shark.

A13. Gaedren's Playground (EL 4)

The air in this large room is somewhat chilly and stinks of the river, no doubt thanks to a huge opening in the floor that drops away to the river shore five feet below. Several pilings emerge from the waters to support the roof above, 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's edge 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 entire chamber. Three tables, their tops heaped with additional clutter, stand amid this mess, while just west of that a wooden door seems to provide access to a walled-off section.

Gaedren can be found here during most hours of the day, painstakingly sorting through various bits of treasure, loot, coins, and refuse his pickpockets harvest for him every day. Every sunset, his little pickpockets return from a day on the streets, load their catch into buckets, and then lower those buckets via ropes to the walkway in area **A12**, where Gaedren harvests them and then brings them back here to sort. Most of what his Lambs catch ends up being classified as junk and tossed

aside, while the true finds go into his lockbox in area **A14** to be fenced by Yargin every month or so. Every few weeks, Gaedren loads all the "junk" 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 he's got means just such a trip is to happen soon.

The rusty manacles hanging from the ropes are used by Gaedren to feed his pet alligator, Gobblegut, who dwells in the waters below. Typically, he has Giggles hang the doomed orphan by the ankles and then slowly lowers the child down into Gobblegut's snapping jaws, stringing out the torment by making the child answer impossibly complex questions and dropping him a few inches each time he fails to answer.

Creature: Gaedren Lamm, hunchbacked thieving snake, plague on Korvosa's forgotten children, and all-around despicable wretch, can be found here. Gaedren sits at one of his tables and sorts the previous day's catch, painstakingly examining, appraising, and cataloging everything. Lamm is a jaundiced and bent corpse of a man, his eyes yellowed and skin speckled from age. His left leg carries a pronounced limp as he shuffles about. Lamm's old skin can't stand the chafe of armor, and thus he typically wears only a gray cotton robe. On his rare trips outside, he wears a tattered wide-brimmed sun hat to protect his bald head from sunburns.

Gaedren is well-schooled in the credo, "secrets can kill," and the miserable cur hasn't survived to become the stinking 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 at the first sign of trouble, abandoning his thugs to their fate. Today's Gaedren does not take this route—he elects to stay and fight, not out of any loyalty to his men but simply because he's grown too mean and greedy to give up what he thinks of as his.

Gaedren recognizes each of the PCs when they enter, and depending on his 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? I don't have to tell you the pay'll be more than fair."), to panic ("YOU! How the hell did you find me? No matter now, I suppose..."). Try to ensure that, if not before combat begins, then certainly during a fight with the old man, that Gaedren personally threatens or insults each of the PCs at least once. 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

Male old human expert 4/rogue 2

NE Medium humanoid

Init +5; Senses Listen +2, Spot +8

DEFENSE

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10

(+1 Dexterity)

hp 11 (6d6–12)

Fort –1, Ref +5, Will +6

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Spd 15 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +6 (1d4–3/19–20)

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. On one level he's aware of his flaws, 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 hopes that Gobblegut takes care of the PCs, but he continues firing crossbow bolts at them as long as he can, switching 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 3 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.

STATISTICS

Str 5, Dex 13, Con 7, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 15

Base Atk +4; Grp +1

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

Skills Appraise +12, Bluff +14, Forgery +12, Handle Animal +9, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (local) +12, Open Lock +10, Sleight of Hand +12, Spot +8

Languages Common, Goblin

SQ trapfinding

Gear masterwork dagger, masterwork hand crossbow with 10 bolts, ring of keys (for all locks in the fishery)

GOBBLEGUT

CR 2

Alligator (MM 271 [Medium crocodile])

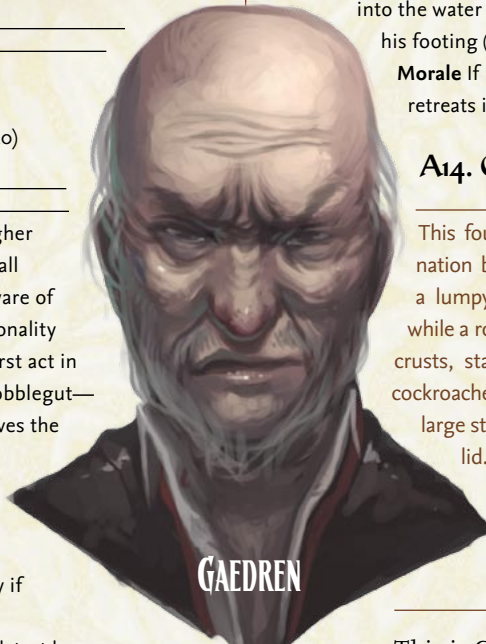
hp 22

TACTICS

During Combat If enraged (such as by being shot by Gaedren),

Gobblegut bellows and snaps at anyone within 5 feet of the edge of the pool. The alligator has to make a DC 15 Climb check to clamber up high enough to bite at someone this close to the edge, and even then, the cover provided grants his target a +2 bonus to 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 unless he's strong enough to hold his footing (Gobblegut weighs 500 pounds).

Morale If reduced to 7 hit points or less, Gobblegut retreats into the water to hide.



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 securing 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 a large nest of roaches.

The hatbox actually contains something shocking—Zellara's severed head, poorly preserved and decorated with unsightly makeup in a crude attempt to give her sagging flesh the semblance of life. A DC 10 Heal check is enough to note she must have been dead for weeks. Her Harrow deck sits in a smaller wooden box under the stump of her neck.

Treasure: Although the vast majority of the loot Gaedren's Little Lambs bring in is fenced relatively quickly, the old man has a habit of sorting through each batch for "keepers"—bits of treasure and finery that catch his eye. These he adds to his collection of treasures kept in the footlocker at the foot of his bed. The footlocker is locked, but it can be opened with one of several keys Gaedren carries or a successful DC 20 Open Lock check. Each of these treasures is wrapped in cloth and 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 worth 100 gp bearing the Cheliox coat of arms, 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 worth 150 gp bearing the inscription “For Emmah—the light in my nights,” a highly realistic and highly scandalous ivory figurine of two entwined succubi worth 450 gp, a masterwork shuriken, an adamantite arrowhead, an abalone-shell holy symbol of Shelyn worth 300 gp, a tiny 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.

Even to an untrained eye, this brooch is obviously the most valuable object in the entire collection. The circular gold brooch depicts a pseudodragon 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 1,000 gp, but more importantly, a DC 15 Knowledge (nobility & royalty) check reveals it is the possession of 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. Zellara’s spirit can sense great destinies in the PCs, and her guidance through this haunted Harrow deck becomes a key element in the coming adventures in this Adventure Path.

PART TWO: A CITY GONE MAD

As the PCs return to the streets from the fishery (likely to return to Zellara’s home to investigate), it quickly becomes apparent that something terrible has happened. Korvosa is in flames. Smoke rises on the horizon. The frantic clang of alarm bells sing out in harmony with a multifarious cacophony of screams, the clash of steel on steel, moans, and even the periodic detonation of arcane power. A wing of Sable Company griffon riders swoops overhead, angling toward Castle Korvosa at a breakneck pace. One of the badly wounded 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 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!” and “The usurper whore must die!” Through an alleyway, the party even spots a contingent of hellknights clad in dark

ZELLARA’S HARROW DECK

Aura moderate divination; CL 10th

Slot —; Price —; Weight 1 lb.

STATISTICS

Alignment CG; Ego 8

Senses 60 ft. vision and hearing

Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 13

Communication empathy

Lesser Powers *identify* 3/day, *major image* 1/day

Special Purpose defend Korvosa

DESCRIPTION

Hand-painted images decorate this Harrow deck, the frames gilt in silver so that under lighting they sparkle and flash. 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 itself 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. She can also identify a magic item’s properties if one of her cards is touched to it, as the spell *identify*, up to 3 times per day. When she does so, knowledge of the item identified manifests in the mind of one creature she chooses who is also holding at least one card, or she can opt to describe the item’s functions via a *major image*.

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. Consult the Harrow article on page 58 and the notes on Zellara’s reading on page 12 for details on how these potent divinations can help the PCs during this Adventure Path.

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—thus, no pricing information for the deck itself is needed.