

always chooses Jump checks to speed her flight whenever she can and takes risks on Balance, Climb, and Tumble checks when she's guaranteed to make the roll or 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 may attempt a single grapple check to grab and restrain her. Once Trinia is pinned, unconscious, or killed, the chase ends. Also, if Trinia manages to move off of card 15, the chase ends.

Ad Hoc Experience 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).

Trinia's Fate

If the PCs catch Trinia, she breaks down in tears, sobbing that she's being 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 if they believe her and what to do about it. If they turn her over to the guard, she's carted off to Castle Korvosa to await her fate. If, on the other hand, the PCs decide to let her go, she'll just be caught a few minutes later. Only by giving her a place to hide can the PCs prevent her capture. If Trinia escapes the PCs (or if they catch her and then decide to let her go), she doesn't escape the law. Not long after she moves off of card 15, she's spotted by a patrol of Sable Company marines who swoop in on hippogriff back to arrest her and carry her off to Castle Korvosa.

PART SEVEN: THE DEAD WARRENS

With Trinia's capture (or her vanishing, if the PCs decide to take pity on her and hide her from the law), things in Korvosa once again calm down. Yet during the recent mob fervor and riots revolving around the queen's announcement that the king's assassin had been identified, a group of racist thugs took the opportunity to use the unrest to fuel their own agenda.

Tensions between Korvosa and the Shoanti have existed since the city's foundation some 300 years ago, when Chelish colonists attacked and defeated the Shoanti tribes who dwelt in the region destined to become the largest city in Varisia. Forced to retreat and relocate into the inhospitable Cinderlands northeast of Korvosa, the Shoanti persevered and even flourished, and many among them preach that the time to take back their ancestral homeland is nigh. Yet in Korvosa itself, the Shoanti seek a more peaceful accord. Led by a visionary shaman 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 people can coexist in peace.

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 ancient shaman. 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 misplaced vigilantism.

When the PCs report to Field Marshal Cressida Kroft after capturing Trinia, 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."

A Missing Body

Cressida Kroft isn't alone when the PCs arrive at her office—with her is a tall, rail-thin Shoanti man of 60 winters. He leans heavily on a walking stick, the polished femur of some giant beast crowned with a firepelt cougar's skull. He wears a shirt decorated with countless jangling animal bones, many painstakingly scrawled with dozens of tiny symbols and glyphs. A bearskin cloak is draped about his bony shoulders, and warpaint in the shape of a skull decorates his face. The Shoanti's eyes are milky as if he were blind, though he sees better than most men half his age. He is never without his familiar, a regal red-feathered razor crow named Eats-Eyes. He regards the PCs impassively while Cressida introduces him as Thousand Bones, a Way-Keeper for the Skoan-Quah, the Clan of the Skull. Cressida bids the PCs sit, tells them about the situation with the mob violence and the dead Shoanti, 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 yours, yet it seems each day we see new examples of how your 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 gods, 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 can 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 named Rolth, a criminal to both our people. I have spoken with the spirits, and they have revealed to me that Gaekhen's body has been taken to a place below your boneyard, a place the spirits call the Dead Warrens.

“With this knowledge, I could surely lead a group of my finest warriors into your boneyard 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 to await the delivery of his grandson's body. Field Marshal Kroft apologizes for the man's behavior, but to a great extent 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. Normally, Kroft would contact the Church of Pharamasma to organize an expedition into one of the warrens under the city graveyard, but the PCs have proven capable, and they were Kroft's first nomination for the problem. 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? “He's long been a thorn in my side. A failed Academiae 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 Academiae 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. We suspect he's responsible for nearly a dozen slayings, each involving mutilation to the body, but to date we haven't been able to find him or locate his lair. 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.”

What are the Dead Warrens? “Korvosa's Gray District is 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 Pharamasma, yet the Gray District is a large place and the tunnels below are vast and tangled. The Pharasmen 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, chambers that lie under Potter's Ward.”

Where are 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 used to be 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.”



The Dead Warrens

Korvosa's vast graveyard, a place known as the Gray District, is a mournful place even by day. Alone in the city, this place is quiet and calm in the face of the civil unrest, yet this calm is an unnatural stillness in the air, almost as if the graveyard were preparing itself for a vast influx of new dead. Certainly, this ominous feeling is nowhere 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 mausoleum described by Elkaris is a relatively simple task. No sign of Gaekhen's body remains in the area, although a DC 15 Search check reveals the presence of a man's tracks a wheelbarrow trail. More interestingly, several smaller humanoid tracks, each bearing only four toes, clutter the site as well. These tracks lead into the mausoleum itself, where a DC 15 Search check reveals a poorly hidden secret trap door in the floor that leads down into the dark. A DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check reveals these tracks to be derro footprints.

The Dead Warrens themselves are not Rolth's primary lair, but rather one of several laboratory sites he maintains throughout the city. Currently elsewhere in Korvosa securing key components for the completion of his first flesh golem (a *scroll of limited wish*), Rolth left the Dead Warrens under the watchful eye of a small band of derro whose services he acquired after agreeing to take on one of their number as an apprentice. This apprentice is a gifted necromancer himself. Named Vreeg, the derro 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.

The Dead Warrens are dimly lit by patches of eerily glowing mold, filling the chambers here with a cold blue light. These patches of mold are cultivated by the derro, 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 of the 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 adventure.

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 man's body he needs to finish his flesh golem's body—the head. The rest of the body (the legs, the torso, 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.

KORVOSA'S DERRO PROBLEM

Most native Korvosans have heard stories about the wererats, otyughs, and goblins said to haunt the deeper Vaults under the city, but few have heard of the pervasive derro. These small, three-fingered, blue-skinned menaces operate in semi-independent groups beneath several regions of the city. The largest of these groups live under Gray District, the Longacre Building, and Thief Camp.

Derro are sometimes responsible for mysterious disappearances (to say nothing of confused reappearances), as well as cattle and pet mutilations. When those kidnapped by derro suddenly and inexplicably return to Korvosa, they frequently have only vague and horrifying memories of the missing time. They speak of bizarre experiments, painful tortures, and an ever-present pale blue light. The extent of derro activity under Korvosa and the exact nature of their plans are unknown, and while their role is small in Curse of the Crimson Throne, the unstable times afflicting the city do make the menaces more bold in their activities.

D1. Ossuary (EL 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—human bones mostly, but here and there smaller bones might be from halfings, 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 into the wall, providing access to a tunnel.

This area was one of many ossuaries used to store bones. It was abandoned when the church of Pharama 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 derro alone, Rolth animated several skeletons and posted them in this room. The skeletons lurk in the bone pits—six 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 DC 15 Spot check before they clatter to unlife and clamber up the stairs to attack intruders. The skeletons pursue foes throughout the Dead Warrens, but not up into Potter's Ward above.

HUMAN SKELETONS (6)

hp 6 each (MM 226)

CR 1/3

OWLBEAR SKELETON

hp 32 (MM 226)

CR 2

The Dead Warrens



D2. Crawlspace

These tunnels are used by the derro to move quickly from room to room. The secret doors that hide these tunnels can be discovered with a DC 20 Search check.

D3. Derro Cave (EL 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: This room is used by Vreeg's four derro followers as a place to rest, relax, and take their meals. At any one time, two can be found here, playing a game of Rat Squish (a needlessly 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 derro notice intruders, they take up their weapons and attack.

DERRO (2)
hp 16 each (MM 49)

CR 3

D4. Corpse Dump (EL 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 into the Dead Warrens during a dark night with promises of a regular diet of delicious discards, and this is now how the derro dispose of extra body parts. When the PCs first enter this room, the otyugh is in the process of enjoying this latest delivery of body parts, taking its time eating as it wallows in the mud. When it notices the PCs, it cries out, "WARM FOOD!" in a delighted slobbery voice as it lumbers forth to attack.

OTYUGH
hp 36 (MM 204)

CR 4

Treasure: Among the still-uneaten body parts on the island are the broken legs and hips of a human—legs decorated with bold Shoanti tattoos. These legs once belonged to Gaekhen.

The mud itself is only a few feet deep, and takes quite some time to sift through. On a successful DC 25 Search check, though, determined searchers are rewarded with a few trinkets left over by the otyugh's meals: an amber necklace worth 350 gp, a silver dagger, and a wax-sealed elixir of vision in a metal flask.

D5. Exsanguination Chamber (EL 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 experiments, particularly golem construction, work best with body parts that have been drained of blood. The hutch contains his blood draining "tools"—a nest of six stirges harvested from the Shingles. As the PCs arrive, a lone derro toils in here over the freshly dead body of a vagrant—the derro has just placed the fourth stirge on the body and reacts to intruders with a shriek. His first act in combat is to yank open the stirge hutch. The four stirges 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 his allies there. If he finds them dead, he abandons his post, fleeing down the western tunnel.

DERRO

hp 16 (MM 49)

CR 3

STIRGES (6; 4 NONCOMBATANT)

hp 5 each (MM 236)

CR 1/2

D6. Skull Corridor (EL 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: Three of the skulls along the walls here are actually constructs known as necrophidiuses. These creatures resemble skeletal snakes but with human skulls for heads. These three necrophidiuses are in fact a less dangerous variant than those normally encountered—creations of Rolth's he built in anticipation of the day he could craft a proper necrophidius. 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 (see below) in this room 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.

LESSER NECROPHIDIUS (3)

Variant necrophidius (*Tome of Horrors Revised* 276)

N Medium construct

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +0, Spot +0

CR 2

WHERE'S ROLTH?

Rolth is not scheduled to appear in this adventure, even if the PCs end up taking more than a day to complete their mission. Rather, Rolth returns to the Dead Warrens some time after the PCs leave, only to find his laboratory destroyed. Enraged, it takes Rolth some time to discover who was responsible, but when he does, the PCs hear from him. More details appear in the next adventure in *Curse of the Crimson Throne*, "Seven Days to the Grave."

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13

(+2 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 25 (1d10+20)

Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +0

DR 5/bludgeoning; Immune construct traits

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee bite +2 (1d6 plus paralysis)

Special Attacks dance of death

TACTICS

During Combat The necrophidiuses attack the closest target.

Morale The necrophidiuses fight until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 15, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 12

Base Atk +0; Grp +0

Feats Weapon Finesse

Skills Move Silently +10

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Dance of Death (Ex) A lesser necrophidius can entrance opponents by swaying back and forth. Those within 30 feet viewing the creature must succeed on a DC 11 Will save or be unable to act for 2d4 rounds. Victims are dazed (as the *daze* spell) for the duration of the effect and cannot take any action (other than defending themselves). This is a mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Paralysis (Su) A living creature bitten by a lesser necrophidius must succeed on a DC 11 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1d4 rounds. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Trap: Several of the skulls on the walls here are magical traps. 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 derro 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

Type magical

Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 25

CR 1



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)

D7. Alchemy Lab (EL 3)

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 of rendered fats have spilled over 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 of 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 less than 5 hit points.

DERRO

hp 16 (MM 49)

CR 3

D8. Store Room (EL 4)

The door to this room is boarded over, and can be broken down with a DC 24 Strength check or 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 D10 and made its way here, smashing a good portion of the equipment in area D7 before Rolth managed to trap it in this room. To his shopping list, he added all of the alchemical gear just smashed—a delay that 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
hp 42 (see page 78)

CR 4

D9. Prisoner Pits (EL 3)

This foul-smelling cavern is bordered on three sides by ten-foot-deep pits. It is from these pits that the rancid smell of excrement and decay fills the air—each pit contains a few heaps of moldy straw, a wooden trough of filthy water, a few rotting body parts, and a couple still-living prisoners.

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

Creatures: 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

Male ogrekin human fighter 2 (*Pathfinder* #3 90)
CN Medium giant

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen -1, Spot -1

DEFENSE

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

hp 23 (2d10+8)

Fort +7, **Ref** +1, **Will** -1

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +8 (1d4+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 barefisted, pummeling foes mercilessly.

Morale Cabbagehead fights to the death.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +7

Feats Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike)

Skills Swim +10

Languages Common

SQ ogrekin deformities

Other Gear +1 studded leather armor

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ogrekin Deformities (Ex)

Cabbagehead's head is monstrously deformed and his skin is thick and blubbery. This increases his natural armor bonus to +5, but his unfortunate deformities reduce his Intelligence by a further 2 points.



CABBAGEHEAD

D10. Library

Two wide, freestanding bookshelves stand in this room, the shelves filled with row upon row of tomes and scrolls.

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. Knowledge checks made on these topics while using these books as resources gain a +2 circumstance bonus.

Treasure: 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 fat 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's built several carrion golems over the years (most of which he's sold to interested parties or uses to guard other hideouts)—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.

This room is used by Rolth to rest and relax as the need takes him, a place to do so without having to abandon his laboratory during long sessions. He has other laboratories elsewhere in Korvosa (see *Pathfinder* #8)—as a result, he keeps little of value here.

D13. Vreeg's Chamber (EL 7)

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

The torso and arm belonged to Gaekhen. Vreeg claimed them before Rolth could discard them along with his legs in the corpse dump (area D4), and although he's not quite able yet 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—any turn undead attempt or the application of any amount of magical healing is enough to disrupt it and revert the torso to inert dead flesh.

Creature: The derro Vreeg dwells here, where he lives a relatively spartan and simple life. When Rolth is present, the derro follows around the human 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 a day tormenting Cabbagehead and the other derro 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

CR 6

Male derro necromancer 5

NE Small monstrous humanoid

Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +2, Spot -4

Aura info

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 16, flat-footed 14

(+1 deflection, +4 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size)

hp 60 (8 HD; 3d8+5d4+34)

Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +11

Immune confusion, insanity; SR 15

Weaknesses vulnerability to sunlight

OFFENSE

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

Melee mwk dagger +7 (1d3/19-20 plus poison)

Special Attacks poison use, sneak attack +1d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd)

At will—*darkness*, *ghost sound* (DC 14)

1/day—*daze* (DC 14), *sound burst* (DC 16)

Spells Prepared (CL 4th; +10 ranged touch)

3rd—*extended false life* (already cast), *fly*, *vampiric touch*

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

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

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

Specialty necromancy; Prohibited 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 he's cast *blindness* on.

Morale Vreeg fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 3, Cha 18

Base Atk +5; Grp +1

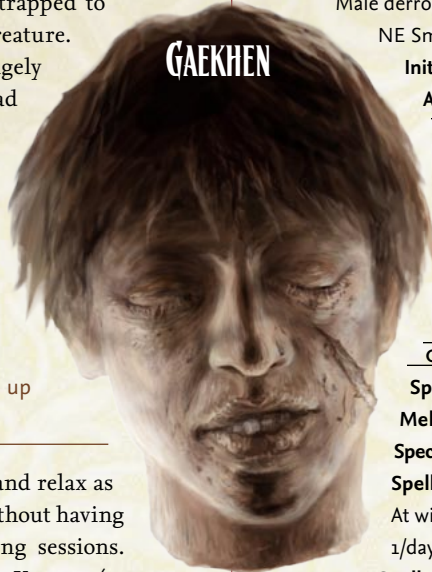
Feats Combat Casting, Craft Wand, Extend Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy)

Skills Bluff +10, Concentration +8, Hide +14, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Listen +2, Move Silently +14, Spellcraft +10

Languages Common, Terran, Undercommon

SQ madness

Combat Gear *wand of ghoul touch* (44 charges), blue whinnis (5 doses; Fort DC 14; 1 Con/unconsciousness); **Other Gear** masterwork dagger, *robe of bones* (human skeleton, goblin zombie, human zombie), *ring of protection* +1



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*.

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 deanimating the torso if needed). This is for the best, for 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.



VREEG

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

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 a common man. The overall feel of the event is that of a grand ball or party, not an assassin's public execution. Give the PCs time to rub shoulders and interact with the crowd—if you have the *Guide to Korvosa*, feel free to introduce the party to whatever personalities you find most interesting and entertaining from that book, though most should be of noble birth or at least extremely wealthy to be proffered an invite. One notable personage not in attendance is Vencarlo Orisini, although given his outspoken disdain for the queen, this shouldn't arouse any suspicions or concerns.

Queen Ileosa emerges amid a great flourish and pomp as heralds announce her arrival with a fanfare of music and drums. This queen is not the subdued mourner the

PCs met earlier in this adventure—Queen Ileosa 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 servants. Chief among these is Sabina, her expression neutral but ever watchful for possible problems in the crowd. Ileosa takes her seat in a high throne-like chair at one end of the public courtyard, while the headman's block stands ominously at the other. The executioner is a towering, muscular man wearing an executioner's helm and idly holding an immense axe—he remains motionless until his services are called upon. If the PCs attempt to catch Ileosa's attention, she coldly ignores them as if she doesn't even remember who they were, although Sabina does take note and from that point on keeps an eye on them.

As sunset draws near, the expectant excitement in the crowd builds. When the ominous beating of a single large drum begins, the assembled gawkers fall silent. The drum sets the pace for Trinia's procession to the headsman's block. As they reach the headsman's block, one of the guards removes Trinia's shackles and the hood, revealing a very frightened woman who nonetheless bravely holds back her tears, if only barely. Trinia is led up onto the platform, her arms bound behind her back by a leather cord, and she is forced to kneel over the wooden block before the headsman as Queen Ileosa stands and addresses the crowd.

"Fellow Korvosans! You have suffered greatly these past few weeks. Homes have burned, family members have died, fortunes have been lost. I feel your suffering, for not only have I lost a beloved husband, but with each riot, each burning home, each act of anarchy, my heart bleeds a little more. This has been a trying time for us, yet the torment is at an end. Before you

DIDN'T WE HIDE TRINIA?

Whether Trinia was sheltered by the PCs or not, Queen Ileosa needs a scapegoat. If Trinia isn't available for the queen to execute, she simply has Sabina select another prisoner from the dungeons—this prisoner need only look like Trinia, since the audience wouldn't recognize her on sight anyway. Ileosa even has the replacement prisoner *feble-minded* to ensure silence. Queen Ileosa announces that Trinia has been caught and the adventure proceeds as normal, although in this case, the PCs know that there's trickery afoot.



QUEEN
ILEOSA ARABASTI

is the face of your anguish and pain. Do not be deceived by this murderer's timid nature—she is a black-hearted assassin, a seductress and sinner, a viper amidst us all. I offer you all her death as a salve against the hatred and hurt you have suffered. Her death will not rebuild Korvosa, nor will it bring back the king, yet tomorrow will be a new dawn—a dawn over a city ready to rise from the edge of anarchy to become stronger than ever before!

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

As the headsman hefts his axe, the already silent crowd freezes in anticipation. Yet just before he swings, the headsman gives a strange little grunt and staggers. His raised axe falters as he reaches with one hand to the small of his back and then brings it to his face, the fingers dripping with blood. An instant later, he cries out in pain and drops the axe as a dagger embeds itself in the back of his other hand. The axe sinks itself in the block inches from Trinia's head, and the headsman doubles over in pain, revealing a second dagger that's already embedded in the small of his back. Trinia rises to her knees, glancing up at the executioner in shock as a scream echoes through the crowded courtyard: “By the gods! It's Blackjack!”

An instant later, a man dressed in a hooded cloak and leather armor springs onto the executioner's block. He wields a rapier in one hand and a dagger in the other. Blackjack cuts the bonds on Trinia's wrists and then throws the dagger down to pin the executioner's left foot to the wood below. He quickly helps Trinia to her feet and then briefly 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 petulantly call a monarchy! Long live Korvosa! Down with the Queen!”

Blackjack's words spread like fire, causing the crowd to erupt into a frenzy of activity. Some demand that he release the assassin while others call for the queen to step down from the Crimson Throne. 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 once again over Blackjack, who seems to have momentarily forgotten the man in his apparent delight at having forced the queen to flee.

What happens here is up to the PCs. Don't run this encounter as a battle—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 they do little



to impact the scene, Blackjack notices the headsman in time and ducks out of the way of his axe, dragging Trinia behind him and clambering up a hanging banner to a nearby wall, Trinia scampering behind them. As the two reach the wall, he swiftly drinks a *potion of feather fall*, bows to the crowd while backlit by the setting sun, and then both he and Trinia leap from the wall to make their escape into the city.

If the PCs attempt to help Blackjack, either by warning him about the headsman or attacking the executioner themselves, describe how those actions seem to 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, either by restraining him, attacking him, or even taking Trinia's execution into their own hands. 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 adventures to come.

Escaping the chaos after Blackjack's exit should be relatively simple. Furthermore, 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. The PCs might be among these folks—for now, let them wonder just how much the queen actually does care for Korvosa's well being. 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—this 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. And death follows with it.