



WHERE ARE ALL THE HEALERS?

Page 138 of the DMG presents a way to determine how many characters of each class reside in a city. According to this method, the average population of a large city like Korvosa includes 3 12th-level clerics, 6 6th-level clerics, 12 3rd-level clerics, and 24 1st-level clerics. Of these clerics, only nine are of high enough level to cast *remove disease*. Even including the average of 24 paladins—of which there are only three of a high enough level to possess the *remove disease* ability—and disorganized numbers of rangers, druids, and visiting NPCs with access to healing magic, this is still less than 0.1 percent of the city's population. With far more victims contracting blood veil every day, it's easy to see how the city's curative magics are quickly overwhelmed, even if every healer in the city were casting the maximum possible number of *remove disease* spells each day. To a certain extent, wands and potions and scrolls can bolster these numbers, but only as long as supplies hold out. When faced with a plague as virulent as blood veil, magic alone is not enough to save a city.

—F. Wesley Schneider

both known scholars of disease. With their aid, he masterminded the creation and advent of Korvosa's plague. Currently, he acts as a go-between for the queen, the Red Mantis, and the cult of Urgathoa hidden beneath the city. Publicly appointed as the Queen's Physician, Davaulus pantomimes the acts of a concerned healer devoted to his royal patron and the well-being of her city, while in truth, he and his Queen's Physicians plan to spread blood veil to every corner of Korvosa, relieving the city of its excess population of undesirables.

Dr. Davaulus's supposedly handpicked cadre of doctors are as deadly and false as he. Each of these men is a worshiper of Urgathoa, although they bear no evidence of their religion and their magic masks disguise their evil alignments. Expecting their appearances to generate some concern, the doctors lift up their masks, showing that they are indeed humans if asked (although this does not count as removing the masks, allowing them to still benefit from the magic items' effects). Each claims to be a local with some knowledge of healing or a country doctor rushed in from Harse, Palin's Cove, or Veldraine as soon as word of the spreading disease reached them.

PART FOUR: PESTILENCE

The plague has come to Korvosa, and while the new queen and her advisors bicker over how to address the calamity, on the streets fear takes hold. As the number of sick grows, people take desperate measures to avoid the plague, shutting themselves within their homes, shunning the infected, or even seeking escape from the city. As the Guard has yet to receive any official word on how to treat the ill, Korvosa's

most impoverished areas—particularly Old Korvosa—manifest district-wide symptoms, with blister-faced beggars and hacking common folk visible on every corner.

The majority of the encounters the PCs have through the rest of the adventure rely on them seeking to help the people of the city. With the Korvosan Guard doing its best to keep the peace and the church of Abadar busy tending to the ill, there are few with the time to seek out the PCs and ask for their aid. If the PCs look for ways to help, though, they easily discover a host of plague-related perils afflicting the city. The following six encounters present various ways the PCs can help fight the plague and slowly unravel the sinister source behind its spread. While each of these encounters is assigned a specific hook in which the PCs could get involved, feel free to adjust these hooks as befits your campaign. In any case, these encounters occur in no precise order, allowing you to run them as you please or leaving the PCs to pick and choose which situations most deserve their attentions.

Body Count

Through the efforts of Queen Ileosa, the Red Mantis, and the Cult of Urgathoa, hundreds of Korvosans are destined to die before the blood veil plague runs its course. Their efforts target the poor and weak among the city's populace—a group that numbers in the thousands. With the aid of Dr. Davaulus's Queen's Physicians and the plots of their Urgathoan allies, approximately 5,000 Korvosans are destined to succumb before the plague runs its course if the PCs do nothing to fight it.

Throughout this part of the adventure, each encounter ends in a "Body Count" section. These descriptions detail what results the PCs' efforts have on the estimated death toll of 5,000 souls. You should record the total number of lives the PCs save, as this not only provides a rough estimate of the plague's total casualties at the adventure's end, but serves as a guide of how effective the PCs were in combating the plague.

A. The Hungry Dead

Hook: Field Marshal Cressida Kroft hears a disturbing rumor that some of the lazier northern plague carters aren't delivering their bodies to the Gray District as ordered, but are instead disposing of them in one of several secluded alleys. She sends the PCs to investigate one of these sites—Racker's Alley.

In the days since the start of the plague, the disposal of bodies became a great concern, leading the Korvosan Guard to contract dozens of plague carts to collect the dead and see them buried in the city's Gray District or transported to wards where they can be safely burnt. It wasn't long, however, before a few carters in North Point grew tired of their long treks across the city bearing the

Attention!

By Decree of Her Royal Majesty, the Radiant Queen Illeosa I, all citizens and members of the Korvosan Guard are to aid and admit the newly established Queen's Physicians in this time of urgency. These royal agents will extend healing to the sick and organize defense against the spreading affliction known as "blood veil." They are to be allowed access to any home or building they deem necessary in the course of their duties. All those suffering from disease or disorder are to submit themselves to the Physicians for treatment.

To aid in the duties of the Queen's Physicians, know that the order of the Gray Maidens has been established to provide military support as needed. The Maidens answer directly to the Crimson Throne, and will be called upon as necessary to augment and strengthen the peace where simple city guards will not suffice.

Impeding or distracting the duties of the Queen's Physicians or the Gray Maidens is punishable by imprisonment. Impersonating one of the Queen's Physicians is punishable by death. Knowingly harboring or hiding the infected is punishable by death. Purposefully spreading blood veil is punishable by torture, then death.

The Queen's Physicians will be making rounds of every city district henceforth until Her Majesty deems this misfortune abated.



Handout 1

disease-ravaged dead. That's when someone thought of Racker's Alley.

Racker's Alley, with its strange shape and shadowy corners, has long been a site of illicit exchanges, quiet murders, and criminal business near the eastern edge of North Point. Already shunned by the locals and constantly hidden from sunlight by looming buildings and the nearby wall, the alley made a perfect dumping spot. Although few living people notice the bodies accumulating in the alley, the same cannot be said of the unliving—a group of four vampire spawn has taken up residence in the alley.

These four are some of hundreds of such undead slaves to one Conte Senir Tiriac, a powerful vampire who rules Varno County in the nation of Ustalav many miles east of Varisia. When the Red Mantis contacted him to request the services of one of the Conte's most valued assistants, a nosferatu named Ramoska Arkminos, the Conte agreed, seeing it as an opportunity to establish a presence beyond his normal reach. In addition to Ramoska, though, he sent along four of his own vampire spawn to serve the nosferatu as assistants. Of course, Ramoska knew they were also sent with him to serve as observers, to make sure that the nosferatu did not

betray or compromise the Conte's interests. Ramoska had little interest in keeping the four half-feral vampire spawn nearby as a result, and allowed them free reign in Korvosia's alleys and sewers. They eventually settled in the crawlspace beneath Giotorri's Toys, a rundown shop abutting the alley here, and have all but forgotten their charge to keep an eye on Ramoska.

Breaking a hole in the wall the shop's backroom shares with the alley and disguising it with corpses, the feral vampire spawn come and go as they please, feeding on and piling their victims anonymously among the alley's other dead in an attempt to disguise the remnants of their presence.

A1. Racker's Alley (EL 4 or 8)

The high walls of the surrounding buildings throw this awkwardly bent alley into constant shadow. Although littered with garbage and filth, the refuse isn't the most stomach-turning trait of this rundown sideway. Heaped against a bent wooden wall rises a pile of more than three dozen plague victims, their faces blistered and flushed, eyes open and staring. The scent of death is overpowered by the reek of rot, suggesting that some of these corpses have lain here for days.

Both lazy workers manning the plague carts and the vampire spawn deposit corpses in this shadowy alley. More than 40 corpses lie piled against the eastern wall. A DC 16 Search of the bodies reveals that several bear twin puncture wounds on their necks and wrists. Any Search result of the bodies that exceeds DC 14 also reveals a hole in the eastern wall, leading into area A2. The bodies themselves remain contagious, of course—anyone who comes into contact with them is exposed to blood veil.

Creatures: During the day, Racker's Alley is thick with fat flies and rats gorging themselves on the corpses here. At night, one vampire spawn hides on the roof above the alley, standing guard over the lair below. The 20-foot-tall walls impose a –2 penalty on Spot checks to notice the vampire spawn from the alley floor. Once the vampire spawn sees anyone touching the pile of bodies, it shrieks an alarm and clambers down to attack. Its three companions join the fight in 1d3 rounds.

VAMPIRE SPAWN
hp 29 (MM 253)

CR 4

A2. Workshop (EL 8)

Dozens of crooked glass eyes—hollow and crazed—glare from the heads of malformed and half-carved dolls lining skewed workroom shelves. Rat-gnawed stuffed aurochs, disembodied doll limbs, miniature rolling elephants, unseaworthy wooden ships, and crooked blocks illustrated with deformed or poorly painted animals fill bins and racks about the room. A cracked wooden door leads to the north, while a rickety trap door breaks the sawdust-covered floor to the east. In one corner lies the drying corpse of an old bald man amid the wood chips, rusty tools, and oily rags of a scored workbench.

From here, for more than 20 years, the artless ex-con Rodolfo Giotorri created his horrible toys. Now, he lies dead and desiccated under the uncaring eyes of his deformed creations. A DC 15 Search check of Giotorri's body reveals eight puncture wounds up and down his neck, as well as a ring of small keys, including those to the shop's front door and the lockbox in area A3.

The trap door leads into a 3–1/2-foot-tall dirt-floored crawlspace with the same dimensions as the room above. Medium creatures treat the area as difficult terrain. Amid numerous blocks of various types of mundane wood lie four simple but solid coffins. Dry, gray soil from Ustalav fills each.

Creatures: During the day, the four vampire spawn minions rest here. Stealthy PCs might be able to sneak up on the resting vampire spawn, who take a –10 penalty on their Listen checks for being asleep. While the PCs might be able to get the drop on one vampire spawn

while he's helpless, the creature does a great deal of thrashing and howling even if one of the proscribed methods of slaying a vampire spawn is used (see page 253 of the MM). This clamor wakes the three other vampire spawn, who fight for their unives against the trespassers. Both areas A1 and A2 are shadowy enough that the vampire spawn can move through them without harm, even during daylight hours.

VAMPIRE SPAWN (4)
hp 29 each (MM 253)

CR 4

Treasure: A DC 20 Search reveals several items amid the soil filling the four vampire spawns' coffins. Three leather pouches hold a combined 300 gp and 15 pp, all of Ustalavic minting, a *ring of jumping* sculpted to look like intertwined brass spider legs, and a set of bone *pipes of haunting*.

Body Count: By slaying or driving off the vampire spawn and confirming that Racker's Alley is being used as a dumping ground (and therefore allowing the Guard to take action against such use in the future), the PCs save 200 citizens.

A3. Giotorri's Toys

Unbalanced stuffed animals, poorly equipped toy soldiers, and dolls exhibiting myriad accidental deformities stare blankly out of the filth-smearred front window of this toy store showroom. Several heavy-looking kites dangle purple and crimson tails from the ceiling above, and a dollhouse recreating Castle Korvos's intimidating towers dominates a table in the room's center. Festooned with tiny bells, the shop's entrance stands to the north, across from a counter cluttered with dusty candies and a doorway marked "Private."

Closed since the earliest days of the plague, the showroom of Giotorri's Toys lies under a thin layer of dust. The vampires taking up residence in the shop have largely left the cheap and defective wares here alone, giving curious passersby no reason to investigate. The front door is locked, requiring the correct key from area A2 or a DC 18 Open Lock check to open.

Treasure: While the hundreds of toys technically have value, they brought Giotorri little wealth and promise to enrich the lives of others even less. A DC 14 Search check turns up a rusty, pathetically jingling lockbox behind the counter. A DC 12 Open Lock check reveals 2 gp, 8 sp, 22 cp, a silver tooth (worth 1 gp), and a brass key shaped like the symbol of Abadar and bearing the number 261. A DC 16 Knowledge (religion) check recognizes the key as belonging to a private deposit box at an Abadarian temple.

If taken to a clerk at the Grand Vault of Abadar, the key leads a priest to fetch Giotorri's life savings and

effects from his youthful days as a thief: 68 gp, a set of masterwork thieves tools, a pair of *boots of striding and springing*, and a sheaf of papers detailing the creation of dozens of poorly designed toys.

B. The Color of Death

Hook: A woman named Vendra claims to have discovered a cure for blood veil. The PCs are asked by Ishani to visit her perfumery to determine if her claim is legitimate, offering them 1,000 gp in payment for a full report.

Lavender, one of the better-known and noted perfume boutiques in Korvosa, stands amid a row of tightly packed shops just off of Summoning Street. Owned by an opportunistic Chelaxian woman named Vendra Loaggri, the perfumery has always had a reputation for avant garde creations and brazen promotions—infamous memories of the “Free Imp with Every Purchase” stunt still linger among residents of the Heights. With fear of blood veil running rampant throughout Korvosa, Vendra conceived of her most ingenious publicity stunt ever: a cure.

Lavender’s Luxuriant Liniment is the everyday elixir of the common Korvosan. It wakes you up in the morning and calms you down at night. It soothes aching joints, tired feet, sore hands, and throbbing heads. It takes the pain out of cuts, burns, bruises, and blemishes. It smells like chastity, confidence, and respectability, and tastes like honeyed dewdrops over snow clouds. Most miraculously, though, Lavender’s Luxuriant Liniment dispels blisters, minimizes swelling, calms the complexion, and erases all symptoms of the common blood veil complaint.

And it’s all a complete sham.

Turning from an unscrupulous merchant to a two-bit snake-oil saleswoman, Vendra expects to collect a small fortune from desperate Korvosans and be long gone before anyone realizes her prosaic potion’s main ingredient is river water.

Lavender

If the PCs pay a visit to Lavender during the day, a queue of eager Korvosans stands in a line that stretches nearly four blocks from the perfumery’s distinctive amethyst-shaded windows. Many of these people look healthy, but several bear the obvious hacking, blistered symptoms of blood veil. The line threads through the street and into the store, where customers pay 2 gp for a dose of Lavender’s Luxuriant Liniment. Vendra greets each new customer from behind the shop counter, leaving the actual sales to two pretty young shop girls. Two large, well-dressed men with purple cravats discreetly hold saps and keep their eyes on the shop’s patrons, ready to put down any trouble at a nod from Vendra.

Coming at night, PCs discover only a slightly different scene. A line of more than 50 customers camps outside

Lavender’s front door, waiting until the shop opens the next morning to buy their doses of Vendra’s elixir. One of the shop’s burly guards remains on duty through the night, watchful for thieves and keeping overly zealous customers in line.

In addition to Lavender, Vendra Loaggri owns two apartments situated behind her shop. One serves as her personal residence. The other looks condemned from the outside—its door even being boarded over with dusty timbers—but in actuality it serves as the laboratory in which she creates Lavender’s Luxuriant Liniment. A secret door between Vendra’s bedroom and this hidden laboratory allows her to create doses of her elixir unseen.

Three times a night, two of Vendra’s men leave through the front door of the building rolling a sturdy barrel. They take it all the way down to the Jegarre River and fill it with water (although sometimes they get lucky and just replace it with a full rain barrel). They then bring the water back to Lavender, disappearing with it into Vendra’s apartment, where it is sneaked into **D5** and used to make the shop’s phony cure-all. PCs who stand watch through the night should have no trouble spotting and following Vendra’s men, although the men know their employer wants them to be discreet and they have orders to rough up anyone who proves too interested in their business.

B1. Perfumery (EL 3 or 7)

A menagerie of heady scents twists throughout the cramped but stylish perfumery. A dizzying assortment of bottles—from gaudy ceramic containers to graceful crystalline vials—lines a variety of lace- and ribbon-strewn tables, shelves, racks, and an eye-catching display in the wide front window. Across from the front door’s orchid-tinted glass panes runs a long counter, stacked high with hundreds of simple clay phials bearing round, magenta stoppers. Behind the counter, violet flourishes swoop across a sign reading, “Lavender’s Luxuriant Liniment: Either You’ve Got It, or You’ve Had It.”

Although Vendra once prided herself on stocking only the rarest and most expensive scents, her current venture has led her to put a large portion of her stock into storage, making room for her Luxuriant Liniment. Paying the 2 gp—or otherwise obtaining a vial—nets a character one dose of Vendra’s cure-all, a pleasant-smelling oily fluid with a bitter taste. By spending an hour with an alchemist’s lab, a PC who makes a DC 22 Craft (alchemy) check can discern the elixir’s components: sugar, cheap perfume, and river water.

Creatures: If the PCs enter the perfumery during the day, Vendra and the majority of her staff are here with a line of customers stretching from the door to the counter. Confronting Vendra while she has customers quickly



turns into a messy affair. A consummate saleswoman and fast-talker, the shop owner can talk herself out of most accusations. Even if she can't, though—such as when confronted with someone who reveals her ingredients, questions her about late-night trips to the river, or confronts her with a plague victim left unhealed by the medicine—she knows the con game well and keeps a shill in the crowd at all times.

Today, she's bought a middle-aged dockworker named Solt Carmino, whom she pays to mill about the shop, stand in line, and—if needs be—give an “unbiased” personal testimonial of how Lavender's Luxuriant Liniment not only cured his plague, but soothes the pain in his bum leg. A DC 18 Spot check allows a PC scanning the crowd to notice that Solt is the only person who seems to be browsing the perfumes. Calling out the shill and making a DC 25 Diplomacy or Intimidate check gets Solt to confess that Vendra paid him and that he's never had the plague—although he does lamely point out that his bum leg *has* been feeling a *little* better lately. If his confession occurs in front of the store's customers, more than half of them begin muttering and leaving. Vendra shouts at the PCs to leave her store, having her guards try to forcibly eject them if they don't leave peaceably, and begins offering free doses of Lavender's Luxuriant Liniment to win back her customers. If a fight breaks out, chaos ensues, with customers scattering and Vendra shrieking that the shop is closed as dozens of vials of perfume are doubtlessly destroyed. During the fracas, the shop owner attempts to flee to area **D2**, making a sneak attack against one of the PCs if the opportunity presents itself.

At night, only one of Vendra's guards keeps watch outside the shop's front door. She uses charges from her wand of *remove disease* on herself and her guards every night if they develop symptoms of blood veil—once her wand is down to a single charge, she plans on leaving the city with her fortune.

VENDRA LOAGGRI

CR 5

Female human expert 2/rogue 4

CN Medium humanoid

Init +6; **Senses** Listen +10, Spot +5

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12

(+2 armor, +2 Dexterity)

hp 17 (6d6–6)

Fort +0, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +7 (1d4/19–20 plus poison)

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

TACTICS

During Combat The perfumer does her best to make herself look like a harmless merchant, shrieking and sobbing dramatically, rushing back and forth, and harmlessly slapping, but in actuality looking for an opportunity to sneak attack a PC with her poisoned dagger. At range, she relies on her *wand of charm person* to turn enemies to her favor.

Morale Vendra surrenders if reduced to 10 or fewer hit points, and says or does anything to escape the city without being killed or imprisoned.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 14, **Con** 8, **Int** 13, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 16

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

Feats Dodge, Mobility, Skill Focus (Use Magic Device), Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +12, Craft (alchemy) +10, Diplomacy +14, Escape Artist +6, Forgery +6, Knowledge (local) +10, Listen +10, Move Silently +6, Profession (perfumer) +10, Spot +5, Use Magic Device +15

Languages Common, Varisian

SQ trapfinding

Combat Gear *wand of charm person* (38 charges), *wand of remove disease* (7 charges), 2 doses of giant wasp poison (DC 14; 1d6/1d6 Dex damage); **Other Gear** masterwork dagger, *bracers of armor* +2, silver and violet jewelry worth 50 gp

LAVENDER THUG (2)

CR 3

Male human fighter 3

CN Medium humanoid

Init +0; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +4

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15

(+5 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 27 (3d10+6)

Fort +5, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft.

Melee mwk sap +7 (1d6+2 nonlethal)

TACTICS

During Combat These unimaginative mercenaries attack whomever looks to pose the greatest threat, caring little for any collateral damage they might do.

Morale A thug surrenders if beaten to fewer than 5 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +4

Feats Alertness, Diehard, Endurance, Weapon Focus (sap)

Skills Intimidate +7, Listen +1, Spot +4

Languages Common

Gear chainmail, masterwork sap, 1 dose of Lavender's Luxuriant Liniment, 20 gp

Treasure: Any character who makes a DC 18 Profession (alchemy) or Knowledge (nobility and royalty) check can pick out the most expensive perfumes Lavender has to offer, scents worth upwards of 100 gp to the right buyers. In all, the store holds exotic perfumes worth 800 gp. A simple wooden box and sturdy iron safe sit behind the counter. The box holds random coins worth 422 gp—the proceeds from the last few days' sales. A DC 28 Open Lock check cracks the safe, which has 65 pp, 112 gp, and three empty but elegantly carved lapis lazuli perfume bottles (worth 45 gp each) inside.

B2. Vendra's Apartment

Like the majority of the apartments in this hall, Vendra's door is locked, requiring a DC 20 Open Lock check to open.

Delicate wall hangings, artistically shaped candles, and the fine scent of cherry blossoms fill this well-decorated apartment. A table sculpted with swirling ivy leaves bears a fragile porcelain tea service and an exotically curved hookah in a kitchen nook to the east. A door adjacent to the kitchen opens into a bedroom furnished with an antique armoire and a bed sheeted in purple silks and heavily laden with round pillows.

Vendra's apartment strives to mimic the salon of a Chelish noblewoman. The place is quite neat and clean, the perfumer's collection of tawdry romances and maudlin poetry being particularly well organized. Two pieces of amateur artwork hang among candle sconces and painted dishware—one a soul-soothing landscape of a mountain lake and another a sketch of Chelias's famed opera house, Her Imperial Majestrix's Melodeum. The room is peculiarly devoid of any sort of mixing or alchemical equipment.

A DC 20 Search check of the bedroom does reveal something out of the ordinary, though: a corner-hinged secret door leading into the bedroom of the adjacent apartment.

If the PCs come to call on Vendra at night, there is a 50% chance that she is here sleeping or in **B3** mixing up the next day's brew of Lavender's Luxuriant Liniment.

B3. Liniment Laboratory (EL 3)

The door to this apartment is boarded over and nailed closed, both from the inside and the outside (hardness 5,

15 hp). Breaking through the door with a DC 24 Strength check alerts those inside the room.

Bits of broken crates and barrels cover the floor of this dilapidated apartment. A tun of oily liquid, its lip level with a man's chest, fills a corner of the room, a well-used canoe oar sticking out of it. Next to it squat several large casks of murky water and two stacks of boxes—one holding dozens of small ceramic vials with magenta stoppers, the other holding a mismatched collection of delicate perfume bottles. The apartment's kitchen nook holds another crate, this one filled with broken shards of multicolored glass. Despite being in shambles, the apartment smells delightful—a mixture of spices, flowers, and exotic oils.

Vendra and her toughs spend hours every evening combining rude elements with poorly selling perfumes to create Lavender's Luxuriant Liniment. The bottles, perfumes, and river water here are all the evidence the Korvosan Guard requires to shut down Lavender and imprison Vendra.

Creatures: During the day, one of Vendra's hired men works here.

At night, Vendra and two of her men make the lion's share of the next day's concoction, with barrels of river water being sent for at least three times a night.



LAVENDER THUG

hp 27 (see page 25)

EL 3

Closing Up Shop

Any thorough investigation of Lavender's miracle cure reveals Vendra's completely spurious claims and criminal activities. The Korvosan guard needs evidence of the perfumer's wrongdoing to charge her with any crime, though. The easiest way to do this is for the PCs to simply purchase a dose of Lavender's Luxuriant Liniment, find a plague victim, and administer the useless panacea in the company of a Korvosan guard—both Grau Soldado and Field Marshall Kroft are willing participate in such an experiment, provided the PCs can actually cure the victim of the disease in the end.

Reporting to Cressida what they saw in Vendra's secret laboratory also brings down the Guard. Assigning a patrol to the task, Field Marshall Kroft sends guards to follow the PCs back to Lavender to arrest Vendra.

PCs who investigate Lavender on their own might take a more vigilante approach to dealing with Vendra.

Although murdering the perfumer is frowned upon by the Korvosan Guard, Kroft overlooks the matter based on all the PCs' past help, and actually thanks them if they bring her proof of the shopkeeper's misdeeds—although she does suggest showing a greater deal of restraint in the future. Any act that ends in the deaths of multiple innocents or damage to the row of shops Lavender occupies should lead to at least a significant fine, should the PCs be the obvious culprits.

In any case, once Lavender is closed, gossip about the shop's fake cure-all spreads quickly and Vendra Loaggri's reputation is permanently ruined.

Body Count: Putting an end to the creation and sale of Vendra Loaggri's false cure saves the lives of 700 Korvosan citizens.

C. Plague Rats

Hook: A wererat named Eries Yelloweyes, worried that Korvosa might soon blame her kind for the plague, seeks out the PCs for help.

As in many large cities, the tunnels and sewers beneath Korvosa attract all manner of unsavory elements. Combining elements of the thieves, vermin, and monsters that prowl the reeking depths, the wererats of Korvosa eke out a subtle living from the city's refuse. Most Korvosans contentedly believe the monsters are nothing but stories to keep children out of trouble, and thus, the lycanthropes and their unwitting hosts have long lived in a kind of oblivious accord. Until now.

Giving voice and violence to their fear of the plague, a mob of Midland citizens discovered a foolish, alley-prowling wererat and publicly executed him with a silver axe. Their misguided violence quickly extended to a few drunken dockworkers braving the sewers to hunt wererats, blaming their problems on the lycanthropes believed to dwell below. Used to fear and abuse, most wererats respond to the attacks by abandoning their dens and hiding elsewhere in the city. One wererat, however, a firebrand called GIRRIGZ Ripperclaws, refuses to do so, instead calling his kin to war against the weakened humans above.

One of Korvosa's closet lycanthropes seeks out the party once these events begin. A mousy, second-hand fishmonger with jaundiced eyes, Eries Yelloweyes has lived in secret as a wererat for more than 50 years and is one of the oldest lycanthropes in the city. She's seen much suffering in her time, including devastating government-directed rat-purges, a return of which she fears GIRRIGZ's warmongering ways could quickly incite. Her efforts to talk sense to the violent wererat and his gang having failed, Eries hears of the the PCs through her contacts in the Korvosan Guard and approaches them in her human form for help. Quietly proud of her

lycanthropic blood, she explains that something must be done about GIRRIGZ before more lives are lost. She asks the PCs to speak with him and, if necessary, offer him an example of the force the city will doubtlessly employ should his rebelliousness continue. Begging the PCs not to kill her people if it can be avoided, she gives them directions to GIRRIGZ's lair beneath Midland. In exchange for their help, she offers the PCs the spoils of his camp and, once they've disbanded his ragtag army, information on what might be the true reason for Korvosa's plague.

C1. Sewer Tunnel

The trek through Korvosa's sewers to GIRRIGZ's wererat camp can be as long as you wish. If the PCs are lagging in experience points, or if you merely want to enliven the journey, both *Pathfinder* #7 and the *Guide to Korvosa* include random encounter charts for Korvosa's sewers. Eventually, though, the party comes to a tunneled-out gap in the sewer wall.

Through the disgustingly visible haze of noxious sewer reek, the flow of unmentionable slop through the sewer tunnel's filth-slick channel unexpectedly forks. Most continues on its expected path, but a small stream of ooze diverts off through a wide cleft in the moldy masonry wall. The man-sized crack cuts deep into the rock behind the wall, and wisps of thin white smoke issue forth.

Any characters who proceed down the tunnel another 20 feet find that the sewer bends east and is blocked by a large, rusty grate. From here, PCs can easily see into area C4.

C2. Guard Den (EL 5)

The flow of sewer filth oozes into this rough-hewn stone cave, pooling near its center before continuing through a crude channel in the western wall. Fat black mushrooms and other disgusting fungus grow thick around the pool of slime. Several low alcoves are cut into the walls, each filled with moldering hay, filthy furs, and tiny bones.

This room serves as a guard post against incursions of humanoid hunters or any of the sewer's countless other threats. A DC 16 Knowledge (nature) check allows a PC to recognize the largest of the mushrooms to the south of the pool of sewage as a shrieker.

The shallow flow of sewage makes the floor lightly slippery in the spaces it covers. Taking a single move action through the muck offers no problem, but attacking from or making a double move through one of these slimy spaces forces a character to make a DC 12 Balance check.

Several cracks in the north wall allow creatures of Tiny size or smaller to slip through into area C5.

Creatures: Three wererats and two dire rats keep watch in this room. The wererats know and the dire rats are trained not to cross the flow of sewer water, as doing so tends to set off the shrieker. The wererats purposefully do this if they notice intruders or are attacked.

The shrieker sits near the center of the south wall, but closer to the passage to area C3 than to the other gap in the wall. Any creature that enters this room from C1 and does not move north (through the gap between the wall and the stone pillar at the room's center) causes the shrieker to begin screeching. This causes the wererats in area C3 and the rat swarm in C5 to come investigate. It also wakes the otyugh in area C4.

DIRE RATS (2) **CR 1/3**
hp 5 each (MM 64)

SHRIEKER **CR 1**
hp 11 (MM 112)

WERERATS (3) **CR 2**
hp 12 each (MM 173)

C3. Communal Dens (EL 6)

Several pieces of broken furniture, dried hay, and fragments of lumber burn in a small fire at the center of this open, ruggedly carved cavern. Short alcoves filled with filthy, oversized rats' nests dot the walls, and the disgusting drip of polluted black condensation echoes through the chamber. A thick flow of sewage spreads across the western edge of the chamber, seeping from a crack in the western wall to another in the south.

Most of Girrigz's wererats spend their time here sleeping, sharpening scavenged weapons, and eating what passes for food in the sewers. The filth-soaked floor here is lightly slippery in the spaces the refuse passes through, just as in area C2.

A DC 20 Search check of the easternmost alcove reveals a hole in the eastern wall. Creatures of Small size or smaller can squeeze through this gap.

A character with stonemasonry or ranks in Knowledge (architecture and engineering) can make a DC 14 Spot check to notice that the walls around the cleft in the south wall are subsiding. If this stone is chipped away (hardness 8, hp 40), the gap into area C4 becomes big enough for the otyugh to rampage through.

Creatures: Four wererats lounge here, hissing and laughing at several fat black rats tormenting an alley cat they captured in a cargo-crate cage. They attack any

non-wererats who enter the room. If battle erupts in this room, Girrigz transforms into his dire rat form and comes through the gap in the east wall to aid his men.

WERERATS (4) **CR 2**
hp 12 each (MM 173)

Treasure: A DC 18 Search check reveals a variety of the wererats' crude treasures and tools, the most noteworthy being 3 smokesticks, a tanglefoot bag, 20 tindertwigs, a bent copper trumpet bearing a pennant with the city's coat of arms worth 120 gp, and a complete set of carpenter's masterwork artisan's tools.

C4. Trapped Otyugh (EL 4)

Two thick grates of rusted iron hedge in this section of sewer tunnel. From a man-sized crack in the northern wall seeps a steady flow of sewage, oozing into the greater flow of tainted water. A hulking pile of filth and debris partially blocks the stream of offal, a cart-sized clot in this disgusting artery.

An old and permanent fixture of the city sewers, the grate to the west prevents undesirables from slinking through the sewers. The grate to the east is a newer addition meant to serve the same purpose, but includes a lifting mechanism for the passage of sewer workers and other civic servants, and the city has simply not corrected the redundancy yet. Both grates extend to the ceiling 10 feet above and have hardness 10 and 60 hp.

A wall-mounted mechanism consisting of several gears and a large handle rests on the south wall, 10 feet to the east of the eastern grate. Wererats jammed the device to keep it permanently unlocked and ready to use. Any creature who spends a minute turning the handle causes the eastern grate to screech loudly as it retracts into the ceiling.

Creatures: The wererats here have made good use of the grates' arrangement, having used them to trap a rogue otyugh. The creature has been here for more than a week, surviving off of rats and what it finds floating through its cage. Unless awakened by the shrieker in area C2 or similar loud noises, it is sleeping when the PCs arrive.

If awakened, the hungry otyugh's first reaction is to attack any PC in reach. If the PCs are out of reach, though—as they should be if they stay away from the grates in C1—the distressed sewer monster blubbers about being “So hungeries” and “Caught by mean rat hoomans.” If the party can change the initially unfriendly otyugh's attitude to friendly with a DC 25 Diplomacy check, he promises to aid them by attacking the wererats. Giving the otyugh any kind of food gives PCs a +4 bonus on this Diplomacy check.

The otyugh only remains friendly for 10 minutes, though, and unless further Diplomacy checks are made, it soon forgets who the PCs are and attempts to eat them anyway.

OTYUGH

hp 36 each (MM 204)

CR 4

Development: If the otyugh is made friendly and the gap in the north tunnel wall is enlarged, the ravenous aberration rampages through areas C2 and C3. The wererats are deathly afraid of the otyugh and all the remaining lycanthropes—except for Girrigz—flee the dens.

C5. Rat Dens (EL 3)

The scrapes and scratches of tiny claws cover the uneven walls of this crudely carved cave. Amid these marks, dozens of dark, fist-sized holes dot the stone like a rocky bee's hive. Hundreds of bones—of rats, horses, fish, and humans—lie scattered across the floor, and a cleft in the earthen wall leads off to the east.

Creatures: Within the carved-out walls, a swarm of rats and two fat, greasy dire rats make their nests. They attack any creature that enters the room that doesn't smell of rodent. If the shrieker in area C2 is set off, the rat swarm moves through the gaps in the south wall to investigate, but the dire rats are too lazy to care.

DIRE RATS (2)

hp 5 each (MM 64)

CR 1/3**RAT SWARM**

hp 13 each (MM 239)

CR 2**C6. Girrigz's Den (EL 7)**

Several crates, mismatched boxes, and poorly kept weapons lie stacked and scattered about this dingy stone chamber. Pinned to the side of one stack is a crudely sketched map of Korvosa. A large rat's nest, strewn with moldy pillows, fills an elevated hollow in the south wall.

Girrigz, the wererats' leader, plans his war on the city above from this den. He and his henchmen managed to collect much of what they think they might need in the coming days, including a variety of weapons, discarded food stuffs, and equipment like rope, manacles, and several flasks of alchemist's fire.

A DC 20 Search check of the alcove on the southern wall—Girrigz's nest—reveals a large crack, big enough for a Small creature to squeeze through, leading to C3.

Creature: Girrigz always hated the place of his people. A true lycanthrope, he's spent his entire 29 years of life as a wererat, feeling trapped beneath the boots of Korvosa's people above. More than once, the rebellious wererat snuck up onto the streets to take out his hatred on beggars and other unsuspecting humans, seeing his predations as just revenge. Less than a year ago, he took two silver crossbow bolts from a well-equipped Korvosan Guardsman who came upon him savaging a dockside tramp. Barely escaping with his life, Girrigz has since been a fiery and vocal member of the wererat community, urging his people to strike back against the weak humans above. The lack of reason and cowardice of elder lycanthropes long stifled Girrigz's warmongering, but the attacks from those above coming in the days since the plague finally gave the savage wererat revolutionary the following he needs. While he lacks the numbers and

GIRRIGZ

skill to truly threaten the city above, his blind hatred could easily lead to the deaths of hundreds.

Although he doesn't respond to the sound of the shrieker's screeching, battle in area C3 or the release of the ottyugh causes Girrigz to come investigate. If the party manages to catch him unawares, he's here studying a map of the city and dreaming of burning Castle Korvosa to the ground. Girrigz cannot be reasoned with; he hates all non-wererats and, upon seeing invaders, savagely attacks and fights to the death.

GIRRIGZ

CR 7

Male wererat fighter 5

CE Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger)

Init +8; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Listen** +6, **Spot** +4

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 14, flat-footed 22

(+5 armor, +3 deflection, +4 Dexterity, +3 natural)

hp 49 (5d10+2d8+13)

Fort +10, **Ref** +11, **Will** +5

DR 10/silver

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee +1 *silver rapier* +13/+8 (1d6+4/18–20) and bite +6 (1d6 plus disease)

Special Attacks curse of lycanthropy

TACTICS

Before Combat Given advance warning, such as by the sounds of fighting in area C2, Girrigz imbibes his *potion of blur* and *potion of shield of faith* (factored into his stats) and stealthily moves in the direction of battle.

During Combat Girrigz fights ferociously, taking particular pleasure in using his bite attack.

Morale A total fanatic, Girrigz fights to the death.

Base Statistics **AC** 22, flat-footed 19 (+5 armor, +4 Dexterity, +3 natural)

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 20, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +7

Feats Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialization (rapier)

Skills Climb +4, Handle Animal +3, Hide +9, Listen +6, Move Silently +5, Spot +4, Swim +9

Languages Common

SQ alternate form, rat empathy

Combat Gear *potion of blur*, *potion of shield of faith* +3;

Other Gear +1 chain shirt, +1 silver rapier, 30 gp

Treasure: Amid the rotted food, miles of rope, and dark cloaks that fill most of the crates in this room, a DC 15 Search check turns up 22 daggers, 12 short swords, 3 light crossbows, 60 black metal bolts, 4 chain shirts, 12

flasks of alchemist's fire, a masterwork longsword, and a masterwork suit of chainmail. In addition to the cracked wall there, a DC 20 Search of Girrigz's nest also turns up four *potions of cure moderate wounds*, a masterwork silver dagger, and an *eversmoking bottle*.

Eries's Revelation

After putting down Girrigz's revolution, Eries Yelloweyes returns to the PCs to thank them for their help and to give them the information she promised them. Fortune has it that several sewer tunnels empty into the Jeggare River below the Wall of Eodred. The night a black-sailed ship was sunk before reaching the harbor, several of Eries's brethren were watching. They saw nothing on the ship except for a yellow light, but once it sank, strange debris drifted from its hull. Tracking down some of the flotsam, the wererats discovered a few small boxes filled with dead rats and a few pouches of silver coins conveniently bound to floating timbers. Suspecting that something was wrong with the rats, and scenting some foulness upon the coins, the lycanthropes kicked the debris back into the river. Eries knows little more than this, but doesn't believe that the ship's sinking, the strange flotsam, and the advent of the plague are mere coincidence.

If the PCs wish to learn more about the sunken vessel, Eries can point out exactly where in the river it sank. She also knows an alchemist's shop with a hidden tunnel in the basement, which her people often pilfer for medicine and supplies. If the party wishes, she can have her children fetch them each *potions of water breathing* for half the normal price (375 gp apiece).

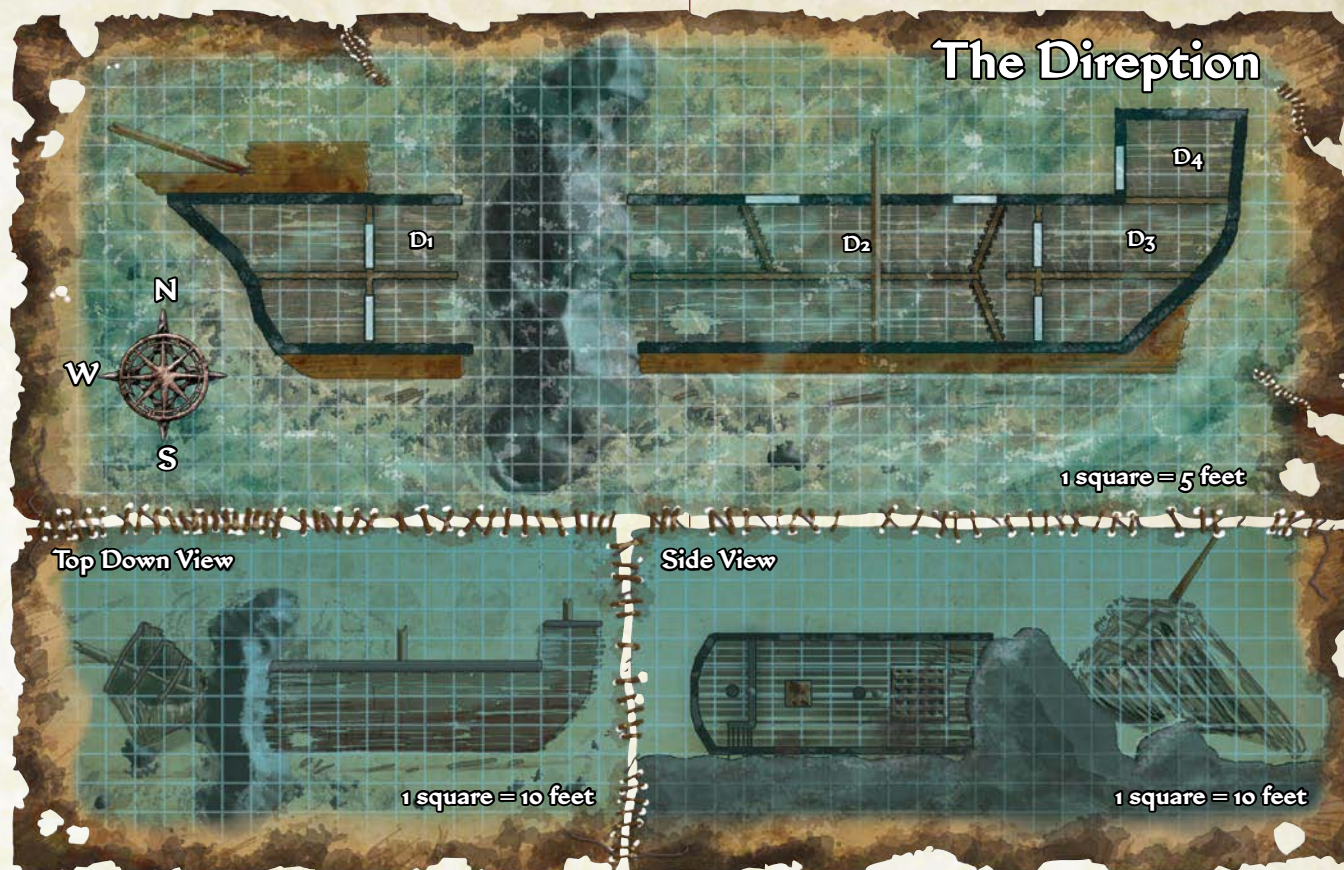
Ad Hoc Experience Award: If the PCs managed to scatter Girrigz's warband without killing any wererats—besides Girrigz—grant them experience for an additional CR 5 encounter.

Bodycount: Preventing Girrigz's war against Korvosa saves the lives of 400 citizens.

D. The Wreck of the Direption

Hook: Eries's revelation about the strange circumstances involving the sunken ship should be enough to send the PCs out to investigate the wreck—otherwise, they might not think of investigating the wreck until after they find more clues in the temple of Urgathoa in the last part of this adventure.

The *Direption* lies beneath nearly 80 feet of water, its masts shattered and hull split in two. Reaching the wreckage can prove a daunting affair, as PCs must overcome the barriers of swimming down to the ship, breathing underwater, and lighting their way. The easiest way to deal with these challenges is through magical means. By this point in the adventure, the PCs should be 5th level—PC clerics, druids, and wizards should have access to *water breathing* as a result. Even if the party doesn't have a spellcaster capable of casting



this spell, Eries offers affordable access to *potions of water breathing*. Alternatively, the PCs could purchase their own scrolls, potions, or wands in any of Korvosa's markets. They could even call upon their friend Ishani to cast *water breathing* on them—since he's easy to convince that there might be clues hidden in the sunken ship, he even goes against church policy and casts the spell on the PCs for free.

With the concern of drowning overcome, seeing beneath the Jeggare's surface also poses a problem. Aside from numerous illuminating spells, the inextinguishable light of everburning torches and sunrods prove useful even deep underwater.

The Jeggare River

With direction from Eries, or a DC 15 Gather Information check to determine the site from other witnesses, finding the *Direption* should prove little problem even with the restrictive visibility of the Jeggare's muddy waters. If you wish to make hunting for the shipwreck a bit more difficult—or the PCs decide to conduct their dive at night—for every 10 minutes of exploration the PCs can make a DC 24 Search check to locate the wreckage. This might significantly cut into the duration of their *water breathing*, but the increased urgency can certainly make the investigation more exciting.

When the PCs finally do discover the *Direption*, obvious scars from fire and trebuchet strikes mar the ship's broken hull, which lies on its side in two pieces amid the splinters of its masts. The ship has broken over a rock outcropping, its bow fallen to one side and a larger section of the stern on the other. Two relatively intact interior decks lie within both halves of the ship, along with the captain's quarters situated at the stern. While the bow sunk in a way that allows explorers easy access to any of its levels, the stern cleaved to the rocks it fell upon, limiting entrance to its lower decks. Upon the stern section's upper deck, the 10-foot-square main hatch and a covered ladder lead to the berth below. Both swelled shut, the heavy main hatch requiring a DC 26 Strength check to move and the trap door covering the ladder requiring a DC 23 Strength check to open. The trebuchet stone that struck the ship its killing blow also punched a sizable hole into the *Direption*. This 10-foot-diameter hole allows easy access to area D2 in the ship's hold.

D1. The Direption's Bow (EL 5)

The front portion of the ship broke away and landed awkwardly here, revealing two splintered decks inside. Its bowsprit shattered and decks filled with debris, the vessel bears an ominous moniker along its fire-scarred hull: *Direption*.

DEATH'S HEAD COFFER

Aura faint necromancy; **CL** 5th

Slot —; **Price** 1,000 gp; **Weight** 5 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

Typically engraved with numerous skulls, these small metal coffers allow the safe transport of infectious substances of up to Tiny size. Closing the lid seals in the contents and holds them in stasis, rendering them immune to aging or any damage. In addition, any infectious material—such as the body of a creature that died of disease—is preserved for as long as the coffer is closed. A *death's head coffer* can potentially hold several Tiny items, having dimensions of approximately 4 inches by 4 inches by 6 inches.

A *death's head coffer* can spread infections between items. Any item placed into a coffer with a disease-ridden item (something capable of spreading a disease by contact) becomes infected with the same disease. For 1 week after being removed from the coffer, the newly infected item can spread the same affliction as the disease-ridden item to any creature that touches it. For example, a coin placed into a *death's head coffer* with a rat infected with the shakes forces any creature that touches the coin to make a DC 13 Fortitude save or become infected with the shakes as well.

After a *death's head coffer* is closed and then reopened, its magic dissipates, rendering the box completely mundane.

Some *death's head coffers* feature complex locking mechanisms, which require DC 20 Open Lock checks to open.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *contagion*, *gentle repose*; **Cost** 500 gp, 40 XP

Having split from the rest of the ship as it sunk, the bow of the *Direption* emptied most of its contents into the river's currents, leaving little of interest inside. The doors into the forecabin and galley here swing open in the current, their interiors wrecked and disordered. A DC 18 Search of either of these areas reveals no evidence of food or supplies in the galley or personal goods in the forecabin.

Creatures: A half-dozen silt eels (spiny-faced dark-brown eels native to the region) have relocated from their original lairs in the rock that split the *Direption* in half into the wreck's bow. Hiding amid scattered pots, shattered barrels, and overturned bunks, the foul-tempered eels attack any creatures that come too near their new homes. Silt eels are functionally identical to Medium vipers, save that they have the aquatic subtype and no land or climb speeds.

SILT EELS (6)

hp 9 each (MM 280—Medium viper)

CR 1

D2. Shattered Hold (EL 3)

A yawning wound in the ship's charred timbers allows murky water to flow easily through this debris-cluttered hold. Loose timbers, small fish, and dozens of identical boxes float eerily in the quiet darkness.

As many in Korvosa have come to suspect, the *Direption's* hold did indeed carry the plague with it, but not in the form of sickly passengers. Rather, the plague hides within dozens of *death's head coffers*. The fires that took the vessel before it sunk destroyed most of these, but some washed up on the shores of the Jeggare River. Any PC who investigates these ruined *death's head coffers* finds that most are empty, although a few hold bits of flesh or dead rats. The destruction of the coffers, water, and time removed any trace of blood veil infecting these samples, allowing characters to handle them without fear of disease.

Creatures: Skinshear, the jigsaw shark animal companion of the sea hag druid Yvicca, circles within the *Direption's* hull, guarding his mistress. Should he detect the PCs, he butts his head against the door of area D3 to alert Yvicca, then circles in wait. Even if not alerted by her servant, the sea hag comes to investigate any sounds of battle here.

SKINSHEAR

Blue shark (MM 279—Large shark)
hp 38 (7d8+7)

CR —

D3. Infirmary (EL 7)

Several bent metal bed frames and glass-paned cabinets lie shattered across the floor of the room. The room swirls with a haze of gore, fish heads, and half-eaten eels chumming the circling waters.

Amid the room's debris, pinned beneath the bent iron leg of a sickbed, lies a thin darkwood coffer. A DC 20 Search check uncovers the airtight coffer, which contains a collection of ledgers, invoices, and the deed to the *Direption*, all from a group noted as "B7," titling one "R. Davaulus" with ownership of the ship and a cargo noted only as "specimens." Davaulus knows of these incriminating papers, but he expected sinking them to the bottom of the Jeggare would suitably destroy them. Opening the coffer underwater does just this, but the PCs should have enough time to read the papers before they are ruined if they act quickly.

Creatures: Sizable ships don't sink into the Jeggare every day, so when the *Direption* fell from the surface, the sea hag Yvicca noticed on one of her regular journeys upriver in search of easy prey beyond Korvosa's walls. Intrigued by the cargo of broken magic coffers, the aquatic crone became enamored during her investigation and took up temporary

residence in the ship's infirmary. While scavenging the wreck, she came upon a number of papers and ledgers, which she brought here to investigate at her leisure.

YVICCA**CR 7**

Female sea hag druid 5 (MM 144)

NE Medium humanoid

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +10, Spot +4**DEFENSE****AC** 20, touch 13, flat-footed 18

(+2 armor, +3 Dexterity, +5 natural)

hp 60 (8d8+24)**Fort** +10, **Ref** +7, **Will** +11**Defensive Abilities** resist nature's lure; **SR** 14**OFFENSE****Spd** 30 ft., swim 40 ft.**Melee** +1 *short spear* +14/+9(1d6+8) and
claw +9 (1d4+4)**Special Attacks** evil eye (DC 13), horrific appearance (DC 13),
wild shape 1/day**Spells Known** (CL 5th)3rd—*cure moderate wounds*, *greater magic fang*2nd—*barkskin*, *bull's strength*, *resist energy*1st—*charm animal* (DC 15), *cure light wounds*, *faerie fire*,
*speak with animals*0—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *flare*, *read magic*,
*resistance***TACTICS**

Before Combat Before combat, Yvicca casts *bull's strength*, *barkskin*, and *greater magic fang* upon herself (in that order). She also casts *speak with animals* so she can more easily direct Skinshear and any summoned sharks.

During Combat Upon seeing the PCs, Yvicca swaps out *resist energy* to cast *summon nature's ally II* to call a Medium shark to aid her in battle. She then uses her evil eye ability to daze the strongest-looking interloper before swimming into melee herself. If brought below 35 hit points, she casts *cure moderate wounds* on herself.

Morale Yvicca turns into a shark and flees to the open sea if reduced to 15 or fewer hit points.

Base Statistics **AC** 18, flat-footed 16, **Melee** +1 *short spear* +12/+7 (1d6+6) and claw +7 (1d4+3); **Str** 20; **Grp** +11; **Skills** Swim +13

STATISTICS**Str** 24, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 8, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 14**Base Atk** +6; **Grp** +13**Feats** Alertness, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative**Skills** Concentration +8, Handle Animal +7, Knowledge (nature) +6, Listen +10, Survival +6, Swim +15**Languages** Common, Druidic, Giant**SQ** amphibious, animal companion (Skinshear), nature sense, trackless step, wild empathy +9, woodland stride**Gear** +1 *short spear*, *bracers of armor* +2

Treasure: Aside from her gear, Yvicca has recovered one of the *death's head coffers* from the wreck—the only coffer to survive the ship's sinking intact and not subsequently washed up on shore. Yvicca hasn't yet figured out how to open the coffer, much to her unsuspecting good fortune—since the coffer contains a dead rat—and 50 sp infected with blood veil.

D4. Captain's Quarters

The door to the captain's quarters is swollen shut, requiring a DC 20 Strength check to open.

Along with a few other bits of ruined furnishings, the scorched sheets of a canopied bed twist like ghosts above the snapped wooden bed frame. Knotted amid the linens, a drowned corpse wearing the birdlike mask of a Queen's Physician twirls in the current.



The *Direption* wasn't quite abandoned and empty when it sank into the Jeggare. The corpse here is that of the ship's only remaining crewmember, an Urgathoan patsy ordered to guide the ship into Korvosa's harbor. A sickly sort, Rois Vindmel served Urgathoa mostly due to his rampant hypochondria. Fate and bad luck eventually forced the middle-aged acolyte into the service of Lady Andaisin, who had little patience for his nebbish ways. When the plot to sail the *Direption* into Korsova harbor took shape, Andaisin volunteered her least-favorite servant for the mission. Unable to decline the will of his cult's icy high priestess, Rois oversaw the loading of dozens of *death's head coffers* onto the Red-Mantis-commandeered ship. He was never told that his journey would bring down the ire of Korvosa's defenders, or that his mission was intentionally suicidal. When the other Red Mantis members who helped him sail the ship to Korvosa silently abandoned ship as the *Direption* entered the Jeggare River, though, Rois realized he'd been had. Working furiously but alone, he managed to guide the ponderous ship up around Old Korvosa, but was unable to maneuver the ship close enough to land to swim for shore. When the Korvosan Guard opened fire, Rois retreated belowdecks, where he discovered the infectious nature of his cargo and realized that he had been played for a fool. He drowned not long thereafter as the ship sank into the river.

Unwrapping the body reveals Rois Vindmel's corpse, wearing simple black robes. A DC 14 Search of the body also uncovers a brass holy symbol of Urgathoa. The presence of a priest of the goddess of disease in the signature mask of a Korvosan doctor should serve as strong evidence that Davaulus and his men have more to do with the plague than they say. Certainly, *Speak with Dead* can reveal much about the involvement of the cult of Urgathoa and the Red Mantis—Rois didn't know that the queen was involved, though, so he can be no help revealing the true depth of the conspiracy.

E. The Case of the Vanishing Virtuoso

Hook: A distraught woman named Deyanira Mirukova, hearing of the PCs' acts of heroism via the Korvosan Guard, pleads with the party to seek out her missing brother.

The Carowyns have always relished the limelight. Regardless of the circumstance—contributing thousands of gp to the upcoming season at the Kendall Amphitheater, reserving box seats at the Marbledome, or hosting galas at their South Shore estate—no scene is too garish for the aging nobles to steal. Thus, when the gossip of the hour turned from this scandalous actor or that noble's mistress to death in the street and hastily planned flights from the city, Olauren Carowyn saw opportunity. Discussing the matter with her husband Ausio, the two hatched a

fabulous plan to avoid the plague's gloom and dread: have a fantastic party. Within days, casks of wine filled the cellar of Carowyn Manor, new Quadrian window dressings were hung, and the finest players were on retainer to entertain the nobles' dozens of guests. For a moment, South Shore's *crème de la crème* forgot all about the hundreds dying just blocks away. Just as Queen Ileosa desired.

Blood veil had always been meant to dispose of Korvosa's weak, poor, and unsavory citizens, but what of the worthless rich? With a list of grievances against this fatuous merchant prince or that nosy noblewoman stretching from the gates of Castle Korvosa to the Heights' cobbles, the queen tasked Dr. Davaulus with disposing of numerous offending socialites. The queen's murderous temper fit well with a flaw Davaulus saw in their plots, fearing that someone might eventually notice how few members of Korvosa's upper crust were suffering from blood veil. As such, he turned to Rolth—a cruel-minded local necromancer conscripted by the cult of Urgathoa—to deal with the queen's hit list, stipulating only that their deaths appear as further ravages of the plague.

Rolth, however, had little interest in Davaulus or the queen's errands. In the weeks blood veil spread through the city, the necromancer noticed a disturbing trend. Among the Varisian population, it seemed that one in 10 showed immunity to the Urgathoan disease. Deep in his studies, he pawned off Davaulus' list on his obsessive sometimes-lover, a sick-minded forsaken elf named Jolistina Susperio. The pesh-addicted, self-destructive elf—terribly immature for her near-180-year age—had fawned over the necromancer ever since he half-threatened, half-promised to turn her into a zombie one day. Knowing that his paramour would die before failing him, Rolth packed off the elf with a few tender promises, several deadly smoke bombs tainted with Vorel's phage—the viral root of blood veil, the queen's list, and a mind set on murder.

Ruan's Ruin

For days, Deyanira Mirukova has pleaded at the gates of Citadel Volshyenek, begging for help in finding her brother, Ruan. The young Varisians live together in a modest apartment off Overton Way, not far from the Marbledome where she works as a chorus girl and Ruan plays ocarina in the orchestra. Several days ago, Ruan came home excitedly, delighted that he had been personally requested to perform at a private masquerade at Carowyn Manor, home of the well-known patrons of the arts. He bought a new outfit, practiced a challenging new arrangement, and left early the evening of the event. That was several days ago and the last time his sister saw him.

When Ruan didn't return the entire next day, Deyanira went to the Carowyn estate, only to find it seemingly

abandoned—its entrance locked, its windows tightly curtained, and a sickly smell issuing from behind the heavy door. Next she went to the Korvosan Guard, but they proved unable or unwilling to help, their efforts being stretched past the breaking point already without the added concern of hunting down a single missing performer amid a city of plague victims. Deyanira didn't know where to turn.

The PCs become involved with Deyanira Mirukova when the girl tracks them down to ask for their aid. When she mentions her brother, a DC 16 Knowledge (local) or bardic knowledge check allows a PC to recognize Ruan as a Varisian prodigy and a youthful master of a most unconventional instrument, the ocarina. Deyanira barely holds herself together as she tells the PCs what she knows and discovered at the Carowyn estate. She has little money with which to reward the PCs, but she offers all she owns—common goods and family heirlooms worth less than 100 gp and a season's worth of free passes to the Marbledome—if they help her.

Carowyn Manor

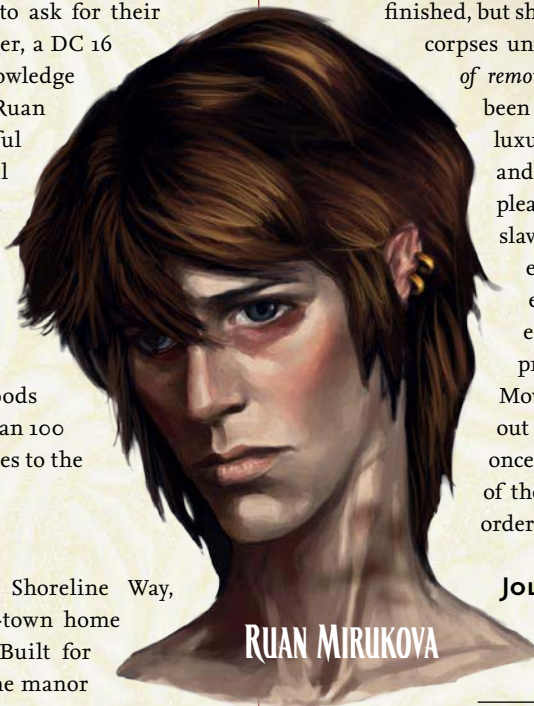
A stately, gabled manor along Shoreline Way, Carowyn Manor serves as the in-town home of Olauren and Ausio Carowyn. Built for entertaining, the estate includes the manor house itself, a smaller servants' residence, and a meticulously manicured garden—complete with gazebo and pond full of Ember Lake charigs (tiny salamanders that glow in the dark).

Festooned with cinderberry garlands and bright red drapes, the limestone facade of Carowyn Manor faces Shoreline Way. Its sturdy-looking doors of Bloodsworn mahogany are locked (hardness 5, 20 hp), and require a DC 30 Open Lock check or a DC 26 Strength check to open. The brass banisters of a balcony rise 15 feet above the front door—a nimble PC might scale these with a DC 15 Climb check. The PCs might also clamber over the garden hedges to get onto the estate grounds, a feat requiring a DC 12 Climb check. Failing an attempt by 5 or more results in 1d6 points of damage, as the hedges grow around a spiked iron fence (hardness 10, 25 hp).

Regardless of how they make it into Carowyn Manor, the PCs should immediately realize that something is terribly wrong. The masquerade that was supposed to be occurring here is most obviously over, with every paper mache mask and sequined dress covering a blister-covered corpse. With merely two exceptions—Jolistina Susperio and Ausio Carowyn—every person in Carowyn Manor is dead, killed

by lethal exposure to Vorel's phage. Rather than let all of the delightfully garbed bodies go to waste, though, Jolistina animated many of the disease-wracked nobles into zombies. Now they drink and dance and mingle in a grotesque pantomime at Jolistina's own masquerade of the dead.

Carowyn Manor is essentially just one large, continuing encounter. Jolistina animated 21 zombies and posed them as she pleases throughout the manor. Her job here is finished, but she intends to stay and play with the corpses until the plague ends or her *potions of remove disease* run out. She's already been here for days, greatly enjoying the luxuries the Carowyns had to offer and taking endless, megalomaniacal pleasure in ordering about her new slaves. Jolistina likely hears the PCs enter and hides in area E2. She's excited to have new playmates and eager to see others' reactions to her presentations. She makes Hide and Move Silently checks to attempt to stay out of sight for as long as possible, but once spotted, she dashes through areas of the house still containing zombies, ordering them to defend her.



RUAN MIRUKOVA

JOLISTINA SUSPERIO CR 8

Female elf rogue 6/sorcerer 2

CE Medium humanoid

Init +9; Senses Listen +3, Spot +3

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 16

(+4 armor, +5 Dexterity, +2 shield)

hp 44 (6d6+2d4+16)

Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +4

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge;

Immune sleep

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +7 (1d4+1/19–20)

Ranged +1 light crossbow +11 (1d8+1/19–20) or

+1 light crossbow +12 with screaming bolt (1d8+2/19–20 plus Will DC 14 or be shaken)

Special Attacks sneak attack +3d6

Spells Known (CL 2nd; +10 ranged touch)

1st (5/day)—*ray of enfeeblement*, *shield*

0 (6/day)—*acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 12), *mage hand*, *open/close*

TACTICS

Before Combat As soon as she hears intruders in the manor, Jolistina drinks her *potion of invisibility*, casts *shield*, and uses a charge from her *wand of cat's grace*.

During Combat Jolistina plays a madcap game of cat and

mouse with the PCs, laughing, taunting, and commenting on her undead showcase. She tries to keep out of melee with the party by rushing from room to room and using her *potions of invisibility*. She makes liberal use of her *screaming bolts* and casts *ray of enfeeblement* to further vex her foes.

Morale Jolistina surrenders if she is reduced to 10 or fewer hit points. She tries to escape from the PCs at the first chance she gets, though, especially if she still has any *potions of invisibility* left.

Base Statistics Init +7, AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Ref +8; Ranged +1 *light crossbow* +9; Dex 16; Skills Balance +8, Escape Artist +6, Hide +10, Move Silently +10, Open Lock +6, Sleight of Hand +8, Tumble +10

JOLISTINA SUSPERIO



STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 20, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +6

Feats Alertness (when Yarik is in arm's reach), Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Scribe Scroll

Skills Balance +10, Bluff +7, Climb +3, Concentration +6, Disguise +7, Escape Artist +8, Gather Information +7, Hide +12, Jump +3, Knowledge (local) +6, Listen +3, Move Silently +12, Open Lock +8, Perform (comedy) +6, Search +2, Sleight of Hand +10, Spot +3, Tumble +12

Languages Common, Elven

SQ summon familiar (rat named Yarik), trapfinding

Combat Gear *potion of invisibility* (3), *potion of remove disease* (2), *wand of cat's grace* (11 charges), smoke bombs (4); **Other Gear** +1 *glamered studded leather armor*, +1 *light crossbow* with 3 *screaming bolts* and 30 bolts, masterwork dagger, alchemist's fire (2), flint and steel, manacles, sealing wax, sewing needles (20), 150 gp in stolen jewelry

ZOMBIES (21)

CR 1/2

hp 16 each (MM 266)

E1. First Floor

The following description details the great hall of Carowyn Manor, the first place PCs are likely to notice something is amiss.

A massacre took place here. Upon the marble floor and heaped in the corners lie more than a dozen corpses, each clad in garish outfits of sequined velvet, revealing silk, and colorful feathers. Masks of all shapes and sizes—each competing with the last in terms of elaborateness—adorn the dead. In several cases, though, these fanciful adornments have fallen away, revealing withered flesh covered in nauseating facial tumors. Most horrifyingly, upon a blood-slick space cleared at the room's center sway three couples, jerking like hellish dancers, all obviously dead.

Creatures: Jolistina has animated a total of 21 zombies in Carowyn Manor, utilizing three *scrolls of animate dead* provided to her by Rolth to do so. All of the scrolls functioned at 7th level, which means that seven of the zombies are uncontrolled. The breakdown of what zombies are located where is listed below and in the description for E2—unless otherwise noted, all zombies in an area are under Jolistina's control.

E1a. Great Hall (EL 3): Jolistina murdered the majority of the Carowyn's guests in the great hall. So taken was she with the graceful nobles that she animated six of them, setting them up into couples and ordering them to dance in the otherwise silent hall. The zombies turn and attack 1 round after the PCs enter the room.



E1b. Den (EL 2): Two dead nobles wearing matching lion and lioness masks sit before the empty fireplace, with a third zombie dressed as a peacock and holding a silver serving tray attending them. They attack as soon as the PCs enter. These three zombies are not controlled by Jolistina—she avoids entering this room as a result.

E1c. Dining Room (EL 2): Eight corpses sit at a finely set dinner table, looking at one another blankly. Of the eight, four are zombies who mechanically go through the motions of eating the rotten food on the table before them, spooning it back into their mouths after it dribbles out onto the table from their slack jaws. These zombies attack as soon as the PCs enter the room, but must take 1 round to extricate themselves from their tightly pushed-in chairs.

E1d. Recital Hall (EL 1/2): A zombie dressed as a blue-winged angel strums a large, standing harp—unfortunately all of the harp's strings are broken. Four costumed corpses—a sea serpent, a castle tower, a swan, and a blue skeleton—look on from chairs. The musician zombie attacks as soon as the PCs enter the room.

E1e. Kitchen (EL 2): Two of the Carowyns' ex-servants sit at a preparation table here holding dull knives, pantomiming the carving of a corpse on the table dressed as a huge pig. The two zombies attack as soon as the PCs enter—they are not controlled by Jolistina.

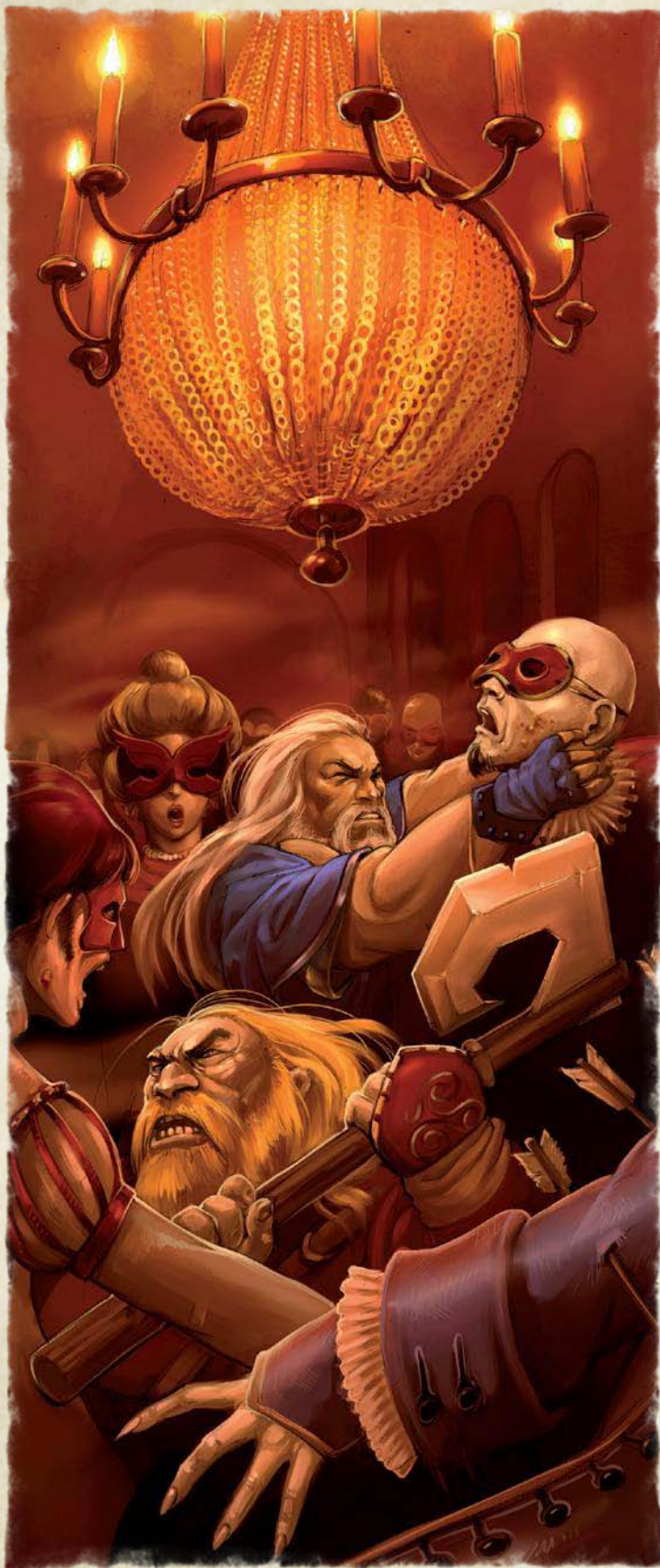
E2. Second Floor

Finely framed works of art cover the walls of this gallery, looking down upon the hall below. Great windows look out to the west and south, and an alcove to the east is set with chairs for musicians. In mockery of the room's beauty, several costumed corpses stand about the hall, some posed like ghastly statues while others stand like contemplative critics.

Creatures: The remaining five of Jolistina's zombies are posed upon the second floor.

E2a. Gallery (EL 2): Three zombies dressed in flashy metallic costumes wander aimlessly through this room, pantomiming appreciation and criticism of the paintings of Korvosan cityscapes and Carowyn portraits on the walls. Periodically, one stumbles over one of nearly a dozen dead bodies on the floor here. They attack as soon as the PCs enter the room. A search of this area reveals the bodies of three musicians. Ruan's corpse is not among them.

E2b. Bedroom (EL 1): Olauren Carowyn, now a zombie, stands in the center of this room dressed as a Galtan queen, her sprawling pearl-studded gown flowing around her and her elaborate, powdered wig nearly brushing the ceiling. A second zombie—dressed as a Quadiran princess—attends her. The zombies attack 1 round after the PCs enter the room. They are not controlled by Jolistina.



E3. Cellar

A well-stocked wine rack and several large casks line the walls of this stuffy cellar. A small wooden door squats in the southeastern corner.

Thoroughly restocked in preparation for the Carowyns' masquerade, most of this wine cellar's contents have gone unused. Nestled away at the rear of this room is a small workshop that Ausio Carowyn personally converted into a studio. Currently locked from within, the door requires a DC 30 Open Lock check to bypass or a DC 24 Strength check to batter down. Within, among the painting supplies, is a tawdry-looking divan, a small shrine to Shelyn, several scandalous portraits of Mrs. Carowyn, and Mr. Carowyn himself.

Creatures: **Ausio Carowyn** (LN male human aristocrat 3) has never been a brave man, and when Jolistina made her dramatic entrance to the masquerade—assaulting his guests with crossbow bolts infected with the pallid pox from a *death's head coffer*—he quickly exited the party, making for his semi-hidden sanctuary here in the cellar. He's remained hidden here for some time now, listening to the shuffling of undead feet and the high-pitched laughter of a madwoman above while subsisting on a steadily diminishing cask of water stored within this room and what rats he can catch for dinner. In his late 50s, Ausio dares not try to face the invaders above. He brandishes a dull paint knife at the PCs when they enter, trying his best not to shake too obviously. His initial attitude is unfriendly—if he can be made at least friendly he relates what he knows—little more than, "We were greeting the Westerkiens when a stranger burst in, quite uninvited, dressed as something of a harlot-harlequin. She opened fire on my guests with her crossbow, laughing all the while in the most frightful, shrill way. They sickened and collapsed with shocking rapidity—whatever venom she coated those bolts with can only be blood veil!" Ausio inquires after his wife and loses his composure for only a few moments should the PCs inform him of her demise—he expects the worst, but even that pales against learning of her true fate. Detailing her undead transformation horrifies the aging man, and showing him her mangled—or, worse, still undead—body breaks Ausio's already traumatized mind. If the PCs ask after Ruan, Ausio recalls the youth and last saw him in the gallery on the second floor.

What Jolistina Knows

Should Jolistina be captured alive, she knows much that might help the PCs. The problem, however, is that she's thoroughly insane. Her initial attitude is hostile—before she talks, she must be made helpful. Diplomacy

can accomplish this only with a (likely impossible) DC 50 check, although making her at least indifferent with a DC 25 check gets her to mention something about how the diplomat's tone reminds her, with a high-pitched giggle, of "my darling Rolth's silken tongue." Intimidate also has a tough time, since the forlorn elf is a fatalistic masochist. She responds with delight and scandalous cries if threatened with pain or tortured for information (especially including threats to infect her with blood veil)—only an Intimidate check that utilizes the threat of imprisonment or threats to expose her failure to Rolth have the normal chances of making her compliant. In the end, magic like *charm person* or *suggestion* is the easiest way to get her to talk.

Should the PCs manage to get her talking, she tells them why she's there—Rolth sent her to kill several "rich bastards" who were scheduled to attend the party here—the others (including the manor's servants) were just bonuses. She doesn't know why he wanted them dead, but she suspects it is something his new employer wanted, as Rolth wouldn't have known any of these sorts. Jolistina doesn't know who Rolth's employer is, but she doesn't like him, as he (or she—an infuriating possibility) has kept the necromancer holed up in some hidden laboratory somewhere in the city. She has no idea where it is, but she's barely heard from Rolth for weeks except for a brief visit the morning after she crashed the party.

If asked about Ruan (or asked about Rolth's visit the day after she killed everyone here), Jolistina doesn't recognize his name, but does know him by his description. She giggles as she admits that Rolth asked to capture any young, healthy-looking Varisians she might run into, and to keep them under wraps but alive for Rolth to collect. Ruan was the only Varisian at the masquerade, and Jolistina dutifully restrained him until Rolth showed up to assess her work. The necromancer seemed very pleased and had the two heavily armored women with him carry the youth off to who-knows-where. Although the elf doesn't know it, these armored women are members of Queen Ileosa's new elite guard, the Gray Maidens—if asked to describe them, the PCs should recognize the description of red-plumed heavily armed women. Rolth was so pleased with Jolistina for completing her task and sparing the Varisian that he rewarded her with two *scrolls of animate dead*, scrolls she immediately used to transform the abattoir into her own gruesome playhouse.

Beyond this, Jolistina knows little more. She's of no help in tracking down Rolth, as she doesn't know where he is (although she does ask the PCs to tell him she misses him if they see him). If the elf is released, she finds some filthy pesh den and spends the next several days pining for her beloved prince.

Returning Empty Handed

After exploring Carowyn Manor, the PCs have a good-news/bad-news situation to report to Deyanira Mirukova. Although the manor was filled with the dead and undead, her brother was not among their horrors—the PCs might know that a necromancer took him to an unknown location. Unsurprisingly, the news does little to relieve the young woman's concerns. For now, Ruan is probably out of the PCs' reach, but they have a chance to rescue him later when they explore the Temple of Urgathoa in the final part of this adventure. Deyanira pays the PCs anything she promised, entreating them to keep an eye out for her brother and to come to her with any rumor of him they might hear. Still distraught, she solemnly excuses herself from the PCs' company.

Bodycount: Destroying the zombies in Carowyn Manor and preventing Jolistina Susperio from releasing her zombies into the streets when she grows bored saves the lives of 500 citizens.

PART FIVE: EPIDEMIC

As the PCs work through the events of Part Four, hints that blood veil might not be an act of the gods appear. The PCs might even find evidence that the Queen's Physicians and Queen Ileosa's new Royal Physician might have nefarious dealings with the plague. If the PCs don't come to their own conclusion that Dr. Davaulus and the Queen's Physicians need to be investigated further, either Ishani or Cressida can come to these suspicions on their own, asking the PCs to investigate the Queen's Physicians and the Royal Physician. The most logical place to begin these investigations, of course, is the building the Queen's Physicians have claimed as their base of operations—the same building that Dr. Davaulus is reputed to be using as his headquarters for the field operations of combating blood veil. This location is a building known as the Hospice of the Blessed Maiden—a DC 15 Gather Information or Knowledge (local) check is enough to determine this. Both Ishani and Cressida Kroft know where the building is located as well, and if they ask the PCs to investigate the Queen's Physicians, they suggest starting there.

The Hospice of the Blessed Maiden

When one of the Arkona Imports warehouses on West Dock was purchased nearly four months ago, few people raised a brow. That the shrewd Arkonas would sell one of their half-full storage houses struck most as simple business sense. In truth, the sale was the culmination of several backroom meetings, bribes, and bouts of blackmailing. In the end, the West Dock warehouse—one of the Arkonas' most secret and secure smuggling dens—became the property of the Red Mantis, an