

PATHFINDER™

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CURSE OF THE CRIMSON THRONE

SEVEN DAYS TO THE GRAVE

By F. Wesley Schneider



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Regulation: Lolia Perenne

Tourism: Mercer Cucuteni

Arbiters

Senior Arbiter
Zenobia Zenderholm

Lesser Arbiters

Aristocracy



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Arkana



House
Jeggare



House
Leroung



House
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House
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ADVENTURE PATH  PART 2 of 6

CURSE OF THE CRIMSON THRONE

**SEVEN DAYS
TO THE GRAVE**



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WE ALL FALL DOWN

From the ancient past to the current day, we've been afraid of the plague. With good reason. The concept that a person, a city, a nation, or even the entire world could be wiped out by something that's effectively invisible, something we can see only in the damage it does to the flesh, is frightening. The Black Death changed societies when it killed its millions (the classic nursery rhyme "Ring Around the Rosie" might be about the symptoms of those dying from bubonic plague, although it's unlikely that the rhyme was invented during the time of the Black Death). In modern times, fears about modern plagues like HIV and immunization-resistant strains of the flu have become compounded by the threat of biological warfare and anthrax delivered by mail. This fear of disease is reflected even in our entertainment. Countless movies about plagues and diseases have graced the silver screen. One of the greatest of them, *The Seventh Seal*, was (of course) about the Black Death. Poe personified the plague in his classic story, "The Masque of the Red Death." One of Stephen King's best novels, *The Stand*, is about the end of the world brought on by a superflu. *The*

Andromeda Strain. *The Hot Zone*. *28 Days Later*. The list goes on and on. And what self-respecting gamer doesn't immediately think of Monty Python when the topic of the plague comes up at the gaming table?

Yet at that gaming table, diseases are among the least frightening things that can happen to your characters. Unlike almost every other effect that can hurt you, from swords to poison to magic, most diseases act incredibly slowly, often taking days before having an effect on a character. And since you get to make a Fortitude saving throw to resist the disease when you're first exposed, metagaming is frightfully easy—a character who's exposed to a disease can usually take his time before ambling over to the closest cleric for a cure. And therein lies a second reason disease is almost a joke in the rules—it's shockingly easy to cure before it does its dreadful work. If you're poisoned, you take damage immediately, and if a combat lasts for long, there's a good chance you'll be hit by the secondary effects of the poison before you get it fixed. Not so with diseases—there's almost always time to find a cure. All of which makes immunity to disease, a classic ability for both paladins and monks, relatively dull.

So how do you go about writing an adventure about a plague and have it actually capture the terror of an epidemic? Fortunately for me, I didn't have to answer that question.

SPREADING THE SICKNESS

Wes Schneider had this idea for a plague-themed adventure in his head for years. Originally, we had a plan to have a crossover event between *Dragon* and *Dungeon*. *Dragon* would present rules for how a plague might work in a world where people can cure diseases with magic, while *Dungeon* would take those rules and present an adventure that builds off of them. The idea really intrigued me, but unfortunately, with the Adventure Paths taking up so much room in *Dungeon* and with themes planned out a year in advance for *Dragon*, it continually proved too difficult to pull off.

When we transitioned over from magazines to books, I refused to let the idea die. I'd seen plagues used in adventures before, but never to my satisfaction. The plagues always felt like flavor for the adventure, or worse, didn't bother taking into account the integration of magic into the adventure's plot. In many ways, the overarching plot for *Curse of the Crimson Throne* was born in that old idea to do a plague crossover in the magazines, because the adventure you have in your hands now was the first thing we had nailed down for this Adventure Path. We knew we wanted a plague, and we knew we wanted it to incorporate an element of biological warfare, and we were able to build the entire campaign around it.

Poor Wes, though! In researching this adventure, I'm pretty sure he made himself a hypochondriac. At one point, he was talking in a panic-tinged voice, asking us if we knew that "ANTHRAX COMES OUT OF THE GROUND!" Whatever personal hell he went through (certainly involving spending too much time on the Internet doing image searches for "leprosy," "necrosis," and "parasitic worms"—trust me, you do NOT want to follow those footsteps!), the end result is fantastic.

"Seven Days to the Grave" does everything I hoped it would. We've got sham cures, overwhelmed healers, sinister doctors, horrific symptoms, and a slowly building sense of doom and ruin that really does capture the terror of a city caught in an epidemic. The key is that the sickness doesn't just target the PCs—it targets everyone. It's one thing if the PCs can cure themselves, but what happens when they're also expected to cure dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of their friends and allies? And worse, what happens when a plague brings out those allies' true colors, and riots and mayhem result?

Perhaps most gratifying to my inner GM, though, was the discovery that just because there are effects that can cure disease doesn't mean you can't have plagues. When you run the numbers to estimate just how many *remove disease* spells a large city can generate in a day,

you get a surprisingly small number. Certainly enough to handle day-to-day sicknesses or even small outbreaks, but a fantasy city gripped by a full-blown epidemic is not all that much better off than one in the real world. In fact, magic can just as easily encourage the spread of a plague—say, by giving a plague's sinister creators the ability to infect things like weapons and coins. In "Seven Days to the Grave," characters who assume that a few *remove disease* spells can stop a full-blown epidemic are in for a rude surprise indeed.

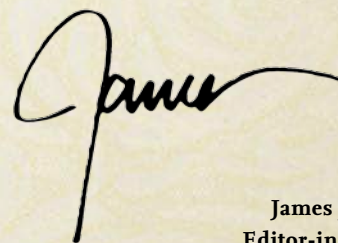
THE OTHER FIENDS

Finally seeing what I feel is the definitive "plague adventure" in print isn't the only personal milestone in this volume of *Pathfinder*, though. We also nailed down the role of the neutral evil fiends in Golarion.

Although they're known by various names throughout the numerous editions of the game, in *Pathfinder*, we'll be using the classic categories for the three types of evil outsiders. Lawful evil outsiders are devils. These are the monsters interested in corrupting and destroying the mind. They infect faith, politics, and scholastic pursuits, and strive to turn mortals into traitors and heretics against their own nature. Chaotic evil outsiders are demons, creatures of primal destruction and ruin who have existed as long as life itself. They seek to destroy and savage the world. They are forces of entropy that exist to bring about the end of the world itself.

But the neutral evil fiends have always seemed to get left behind. Once you have groups out to corrupt the mind and corrupt the body... what else is left? For our neutral evil fiends, the daemons, what is left is perhaps the most important thing of all. In Golarion, the daemons are embodiments of death. They care little about the physical world or pleasures and torments of the flesh (that's for the demons), nor are they particularly interested in corrupting mortal life to serve their needs or to betray its own kind (that's for the devils). Daemons have perhaps the simplest desire: to feed on the soul. In many ways, the daemons are perhaps the most dangerous of the three, since you can continue to live even if your body and mind are broken after the demons and devils are done with you. When a daemon is done with you... you're just dead.

Actually, maybe that makes the daemons the most humane of the three fiends. At least they don't torment you as much.



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SEVEN DAYS TO THE GRAVE

CURSE OF THE CRIMSON THRONE: CHAPTER TWO

Although the flames of rebellion have been reduced to embers, peace is a short-lived comfort for Korvosa. From the red-tinted windows of Castle Korvosa's galleries and vaults, the increasingly morbid dreams of a new queen fall upon the crawling, filthy citizenry below. What care are mewling masses and simpering slaves to a high-and-mighty monarch? Why bother with the smothering obligations and unending exercises of rule? The life of a queen would be ideal, were it not for her subjects.

Her Majesty's mind has long mused on the subtle culling of her city's chaff, and royal coin can buy even the darkest dreams. With agents willing to commit any atrocity for gold and the eager zealots of Golarion's foulest gods, the madness of Queen Ileosa takes form—a form with black sails and a hull festering with death.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

For years, agents of the guild of assassins known as the Red Mantis have been active in Varisia, scouring the mysterious land for ancient relics, tribal magics, and deadly beasts that might prove useful or profitable in the assassins' far-reaching and nefarious dealings. While they currently pursue numerous ventures in the region, the most promising came to them quite by accident.

In months past, a mysterious group calling itself the Brothers of the Seven offered to sell the Red Mantis infected rats bearing a newly discovered magical disease. While proxies of the Magnimarian group proved tight-lipped on the source of the new affliction, demonstrations of its speed and horrifying blistering effects captivated the cruel imaginations of the Red Mantis agents. The Red Mantis purchased the affliction, referred to by the brothers as "Vorel's phage," and spirited it away to their secret dens in the bowels of Korvosa, where it could be researched and then sent on to the group's mysterious leaders far to the south.

The time for study proved short, though. Deeply Chelish in its ways and thinking, Korvosa had never been a tolerant city, especially toward the native peoples of Varisia: the Shoanti and the Varisians. When someone started making sinister inquiries in the city's riverside smoke and poison dens and throwing around enough coin to be noticed, the Red Mantis responded. Subtly at first, the Red Mantis's representatives sought out the one making these secretive inquiries, discovering her to be none other than a magically disguised Queen Ileosa, a monarch eager to contact the guild of assassins with a task. When it became apparent that she wanted the Red Mantis to assassinate her husband, the assassins informed the queen of their policy against direct regicide. Yet they could still aid her indirectly, supplying her with the poison needed to do the deed.

The Red Mantis took secret pride in the resulting chaos, knowing well the role its hand had played. Yet not long after the king's death, the queen contacted them again—this time with a much more interesting request, and one the Red Mantis was only too eager to aid her with. She wanted a method to take care of Korvosa's "native problem"—she wanted a city in her own image, and in order for this to come to pass, those of Varisian descent, Shoanti blood, or simply the poor luck to be among Korvosa's lowest class had to go.

The order of genocide against Korvosa's unwanted populace fell to a cold-minded sociopath, a Chelaxian "doctor" named Reiner Davaulus. Reputed to be a "gentleman's killer," Davaulus's modus operandi forsook blades and bloodshed, favoring the path of sickbed poisonings and "accidental" deaths. Seeing the assignment as a fantastic challenge, the good doctor came to Korvosa to meet with Queen Ileosa in secret, and in swift course

became the primary point of contact between her and the Red Mantis. With *carte blanche* to do as he would with Korvosa, and with access to Red Mantis assets, Davaulus quickly came to the conclusion that the best way to engineer the death of Korvosa's undesirables was a plague. And here, his contacts with the Red Mantis proved invaluable, for the assassins themselves had the perfect agents in mind.

Acting again as intermediaries, the Red Mantis put Davaulus in contact with the local cult of Urgathoa—goddess of disease, gluttony, and undead—and Conte Senir Tiriac, an exiled ruler from distant Ustalav and a near-peerless scholar of disease. Offering both significant fortunes from the Korvosan royal vaults, Davaulus retained their services to aid him in a citywide assassination, while the Red Mantis did what it did best—stepped back to watch and enjoy the mayhem its influence encouraged.

Within weeks, the foundation of Queen Ileosa's plot against her people was laid. The cult of Urgathoa, working in secret with Davaulus and the Red Mantis's discovered disease—Vorel's phage—swiftly crafted the perfect epidemic to plague the city. The result: a slower, easy-to-spread variation with dramatic symptoms sure to panic the populace. The Urgathoans named their creation "blood veil."

Utilizing methods perfected by Conte Tiriac, Davaulus planned a double-tiered infection targeting the lifeblood of any city: its coin. Overseen by Tiriac's meticulous agent, Ramoska Arkminos, a fortune in Korvosan silver was tainted with blood veil. Split into two loads, part of the silver filled the hull of a Chelish ship called the *Direption*, a red herring and scapegoat meant to draw attention away from the second fortune of tainted silver. The rest of the silver would be deposited at the Grand Vault of Abadar, where its taint would both spread throughout the city and cripple the priests best posed to combat the disease.

Her wishes fulfilled, her new dark allies marshalled, and her mind afflicted with insidious dreams, Queen Ileosa gave the nod that launched a ship with black sails and opened her city gates to a pestilence unlike any Korvosa has ever known.

Adventure Synopsis

What begins as a simple favor for a recent acquaintance draws the PCs into a battle against a rampant plague that threatens to consume all of Korvosa. Becoming unofficial agents of the desperate church of Abadar, the party must do all it can to halt the progression of the plague and save as many infected citizens as possible. Through the course of their work, the PCs gradually discover the sinister groups responsible for the plague's outbreak and the deaths of thousands: the criminal Red Mantis, the disease-worshipping church of Urgathoa, and Korvosa's own genocidal queen.

Seven Days to the Grave

Points of Interest



PART ONE: INFECTION

While “Edge of Anarchy” gave the PCs ample opportunities to explore Korvosa and become acquainted with its districts and people, most of these encounters occurred under stressful circumstances. With the quieting of much of the city’s disorder and the slow acceptance of Queen Ileosa as Korvosa’s new sovereign, the city returns to a state of near normalcy—although the scars of the past week’s upheaval still show on many buildings and in whispered gossip. In the downtime following their first adventure, the PCs should be given time to explore the city, resupply, and clean up any loose ends. As “Seven Days to the Grave” promises to drastically alter the face and feel of Korvosa, be sure the PCs have ample time to prepare. Characters should be encouraged to make connections and grow attached to people and places throughout the city, especially if they’re locals. Such bonds should cause the tragedies of the impending days to affect the characters even more deeply and lend personal inspirations to their search for a cure.

The harbinger of Korvosa’s continued troubles came in the ominous form of the *Direption*, a black-sailed Chelish ship secretly owned by the nefarious criminal organization known as the Red Mantis and loaned to the local cult of Urgathoa as one method to begin the plague. Largely a decoy—a mysterious scapegoat to divert inquisitive eyes from the plague’s true source—the ship also carried several magical boxes known as *death’s head coffers*—containers used to preserve highly infectious material for safe transport. The cult of Urgathoa knew that once the city sank the ship, these air-tight containers would float and wash ashore all along the river’s banks, where the poorest of the poor generally dwell, and that the infected coins would circulate swiftly. Other coins were scheduled to enter circulation at other points as well (including via the bank of Abadar), but as fortune would have it, the first to find the coins from the *Direption* was a child.

The Yellow Light

As this adventure begins, an ominous disruption presages the city’s newest peril. Just before midnight, the evening’s peace is shattered by a wooden screech, followed by the thunder of a trebuchet being fired. Again and again the sounds echo from the Wall of Eodred near North Bridge, waking nearly all of North Point. Across the river in Trail’s End, citizens wake just in time to see a sleek brig burn and swiftly sink into the wine-dark waters. The rest of the night passes in breathless anticipation of the wall-weapons’ further use, which fortuitously never comes.

Next morning, gossip buzzes through the city and fanciful tales run wild. Every tavern and street corner is abuzz with rumors of pirate raiders and ghost ships. The Crimson Throne remains quiet on the matter, though,

BLOOD VEIL

The affliction that the people of Korvosa will soon widely fear as “blood veil” is no natural malady. Created by plague shaping priests of Urgathoa and funded by the Red Mantis, blood veil is a refined form of Vorel’s phage, an unnatural disease that first came into being deep under Foxglove Manor, on Varisia’s coast (see *Pathfinder* #2). The arcane and alchemical manipulations of these two nefarious organizations have altered the potent necromantic infection into a weaker but more virulent weapon.

Blood veil takes its name from its most apparent symptom, a rash and mask of blisters that covers the face. In its initial stages, the disease is characterized by headache, fatigue, coughing, and the aforementioned rash. As it progresses, the cough becomes more obtrusive, the rash spreads to the neck, face, and limbs and develops into pox-like blisters, and the lymph glands swell into painful buboes. At its most advanced stage, the blisters grow to the size of grapes or larger, internal bleeding creates black patches on the skin, and blood is expectorated. Ultimately, a most unseemly, wheezing death occurs. If left untreated, blood veil kills the average human in approximately 7 days.

Blood Veil—contact or injury; Fortitude DC 16; incubation 1 day; damage 1d3 Constitution and 1d3 Charisma.

with even the loosest-tongued politicians seemingly knowing nothing of the previous night’s incident. With so many far wilder and more interesting tales circulating, the facts of the matter become lost among the frenzied gossip.

PCs who seek more information about the night’s events are best served by waiting until the city digests the most unlikely rumors and the wild storytelling dies down. On the night of the *Direption*’s sinking, very little can be discerned, and even interrogating a guardsman stationed upon the wall reveals only that an order was given to fire upon a light on the water. Gather Information checks can turn up the following facts and fictions.

Check

DC Information Gained

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

Upon hearing rumors of a strangely lit ship, a DC 20 Profession (sailor) check reveals that shining a single yellow light is a nautical warning identifying a ship under quarantine.

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

The First Symptoms

The day after the *Direption* sinks into the Jeggare, Brienna "Breeze" Soldado made the most serious discovery of her life. Washed up on the shore near her Trail's End home was a strange wooden coffer. When she opened the ruined box, she found 50 shiny silver coins—the largest fortune the child had ever seen. Shocked at her good luck and thanking Desna, she raced into North Point, intent on spending every coin of her unexpected windfall as quickly as she could.

Unfortunately for Brienna, the coffer she found was a *death's head coffer*, and the coins that remained inside it even after it washed ashore were infected with blood veil. Brienna fell ill quickly. Her mother, Tayce, did all she could think of, drawing on more than 20 years of common parenting sense and mothering instinct, but nothing seemed to soothe the girl. By evening, despite the attentions of her mother, the neighbor women, and a pinch-faced local herbalist, Brienna's condition had only worsened.

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

A Second Favor

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

Grau uses his contacts with the Guard to locate the PCs, an easy enough task if they are still in the good graces of Field Marshal Cressida Kroft. Physically, he's in much better condition than the last time the PCs met him,

having shaved, bathed, and sobered up. Psychologically, though, Grau remains distressed. If he encounters a character besides the one he's looking for, he urgently requests to be led to the PC he believes can best help his sick niece. Once Grau finds the PC he's looking for, he looks for a private place they can talk.

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

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

A Family in Need

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

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

in a few coins for the family—Brienna working as a maid, while Charlo and Rello work as unofficial apprentices to a wheelwright friend of the family.

Tayce is a single mother. Her husband Bayan was murdered long ago by highwaymen. Left with three children to raise alone, Tayce dedicated her life to bringing them up right. Grau visits the family at least once a week to ensure that they're safe and have everything they need. He respects and honestly likes Tayce, but his visits are inspired by familial concern and fraternal obligation, not any one-sided feelings for his brother's widow.

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

Infectious Encounters

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

Ishani Dhatri (LG male human cleric 5) attends a kettle boiling in the kitchen hearth until Grau and Tayce come back downstairs. He's just nearing 30 years old, yet still only a low-ranking priest in the church of Abadar. His mother brought him to Korvosa when he was less than 10, fleeing an outbreak of scarlet leprosy in Vudra that had already claimed his father. Taking the first ship to

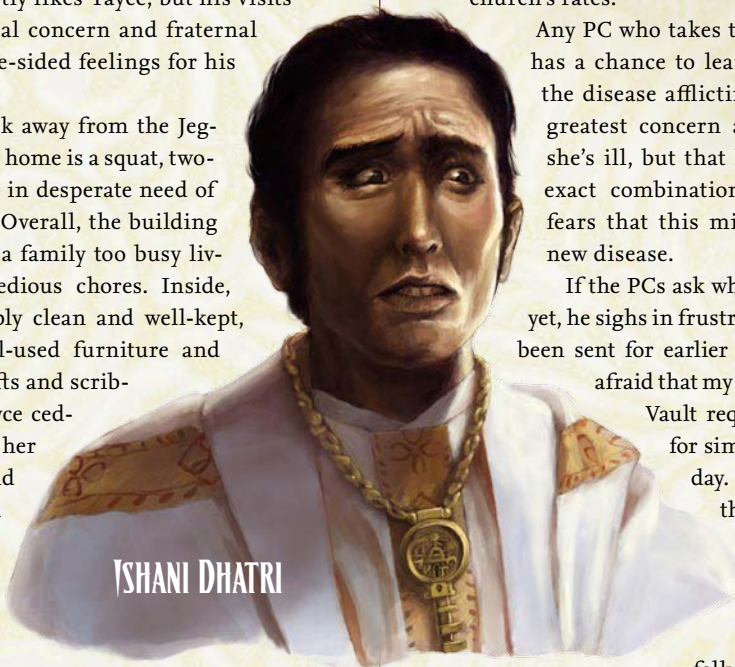
anywhere, Ishani and his mother found themselves on the return journey of an Arkona expedition and have lived in Korvosa ever since. Ishani's experience in Vudra scarred him, and he has sought to help the sick ever since. He knows he can't offer actual healing without seeking payment, and the use of herbal remedies and other methods of fighting illness are his way of skirting the system for folk who need his aid yet cannot afford the church's rates.

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

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

Nearing 40, **Tayce Soldado** (NG female human commoner 3) possesses a simple beauty, scarcely hidden by her disheveled appearance and wan features—she's not slept in more than a day. Despite her personal state, her concern for her daughter drives her on and she welcomes the PCs sincerely, especially if one of them has the look of a priest. She knows nothing of how her daughter might have become so ill, as the girl has drifted in and out of consciousness since her discovery. Once Tayce satisfies herself that one of the PCs might be able to help her, she invites the healer upstairs with her to see Brienna.

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



ISHANI DHATRI

CONTRACTING THE PLAGUE

Although Brienna certainly doesn't mean the PCs harm, this is the first time the PCs are exposed to blood veil in the adventure. As the disease is passed through contact and injury, simply being among victims of the plague has a chance of infecting the PCs. As the adventure progresses, the PCs likely spend more time among the diseased and in areas that might be thick with infection. From this point on, in addition to typical ways of getting sick, PCs have a 15% chance every day of being exposed to blood veil simply in the course of their day—perhaps by brushing up against a victim on the street, taking an infected coin, or by any of a hundred other everyday interactions. You should check every morning to see if any of the PCs were exposed to the disease the previous day. Those who were should make the Fortitude save to resist, with failure indicating immediate damage as the incubation period ends. Of course, daily uses of *remove disease* can protect the PCs from blood veil, but doing so also reduces their resources to aid others who fall ill during the adventure.

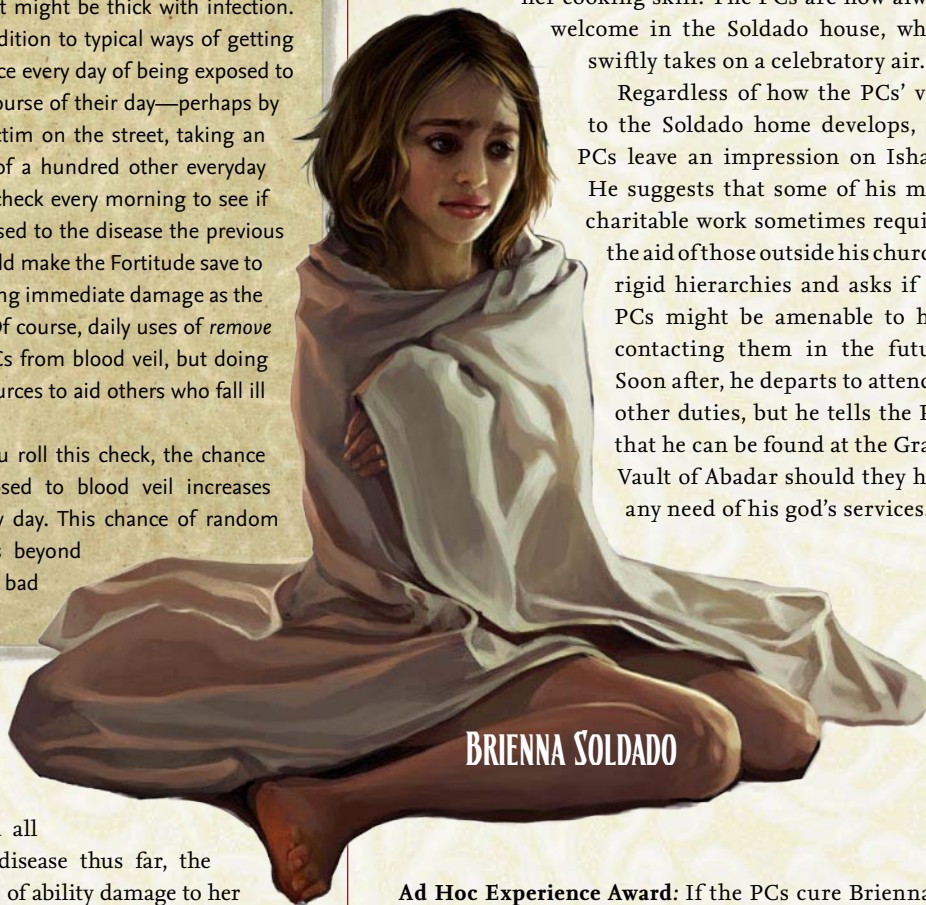
From the first time you roll this check, the chance of being randomly exposed to blood veil increases by a cumulative 5% every day. This chance of random exposure never increases beyond 50%, regardless of how bad the plague gets.

Brienna Soldado is a 1st-level commoner with a base Constitution score of 9 and a base Charisma score of 12. Having failed all of her saves against the disease thus far, the affliction has dealt 4 points of ability damage to her Constitution and 5 points to her Charisma (reducing her scores to Con 5 and Cha 7). As she gains no bonuses to her saving throw from her class, she has to make another DC 16 Fortitude save against the disease to avoid taking even more damage every morning—currently a d20 roll with a -3 penalty. At this rate, without receiving healing or other treatment, Brienna will die within the next 2 or 3 days.

The PCs have three obvious choices: heal Brienna on the spot via a cleric or paladin with the capability to cure diseases; prepare a spell, fetch a magic item, or recruit a healer capable of curing the girl; or do nothing. *Remove disease* saves Brienna's life, but it takes a few *lesser restorations* or similar spells to immediately restore her to full health. Regardless, if the PCs only use *remove disease*, her coughing fits and restlessness immediately vanish. In either situation, Tayce is overwhelmed. Brienna wakes almost immediately. She's slightly befuddled by the crowd

of strangers in the house and all the fuss before she asks her mother if lunch is ready yet. The PCs immediately become Tayce's personal heroes, and she proves very animated and affectionate in her thanks (few can hope to escape the relieved mother's hugs). Although the Soldados can hardly afford to compensate the PCs, Tayce is eager to prepare them a feast—a considerable reward, considering her cooking skill. The PCs are now always welcome in the Soldado house, which swiftly takes on a celebratory air.

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



BRIENNA SOLDADO

Ad Hoc Experience Award: If the PCs cure Brienna of blood veil on their first visit to the Soldado home, grant them a CR 3 experience award.

A Second Harrowing

In "Edge of Anarchy," the PCs gained a powerful magic item—*Zellara's Harrow Deck*. As indicated in the previous adventure, this Harrow deck plays a recurring role throughout *Curse of the Crimson Throne*. "Seven Days to the Grave" is tied to the suit of Shields in a Harrow deck—and by extension, to Constitution.

Zellara's spirit haunts her Harrow deck, and at several points during this Adventure Path, she can perform a special Harrow reading to grant her chosen heroes, the PCs, advantages over what is to come in the adventure. After the PCs leave the Soldado home, Zellara can sense that something dire is coming for Korvosa. She uses her empathic link to instill an urge to perform a Harrow

HARROW POINT USES

In “Seven Days to the Grave,” the PCs are faced with numerous situations where health and resolve win the day, be this avoiding the contagion that plagues the city, resisting the toxins and poisons possessed by many of the people in the adventure, or enduring the implied race against the clock to find a cure for blood veil before it kills thousands. During this adventure, a character can spend his Harrow Points in the following ways.

Constitution Rerolls: Spend a Harrow Point to reroll any one Fortitude saving throw, Concentration check, or other Constitution-based d20 roll. You must abide by the new result (although if you have additional Harrow Points remaining, you can use them to attempt additional rerolls).

Fast Hit Point Recovery: Spend a Harrow Point after resting for a minute to catch your breath and recover from your recent ordeals—you heal a number of hit points equal to your class level and 1 point of ability damage (but not ability drain) each time you do so. You may spend a Harrow Point in this manner once after each encounter.

Damage Reduction: Spend a Harrow Point to gain damage reduction 3/—. This damage reduction persists for the duration of the encounter in which you spent the Harrow Point.

THE CHOSEN

In addition, the card a PC draws during the choosing has special qualities during this adventure. Each of these cards is tied to a specific encounter in “Seven Days to the Grave,” and when a PC who drew that card reaches that encounter, he gains a +2 bonus on all rolls modified by Constitution and a number of temporary hit points equal to twice his character level. These bonuses last for the encounter’s duration.

The Trumpet: Combat with Davaulus (area F8)

The Survivor: Combat with Lady Andaisin (area G14)

The Desert: Combat with Yicca (Area D3)

The Brass Dwarf: Combat with Jolistina (area E)

The Teamster: The Color of Death (area B)

The Mountain Man: The Hungry Dead (area A)

The Tangled Briar: Combat with Girrigz (area C6)

The Sickness: The Sick Ward (area F2)

The Waxworks: Combat with Rolth (area G5)

reading in the mind of the PC who carries her deck. If that PC doesn’t comply soon by using her cards to perform a reading, she takes matters into her own hands once she sees the PCs are alone by creating a *major image* of herself who then performs the reading. When you do this reading (which should only be done with Constitution cards at the choosing), take pains to interpret the cards from the past to dwell upon previous brushes with disease, sickness, and death the PCs might have experienced (be

these drawn from their character histories or from events in “Edge of Anarchy,” such as the battle with the carrion golem or otyugh). When you get to cards representing the present, focus on metaphors that relate to the recent visit to the Soldados, the mysterious ship sunk in the harbor, and the general sense of unease in the city. For the cards representing the future, get grim—interpret the cards as dire warnings, mass graves, undeath, rot and decay, birds feasting upon the dead (to symbolize the Queen’s Physicians), and beautiful women with ashen skin and blank faces (to symbolize the Gray Maidens).

**PART TWO:
A DAMSEL IN DISTRESS**

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

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

After his rescue of Trinia, Blackjack—the alter ego of Vencarlo Orisini—returned to the Orisini Academy to devise a way to assure the painter-turned-scapegoat’s safety. The smuggling of a single girl out of the city would usually be no problem for the well-connected swordsmaster, but in the days following the city riots and general upheaval, many of Vencarlo’s usual contacts are either doing time or laying low. He knows he’s being watched by the government, and he can’t disrupt his routine—yet every day that Trinia remains hidden in his school is another that she might be discovered. Thus, he turns to the adventurers who his friend Field Marshal Kroft put so much faith in—heroes who might have had a hand in aiding his daring stunt during Trinia’s supposed execution—and sends them a short, cryptic note that invites them to pay him a visit in his academy in Old Korvosa.

Even if the PCs don’t know where Orisini Academy is located, it’s a simple matter of a DC 10 Knowledge (local) or Gather Information check to secure directions. The academy is located at 16 Hillcrest Street, near the center of Old Korvosa. A sign hanging from the front door reads,

“Classes Cancelled Today.” A few moments after the PCs arrive, whether or not they knock on the academy’s front door, a serious-looking Vencarlo appears and ushers them inside. The swordsman thanks the PCs for responding to his cryptic note and leads them down a hall and into a study, the windows of which are tightly shuttered and curtained. He explains in hushed tones that he has an important task for the PCs, one that becomes obvious when he calls another guest into the room: Trinia Sabor.

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

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

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

Vencarlo is relatively sure the PCs will aid him, particularly if they’ve already put their reputations on the line in helping Blackjack effect his escape from the execution, which is why he’s taken such a risk so as to reveal to them he’s been harboring Trinia in the first place. He plans on funding the escape by supplying Trinia with a horse and supplies for her travels, along with any reasonable mundane supplies the party needs to smuggle her out of the city. Should the

PCs prove hesitant, Vencarlo insists that more is afoot than is currently clear and that, as gentlefolk, the PCs should aid a lady in need. If they require further convincing, he begrudgingly offers them 500 gp for their efforts.

Vencarlo asserts that a simple, subtle egress would work best and draw the least attention. With the recent events near North Bridge, he suggests a slow walk through the city down to High Bridge and then up to Dwarfwalk Road, mingling with the afternoon’s merchants leaving the city. He opposes more dramatic attempts to leave town, knowing the Guard is certainly on alert for such theatrics as flying people or other shows of magical power.

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

The Last Horse Out of Korvosa

Guiding Trinia out of the city should be a relatively simple affair. With Trinia adopting the disguise of an everyday traveler, there’s very little chance of her being spotted among the city’s crowds as long as she and the party keep a low profile, but the PCs shouldn’t know this. Groups of Guards and even Hellknights might cast sidelong glances at the party as it travels through Korvosa, but each passes by as long as the PCs don’t do anything suspicious.

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

If she’s asked about Blackjack or Vencarlo, Trinia grows somewhat evasive. After they made their escape from the castle, Blackjack and Trinia fled north through the city’s alleys, rooftops, and sewers in an attempt to evade pursuit.

They eventually came to Vencarlo's Academy. Blackjack broke into the building through a back door and bade Trinia wait in a back room while he spoke to the school's master. Several minutes later, Vencarlo himself, appearing flushed and worried, introduced himself to Trinia as an accomplice of the legendary hero, explaining that he'd agreed to keep her in hiding at the academy until he could orchestrate her escape from the city.

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

Even this early, blood veil is silently spreading through Korvosa. As the PCs move through Old Korvosa or North Point, an aggressive beggar stumbles up to them, hacking and wheezing, a splotchy red rash and blisters the size of ripe grapes covering his face and arms as he pleads for coins to buy food and medicine. PCs who keep alert for other signs of the disease as they travel through Old Korvosa and North Point can make DC 15 Spot checks to notice at least five other individuals—beggars, common folk, and even a merchant—who display familiar fiery rashes. These portents should serve to pique the PCs' concerns about the spreading disease, but shouldn't distract them from the task at hand.

As soon as the party escorts Trinia through the city gates and some safe distance away, Trinia wholeheartedly thanks them for their help and apologizes for any trouble she's caused them. She promises to make it all up to them someday and might give a PC she's come to favor a quick kiss, but for now, she's eager to be away from the city that wants her dead. Should the Guard somehow manage to recapture Trinia, the wily girl manages to slip her bonds and escape the city on her own, although her location should remain a mystery to the PCs until they encounter her again in "A History of Ashes" in *Pathfinder* #10.

PART THREE: OUTBREAK

Witnessing further evidence of blood veil in Korvosa, the PCs might grow concerned about the disease's spread. Already, more of Korvosa's citizens are falling ill, and what starts as a few random cases soon fills the local gossip with rumors of sick people with the distinctive red pocks on the face. While some are able to fend off the disease through simple resilience, magical means, or sheer luck, the number of sick quickly grows to beyond the city's combined priesthoods' ability to simply "magic it away."

For the remainder of the adventure, up until a cure is discovered, the number of sick in Korvosa grows. Hundreds, if not thousands, are destined to die, but as fortune would have it, the PCs can directly influence the body count claimed by the plague. As a priest of Abadar, Ishani Dhatri quickly finds his skills in increasing demand against the tidal wave of plague carriers. He needs all the help he can get, and with his brethren steeped in church procedure and tradition, Ishani turns to the PCs. A day after they escort Trinia out of the city, an acolyte from the Grand Vault of Abadar locates the PCs, telling them that Vaultkeeper Dhatri seeks a meeting with them at the temple.

The Grand Vault of Abadar

In a city as steeped in political scheming, decisive justice, and trade as Korvosa, it should be no surprise that the city's largest and most influential faith is the congregation of Abadar, god of cities, laws, and merchants. Presided over by Archbanker Darb Tuttle, the Bank of Abadar is one of the more potent moderating factors in the city, ever eager to remind the government and nobility of their responsibilities to their citizens. Although its acts might sometimes seem charitable, the church of Abadar is more concerned with the just enactment of the law and the continued flow of trade. (For full details on Abadar's faith, see page 64.)

The Grand Vault of Abadar, a meticulously well-kept structure of white marble and gleaming bronze friezes, stands in the North Point district of Korvosa. Within, the Vault serves several purposes. While the first floor holds a few small side shrines and counseling chambers, the majority of its airy halls are given over to the business of banking, with acolytes of Abadar eager to serve any with coin they would bestow in the god's trust, while armored clerics keep watch for ne'er-do-wells. The floor above holds the god's sanctuary and the quarters of a small number of resident priests, although most are encouraged to maintain their own addresses away from the temple. Finally, beneath the temple lies the physical vault, a heavily guarded storehouse where the clergy's considerable fortune—as well as the investments of thousands of citizens—are safely stored. So trusted and respected are the priests that for decades these lower levels have also housed the presses that mint Korvosan coins.

The Unwashed Masses

When the PCs reach the temple of Abadar, things might not be as they expected.

Towering over the surrounding buildings, the Grand Vault of Abadar offers a vision of divine luxuriance amid a sea of mortal troubles. Radiant, as its grey-veined white marble reflects the midday sun, there's little question that this place is the house of a god.

Yet, for a deity of law, the steep stairs and ramps leading up to the temple's great bronze doors offer a strangely discordant scene. Dozens of citizens—mostly of the working class, although the silks of a few merchants show through the crowd—throng the entry, scarcely being held back by a group of gold-armored Abadarian clerics. All seem intent on gaining entry to the temple, but the clerics turn away nearly all comers. The clerics' reasoning becomes clear as one desperate believer is turned away, his pitiful countenance mottled with violent red sores.

Although Brienna Soldado was the first to be stricken with blood veil, her case did not remain unique in Korvosa. As a result of her haphazard spending and the Abadarians' release of tainted silver, dozens of cases of the disease have appeared throughout the city—mostly among the residents of North Point. The clergy of Abadar has been inundated with pock-scarred patients, healing those with the gold to pay and recommending local herbalists for those without. The priests might have been able to help more, but they had their own troubles, since several of their acolytes, guards, and vaultkeepers developed symptoms of the same mysterious disease. What little magic was left among the clergy was quickly sold to a few wealthy and lucky worshipers, but in all, fewer than two dozen citizens were healed.

Upon arriving, the PCs witness the temple guards turning away all comers who show signs of blood veil. Others who have less urgent business in the temple must fight through the disease-ridden crowd and undergo the guards' brief questioning as to their purpose—twin gauntlets few healthy visitors dare to run. While the crowd remains relatively orderly in its pleading, the temple's protectors and a few Korvosan Guards gathered nearby eye the situation with unease.

If the party intends to meet with Ishani, it must navigate the desperate crowd. This proves troublesome, forcing each PC to make a DC 14 Strength check to strong-arm through the assemblage. If any PC is obviously a cleric, the crowd turns its attentions to the party, begging for healing and divine aid—regardless of the PCs' actual ability to heal. The mob is allowed to make Spot checks (with no modifiers) to notice a character's religious garb or holy symbols, which the PCs can wholly avoid by removing the symbols of their faith or by making opposed Disguise checks.

Actually healing a disease victim or making a show of divine power within sight of the mob nearly sets off a riot. The crowd swarms the would-be healer, dozens of the sickly riffraff begging to be cured and explaining why their case is the most desperate. Each PC must make a DC 16 Escape Artist or grapple check to escape the press. Violence against the crowd at any point is immediately noticed by the Korvosan Guard. While the watchmen can understand a few thrown punches if the party is mobbed,

the use of weapons or deadly spells—even in defense—could see the characters arrested.

Once the PCs manage to muscle through the crowd, guards at the doors to the Grand Vault halt them and sternly ask their purpose. Mentioning Ishani's name is enough to convince the guards that the PCs have legitimate business inside, and unless the PCs are obviously sick or violent, the guards let them into the temple for their appointment.

Ad Hoc Experience Award: If the PCs manage to navigate the crowd without harming anyone, grant them a CR 2 experience award.

The Healer's Hands

Even after the clerics of Abadar manage to disperse the plague victims with promises of healing, the temple remains a place besieged. Within its airy hall, priests and patrons eye each other and every newcomer with suspicion, and every footfall upon the marble floor echoes through a frightened silence. The PCs should have no trouble finding Ishani Dhatri, as he reserved one of the temple's western meeting rooms to meet with the party and waits for them there. The young priest looks grave as he greets them.

"Thank you for coming. I assume you already suspect my reasons for calling, having seen the crowd outside—poor lot. You recognize the symptoms too, I'm sure. I had hoped that the Soldado case was isolated, but apparently we have a bigger problem on our hands than I'd feared.

"I'm concerned for the city, but also for my brethren here. The morning after my visit to the Soldado home I came to the temple to hear that three of my brothers awoke with similar symptoms, although they had already been healed. I spoke to each, and aside from their usual duties in the temple, none have had any dealings with the sick. Later in the day, more of my brothers—vaultkeepers, guards, and acolytes—developed symptoms, and folk from throughout the city began arriving in search of healing. It's been more than a little bit frightening. They're calling the sickness 'blood veil.' An apt enough name, I suppose.

"This affliction has spread fast, yet I'm not yet sure how. Most of the patients we're treating have come from North Point and Old Korvosa. The disease seems to spread fastest through the lower classes. Although we here at the temple can heal some of the ill, I fear that the spread of the disease will soon outpace our resources. The only way to stem the growing infection is to involve all the city's resources. We need to organize. We need to call upon the faiths of Sarenrae, Pharasma, and even Asmodeus to face this attack. Archbanker Tuttle and several of his assistants are out pursuing alliances with these other faiths, but even that won't be enough. We need to involve the Korvosan Guard, at the very least. And that's where you come in—with the number of desperate souls growing, it's not particularly safe



for a priest to walk the streets of Korvosa. I hear that you have a good relationship with Field Marshal Cressida Kroft—perhaps you would be willing to escort me to Citadel Volshyenek to introduce me to her?”

Ishani doesn't expect the party's involvement to be charity and has already cleared a generous payment of 200 gp for each PC involved in the errand. This is all the church is willing to commit to a single priest's unofficial interests, but Ishani might be convinced to increase the payment by 50 gp apiece if the PCs prove hesitant, supplementing the church's gold with his own.

Ishani is also willing to answer any questions the PCs might have about blood veil, but it's unlikely he knows much that they don't. His first encounter with it, after Brienna, was at the temple, when three of his fellow priests received healing for the disease's early symptoms. Several other faithful fell ill soon after, but each was healed with ease. The first sick from outside the temple were a barkeep and his wife from the Three Rings Tavern in North Point. They paid to be cured magically and were sent on their way. Within the next hour, though, three more sick citizens arrived, and more in the hours after that. Soon the crowd the PCs saw upon entering the temple had formed. Ishani

fears that the scene on the temple's steps is but a precursor to the dangers ahead.

First, Do No Harm

Reaching Citadel Volshyenek poses little problem, despite Ishani's fear to the contrary. Although many in the city attempt to conduct life as normal, stilted mumbling and quiet conversations replace the raucous chatter of any normal business day, as if noise might attract the plague's lethal notice.

A few hours prior to the PCs' arrival, Field Marshal Kroft received orders stamped with the Korvosan royal seal, commanding that the Guard serve as bodyguards to the queen's personal physician, Doctor Reiner Davaulus, and a group of strange men proclaimed to be doctors, as they fulfill an appointment by the throne to halt the plague's spread. Although Kroft doesn't like her men being tasked as glorified bodyguards, she knows her duty and obeys. Reiner and his band of strangely dressed "Queen's Physicians" are escorted to Citadel Volshyenek to be introduced to the Guard, and as the PCs arrive, this introduction is in full swing. Assuming the PCs have done nothing to sour their relationship with Field Marshal Cressida Kroft and the Korvosan Guard, the guards at the

PLAGUEBRINGER'S MASK

Aura faint conjuration; **CL** 5th

Slot head; **Price** 2,000 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

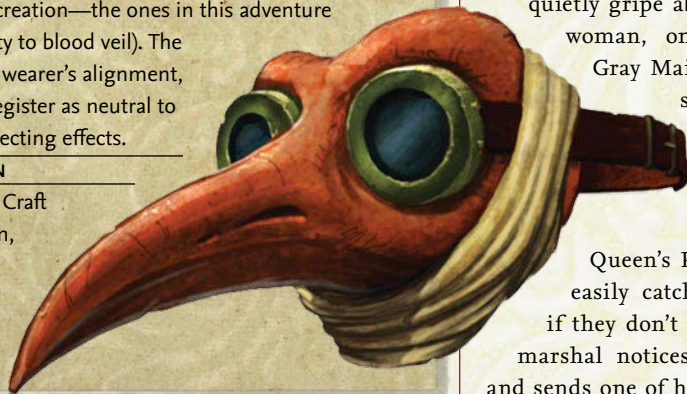
Resembling the more common nonmagical doctor's mask, a *plaguebringer's mask* grants a +2 resistance bonus on saving throws against nauseating scents and immunity to one specific disease (the disease must be chosen at the time of the mask's creation—the ones in this adventure grant immunity to blood veil). The mask veils the wearer's alignment, making him register as neutral to alignment-detecting effects.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft

Wondrous Item,
misdirection,
remove disease;

Cost 1,000
gp, 80 XP



gate greet the PCs warmly, noting that if PCs want to meet the Queen's Physicians, they need to hurry to catch the doctors in the citadel's courtyard. As Ishani and the PCs enter the citadel, read the following.

The echoes of forcefully spoken but still just-missed words resound off the imposing granite and iron walls of Citadel Volshyenek's outer curtain. Dozens of red-and-silver-armored guards stand in assembly upon the pitted stone mustering ground here, mumbling in hushed, somber tones. Before them, atop a weathered wooden platform, paces Field Marshal Kroft, her eyebrows arched sternly as she momentarily tolerates the crowd's murmurs. Behind her upon the scaffold stand three grizzled veteran guardsmen at attention, as well as an ominous-looking group. These men wear cowled robes of oily-looking leather, supple gloves, and wide black hats. Some grip heavy canes, others dark satchels. Each of them, though, wears a dark-goggled mask tapering to a pointed beak. Among them stand two others. The first is a middle-aged gentleman in a simple black overcoat with streaks of white gracing the sides of his short dark hair. He watches the gathered guards with a soft, concerned expression, his hands tightly clasping a heavy-looking doctor's case. The second figure is an imposing one indeed—a woman dressed in full-plate armor, a longsword and shield at her side, and her blank-faced full helm sporting a bright red plume.

The Field Marshal's fierce tone cuts through the rumble of whispers. "You will escort Doctor Davaulus and his men in their royal duties wherever those might take them. Furthermore, you are to consider orders from any of the queen's new order of Gray Maidens to be as binding as any superior officer in

the Korvosan Guard or Sable Company. You are guardsmen of Korvosa. You will not balk. These are dire times and your city needs these healers. Your city needs you. Your patrol leaders have your assignments. Dismissed!"

As the assembly ends, the guardsmen gathered in the courtyard break up into groups, many reporting for various duties while others loiter for a few moments to quietly gripe about their new orders. The armored woman, one of the queen's aforementioned Gray Maidens, quickly organizes the guards, silencing bickering words with harsh commands and assigning orders for the day. Kroft and her veteran attendants begin to head into the citadel with Dr. Davaulus and his Queen's Physicians, but PCs who act fast can easily catch the commander's attention. Even if they don't try to catch up with Kroft, the field marshal notices them before she enters the keep and sends one of her aides to fetch the PCs. The leader of the Korvosan Guard welcomes the PCs and is even eager to see them, but she seems guarded in her current, unfavorable company—Davaulus's doctors unnerve her just as much as they do her men. She introduces the PCs to Dr. Davaulus, the newly appointed Queen's Physician. A calm man with a polite demeanor and deeply analytical mind, Dr. Davaulus greets the PCs warmly and welcomes their questions, saying that he hopes to ease the concerns of as many of Korvosa's people as possible in this trying time. If questioned about his plans to help Korvosa, Davaulus admits that he must still confer with Field Marshall Kroft to form a sensible plan, but produces a public announcement from his bag—one of numerous such writs soon to be distributed throughout the city (see Handout #1 on page 21)—to convey the queen's initial expectations.

If the PCs attempt to question the Queen's Physicians themselves, these men have little to say and defer to Davaulus, their voices muffled and disembodied as they emanate from their sinister masks.

The party might also wish to speak with soldiers of the Guard. By and large, the common guardsmen are wary of these strange new doctors—they're like no healers these simple men have ever seen before. The soldiers are also offended that outsiders have been given authority over them, and many are fearful that attending the doctors might result in their own infections.

At the conclusion of the discussion with Kroft and Davaulus, Ishani asks if he might be of service in coordinating the efforts of the Grand Vault of Abadar with those of the city. His participation is welcomed and he heads inside with the group after thanking the PCs,

THE GRAY MAIDENS

This adventure introduces several new organizations to Korvosa's streets: the Queen's Physicians, the cult of Urgathoa, and the Gray Maidens chief among them. Of these three, it is the Gray Maidens who are destined to have the largest role in Curse of the Crimson Throne. Created by Queen Ileosa to be a military group loyal only to her, she places her bodyguard and lover Sabina Merrin in command of this elite force.

New recruits into the Gray Maidens are hand-selected from beautiful young fighters, most of whom are conscripted from the Sable Company, the Order of the Nail, and the Korvosan Guard, but as this campaign continues, the Gray Maidens increasingly take to recruiting new members from Korvosa's more violent underworld. Conscripts to the Gray Maidens must pass the queen's own examination for beauty and strength—those who apply and are found lacking are told they can play another role in the new age, but are instead led down into the castle dungeons, disfigured, and imprisoned. Those who make the cut undergo a cruel and grueling initiation procedure designed to break down their personalities, leave their once-beautiful faces scarred, and to impress upon them that service and loyalty to the queen is the surest way to avoid painful punishment. Those who do not fall into line find themselves imprisoned as well. Those who comply are promised vaunted roles at Queen Ileosa's side once she brings Korvosa fully under her control.

During this adventure, the Gray Maidens are few in number, but Sabina Merrin quickly bolsters their ranks over the weeks. Although they are destined to become one of the major opposition groups against the PCs, strive in this adventure to present them as merely a necessity of desperate times—a personification of the threat of martial law in the face of a great urban crisis.



surprised and cautiously optimistic about the queen's new plans. It's up to you whether or not the PCs should be allowed into this meeting, a lengthy affair wherein Kroft and her aides go over the reports and statistics of plague in the city, then confer about ways to contain and treat the victims. Talk of quarantining blocks of the city and limiting movement through districts is the only news of any real import that comes of the discussion.

Dr. Davaulus and the Queen's Physicians

Dr. Reiner Davaulus heads Korvosa's efforts to combat the blood veil plague preying upon the city. A Chelaxian in his mid-40s, the doctor is deliberate in his speech and conducts himself like a concerned father, seeming to take genuine interest in assuaging the concerns and maladies of those around him. He claims to have served Queen Ileosa's family in Egorian, the capital of Chelax, for many years. When she contacted him several days ago, begging for his assistance on her city's behalf, he couldn't refuse. After accepting her gracious offer of magical transport to Korvosa, he's spent his time assembling a group of the city's most talented healers to help stem the tide of the spreading plague. In all cases, he speaks highly of

the queen and her attentiveness to her city's needs—this being the greatest clue of his counterfeit nature.

Dr. Davaulus does not lie when he doesn't have to: he is a doctor, he did come at the queen's request, and he is from Egorian. What he doesn't say, however, is that rather than being a servant of the Arvanxi family, he is in fact a secret member of the Red Mantis. An unassuming and unconventional assassin—more interested in slow poisonings and seemingly natural deaths than blades in the night—Davaulus was tasked by his superiors with fulfilling Queen Ileosa's genocidal wishes. To this end, the learned doctor contacted two allies of the Mantis: Lady Andaisin of Urgathoa's cult and Conte Tiriatic in Ustalav—



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 unlives 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-smearing 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 Abadaran temple.

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

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.

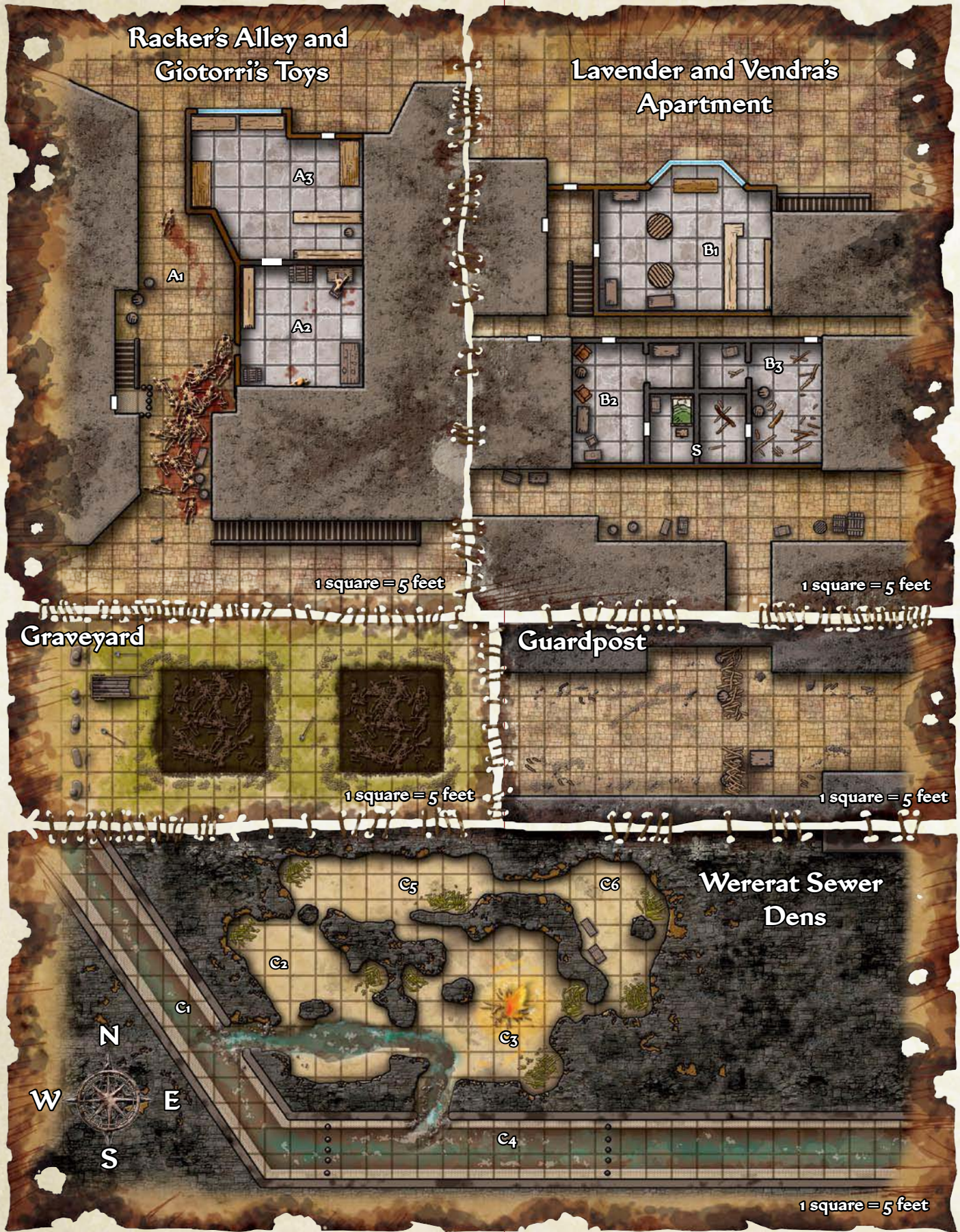
Three times a night, two of Vendra’s men leave through the front door of the building rolling a sturdy barrel. They take it all the way down to the Jegarre River and fill it with water (although sometimes they get lucky and just replace it with a full rain barrel). They then bring the water back to Lavender, 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 Chelixa'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 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).

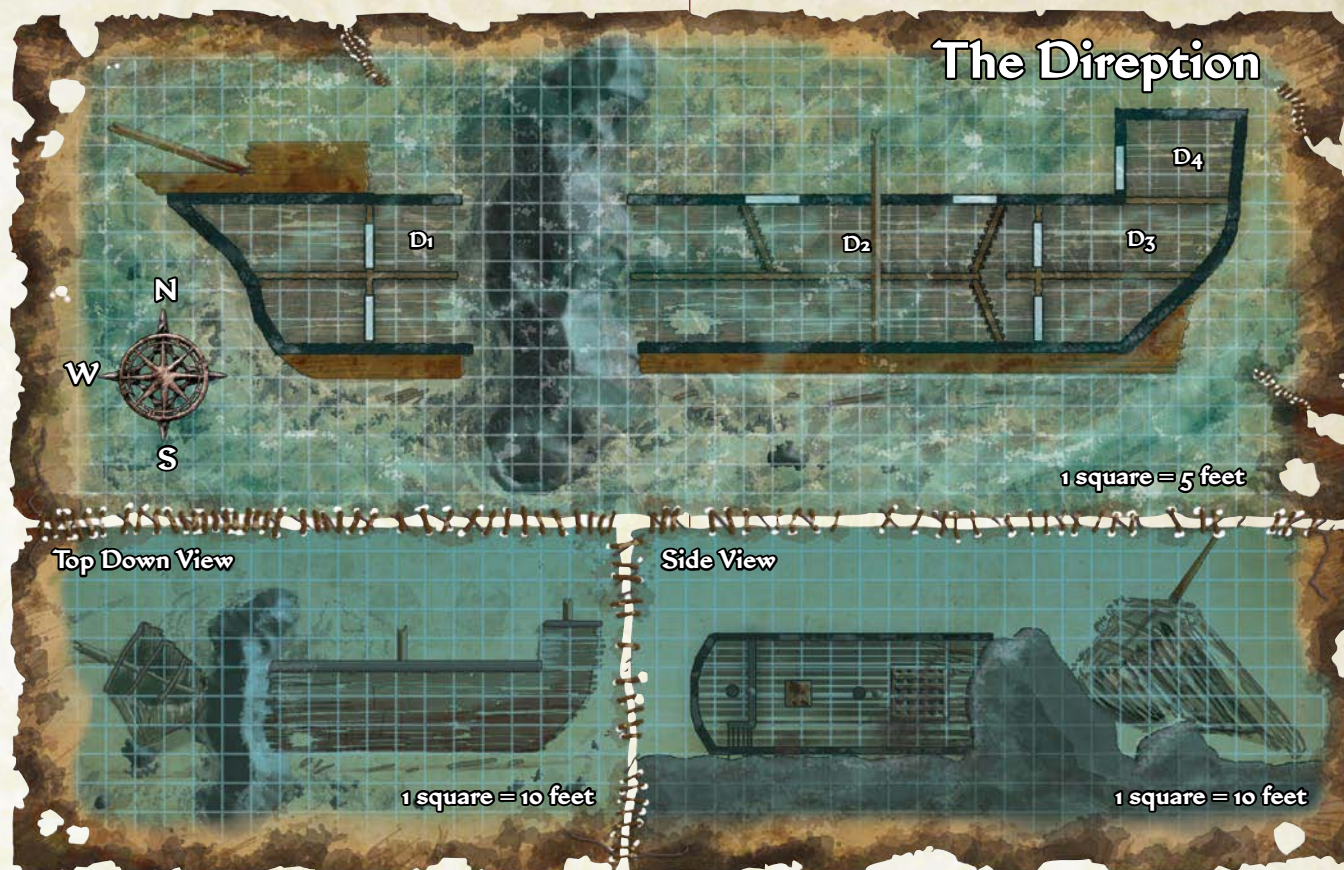
Ad Hoc Experience Award: If the PCs managed to scatter GIRRIGZ's warband without killing any wererats—besides GIRRIGZ—grant them experience for an additional CR 5 encounter.

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

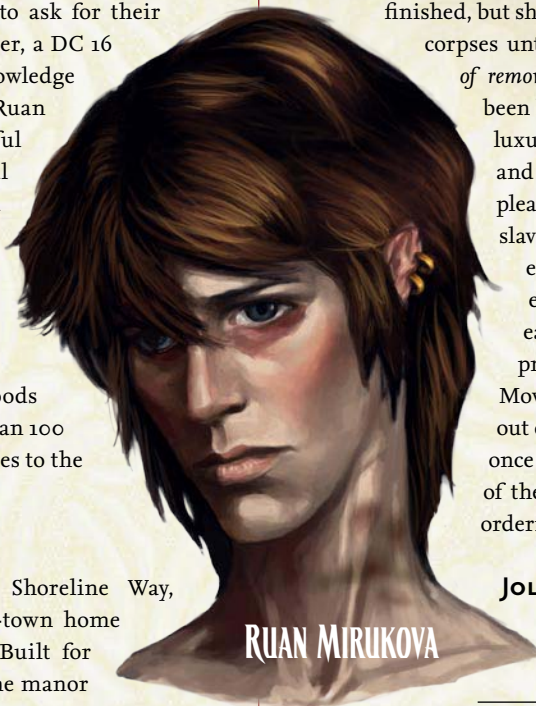
A stately, gabled manor along Shoreline Way, Carowyn Manor serves as the in-town home of Olauren and Ausio Carowyn. Built for entertaining, the estate includes the manor house itself, a smaller servants' residence, and a meticulously manicured garden—complete with gazebo and pond full of Ember Lake charigs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

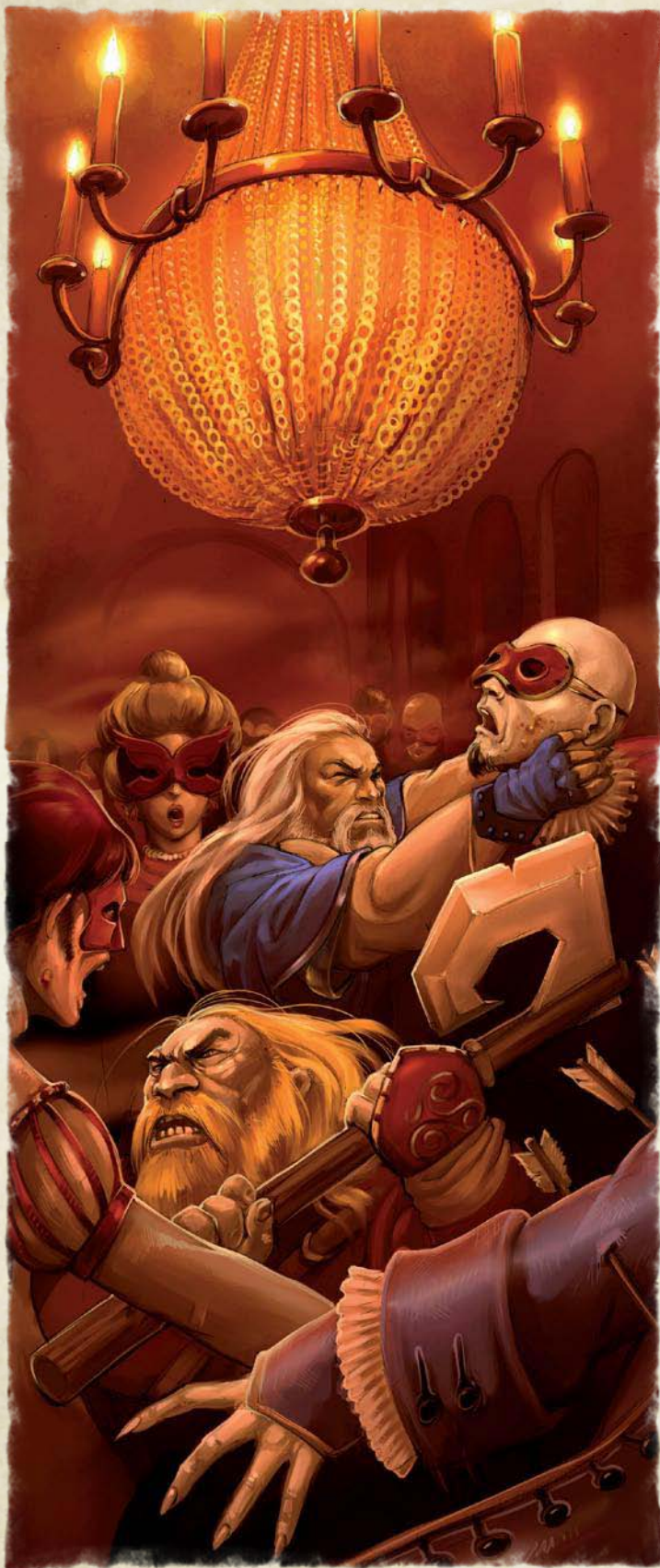
E2. Second Floor

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

acquisition that further enflamed the conflict between the two powerful organizations (a conflict that takes center stage in the next adventure, “Escape From Old Korvosa”). The Arkonas tried to double-cross the Red Mantis, quietly attempting (but failing) to reveal the existence of the warehouse’s secret lower levels to the Korvosan Guard. The Red Mantis’s growing influence in Korvosa assured that the information, and all who laid eyes on it, disappeared. Thus established, allies of the Red Mantis among the Church of Urgathoa, led by the cold and fanatical beauty Lady Andaisin, rebuilt the den of criminal greed into a temple dedicated to the ruin of an entire city.

Renamed the Hospice of the Blessed Maiden and opened to the public as the Queen’s Physicians became established in Korvosa, the former Arkona warehouse now serves multiple purposes. On the outside, the hospice presents itself as a place of hope and respite for those suffering from disease, where the sick of any walk of Korvosan life might come to find salvation under the care of the Queen’s Physicians. In truth, though, the place is a den of Urgathoan research and corruption. The ibis-masked Queen’s Physicians, worshipers of Urgathoa in disguise, watch their plague take effect first hand, endeavor to root out its weaknesses, and—in the secret depths below—create ever more deadly strains.

Although the Hospice is in the heart of Korvosa, the plague has tapped the city’s resources almost completely. Once the PCs realize that there’s something dire going on in the Hospice, they might try to recruit aid from the Korvosan Guard, the church of Abadar, the Sable Company, or another group—as long as the plague continues its rampage, though, none of these organizations can spare much aid to the PCs. If the Queen’s Physicians and the cult of Urgathoa are to be stopped—it’s up to the party to do it.

F1. Entry (EL 3)

The stinging scent of alcohol and medicine floods this dingy reception room, an odor typical to hospices, morgues, and battlefields. Across from the entrance sits a long wooden desk, beyond which a stained leather curtain covers an open archway, muffling moans from beyond.

This reception room serves as the public face of the Hospice of the Blessed Maiden—formerly Arkona Imports West Dock—and hides the work of the cult of Urgathoa within. Six poor citizens huddle in chairs and against walls here, some having waited for hours to be seen by the Queen’s Physicians in the hospice proper beyond. Each of these men and women exhibits symptoms of blood veil, some at quite advanced stages.

Creatures: A burly nurse named Bhrunlida Torthus sits at the desk, hired by the Queen’s Physicians to serve here. Blunt and bull-headed, her job is to take the names of those who come to the hospice and assure that patients are admitted to the quarantined main hall of the warehouse in order and when the doctors are ready. Besides this task, Nurse Torthus has no real compassion for the sick and does all she can to avoid contracting the plague herself, including avoiding physical contact, wearing three scarves over her mouth and nose, and wearing heavy leather gloves. She knows nothing of the Queen’s Physicians true endeavors or of the cult of Urgathoa working below.

When the PCs arrive, Nurse Torthus looks up disinterestedly and waits for them to come over and add their names to her list of those waiting for treatment. If the PCs don’t do this, she ignores them unless they try to pass through the leather curtain leading to area F2, at which point she shrilly informs them that there’s a queue and they aren’t allowed to go back there until they’re called for. Paid quite well, Nurse Torthus is quite adamant in her duties, but a successful DC 25 Diplomacy or Intimidate check can convince her to permit the PCs entry. If the PCs try to force their way past the matron, her bellows alert the Queen’s Physicians and Gray Maidens in area F2.

BHRUNLIDA TORTHUS

CR 3

CN female human fighter 3 (see page 25; Lavender Thug)
hp 27

F2. Sick Ward (EL 8)

The warehouse’s vast interior has been converted into one gigantic convalescent’s ward, the stench of alcohol, sickness, and waste choking each breath. Tight rows of low, stained cots cram the stone-floored hall. Every bed is filled with a pitiful story—men and women of all walks groaning and wheezing as they’re consumed by blood veil, their sufferings multiplied by the echoing chamber.

What was once home to a fortune of rare Vudran imports has become a vast sick ward for Korvosa’s most hopelessly ill. Here, the Queen’s Physicians mill about the cots, cooing at their victims in unsympathetic voices as they watch the sick wither and die. More than 60 cots fill the area, each holding a helpless citizen—most of whom are too weak to even rise from their stinking sick beds. While most of the room is filled with beds and the dying, the northeast holds an improvised kitchen with room and supplies enough to make the patients their daily watery gruel.

The ceiling of this room is nearly 30 feet high, though the catwalks above span the room at 20 feet.

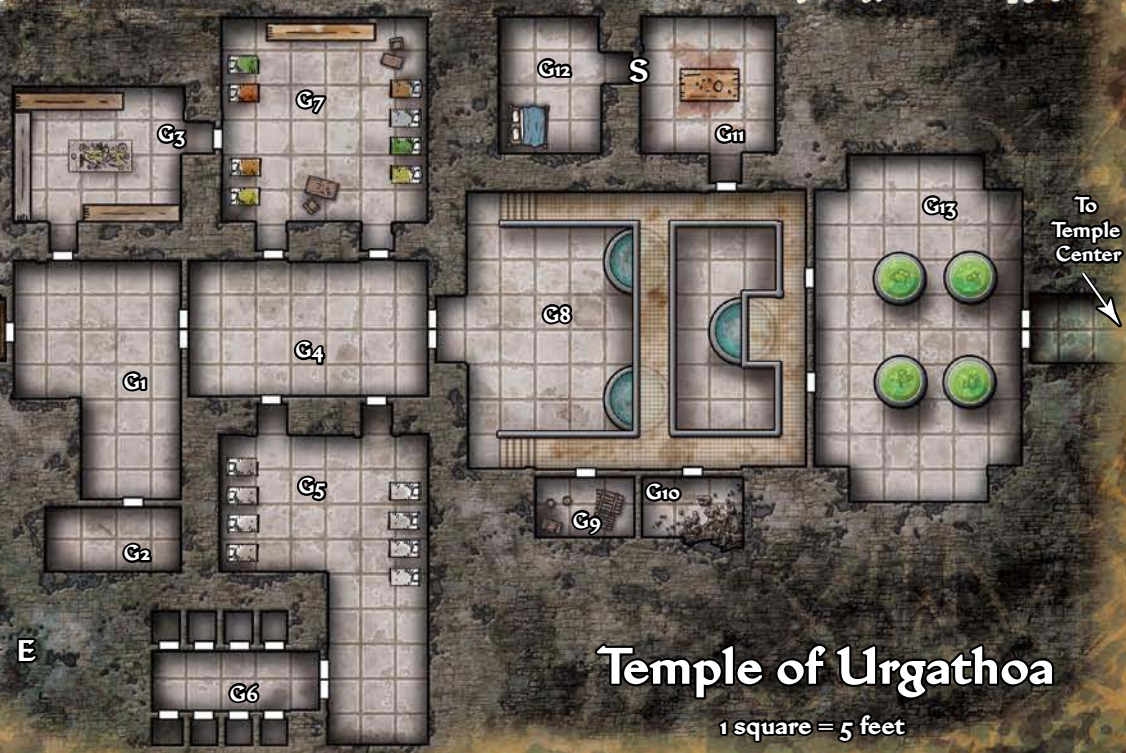
Creatures: Amid the sick hover four dark-robed Queen’s Physicians, their avian masks giving them an unnerving

Hospice



1 square = 10 feet

Temple Center



Temple of Urgathoa

1 square = 5 feet



resemblance to crows waiting to feed. Two Gray Maidens patrol the catwalks above, while another two stand guard at the entrance to area **F3** and the stairs up to the floor above. Any doctor or Gray Maiden who notices the PCs enter immediately knows that something is wrong. The closest Gray Maiden moves up to the PCs while the others ready their bows. She makes a single attempt to ask the party to leave—loud enough to alert the others in the area. If the PCs don't comply, the Gray Maidens attack. The doctors move silently to try to surround the PCs, blocking exits and, if it looks like the Maidens are having difficulty, joining in melee as well.

Fighting in this area might prove difficult, as every bed also holds a sick (but innocent) patient. While the PCs might have a care for the wellbeing of the unfortunates here, the doctors and Gray Maidens do not. GMs might wish to account for the effects of ranged attacks that miss their intended targets, assigning them a 25% chance of striking a patient. The patients in this room are all helpless and have 2 hit points each.

GRAY MAIDENS (4)

CR 2

Female human fighter 2

LE Medium humanoid

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

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20

(+8 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 19 (2d10+4)

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

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft.

Melee mwk longsword +6 (1d8+2/19–20)

Ranged composite longbow +3 (1d8/×3)

TACTICS

During Combat The Gray Maidens on the ground floor move to engage the PCs in melee, while the two on the catwalks above provide support with their bows.

Morale The Gray Maidens fight to the death.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +4

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

Skills Climb +1, Intimidate +6, Jump -5

Languages Common

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

QUEEN'S PHYSICIANS (4)

CR 2

Human rogue 2

NE Medium humanoid

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

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12

(+2 armor, +2 Dexterity)

hp 11 (2d6+2)

Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +1

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee mwk club +3 (1d6+2)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

TACTICS

During Combat Queen's Physicians fight with an eerie silence.

They coordinate their attacks with a series of hand gestures, speaking only when forced to and focusing their attacks on the same target so as to increase flanking opportunities.

Morale A Queen's Physician flees if reduced to 3 hit points or less.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +1; Grp +3

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative

Skills Bluff +4, Diplomacy +6, Disguise+3, Gather Information+3, Heal +4, Hide+7, Intimidate +1, Knowledge (local) +6, Listen+5, Move Silently +7, Sense Motive +5, Spot +5

Languages Common, Varisian

SQ trapfinding

Gear leather armor, masterwork club, healer's kit, *plaguebringer's mask*

Development: Aiding the dozens of helpless, plague-ridden patients in this room is likely a feat beyond the PCs' capabilities. As most are too sick to rise—much less walk—what the party does with the innocent invalids is likely to be a difficult decision. Healing all of the sick in this room is an endeavor that would tax the entire church of Abadar, but if the PCs go to Ishani or others at the Grand Vault, several priests are sent to the hospice once the party can assure that the warehouse is safe.

Ad Hoc Experience Award: If the PCs get help for all the sick in this room, grant them experience for a CR 7 encounter.

F3. Loading Bay

The scent of exotic wood and sawdust fills this maze of barrels and crates. A spider web of ropes and pulleys crisscrosses the ceiling, one thick cable suspending a net of barrels suspended nearly twenty feet from the splinter-scattered floor below. Three great wooden doors dominate the northern wall, while leather flaps lead to the south and east.

These crates and containers house the remains of the legitimate Arkona importing venture that once occupied



the entire building. The majority of the containers are empty, their textile contents relocated to other warehouses once the Arkonas were forced to give up this site. In the southwest corner of the bay stand a number of empty cages and crates for transporting animals, many bearing the names and origins of the exotic creatures once held within, names like "Three Breaths Viper—Mwangi," "Emperor Cobra (Eggs)—Vudra," and "Rat Monkey—S. Island."

The three large loading doors here offer a back way into the warehouse, but all three are chained shut from the

OTHER PLAGUE EVENTS

The encounters in the adventure give the PCs several opportunities to interact with the pestilence in full swing, but they are by far not the only events that take place during the plague. This sidebar lists other major events that occur during this part of the adventure that don't involve the PCs—if you're looking to expand this section even further, you can use any one of these events as the basis for additional opportunities for PCs to reduce the plague's body count.

Burn up the Dead: As the plague goes into full swing, disposal of the dead becomes even more problematic. The city takes to burning the dead in huge mass graves in the Gray District, and plumes of rancid black smoke become a common sight on the southern skyline. Unfortunately, one mass grave opens into a ghoulish warren, releasing a nest of angry ghouls and ghouls into the city's graveyard. If the PCs wish to help dispose of the undead, you can use the Graveyard map on page 24 for the battle.

The Merciless Way Massacre: A group of Gray Maidens confronts a mob of frightened locals unwilling to comply with a small-scale quarantine of a city block. The resulting riot sees the slaughter of nearly 100 citizens when the Gray Maidens refuse to back down. You can use the Alleyway map on page 24 to run an encounter where the PCs might have a chance to talk down the mob before the Gray Maidens are forced to attack.

The Quarantine of Old Korvosa: As the plague reaches its height and Part Four is drawing to a close, Queen Ileosa enacts a bold move—the quarantining of Old Korvosa. Enacting Her Majesty's will, the Gray Maidens destroy every wooden bridge leading into the old city and erect a permanent barricade on the one stone bridge connecting the island to the mainland. Although many of the city's most prominent citizens would protest, the people are tired and disorganized, and the deed is done before any argument can even be roused. The PCs should not be allowed to prevent this event, since the quarantining of Old Korvosa must occur for the events in the next adventure to progress.

inside. Nearly two stories tall, the loading doors require a DC 18 Strength check to open (DC 30 if chained) and groan loudly on their aging metal hinges. Any Queen's Physicians or Gray Maidens in area **F2** can attempt a DC 5 Listen check (remember to modify this DC by +1 per 10 feet of distance to the listener) to hear the rusty metal whine if the loading doors are not silenced somehow. A Gray Maiden comes to investigate immediately if the noise is noticed.

Treasure: A thorough search of the loading dock takes nearly half an hour and a DC 20 Search check. Those who take the time, though, are rewarded with a crate of elegant silk Vudran clothes—robes, saris, turbans, and the like.

One of the saris is bloodstained and marred by a jagged gash. Aside from this damage, the brightly patterned, exotic garb is collectively worth 300 gp.

F4. The Lift

Several cubbies and wooden lockers line the walls of this small workroom. Four rickety chairs surround a water-damaged table, and a well-used but solid-looking cargo lift rises up through the ceiling.

Formerly a break and storage area for the warehouse's workers, this room contains a powerful lift, allowing sizable cargo to be hauled to the floors above, or hidden in the chambers below. The Red Mantis did not choose this warehouse at random, selecting it primarily for its secret underground level, cleverly concealed and accessed by the cargo lift.

Any character who gets on the lift can plainly see controls that cause the contraption to operate—the lever itself radiates moderate necromancy. A DC 20 Search check of the lift reveals a third control set within the slot of the operating lever, a simple hole that's missing the button to operate it. If the missing button is set within the hole and depressed, the lift can be made to descend to the hidden basement, admitting those onboard to area **G1** in what is now the hidden Temple of Urgathoa. A DC 25 Disable Device check bypasses the need for a button, and causes the lift to lower. The missing button is held by Doctor Davaulus in area **F8**.

F5. Catwalks

A track of sturdy-looking catwalks soar over the warehouse floor below, the evenly placed and well-trod platforms supported from above by iron poles.

These catwalks once allowed warehouse workers access to high storage shelves that filled area **F2** below. Although the rows of rare imports have been removed, the permanent catwalks remain. The catwalks are 20 feet above the floor below.

F6. Private Hall (EL 4)

The rough functionality of the warehouse below gives way to beige tile and a white hall on this more officious-looking floor. A door engraved with images of rampant gazelles stands to the south, their once fine teak bearing obvious scores and gapping chips from rough use.

This hall once served as an entryway to the clerks' and manager's offices beyond. Now it's little more than a guard room. The doors to area **F7** are kept locked. They can be

opened with a DC 30 Open Lock check, a DC 26 Strength check, or via the key carried by Doctor Davaulus in area F8 (he opens and closes the doors for the Queen's Physicians in area F7 when a shift change occurs).

Creatures: Two Gray Maidens stand guard in this room. They order anyone undetected to leave immediately—this includes anyone disguised as Gray Maidens or Queen's Physicians, since there's little reason for such to visit the area except for a shift change (dawn or dusk). A successful Bluff check and a successful Disguise check are required to trick the Gray Maidens into believing that the PCs are the next shift of Gray Maidens (a ruse that fails automatically if there aren't only two disguised PCs) or Queen's Physicians (fails if there aren't only three disguised PCs). If the Gray Maidens realize the PCs aren't supposed to be here, they immediately attack, calling out an alarm to the Queen's Physicians in area F7.

GRAY MAIDENS (2)
hp 19 each (see page 42)

CR 2

F7. Experimentation Ward (EL 5)

Rows of white-sheeted beds line the walls of this room. Each is occupied, every bed bearing a patient restrained by leather straps that bind the figure to the sturdy metal frame. At the room's center stretch simple wooden worktables, each covered in fluid-filled beakers, intricate glass tubes, small burners, and other alchemical instruments.

Once the communal office of a number of Arkona clerks, any trace of such clerical efforts have been removed from this room, replaced by the profane studies of Urgathoa's faithful. Here, the Pallid Princess's servants keep a number of humans of Varisian descent drugged, as each has inexplicably shown resistance to their designer plague, blood veil. The cultists eagerly examine, operate on, and mutilate their prisoners, hoping to discover the reason for this immunity. The alchemical and surgical tools of their work and notes from their murderous observations cover the tables at the room's center.

Currently, Varisian research subjects occupy each of the 15 beds here. Each prisoner has only 2 hit points and is helpless. Each is drugged into a state of oblivious bliss by the smoke emanating from the censer at the room's center.

Creatures: Three of the Queen's Physicians work in this room, trying to discover what makes some Varisians immune to the effects of blood veil. They keep their patients unconscious so as to minimize trouble while experimenting on them.

QUEEN'S PHYSICIANS (3)
hp 11 each (see page 42)

CR 2

Development: If the Queen's Physicians are defeated, even the healthiest of the Varisians here still won't be fit to act and move of their own accord until healed. After this time, most remain so weak from mistreatment and needless surgeries that they still require significant help to escape. None of the Varisians know anything about where they are or what the doctors were attempting to do.

Ad Hoc Experience Award: Grant the PCs experience for a CR 5 encounter if they see all the patients here to safety.

F8. The Doctor's Office (EL 9)

Blood, bile, and other humors bubble away within oddly formed beakers and twisted tubes in this sizable laboratory. Any wall space left unobscured by cabinets or over-laden bookshelves is covered by worn parchments depicting magnified aspects of human anatomy in grisly detail—many pierced with pins and flags like the war maps of a veteran campaigner. In the corner, a desk of elegantly carved white ash bears the image of a herd of antelope, but the stains of dark chemicals and gore disfigures the once-beautiful piece.

Creatures: This office has been given over to Doctor Davaulus, the man appointed by the queen to be the public face for her efforts to eradicate blood veil. In truth, the "good doctor" is an agent of the Red Mantis. The selection of this warehouse as a place to hide the growing cult of Urgathoa was his, and while he has not yet passed into the upper ranks of the Red Mantis to become an assassin, he hopes to do so some day. In particular, he hopes that his work orchestrating blood veil with the church of Urgathoa will bring him favor in the eyes of the mysterious leader of Korvosa's Red Mantis cell.

Yet the doctor is not a warrior—he prefers to kill from afar with poison or sickness, or to work his evil on those rendered helpless by bindings or toxins. If he hears the alarm raised or the sounds of combat, he gathers his gear, casts invisibility on himself, and attempts to make his way to the lift in area F4, taking it down to the temple of Urgathoa to warn his allies there. Of course, PCs in proximity to the lift when he makes this escape could be inadvertently alerted to the existence of chambers below the warehouse by his tactics. If he does escape, he can be found in area G5 with Rolth.

If the PCs catch him here unawares, he angrily confronts them with threats. He claims they are interrupting important work being done to determine a cure for the plague, work commissioned by the queen herself, and that their actions could be taken as high treason. If he realizes the PCs know more about the plague's source or that they know there's not much being done here to actually research a cure, he feigns confidence and superiority as he attempts to talk the PCs

out of their “foolish crusade to save the city.” He points out that disease is the world’s way to bring back balance, and that in order for civilization to grow and prosper, the parts of society that hold everything else back must be periodically pruned. “Korvosa will be stronger at the end of these dark days—a place you and I would be proud to call home.” As soon as he gets the feeling that the PCs are about to attack, Davaulus casts *invisibility* and attempts to flee to area **G1** as detailed above.

DR. DAVAULUS

CR 9

Male human rogue 3/expert 3/bard 4
NE Medium humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** Listen +12, Spot +7

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16
(+5 armor, +2 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 37 (10d6)

Fort +3, **Ref** +10, **Will** +9

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee +1 *human bane rapier* +10 (1d6/17–20)

Special Attacks bardic music (4/day),
countersong, *fascinate*, inspire competence,
inspire courage +1, sneak attack +2d6

Spells Known (CL 4th)

2nd (1/day)—*invisibility*, *misdirection*

1st (3/day)—*charm person* (DC 13),
disguise self, *hideous laughter* (DC 13)

0 (3/day)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost
sound*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*

TACTICS

Before Combat Doctor Davaulus casts *misdirection* whenever he expects to be involved in a public scene.

During Combat Davaulus considers himself a gentleman, even though his interests run to murder and cruelty. He engages in physical combat only as a last resort. When he fights, he utilizes Combat Expertise to full effect, saving *hideous laughter* for use against foes who seem to be more brawn than brains.

Morale Davaulus attempts to flee if brought below 10 hit points, but fights to the death if no escape seems possible. Loyal to the Red Mantis, he does not surrender.

STATISTICS

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

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

Feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Quick Draw, Weapon Finesse

Skills Appraise +7, Bluff +15, Diplomacy +17, Gather Information +13, Heal +10, Hide +6, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (nature) +8, Knowledge (religion) +11, Listen +12, Move

Silently +11, Open Lock +6, Perform (oratory) +12, Profession (doctor) +9, Search +7, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +8, Spellcraft +5, Spot +7

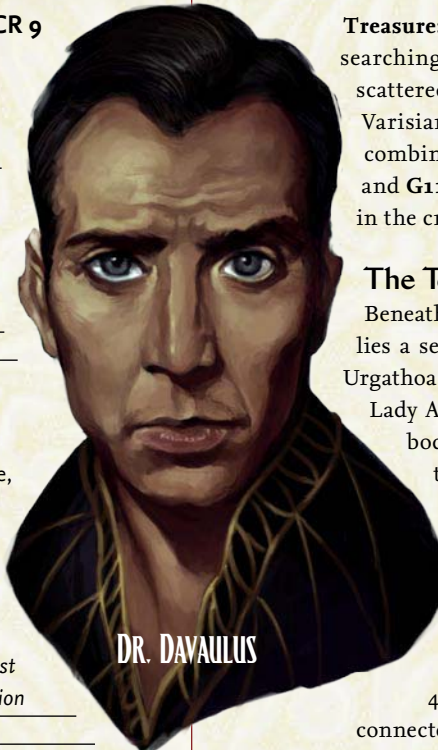
Languages Common, Elven, Halfling, Mwangi

SQ bardic knowledge +7, trapfinding

Combat Gear *flask of curses* labeled “elixir of true healing,”

potion of remove disease; **Other Gear** +1 *human bane rapier*, +1 *mithral shirt*, *amulet of natural armor* +1, key to doors into **F7**, button key for lift to area **G1**

Treasure: A DC 16 Search check made while searching the desk uncovers Dr. Davaulus’s scattered notes on the source of some Varisians’ immunity to blood veil. When combined with the notes found in areas **G5** and **G11**, these findings prove quite helpful in the creation of a cure to blood veil.



DR. DAVAULUS

The Temple of Urgathoa

Beneath the Hospice of the Blessed Maiden lies a secret laboratory-temple dedicated to Urgathoa, the goddess of disease. Overseen by Lady Andaisin, a morbid beauty dedicated body and soul to her Pallid Princess, these foul cultists work with the support of the Red Mantis, encouraging the spread of blood veil through Korvosa and refining the disease into an even more deadly plague.

The Temple of Urgathoa lies 40 feet below the warehouse above, connected via a wooden cargo lift that runs between area **F4** and **G1**. Formerly a much smaller smuggler’s den, the hidden chambers have recently undergone significant expansion to suit its new priestly inhabitants’ genocidal plot. Rock excavated from these expansions was smuggled out in carts and dumped into the Jeggare. Once drippy brick-lined rooms, the cultists have rebuilt and refurbished the chambers with stone panels and plaster, decorating many of the walls with murals of plague-haunted cities. Nevertheless, water seepage from the surrounding rocks has already damaged these new plaster walls in many locations. Although most of the areas in the temple are well lit, areas **G1** and rooms **G9** through **G12** are dark.

G1. Entry Hall (EL 8)

The scuffed stone walls of this chamber have been plastered over and then decorated with lurid murals of skeletons cavorting among the dead of a Korvosa completely succumbed to blood veil. Simple wooden doors lead to the north, south, and west,

each bearing a painting of a scythe-wielding skeleton. A sizable double door stands on the east wall, appearing in the mural as a massive set of double doors opening into the pyramid foundation of Castle Korvosa. Two more scythe-wielding skeletons decorate these large doors.

Trap: The double doors on the eastern walls and the door to the north both bear a potent magical ward meant to bar all non-Urgathoans from the rooms beyond. Any creature of an alignment other than neutral evil who touches either of these doors triggers the trap, causing the skeletons painted on the wall surrounding the door to breathe forth poisonous gas and animating their scythe-wielding arms to strike from the painting as if they were real.

Setting off this trap also triggers an *alarm* spell in area **G8**, alerting all the creatures in areas **G8** through **G13** to the PCs' presence.

DEATH'S BREATH DOORS

CR 8

Type magical

Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** automatic (after 1 minute); **Bypass** each door can be neutralized for one round with a successful turning attempt against a 6 HD target (a destruction result destroys the trap)

Effect Atk +14 melee (scythe; 2d4+9/×4; all targets within 5 feet of any door) and poison gas (insanity mist; inhaled Fort DC 15; initial 1d4 Wis, secondary 2d6 Wis; all creatures in area **G1**)

G2. Guardpost (EL 6)

A number of crates fill this room. A particularly large one has been dragged into the chamber's center, around which stand four mismatched chairs and stools.

The crates in the room once held a number of exotic imports, but they have since been emptied.

Creatures: A group of four Queen's Physicians stand guard here. They ready themselves for battle if any one of them makes a DC 16 Listen check to hear the lift lowering in area **G1**, or if the traps in that room are set off.

QUEEN'S PHYSICIANS (4)

CR 2

hp 11 each (see page 42)

G3. Doctor Indoctrination

Cabinets and low benches fill this chamber. From pegs on the opposite side of the room, the empty black eyes of several beaked plague masks glare with soulless, unblinking stares.

When the cult of Urgathoa indoctrinates a new Queen's Physician, he is sworn in to his new role and outfitted with gear in this chamber. Dark leather robes, high boots, wide-brimmed hats, and solid canes fill most of the cabinets. The doors of one large cabinet against the west wall opens to reveal glass shelves covered in a variety of delicate doctors' instruments—jars of unguents, syringes, magnifying glasses, and the like—and a medicine jar full of black onyx gems enclosed by another set of glass doors. A small brass lock keeps these doors firmly shut.

Any significant noise in this room—such as breaking the glass door or setting off the attached trap—attracts the attentions of the Queen's Physicians in area **G7**.

Treasure: There are enough Queen's Physician robes and other accoutrements to outfit 20 doctors in this room. The collected clothes, boots, canes, and other accessories are well-made and only slightly used, each set worth 5 gp. There are also four *plaguebringer's masks* here (see page 18).

The most valuable items in the room, though, are held behind the west cabinet's glass door. Within are four healer's kits and 23 black onyx gems worth 50 gp each. At the back of the cabinet are four identical flasks—three containing *potions of cure moderate wounds* while the fourth contains a *potion of poison*.

G4. The Princess's Bacchanal

Dozens of the living dead line the walls of this chamber, their rotting faces sneering and broken fingers clawing at each other. A layer of rotting bodies lines the floor, the shattered forms twitching in vain, bones and splintered appendages grasping hopelessly. Yet, rather than some massive, nightmare grave, this horror-show seems instead to be a stomach-churning attempt at art, as the mangled living dead lie trapped behind walls and beneath a floor of thick glass.

As common to temples of Urgathoa as cloisters or choirs are in the holy buildings of other religions, the Princess's Bacchanal is a perverse memento mori with a profane message—"In the end may you be undead." Here, dozens of twitching undead stand on display, their bodies too damaged to do anything but writhe and scrape in an unliving tableau until their bones turn to dust and their flesh flakes away. The glass separating the undead from the party is quite sturdy, but the PCs shouldn't know that. Only a significant effort to break the glass (hardness 4, 20 hit points per 5-foot section) allows the undead to spill out into the chamber. Fortunately, these aren't true zombies, but rather bodies deemed for whatever reason unsuitable for full animation—they're unsettling but harmless if freed.

G5. Operating Room (EL 9)

Eight cold, iron beds stand here, their sharp frames threaded with worn manacles and stained leather straps. Several are occupied by obviously unwilling patients, each bound and in various states of consciousness, their combined moans murmuring throughout the room. Between them stand several small tables, each strewn with gore-soaked pans, flasks of mysterious fluids, and all manner of cruel-looking cutting instruments. A sizable brown-crimson stain covers much of the eastern wall, as if all the blood from a body once held there had exploded forth in a single violent eruption.

Here, the priests of Urgathoa perform all manner of foul, gratuitous, and torturous experiments on the living in the name of their dark goddess. Currently, the work of the doctors here tends toward the testing of diseases crafted by their brethren in area **G13**, particularly variations of the blood veil plague capable of infecting the small percentage of immune Varisians.

A pair of sturdy, locked iron doors leads to the cells of **G6** to the east. They require a DC 22 Open Lock check or the key held by one of the priests in this room to open.

Creatures: Two Queen's Physicians and two priests of Urgathoa currently work in this room, encouraging and observing the diseases at work within their prisoner-patients here. Their work is in turn observed and guided by a gifted and reprehensible necromancer named Rolth, a man whose skill at necromancy recently came to Lady Andaisin's attention—his work has been a major factor in developing a strain of blood veil that can animate its victims as zombies. Rolth finds Lady Andaisin to be ravishing, but hasn't yet worked up the courage to approach the gothic priestess with his desires—he hopes that by developing the variant of blood veil she wants, though, he'll be rewarded with far more than her favor and the gold she's promised.

Rolth is a foul man by any definition of the word. Pale and blotchy from scars caused by various diseases he's exposed himself to (either by accident or design), Rolth wears thick leather robes lined with dozens of pockets that bulge with surgical and mortician tools. Although this is likely the first time the PCs meet the necromancer, it's not the first time they've encountered his work—the Dead Warrens from "Edge of Anarchy" were one of his other laboratories, and after he returned there and found it all but destroyed, Rolth became enraged. He spent some time tracking down who was responsible for the damage, and if he discovered the PCs were behind it, he might already have taken action against them. If he doesn't know they ruined his Dead Warrens, he reacts to the PCs with shocked indignation if they intrude on his work here. If he does know who they are, his reaction is all the more filled with profanity and frothing rage as

he accuses the PCs of being vandals, crooks, and thugs before ordering the attack.

Six patients lie strapped to the metal operating beds scattered throughout the room. One of the patients is dead, his body still highly contagious with blood veil. Two of the other patients fade in and out of consciousness, their bodies wracked by blood veil, coughing violently and whimpering through their restless fever dreams. The other three bodies suffer from a new strain of blood veil the priests of Urgathoa see great potential in. The men each died within the past two days and have partially wakened as zombies. They remain here for observation and further study—if a version of blood veil that swiftly animates its dead as plague zombies can be perfected, the cult will have a potent weapon on their hands indeed.

The two living men here are a cobbler named Olen Hanch and a Sable Company stableboy named Dalvun Krand—both are 2nd-level human experts and both are unconscious at 0 hit points each. If their diseases are cured, they can tell the PCs a bit about the temple. They know that more prisoners are trapped in area **G6** and that the priests of Urgathoa are the source of the plague infecting Korvosa—both believe that the disease itself was created in a laboratory further to the east in this very complex. They also know that the priests take orders from two fearsome individuals: a beautiful high priestess who speaks of death like some great gift, and a disturbing man with elven and rodent features who berates the doctors for amateurish and dim-witted work.

The three partially undead bodies are beyond help—they thrash and twitch and gibber randomly, but lack even the rudimentary mock-intelligence of a zombie and cannot attack or defend themselves.

As with the Dead Warrens, the temple of Urgathoa is not Rolth's actual home in Korvosa. If he escapes the PCs in this adventure, his hatred toward them only grows. The next adventure, "Escape from Old Korvosa," includes notes on how to incorporate Rolth into the adventure as an additional enemy, but if he perishes at the PCs' hands here, his death won't impact the next adventure in any major way.

ROLTH

CR 8

Male human necromancer 8

CE Medium humanoid

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

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 19

(+4 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dexterity, +4 shield)

hp 50 (8d4+29)

Fort +7, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee +4 mwk dagger (1d4–1/19–20)

Spells Known (CL 8th; +6 ranged touch)

4th—*animate dead*, *dimension door*, *enervation* (DC 20), *ice storm*
 3rd—*dispel magic*, *hold person* (DC 17), *lightning bolt* (DC 17),
ray of exhaustion (DC 19), *vampiric touch*
 2nd—*detect thoughts*, *false life*, *ghoul touch* (DC 18),
scorching ray, *spectral hand*
 1st—*charm person* (DC 15), *chill touch* (DC 17), *grease* (DC 15),
mage armor, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 17), *shield*
 o—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *light*, *ray of frost*, *touch of*
fatigue (DC 16)

Prohibited Schools illusion, transmutation

TACTICS

Before Combat Rolth prepares for battle by casting *mage armor*, *shield*, and *false life*. He then animates any corpses he has handy and readies his *spectral hand* with *vampiric touch*.

During Combat Rolth attempts to stay out of combat as much as possible, preferring to let his undead creations and subordinates do the fighting as he uses his offensive spells and *wand of magic missile* from the far side of the room.

Morale Rolth abandons his Urgathoan allies if brought below 10 hit points or if his defeat seems imminent, in which case he casts *dimension door* to escape into Korvosa above—he does not make a further appearance in this adventure if he escapes.

Base Statistics AC 13, flat-footed 11; hp 28 (8d4+16)

STATISTICS

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

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

Feats Alertness (as long as Runkus is in arm's reach), Craft Construct, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy)

Skills Concentration +13, Craft (alchemy) +15, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (religion) +15, Knowledge (the planes) +9, Listen +2, Spellcraft +17, Spot +2

Languages Common, Undercommon, Varisian

SQ summon familiar (rat named Runkus)

Combat Gear *wand of magic missile* (CL 3rd, 43 charges); **Other Gear** masterwork dagger, *cloak of resistance* +1, *headband of intellect* +2, *ring of protection* +1, *unguent of timeless* (6 doses), mortician's tools, 6 black

onyxes worth 25 gp each, spellbook (contains all spells prepared—Rolth keeps other spellbooks in other lairs elsewhere in Korvosa)

PRIEST OF URGATHOA (2)

CR 2

Human cleric 2

NE Medium humanoid

Init +0; **Senses** Listen +2, Spot +2

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 18

(+6 armor, +2 deflection)

hp 16 (2d8+4)

Fort +7, **Ref** +0, **Will** +5

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee mwk scythe +3 (2d4+2/×4)

Special Attacks death touch 1/day, rebuke undead 2/day (-1, 2d6+1)

Spells Known (CL 2nd)

1st—*cure light wounds*, *divine favor*, *magic weapon*^P, *shield of faith*

o—*cure minor wounds*, *detect magic*, *inflict minor wounds*, *resistance*

D domain spell; **Domains** Death, War

TACTICS

Before Combat Before engaging in combat, a priest casts *magic weapon* and *shield of faith*.

During Combat On the first round of combat, a priest casts *divine favor*, engaging in melee in the following rounds. He casts *cure light wounds* on himself if brought below 6 hit points.

Morale A priest of Urgathoa fights to the death.

Base Stats AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16;

Melee mwk scythe +3 (2d4+1/×4)

STATISTICS

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

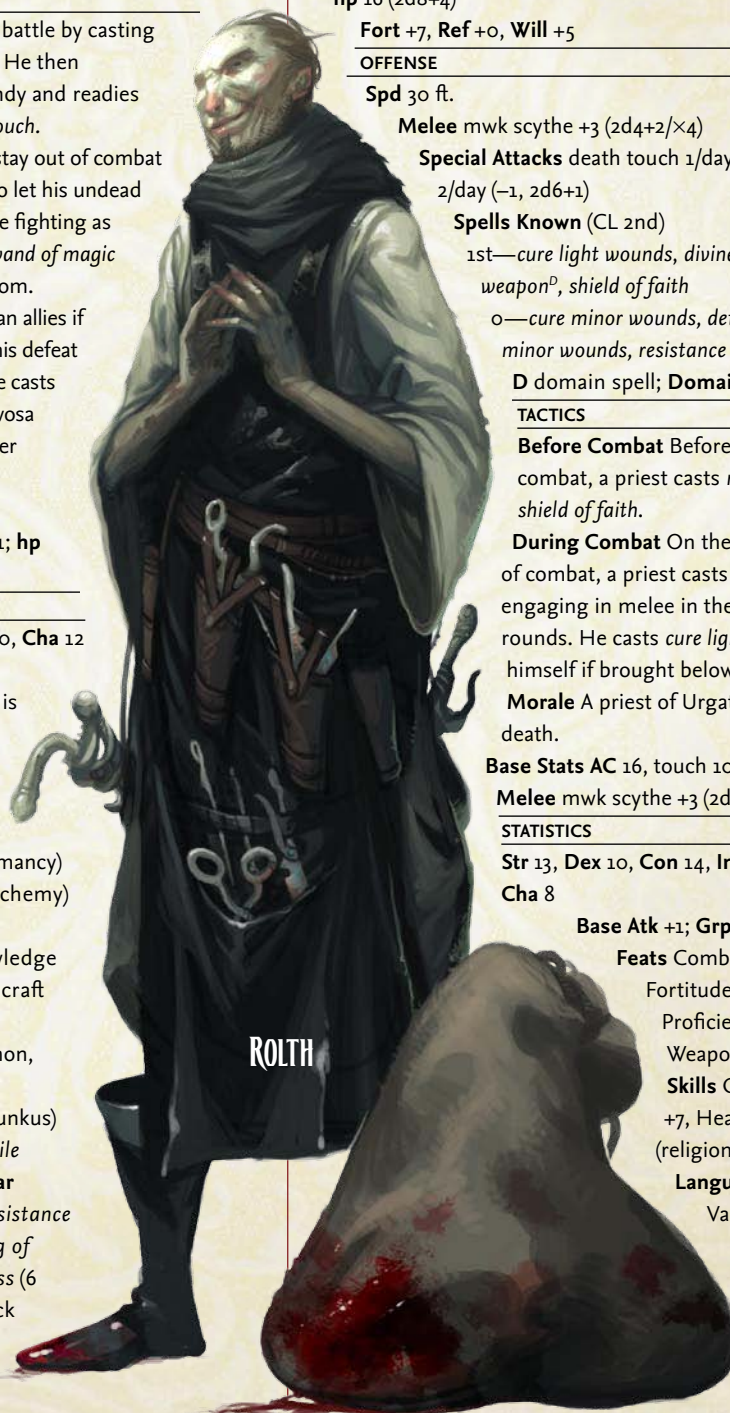
Base Atk +1; **Grp** +2

Feats Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Martial Weapon Proficiency (scythe), Weapon Focus (scythe)

Skills Concentration +7, Heal +7, Knowledge (religion) +6, Spellcraft +6

Languages Common, Varisian

SQ spontaneous casting (inflict spells)



ROLTH

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** mwk scythe, +1 breastplate, key to area **G6**

QUEEN'S PHYSICIANS (2)
hp 11 each (see page 42)

CR 2

Ad Hoc Experience Award: If the PCs rescue and heal the two survivors in this room, grant them experience for a CR 2 encounter.

G6. Patient Cells

Iron doors with slotted windows, much like one might find in a prison or asylum, line the walls of this chamber. Faint bloodstains fleck the straw-strewn flagstones.

The strong iron doors in this hall lead to cramped cells. These doors can be opened with a DC 30 Open Lock check or by using the keys held by one of the priests of Urgathoa. Breaking down a door requires a DC 28 Strength check.

Five of the eight cells here hold captive Varisian men and women. These prisoners have been here for a week or less and many have seen those who were here before them taken away to face the Urgathoans' terrible experiments. These prisoners have all displayed a remarkable resistance to blood veil, and are being used by the cult to develop an even more potent version of the plague. The prisoners can tell the party essentially the same information as the sick men in **G5**.

Ad Hoc Experience Award: If the PCs free all of the prisoners in this room and lead them to safety, grant the party experience for a CR 4 encounter.

G7. Urgathoan Barracks (EL 8)

Numerous black-sheeted cots fill this room, their satin coverings and overstuffed pillows seeming more akin to funerary trappings than the resting places of the living. Numerous skulls are set evenly within the room's stone walls. Candles inside them cause them to glow like morbid jack-o-lanterns and cast dim light across the room.

Creatures: Three unmasked Queen's Physicians and four priests of Urgathoa currently rest in this room. Four skeletal servants, animated to tend to the needs of any cultists present here, wait upon their needs. One skeleton holds a platter bearing several goblets and a decanter of rich Nidalese midnight wine. The Urgathoans order the skeletons into battle first, then two move to attack while a third runs to alert his brothers in area **G8**.

QUEEN'S PHYSICIANS (3)
hp 11 each (see page 42)

CR 2

PRIESTS OF URGATHOA (4)
hp 16 each (see page 50)

CR 2

SKELETONS (4)
Human skeletons
hp 6 each (MM 225)

CR 1/3

Treasure: Footlockers and shelves about the room hold the sparse—and often disturbing—personal effects of the cult of Urgathoa's members. PCs who spend 10 minutes and succeed at a DC 16 Search check discover 12 bottles of midnight wine worth 14 gp each, a *robe of bones* bearing the images of a goblin skeleton and a wolf zombie, a rune-etched onyx sculpture of a skull worth 35 gp, and 11 pp, 40 gp, 58 sp, 160 cp.

G8. The Blood Vats (EL 7)

The stinging scent of harsh chemicals chokes this high-ceilinged chamber. Three huge metal vats bubble here, each more than six feet tall. A sturdy series of catwalks ten feet off the ground stretches over and around the vats, allowing those above to attend whatever slurry produces the foul green-brown mist emanating from each gigantic vessel. Circling the upper portion of the room is an elaborate mosaic of white, black, and green stone that depicts a giant half-corpse woman in black veils dancing among fields of the dead, undead, and dying.

This room holds the source of the plague destroying Korvosa. Within this chamber, priests of Urgathoa use magic and alchemical processes to produce the noxious liquid medium of raw blood veil.

The vats here hold roughly 1,000 gallons of a viscous, phlegm-like fluid of concentrated blood veil. Any creature who comes into contact with the fluid must make a DC 30 Fortitude save or become infected with the disease. The doors to the west, south, and east lie on the area's lower level. The door to area **G11** can be accessed from the catwalks. It is locked, but can be opened with a DC 30 Open Lock check or the key carried by Arkminos.

Creatures: The day-to-day work of brewing the foul liquid blood veil is a relatively simple affair—none of the temple's commanders are required to supervise the process, and they leave it to the six priests of Urgathoa here to tend the brew while it undergoes its long process of distillation and concentration. If the cultists see intruders, one races over to the door to area **G11** to hammer on it and alert the room beyond, while another races to **G13** to alert Lady Andaisin. A third cultist opens the door to area **G9** to release the zombies kept therein. The remaining cultists stand fast here, fighting to the death. As a move-equivalent action, a cultist can dip his scythe into a vat of disease

if he's standing on the catwalk above, giving his scythe attack the ability to expose those struck with blood veil for the next 1d4 blows.

PRIESTS OF URGATHOA (6)

CR 2

hp 16 each (see page 50)

G9. Storage (EL 2)

Little more than barrels of water, kindling, and long stirring poles are contained in this room.

Creatures: Four zombies stand in this storeroom, awaiting a point where they are needed for the defense of the temple. They attack any non-Urgathoan who enters the room.

HUMAN ZOMBIES (4)

CR 1/2

hp 16 each (MM 266)

G10. Unfinished Storeroom

The southeastern corner of this otherwise empty room seems to be unfinished—a large mound of rubble fills the corner.

Although the temple nears completion, the cultists have not yet finished this secondary storeroom's construction. Now that the plague is underway, it will be some time before they do finish here.

G11. Arkminos's Laboratory (EL 10)

An elegant operating table dominates the center of this grim laboratory. Crossed with iron restraints and encircled by a gore-encrusted gutter, the macabre device sprouts various cranks and levers, and is large enough to accommodate an ogre. Along the walls stand several tables strewn with all manner of alchemical accoutrements, their contents appearing old in the extreme, with rusted iron tools, beakers of purpled glass, and deep pools of wax from countless melted candles.

A young and unconscious man, barely older than twenty winters, lies upon the operating table, bound by its heavy restraints.

Ramoska Arkminos, an ancient vampiric undead known as a nosferatu, uses this room as his personal laboratory, having imported his favorite pieces of equipment from his home laboratory below Korsinoria Palace—the home of the reclusive Senir Tiriatic, Conte of Varno County in the nation of Ustalav many miles to the east of Varisia.

The operating table holds Ruan Mirukova, Deyanira's missing brother. He is unconscious, currently at o

THE TEMPLE UNDER ALERT

The following chambers are described under the assumption that the cultists do not know they're under attack. Once the alarm is raised (either by Doctor Davaulus' retreat down here to warn the priests, or by the priests themselves once one group is attacked by the PCs), the inhabitants of the complex react as described below.

Doctor Davaulus: The good doctor seeks out Lady Andaisin to warn her, and then joins the clerics in area G8 of the defense of that area.

Gray Maidens: The Gray Maidens in area G2 take up a defensive position in G1 near the double doors, bows at the ready to open fire on intruders the instant they enter the room.

Lady Andaisin: Lady Andaisin's reaction to the raised alarm is detailed in area G14.

Plague Doctors: There are five plague doctors active in the temple—when the alarm is raised, they relocate to the ground floor of area G8 to defend the temple.

Priests of Urgathoa: There are 14 priests of Urgathoa active in the temple—when the alarm is raised, 6 go to guard area G8 and 8 to area G13.

Ramoska Arkminos: Ramoska ignores any raised alarms and continues to work on his victim in area G11.

Rolth: Rolth joins the guardians of area G8, standing atop the catwalk in the middle of the room, to aid in that chamber's defense.

Skeletons: The four skeletons in area G7 are set on guard in area G4.

Zombies: The four zombies in area G9 are set on guard in area G4.

hit points, and is held fast by the table's three heavy iron crossbeams. The table he lies on is a combination operating table and torture device, its three strong restraints capable of crushing a victim in their metal grip. Three identical levers on the side of the table cause the restraints to loosen or constrict an inch at a time. The levers can be moved to any of 20 slots, each denoting an inch of space between the restraints and the table's surface. Words in Varisian at either end of the levers' paths suggest the mechanisms' use, "up" to the left and "down" to the right. Sliding the levers left loosen the restraints and gradually release Ruan. Moving any of them right, however, causes the already tight restraints to crush the prisoner, dealing 1d6 points of crushing damage with each slot moved. All three restraints are currently set to slot 10—moving a lever one slot in either direction is a full-round action. Other cranks on the table adjust its height and the angle of the table's surface.

Creatures: Ramoska Arkminos has lived as a nosferatu for hundreds of years and has loathed his existence for

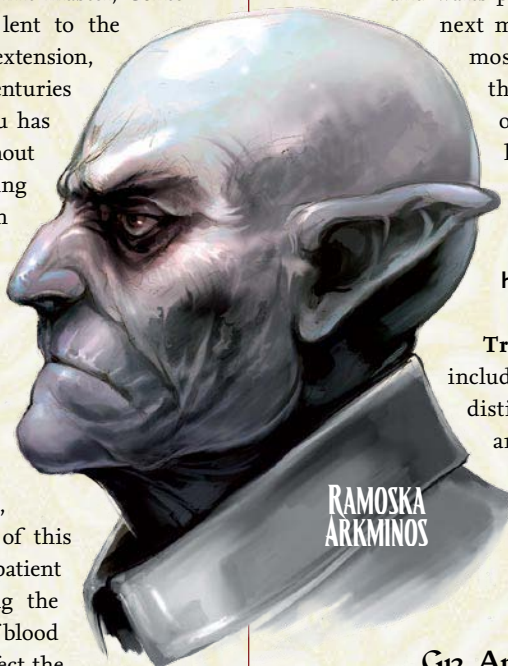
the majority of that time. In his faintest memories, he half recalls having been a devout worshiper of a god, although he cannot recall which god that was. He regrets the forgotten decisions that led to his undead status and wants nothing more than to end his life—but not as an undead. He believes that if he dies as a vampire he'll be denied some eternal reward or reunion in the afterlife and thus he seeks a cure for the curse of vampirism—if only so he can die as a man.

Currently, at the will of his vampiric master, Conte Senir Tiriac, Arkminos has been lent to the service of the Red Mantis, and by extension, the cult of Urgathoa. Through his centuries of alchemical research, the nosferatu has become a scholar of diseases nearly without peer. Arkminos takes umbrage at being drawn away from his experiments in Varno, but is obedient to his patron and master, the Conte. Currently his researches in part supplement the disease refinement efforts of the cult of Urgathoa, although he continues his own studies into the nature of vampirism. That some Varisians seem immune to blood veil has fascinated the nosferatu, who now seeks to test the extent of this mysterious resilience. His current patient is Ruan Mirukova. After subjecting the young man to a number of strains of blood veil—each of which has failed to infect the youth—Arkminos now prepares a regime of other equally virulent diseases to test on his captive. Should the Varisian survive these contagions, Arkminos plans to infect the youth with vampirism. This is not the first time the vampire has subjected a Varisian to this test, though, and each time his subject has proven immune to blood veil and no other disease. He repeats his tests now out of scientific thoroughness and in desperate optimism that his past tests were somehow flawed and a greater immunity to infections does indeed lay within some Varisians.

When the PCs enter, Arkminos is here preparing a number of contagions to test upon Ruan. Although he is obviously a monster, the vampire has no interest in fighting the PCs, wanting only to continue his experiments. He bears no love for the cult of Urgathoa, the Red Mantis, or the Gray Maidens, and says as much before the PCs can attack him, if he can. If the PCs leave him be, he reciprocates the favor, as long as they leave his laboratory immediately.

Ruan's presence, however, likely complicates the situation. While resistant to relinquish his newest subject, the nosferatu proves quick to take advantage of the PCs, especially if they've obviously already laid waste to the rest of the hidden temple. Arkminos offers to sell the youth

to the PCs and leave quietly for the price of 2,000 gp—more than enough to transport him and his equipment back to Ustalav. If the party agrees, he honors the bargain and readies his equipment for departure. If they disagree, however, he welcomes a counter offer, accepting no less than 1,000 gp in coin, magic items, or useful future favors. If the PCs and the vampire still can't reconcile, the nosferatu acknowledges that they are at an impasse and waits patiently for the party to make the next move. The vampire is perhaps the most dangerous foe the PCs face in this adventure, but if the PCs insist on attacking him, Ramoska won't hesitate to fight back.



RAMOSKA ARKMINOS CR 10

Male nosferatu human wizard 8

hp 57 (see page 89)

Treasure: The alchemical supplies here include six flasks of acid; tubes containing distillations of blood veil, filth fever, and red ache; and 500 gp worth of miscellaneous alchemical and medical equipment. Also kept here are several notebooks filled with Ramoska's observations on blood veil.

G12. Arkminos's Room

Several open trunks spill piles of books across this dusty room. Stacks of tomes, some apparently quite old, stand in orderly stacks and haphazard heaps, surrounding nearly every foot of floor space except for an elegant black-canopied bed.

Hidden away from the sun, Arkminos has no need to sleep. What little time the nosferatu spends on leisure he spends here, reading tomes of ancient healing, legendary accounts of vampires, and books of religious lore.

All of the trunks in this room are open except for one. This trunk is locked, requiring a DC 30 Open Lock check to open. A DC 30 Strength check breaks the trunk open but also destroys its contents. Inside are several padded niches and trays, each holding more than two dozen elegant crystal vials filled with crimson liquid. Each holds just enough blood to sate a vampire for one day. Of the 150 vials in the container, 32 are empty. A small gold locket lies among the vials at the bottom of the chest, but the tiny etching within has worn down into nothing more than an androgynous outline.

Characters who make a DC 12 Search check discover that the bed in this room is but a frame. Beneath the tightly

stretched black satin coverings is one of Arkminos's traveling coffins. He flees here if reduced to 0 hit points.

Treasure: The complete collection of books has a total value of 1,500 gp, although many have rotted bindings and weak glue, causing them to deteriorate if handled with anything less than extreme delicacy. If emptied of blood, the vials in Arkminos's locked chest can also fetch 1,000 gp in all, while the aged locket is worth only 100 gp.

G13. Hall of Pestilence (EL 9)

The reek of burning wax wafts through this morbid chamber, with several tall, misshapen candles being the apparent source. Workspaces strewn with tall beakers of foul-colored liquids, parchments covered in insidious symbols, and cages of whimpering rodents fill large alcoves in both the northern and southern walls. A pair of huge stone doors hang ajar to the east, revealing a long hallway leading further into the dark. At the room's center stand four large, cylindrical glass vats, each filled with a bubbling emerald fluid that tints the chamber's light a noxious green. Within each suspension floats a malformed abomination—something part man, part angel, and part horse—things of half-formed muscle with dead, fleshless equine skulls. Three of the forms are motionless and still, but the fourth twitches now and then with life.

The open double doors to the east lead to a 100-foot-long hallway that slopes downward at a noticeable (but not dangerous) angle, slowly widening to a width of 15 feet before emerging into area G14.

Creatures: A pair of priests of Urgathoa are found here at all times, dutifully scrubbing and cleaning the four glass vats or praying on mats made of woven human hair on the floor between the four vats.

The four tubes are magical prisons, gifts from Queen Ileosa to Lady Andaisin to aid her in developing blood veil. The creatures kept inside the tubes are horrific fiends known as leukodaemons, vile outsiders that hail from the outer plane of Abaddon. Their presence here has enhanced the growth and development of the various diseases the cultists have been working on. The containers they have been imprisoned inside prevents them from escaping to wreak havoc on the cultists, but still allows their infectious auras to bolster the diseases

generated in this complex. Three of the leukodaemons have already been sacrificed by Lady Andaisin as part of the generation of progressively more virulent strains of blood veil—once her minions have developed a strain that will affect even the resistant Varisians, she'll sacrifice the remaining daemon as well. Until then, the fiend remains trapped inside the magical container, which functions as a magic circle against evil focused inward.

Unfortunately, the container is relatively fragile. A solid blow from any slashing or bludgeoning attack is enough to fracture the glass (hardness 2, hp 6), which immediately renders the cage nonmagical. The enraged leukodaemon can then burst free as a standard action. If one of the priests of Urgathoa is defeated, the other does just this, hoping to free the daemon so it attacks and kills the PCs. Of course, the enraged outsider sees all humanoids as prey, and is as much of a threat to the cultist as it is to the PCs. Canny PCs can take advantage of this fact, possibly luring the leukodaemon into other encounters with the cultists, or even Lady Andaisin herself.

PRIESTS OF URGATHOA (2) CR 2
hp 16 each (see page 50)

LEUKODAEMON CR 9
hp 95 (see page 80)

G14. Inner Sanctum (EL 10)

The long hall opens into a circular chamber rising into a high dome. Seven basins jut from the walls, ensconced within evenly spaced

alcoves that circle the room. Each is filled to the brim with a unique liquid corruption—blood, bile, milk, or other unidentifiable fluid. Each fills the air with its own distinct reek, creating a noxious, eye-watering bouquet. Upon the floor around each basin lie several small, empty metal boxes, each carved with images of skulls.

At the room's center, rising from a wide pool of crystalline water, rises a golden statue of a sight both erotic and horrifying. The statue is that of a beautiful nude woman, human above the waist, but below this the figure is nothing more than a skeleton.

Within this inner sanctum lies the heart of the temple's corruption. Urgathoa's seven scourges lie within the basins here—seven fluids believed by her faithful to eternally





DIVINE INTERVENTION

At the culmination of their battle with Lady Andaisin, the PCs witness a miracle of the most terrible sort. Urgathoa, the goddess of disease, gluttony, and undeath, has long had her eye on Andaisin, taking great pride in the atrocities the priestess has visited upon Korvosa. Thus, she takes none too kindly to a band of self-righteous upstarts cutting down one of the rising stars of her church, and personally intercedes to give Andaisin a chance to avenge herself, resurrecting her as a Daughter of Urgathoa.

So, in reward for defeating the leader of the forces plaguing Korvosa, the PCs get to fight an even scarier monster? Yes, that's kind of the shtick. But it's all in the way you spin it. As you describe Andaisin's fall, give the PCs a few moments to recover and start to search the area before they notice something strange. Feel free to make Urgathoa's intervention as dramatic as you feel is appropriate, playing up the feel of unholy energy, cold malevolence, and soul-wrenching evil that fills the chamber. Remember, Andaisin's not just some baddie who comes back as a ghost—she's a powerful, fanatical priestess who a goddess has singled out for a second chance. The PCs should feel like they're witnessing something epic and terrible and that they might not be able to handle their foe's unholy reincarnation.

Sure, having a deity interject to make the adventure's big baddie even more horrifying is kind of cheating, but when the PCs do win, their feat should feel all the more epic for having thwarted the will of an actual goddess.

—Wes Schneider

leak from the Pallid Princess's necrotic body: bile, blood, milk, phlegm, pus, sweat, and tears. These revolting fluids spontaneously generate within Urgathoa's shrines in specially prepared basins deep in her temples, serving as foci for her servants' worship, components in a variety of obscene rites, and mediums for the creation and spread of diseases.

Gathered by agents of the Red Mantis, more than two dozen used *death's head coffers* lie scattered within the side shrines throughout this room. Each once held a specimen infected with some terrible affliction—rats, diseased blood, flesh from plague victims, and other contaminants. One such box containing samples of Vorel's phage was brought here as well, and it became the foundation for the scourge known now as blood veil.

Each of the seven scourges in this room has been used as a medium to create and spread blood veil, and currently all seven contain the disease. Empowered by Urgathoa, any creature who touches any of the fluids must make a DC 30 check or become infected with blood veil. There is no incubation period for those who contract blood veil from these scourges—those who fail their saving throw take the first day's damage immediately.

The statue of Urgathoa at the room's center is the focus of a 40-foot-radius *unhallow* spell that grants all worshipers of Urgathoa in its area of effect *freedom of movement*.

Creatures: Lady Andaisin, High Priestess of Urgathoa, occupies herself meditating in this room. If she hears the alarm or cries from outside the inner sanctum, she takes several rounds to prepare herself for the possibility of combat before returning to her contemplation at the statue. As the PCs enter this chamber, she greets them with an icy smile, welcoming them into the presence of the Pallid Princess. The high priestess is confident in the extreme and, being a true fanatic, honestly believes that she is invincible here in the sanctuary of her goddess. Read or paraphrase the following greeting to the PCs at this time.

“And so you have found your way to me, hopeful heroes. Know that you stand before the architect of your city's death. You call this sending blood veil, yet I know it as the gentle kiss of the Pallid Princess. Your reward shall be great—choose of the seven scourges to become one with the goddess. Those who drink, I shall only cripple, leaving you alive to enjoy her as she quickens inside your flesh. Those who abstain are fools, not fit to house the divine gift. You may prostrate yourselves at my feet and I shall make your end all the more swift for it. Swifter, in any event, than this delightful end your lovely queen has enjoined me to create!”

Lady Andaisin sees blood veil as her personal masterpiece—a single dagger used in a mass sacrifice to the Pallid Princess's morbid glory. When she tires of taunting the PCs, she toys with her scythe and promises to try and merely cripple one or two of them so they might still experience the lethal ecstasy of her plague in their days to come as her playthings.

Unlike most fanatics, much of Lady Andaisin's arrogance is not mere delusion. Urgathoa has taken note of the blood veil plague ravaging Korvosa and is pleased with the ingenuity and effectiveness of her servants there. As such, she has considered gifting Lady Andaisin with one of her greatest blessings, transformation into an undead saint of her profane church, a daughter of Urgathoa. The goddess has not yet made Lady Andaisin aware of the decision, planning to quicken her as she exults atop the plague-ravaged ruin of Castle Korvosa. Should Lady Andaisin be slain before this destiny is fulfilled, though, the incensed goddess immediately imbues her minion's corpse with her intended gift—death being no barrier to the goddess of the undead. The round after Lady Andaisin falls, her body crackles with unholy power and is lifted into the air. Her sundered flesh explodes with boils and pustules, while torrents of Urgathoa's foul humors flood forth and congeal into a sickening new body for the unliving saint. Lady Andaisin is instantly reborn as a Daughter of Urgathoa, bent on revenge.

LADY ANDAISIN

CR 9

Female human cleric of Urgathoa 9

NE Medium humanoid

Init -1; **Senses** Listen +4, Spot +4**DEFENSE****AC** 23, touch 12, flat-footed 23

(+7 armor, +3 deflection, -1 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 93 (9d8+49)**Fort** +10, **Ref** +4, **Will** +12 (+1 vs. fear)**OFFENSE****Spd** 20 ft.; *air walk***Melee** +2 *vicious scythe* +11/+6 (2d4+3/×4 plus 2d6)**Special Attacks** death touch 1/day, rebuke undead 4/day (+1, 2d6+10)**Spells Prepared** (CL 9th)5th (2/day)—*greater command* (DC 19),
slay living^D (DC 20)4th (4/day)—*air walk*, *cure*
critical wounds, *divine power*^D,
*greater magic weapon*3rd (5/day)—*blindness/deafness*
(DC 18), *contagion* (DC 18),
dispel magic, *magic vestment*^D,
*extended status*2nd (6/day)—*aid*, *bear's*
endurance, *cure moderate*
wounds (2), *extended*
shield of faith, *spiritual*
weapon^D1st (6/day)—*cause fear*^D (DC
16), *cure light wounds*
(3), *obscuring mist*,
sanctuary (DC 15)o (6/day)—*cure minor*
wounds (3), *guidance*,
light (2)**LADY
ANDAISIN**D domain spell; **Domains** death, war**TACTICS**

Before Combat Every morning, Lady Andaisin casts *extended status* on one her priest of Urgathoa minions, Rolth, and Doctor Davaulus. As soon as she realizes the temple is invaded (likely because the alarm is raised or because one of the creatures she's cast *status* on becomes damaged), she casts *air walk*, *greater magic weapon*, and *magic vestment* on herself and drinks her *potion of barkskin*. When she hears the sounds of combat in area **G13**, she casts *extended shield of faith*, *bear's endurance*, and *aid* on herself as well—if enemies do not arrive in area **G14** within 4 minutes, she makes a quick patrol of every room in the temple to seek them out (or to determine if the intruders have been defeated). All of these spell effects are included in her stats.

During Combat Andaisin's first act in combat is to cast *divine power* on herself—these effects have been included in her stats above. After that, she uses *air walk* to climb to a point 10 feet off the ground, then spends the first few rounds of combat casting spells at the PCs. She generally starts with *greater command*, ordering her enemies to fall prone before her, then follows that in the next few rounds with *blindness/deafness* at an obvious cleric, *dispel magic* if the PCs have several obvious spell effects, or *spiritual weapon* at a wizard or other frail-looking PC. She then drops down into melee with the PCs. If brought below 30 hit points, she retreats back into the air, casting *obscuring mist* on the ground below to make it difficult for non-flying creatures to target her. She spends the next few rounds curing her damage before returning to battle.

Morale Andaisin fights to the death.

Base Statistics **AC** 16, touch 9, flat-footed 16; **hp** 62; **Fort** +8; **Melee** +1 *vicious scythe* +9/+4 (2d4+2/×4 plus 2d6); **Con** 18; **Concentration** +14

STATISTICS**Str** 12, **Dex** 8, **Con** 18, **Int** 10, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 13**Base Atk** +6; **Grp** +7

Feats Combat Casting, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell, Martial Weapon Proficiency (scythe), Spell Focus (necromancy), Weapon Focus (scythe)

Skills Concentration +16, Knowledge (religion) +12, Spellcraft +12

Languages Common

SQ spontaneous casting
(inflict spells)

Combat Gear *potion of barkskin* +4; **Other Gear** +1 *vicious scythe*, +1 *breastplate*, *cloak of resistance* +2, *periapt of Wisdom* +2, onyx unholy symbol of Urgathoa worth 200 gp

LADY ANDAISIN TRANSFORMED

Female daughter of Urgathoa
hp 119 (see page 82)

CR 8

Treasure: A DC 25 Search of the statue of Urgathoa here reveals a well-concealed compartment at its base. Within lies a number of ceremonial instruments used by Lady Andaisin for various rituals—two grim candelabra made from human hands encased in silver worth 150 gp each, several sticks of exotic incense worth a total of 450 gp, a *wand of cure serious wounds* with 37 charges, a *wand of remove disease* with 8 charges, and three blocks of *incense of meditation*.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

With Davaulus and Lady Andaisin defeated, the creation and spread of blood veil suffers a mortal blow. With no one actively propagating the disease, the plague's unnaturally swift and seemingly random spread ends. The disease remains at large, though, and deaths continue until the Korvosan Guard and city priests get matters under control. Fortunately, in the course of investigating the Hospice of the Blessed Maiden and the Temple of Urgathoa below, the PCs should have stumbled across Lady Andaisin's greatest fear—the seeds of a cure.

The cure for blood veil lies within the research of three ingenious but undoubtedly demented minds: Dr. Davaulus, Ramoska Arkminos, and the necromancer Rolth. Each have come upon the discovery that certain individuals of Varisian blood exhibit an immunity to blood veil. Unknown to them, these Varisians share a common bloodline. They are descendants, however far removed, of a woman named

Kasanda Miromia-Foxglove, wife of the failed lich Vorel, whose death led to the creation of the disease Vorel's phage and ultimately to blood veil. Kasanda watches over her descendants from death and fortified their bloodline against the depredations of her insane husband. From any of these villains' research, a skilled alchemist or healer might be able to develop a cure.

Saving the City

If the PCs find themselves in possession of notes from these researchers, they can correlate their findings to create a cure for blood veil. With only one researcher's set of notes, the cure can be found with a DC 30 Craft (alchemy) check and a month of work. With two sets of notes, it's a DC 25 Craft (alchemy) check and only a week of work. With all three sets, it's only a DC 20 Craft (alchemy) check and 1d3 days of work.

Body Count: Finding a cure for blood veil saves 1,000 citizens. In addition, if the PCs help to develop a cure, grant them an experience point award as if they had defeated a CR 9 creature.

Once the adventure ends, total the amount of citizens saved by the PCs and consult the table below to see how the city rewards them for their good work. These awards are cumulative—if the PCs save 3,600 citizens, they receive all four of the rewards listed below.

A Conspiracy Revealed

Although discovering a cure for the plague and saving Korvosā are important accomplishments, another even more important accomplishment occurs if the PCs

Citizens Saved

700 or fewer citizens

701—1,900 citizens

1,901—2,800 citizens

2,801—3,600 citizens

Reward

Family Friends: In gratitude for their efforts during the plague, Tayce Soldado organizes the thanks of Korvosā's settled Varisians. The PCs are treated to a large feast at Tayce's home with the entire community, many of whom bring the party modest gifts coming to total of 250 gp per character.

Good Samaritans: Dozens of families recognize the PCs for saving the lives of family members or neighbors. The PCs each gain a favor from a skilled craftsman, local artist, or other member of an NPC class. This favor might be the gift of an item worth no more than 1,000 gp, a place to hide out for a night, help researching a topic, or any of a variety of useful services (ultimately adjudicated by the GM).

Local Heroes: Field Marshal Cressida Kroft personally thanks the PCs for their extensive aid during the plague. Deputizing them as official members of the Korvosā Guard, she opens Citadel Volshyenek's armory to them. Each PC can select equipment worth up to 2,500 gp (including magic weapons and armor) from the stores.

Saviors of the City: Nearly everyone in the city knows or has heard of the PCs. The PCs gain a +2 bonus on all Bluff and Diplomacy checks made against Korvosā citizens. More importantly, Queen Ileosa is forced to publicly acknowledge their work, and gives a short and (noticeable with a DC 20 Sense Motive check) grudging speech in their honor, praising their work and actions and granting each of them a 5,000 gp writ in reward for their services. This writ is good for any purchase made within Korvosā's walls. If the PCs have been open and aggressive about their theories of the queen's involvement in the plague, she instead has Marcus Thalassinus, commander of the Sable Company, issue the award, claiming exhaustion in the wake of the recent events as her excuse for not attending the ceremony.

survive this adventure. The fact that agents of the queen—in Doctor Davaulus and his Queen's Physicians—are revealed to be in league with the foul creators of blood veil, and worse, seem to have been involved in propagating its spread rather than seeking its cure, is dangerous knowledge. Although Queen Ileosa cannot be directly confronted by the PCs at this time with accusations of engineering a plague to shape the city into something more to her liking, word of the crown's involvement in the outbreak spreads as soon as it's made apparent that the Queen's Physicians and Davaulus were corrupt. The queen's official stance is that the charming doctor duped her, and that his actions and the actions of his masked minions do not accurately reflect Queen Ileosa's desires. Gray Maidens involved in the hospice claim to have had no knowledge of the true goings-on in the chambers below, and Davaulus is publicly executed (or branded a traitor to the city if he is unavailable for such). Without hard evidence that she was involved, the majority of Korvosa's citizens find it difficult to believe that their queen, however vain and unpleasant, could be the source of such an evil. Most of Korvosa's citizens are simply thankful that the scourge of blood veil has passed, and are eager to get back to their lives. The city is too wounded to contemplate rebellion.

Yet unrest grows. As the city continues to recover, the rumors of the queen's involvement grow. Unfortunately, so do her resources. The Gray Maidens become more and more prominent on the street, and progressively oppressive laws and edicts begin to appear. The PCs retain any alliances with Cressida Kroft, Ishani, Grau Soldado, Vencarlo, and other allies in the city, yet they should distinctly feel increasingly unwelcome in Korvosa. The reason for this should be clear soon enough—for Queen Ileosa knows now that the PCs are, without a doubt, her enemies. It won't be long before the PCs learn just how dangerous staying in Korvosa could become.





PLAGUE AND PESTILENCE

DISEASES OF FANTASY AND REALITY

“We were too slow to act. My mind cannot help dwelling upon our accursed mistakes. Such ill conduct at the onset argues gross ignorance of the most common and obvious tenets of our faith, and gives us anxious forebodings for the future. I have lost some of those I valued most, as though the plague sought to humble and shame my soul. Nothing can excuse this madness and ignorance. So many lives thrown away. Our inaction murdered them as much as if we had cut their throats.”

—Deliah Elisten, Former Cleric of Sarenrae, *An Account of the Ridwan Ruin*

Thousands of diseases exist in the world. Most are relatively harmless, causing mild discomfort and inconvenience.

Some, however, present a dire threat to those exposed, stealing life as surely as any blade or spell. Diseases stem from numerous sources, though most can be tracked back to filthy conditions, poor ventilation, lack of clean water, parasites, or other pollutants. They proliferate in crowded areas where infection spreads quickly from person to person. In some communities, the availability of herbal medicine, properly prepared food, clean living conditions, and healing magic stave off the bulk of these maladies. Left unchecked, though, a disease can spread into a deadly plague, harvesting countless lives under a silent, dreadful scythe.

Magic and miracle cures don't mean an end to disease. Even in a fantasy world, the afflictions of the flesh run rampant, and fears of pestilence and plague terrify mortals. What follows is an exploration of how diseases affect the people of Golarion—and potentially any other fantasy world—as well as a look at methods of treating illness and a host of new afflictions.

PLAGUES IN FANTASY

Although healing magic greatly aids the treatment of diseases, it does little to make the threat of natural pestilence less terrifying. If both mundane and magical maladies can threaten bands of adventurers—who often count skilled healers among their number—the common man proves even more vulnerable, typically lacking access to divine magic or coin to purchase it. As such, fear of sickness torments everyday folk just as it would have distressed the medieval peoples of the real world.

Pestilence has a variety of effects on typical fantasy communities. The degree of these afflictions are classified in order of increasing scale as outbreak (an occurrence of a disease affecting a small group of people), epidemic (a disease affecting numerous people someplace it is not already prevalent), and pandemic (an affliction spreading across large regions—such as countries, nations, or entire worlds—for long periods of time).

Outbreak

Infectious diseases have existed since before the first cities were founded, and people living in close-packed communities only made their spread easier. When a disease spreads outside a limited group, affecting a larger populace for an extended period of time, it becomes an outbreak.

A disease present at all times is considered endemic. For example, sleeping sickness is endemic in many tropical areas but is not considered an outbreak until it extends beyond its endemic region.

When dealing with an outbreak, clerics and healers typically act to contain or quarantine the disease as quickly as possible, lest it spread through the populace. The spread

of any disease depends entirely on its nature, and this nature ultimately determines how quickly it kills. An airborne disease spreads from person to person and can infect large numbers very quickly, as one victim passes it on by coughing, sneezing, sharing food and drink, or sleeping in the same room as others. Diseases that travel through water ride downstream to infect nearby villages or passersby who can then continue to transmit the disease to the next water source with their bodily fluids. This means of infection often occurs when human waste infects freshwater wells, spreading the disease to the surrounding populace.

In smaller communities, the rarity of healing magic can devastate the population and, in the worst-case scenario, wipe an entire village from the map. In such cases, even low-level clerics might be able to stem the source of the disease, halting its progress or eliminating it entirely. For example, where a local well has been tainted with refuse, a cleric could slow a disease's progress with *purify food and drink* spells and by directing the villagers to discontinue using it. Further, given a small population, a cleric's *create water* spell provides an excellent alternative fresh water source.

Epidemic

While an outbreak focuses on one locale, an epidemic affects a more general area, such as a city, feudal state, or geographical region, for a sustained period of time. In game terms, it's easiest to treat districts of a city as separate small villages when it comes to the spread of disease, with the only major differences being more people coming and going in an urban area, where the risk of spreading an infection increases. Older and poorer districts of a city, or those near contaminated water, generally succumb to disease first.

To this end, many city leaders might maintain protocols ensuring the population's safety in the event of an epidemic-level plague. In this situation, each district holds responsibility for its inhabitants, and temples and clerics within the district assist residents. Further, when a district becomes contaminated, quarantines enforced by city guards or militia might go into effect. Barricades and checkpoints prevent any movement in or out of the area. Those caught attempting escape are forcibly returned to the quarantine zone, or perhaps even slain outright if the situation is dire enough. Even city nobles, fearing infection, typically seal off their estates to outsiders and post guards at the gates with orders to slay anyone attempting to enter the grounds without permission.

When faced with an epidemic, many city leaders issue summonses throughout the city to anyone possessing the means to combat and treat the disease, including adventurers passing through. Clerics and paladins are the most common targets for impressment. Herbalists, alchemists, rangers, druids, and even wizards capable of summoning extraplanar creatures with healing magic

(such as astral devas or planetars) are also sought out and press-ganged into the city's service.

Even with magic on the residents' side, though, common practices still beg observance. The most important practice remains cleanliness, for if the victim stays in a contagious environment, not only might his condition continue but, worse, he might contract other diseases. In the worst instances, spells such as *purify food and drink* or *create water* could be more valuable than *cure disease* or *restoration*, which might restore some vitality to the victim but do nothing to prevent him from catching the disease again.

Pandemic

Beyond the scope of an epidemic, a pandemic is a disease gone rampant, infecting entire countries, continents, or even worlds in a spiral of misery that lingers for months or years. Without intervention, such a disease can wipe out entire populations. Pandemics often follow a pattern of remission and resurgence with widespread community outbreaks rippling through a region in intervals of months or whole generations between waves.

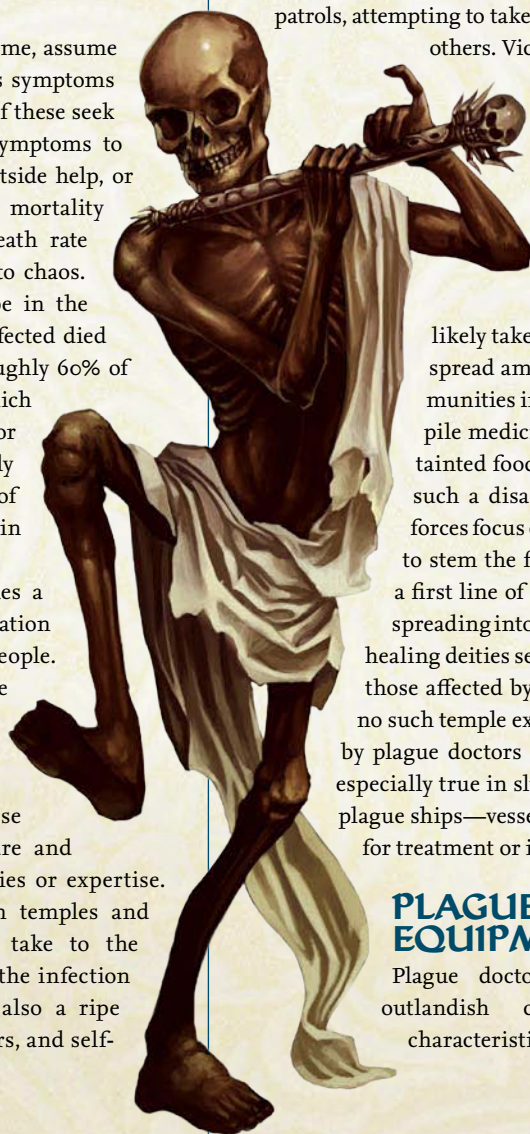
When running a pandemic in your game, assume that roughly 30% of a population shows symptoms of the disease. Unfortunately, only half of these seek medical care, often attributing their symptoms to those of common ailments, refusing outside help, or consigning themselves to death. While mortality rates for pandemics range wildly a death rate of 2–3% is plenty to plunge a nation into chaos. When the Black Death wracked Europe in the 13th century, four out of five of those infected died within 8 days, costing the continent roughly 60% of its population (75 million people, of which 50 million came from Europe). Slow or ineffective responses to the crisis only increases the rate, as wave after wave of transmission entrenches the disease within the population.

A pandemic-level disease that reaches a city the size of Korsova (with a population around 18,000) could claim at least 500 people. In such a case, many nobles might flee to rural estates, while the city enacts martial law in an attempt to maintain order. The remaining businesses and professionals who do not flee likely close shop rather than risk further exposure and looting, leaving the city without supplies or expertise. Clerics and other relief workers from temples and assorted humanitarian organizations take to the streets, attempting to stem the flow of the infection among the populace. Pandemics are also a ripe opportunity for entrepreneurs, hucksters, and self-

proclaimed “plague doctors” who tout their own expertise and miracle cures, with varying levels of qualification and results. Throughout the city, officials desperately attempt to organize burial details as bodies mount and further contribute to infection. Funeral pyres burn night and day in the hope of cleaning the air. Meanwhile, plague doctors prescribe the use of strong-scented herbs, flowers, smoking tobaccos, and any other substances that give off strong odors—such as pepper, hops, or frankincense—in the belief that such remedies stave off disease. In the best-organized communities, citizens band together, forming coalitions to limit the spread of infection, some offering to guard quarantined areas while others see to the needs of their affected neighbors.

Quarantines place heavy burdens on the populace. Limiting the movement of people, goods, and services into and out of areas where an outbreak has occurred is an extremely difficult task. Families with loved ones in a quarantined region try to offer aid. Businesses or desperate bandits with significant interests in a region run blockades or circumvent border patrols, attempting to take advantage of the hardships of others. Victims caught within a quarantine zone try escaping, their desire to survive overriding any concern for the welfare of their neighbors.

In the event that a city knows a pandemic-level disease has infected its neighboring lands, the city likely takes measures to circumvent the spread among the populace. Wise communities in that situation quickly stockpile medicines, curative magic, and untainted food and water in anticipation of such a disaster, while the city's martial forces focus on blockades and checkpoints to stem the flow of the disease, providing a first line of defense against the infection spreading into the city. Temples dedicated to healing deities set up lazarettos—hospitals for those affected by a disease. In districts where no such temple exists, sick wards administered by plague doctors tend to the infected. This is especially true in slums, quarantine zones, or on plague ships—vessels where the sick are brought for treatment or isolation.



PLAGUE DOCTOR EQUIPMENT

Plague doctors dress in intimidating, outlandish clothing featuring three characteristic items: a heavy leather

tunic, a doctor's mask, and a wand of misery. In addition to these items, healers forced to combat plagues make use of numerous other implements and remedies.

Doctor's Mask: Resembling the head of a heron and featuring slits that allow its wearer to breathe, this black, goggle-eyed mask of leather and cloth covers the entire head and shoulders, acting as a primitive gas mask filled with herbs meant to purify the senses and ward off disease. This mask grants its user a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves made to resist foul smells (like a *stinking cloud* spell or a troglodyte's stench) and inhaled diseases.

Doctor's Outfit: The heavy leather tunic and supple gloves are treated with special oils to resist disease, yet still provide wearers with the flexibility to perform fine manipulation. The tunic covers the entire body from neck to foot, while the slick black gloves reach from the fingers to the upper arms. Any creature wearing this outfit gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Fortitude saves made to resist contact diseases.

Surgeons' Tools: Including a bone saw, iron for cauterization, various delicate knives, and iron tongs, these specialized tools are used to treat a variety of wounds. When purchased to supplement the contents of a healer's kit, they raise the kit's bonus to a +3 circumstance bonus on Heal checks.

Thurible: This vessel is for burning incense, oils, or aromatic herbs used to mask foul odors and purify the air. When filled with coal and common herbs worth 2 sp, these miniature braziers fill an area 30 feet in diameter with light smoke for 1 hour. Any creature in the area of this smoke gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Fortitude saves to resist inhaled diseases.

Wand of Misery: This simply carved but sturdy 3-foot-long wooden cane is used to scrutinize plague victims. The wand permits the plague doctor to determine a patient's condition, diagnosing his maladies through his reactions to various pokes and prods, often opening infected sores and wounds for inspection. These tools have the same statistics as clubs.

Plague Doctor Equipment

Item	Cost	Weight
Doctor's mask	50 gp	2 lb
Doctor's outfit	150 gp	6 lb
Surgeons' tools	20 gp	5 lb
Thurible	50 gp	3 lb
Wand of misery	5 gp	1 lb

HERBAL REMEDIES

Healers have long extolled the use of various plants and herbal concoctions in treating all manner of ailments. GMs who wish to incorporate healing herbs into their games might allow characters with ranks in Heal and Survival

REAL WORLD PLAGUES

Researching and writing "Seven Days to the Grave" has been a morbidly fascinating and, at times, socially terrifying experience. While we often think of plagues as artifacts of the Dark Ages, unfortunately modern medicine has not advanced to the point that we can consign the term to the distant past.

Bubonic Plague: Although no longer of pandemic status and eminently treatable, bubonic fever—a disease characterized by swelling of the lymph nodes, bleeding under the skin, weakness and/or a variety of respiratory symptoms—has not been eradicated. At its height in the 1300s, this disease may have been responsible for the deaths of more than 100 million people. If those killed by the plague in those years were laid head to toe, one could walk around the world more than four and a half times on the bodies. A handful of people still die of bubonic fever every year.

HIV and AIDS: HIV (Human immunodeficiency virus) is a modern pandemic, a sexually transmitted disease that attacks the immune system, eventually leading to a failure of the body's defenses and opportunistic infections known as AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome). An estimated 25 million people died of AIDS between the years of 1981 and 2006 (advert.org), enough bodies to pave a path from Seattle to Miami. This sexually transmitted disease is carried and spread by both genders, regardless of sexual preference, and there is no known cure.

Influenza: More commonly known as the flu, new strains of influenza infrequently jump the species gap from animal hosts to humans. From 1918 to 1920, the Spanish Flu killed from 50 to 100 million people worldwide, creating enough bodies to stretch from London to Tokyo. The widely publicized Asian bird flu serves as a modern example of a new strain of influenza adapting to affect the human population.

More details on modern diseases of all types can be found at the U.S. Center for Disease Control (cdc.gov) and the European Center for Disease Control and Prevention (ecdc.eu.int).

—Wes Schneider

to spend a day in the wilderness searching for helpful healing plants. Making a DC 15 Survival check results in the discovery of a useful bundle of herbs. The character finds another bundle for every 2 points by which the check exceeds 15. Using such an herb grants the healer a +1 circumstance bonus on a Heal check made to treat a disease.

Here are but a few widely known herbal remedies, useful for describing what's in a healer's bag or what simmers within an alchemist's concoctions.

Aloe: This fleshy-leafed flowering plant treats wounds and burns. If brewed as tea, it acts as a laxative. If made into an oil, its uses include negating the itching caused by biting insects.

Anise: This flowering, leafy coastal plant is best known for its seeds, which act as antacids and further aid in

digestion. If made into an oil, it repels lice and treats high fevers and colds. If the leaves of this plant are brewed into a tea, they are especially effective in soothing coughing fits.

Belladonna: This leafy berry plant is very poisonous. If brewed properly, however, it cures nervous disorders. The berries of this plant are also used to cure maladies afflicting the eyes.

Garlic: This bulbous plant is traditionally rumored to ward off vampires. If eaten raw, it is especially effective in killing parasites. If brewed as a tea, made into soup, or cooked, it also aids in soothing coughs and detoxifying blood conditions.

Lavender: This shrub-like flowering plant proves effective as an antiseptic and anti-inflammatory agent. If made into an oil, it treats insect bites and soothes headaches.

Rose: This flowering thorny bush is most renowned for its petals. When brewed as a tea, the petals treat colds and fevers.

Witch Hazel: This leafy, flowering, shrub-like tree heals external sores, bruises, and swelling once rendered into a salve. Witch hazel oil is an antioxidant and astringent.

DISEASES

The world is rife with diseases. Some thrive in relatively localized regions and are familiar to Golarion's healers, while new afflictions—maladies from the edges of the map—sometimes steal into the heart of the civilized world. Many of the following new diseases take inspiration from real-world maladies and compliment those presented in the DMG.

Anthrakitis: This disease spreads through particles exuded from the decomposing corpses of infected animals. Infective particles can survive in the soil for decades or even centuries. The disease typically occurs when grazing mammals ingest or breathe the spores while eating ground vegetation. Anthrakitis causes a wide variety of symptoms as it attacks the skin, digestive system, or respiratory system; symptoms include fatigue, difficulty breathing, ulcers, loss of appetite, and nausea.

Any victim infected with anthrakitis can also spread the disease. Those who come into contact with a victim must save versus the disease or become infected themselves. The bodies of those killed by anthrakitis are also infectious and remain so until destroyed.

Bubonic Plague: Infected vermin and parasites spread this disease, also known as Daemon's Touch or the Black Death, through their bites. Once contracted, the disease spreads quickly, polluting the victim's body with toxins. As the disease reaches the lymph nodes, the victim suffers extreme inflammation of glands, and his skin might take on a black pallor. Symptoms include fever, headaches, nausea, fatigue, and swelling of the lymph nodes (called buboes) on the neck, underarms, and inner thigh areas,

and eventually bleeding beneath the skin. A victim who takes any Constitution damage from the disease must immediately make a successful Fortitude save or become fatigued until all his Constitution damage is healed. Each time a victim takes 2 points of Constitution damage from Black Death, he also takes 1 point of Charisma damage.

Bonecrusher Fever: Spread by mosquitoes and other infected insects in tropical climes, the moniker for bonecrusher fever—also called dengue fever—comes from the sensation sufferers experience, described as a great force squeezing their bones from within. Those suffering from bonecrusher fever endure severe headaches, high fevers, and a distinctive rash characterized by bright red dots caused by capillaries under their skin hemorrhaging. The rash appears first on the lower limbs and the chest, spreading to cover the entire body in severe cases.

Enteric Fever: Enteric fever, also known as typhoid fever in temperate climates, breeds within contaminated foods, especially raw or undercooked meats. Symptoms include high fever, profuse sweating, and nausea. As the disease progresses, enteric fever victims become sickened and suffer from severe headaches, exhaustion, and abdominal pain, as rose-colored spots appear on the chest and abdominal areas. At that point, the victim is prone to dehydration and falls into bouts of delirium and nervous shakes.

Leprosy: Terrifyingly common throughout Qadira, leprosy is spread by victims of the disease through direct—even casual—contact. Leprosy results in skin lesions, extreme nasal congestion, and wounds that do not heal. A highly visible malady, leprosy can permanently disfigure those who don't receive magical aid. If left untreated, the victim develops sores and becomes easily fatigued. While leprosy can prove difficult to contract, few overcome the disease once infected. When exposed to leprosy, a character must make a DC 12 Fortitude save to resist the disease. If he fails, once the affliction's incubation time passes and symptoms begin showing, the save to recover from the malady increases to DC 20. Suffering from a slow deterioration, particularly hardy lepers can remain quite active for years after first exhibiting signs of the disease.

Sleeping Sickness: A well-known illness endemic throughout the Sodden Lands and the Mwangi Expanse, this disease is spread by infected flying insects injecting tiny parasites into the victim's bloodstream, inducing fever, headache, joint pain, swelling of the neck and glands, and most notably, fatigue. The disease gradually infects the brain, causing confusion and reduced coordination as the victim loses all track of time, suffering bouts of insomnia and exhaustion. Anytime a victim takes ability score damage from this affliction he is also fatigued for the next day.

A detoxifying brew consisting of garlic, onions, and parsley grants the drinker a +5 bonus to his next saving



New Diseases

Disease	Infection	DC	Incubation	Damage
Anthrakitis	Contact, Inhaled, or Ingested	20	1d6 days	1d8 Con
Bubonic Plague	Injury	17	1 day	1d4 Con and Cha damage*
Bonecrusher Fever	Injury	12	1 week	1d4 Dex
Enteric Fever	Ingested	15	3 days	1d4 Str, 1d4 Con, sickened
Leprosy	Contact or Injury	12/20*	2d4 weeks	1d2 Cha
Sleeping Sickness	Injury	14	1d2 days	1d4 Wis, fatigue*
Tetanus	Injury	14	1d6 days	1d4 Dex, lockjaw*
Urgathoa's Breath	Inhaled	18	1d4 days	1d4 Str, 1d4 Con
Vorel's Phage	Contact or Ingested	20	1 day	1d4 Cha, 1d4 Con

*See description for further details.

throw against the disease. The most effective mundane treatment, though, is dosing the patient with arsenic (ingest DC 13; initial 1 Con, secondary 1d8 Con). If the patient survives this "treatment" there is a cumulative 30% chance that the disease is cured with each dose given.

Tetanus: This disease, also called "lockjaw" or "ironmaw," is typically introduced via deep wounds from contaminated objects like rusty metal. Tetanus victims become more and more prone to violent muscle spasms, splitting headaches, fever, and difficulty swallowing. Stiffness of the jaw is a common result of tetanus infection. Each time a victim takes Dexterity damage from tetanus, there is a 50% chance his jaw muscles stiffen—preventing speech, the casting of spells with verbal components, or even eating—for the next 24 hours.

Urgathoa's Breath: This disease, also known as tuberculosis in some regions, flourishes in unsanitary

conditions, places of stale air, and many humanoid cities. Symptoms include chest pain and a productive, prolonged, bloody cough. If left untreated, the disease quickly progresses, leading to high fever, chills, night sweats, appetite loss, pallor, and fatigue. While the disease can take years, even decades, to manifest, Urgathoa's cult has long possessed a faster, more virulent version that they often use to inspire fear of their festering goddess.

Vorel's Phage: A relatively new and still exceedingly rare malady, this hideous disease is found only in southern Varisia. The phage causes a painful and hideous outbreak of facial tumors and a sickening deterioration of the skin across the entire body, and also works on the minds of some, slowly driving them insane. This affliction has recently fallen into the hands of the Red Mantis and, through them, the cult of Urgathoa, making its destructive spread nearly inevitable.



ABADAR

MASTER OF THE FIRST VAULT

Abadar (AB-uh-dar) is a patient, calculating, and far-seeing deity who wishes to bring civilization to the frontiers, order to the wilds, and wealth to all who support the progression of law. He strikes a careful balance between good and evil, seeing benefits of both sides and refusing to endorse one or the other. His followers believe he is responsible for elevating the demihuman races from simple tribes to beings capable of creating huge cities. He puts words of diplomacy in the mouths of men, guides the pens of those who write laws, and steers coins into the hands of those who practice good commerce.

Abadar is the master and guardian of the First Vault, a magical trove in his realm where a perfect version of every creature and creation exists—a perfect sword, a perfect deer, a perfect wheel, and even a perfect law. His mortal artists and craftsman attempt to emulate these perfect forms, inspired by Abadar's mentoring. Likewise, his arbiters and judges keep these idealized laws in mind when crafting new laws or ruling on existing ones. It is said that centuries ago he allowed mortals to visit the First Vault in dreams. There has been no record of this in a long time, perhaps because he has not found someone worthy, because he fears his enemies might steal the perfect forms, or because he is pacing the advance of civilization to prevent it from growing too quickly and dissolving before it is ready.

The god of cities is stern but rewards those who work hard and whose actions benefit others as well as themselves, though he is morally ambiguous enough to recognize that not every person can benefit from every decision. Misusing slaves or beasts of burden is a waste of resources and detrimental to the profitability of a farm and civilization as a whole, and using cheaply-paid laborers rather than slaves is a better option, but Abadar understands that the world changes in small increments and the most advantageous option for society is not always the most workable in the present. He respects cautious thought and rejects impulsiveness, seeing it as a base and destructive whim. He teaches that discipline, keen judgment, and following the law eventually leads to wealth, comfort, and happiness. He does not believe in free handouts, and because of this his temples sell potions and healing spells or scrolls rather than giving them to those in need. Any who protest are pointed at the temple of Sarenrae.

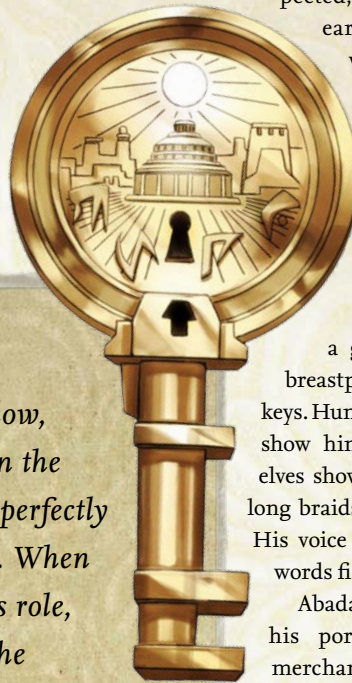
His primary worshipers are judges, merchants, lawyers, and aristocrats, all of whom benefit from established laws and commerce. Those who are poor or who have been wronged also worship him, praying he might help reverse their ill fortune, for most mortals seek wealth and the happiness it brings. He expects his followers to abide by local laws (though not foolish, contradictory, toothless, or purposeless laws) and work to promote order and peace. He has no tolerance for gambling or excessive drinking. Abadar's personal intervention in the mortal world is usually in the form of hints or opportunities rather than direct gifts.

Worshipers who lose Abadar's favor might find themselves short on money at a crucial time, tongue-tied in the middle of an important deal, or stymied in their craft or art. When he is pleased, deals are more profitable than expected, projects are completed

early, and journeys to or within a city take less time than normal. His intervention is subtle, for he expects worshipers to do their own work.

Abadar is depicted as a handsome man with black hair dressed in fine garments, often with a gold cloak over a golden breastplate and bearing many keys. Humans, dwarves, and gnomes show him with a beard, whereas elves show him beardless and with long braids tied with golden thread. His voice is pleasant and even, his words firm but not harsh.

Abadar is lawful neutral and his portfolio is cities, wealth, merchants, and law. His domains are Earth, Law, Nobility, Protection, and Travel, and his favored weapon is the crossbow. His holy symbol is a golden key, often with a city image on the head. Most of his clergy are clerics, with a small number of paladins. Due to the emphasis on cities and civilization, he has no adepts—even the most remote settlements paying homage to Abadar are watched over by a cleric or paladin. He is called the Master of the First Vault, Judge of the Gods, and the Gold-Fisted.



For unto each thing is given an order to follow, a role to play in the world that fits perfectly with all others. When performing this role, they advance the cause of civilization and bring order and prosperity to all who serve their part. With each turn of every tiny wheel, civilization spreads to cover the world.

—*The Order of Numbers, Chapter 10, Lines 14-17*

The Church

Abadar's church is well organized and has a city-based hierarchy. The church in each city is independent, encouraging friendly competition between cities to promote trade. Church law forbids the clergy from attacking each other regardless of political, national, or financial motivations. If two rival cities go to war, the churches of Abadar often become neutral territory, not participating in the struggle and acting as safe havens and mediators in the conflict. Warfare creates instability and chips away at the foundations of civilization.

Ritual garb for religious ceremonies includes white silk cloth trimmed with gold thread, a belt or necklace of



gold links bearing a golden key, and a half-cloak of deep yellow or gold. Ceremonial items are always crafted out of precious metals if available and often decorated with gems or inlays, though not to the extent that the item becomes fragile or unusable.

Services to Abadar include songs with complex harmonies, the playing of music (usually hammer-based instruments such as dulcimers and glockenspiels), and the counting or sorting of coins or keys (often in time with the singing or music). Services and ceremonies always take place indoors, representing the shelter of civilization. Faithful unable to reach an actual building make do with at least a crude structure or a even a sloping wall or cave that provides protection from the elements. Services usually take place in the morning and it is customary to thank Abadar after a profitable or advantageous transaction.

Temples and Shrines

Abadar's temples are elaborate buildings with rich decorations and high, thick stained-glass windows. These windows have small frames (to guard against thieves) and usually feature vivid yellow glass that casts a golden hue on everything within the church. Most temples have a guarded vault for church treasures and wealth, and many also rent space in their vault to those who wish a safe place to keep their valuables. Any temple in a small town or larger settlement also serves as a bank, currency exchange, and moneylender, which helps keep interest rates reasonable and consistent. The head of the temple (known as a Banker or Archbanker) watches the local economy and adjusts interest to stimulate growth, encourage investment, or help recover from a disaster. As priests often serve as lawyers and judges, the temples are usually built near courthouses.

A Cleric's Role

Abadar's basic tenet is simple—people should use their gifts to advance civilization in the world so commerce happens and people can go about their orderly lives and achieve comfort and happiness. His clerics are the agents of civilization, turning trails into roads and towns into cities while always enforcing law. They eliminate monsters and troublemakers in urban and rural areas, adjudicate disputes, make legal rulings, and reassure law-abiding people that the forces of order are watching over them. Many city-bound clerics work with the local legal system as judges, lawyers, and clerks (donating their services much as a healing-oriented church might run a hospice or give food to the needy), although they are not usually part of the city's government. In wilder areas, clerics act as judge and jury, seeking out threats to civilization and eliminating them. Younger priests who are physically fit do many tours through smaller towns and frontier areas to carry news and make sure order leaves its footprint. As meters of justice,

each priest traditionally carries a single golden-headed crossbow bolt for when a criminal must be executed. This bolt goes to the dead criminal's family as compensation for the loss and a means to make an honest living.

Although Abadar's temples are mercenary when it comes to providing healing, as guardians of civilization they are more generous when protecting the public health. Likewise, when traveling with others (such as an adventuring party) they do not charge their companions for healing any more than they expect a fighter to charge for each sword-swing or a rogue to charge for each picked lock. Like a business, questing and traveling requires teamwork, and it is part of the cleric's responsibility to provide healing and magical support.

A typical cleric has at least 1 rank in Knowledge (local) in order to be familiar with the laws of his home city. Most also dabble in knowledge of local history and nobility or practice some sort of craft or profession—always something useful to a developing or established settlement. Clerics are not permitted to give money to those in need, only to lend it at a fair rate and record the transaction for the church's record. They are required to tithe, and most clerics have small investments in local businesses that generate enough income to cover the tithe. Those with no mind for business but a talent for dealing with people often work as teachers, educating children and adults so they can advance themselves and better serve the community. Every cleric belongs to a city temple, even those touring remote areas. If circumstances warrant distant travel or a long period near another city, the home temple files paperwork transferring the cleric's affiliation to a closer temple.

A typical day for a cleric involves waking, breakfast, prayer, reading or hearing the local news for anything worth investigating, and a period of work. At night, there is a brief prayer before the evening meal, and the evening is reserved for hobbies, family, or other non-work interests. Spell preparation takes place after morning prayers.

A Paladin's Role

Paladins are not common in the faith (with perhaps one paladin for every 50 clerics), as their zealous push for good doesn't sit perfectly within Abadar's more balanced approach to ethics. As many frontier areas are plagued by evil monsters, though, and the forces of chaos are usually aligned with evil or are evil themselves, the god understands that an active force for good is sometimes best for the job. Abadar's paladins are unusual in that they tend to be flashy in their clothing and equipment, as a way to inspire others to join the cause, and use their money and influence to extend the reach of civilization.

Because of their specialized interests and abilities, paladins of the Judge sometimes work behind the scenes in lawful evil nations where the leaders are exploiting the economy at

ALLIES OF ABADAR

Abadar's priests prefer summoning paragon beasts and embodiments of perfect law. They can use *summon monster* spells to summon the following creature in addition to the normal creatures listed in the spells (rangers can use *summon nature's ally* to summon creatures from the same-level *summon monster* list).

Summon Monster II

Two-headed celestial eagle (LN)*

Summon Monster III

Celestial hippogriff (LN)

Summon Monster IV

Two-headed celestial giant eagle (LN)*

Summon Monster V

Celestial griffon (LN)

Summon Monster IX

Kolyarut (LN)

*These creature have two heads. They gain a +2 racial bonus on Listen, Spot, and Search checks, but do not gain an extra bite attack.

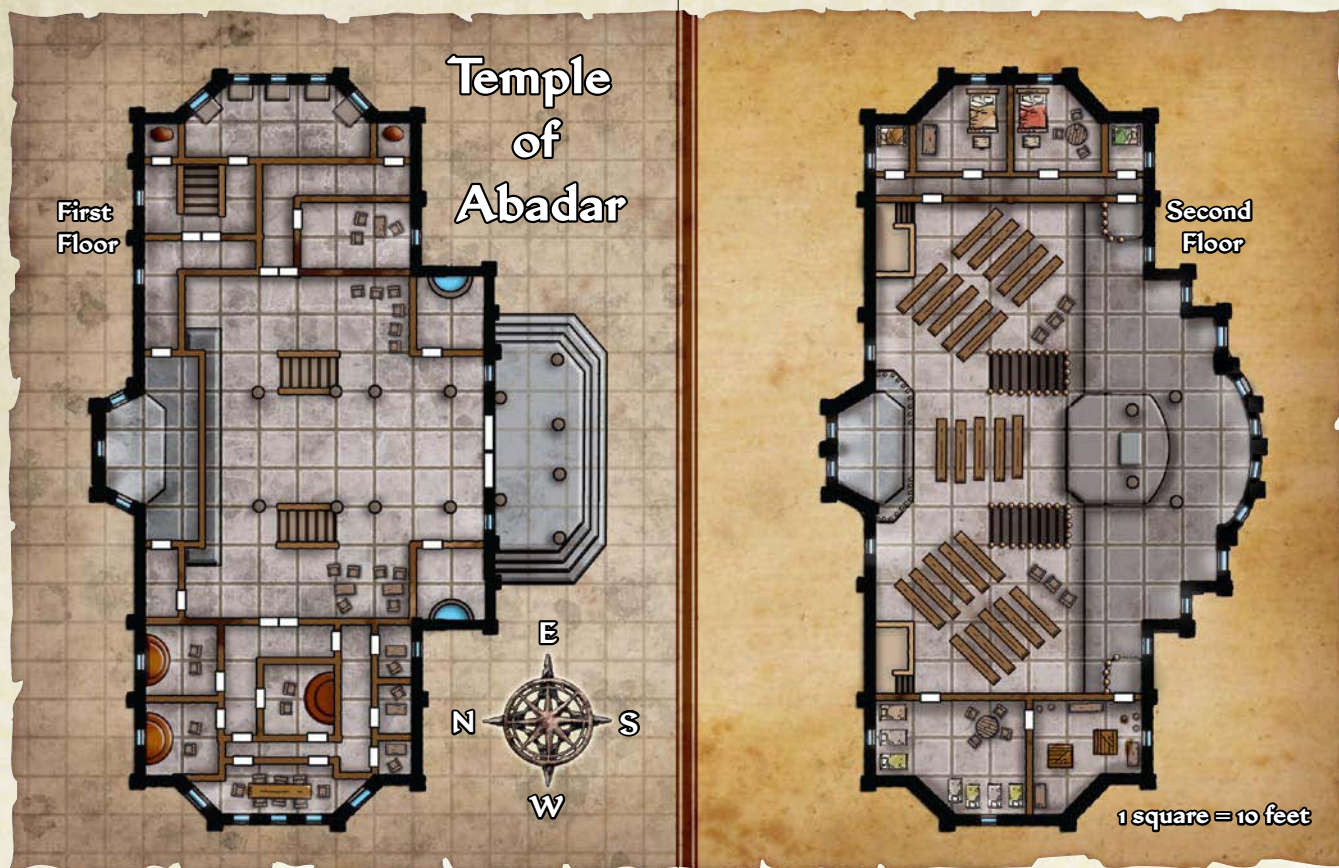
the expense of their subjects. In such realms, the paladins' primary goal is to balance the movement of wealth in the area, but if a few evil leaders fall and in the end the region is more skewed toward neutrality or good, so be it. Paladins tend to be more fiscally aggressive than clerics, willing to invest in promising enterprises, take a loss on a deal in order to motivate trade, and take greater risks with their money.

Three Myths

The followers of Abadar are meticulous record-keepers, and the general population regards most of their stories and parables as fact.

Eagle's Eye: Eagles play a significant role in several Abadaran myths. The faithful honor them for their far-seeing eyes that search for subtle details and the high flights that give them perspective. One prominent myth says that Abadar spends a day each year in the form of a two-headed eagle (representing his even perspective on both sides of every situation). He soars above the greatest mortal cities and observes their craft and commerce. If members of the faithful find and recognize him, he grants them boons that greatly profit them and their towns.

The First Vault: As nomadic tribes began to create permanent settlements, they established permanent places to keep important or valuable things. Sensing a need for a godly version of these caches, the young god Abadar sought a place in his realm where he could keep the perfect forms of anything ever created or witnessed by civilization. He found a deep cave with an even floor and used his powers to carve additional space and seal it with a huge door of gold. He placed within the vault pure, godly representations



of the first mortal creations and was pleased to see that others appeared as mortals did their work. Abadar locked the vault with a great key so that if a civilization failed, its works would persist and could be taught to or discovered by those who came after. In honor of this great undertaking, the priests of the Master of the First Vault emulate him by keeping detailed records of their accomplishments.

Zorin's Pledge: Long ago, an army of barbarians and undead besieged the home city of a priest named Zorin. Faced with grim odds and dreading the pillaging the army would bring, he swore an oath to Abadar that he would give his life and soul to protect his city from the raiders. When the horde charged the city gate, Zorin stepped forward to repel them, and with each hit he took more of his armor turned to gold. Even his skin took on a golden hue, until eventually he was transformed into the Lawgiver, the golden herald of Abadar's faith. Zorin vanished after the battle, but he has been known to spontaneously arrive to defend a city in great need.

Holidays

All of the Church of Abadar's observed holidays have to do with trade or civilization.

Market's Door: This holiday marks the first day the markets receive goods from the fall harvest. The actual date varies from year to year, but between historical trends and

simple divination the church can announce the exact date a month in advance. Before the market opens, a priest blesses the market area and leads a group prayer for all present, thanking Abadar and asking for his eye to look favorably upon the season's business. In cities where the vendors must pay a fee in order to use the market, the church usually subsidizes a portion of the fee on this day for the earliest arrivals.

Taxfest: The church views the annual collecting of taxes as a cause for celebration, seeing fair taxation as a necessary part of the building and maintenance of civilization. Whenever possible, the church sends a priest with each taxman to ensure that the process is respectful and to make sure the taxpayer knows the collection is being monitored. Once all monies have been collected, the church opens up its doors and invites the townsfolk to participate in an enormous feast with their civic leaders, both to help the experience remain positive and to give the commoners a chance to express their opinions on how the newly collected funds ought to be spent.

Aphorisms

As Abadar is the god of cities, the sayings of his followers are commonplace in urban areas.

So it is judged: Used in trials to indicate Abadar's approval of any verdict, this phrase is repeated for any legal proclamation or sentencing. It is also traditionally said at

the end of any Abadaran prayer or blessing, weddings (a legal and religious matter), and funerals. Superstitious folk whisper it whenever an act in the natural world supports their idea of law and justice, and many gamblers say it when chance goes in their favor (a mildly sacrilegious jest).

This can help us all: Because the church doesn't believe in giving handouts, most choose to celebrate holidays by giving practical gifts such as tools, musical instruments, or even simple services like chopping a cord of wood or watching children. These kinds of gifts strengthen community bonds and show the advantage of living like civilized folk. This phrase is said when receiving a gift as a way of expressing thanks while acknowledging the benefit the gift extends to the community as a whole.

Relations With Other Religions

Abadar understands that an advanced civilization has many spiritual needs, and different members of a society pray to different gods, thus he tries to maintain an approachable coolness where other deities are concerned. Only those who directly oppose his beliefs and purpose—notably Rovagug and to a lesser extent Lamashtu—are his declared enemies, and while he might be willing to negotiate with them for some purpose, they routinely refuse to do so. He is friendly with Erastil (god of farming, necessary for transitioning from a nomadic lifestyle), Iomedae (goddess of justice and rulership, necessary to preserve peace in a society), Irori (god of history and knowledge, critical for a stable civilization), Shelyn (goddess of art and music, excellent traditions), and even Asmodeus (although only for the archdevil's belief in upholding contracts). Abadar knows that his pursuits frequently anger Gozreh (god of nature), who would like to see the natural parts of the world remain unspoiled, but he believes the two can eventually reach a compromise.

Holy Texts

The average cleric of Abadar is rarely without numerous documents related to the internal processes of the church, but their holiest texts have a more educational focus.

The Order of Numbers: This book reads more like a city charter or legal treatise than a religious text. It is the core book of the faith and most editions are elaborately decorated and exquisitely penned—usually a paid commission by the priest or temple, as this generates business in the community. In addition to more than two dozen chapters detailing the beliefs and taboos of the church, each copy has space for notes on local laws, how they interact with church doctrine, names of key figures in the city, and so on. Given its size, every copy has an index and includes pages at the end for the owner to note the location of favorite or commonly-referenced passages. The inside cover bears the name of the book's owner, and possessing a book belonging to a prestigious family or passed down from a respected church official is a great honor.

The Manual of City-Building: This book is normally bound in heavy leather with bronze clasps and corners, designed for heavy use and frequent reference. It contains comprehensive advice on how to successfully found a town and build it up into a city, with sections on planning for water needs, sewage, roads, trade, defenses, and so on. Each section contains scriptural anecdotes bolstering the factual information, including prayers and blessings for each aspect of the building process. The church updates this book every few years with information it has learned since the last edition, and hence most older copies have an appendix for changes and footnotes. The oldest church in a city usually keeps its copy of this book on a special consecrated table, especially if the church was responsible for the city's founding.

JUSTICIARS

Justiciars embody law and civilization wherever they go, from the most corrupt depths of a city slum to the wildest frontier lands. They arbitrate disputes, deal with criminals, and establish law where there is none. In pleasant times they are diplomats, in dangerous ones they are judge, jury, and executioner. Their feet leave trails destined to become great roads, and their decrees carry the force of law. Being a justiciar is a serious duty and is not taken lightly—they tend to wear down over time, weathered not from travel and sunlight but from the heavy burden of carrying civilization forward into the future. A rare few pursue heretics of their own religion, keeping the faith stable and weeding out unruly elements. Each is sworn to uphold a religious or secular code.

Justiciars are usually clerics or paladins of Abadar, but order-minded individuals of other classes (particularly fighters, monks, and wizards) sometimes heed the calling to tend the roots of enlightened society.

Requirements

To qualify to become a justiciar, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria:

Alignment: Any lawful.

Skills: Diplomacy 4 ranks, Knowledge (local) 8 ranks, and 6 ranks total in Craft, Knowledge (arcana, architecture and engineering, history, nobility and royalty, or religion), or Profession skills in any combination.

Feats: Investigator or Negotiator, proficiency with any crossbow.

Special: A justiciar must be appointed by a lawful religious or secular authority, typically a governing official of higher rank than the character.

Class Features

The following are class features of the justiciar.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Justiciars gain no additional weapon or armor proficiencies.

JUSTICIAR

HIT DIE: D8

Level	Base				Special
	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Aura of law, authority, lawkeeper
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	Sure shot
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Oathmark

Skills (4 + Int bonus per level): Appraise, Bluff, Craft, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, Knowledge (any), Profession, Sense Motive, Speak Language, Survival.

Aura of Law (Ex): The power of a justiciar's aura of law (see the *detect law* spell) is equal to her character level. If the justiciar has cleric or paladin levels, the power of her aura of law is equal to her character level +4.

Authority (Su): A justiciar serves a religious or legal code and has absolute authority (granted by a higher-ranking agent of that code) to enforce it. This means that if the justiciar catches criminals, she may judge them guilty (given sufficient proof) and order their execution, or do it herself if need be. Because the justiciar must act within the law, there is rarely any friction between her and established authorities other than disputes about jurisdiction and challenges from other forms of authority. (A religiously endorsed justiciar, for example, might come into conflict with secular governors who take exception to the execution of their subjects.) A justiciar may deputize others to aid her in her tasks, although she is responsible for their actions in her name.

As part of a Diplomacy and Intimidate check regarding matters of the law and her authority, a justiciar may exert her authority to grant herself a +4 bonus on these checks. This ability negates any need to carry a badge or writ of office, and is mainly used to convince those unfamiliar with the justiciar of her legal powers. For example, a justiciar can use this ability to check an angry mob intent on lynching a jailed prisoner, or convince a stubborn mayor that interfering with the justiciar's efforts is likely to anger the lord they both work for. Even against individuals who don't acknowledge his code of laws (such as thieves or warriors from other lands), the justiciar's fervor still grants these skill bonuses. She does not, however, gain these bonuses in situations where her code of laws would not apply or hold no bearing (like against monsters or savages). The GM ultimately adjudicates who the justiciar's authority applies against.

In addition, a justiciar's knowledge of her code is magically flawless, as if she were mentally reviewing a perfect copy of the code. If the source of the code changes (such as a decree from the church's high priest or a new law created by a king), she instantly knows it. This perfect knowledge means she

immediately recognizes any misquoting of the law (deliberate or accidental), and many justiciars consider it their duty to review the law book in remote settlements to make sure there are no errors in transcription or translation. A justiciar may always take 10 on Knowledge checks regarding the code, even when rushed or threatened.

Lawkeeper: Justiciars are not allowed to violate their code or any oath or contract they willingly agree to, nor can they go against the spirit of it while holding to the letter. A justiciar who willingly does so loses all prestige class abilities until she receives an *atonement* spell from her religious superiors or an official pardon from her secular superiors.

Sure Shot: A justiciar is skilled with crossbows. At 2nd level, she gains the ability to make a sure shot. A number of times per day equal to her class level, a justiciar may add her Charisma bonus on an attack roll made with a crossbow and deal 1 extra point of damage per justiciar level.

Oathmark (Su): This ability magically seals an oath or agreement between two people. The justiciar chooses two willing creatures and presses her authority upon them. By accepting her authority and stating their agreement on something (whether a verbal promise, written contract, treaty, or the like), the two creatures are magically linked so that if one breaks the agreement, the other knows it. The expiration of the link does not explain the exact nature of the betrayal, only that it has occurred. If one target dies, the link ends and the other target knows the other party is dead.

Direct and indirect attempts to violate the agreement end the link; swearing not to kill someone and then hiring someone else to do it is a violation, as is hiring assassins before the agreement with the orders to kill the person later. The link cannot penetrate other planes, areas where magic does not function, or spells such as *mind blank* that block mind reading. Once the interference ends, the link resumes and determines if the agreement has been broken. The other person in the link knows if the link is blocked, but not why.

The creature who breaks the agreement is cursed with a raised physical mark on the forehead (or other obvious place) indicating his willing violation of the agreement. The target takes a -4 penalty on Diplomacy and Gather Information checks when dealing with those who dislike oathbreakers. Magical attempts to remove the mark—such as via *remove curse*—require a successful caster level check (DC 10 + justiciar's character level). Even if the curse is removed, the other party in the agreement still knows of the betrayal. The mark is colored and textured as the justiciar chooses, and cannot be hidden with makeup, tattoos, or scars, although greater physical obstructions (such as a long wig or low-hanging hat) can conceal it.

This is a permanent divination effect. Creating a link is a standard action. The justiciar may use this ability up to three times per day.

NEW DIVINE SPELLS

Clerics of Abadar may prepare *word of recall* as a 5th-level spell if their designated sanctuaries are the temples of their home city; paladins may do so as a 4th-level spell under the same circumstances.

Abadar's followers have two additional spells only available to those of the faith.

ABADAR'S TRUTHTELLING

School enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]; **Level** cleric 1, paladin 1

CASTING

Components V, S, DF

EFFECT

Range touch

Target creature touched

DESCRIPTION

This spell functions like *zone of truth*, except as noted above.

Abadar's symbol appears above the head of the target so all present can see that he is affected by the spell.

BLESSING OF THE WATCH

School enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]; **Level** cleric 1, paladin 1

EFFECT

Duration 1 hour/level

DESCRIPTION

This spell functions like *bless*, except as noted above. It only works in the caster's home city, specifically referring to areas under the jurisdiction of the city watch. For example, if the watch patrols a shantytown outside the city walls but not the city's ruined subterranean tunnels, the spell works in the former area but not the latter.

NPC Priests of Abadar

The Church of Abadar possesses a vast network of zealous agents scattered across Golarion.

Poss (LG female human paladin 7) spends most of her days checking on frontier settlements, carrying news, and watching for disruptive influences that might harm her chosen communities. She loves tackling groups of bandits or other raiding monsters, as they usually have the kind of spoils that she can sell to an entrepreneur at a discount, and is a part-owner of several small roadside inns.

Black Olan (LN male human cleric 11) is a dour, middle-aged man who dresses all

in black except for a golden holy symbol. Easily recognized by his rancher-style hat with a wide, stiff brim, he preaches the need to obey laws, establish trade, and expand the reach of civilization. He has little use for druids, seeing them as obstacles to progress, and views hermits and other isolationists as a dying breed. He has no qualms about bashing skulls to protect settlements, and the only time he cracks a smile is at weddings.

Planar Allies

While the even-tempered Abadar has few enemies, there are a few individuals who have particularly distinguished themselves as friends of the faith. Abadar's herald, the golden titan known as the Lawgiver, is described fully on page 86.

Cobblehoof: This celestial hippogriff is tawny with a white head, and normally appears wearing a set of mithral breastplate barding (which is light enough that he can still fly when wearing it). He is battle-trained and accepts a rider without question. "Old Cob," as his friends call him, rarely speaks, but understands Common, Celestial, and several other languages. He loves eating deer or cattle, and presenting him with such a gift is a sure way to get on his good side. He has grown feisty in his old age and doesn't appreciate "youngsters" talking down to him or treating him like a mere beast. He is lawful neutral.

The Ghost of Malthus: This frail-looking, transparent man was once a wealthy priest of Abadar and now serves his god in death. When he was alive he frequently warned against overcrowding in cities and encouraged the faithful to found new settlements rather than pack in like rats. He sometimes appears in the mortal world as a harbinger of coming plague (intended as a warning to move out or improve living conditions) and as such is considered a "grim reaper" sort of figure by those who recognize him. He has all the abilities of a spectre except that he cannot create spawn; if summoned, turning him merely sends him back to Abadar's realm.





THE BLOODWORKS INCIDENT

9 Rova, 4707 AR

Try as I might, I'm afraid I'll never get the knack of rationing water. I'm already halfway through my supply, and unless I find a creek or an oasis tomorrow, it looks like I'll be spending at least the last leg of the trip very thirsty indeed. At least Solitaire's comfortable—I left my trusty mount with the Burn Riders. They've promised to care for her until I return, but I doubt I'll ever see the horse or the Burn Riders again. I miss her, but I sure as hell wasn't going to bring her into Urglin just so some hungry orc could eat her the second I took my eyes off her.

Why would anyone want to visit Urglin if they're not an orc or some hard-case Shoanti outcast? Answer's simple—I need a guide, and I need water. I should have bought a water-creation wand while I was in Kaer Maga, but the thought never occurred to me. As for the guide, it's become more and more clear to me that my treacherous wayfinder wants to send me into the Hold of Belkzen, and despite all evidence to the contrary, I'm not crazy enough to try to navigate the Hold without the advice of an expert. Urglin's primary inhabitants are orc and half-orc outcasts from Belkzen. I suspect that I'll be able to

find plenty of knowledgeable guides there, mercenaries who can be bought and who won't balk at the prospect of leading a Pathfinder through the Hold.

So, here I am, camped out in the lee of a hopefully abandoned bulette drift, waiting out the day so I can continue journeying through the night—both tricks I learned from my friend Tomast before I took my leave of the Sklar-Quah. Traveling at night seems so obvious now—it's a wonder I didn't die from heatstroke the moment I left Kaer Maga. Fortunately, the moon is full tonight, and there's plenty of light to see as I walk.

Seeking out bulette drifts, though—I never would have thought of that. The huge predators are well feared by the Shoanti, but they aren't as common here as stories might tell. Anyway, as it works out, pretty much everything else is afraid of the landsharks as well. According to Tomast, the things have enormous hunting grounds, and maintain dozens of drifts as lairs where they sleep out the day. He told me how to identify these crater-like nests, and how to judge how long it's been since the toothy inhabitant has been out by the condition of the droppings in the lowest part of the nest. You find an empty drift with moist

droppings, the bulette's still using the area and you want to be out of sight as quickly as you can. You find a drift with droppings that are dry as the ash and sand around them, the bulette's bound to return from his hunting circuit any time. But find one like the one I'm camped in now, with the droppings dry on the outside but still moist in the center, and you can be pretty sure that the nest's owner is near the opposite side of his hunting circuit, at least two days away. Since other predators avoid bulette drifts at all times, you can apparently sleep in one without worry that something's going to grab you.

So, yeah. I'm horseless, hunkered down in a bulette's toilet, parched and hungry, planning my first visit to a city filled with orcs where I'm planning on flashing around some money to hire a mercenary to guide me into the Hold of Belkzen.

There better be something really, really incredible at the end of this journey.

11 Rova, 4704 AR

What is there to say of Urglin, aside from the obvious? The place is a cesspool, a breeding ground for vice and hatred, and a constant annoyance and threat to the Shoanti. Pound for pound, there are more orcs to be found squatting in these ancient ruins than anywhere else on the Storval Plateau. Ironically, that makes the place one of the safest locations to interact with the ferocious savages, since their excessive numbers here give them a sense of safety—they so obviously outnumber other races, their natural instinct to defend their territory seems to be completely absent.

Unfortunately, my first impression of Urglin (Orc, I believe, for "Second Home"—no one seems to know what the city's original name might have been) was disappointing. Not for its size or scope, but simply because the rumors of it being a Thassilonian ruin are just that—rumors. The underlying architectural style of the ruins is distinctly more recent. Yet as I explored the city and did my best to avoid attracting the attention of the Bonecarvers (more on them later), my initial disappointment gave way to curiosity, for in several places, ruined walls bear marks and carvings that have a distinctly Shoanti feel. Was the city on which Urglin was built originally of Shoanti construction? Were the nomadic tribes of the Storval Plateau not always so nomadic? And if they were the original builders of this city, why did they abandon it?

Unfortunately, I don't have much time to spend investigating these curious mysteries—I need to find myself a guide and a wand as quickly as possible so I can be on my way before sunrise. I want to put as much distance as possible between me and here before I sleep. There's not much in the way of safe places for a lone wanderer to sleep in Urglin. There are plenty of taverns

and flophouses, but most cater almost exclusively to orcs and half-orcs—humans are welcome only if their reputation precedes them. As I have no intention of staying in town long enough to garner one, for now I'm holed up beneath a partially collapsed pillar, out of sight of foot traffic after having spent the better part of the early evening exploring the city.

The city itself covers more than three hundred acres of barren land, ruined even further by decades of misuse. Not a large city at all, by Korvosa's standards, but large enough that even after several hours of exploring, I feel I've only scratched the surface of what's going on here. As noted above, the orcs didn't build Urglin. At least, not most of it. They've shored up buildings here and there with bone and leather tents, crude stone walls, and in some places even lumber—so much lumber, in fact, that this more than anything else is proof that I'm on the northernmost edge of the Cinderlands. The city is split into five neighborhoods—Warmouth, Bonerattle, Ooze-front, Scabtown, and Pinkskin. I'm in Pinkskin right now—easily the smallest neighborhood, and by far the friendliest to humans. The majority of the folk living in the tents and yurts that make up Pinkskin are humans, in fact—outcast Shoanti, traveling mercenaries, and other doubtful folk who've thrown in their lot with the orcs. After spending several hours in the other neighborhoods, it's actually a relief to see so many grizzled and unfriendly, but unmistakably human, faces.

Warmouth's the largest neighborhood, and it's the first one a visitor to Urglin encounters. Comprising the southern third of the city, this is where the city's "nobility" hold court, and where you see the most of what pass for public buildings. Largest of them all is the Gray Donjon, Urglin's jail and the heart of its military. Other buildings include the seven Warlord Keeps, the War Tower, and the Rally Fields—all places I avoided.

After passing north through Warmouth, you come to a long, narrow neighborhood called Ooze-front, Urglin's primary marketplace. The district stretches the entire length of Urglin, running east-west and split down the middle by a rancid river bearing a charming moniker: Ooze. Urglin doesn't have an actual sewage system, but it does have this convenient river, and the Ooze didn't get its name accidentally. The orcs get the majority of their drinking water from where the Ooze flows into town along the western wall, and it's a wonder to me that disease isn't more rampant among them. They likely have resistances built up. In any case, I couldn't stand to remain within fifty feet of the riverbanks for the stench. Whatever the orcs don't want goes in the river, which grows more and more sluggish as it flows east, eventually miring in the stagnant reaches of Pusbubble Lake just outside the city walls. Two bridges cross the Ooze, one at the east end and one at the west. Since the eastern one goes right up over

the nearest shores of Pussbubble, I chose the western one and entered Bonerattle. That turned out to be a mistake.

Bonerattle's the religious core of Urglin. And since these orcs, like most orcs, worship the Rough Beast, Rovagug, Bonerattle's not a nice place to be. The buildings here are built entirely from bones, mostly from aurochs and other large animals, but certainly decorated with human remains. Walls consist of thick sheets of leather stretched over frames, with the notable exception of the Beast's House, the central cathedral of Rovagug. The church looks like a small hill carved to resemble an immense spider made of bones—the mouth of which, of course, serves as the building's entrance. Curious as I was, I knew better than to go inside. Yet even my brief observation attracted the attention of one of Bonerattle's guardians, a hulking orc priest of Rovagug bearing an immense axe and spiky metal armor. I found out later that these "Bonecarvers" are what passes for a city guard in Urglin. From what I've seen, though, they're really just bruisers and extortion artists dangerous enough to demand official recognition. The Bonecarver that accosted me asked my business in Bonerattle, and, thinking quickly, I responded in Orc: "I'm looking for my partner—he robbed me, left me for dead, and headed back here to sell what he stole. I'm hoping to catch him drunk so I can haul him back here for you to offer up to the Beast." (To be honest, my speech wasn't quite so eloquent, as the Bonecarver insisted on taking playful swings at me with his axe while I explained myself.) Once the message made it through, though, he seemed to like the concept of me offering up another "pinkskin" to the Beast, and said he'd accompany me into Pinkskin to collect my friend. I didn't really have a choice but to agree.

The smallest of the five neighborhoods, Pinkskin is wedged between Bonerattle and Scabtown along the northern central side of the city. Walking through its crowded lanes, I began to sweat as it became increasingly obvious to my Bonecarver escort that I didn't really know where I was going. Fortunately, my random wanderings took me by a small, rickety stall owned by a beardless dwarf. (Ever see a beardless dwarf? It's bizarre.) The dwarf panicked when he saw the Bonecarver approaching his stall, and he ran up to the orc priest babbling, "Sir! You didn't need to come down here! I'll be done by tomorrow at sunrise, I promise! Elves are delicate things—they don't take to taxidermy well, and I had to secure some special salts to preserve the color of her skin. She'll be done by dawn, I promise!" The poor idiot didn't get much more out, for whatever he was talking about enraged the Bonecarver. I was instantly forgotten, and the spectacle of the berserk orc priest hacking the unfortunate dwarf into pieces made for a convenient opportunity to slip away into the crowd.

The Bonecarver spent a few minutes looting the dwarf's stall and then headed back to Bonerattle, apparently having forgotten me altogether. Honestly, I'm not sure what was more unnerving—the speed with which he took that dwarf apart, or the speed in which things returned to normal after he was done.

In any case, breaktime is over. I'm going to finish off this entry and head into Scabtown. I've been hearing a lot of talk about the "games" starting in an hour at some place called "Ploog's Bloodworks"—might have to check that out first. Who could resist finding out what passes for a "game" in an orc city?

12 Rova, 4704 AR

In most cities, the marketplace is the loudest district, residential sections tend to be relatively quiet. Not so with Scabtown—the first thing I noticed about the place was the noise, a constant cacophony of crashes and screams as orcs

*The faithful of Rovagug
have little patience
for pinkskins.*



worked, played, and, presumably, loved (though how to tell which activity a given scream represented was beyond me). It didn't take long for me to determine that this wasn't a safe place for a human to linger, and I made up my mind to seek out my guide back in Pinktown.

But not before a visit to the Bloodworks.

The place was on everyone's lips, and the way Scabtown's set up, you can't miss it. It's easily the largest building in the district, old ruin or new orc shelter alike. It's an open-air arena, built from a combination of immense bones, logs, and hundreds of sheets of leather stretched over the ovoid outer walls. The thing looks like an enormous, bony leather egg half-buried in the stone, laying on its side and with a circular opening at the top to expose the fighting floor to the open sky. The entire structure's about two hundred feet wide and three hundred feet long, rising to a height of just over sixty feet. The circular opening in the roof is about eighty feet in diameter, surrounded by dozens of long thin banners marked with too many orc symbols to remember, although the symbol of Rovagug certainly is a common theme.

By the time I reached the Bloodworks, it was obvious that much of the district's noise was coming from within—a mix of cheers and the sound of combat. I'd been a little worried that, as a human, I wouldn't be let into the arena, but it was only a matter of a few coins paid to one of the bulky orc guards to get inside. The way he chortled at me as I entered was a little unsettling—I wasn't sure if he thought I was here to watch a match or to *be* the match.

Inside, the combined stink of sweat, blood, alcohol, and worse hit me like a hammer. A thin miasma of smoke and dirt hung in the air, but the place remained well lit by the profusion of torches burning on poles surrounding the central fighting pit. This pit was an earthen floor featuring a few odd rocky protrusions here and there. The place was a mess—it appeared I had arrived just as a previous gladiatorial match between two groups of warriors came to its gruesome, bloody end. The victors, a band of lumbering ogerkin clad in leather armor emblazoned with Rovagug's symbol, were busy pumping bloodstained weapons in the air or kicking around the remnants of their victims—a dozen freshly slain dwarves. The cheers in the place were nearly deafening—surrounding three-quarters of the fighting pit was a tiered set of scaffolding, to which hundreds of orcs clung wherever they could find space. The opposite side of the arena was more enclosed—a wooden fortress, almost. Two sweeping staircases spiraled down from the structure's roof, itself seeming to function as additional seating for important guests. Those stairs led right down to the arena floor, framing an enormous pair of doors. Orc guards dressed in spiky hide armor stood at attention on those stairs.

To my immediate left, I noticed a section of the surrounding scaffolding that seemed to be mostly taken

by half-orcs, rough-looking humans (mostly Shoanti), and a few grizzled dwarves. Assuming this must be the "Pinkskin" section of seating, I clambered up onto the lowest tier overlooking the fighting floor—no one seemed to take offense at my arrival, which I took as a good sign.

By this point, the ogerkin had quit the field, and an incredibly fat orc dressed in crimson and silver robes had finished descending the stairs and taken a position on a flat rock at the far end of the field. A three-foot-long spiny green lizard perched on his ample shoulders, and as the corpulent orc held up his bejeweled hands, the place fell silent. This, I had to assume, was none other than Ploog himself.

"And now," the orc began, his voice filling the interior of the Bloodworks with ease, "The Main Event. What you've all gathered here for! Thanks again to the Sons of Rovagug for the opening show, and proof that being a dwarf isn't all it's cut out to be!" To this, there was a short round of laughter and applause (except from the few dwarves to my left) before Ploog continued.

"My brothers, tonight I have a rare treat for you. As you're all aware, Old Vestatch woke from sleep on the point of a knife. Kurg Gutsar's got his fortress in Warmouth now, and along with Vestatch's body, he threw out quite a few slaves and servants. I had my boys gather up those who survived, and bring them before you today to die for your entertainment! BRING OUT THE MEAT, BOYS!"

Ploog spun on his heel to face his wooden castle, and a small door to the left of the larger gates opened. Out came eight men, mostly humans but two half-orcs as well. All were dressed in ratty-looking leather armor and had looks of desperation on their sooty faces. Three orc guards led them into the center of the fighting pit and lined them up on display, at which point I noticed that the half-orc closest to me, alone among his brethren, managed to look amused by the situation.

"There they are, my brothers. The last ragged remnants of House Vestatch. How are they to die?"

A ripple of murmurs and whispers shot through the crowd. A few moments later, an orc across the way cried out, "Make them spin!" Another shrieked out, "Let's have a duel!" followed by a cry of, "Let's see some pain!" The Bloodworks erupted into a cacaphony of shouting then, with various members of the audience crying out for Duels, Spins, and Pain. Ploog basked in the uproar for a few minutes until it became obvious that the crowd had settled on a choice.

"So they are to spin. Well and good," said Ploog as he turned to the guards. "Arm them and have one of them spin!" The crowd erupted into cheers again as one orc handed out rusty short swords, small hatchets, and battered wooden bucklers to the eight men. The other two orcs returned to the keep for a moment, then wheeled a large

metal device out onto the floor. It was a four-foot-diameter disk balanced upon a wooden beam—a wheel-shaped spinner with names carved into the pie-shaped wedges on its surface. As one orc led a nervous-looking slave up to the spinner, I could only make out a few of the names carved on its face: “Face-Gasher,” “Bonethunder,” “The Grinder,” and “Old Razorbite” among them. As the slave spun the wheel, the crowd fell silent. For half a minute, the only sound was the slowly decreasing “tick-tick-tick” of the spinner’s pointer glancing off the ridges that separated the various choices. When the spinner finally came to rest on a wedge, Ploog threw his hands into the air.

“Razorbite it is!” This brought a new cry of excitement up from the crowd, and I noticed how the expressions on most of the doomed slaves grew even more desperate. The slave who’d spun the wheel started pawing at his orc keeper, begging and pleading, and received a mailed fist to the jaw, knocking him out cold. One of the other slaves in the lineup, a sobbing human at the end closest to me, sank his rusty knife deep into his own neck. He was still tugging the wound open as he crumbled to his knees. The two sudden events brought an uproar of laughter from the crowd, and a smile to Ploog’s spit-flecked lips.

“Looks like it’s just going to be six against Razorbite after all. Very well! On with the game!” Moving nimbly for his size, Ploog clambered back up the stairs to take his seat of honor overlooking the battlefield below while his orcs followed. A few minutes passed, giving the audience time to jeer at the slaves on the field below. Five of them huddled together, but the sixth, that same half-orc I’d noticed earlier with the smirk, cast aside his Ploog-issued buckler, walked over to the suicide, and took up the dead man’s sword in his off-hand to compliment the hatchet he wielded in his other. Sounds of something big roaring and thrashing around inside the wooden castle

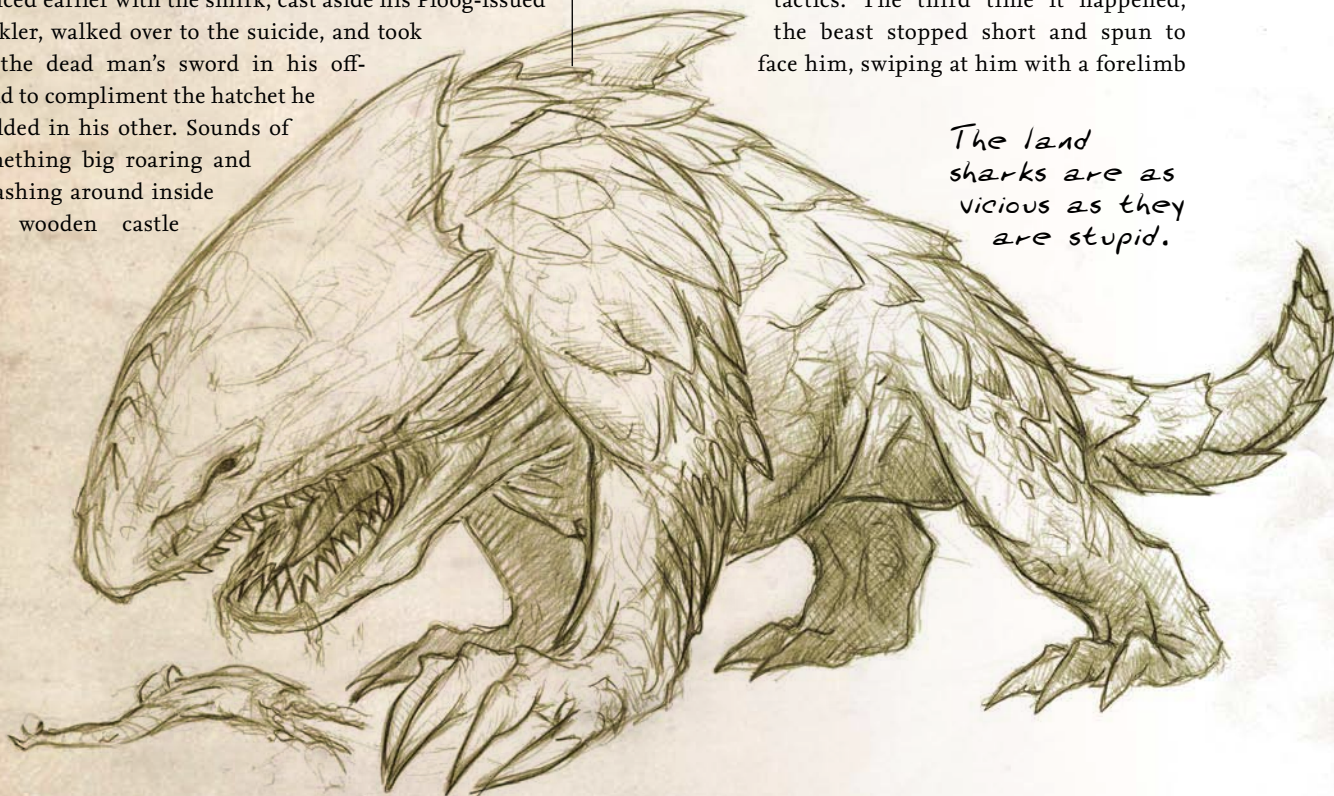
became apparent, and then Ploog’s bodyguards began turning a pair of winches to either side of the fat orc’s throne. Below, the massive doors began to open.

With a crash, the immense, battle-scarred monstrosity within threw the doors wide as it thundered onto the battleground, much to the delight of the crowd. The bulette was immense, thirty feet long if it was an inch, and combining the worst features of a shark and some horrific armored reptile.

The nature of what was to come became quickly apparent as the bulette leapt the twenty feet between the doors and the unconscious slave. It tore into him with a ravenous wrath—although it could have easily swallowed him whole, the monster seemed to take a particular delight in tearing him apart first. Its dorsal plate was standing at full height, indicating its excitement.

To their credit, the slaves held out a lot longer against the monster than I thought they would. Of course, they spent most of the battle running away from the bulette, who in turned seemed to be enjoying the chase. Now and then, its leaps would carry it close enough for its claws to lash out and maul a slave, giving the dwindling number of survivors a few moments to put some distance between themselves and the terror. Only the grinning half-orc seemed interested in fighting—his skill at dodging aside to take swipes at the monster’s flanks as it raced past him even started to garner some cheers from the audience, although they still seemed to be more interested in watching the bulette tear things up.

It didn’t take the bulette long to tire of the half-orc’s tactics. The third time it happened, the beast stopped short and spun to face him, swiping at him with a forelimb



The land sharks are as vicious as they are stupid.

capable of cutting a horse in half. The lucky half-orc dodged aside from the claws, but was still struck by the backswing of the creature's paw. Sent hurtling through the air, the half-orc landed with a grunt against the support pole on which I leaned, his head lolling back so that, for a moment, our eyes met.

It's impossible to say what I saw in those pain-clouded eyes—a ferocious need to survive, yes, but tempered with a calculated acceptance of the situation. Then his gaze shifted to my left. I turned to follow it and saw what he had seen: the support pillar just to my left had split at some time in the past, likely from a different titanic clash here in the Bloodworks. Ploog had apparently never bothered to have it fixed. Now it leaned outward at an angle, and its splintered tip protruded into the ring like a lance set to receive a charge.

I glanced back at the half-orc and was astonished to see him smiling through the pain. He mouthed two words to me—"Watch this!"—then sprang back to his feet to return to the fray. The bulette had pinned the last two slaves to the ground and was tearing them to ribbons, but its back was to us. The half-orc took aim, and with a single powerful throw, hurled his hatchet at the tender flesh that had been exposed by the bulette's extended dorsal plate. His aim was true; the hatchet buried itself in the monster's back, causing it to roar in pain and spin again to face him. The creature charged, a stampede of razor teeth and talons. The half-orc turned and ran directly at the leaning pole—at me—and I realized that I was sitting in the most dangerous seat in the house. So, apparently, did the other men seated in my area—with an eruption of profanity, they scrambled to the left and right, looking for cover. Not me. Maybe the half-orc and I had shared something in that brief moment, recognition of another born survivor, or maybe I'd just seen enough men torn limb from limb that day. I stood my ground and reached quickly into one of my pouches, drawing forth a handful of ground mica. Bringing it close to my mouth with both hands, I whispered an incantation, then blew.

An eruption of glittering dust exploded from my cupped hands, engulfing the charging bulette. The golden powder coated its body, causing it to glow brightly, and gathered thick in its tiny eyes, blinding the beast. Yet its momentum remained. I dove aside, down and into the pit, just as the creature made an ill-advised leap that I'm sure it thought would bring its four taloned legs down square on the fleeing half-orc. Instead, it brought its throat down on the jagged tip of the leaning scaffolding support.

What happened next is a blur. That the bulette hadn't been killed by its self-impalement—only angered—was a shock. Apparently those things are too stupid to even know when they're dead. The ensuing carnage undoubtedly saved my life, however—even though the entire audience, Ploog included, had doubtless seen me casting the spell, there wasn't time to do anything about it with a bleeding,

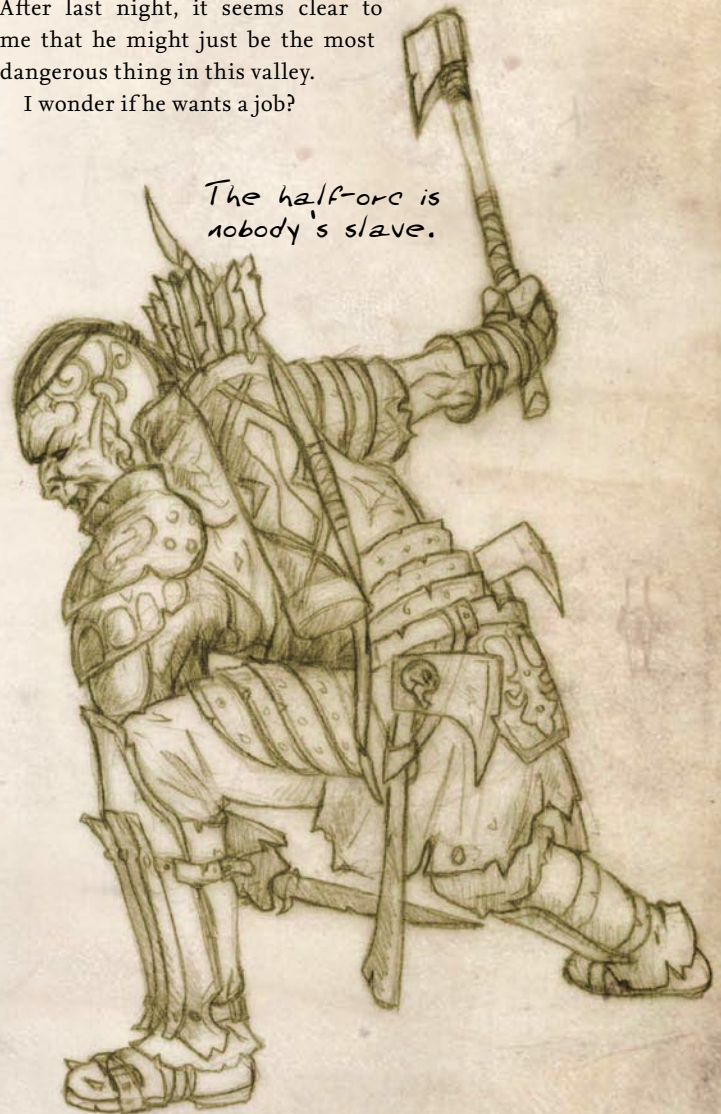
enraged, and blinded set of teeth attached to several tons of monster tearing its way through the audience. The bulette's talons allow it to burrow through the earth with shocking speed. Through crowds of orcs and wooden scaffolding, it goes even faster.

I felt a hand grab mine and tug me aside. It was the half-orc.

"Thanks for that," he said in a low, guttural voice. "But I'm afraid you just signed up for a whole lot of pain. We need to get out of the city. Come with me. I know a place we can hide in the hills east of town."

Our flight out of Scabtown and from there out of Urglin was swift, made easier by the fact that the news of the commotion at the Bloodworks was spreading fast and citizens were eager to get a free look at the carnage. By the time we made it to the gladiator's promised cave, a tiny but well-hidden nook at the edge of wide field of briars, the sun was rising, and we both collapsed into dreamless sleep. I woke often, starting at the slightest sound, but he seemed completely at peace, unconcerned with whatever dangers might threaten us. And why shouldn't he be? After last night, it seems clear to me that he might just be the most dangerous thing in this valley.

I wonder if he wants a job?



The half-orc is nobody's slave.



BESTIARY

SEVEN DAYS TO THE GRAVE

Heart racing, lid thrown clear, I sought the breast of the infernal where he slept.

“Empty. Empty save dust, black soot, and the droppings of rats.

“If not here, then wh—’ A scream choked my words. With eyes the size of silver crowns, Duristan stood shocked, stiff as a churchyard post. Drifting like foul breath, the Viscount of Amaans loomed stark and terrible, his Garund-yellow eyes piercing my fiancé’s soul, pinning him like so many victims past. With the jerking grace of a hunting spider, envious Galdyce was upon the man of breath and blood, the torch slipping from numb fingers, the crypt set to spinning as the flame fell.

“Not thinking to aim, my bolt took flight, but whether for the heart of the monster or the man I do not know.”

—Ailson Kindler, Galdyce’s Guest: Feast of the Nosferatu

Lurking terrors and subtle horrors haunt the pages of this month's *Pathfinder* Bestiary. Corrupt and diseased, these abominations sow all manner of afflictions: the putrescence of monstrous vermin, the dreaded curse of vampirism, and the blasphemous corruptions of the planes and dark gods. Whether spreading their foul diseases or drawn to feast upon the ravages of pestilence, any of these menaces might be drawn to Korvosa in the wake of blood veil's blistering rampage.

Serving as a stark counterpoint to this host of grotesqueries, another herald of the gods emerges: the lawbringer, harbinger of the god of cities. While Korvosa's plight is unlikely to attract this extraplanar guardian, wherever the march of civilization faces insurmountable odds, there Abadar's favored minion takes the field.

Thus, without divine intervention, Korvosa must look within for salvation, a burden likely to rest on the shoulders of the PCs alone.

Wandering Monsters

Korvosa keeps a pretty good handle on its dead. Within the Gray, the smallest of the city's seven districts, the resident priests of Pharasma cater to the needs of the deceased, keeping hundreds of graves and mausoleums orderly, undisturbed, and honored. But even the most attentive guardians can't be everywhere at all times.

Beneath the Gray, the dead of Korvosa don't always rot peacefully. The crypts of nobles and former rulers house unquiet spirits, tombs of ancient Shoanti warriors bristle with deathless warriors, and mass graves belch forth all manner of mindless horrors. And this it to say nothing of the immortal residents of the city's most ancient vaults, or terrors wandering up from the darkness below. Foul things fester among the bones of the city's deceased, and great honor and fantastic wealth might be had by those daring enough to brave the halls of the dead. The following descriptions explain several encounters on the Korvosa Crypts Random Encounters table in more detail.

Ghouls: Necrotic cannibals, ghouls are a constant menace in Korvosa's crypts and graveyards. An encounter with these ravenous undead might include six ghouls or, in rarer cases, three ghouls and a bloated, reeking ghast leader.

Hauntings: The party encounters some manifestation of the dead, lingering memory, or expression of evil. You can handle this however you like and should treat it as a spontaneous effect with the same abilities as a *major image*. Alternatively, if you have *Pathfinder* #2 or #6, you might customize this effect to be similar to the haunts detailed on pages 24 and 10, respectively.

Priests of Pharasma: The clergy of the goddess of fate makes regular patrols of many crypts and the boneyard around its cathedral. Aside from the unquiet dead, the clergy also combats the depredations of vandals,

THE FIENDS

This volume of *Pathfinder* introduces a new fiend to Golarion and opens the doors to the planes. These immortal terrors oppose the works of gods and angels. They are the multiverse's embodiments of corruption, evil, and destruction: devils, daemons, and demons.

Devil: The corruptions of deities and their fallen servants, devils concern themselves with the twisting of the mortal mind. Social fiends, they seek to warp and distort that which is pure into fonts of depravity. Their victims are faith, politics, and philosophy—those who succumb to them become betrayers and traitors and heretics.

Daemon: The bane of mortality, daemons seek to harvest and consume life itself. Through death and the dispersion of souls they claim power, strengthening their own ability to sow ruin or the nefarious powers of those with whom they bargain.

Demon: Primordial embodiments of annihilation, demons undo all that can be destroyed. Whether through gross manipulations of the flesh, orgies of unrestrained vice, or unbridled savagery, they hate and devastate all they encounter, including other demons.

KORVOSA CRYPTS RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

d%	Encounter	Avg. EL	Source
01–03	1 caryatid column	3	<i>Tome of Horrors</i> 33
04–13	1d6 spider swarms	3	MM 239
14–18	1d10 giant maggots	4	<i>Pathfinder</i> #8 84
19–21	Rot grubs	4	<i>Tome of Horrors</i> 222
22–31	1d12 zombies	4	See description
32–36	1 crypt thing	5	<i>Tome of Horrors</i> 50
37–48	Ghouls	5	See description
49–57	1d6 imps	5	MM 56
58–62	1d6 derro	6	MM 49
63–64	1 revenant	6	<i>Pathfinder</i> #2 90
65–71	1d6 wights	6	MM 255
72–76	Yellow mold	6	DMG 70
77–81	1 spectre	7	MM 232
82–85	1d4 wraiths	7	MM 258
86–89	1d6 vampire spawn	8	MM 253
90–91	1 mohrg	8	MM 189
92–94	Haunting	—	See description
95–100	Priests of Pharasma	—	See description

vagabonds, and other villains who might disrespect the dead. PCs might have a hard time convincing Pharasma's devout that they aren't such miscreants.

Zombies: A group of human zombies patrols these sepulchral halls, either acting as they did in life or violently attracted to the PCs' noise, light, or brains. If you'd prefer something more monstrous, you might employ two bugbear zombies, a minotaur zombie, or a host of equal-EL skeletons.

DAEMON, LEUKODAEMON

Stalking upon a pair of chipped hooves, this man-shaped beast of bones and tattered flesh grips a longbow like a ready hunter. Where its head should be rests a sun-bleached horse's skull, while behind it hang filthy, moth-eaten wings. Upon its festering flesh crawl wormy things, squirming and roiling amid the blisters and necrotic symptoms of some terrible, rotting affliction. A cloud of flies surrounds the diseased-looking thing, their buzzing a morbid harmony to its stride's bony clatter.



LEUKODAEMON

CR 9

Always NE Large outsider (daemon, evil, extraplanar)

Init +11; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., telepathy 100 ft.; **Listen** +20, **Spot** +20

Aura infectious aura

DEFENSE

AC 25; **touch** 16, **flat-footed** 18
(+7 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size)

hp 95 (10d8+50)

Fort +12, **Ref** +14, **Will** +12

DR 10/good; **Immune** acid, death effects, disease, and poison;

Resist cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 19

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee 2 claws +13 (1d6+4) and
bite +8 (1d8+2)

Ranged +2 *composite shortbow* (+4 Str) +19/+14 (1d8+6 plus
contagion shot)

Special Attacks breath of flies, contagion shot, *summon daemon*

TACTICS

Before Combat Upon sighting foes, leukodaemons take to

the air, summoning other leukodaemons and readying their bows for a strike from above.

During Combat Far less effective in melee combat than at a distance, leukodaemons prefer to stay out of reach of their enemies, using their flight and speed to make repeated use of their breath of flies and contagion shot abilities. Leukodaemons favor using their contagion shot to spread cackle fever and slimy doom, due to the relative swiftness of their effects.

Morale Intimately familiar with the workings of the diseases they spread, leukodaemons flee to a safe distance after peppering dangerous enemies with arrows, waiting for their diseases to weaken their foes before returning to finish the fight.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 24, **Con** 20, **Int** 16, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +10; **Grp** +18

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (short bow)

Skills Heal +18, Knowledge (religion) +16, Knowledge (the planes) +16, Knowledge (two others) +16, Listen +20, Move Silently +20, Search +16, Spot +20, Survival +18

Languages Abyssal, Draconic, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

ECOLOGY

Environment any**Organization** solitary**Treasure** standard**Advancement** 11–20 HD (Large), 21–30 HD (Huge)**Level Adjustment** —

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Breath of Flies (Su) Once per minute, a leukodaemon can unleash a cloud of thousands of corpse-bloated, biting black flies. 20-foot cone, damage 8d6 slashing, Reflex DC 20 half. Those who take any damage are also sickened for 1 minute. In addition, the flies linger for 1d4+1 rounds after being breathed forth. This buzzing swarm manifests as a 20-foot-square cloud centered on the cone's original point of origin. This cloud has the same effects as a *stinking cloud*. The cloud has no effect until 1 round after the leukodaemon breathes.

The save DCs are Constitution-based.

Contagion Shot (Su) Any arrow a leukodaemon fires—either from its own bow or any other—is tainted with disease. If a creature is damaged by a leukodaemon's arrow, it must make a DC 19 Fortitude save or be affected as if by the spell *contagion*. The save DC is Constitution-based.

A leukodaemon can manifest arrows at will and never runs out of ammunition.

Infectious Aura (Su) Diseases are more virulent in the presence of a leukodaemon. All creatures within 50 feet of a leukodaemon take a –5 penalty on all Fortitude saves against disease. This penalty is equal to the leukodaemon's Constitution modifier.

Summon Daemon (Sp) Once per day, a leukodaemon can attempt to summon another leukodaemon with a 35% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 3rd-level spell.

Harbingers of plagues and daemons of disease, leukodaemons spread sickness among all who fall beneath the shadow of their black wings. Servants of Apollyon, the Horseman of Pestilence—one of the foul masters of Abaddon and among the most powerful of archdaemons—leukodaemons scour the planes at the behest of their dark master, claiming souls in his dreaded name. Among the greatest bowmen of the Lower Planes, the skull-headed fiends strike like the plagues they spread: silent, sudden, and deadly.

Most leukodaemons stand 14 feet tall, yet being composed mostly of dust, withered flesh, dried bones, and the buzzing of flies, weigh little more than 200 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Like their apocalyptic master, leukodaemons are actively destructive beings. They seek to murder all living creatures, claiming each life in the name of their foul daemon liege. Although their endless supplies of plague-ridden arrows could fell whole cities, the daemons' perverse affinities with disease and enjoyment of slow

DAEMONS OF THE APOCALYPSE

Seated upon thrones of corpses, the four lords of the daemon race covetously eye the aimless souls of the Material Plane, plotting cataclysms and atrocities to harvest them for their own. They are the Four Horsemen, the harbingers of the end, the daemon lords of apocalypse. Titles claimed and endlessly squabbled over by the most powerful of daemonkind, the bearers of these foul crowns are feared as the most terrible of fiends by some, honored as avenging angels by others, but known as doom to all. Serving as the emissaries and sentinels of each Horseman are the deacons, daemons who obey not one greater daemon, but the title of Horseman alone: leukodaemons, the deacons of disease; purrodaemons, the deacons of destruction; meladaemons, the deacons of wasting; and thanadaemons, the legendary, black-cloaked deacons of death.

suffering lead them to prefer sowing the seeds of sickness and watching an ailment grow from a minor infection to a full-fledged epidemic.

In a sense, leukodaemons have no heads. They wear bleached skulls, typically those of equines in honor of the Horseman of Pestilence. In lands where horses are unknown, though, these daemons often take the skulls of other beasts of burden or simply those of more fearsome creatures. They can remove or change their skulls as easily as other races change clothes, the seat of their senses being vested within a blistered nodule hidden beneath the bony shield.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Leukodaemons are members of a servile caste of daemonkind known as deacons, or “destroyers,” fiends fundamentally bound to the service of the Four Horsemen, the lords of the daemon race. Each Horseman commands obedience from one race of deacon, a vast personal army sworn to serve an archdaemon for as long as it holds the title of Horseman. Should the Horseman be killed or otherwise dethroned, all subservient deacons know of the vacuum in power or successful coup, either immediately allying with the newly ascended Horseman or indulging in their typically short-held freedom.

Currently, leukodaemons serve the archdaemon Apollyon, Prince of Locusts and Horseman of Pestilence. From the Throne of Files upon the bleeding wastes of Abaddon, the archdaemon devises world-scouring plagues to increase his power beyond that of his fellow fiendish rulers, sending his armies of deacons across the planes to wreak his terrible will. When not acting in direct service of their dark lord, leukodaemons haunt the Plaguemere, a vast swamp of festering pox pits and withered forests surrounding the Throne of Flies.



DAUGHTER OF URGATHOA

What once might have been a woman now towers as a monstrosity of exposed muscle, twisting marrow, and hellish majesty. Flesh worn like a tattered gown and bone warped into gruesome weapons, her rent gut spills a wave of hardened fluids, dried bowels, and supremely powerful muscles into a single tentacle-tail, propelling the feminine horror forward.

DAUGHTER OF URGATHOA

CR 8

Always NE Large undead

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +17, Spot +17

Aura desecrate (20 ft. radius)

DEFENSE

AC 23; touch 12, flat-footed 20
(+3 Dex, +11 natural, -1 size)

hp 104 (11d12+33)

Fort +7, **Ref** +7, **Will** +11

Immune undead immunities

OFFENSE

Speed fly 40 ft. (perfect)

Melee great claw +13 (1d8+9 plus diseased touch) and
claw +11 (1d6+5 plus diseased touch) and
tail +11 (1d8+5)

Special Attacks diseased touch, spells

Spells (CL 6th, +13 melee touch)

3rd—*animate dead*^D, *contagion* (DC 16), *dispel magic* (DC 16)

2nd—*death knell* (DC 15), *hold person* (DC 15) (2), *spiritual weapon*^D

1st—*cause fear*^D (DC 14), *entropic shield*, *inflict light wounds*
(DC 14), *protection from good*

0—*detect magic*, *guidance*, *inflict minor wounds* (DC 13),
resistance, *virtue*

D domain spell; **Domains** Death, War

TACTICS

Before Combat In the moments before zealously charging into battle, a daughter of Urgathoa casts beneficial spells upon herself, waiting until the last moment to cast *spiritual weapon* to summon a crackling black scythe into existence.

During Combat A daughter of Urgathoa delights in spreading disease, either using her diseased touch attack or *contagion*. If aided by minions, she uses her spells to aid her allies and confound her enemies from a distance before tearing her way into melee.

Morale While some daughters of Urgathoa see the wisdom in escaping to thwart their dark goddess's foes another day, more fanatical ones believe themselves to be invincible and fight until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 27, **Dex** 17, **Con** —, **Int** 19, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 17

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +17

Feats Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Multiattack, Power Attack

Skills Balance +12, Bluff +10, Concentration +17, Escape Artist +10,
Intimidate +12, Knowledge (religion) +14, Listen +17, Move Silently
+10, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +11, Spot +17, Tumble +10

Languages Common, Abyssal or Infernal, and two others.

SQ great claw, unholy fortitude

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary or cult (with 2d8 clerics of Urgathoa)

Treasure double standard

Advancement by character class; **Favored Class** cleric

Level Adjustment —

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Great Claw (Ex) When a follower of the goddess of disease is transformed into a daughter of Urgathoa, she grows a massive and terrible weapon. This great claw typically takes the form of some signature weapon or distinctive feature (not necessarily a claw), grown huge, lethal, and incorporated into the daughter's foul form. A great claw is treated as an evil-aligned weapon and (at the time of the creature's creation) she chooses if it deals bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage.

Desecrate Aura (Su) A daughter of Urgathoa is surrounded by a 20-foot aura that functions as the *desecrate* spell. In addition to those in this aura, the daughter is constantly affected by the benefits of *desecrate* (already factored into

her statistics). If dispelled, she can renew this effect as a standard action.

Diseased Touch (Su) Any time a daughter of Urgathoa strikes with her great claw or claw attack, she can choose to afflict the damaged opponent with a disease, as per the spell *contagion*. The target is still allowed to make a DC 16 Fortitude save to resist the disease, as per normal.

Spells A daughter of Urgathoa casts spells as a 6th-level cleric. The save DCs are Wisdom-based.

Unholy Fortitude (Ex) Daughters of Urgathoa gain bonus hit points equal to their Charisma modifier times their Hit Dice, and a bonus on Fortitude saves equal to their Charisma modifier.

Within the church of the goddess of undeath, few more coveted stations exist than daughter of Urgathoa. Yet no high priest can bestow the title and no living worshiper can take the role. Rather, daughters of Urgathoa are selected by the fickle goddess herself, chosen from her most zealous and accomplished priestesses and only at the moment of their deaths. When such fanatics expire, the Pallid Princess takes note, binding soul to skin and warping the dead flesh into a form of terrible majesty. Blessed with power over death and disease, these adopted daughters of the Pallid Princess take positions of revered authority within their mistress's church, inspiring the goddess's minions to new heights of fanaticism and new depths of corruption.

No two daughters of Urgathoa look alike. As distinct from one another as they were in life, the bodies of these transformed priestesses writhe with new appendages of misshapen organs and sharpened bone. In every case, however, the undead thing's body shows some element of the woman it once was, with reminiscent features, favored accoutrements, or distinctive effects now mimicked in flesh. Without fail, one hand undergoes a terrible transformation, becoming huge and pocked or taking the shape of a weapon favored in life.

Most daughters of Urgathoa stand nearly 15 feet tall and weigh more than 600 pounds.

ECOLOGY

As with most undead, the transformation into a state of unlife removes daughters of Urgathoa from the natural workings of the world. Yet, although they have no need nor ability to eat, sleep, reproduce, or otherwise participate in nature's cycle, the works of the Pallid Princess's resurrected favorites can often be seen in the regions in which they dwell. With a new form, abilities drawing from the might of the goddess herself, and a not-altogether-unfounded sense of invincibility, daughters of Urgathoa commit blasphemous acts and plot unspeakable atrocities. The inception of terrifying plagues, pogroms of undead against the living, and the

creation of evil artifacts typify their least-imaginative plots, and with whole cults of fanatical followers at their command, their foul claws can scour entire regions.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Even after their transformations into things of pestilence and dead flesh, daughters of Urgathoa remain social beings. In life, the priestesses most likely to be adopted by the goddess typically surround themselves with fanatical cults, most of which see their leaders' transformation as a glorious inevitability. The resurrection of a daughter of Urgathoa often strengthens such cults, as the goddess's devout travel far to serve those touched by their unholy lady. Thus, the change means little for those so blessed, being revered where they were once revered, and shunned where they were once shunned.

DAUGHTERS OF URGATHOA

As Urgathoa's adopted daughters typically work in secrecy, none can say how many of these flesh-warped horrors currently plot against the unsuspecting souls of Golarion. Noted here are merely a handful of those favorites of the Pallid Princess known to plot over the lands of Avistan.

Andaisin the Reaper: A soon-to-be resurrected daughter of Urgathoa, Andaisin's still-mortal hand guides the creation of the blood veil plague afflicting the Varisian city of Korvosa. The creation of such an effective and lethal new disease serves as the crowning achievement of years of mercilessness and disease-crafting. Her inhumanity having drawn the eye of the Pallid Princess, with her death Andaisin will become a daughter of Urgathoa, blessed with a body of frozen flesh and a claw of scything bone.

The Gluttons of Steeplespine: Two daughters of Urgathoa dwell within the grotesque cathedral of Urgathoa in Absalom. Forgoing leadership of the city's powerful faith, the obese Daughter Endroma of Tolguth and slug-like Daughter Nisvyraka the Goreflay lie encysted within the cathedral's ancient catacombs, keeping, collecting, and poring over centuries of the Pallid Princess's most unholy writings. From their rotted lips knowledge of long-forgotten plagues, secrets of primal unlife, and the foulest of the Mother of Rot's magic passes to cults far-flung and foul, tainting the world anew.

The Wight Mother of Isger: Tentacled and monstrously beautiful, the unliving martyr Ilcayna Alonnor has led the Pallid Princess's cult in Isger for more than a century. Having sacrificed herself to an uncontrolled legion of wights, the young priestess spontaneously resurrected and led the undead to consume the entire hamlet of Finder's Gulch—including the living members of the cult of Urgathoa there. Today, the Wight Mother's almost entirely undead cult plagues western Isger, a mutated and magically altered legion of deathless minions following the direction of her massive clawed hand.



GIANT FLY

Scraping its barbed forelimbs across its head's filth-encrusted hairs, this gigantic fly stares mindlessly with terrible multifaceted eyes. It moves in jerks and twitches, wings buzzing unnervingly as it dances in anticipation of impending corpses to feed upon.

GIANT FLY CR 1

Always N Medium vermin

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen -2, Spot +2

DEFENSE

AC 13; touch 13, flat-footed 10
(+3 Dex)

hp 15 (2d8+6)

Fort +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** -2

Immune disease, mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

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

Melee bite +2 (1d6+disease)

Special Attacks disease

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 17, **Con** 16, **Int** —, **Wis** 7, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +2

Skills Spot +2, Survival -2*

SQ disease carrier

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate or tropical marshes

Organization solitary or swarm (5-20)

Treasure none

Advancement 3-5 HD (Medium), 6-11 HD (Large), 12-20 (Huge)

Level Adjustment —

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease Carrier (Ex) Although giant flies are immune to disease, they become carriers of any contact or injury disease they are exposed to. They do not suffer the effects of the disease, but they can pass it on to any creature they bite. All giant flies have a disease randomly determined by rolling 1d6 on the following chart. See page 292 of the DMG and "Plague and Pestilence" in this volume for more details on the following diseases.

d6	Disease
1	Mindfire
2	Shakes
3	Bonecrusher fever
4	Sleeping sickness
5	Slimy doom
6	Filth fever

Skills Giant flies have a +4 racial bonus on Spot checks.

*They also have a +4 racial bonus on Survival checks to orient themselves.

GIANT MAGGOT

Rolling upon powerful spines and folds of its own corpse-white bulk, this huge, bile-slick maggot blindly gnashes a maw full of spiny ridges, devouring all that falls within its path.

GIANT MAGGOT

CR 1/2

Always N Medium vermin

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen -3, Spot -3

DEFENSE

AC 9; touch 9, flat-footed 9

(-1 Dex)

hp 7 (1d8+3)

Fort +5, **Ref** -1, **Will** -3

Immune disease, mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., burrow 5 ft.

Melee bite +0 (1d6)

Special Attacks regurgitate

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 8, **Con** 16, **Int** —, **Wis** 5, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +0; **Grp** +0

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate or tropical marshes

Organization solitary or swarm (2-40)

Treasure none

Advancement 2-3 HD (Medium), 4-12 HD (Large), 13-20 HD (Huge)

Level Adjustment —

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Regurgitate (Ex) Once per day, a giant maggot can vomit the putrid contents of its stomach upon one creature within 5 feet. The target must make a DC 12 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1 minute (or until the target spends a full-round action with at least a gallon of water to wash off the vomit).

Grown to monstrous size within the fetid bowels of Golarion's most disgusting swamps, giant flies—and their monstrously bloated maggot young—reach sizes of up to 7 feet from their barbed rear legs to their filth-sucking proboscises. Although dozens of different types of monstrous flies have been recorded, the most common of Avistan's varieties appear as gigantic, bloodthirsty gadflies. The sickening drone of these disgusting vermin's flight taints the air as they circle sites of carnage and decay in search of smaller prey and spilled blood.

ECOLOGY

Giant flies follow a lifecycle similar to their minute and infinitely less grotesque mundane cousins. As the hundreds of eggs laid by a female fly hatch, giant maggots are born. These ravenous larvae devour all they can, yet where the centimeter-long maggots of most flies must make do with dead flesh, giant maggots possess the strength and mobility to hunt more lively prey. Rather than flesh-scraping mouth hooks like those of smaller species, giant maggots possess maws filled with rows of spiny ridges, capable of gnawing through even the thickest hide.

Those giant maggots that survive and flourish—for approximately 2 weeks for most breeds—seek shelter or

burrow into soft earth to pupate. After a matter of days, gigantic flies emerge, ready to feed, mate, and spawn more of their nauseating ilk.

While normal flies parasitically subsist alongside larger animals, giant flies are consummate predators. Forgoing the stealth of their smaller brethren, these monstrous insects are capable of overpowering creatures up to the size of a horse. Although the numerous varieties of giant fly have vastly differing tastes—some using scissor-like maws to chomp away at live flesh while others favor a slurry of predigested dead meat—these mindless hunters attack any fleshy creature they encounter, regardless of size or apparent strength.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

Far too large to live among the filth of animals or men, giant flies flourish in places of natural rot or widespread ruin. Bogs and dense marshes sometimes host small swarms of giant flies. Mass numbers of bodies left to rot as the result of a large battle, massacre, or natural disaster sometimes lead to explosions in giant fly populations near such sites, with corpses still serving as a favorite food of the monstrous insects. Unsurprisingly, some of the Outer Planes' more horrific extremes serve as fetid paradises for giant flies and their larvae, most notably the expanse of Abaddon known as Sheol, the Common Grave, which is home to sky-darkening swarms of the horrifying vermin.

VARIANT GIANT FLIES

Although each of the thousand species of flies do not have their own monstrous counterparts, there are still a number of regional variations between types of giant fly. Listed below are three of the more common ones.

Giant Housefly: Where the giant gadfly uses scissor-like mouthparts to obtain its liquid meal, the giant housefly dissolves its food by retching an acidic slurry over its meal and lapping up the dissolved nutrients. These giant flies are in all ways exactly like the typical version, but their bite attacks deal an additional 1d4 points of acid damage.

Giant Hoverfly: As their name suggests, giant hoverflies have great control over their aerial movement, having a flight speed of 70 feet and perfect maneuverability. Most giant hoverflies resemble giant wasps or bees, but are typically less deadly than those overgrown pests.

Giant Tsetse Fly: With long legs and a pronounced proboscis, the giant brown tsetse fly can be found in various tropical regions, particularly throughout the southern Mwangi Expanse. These bloated, mosquito-like vermin spread only sleeping sickness with their bites, although—like typical giant flies—they might spread other diseases as well.



LAWGIVER

The titanic golden statue of a great knight looms here, four times taller than even the most intimidating warrior. Bearing a gigantic hammer almost too large for it to hold, the sculpture depicts thick, rigid armor, but no details beneath, hiding the identity of the wearer. Upon its breast gleams a golden relief of runes, a key, and a shining city.

LAWGIVER

Always LN Gargantuan construct (extraplanar)

Init +1; **Senses** all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness; Listen +19, Spot +26

CR 15

DEFENSE

AC 34; touch 7, flat-footed 33
(+1 Dex, +27 natural, -4 size)

hp 159 (18d10+60)

Fort +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +13

Defensive Abilities construct traits; **DR** 15/chaos; **Immune** acid, electricity, flanking, rust effects; **Resist** cold 10, fire 10; **SR** 25

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 60 ft. (poor)

Melee *Gavel of Abadar* +20/+15/+10 (4d6+14) or
2 slams +20 (1d8+11)

TACTICS

Before Combat The Lawgiver is a cautious opponent and, if given time, takes several moments to judge the battlefield before entering combat. In most cases, it prefers to let battle come to it, using its freeze ability to appear as nothing more than a giant statue, then coming to devastating life once Abadar's enemies surround it.

During Combat The Lawgiver attacks with the *Gavel of Abadar*, pounding a single opponent until dead before moving onto another enemy. If possible, it pursues its foes, using its wings to mete out judgment wherever the foes of law might flee.

Morale The herald of the god of law fights until its master commands it to retreat or it is destroyed. Even if killed, though, the herald reappears at Abadar's side 1 day later.

STATISTICS

Str 32, **Dex** 12, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 24, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +13; **Grp** +36

Feats Alertness, Awesome Blow, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun, Power Attack

Skills Appraise +12, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +12, Knowledge (local) +12, Knowledge (religion) +12, Listen +19, Sense Motive +24, Spot +16

Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal
SQ freeze, golden body, herald of Abadar, wings of Abadar

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary

Treasure none

Advancement 19–26 HD (Gargantuan), 27+ (Colossal)

Level Adjustment —

SPECIAL ABILITIES

All Around Vision (Su) The Lawgiver is aware of everything around it at all times, providing it with a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks. The Lawgiver cannot be flanked.

Freeze (Ex) The Lawgiver can hold itself so still it appears to be a gigantic, golden statue. An observer must succeed on a DC 25 Spot check to notice the Lawgiver is really alive.

Gavel of Abadar The *Gavel of Abadar* is a Gargantuan warhammer

that is treated as though it had the axiomatic weapon quality. Aside from dealing the usual +2d6 points of damage to creatures of chaotic alignment, three times per day, as a standard action, the Lawgiver can touch a creature with the hammer. Any creature touched in this way is affected by the spells *cure serious wounds*, *neutralize poison*, *remove blindness/deafness*, *remove curse*, *remove disease*, and *remove paralysis*, as if cast by an 18th-level cleric. If the Gavel of Abadar is ever removed from the Lawgiver's hands, the herald can summon the weapon back to its hand as a standard action.

Golden Body (Ex) The Lawgiver is a creature of living gold and blessed steel, granting it immunity to acid, electricity, critical hits, and rusting effects (such as the *rusting grasp* spell or a rust monster's rust attack).

Herald of Abadar (Su) The Lawgiver can be summoned by clerics of Abadar using the spell *gate* or *greater planar ally*, despite any restrictions of those spells.

See in Darkness (Su) The Lawgiver can see in darkness of any kind, even that created by spells like *deeper darkness*.

Wings of Abadar (Su) As a free action, the Lawgiver can manifest a pair of gigantic golden wings. These wings grant the herald a flight speed of 60 feet with perfect maneuverability. The Lawgiver can dismiss its wings at will. Alternatively, as a standard action, the Lawgiver can take the form a two-headed golden eagle, one of Abadar's many symbols. The Lawgiver retains its normal hit points and bonus on Spot in this form, but otherwise has the same statistics and abilities of an eagle (MM 272).

Abadar's herald is the Lawgiver, a golem-like creature of gold and consecrated steel. Massive and powerful, the divine emissary appears as a 25-foot-tall giant in elaborate golden armor and bearing a titanic warhammer. Standing still, the Lawgiver appears as a fantastic statue crafted in honor of the god of law. When active, its steps shake the earth and the blow of its legendary hammer—the god-forged *Gavel of Abadar*—can shatter castle walls. Stoic, infinitely patient, and entirely dedicated to the Keeper of the First Vault, the Lawgiver is like an intelligent golden volcano: mountainous and indomitable, yet capable of exacting incredible destruction. This sentinel of civilization appears where the forces of chaos threaten to undo the works of lawful communities and hinder progress's inexorable march.

Terse in nature, the herald of Abadar restricts communication to an unusual limit. Although the giant can speak several languages, it has only ever been heard speaking in numbers and measurements or—more frequently—in direct quotes from Abadar's holy writings, the *Order of Numbers* or the *Manual of City Building*. Encyclopedic in its knowledge of the god of cities's holy texts, this restriction rarely prevents the Lawgiver from making its intentions known.

ECOLOGY

A unique titan of living metal, the Lawgiver has no apparent need for food, drink, rest, or other mortal comforts. On most of its rare appearances, the creature's stoicism and stillness lead even devout worshipers of the Judge of the Gods to mistake the giant for a reward from their god or simply one temple's ostentatious display of piety. More than once, needy clerics or thieving heretics have attempted to chip away parts of the golden herald or melt it down entirely, with the Lawgiver's reaction varying depending on the individual assaulting. While thieves are typically crushed beneath the giant's heel, in some cases the Lawgiver seems to have no purpose other than to allow a struggling or robbed temple to sheer off a few hundred coins' worth of gold so it might continue its work. The titan always seems to heal lost pieces when seen next, but it never grants those who summon it permission to take gold from its body.

HABITAT & SOCIETY

The Lawgiver goes where powerful worshipers of Abadar call him and where the god of cities and law orders. While a literal giant on the battlefield, often the mere suggestion of the Lawgiver's prowess or the Master of the First Vault's displeasure is enough to avert a disruptive conflict completely.

Amid the harrowing accounts of Gojan the Sharp's trials in Numeria, volume 3 of the *Pathfinder Chronicles* relates a widely debated episode involving a mysterious golden statue that numerous modern theologians identify as the herald of Abadar. According to Gojan, in the fearful night prior to what seemed to be an inevitable slave revolt, a massive and magnificent statue appeared upon the Sable Barrow, one of the hills overlooking the city of Chesed. Holding a gigantic hammer and posed as if ready to smite the city, the mysterious statue bore the symbol of the Judge of the Gods upon its breast, looming like some divine threat. The figure baffled slave and master alike, ultimately leading many of the superstitious rebels to reconsider their murderous uprising. The mysterious statue disappeared four nights later, but within a week's time Gojan bore witness to the fifth Barrow Siege, wherein savage hordes from the west sought to raze Chesed. The city barely resisted, winning a costly victory that would have been unimaginable in the wake of a crippling internal revolt.

On several occasions in the past century, followers of the god of law have reported seeing the Lawgiver wandering remote places, from ancient caves to deep underwater trenches, seemingly searching for something. Neither Abadar nor the golden titan ever speak of these travels, leading to widespread conjecture and debate among the faith of the Gold-Fisted.

NOSFERATU

Intense and pale as death, the somberly dressed man stands rigidly, his arms crossed over his chest, his eyes wide and intense, and his nose wrinkled in an expression of extreme distaste. Yellow teeth bared, his overly large incisors jut forward, not like those of a man, but of a filth-hungry vermin.

Vampirism is a living curse. Since before the earliest of elven records, accounts of the bloodthirsty dead stain the growth of civilization. Yet nothing that counts its age in millennia remains the same forever. Deemed the progenitor of modern vampirism by some scholars, the curse of the nosferatu lacks the elegance and romance of its modern form, harkening to a forgotten age of verminous hunger and eerie powers. Granted immortal life but not immortal youth, nosferatu are the withered, embittered corpse-sires of vampirekind. In their ancient memories they bear the cruelty of epochs past and age-spanning plots devoid of the modern affliction of morality.

CREATING A NOSFERATU

“Nosferatu” is an acquired template that can be added to any humanoid or monstrous humanoid creature (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

A nosferatu uses all the base creature’s statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Size and Type: The creature’s type changes to undead (augmented humanoid or monstrous humanoid). Do not recalculate base attack bonus, saves, or skill points. Size is unchanged.

Armor Class: The base creature’s natural armor bonus improves by +8.

Hit Dice: Increase all current and future Hit Dice to d12s.

Speed: Same as the base creature. If the base creature has a swim speed, the nosferatu retains the ability to swim and is not vulnerable to immersion in running water (see weaknesses).

Attack: A nosferatu retains all the attacks of the base creature and also gains a claw attack if it didn’t already have one. If the base creature can use weapons, the nosferatu retains this ability. A creature with natural weapons retains those natural weapons. A nosferatu fighting without weapons uses either its claw attack or its primary natural weapon (if it has any). A nosferatu armed with a weapon usually uses the weapon as its primary attack

along with a claw or other natural weapon as a natural secondary attack.

Damage: Nosferatus have claw attacks. If the base creature does not have this attack form, use the appropriate damage value from the table below according to the nosferatu’s size. Creatures that have other kinds of natural weapons retain their old damage values or use the appropriate value from the table below, whichever is better.

Size	Damage
Fine	1
Diminutive	1d2
Tiny	1d3
Small	1d4
Medium	1d6
Large	1d8
Huge	2d6
Gargantuan	2d8
Colossal	4d6

Special Attacks: A nosferatu retains all the special attacks of the base creature and gains those described below. Saves have a DC of 10 + 1/2 nosferatu’s HD + nosferatu’s Cha modifier unless noted otherwise.

Blood Drain (Ex): A nosferatu can suck blood from a living victim with its fangs by making a successful grapple check. If it pins the foe, it drains blood, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution and Wisdom drain each round the pin is maintained. On each such successful attack, the nosferatu gains 5 temporary hit points.

Dominate (Su): A nosferatu can crush an opponent’s will just by looking into his eyes. This is similar to a gaze attack, except that the nosferatu must use a standard action, and those merely looking at it are not affected. Anyone the nosferatu targets must succeed on a Will save or fall instantly under the nosferatu’s influence as though by a *dominate animal* or *dominate person* spell (whichever applies; caster level 12th). The ability has a range of 30 feet.

Telekinesis (Su): As a standard action, a nosferatu can use telekinesis, as the spell, as if it were a 12th-level sorcerer.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Str +2, Dex +4, Int +2, Wis +6, Cha +4. As an undead creature, a nosferatu has no Constitution score.

Feats: Nosferatus gain Alertness, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, and Skill Focus twice, assuming the base creature meets the prerequisites and doesn’t already have these feats.



Skills: A nosferatu has a +8 racial bonus on Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Search, Sense Motive, and Spot checks.

Special Qualities: A nosferatu retains all the special qualities of the base creature and gains those described here.

Beast Senses (Ex): A nosferatu gains darkvision to 60 feet, low-light vision, and scent.

Damage Reduction (Su): A nosferatu has damage reduction 5/wood and piercing (this includes all wood-shafted weapons like arrows, crossbow bolts, spears, and javelins, even if the weapon's actual head is made of another material).

Fast Healing (Ex): A nosferatu heals 5 points of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point. If reduced to 0 hit points in combat, it automatically assumes swarm form and attempts to escape. It must reach its coffin within 1 hour or be utterly destroyed. Any additional damage dealt to a nosferatu forced into swarm form in this manner has no effect. Once at rest in its coffin, a nosferatu is helpless. It regains 1 hit point after 1 hour, then is no longer helpless and resumes healing at the rate of 5 hit points per round.

Resistances (Ex): A nosferatu has resistance to cold 10, electricity 10, and sonic 10.

Spider Climb (Ex): A nosferatu can climb sheer surfaces as though with a *spider climb* spell.

Swarm Form (Su): As a standard action, a nosferatu can change into a bat swarm, centipede swarm, rat swarm, or spider swarm. The swarm has the same number of hit points as the nosferatu, and any damage done to the swarm affects the nosferatu. While in swarm form, a nosferatu cannot use its natural claw attack or any of its special attacks, although it gains the natural weapons and extraordinary special attacks of the swarm it transformed in. It also retains all of its usual special qualities. While in swarm form, the nosferatu is still considered to be an undead creature with its total number of Hit Dice. It can remain in swarm form until it assumes another form; retakes its original form as a standard action; or until the next sunrise.

Telepathy (Su): A nosferatu can communicate telepathically with any creature within 60 feet that speaks the same languages. In addition, a nosferatu can communicate with any animal, magical beast, or vermin.

Turn Resistance (Ex): A nosferatu has +4 turn resistance.

Weaknesses: Nosferatus have all the weaknesses of normal vampires (see page 253 of the MM).

Environment: Any, usually same as base creature.

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +2.

Treasure: Double standard.

Alignment: Always evil (any).

Advancement: By character class. Nosferatus have all the class restrictions of normal vampires (MM, page 253).

Level Adjustment: Same as the base creature +8.

SAMPLE NOSFERATU

The long-withered son of forgotten princes, the nosferatu Ramoska Arkminos has long searched for a cure to the curse of vampirism. Under the guidance of Conte Tiriac of Ustalav, his often amoral research benefits from limitless resources, yet after centuries of work, seems no closer to revealing a cure—a source of frustration he eagerly takes out on disruptive intruders.

RAMOSKA ARKMINOS

CR 10

Male nosferatu human wizard 8

LE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent, telepathy 60 ft.; **Listen** +15, **Spot** +15

DEFENSE

AC 27; touch 15, flat-footed 24

(+4 armor, +2 deflection, +3 Dex, +8 natural)

hp 57 (8d12); fast healing 5

Fort +2, **Ref** +7, **Will** +13

Defensive Abilities turn resistance +4; **DR** 5/piercing and wood; **Immune** undead traits; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10, sonic 10; **Weakness** vampire weaknesses

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +4 (1d6)

Special Attacks blood drain, dominate (DC 19), telekinesis (DC 19)

Spells Prepared (CL 8th, ranged touch +7)

4th—*crushing despair* (DC 19), *dimension door*, *fire shield*, *stone skin*

3rd—*dispel magic*, *hold person* (DC 18), *lightning blot* (DC 17), *stinking cloud* (DC 17)

2nd—*invisibility*, *scorching ray*, *touch of idiocy* (DC 17), *web* (DC 16)

1st—*disguise self*, *mage armor* (already cast), *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 15), *silent image* (DC 15)

0—*detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 14), *mage hand*, *message*

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 19, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 17

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

Feats Alertness, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Negotiator, Skill Focus (Craft [alchemy]), Skill Focus (Heal), Spell Focus (enchantment)

Skills Concentration +10, Craft (alchemy) +12, Decipher Script +9, Diplomacy +5, Heal +13, Hide +11, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (religion) +9, Knowledge (the planes) +9, Listen +15, Move Silently +11, Search +12, Sense Motive +14, Spellcraft +9, Spot +15

Languages Common, Draconic, Infernal, Varisian

SQ spider climb, swarm form

Combat Gear *wand of magic missile* (3rd, 31 charges), two *potions of inflict moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** *ring of protection* +2, *cape of the montebank*, spellbook, antique jewelry worth 70 gp

EZREN

MALE HUMAN WIZARD 4

ALIGN NG **INIT** +3 **SPEED** 30 ft.

DEITY: Atheist **HOMELAND:** Absalom

ABILITIES

11	STR
9	DEX
12	CON
17	INT
15	WIS
9	CHA

DEFENSE

HP 15	
AC 11	
touch 10, flat-footed 11	
Fort +4, Ref 0, Will +6	

OFFENSE

Melee cane +2 (1d6)
Ranged light crossbow +1 (1d8/19–20)
Base Atk +2; **Grp** +2

Spells Prepared (CL 4th, +1 ranged touch)
 2nd—*bull's strength*, *scorching ray*, *web* (DC 15)
 1st—*alarm*, *magic missile* (2), *shield*
 0—*daze* (DC 13), *detect magic* (2), *light*

SKILLS

Appraise	+6
Concentration	+8
Knowledge (arcana)	+10
Knowledge (geography)	+10
Knowledge (history)	+10
Knowledge (the planes)	+4
Spellcraft	+10

FEATS

Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll

FAMILIAR

Sneak (weasel, MM 282)



Combat Gear alchemist's fire (2), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *wand of magic missile* (CL 1st, 50 charges); **Other Gear** cane (as club), dagger, light crossbow with 20 bolts, *bracers of armor* +1, *pearl of power 1st level*, backpack, rations (6), scroll case, spellbook, spell component pouch, 100 gp pearls (2), 55 gp

The son of a successful spice merchant, Ezren's childhood was pleasantly safe. This changed when his father was charged with heresy by the church of Abadar. Ezren spent much of his adult life working to repair his father's ruined reputation, but when he discovered proof of his father's guilt he abandoned his family and set out into the world. Lacking the spry limbs of youth, Ezren fell naturally into the ways of wizardry, swiftly becoming a gifted self-taught spellcaster. While he often argues on the value of religion with Seelah, and his atrophied sense of humor often makes him the butt of Lem's jokes, his world experience and keen wit are quite valued by his younger traveling companions.



SEELAH

FEMALE HUMAN PALADIN 4

ALIGN LG **INIT** +0 **SPEED** 20 ft.

DEITY: Iomedee **HOMELAND:** Katapesh

ABILITIES

16	STR
10	DEX
14	CON
8	INT
13	WIS
12	CHA

DEFENSE

HP 34	
AC 20	
touch 10, flat-footed 20	
Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +3	

OFFENSE

Melee +1 *longsword* +9 (1d8+4/19–20)
Ranged mwk composite longbow +5 (1d8+3/x3)
Base Atk +4; **Grp** +7
Special Attacks lay on hands (8 hp/day), smite evil 1/day, turn undead 4/day (+3, 2d6+2, 1st)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th)
 At Will—*detect evil*
Spells Prepared (CL 2nd)
 1st—*lesser restoration*
Special Qualities aura of courage, divine grace, divine health

SKILLS

Knowledge (religion)	+4
Ride	+4
Sense Motive	+6

FEATS

Power Attack, Mounted Combat, Weapon Focus (longsword)



Combat Gear holy water (2), *wand of cure light wounds* (50 charges); **Other Gear** full plate, heavy steel shield, +1 *longsword*, dagger, mwk composite longbow (+3 Str) with 20 arrows, *cloak of resistance* +1, backpack, rations (4), silver holy symbol, 33 gp

Seelah's parents were slain by gnoll raiders within months of their settling in Solku. When a group of Iomedae's knights arrived to help defend the town, Seelah was taken with their beautiful, shining armor. She stole a helm from one of the paladins, but became overwhelmed with guilt. Worse, before she had a chance to return the helm, the paladin was herself slain during the Battle of Red Hail. Wracked with guilt, Seelah confessed her guilt to the paladins and vowed her life to their cause. Over the years, her guilt has transformed into a powerful faith and conviction. She values Ezren's wisdom and Harsk's conviction, but it is irreverent Lem who Seelah is most amused by, even if she sometimes feels his jokes go too far.



HARSK

MALE DWARF RANGER 4

ALIGN LN INIT +3 SPEED 20 ft.

DEITY: Torag **HOMELAND:** Druma

ABILITIES

14	STR
16	DEX
15	CON
10	INT
12	WIS
6	CHA

DEFENSE

HP 29
AC 16
touch 13, flat-footed 13
+4 against giants
Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +3
+2 against poison, spells, and spell-like abilities

OFFENSE

Melee mwk greataxe +7 (1d12+3/x3)
Ranged +1 heavy crossbow +8 (1d10+1/19–20)
Base Atk +1; **Grp** +3
Special Attacks favored enemy (giants +2), +1 on attack rolls against orcs and goblinoids
Spells Prepared (CL 2nd)
 1st—*entangle* (DC 12)
Special Qualities darkvision 60 ft., stability, stonecunning

SKILLS

Heal	+8
Hide	+10
Listen	+8
Move Silently	+10
Spot	+8
Survival	+8
Wild Empathy	+2

FEATS

Endurance, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Reload (heavy crossbow), Rapid Shot, Track

ANIMAL COMPANION

Biter (badger, MM 268)



Combat Gear antitoxin, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of pass without trace* (2), smokestick, tanglefoot bag; **Other Gear** +1 leather armor, mwk greataxe, +1 heavy crossbow with 30 bolts, backpack, rations (4), signal whistle, tea pot, 41 gp

Harsk is, in many ways, not your standard dwarf. He prefers strong tea over alcohol (to keep his senses sharp), the wildlands of the surface world (where giants can be found), and the crossbow over the axe (which allows him to start fights faster). Yet few dare to mock him for his choices, for if there's anywhere that Harsk is dwarven, it is in his gruff and offputting attitude. Much of his anger stems from the death of his brother's warband. Slain to a man by giants, Harsk came upon the slaughter moments too late to save his brother. Harsk's hatred of giants has fueled him and shapes his life. His companions value his skill at combat even if they're somewhat afraid of him.

LEM

MALE HALFLING BARD 4

ALIGN CG INIT +3 SPEED 20 ft.

DEITY: Shelyn **HOMELAND:** Cheliox

ABILITIES

8	STR
16	DEX
13	CON
12	INT
8	WIS
16	CHA

DEFENSE

HP 20
AC 18
touch 15, flat-footed 15
Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +5
+2 vs. fear

OFFENSE

Melee short sword +3 (1d4–1/19–20)
Ranged mwk sling +9 (1d3–1)
Base Atk +3; **Grp** –2
Special Attacks bardic music 4/day (countersong, fascinate, inspire competence, inspire courage +1)
Spells Known (CL 4th)
 2nd (1/day)—*cure moderate wounds*, *mirror image*
 1st (3/day)—*cure light wounds*, *hideous laughter* (DC 14), *silent image* (DC 15)
 0 (2/day)—*detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 14), *light*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *summon instrument*

SKILLS

Bardic Knowledge	+5
Bluff	+10
Climb	+1
Concentration	+8
Diplomacy	+12
Hide	+7
Jump	+3
Listen	+1
Move Silently	+5
Perform (comedy)	+10
Perform (wind instruments)	+8
Tumble	+10
Use Magic Device	+10

FEATS

Dodge, Spell Focus (illusion)



Combat Gear *wand of cure light wounds* (CL 1st, 50 charges); **Gear** +1 leather armor, dagger, short sword, mwk sling with 20 bullets, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1, backpack, masterwork flute, rations (6), spell component pouch, sunrods (3), 60 gp

Although Lem was raised in the lap of luxury, his childhood was anything but comfortable. Growing up a slave in the devil-haunted empire of Cheliox exposed Lem to a shocking range of decadence and debauchery. He rarely speaks of his childhood, but one can see its effects in his high disdain for law and order, and his intolerance for cruelty. Always quick to side with the underdog, Lem has learned that his most powerful trait is his optimism and sense of humor—skills that almost make up for his small stature and impulsive nature. Lem's reasons for traveling with his current companions vary upon the day and his mood, but he certainly values their strengths—and the never-ending supply of comedy material their antics provide him with.



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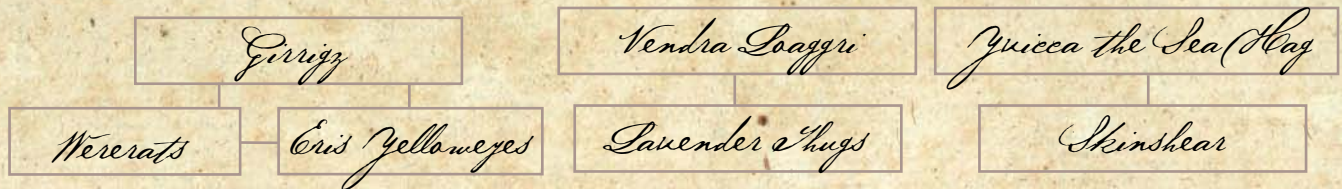
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