

foes on the third round, using her smite and unleashing the *inflict serious wounds* from her *spell-storing spiked chain* on her first attack. As she fights, she hums or whistles as if she were merely doing some pleasant chore, periodically punctuating a particularly solid blow with a giggle or a wink.

Morale Laori enjoys pain, but would rather not give up her life before she has a chance to see Kazavon reborn. If brought below 20 hit points, she flees; if she escapes, she appears again in “Skeletons of Scarwall” as scheduled.

Base Statistics AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; **Str** 13, **Con** 14

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 14, **Con** 18, **Int** 10, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +10

Feats Blind-Fight, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Diehard, Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain)

Skills Concentration +15, Knowledge (religion) +13

Languages Common, Elven

SQ spontaneous casting (inflict spells)

Combat Gear *wand of cure moderate wounds* (11 charges), *wand of sound burst* (19 charges), *wand of death knell* (34 charges);

Other Gear masterwork hook mail (spiked chain mail), +1 *spell storing spiked chain* (contains *inflict serious wounds*), *phylactery of Wisdom* +2, scrap of Neolandus’s uniform, 68 pp, 24 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Darkness Domain This domain grants Laori Blind-Fight as a bonus feat.

Ad Hoc Experience Award: If the PCs deal with Laori peacefully and form an alliance with her, award them experience points as if they had defeated her in combat.

B4. Fungal Incursion (EL 6)

This room appears to have once been a combination kitchen and storeroom, but is now a bewildering riot of brightly colored fungus and mold. The stuff grows everywhere and in every color, over tables, across cupboards, and in swaths along the floor and walls, but seems thickest to the southwest, where puffy sheets of yellow fungus cover several objects so completely that it’s impossible to make out what lies beneath.

In an effort to get just the right colors on canvas his visions required, Salvator eventually resorted to cultivating several brightly colored strains of fungus to craft his own pigments, an endeavor in which he met with some success. Since he was taken from his home, though, the fungus he normally kept well maintained here has run riot, covering much of the room’s otherwise mundane contents.

B5. Sinkhole (EL 7)

What once might have been a small house has been obliterated, collapsed from within by a twenty-foot-diameter sinkhole.

Water from the Narrows fills the hole, creating a muddy pit strewn with jagged bits of timber and flotsam. The edges of the hole are muddy and patchy with fungus. Immediately south of the sinkhole, the boardwalk has also collapsed, creating a dangerous tangle of timber and crazily tilted pilings.

The sinkhole isn’t quite as deep as it looks, although the 5 feet of standing water covers several more feet of mud. Moving through the mud on the bottom of the hole is considered difficult terrain.

Creature: With Old Korvosa going under quarantine, the soldiers normally in charge of keeping the island’s indigenous otyugh population contained have not been able to keep up their jobs, and the otyughs of Old Korvosa are slowly coming to realize that they’re free. The sinkhole here was created when several otyughs forced their way out of the sewers through a drainage tunnel. Barely able to fit, the otyughs’ struggles to escape caused the collapse of the small shack that once stood here, and their further thrashings caused the destruction of the boardwalk. Now, the monsters wallow in the water and mud of the sinkhole, periodically lurching out of the water to attack anyone who comes too close.

OTYUGHS (3)

hp 36 (MM 204)

CR 4

Development: If the PCs haven’t yet met Laori when the otyughs attack, she emerges from area **B3** a round after combat begins. She shrieks in delight at the sight of the battle, and rushes to provide aid to the PCs, hoping that by helping them the PCs become more disposed toward helping her contact Salvator.

PART TWO: THE EMPEROR OF OLD KORVOSA

Eventually, through conversation with Laori, magical divination, or DC 20 Gather Information checks, the PCs should learn that their quarry, Salvator Scream, has been taken by the self-styled ruler of the region—the Emperor of Old Korvosa. In his previous life, this Emperor was a man named Pilts Swastel, the owner and director of Exemplary Execrables, a notorious playhouse that specialized in violent, gruesome productions. Already a bit unhinged before Korvosa fell apart, the riots, a bout with blood veil, and the quarantine were enough to push Pilts the rest of the way. With his knack for showboating, organizing crowds, and his horrifying imagination, it was a relatively simple thing for him to make the transition from director to ganglord.

Today, Pilts’s position of power is growing. Every day, his mob absorbs or murders more of Old Korvosa’s remaining citizens, and his resulting influence grows.

The Emperor's imagination is one thing that has captured the admiration of his mob—from the gory but entertaining real-life plays he produces to new ventures, such as the extremely popular game of blood pig, his followers look to their Emperor as a source of entertainment to distract them from the horror of their new world. Yet the Emperor is also a primary source of that horror. His obsession with an extravagantly carved Galtan guillotine has created a constant need for new victims, and when the mob can't provide the Emperor with victims on whom to use his favorite toy, the Emperor is boundlessly creative in finding reasons to punish random followers for transgressions against his new laws.

After his playhouse partially burnt to the ground, Pilts decided to relocate his home to a group of buildings located a bit closer to the core of Old Dock. Once several tenements, Pilts has converted these structures into a palace. He managed to save many of his old props and gruesome backdrops, storing them for now in his new palace while he works on plans for a new, larger playhouse. He wasn't able to save it all, though his newest "acquisition," Salvator Scream, is the first step Pilts has taken to rebuild his assets.

The Emperor of Old Korvosa has rapidly become one of the most notorious figures in the quarantine zone. If the PCs take the time to use Gather Information, they can learn much of the man before they confront him. Consult the following table to determine the results of such checks.

DC Check	Information Gathered
10	The Emperor of Old Korvosa rules Old Dock from his palace on Silk Street. He's seized control of several tenements there, and rarely leaves the place. Mobs of his fanatics scour the streets of Old Dock seeking more conscripts to his cause. Those who resist are instead captured for other purposes.
15	The Emperor sees Old Korvosa as his stage. He forces some of his prisoners to take part in violent, deadly games or gruesome performances, pitting them against the most ferocious of his pets and followers. Others he simply beheads with his favorite toy—an extravagant guillotine imported all the way from distant Galt.
20	Those who seek to speak with the Emperor must first earn his respect by providing him with entertainment—of late, it is said that the Emperor's favorite entertainment is a violent game he invented called blood pig. He's converted a large rooftop inside of his palace into a playing field for this game, and the howls

and screams of those playing and watching can be heard throughout Old Dock every evening.

The Old Dock Mob

The streets surrounding the Palace are littered with bodies, rubble, and refuse; feral dogs, stirges, shingle spiders, and other vermin scuttle around with a bravery not seen in the city before the quarantine. The further one ventures into Old Dock and draws near the Palace, the fewer citizens appear behind boarded windows, and the more the signs of the Emperor's mob grow. Vandalism, brutalized bodies hung up on display, remnants of fires, and other evidence of public violence are everywhere.

Of the hundreds of people who lived in Old Dock, most have joined the mob, if only to avoid being branded traitors by the Emperor and then forced to take part in his violent entertainment. Those who revel in the chaos quickly find themselves ascending to the role of soldier in the mob, where they serve as leaders and commanders—the majority of the petty thugs under their control obey out of fear. Unless the PCs take pains to remain unobserved, they are noticed by members of the mob within minutes of entering Old Dock, and within a few more, they are confronted by a group of these thugs who loudly and brashly demand to know the meaning of the party's intrusion into the Emperor's domain.

Few have openly opposed the mob yet, and as a result, these groups of thugs wildly overestimate their own power and strength. Their attitude toward intruders is one of haughty and profane disdain. Lewd comments are hurled at female PCs, racial epithets howled at non-humans, and insults of all manner are levied against the rest. The mob leader demands that the intruders quickly explain their presence in Old Dock. Any response other than "We're here to join you," is met with laughter and disdain, swiftly followed by a demand to hand over their weapons. Characters who do so are escorted to area C4 to be judged by the Emperor; their gear, in this event, is stacked on the ground next to the Emperor's throne as an offering.

The mob's initial attitude is hostile. If the mob's leader can be made friendly, he agrees to escort the PCs to meet the emperor but doesn't demand their gear. If made helpful, he'll even agree to letting the PCs make their own way to the Palace with no escort (but there's still a 20% chance per 10 minutes of encountering another mob).

Attacking the mob is certainly a possibility. Word spreads quickly through Old Korvosa if the party adopts an offensive approach, and 3d6 minutes after defeating the first mob, two more arrive to confront the PCs. If the PCs defeat this second wave, a fourth mob seeks them out in 3d6 minutes to extend an invitation to speak with

the Emperor—in this event, the PCs are watched by four mobs from the surrounding streets but are allowed to keep their gear.

A single mob consists of 6 thugs and one captain who serves as the mob's leader—a single mob encounter is EL 7.

OLD DOCK THUGS (6)

CR 2

Male human warrior 2/rogue 1

CN Medium humanoid

Init +5; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +7

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14

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

hp 19 (2d8+1d6+9)

Fort +7, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee battleaxe +4 (1d8+2/×3)

Ranged throwing axe +3 (1d6+2)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

TACTICS

During Combat The Old Dock thugs are more brash and foolhardy than they are brave. They focus their attacks on less-armored foes if given a choice, and generally prefer to gang up on one target at a time.

Morale A thug flees combat if brought below 5 hit points. All thugs flee or surrender if their leader is slain.

STATISTICS

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

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

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Toughness

Skills Climb +7, Intimidate +6, Spot +7

Languages Common

SQ trapfinding

Gear studded leather armor, light wooden shield, battleaxe, 4 throwing axes

OLD DOCK CAPTAIN

CR 4

Male human warrior 2/rogue 3

CN Medium humanoid

Init +6; **Senses** Listen +6, Spot +8

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14

(+3 armor, +2 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 33 (2d8+3d6+10)

Fort +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee mwk battleaxe +7 (1d8+2/×3) or unarmed strike +6 (1d3+2)

Ranged throwing axe +6 (1d6+2)

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

TACTICS

During Combat An Old Dock captain attempts to Intimidate the apparent leader of the PCs, ordering his thugs to engage in melee while he takes the first few rounds to throw axes before entering combat himself.

Morale An Old Dock captain fights to the death.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +6

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike

Skills Climb +9, Intimidate +7, Listen +6, Spot +8

Languages Common

SQ trapfinding

Gear mwk studded leather armor, light wooden shield, masterwork battleaxe, 4 throwing axes

Pilts's Palace

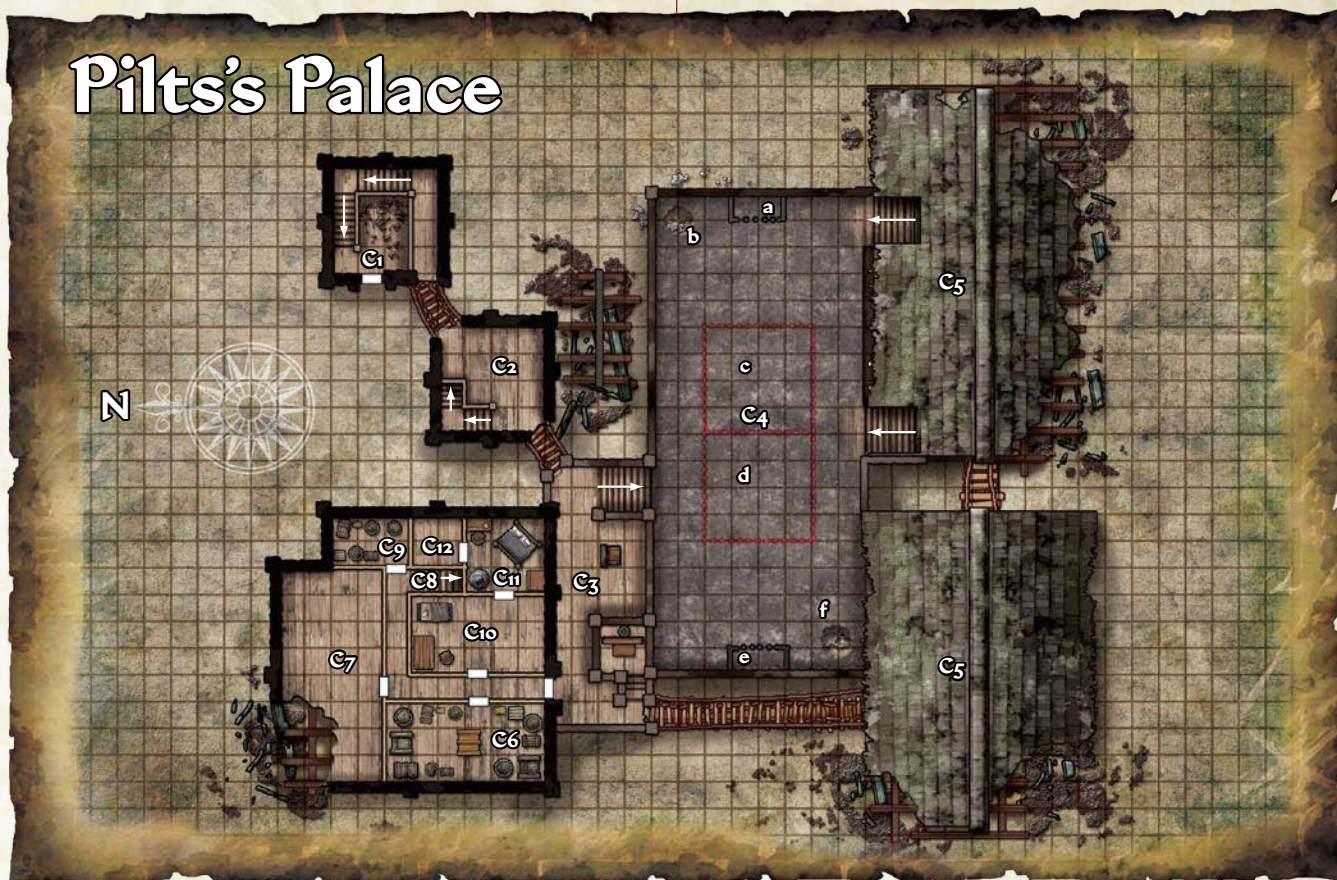
The Emperor of Old Korvosa's palace is located at 11 Silk Street in Old Dock, a collection of tenements and abandoned stores that barely escaped destruction during a recent fire that consumed much of the city block to the west. The palace consists of six buildings, although only the floors or roofs of immediate interest to the adventure are shown on the map. All of these buildings are wood and in relatively good repair, despite the large amount of cosmetic damage the mob has inflicted on them in the form of graffiti, scorch marks, and weapon damage.

Not all of the Emperor's citizens dwell in his palace—the vast majority live spread out through all of Old Dock. Nonetheless, the Emperor retains a small contingent of 18 captains in his palace as personal guards. The captains live in the abandoned tenements at area C5, but at any one time only a third of them are at rest in these buildings. The rest are stationed as indicated in the following encounter descriptions.

If the PCs are being escorted to the palace by a mob of thugs, the mob announces their arrival with yells and calls, forcing the PCs to enter at area C1 and then move up to area C4 to stand before the Emperor. In this case, all of the additional captains in the palace are on alert and ready to join in the defense of the place; the thugs and captains normally at rest are stationed on the roofs of area C5.

If the PCs aren't being escorted, they can pick their own route into the palace. As soon as any guards notice them, they raise the alarm and launch the attack. Battle with the guards could quickly turn into an all-out brawl spread across the entire palace, with the Emperor barking orders and aiding his minions from his throne as he can. In this event, the PCs need not defeat every single thug in the Palace. Defeating the Emperor is enough to cow the entire mob (see area C3).

Pilt's Palace



C1. Palace Entrance

The interior of this home has been gutted. A huge mound of rubble—broken timbers, bits of wall, ruined furniture, and more—lies heaped in the center of the room. Ricketty wooden stairs wind up to a splintered hole in the wall near the roof above.

Areas C1 and C2 are connected by a rope bridge suspended 15 feet off the ground.

C2. Guardroom (EL 8)

What once might have been an attic has been cleared of all clutter, leaving a large open area under exposed rafters and the roof above. Rope bridges lead to other areas outside of the room to the northeast and southwest, and a flight of stairs descends to a lower floor to the northwest.

While the northeast rope bridge is level, the southwest one climbs an additional 10 feet to area C3, turning the bridge into a somewhat unsettling (but still relatively safe) “rope stairway.” The stairs descend into a lower floor that has been filled almost completely with rubble to block entry from below into this area.

Creatures: If the alarm is not raised, four Old Dock captains stand guard in this room, leaning casually against the wall and deep in an argument about whether chokers have skeletons or not—as long as they’re arguing, they’re distracted and take a –5 penalty on Listen and Spot checks.

OLD DOCK CAPTAINS (4)

hp 36 each (see page 22)

EL 4

C3. The Emperor’s Throne (EL 12)

This open-air balcony is shielded from rain and sun by a brightly colored canvas roof that extends up over the area like a dome, held in place by a wooden framework. The inside of the canvas has been decorated in scenes of gruesome debauchery: battlefields, executions, torture chambers, and man-eating monsters all vie for space. The balcony itself contains two major features of note. The first is a high-backed throne that looks like a poor man’s version of the Crimson Throne itself, a thing of blood-red cushions and silks and spikes. Directly west of the throne stands an intimidating device, a tall guillotine of carved wood and bone, its base depicting grasping demonic feet and the housing that holds its glittering blade a leering demonic face.

This balcony is where the Emperor of Old Korvosa holds court, 25 feet off the ground and overlooking a large open rooftop. The guillotine itself is one of the Emperor's most valued prizes—a device imported at great expense from distant Galt, a land itself perpetually in the throes of revolution. Known variously as the Tall Knife, Jabbyr's Tongue, and the Demon's Maw, the guillotine was the first thing Pilts rescued from his old lair when the fire spread, and it remains his favorite method for disposing of unneeded prisoners. It takes 3 rounds to strap a character into place in the Demon's Maw—the character must either be willing or helpless during these 3 rounds, after which it's a DC 30 Escape Artist check (or another 3 rounds of undoing the straps) to escape. The guillotine can be triggered as a move action, at which point the serrated blade drops out of the housing above to shear through the victim's neck. Treat this as a coup de grace attempt delivered by a Large greataxe at Strength 26—the victim takes 9d6+36 points of damage and must then make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + the damage dealt by the blade) to avoid death. To date, none have survived the Tall Knife's kiss.

Creatures: The Emperor of Old Korvosa holds court here daily. After waking and taking his breakfast in his bedroom, he generally takes a seat here on his throne an hour after sunrise and remains until dusk. During this time, he hears reports from his mob and entertains pleas from citizens of Old Dock desperate for more food or shelter or safety, but most of his time is spent being entertained, be it by directing his latest grotesque play or observing a contest, game, or execution.

Pilts is a hideous man—a thin Chelaxian cursed from a young age by acne, made worse of late by his recent bout with blood veil. Pilts has an extensive collection of costumes and delights in mixing and matching them to create an endless array of variations on what he believes to be royal attire. That his costumes are generally threadbare and ratty gives him the look more of a vagrant king than actual royalty, but all who have pointed this out to him before have felt the Tall Knife's kiss. Despite his unsavory appearance, Pilts has an almost hypnotic speaking voice and a real talent for grandstanding and delivering compelling soliloquies—this alone is his greatest tool for gathering the desperate and cruel to his banner.

When he's holding court, the Emperor is always attended by four of his captains and his cohort, a deranged gnome named Jabbyr. Pilts found Jabbyr several years ago in a shipment of

torture devices he imported from Cheliah. Near death, tongueless, and with one eye burnt out by a hot poker, whether the gnome had accidentally been shipped in the gibbet or on purpose Pilts never determined. At first, he thought Jabbyr was dead, but when the tongueless gnome shrieked and began babbling when Pilts tried to extract him from the torture device, Pilts took the nearly dead gnome under his wing. Over those years, Jabbyr never quite recovered his mind from whatever nameless tortures he'd

PILTS SWASTEL



undergone, but he did indeed become a loyal minion of the man he now calls “Unca Pit.” Today, Jabbyr serves primarily as the operator for the Demon’s Maw, a role he has taken to with great delight, especially since Pilts dressed him as a court executioner. He even stitched up the eyehole in the hood that one-eyed Jabbyr has no need for.

PILTS SWASTEL, EMPEROR OF OLD KORVOSA CR 10

Male human bard 10

CE Medium humanoid

Init +4; **Senses** Listen +12, Spot –1

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 14, flat-footed 19

(+5 armor, +4 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 51 (10d6+10)

Fort +4, **Ref** +11, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee mwk war razor +12/+7 (1d4/18–20)

Ranged mwk light crossbow +12 (1d8/19–20)

Special Attacks bardic music 10/day (countersong, *fascinate*, inspire competence, inspire courage +2, inspire greatness, *suggestion*)

Spells Known (CL 10th)

4th (1/day)—*dimension door*, *modify memory* (DC 18)

3rd (3/day)—*charm monster* (DC 17), *confusion* (DC 17), *displacement*, *glibness*

2nd (4/day)—*cat’s grace*, *detect thoughts* (DC 16), *hold person* (DC 16), *tongues*

1st (4/day)—*alarm*, *cure light wounds*, *undetected alignment*, *unseen servant*

0 (3/day)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 14), *mage hand*, *open/close*, *resistance*

TACTICS

Before Combat Pilts casts *alarm* on the door to Salvator’s cell every morning, and *unseen servant* and *undetected alignment* as soon as he takes his throne for the day. As soon as he realizes he’s about to have visitors, the Emperor also casts *glibness* and *tongues* on himself. Before Pilts enters combat, he makes sure to drink his *potion of barkskin* +4 and cast *cat’s grace*. All of these effects are incorporated into his stats.

During Combat Pilts orders all available minions to the attack, augmenting them with inspire courage on the first round of combat. He then alternates casting spells like *confusion*, *charm monster*, and *hold person* with activations of his *rod of wonder*—each time he uses this unpredictable device, he shrieks in delight and offers impromptu (and sometimes witty) commentary on the rod’s results. As soon as it seems obvious that he’s about to be attacked, he casts *displacement* on himself and fights back with his war razor.

Morale The Emperor *dimension doors* into his bedroom (area C11) if brought below 20 hit points, then takes 3d6 rounds

gathering up his favorite prizes before making an attempt to escape through area C7 to hide in Old Dock and nurse both his wounds and plans for revenge against the PCs. If brought below 10 hit points and he’s unable to use *dimension door*, Pilts’s bravado crumbles. He drops to his knees and begs pitifully for his life—he offers up pretty much anything to the PCs in return for mercy. In either event, as soon as Pilts is killed or surrenders publicly (or 2d6 rounds after he flees), his mob falls to pieces and the thugs scatter, seeking a safe place to recover and figure out what to do next.

Base Statistics **Init** +2, **AC** 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; **Ref** +9;

Melee mwk war razor +10/+5; **Ranged** mwk light crossbow +10; **Dex** 14; **Skills** Bluff +19, Sleight of Hand +17

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 18, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 19

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

Feats Craft Rod, Craft Wondrous Item, Leadership, Persuasive, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +49, Concentration +14, Diplomacy +21, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (local) +14, Listen +12, Perform (oratory) +17, Sense Motive +12, Sleight of Hand +19

Languages Common, Gnome

SQ bardic knowledge +11

Combat Gear *potion of barkskin* +4, *rod of wonder*; **Other Gear** +1 *glamered chain shirt*, masterwork war razor, masterwork light crossbow with 10 bolts, *cloak of Charisma* +2

JABBYR

CR 8

Male gnome barbarian 8

CE Small humanoid

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +14, Spot +1

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 13

(+3 armor, +2 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size, –2 rage)

hp 97 (8d12+40)

Fort +11, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7; +2 vs. illusions

Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2;

DR 1/—

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee +1 *greataxe* +16/+11 (1d10+8/×3)

Special Attacks rage 3/day

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st)

1/day—*speak with animals*

TACTICS

Before Combat As soon as combat begins, Jabbyr rages.

During Combat Jabbyr follows Pilts’s orders exactly, attacking whomever the Emperor orders him to. Left to his own devices, though, Jabbyr tends to focus on whatever enemy is the closest. The only exception to this are gnomes—Jabbyr only attacks other gnomes in response to being attacked by one of them first. Pilts knows better than to order the insane barbarian to attack another gnome, in any event.

Morale Jabbyr fights to the death. If he discovers that Pilts has been killed, he freezes for 1 round in shock before continuing his rage. If, on the other hand, Pilts surrenders in Jabbyr's presence, something inside the gnome's dementia snaps and he focuses his wrath on the ex-Emperor. Surrendering is tantamount to treason in Jabbyr's mind, and he'd rather have his master slain at his own hands than live with the ignominy of such a defeat.

Base Statistics AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15; hp 81, Fort +9, Will +5; Melee +1 greataxe +14/+9 (1d10+5/×3); Str 16, Con 16

STATISTICS

Str 20, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 5

Base Atk +8; **Grp** +9

Feats Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (greataxe)

Skills Listen +14

Languages Common, Gnome

SQ fast movement, illiteracy

Gear +1 leather armor, +1 greataxe, gauntlets of ogre power, amulet of natural armor +1

OLD DOCK CAPTAINS (4)

CR 4

hp 36 each (see page 22)

C4. The Emperor's Stage

The large, flat roof of this long building has been converted into a strange sort of marshaling yard or game field. Two large square areas have been marked with what could be blood, while to either end to the west and east, small cages of wood have been set up to the side of a hole in the roof that drops into the upper floor of the building below. Flights of stairs lead up from the roof to a balcony to the north and the gently slanted roof of a building to the south.

Lately, the Emperor's favored distraction is a violent game he invented called blood pig, a game that requires an ever-increasing number of small animals to play.

The exact name of the game changes as needed (blood dog, blood cat, and blood rat are common), but the sound of a squealing pig delights Pilts the most—blood pig is his favorite. The roof's markings and additions are all set up to play this game—the rules for blood pig are presented on page 30.

C5. Rooftops (EL 11)

Two gently sloped rooftops overlook a flat roof to the north. The northern slopes of these roofs are littered with boards, shingles, and other impromptu chairs, transforming the area into a sort of arena-style seating. The southern slopes are falling into disrepair—it's obviously that the materials to build the northern sides' seating were harvested from there.

During performances and games, the roofs here quickly fill with thugs and captains, eager to see what new entertainments their Emperor has crafted for them.



Creatures: Once tenement buildings, this is where the the Emperor's personal guard of Old Dock captains dwell. Their rooms are small and cramped; access to them is from the ground below. At any one time, 12 captains are at rest here. After an alarm sounds, 1d6 of these captains respond per minute until all 12 have joined their companions on the roofs above.

OLD DOCK CAPTAINS (12)

CR 4

hp 36 each (see page 22)

C6. Storeroom

Crates, boxes, and barrels fill this long storeroom, making it difficult to judge the room's actual dimensions.

The majority of the props, tools, and other bits of salvage Pilts scavenged from Exemplary Execrables are stored here. There's little of actual value kept here, with most of the contents damaged by the fire in some way.

C7. Choker Nest (EL 8)

This large room might once have been an attic storage area, but the open rafters above now brood over an empty chamber. To the northwest, a large portion of the roof and floor below have collapsed entirely, leaving a void looking out over the sodden skyline of Old Korvosa.

This could serve as a possible entry point into Pilts's Palace, provided the intruder can navigate the 25 foot distance between the ground and this room. The area within 5 feet of the collapsed floor remains unstable as well. A Medium or larger creature that steps on a square within 5 feet of the collapse causes that square to crumble. He can make a DC 15 Reflex save to stagger back to more solid footing behind him—otherwise the fall deals 2d6 points of damage (and likely defeats any attempt at a stealthy intrusion).

Creatures: This room is the lair of four particularly well-fed and cruel chokers, creatures who once dwelt on the roof of Exemplary Execrables and with whom Pilts Swastel had nurtured something of a friendship. He often used these chokers to take care of victims from some of his shows, and has come to rely upon the efficiency with which the chokers dispose of bodies—the monsters generally eat the choice bits, then carry the remains out across Korvosa's rooftops to stash in nooks, hollows, and other hidden places in the Shingles for scavengers like spiders and rats to feed upon. When Exemplary Execrables burnt, Pilts offered to let the chokers dwell here—the monsters agreed, and have continued to serve Pilts as a disposal method. The chokers don't mind that most of the bodies they're asked to get rid of now are headless.

CHOKER BRUTES (4)

CR 4

Advanced elite chokers (MM 34)

CE Small aberration

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +2, Spot +2

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15

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

hp 45 (6d8+18)

Fort +5, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft., climb 10 ft.

Melee 2 tentacles +10 (1d3+5)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks constrict 1d3+5, improved grab

TACTICS

During Combat The chokers lurk in the shadows in the rafters up above, watching observantly if they notice anyone attempting to move through the room. They swiftly move to attack as soon as anyone entering from outside tries to open the door, or 3 rounds after intruders from the south have already opened the door and are moving about inside the room.

Morale The chokers fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 19, **Con** 16, **Int** 4, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 4

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +9

Feats Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (tentacle)

Skills Climb +16, Hide +13, Move Silently +9

Languages Common

Treasure: The chokers have amassed a small amount of treasure that they keep in a leather bag wedged between two high rafters in the southeast corner of the room—locating this bag requires a DC 15 Search check. The bag contains 44 gp, 3 pp, a single silk glove inset with tiny pearls on the back of the hand worth 250 gp, a masterwork hand crossbow, and a copper *wand of slow* (13 charges).

C8. Collapsed Stairway

This flight of stairs has been filled with rubble—clearing the stairs takes 1d4 hours to access the two empty floors of this building below.

C9. Art Supplies

Several barrels and crates sit against the walls here. Stacked on some are many blank canvases and what appear to be ceramic containers. A stack of paintings leans against the eastern wall, bound on wooden frames and covered with sheets.

The paintings leaning against the eastern wall are all brand new Screams, identifiable as such with a DC 20

Appraise check. If the Appraise check exceeds this DC by 10, it's also obvious that these paintings lack some quality that his previous work contained—they seem muddled, dull, and pedestrian compared to the brilliance of his work before the death of King Eodred II. In particular, the use of the color blue, a trademark in Salvator's work, seems sloppy and poor. The reason for this is simple—when Kazavon's spirit bonded with that of Queen Ileosa, it abandoned Salvator and the other artists. Salvator's muse has vanished.

Treasure: Salvator's paintings generally command a strong price among his fans—and each of these 11 paintings incorporate themes those collectors value: shadowy dragons, torture, violence, darkness, and scenes of pain and despair in vivid colors. These paintings, while maintaining the same themes, simply aren't as good—each of the 11 paintings are worth only 20 gp.

If Laori is with the party when these paintings are discovered, she gleefully goes through them all, but quickly becomes disappointed by their pedestrian nature and wants nothing more to do with them.

C10. Trophy Hall

The air in this room smells sickly sweet—a combination of flowers and vinegar. The unpleasant smell likely comes from the fourteen poorly preserved heads mounted on the walls of this grisly trophy hall. Most of the heads are human, although two are elves and one is from a dwarf. To the north, a small, child-size bed sits against the wall opposite a wooden table decorated with a magnificent set of silverware.

This room serves several purposes. The small bed is where the Emperor's cohort Jabbyr sleeps, and the table is where the Emperor takes his meals (generally served by one of his captains, who themselves usually bully these meals out of local citizens). The grisly trophies on the walls, preserved somewhat by a process of soaking in brine, perfume, and other herbs, are the heads of enemies who particularly vexed the Emperor. He sometimes carries on mocking conversations with these heads in the late hours of the night when he's having trouble sleeping.

The door to area C11 is generally warded by an *alarm* spell; if triggered, it creates a mental alarm, alerting Pilts that someone's intruding in his home.

Treasure: The silverware set on the table is the best that Pilts could steal—the full set is worth 500 gp. A platinum and crystal decanter filled with fine brandy sits on the table as well—this item alone is worth 750 gp.

C11. Emperor's Chambers

This extravagantly decorated bedroom would feel at home in the richest of noble villas or monarchs' castles—at least,

until one looks a little more closely at the sheets on the four-poster bed and notes how stained and frayed they are, or examines the tapestries and curtains and sees the patches of mold and threadbare edges. A tall, well-stocked bookcase to the south turns out to be leaning against the wall for support; the contents of its sagging shelves are poorly produced books with violent or erotic names on their mildewed spines. Everything is slightly musty, stained with age and well-beyond its prime. Only three paintings hanging on the wall hold up to closer examination, but their grisly subject matter might make them difficult to show in most public venues. To the north, a simple wooden door is secured with a lock and a heavy wooden bar.

Most of the furnishings in this room are well-used props from countless plays and productions—they've seen much use, but Pilts finds no fault in their threadbare natures. The Emperor can be found here after dark, either sleeping fitfully or reading one of his scandalous books of violence and erotica stored on the bookshelf. For about an hour each night, he unbolts the door to area C12 to speak with Salvator, give him his food, empty his chamber pot, and remove any finished works to put into storage at area C9.

Treasure: The three paintings are all original Screams—works produced before Salvator lost his muse—that Pilts salvaged from his previous home. The first depicts a full portrait of a thin humanoid wearing shadows as he stands framed by a dolmen of great size. The figure's brilliant blue eyes are the only true points of color in the piece, and they seem to almost glow with anger. This painting is worth 450 gp. The second picture depicts a rugged mountain range above a desert under a brilliant blue sky. In the foreground, a quartet of Vudran tusked camels ridden by N'darr tribesmen race across dunes that, upon closer examination, consist of tiny skulls. This picture is worth 1,100 gp. The final portrait is perhaps the most disturbing, for it depicts a handsome man in the process of peeling away the flesh of his arms as if he were taking off a pair of gloves—underneath, his arms are muscular and covered with glittering blue scales. The man's expression is one of delight, yet his eyes are empty pits of blackness. Half seen in the shadows beyond him are what can only be thousands of humans impaled on towering wooden poles erected in the shadow of an indistinct shape looming on the horizon—perhaps a castle, maybe a mountain, but likely something more. This last painting is worth a staggering 2,000 gp.

If Laori is with the PCs, she asks if it's okay for her to keep all three paintings. She'll settle on splitting the paintings evenly among the PCs and herself, but soon thereafter starts offering to buy them back.

C12. Salvator's Cell (EL 4)

The air in this room is an unpleasant mix of body odor and paint. A lumpy straw mattress lies on the floor in one corner of the room, partially covered by a few blankets, while in the other stands a large easel on which rests a nearly completed painting of immense fiends attacking a village.

Creature: This is where the Emperor has been keeping Salvator Scream—the artist hasn't left this room for many days, and his initial despair has fallen into a numb acceptance that this is his new life—painting for a madman when his muse is gone. Still, he works desperately to create and recapture his old inspiration, if only to produce a work that the Emperor enjoys. With each failed painting, the Emperor's frustration and anger grows, and he regularly beats Salvator after the ruined artist finishes a painting these days. Yet Salvator sees no chance at rescue, and so he continues to slave away at his easel, knowing with each brush stroke that all he has to look forward to at the end is a worse beating than the last one. Eventually, he hopes that the Emperor goes too far, solving the problem of his missing muse permanently.

Upon seeing anyone other than the Emperor, though, Salvator immediately falls to his knees and breaks into desperate sobs, begging for rescue between each heartbreaking shudder. He does or says anything to reward his rescuers, but his mind isn't so far gone that he just hands out all his information to anyone. Before he agrees to answer any questions the PCs might have, he demands two things—the death of the Emperor and to be escorted out of Old Korvosa to the mainland. His initial attitude is unfriendly; if made friendly, he agrees to talk if the PCs just help him escape. If made helpful, he spills what he knows immediately as long as the PCs promise to rescue him. Intimidation and magic can also serve to pressure him into revealing what he knows—routes that Laori, if she's with the PCs, encourages.

Salvator is a plain-looking man dressed in paint-stained rags. His skin is covered with flea bites and his eyes are sunken—he's barely been sleeping an hour or two at a time. The man is desperate, and wants only to escape the nightmare that has captured him.

SALVATOR SCREAM

Male human expert 6
LE Medium humanoid

Init +1; **Senses** Listen +10, Spot +10

DEFENSE

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10
(+1 Dex)

hp 29 (6d6+6)

Fort +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

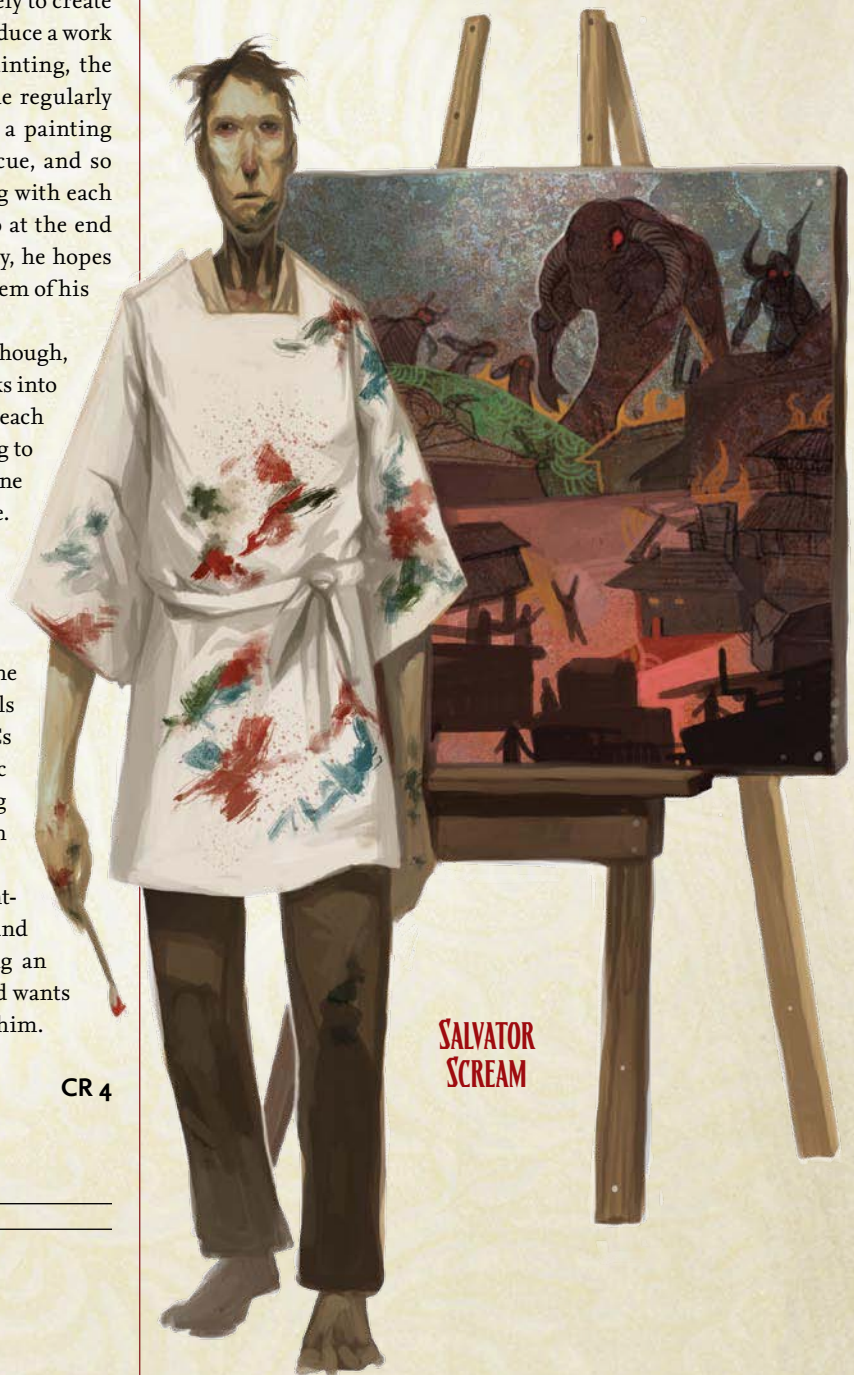
Spd 30 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +4 (1d3 nonlethal)

TACTICS

During Combat Salvator is no fighter, and he knows it. In combat, he covers behind his allies, throwing punches only when there's no other choice.

Morale Salvator flees if all his allies are defeated, or if reduced to less than 15 hit points. If he does so, his primary goal is to find a small dark place to hide, and he eventually works



SALVATOR SCREAM

CR 4

his way back to his home only to be eaten by the otyughs if the PCs haven't defeated them.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 12, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 9

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

Feats Alertness, Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Craft [painting])

Skills Craft (painting) +13, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Listen +10, Profession (artist) +8, Search +10, Sense Motive +8, Spot +10

Languages Common, Draconic

Gear stained clothes, painter's equipment

Development: If the PCs convince Salvator to talk here, the man has relatively little to say. He admits that he spoke with Vencarlo on several occasions, but if the PCs ask him what that subject was about, Salvator grows nervous. He'd rather not finish what he has to say unless he and the PCs are obviously in a safe place where he can't be overheard. Once these conditions have been met, he continues his story in a whisper.

Salvator explains his relationship with Neolandus Kalepopolis, going on to describe how the man showed up at his home, desperate, bloodied, and poisoned, early on the morning Eodred II died. Neolandus was delirious, but managed to convey to Salvator that he needed a place to hide. Salvator nursed him back to health, whereupon Neolandus confided in him that Queen Ileosa had murdered her husband, and that she'd entered an alliance with the Red Mantis. They were the ones who tried to assassinate Neolandus, and his escape was as much luck as anything. Worse, Neolandus said that there was something about Queen Ileosa that wasn't quite right—that she'd changed recently. Grown “worse,” whatever that meant. Neolandus refused to divulge more to Salvator, saying that “the less he knew, the safer he'd be,” and that the seneschal needed more time to think things through and do some research before he decided on the proper course of action.

Yet an artist's simple home is not a secure hideout—both Neolandus and Salvator knew this. Salvator had connections with the Arkonas (they were one of his greatest patrons), and when he suggested that Neolandus seek them out for asylum, the seneschal begrudgingly agreed. Salvator escorted his friend up to the Arkona Palace late one night, just a few days before the quarantine occurred, and hasn't seen his friend since.

Salvator says that the Arkonas seemed friendly enough, and at the time he felt they could be trusted to hide Neolandus from the queen. The artist even offers up the fact that they haven't given him up yet as proof that they were the best choice at the time. Yet after his meetings with Vencarlo, who revealed to Salvator his theories that the Arkonas were more criminal-minded than Salvator

suspected, the artist has come to believe that he might have just traded his friend's danger for a different one. He suspects that Vencarlo might have tried to infiltrate Palace Arkona to find out more, and if told that he's gone missing too, the artist grows pale before begging the PCs to find them both. “Korvosa's not a safe place for them—they need to escape the city!” he cries. “Myself too. And you as well!”

Laori has her own questions for him, but would rather not ask them in front of the PCs. If they give her no other choice, she begrudgingly proceeds. Her primary interest in Salvator is to determine where his ideas come from; when he reveals to her that, before Eodred II's death, his muse inspired him in vivid dreams and he merely painted these dreams, she grows excited and asks him to describe to her his memories of these dreams. When she asks him about why his current work doesn't hold the same power, she's disappointed to learn that Salvator's muse seems to have left him. She has no desire to punish; though, after all, if he's allowed to live, his muse might someday return. In any event, she volunteers to escort Salvator to the mainland, and even though she's a worshiper of the god of pain, she can be trusted to deliver on this promise. Once she learns what she can from Salvator, the strange elf takes her leave from the party (with Salvator if the PCs let her, but without if they don't trust her to see to his safety). She thanks them for their help, but says she must now report to her superiors. Before she leaves, she enigmatically predicts that she hasn't seen the last of the PCs, and tells them she looks forward to the next time they meet before slipping into the lengthening shadows of Old Korvosa.

Ad Hoc Experience Award: For learning what Salvator knows, award the PCs experience points as if they had defeated a CR 8 creature.

A Rousing Game

Stealth and violence are two possible methods to secure an audience with Salvator, but there is a more diplomatic approach as well. If the PCs can meet with the Emperor of Old Korvosa, be it as prisoners or as uninvited guests, they might just be able to convince the lunatic to let them talk with his pet artist. If asked about Salvator, the Emperor proudly admits that the artist is his “guest,” and that he won't be going anywhere any time soon. No amount of diplomacy or threat can convince the Emperor to grant an audience with the artist. Magic like *dominate person* or *suggestion* could work, but only if the PCs can do so without being obvious—and if their initial attempt fails, the Emperor realizes what the PCs are up to and orders their immediate execution. A battle against the Emperor, his cohort, and his 18 captains is an EL 12 encounter.

SQUIRMING PIG

A live pig does not enjoy being carried. Each round a live pig is held, roll a d6 and consult the following table to see how it reacts.

d6 Roll Pig's Action

- 1 **Limp:** Pig takes no action and simply hangs limp in the character's grasp.
- 2 **Squirm:** If the carrier doesn't make a DC 12 Strength check, he drops the pig.
- 3 **Squeal:** The noise draws a hearty round of laughter from the Emperor and his crowd.
- 4 **Bite:** The pig makes a +4 melee attack against the carrier, dealing 1d3 points of damage on a hit; this may cause the carrier to drop the pig (see Dropping a Pig).
- 5 **Kick:** The pig begins kicking. The carrier must make a DC 12 Dexterity check to avoid dropping the pig.
- 6 **Panic:** The pig explodes into a fury of action; apply the results of a squeal, a bite, a squirm, and a kick all at once.



Yet the Emperor isn't completely opposed letting people visit Salvator. After negotiations have gone on for a bit, the lunatic claps his hands as if to signal the end of discussion, but then gives the PCs a chance to "earn" the audience they so desperately seek. If they can win a game of blood pig against the Emperor's best players (eight of his captains who comprise the notorious "Shinglesnipes"), he'll allow them 5 minutes with Salvator—under his supervision, of course! If the PCs have given up their gear, he even promises to return it and grant the party an escort out of Old Dock after their interview if they can win this game.

If the PCs agree to his terms, he invites them to stand in the western square in the middle of the blood pig field (area C4d). As they do, another group of his captains take up position in the other square (area C4c)—eight of them in all—while the Emperor goes over the rules of the game.

Blood Pig!

The rules for blood pig are fairly simple; running the match uses standard combat rules, save that the PCs aren't in it to fight.

Goal: The goal of blood pig is to be the first team to reach five points.

Scoring Points: A player scores a point by throwing, kicking, dropping, or otherwise placing a pig in his team's pit. The PCs' pit is area C4f, while the Shinglesnipe's pit is area C4b. Each of these pits contains a starving wolverine. The pig's fate once thrown into a pit is a violent and swift death—all part of the entertainment for the Emperor. When a point is scored, a fresh pig is loaded into the cage on the opposite side of the playing field at the end of the next round.

Starting Points: Every member of a team must start the game within one of the 20-foot squares in the middle of the field. The PCs must start in area C4d, while the Emperor's team starts in area C4c. Exact positioning in these areas is left to the game players to decide. No more

than eight players can play on a team; if the PCs don't have enough players to round out their team, the Emperor shrugs and says, "At least you won't be as crowded when the game begins."

Limitations: No weapons are allowed in a game of blood pig. Casting spells before or during a match is also not allowed. Each time one of these rules is broken, the other team gets a point. The use of fists and other unarmed attacks does not count as the use of weapons—players are allowed (and expected) to throw punches during the game.

The Game Begins: Once all the players are in position, the Emperor flips a coin. If the result is heads, a trap door opens in area C5a and a frightened pig is raised up into the cage from a room below. If the result is tails, the pig is raised up through the trap door in area C5e. The game begins one round later as the Emperor cries out, "GO GET YOUR PIG!" At this point, each PC and each of the Shinglesnipes makes an Initiative check to determine when they act.

The Pig: Movement and fistfights between players is handled normally. The pig itself has an AC of 15 (+2 size, +3 Dex) and 4 hp. Retrieving, carrying, and throwing the pig is treated as follows.

- **Picking Up the Pig:** Retrieving the pig from a cage is a standard action that provokes an attack of opportunity. Picking up a live pig that has been dropped on the field requires a character to also make a successful touch attack against AC 15. If a member of the Emperor's team retrieves a pig from a cage and has the time, he spends the next round delivering a coup de grace attack against the pig.
- **Carrying a Pig:** A pig weighs 20 pounds. Each round that a character carries a live pig, roll 1d6 and consult the Squirring Pig sidebar to see how the pig reacts to being carried.
- **Dropping a Pig:** A character that takes damage while carrying a live pig must make a Reflex save (DC 10 + 1 per point of damage taken) to avoid dropping the squirming pig. (Damage taken does not incur a chance of dropping a dead pig.)



- **Passing a Pig:** A character can pass a pig to a teammate as a standard action if he is within reach of a teammate.
- **Throwing a Pig:** A pig is an improvised thrown weapon, and thus imparts a -4 penalty on attack rolls. It has a range increment of 10 feet. Catching a thrown pig requires a DC 12 Reflex check.
- **Into a Pit:** In order to throw a pig into a pit, the thrower must hit AC 6 with the thrown pig. Dropping a pig into an adjacent pit is a free action and is automatically successful.
- **Dropped Pig:** A pig that is dropped runs in a straight line away from the closest person on Initiative count o each round, moving at a speed of 20 feet.
- **Interceptions:** A character can attempt to intercept a thrown pig by successfully hitting it if it passes through a square he threatens.
- **Stealing a Pig:** A character can grab a pig out of another person's hands by making a successful disarm attempt. Roll 1d6 on the squirming pig table to determine how the pig reacts to the second person trying to snatch it away.

The Pits: Each pit contains a particularly hungry and aggressive wolverine. The pits are little more than holes that drop into a ten-foot-square room below; there are no walls to climb up to escape a pit, forcing those who fall into

the pit to fly or make a standing 10-foot-high Jump check to escape (for a Medium creature, this is a DC 16 Jump check to leap up and grab the edge above; for a Small creature, it's a DC 48 Jump check). Bull-rushing an opponent into a pit is a time-honored tactic to weaken the enemy team's resources. A character who kills one of the two wolverines automatically forfeits the game for his team, in which case the other team is declared the winner. The wolverines in these pits are free to attempt their DC 16 Jump checks to leap up and attack anyone standing at the edge of a pit.

WOLVERINES (2)
hp 28 (MM 283)

CR 2

Development: The Emperor is a sore loser. If the PCs win the game, he stands up and bellows, "**BEST OUT OF THREE!**" He also has his cohort Jabbyr join the Shinglesnipes for any additional games even if this is over the 8-man limit. If the PCs then go on to win two out of three games of Blood Pig, the Emperor cries out, "**BEST OUT OF FIVE!**" only to be told by a nervous captain that they've run out of pigs. For a moment, the Emperor seems ready to strap the captain into the Tall Knife. An instant later he regains his composure, congratulates the PCs on their victory, and invites them up

to the balcony to follow him inside his palace. Jabbyr and two captains accompany them. He bids the PCs wait in area C10 and then brings a nervous-looking Salvator out to speak to them. Of course, Salvator won't speak at all (unless magically compelled or successfully Intimidated) as long as the Emperor lives. How the PCs handle the situation at this time is up to them—but this may be the best chance to attack the Emperor, since the area's a relatively confined space and he doesn't have his 18 captains on hand to defend him.

Ad Hoc Experience Award: If the PCs win their set of Blood Pig games and secure an audience with Salvator, award them experience as if they had defeated a CR 9 creature.

PART THREE: WRATH OF THE ARKONAS

The true goal of this adventure for the PCs should eventually become a double rescue from the Arkona family. Both Neolandus Kalepopolis and Vencarlo Orisini are being held prisoner in the dungeons below the Arkona Palace, and while they're certainly protected from Queen Ileosa there (for the time being, at least), they're far from safe. This adventure assumes that the PCs learn that their quarry is held by the Arkonas through discussion with Salvator Scream, but other methods like divination spells or alternate lines of investigation can certainly lead them to at least suspect the Arkonas at any point during this adventure. A friendly visit to the palace shouldn't be too dangerous, but once the PCs decide to take the Arkonas on in battle, they should be ready for a fight. For the Arkonas are more than nobility, they are rakshasas.

The Arkonas' Secret

That the Arkonas control crime in Old Korvosa is not their true secret. The government knows that the Arkonas are heavily involved with the underworld, but since this crime is kept behind the scenes and doesn't disrupt life in Old Korvosa, the government has traditionally looked the other way—the good the Arkonas do is held to outweigh the bad. This is only because the true depravities and evil they inflict upon the city are well-hidden indeed.

The Arkonas first fell victim to the rakshasas many years ago, when the family attempted to establish a trade route with distant Vudra. What they found instead was death. The entire trade ship was murdered, the captain and family members replaced by rakshasas and the crew replaced by charmed thralls. When they returned to Korvosa, they found an entire city ripe for their harvest. Building on the now-established trade route with Vudra, the new Arkonas—rakshasas disguised as humans—were able to build their stolen name into one of Korvosa's most powerful families. Over the decades, the rakshasas have had their own secret internal wars for power, but their continued control over the family has remained.

Currently, the Arkona family is ruled by two rakshasas, the children of the original rakshasas who replaced the Arkonas so long ago. Of these two, Bahor has assumed the role of patriarch Glorio Arkona, while his sister Vimanda has assumed the role of Melyia Arkona, his lover. In private, the two rakshasas are constantly embroiled in tiny power plays to gain an advantage over the other, yet neither has yet made a move so reckless as to threaten what they have accomplished as a family so far. Under these two, several other rakshasas dwell in the palace, most of them having traveled from distant Vudra to join the Arkonas on their grand experiment in Korvosa. Below the rakshasas are the "kept men" of the family, humans who are kept in line via magical control and honeyed words. These humans do not suspect the Arkonas of being anything other than criminal masterminds.

Securing an Audience

While the Arkonas have increased patrols of their human guards in Fort Korvosa, the portion of Old Korvosa they've kept under their own watch during the quarantine, they have not closed their doors completely to the outside world. During the day, visitors to Palace Arkona are generally intercepted by a patrol of six house guards who politely but firmly demand to know the party's reasons for approaching the palace. As long as the PCs respond with a believable request (including requests for an audience with Glorio Arkona), the guards nod and escort them through the manicured, immaculately landscaped palace grounds.

Palace Arkona is perched at the highest point atop Endrin Isle in Old Korvosa. The palace is home to the family alone; servants and guards dwell nearby in one of two outbuildings. The grounds are generally open, decorated here and there with tiny copses of trees, exotic topiary animals (elephants, cobras, and tigers being the most common), beautiful flower gardens, and exquisite fountains. The palace is a breathtaking structure built in the Vudran style, with golden pillars, high windows that rise to tapered points, minarets, and domes decorated with slender spires. Inside, walls are made of ebony and carved with depictions of elephants, tigers, monkeys, and peacock, all with shimmering mother-of-pearl eyes. Doors are made of mahogany and carved with images of the Vudran deity Chamidu, the God of Wild Beasts (identifiable as such with a DC 30 Knowledge [religion] check). Chamidu appears as a six-armed, four-faced giant who rides a tiger with human hands for paws. All rooms are lit at night by everburning torches. Exotic plants in clay pots are in abundance, and each room is rich with their scent, mingled with that of sandalwood incense burning in brass censers that hang from the ceiling here and there. The rooms inside the palace are spacious and grand—ceilings, unless otherwise mentioned, are 20 feet high.