

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.

The PCs are led into the entry, whereupon the guards return to their patrol and the PCs are greeted by a tall, pleasant man who wears an eyepatch. He introduces himself as Carnochan, the palace majordomo. Carnochan hears the PCs' request, and if they wish an audience with Glorio (Melyia is not available), they are taken to the visitor's lounge (area D2), where Carnochan asks them to wait while he determines if the master of the palace has time for them. Characters may suspect that they are still under observation even after they are left alone in the visitor's lounge, and they are correct. Carnochan shares a permanent telepathic bond with Bahor, and alerts his superiors telepathically as soon as the PCs arrive, giving Bahor brief descriptions of them.

BAHOR



Bahor then uses *clairaudience/clairvoyance* (using his *third eye*) to observe area D2. If the PCs don't wait and instead move out to infiltrate the palace, Bahor alerts the others at once and the palace goes on alert.

If the PCs decide to wait, though, they are rewarded in about 5 minutes with the patriarch himself. Bahor greets the PCs warmly as Glorio Arkona, gently reprimanding Carnochan for not supplying the guests with wine and cheese to enjoy while they waited. As Carnochan scurries off to rectify this faux pas, Bahor joins the PCs on one of the room's couches and asks them how he can be of service.

Bahor plays the role of a concerned noble, saying that he's done what he can with his limited resources to keep Old Korvosa from falling into complete anarchy, but he admits there could be more done. He has nothing but kind words and support to offer if asked about the queen, ruminating that quarantine really was her only choice and hoping that she'll be able to lift it soon. Throughout his discussion, though, Bahor drops hints that he thinks the queen is driving Korvosa into the ground and that she needs to be removed from power, using *Bluff* to communicate this innuendo. If confronted point-blank with these thoughts, he feigns shock and denies that's what he said, while still maintaining his *Bluff* to get across his true feelings.

Bahor does indeed want Queen Ileosa out of power, and he hopes to accomplish this goal by using seneschal Kalepopolis when the time is right so that he can step in to take her place. Maneuvering his agents and sycophants throughout the city government and other noble families to ensure that this end result occurs is a delicate procedure, though, and Bahor estimates that he won't be ready to make his move for several more months. Until then, he hopes to retain possession of Neolandus so that he can release him to do his job at precisely the right moment. At least, that was his plan until recently.

Queen Ileosa's shocking display of power at the start of this adventure has put Bahor ill at ease. He now suspects that the queen has gained a potent source of power, likely something to do with her new crown. His interrogations and mind readings of Kalepopolis have verified his fears. Currently, Bahor is unsure how to proceed—he certainly doesn't want to risk his own life directly opposing the queen, yet at the same time he knows something must be done before her power grows too great.

As it turns out, the PCs may be his salvation.

Bahor uses *detect thoughts* and the conversation itself to judge the PCs' position on things. He suspects they're here to rescue Vencarlo, Neolandus, or both, but he certainly can't just hand them over without appearing weak before his minions (an act he fears would give Vimanda the support she's seeking to seize control of the family). After speaking with the PCs for some time, Bahor hints (again using *Bluff*) that he knows that there's something more

to the queen than meets the eye. Furthermore, he hints that he can put the PCs in contact with someone who may be able to help them—if they can help him first.

Among his other plans, Bahor wants to regain control of Old Korvosa, and a major step in that direction would be the removal of the Emperor of Old Korvosa. At this point, Bahor drops all pretense of subtlety, stating flat out that if the PCs can assassinate the Emperor, he's certain that the mob in Old Dock will collapse and his agents will be able to step in and regain control of Old Korvosa. In return, he promises to do what he can to help the PCs find their friends. If the PCs have already done this, he smiles broadly and proceeds to aid them as detailed below.

Bahor has little more to say after this, and guides the PCs back to the palace entrance where they are escorted off the Arkona grounds by the guards. Bahor asks them not to return until the matter they discussed is handled, wishes them luck, and retreats back to the upper floor to continue laying his complex plans.

Bahor's Offer

Once the PCs have removed the Emperor of Old Korvosa from the picture, it doesn't take long for word to reach the rakshasa. When the PCs return to the Palace, they are greeted warmly and swiftly escorted upstairs into the Baths (area **D15**), where Bahor lounges in the water. He remains in the water as he congratulates them on their success. In compensation for their service to the family, he's ready to offer an additional reward—a *ring of evasion* set with a deep green bloodstone that sits on a nearby shelf. Of course, this bloodstone is also linked to Bahor's *third eye* (see page 43); the cost of giving up such a powerful magic item pales in comparison to the new viewpoint Bahor could gain if the PCs accept the gift.

Bahor then asks the PCs, point blank, what they wish of him. Assuming they ask for Vencarlo or Neolandus, he gives a rueful smile, then goes on to explain that simply handing over these guests to the PCs may be a "trifle complicated." He goes on to explain that both these guests have been sent into the Vivified Labyrinth. A DC 25 Knowledge (local) is enough to recall rumors of this notorious dungeon, a place said to be used by the Arkonas to torment and test prisoners and agents alike. Bahor apologizes for the complication, and won't retrieve either "guest" for the PCs, but he will do the next best thing. He tells them the secret of the elephant statue in area **D4**, how to access the caverns below the palace, and where to seek the secret door that leads down to the entrance to the labyrinth. He'll even tell the PCs that the labyrinth can be adjusted by pulling key levers to rotate the four sections, promising them that both the people they seek are hidden therein.

What he doesn't tell them is that he's also sending Vimanda into the labyrinth to ambush them. To Vimanda,



RAKSHASAS HAVE GLASS JAWS

For the most part, the CRs assigned monsters in the MM work out pretty well, but there are a few notable cases where the numbers don't quite match the creature's power. One such case is the poor rakshasa. While its damage reduction and spell resistance are formidable, it really can't do much damage for a CR 10 creature. Against PCs who can penetrate its defenses (perhaps by taking advantage of its relatively low AC with Power Attack, scoring critical hits, or using attacks that bypass DR and SR entirely, such as conjuration spells or plain old fire), it simply doesn't have the staying power a CR 10 creature should have.

For *Pathfinder*, we've reclassified the rakshasa's CR at 8. This is still a bit higher than his offensive abilities would seem to indicate, but when matched with his incredible defenses, the challenge works out about right. If, while running this adventure, you find that those two defenses really do make them dangerous, feel free to increase the CR of all rakshasas encountered in this adventure by two back to their SRD standard—but I suspect that as soon as your players hit one with a few arrows or crossbow bolts enhanced by *align weapon* (or get in a few critical hits with an axe, scythe, or other high-crit weapon), you'll see what I'm talking about.

—James Jacobs

he explains this away as a game, and by letting her finish off the PCs, he's giving her a great honor. Of course, Bahor's true hope is that the PCs kill his sister, allowing him to seize control of the family without resorting to the distasteful step of murdering one of his own blood.

Bahor certainly expects the PCs to react to his offer with anger, disbelief, and hostility, but he doesn't see that they have any other choice. If the PCs attack him, he fights back as detailed in his stat block (see area **D18**), but he hopes it won't come to that. It would be a shame to waste such excellent pawns, after all.

Infiltrating the Palace

Since Bahor hopes to use the PCs to help with his own goals, his response to an infiltration of his palace is unusual. When informed by his guards of the event, he commands them to repulse the PCs but does not step in to aid them. The rakshasa is somewhat curious to see how well his defenses hold up against the PCs—only when they finally confront him in his chambers or attempt to damage his treasury in area **D16** does he tempt them with his offer, as detailed above.

The following encounter areas assume that the Palace is not on alert, and give the standard locations and activities of the guards and rakshasas that dwell within. Once the

Arkona Palace

Ground Floor



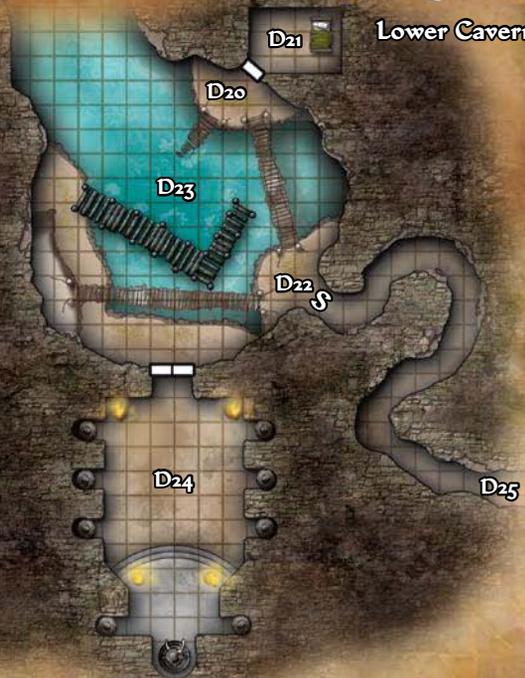
Upper Floor



Upper Cavens



Lower Cavens



palace alarm is raised, all servants and human guards flee the building, knowing full well that their masters tend not to discriminate between intruders and the help when defending their lair. Bahor retires to his chambers in the event of an alarm, and sends Vimanda down into the Vivified Labyrinth to await the PCs should they reach that area. The four remaining rakshasas in the palace split into two groups of two; one pair goes to the garden (area D4) to take up guard positions, while the other pair patrols the remaining rooms (patrolling in encounter number order and spending a few rounds in each room searching for intruders).

AVISHANDU, CARNOCHAN, NUDHAALI, AND VENNASHTI CR 8
Male rakshasas
hp 52 each (MM 211)

D1. Palace Entrance

A black marble arch depicting dozens of elephants standing one atop the other frames a great ebony door in the south wall of this wide and airy entrance hall. Above the door, a single one-eyed elephant looks out over the hall, its eye a glittering bloodstone the size of an apple. Tall windows grant a commanding view of the palace grounds, and a rich red carpet, ten feet wide and luxuriously thick, provides a pathway between doors to the west and north, and around a corner to the east. Each of these doors, including a few smaller ones just west of the northern pair, are decorated with images of a six-armed, four-faced woman who rides a tiger with human hands for feet.

The palace doors are generally kept unlocked, even after dark—a manifestation of the Arkona arrogance and belief that anyone foolish enough to try to invade the palace shouldn't be detained from meeting his proper punishment at the hands of the palace guards.

A permanent *magic mouth* spell wards the door, triggering an audible alarm that sounds like a bull elephant trumpeting (including an illusion of the elephant head above the door's sudden animation) whenever anyone not visibly wearing the Arkona family crest walks into view of the effect. This alarm doesn't trigger if at least one person in a group wears the crest.

Treasure: The bloodstone set in the one-eyed elephant's eye socket is one of several differently sized bloodstones linked to Bahor's *third eye*. He can look through this stone as if it were his own eye, and does so if the alarm goes off. This bloodstone's faint divination aura, like all of the *third eye* bloodstones, is hidden by a *magic aura* spell cast at caster level 10th. The bloodstone is worth 1,000 gp.

D2. Visitor's Lounge

This comfortable room is warmed by a large fireplace, its marble sides and mantle carved into a parade of capering monkeys and tigers. A large sofa sits to the north, while a few comfortable-looking chairs sit to the south.

This is where the Arkonas meet with visitors to the palace, and likely where Bahor first meets with the PCs if they seek his audience.

D3. Statue of Chamidu

A fourteen-foot-tall marble statue of a six-armed woman with four faces on her head, one looking to each of the four cardinal directions, stands under a dome of colored glass. The statue wields numerous weapons in its six arms, and a small kneeler at its base gives a place to pay respects to whatever deity the statue represents. Each of the statue's eight eyes is a sparkling bright green orb.

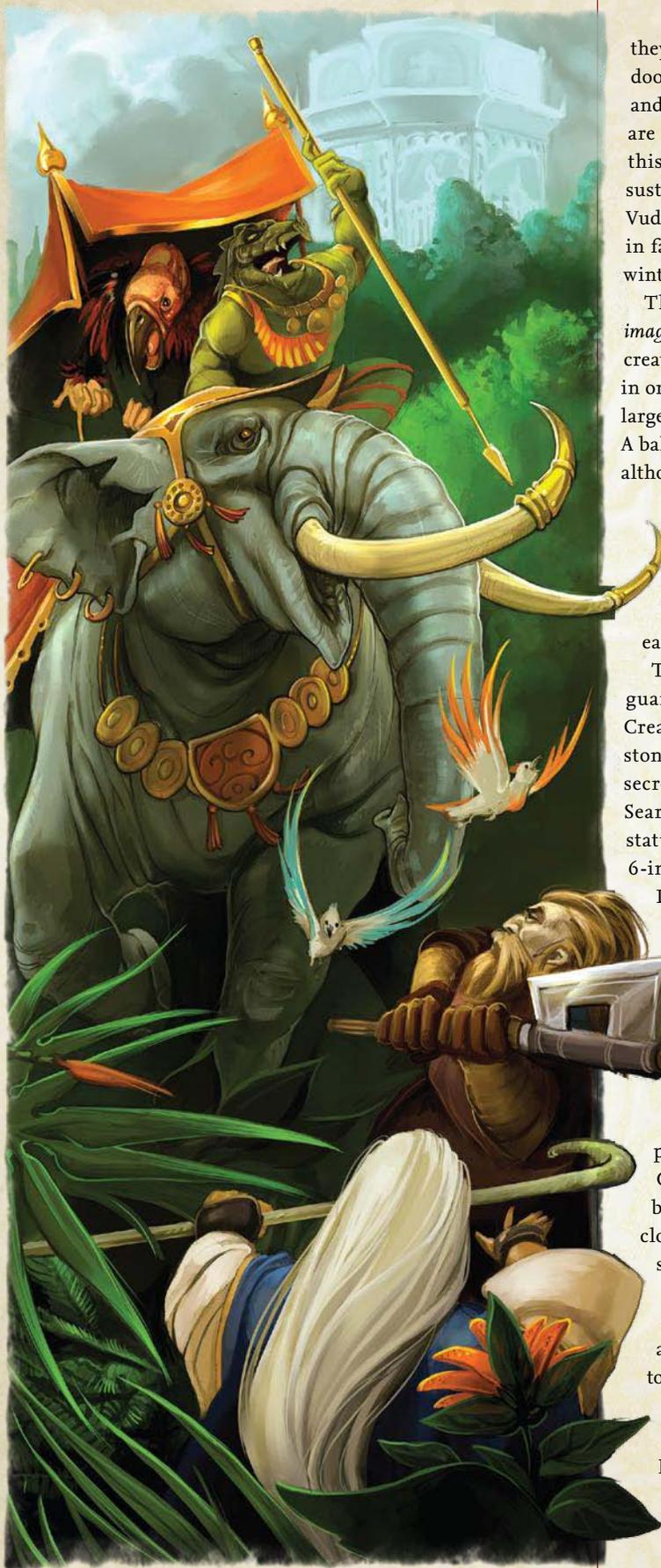
This statue is a depiction of the Vudran goddess Chamidu, a deity with an affinity for the beasts of the world. A DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the exotic goddess.

Treasure: The left eye in the statue's west-facing face is a 200 gp *third eye* bloodstone.

D4. Garden (EL 8 or 11)

This chamber hardly seems to be part of a palace—it seems more like a clearing at the heart of a vast jungle, teeming with life. The sky above is a deep, cloudless blue, while in the distance, hazy towers of distant structures rise above the verdant canopy. Exotic bird calls fill the air, the scent of dozens of unfamiliar flowers and plants assault the nose, and everywhere a riot of color demands the eye, be it the wing of a tropical bird, the petals of a brightly hued flower, or the glittering multicolored tiles that make up a round fountain to the north, its central plume a stone pillar around which entwine two cobra statues that clutch green gems in their fanged maws. Opposite the fountain to the south stands an immense, life-sized jade statue of an elephant, a howdah perched on its back, its tusks and trunk raised high in greeting to the southeast doors—doors that, from inside the room, look more like gates set into a wrought iron fence that encircles the garden. Other gates set in this fence doubtless lead to other parts of the palace, and after a bit more observation the somewhat static nature of the jungle and landscape becomes apparent—the walls of this garden are in fact an incredibly realistic and clever painting of a Vudran junglescape.

The paintings along the walls bear minor illusions to enhance their realism, but close inspection reveals that



they, the “fence” enclosing the area, and even the gate- doors are little more than clever deceptions. The birds and small animals dwelling in the garden, though, are all very much alive. Temperature and humidity in this chamber are maintained by magic, creating a self- sustaining ecosystem that effectively duplicates the Vudran jungle—the Arkonas often come here to relax in familiar surroundings, particularly on cold Korvosan winter days.

The windows in the walls all bear permanent *silent images* that prevent them from breaking the illusion created by the room while still allowing sunlight to filter in on the plants. Skylights above do the same, including a large glass dome above the northern portion of the room. A balcony encircles the room as well at a height of 25 feet, although from ground level looking up, it takes a DC 15 Spot check to be able to tell the edge of the balcony apart from the upper walls and dome, so clever are the paintings and illusions. If a creature stands on the upper balcony so as to be visible to those below, this additional point of reference makes it much easier to see the balcony’s edge.

The elephant statue is in fact one of the room’s guardians—a variant *figurine of wondrous power* (see Creatures and Treasure below). The 10-foot-diameter stone platform on which it stands is a large circular secret trap door that can be discovered with a DC 25 Search check. This door can be opened even when the statue is standing on the platform by pressing a hidden 6-inch-diameter pressure plate at the disc’s center.

Doing so causes the entire disk to slowly rotate, as if it were an immense cap unscrewing from a container. The platform makes a 180-degree turn, and as it does so, a curved opening appears, granting access to a flight of spiral stairs that descend into the ground to area D19. From below, the secret trap door can be opened by pressing a second hidden switch in the wall, twenty steps down. Like the trap door itself, this panel can be discovered with a DC 25 Search check. Once opened, the door remains open for 10 minutes before closing automatically. It can also be manually closed by pressing one of the hidden pressure plates a second time.

Both of the double doors leading out onto the palace grounds are kept locked (DC 30 Open Lock to unlock), and each is warded with a *magic mouth* alarm similar to the one in area D1 save that these doors are not fitted with *third eye* bloodstones.

Creatures: The fountain itself constantly replenishes pure, cool water. The upward plume of water may appear to be created by pressure or a hidden pump, but is in fact generated by a huge water elemental bound to

the room. It recognizes the Arkonas on sight, but does not attack intruders unless they open the secret trap door or it sees intruders attacked by the Arkonas themselves.

The marble elephant remains passive until commanded to attack, or unless someone attempts to pass through the secret trap door without first uttering the passphrase, “Chamidu is blind.”

If the palace is on alert, two of the Arkona rakshasas (Avishandu and Nudhaali) lurk in the howdah on the elephant’s back, ready to ambush any intruders that wander into this room or who pass along the balcony in area D12 above.

LARGE WATER ELEMENTAL CR 5

hp 68 (MM 100)

TACTICS

During Combat The elemental does not start combat on its own, and remains hidden as water until an enemy in an existing combat comes within reach, at which point it attacks. Once it attacks, the elemental leaves its fountain to pursue enemies throughout this chamber but will not chase enemies into other parts of the palace or out onto the grounds, instead returning to this fountain.

Morale The elemental fights to the death.

ELEPHANT CR 7

hp 104 (MM 272)

TACTICS

During Combat Once activated, the elephant follows the commands of its activator. If it activates on its own, it attacks anyone who attempts to use the trap door, returning to this pedestal as soon as the trap door closes.

Morale The elephant fights to the death. If slain, it reverts to its small figurine shape.

AVISHANDU AND NUDHAALI, CR 8

ARKONA RAKSHASAS

hp 52 each (MM 211)

TACTICS

Before Combat The rakshasas cast *mage armor* as soon as they go on alert. Once they take position in the elephant’s howdah, they also cast *shield*, *bear’s endurance*, and *invisibility*, recasting these spells 7 minutes later when they expire if no one’s entered the garden yet. If no one’s entered the garden after the second 7 minute period, the rakshasas abandon their post to join the other two on patrol until they’re certain that whatever triggered the alarm has been dealt with.

During Combat When combat begins, Avishandu activates the elephant and orders it to attack the PCs, while Nudhaali casts *haste*. The rakshasas use *acid arrow* on the PCs from their howdah, or *suggestion* to go leap into the fountain to cool off from the heat present in this room.

Morale The rakshasas fight to the death.

Treasure: The two gems in the cobra mouths on the fountain are bloodstones, each worth 100 gp. The one facing west is a *third eye* bloodstone.

If the elephant is defeated, it reverts to its dormant *figurine of wondrous power* shape. This figurine has an additional power beyond those normally possessed by a *marble elephant*, though—it can be commanded to assume the form of a marble, life-sized statue of an elephant rather than its normal figurine form. Treat this effect as if the elephant were under the effects of a *statue* spell. Assuming statue form counts as one of its activations for the month, but it can remain in statue form for an indefinite period of time. This additional function makes the *marble elephant* a bit more valuable than most of its kind—it’s worth 26,000 gp.

D5. Garden Storage

Maintaining the garden in area D4 requires a lot of water, work, and landscaping. This room is used to store all the tools necessary, including five huge casks of water and dozens of buckets and other containers for the servants to use to do just that.

D6. Storerooms

These storerooms are used to house all manner of tools, firewood, food, and other necessities. There’s little of interest in these chambers, except the fact that the stacks of barrels and crates could provide lots of places to hide.

D7. Library

Two floor-to-ceiling bookshelves decorate the south and west walls of this chamber, facing a curved north wall on which hang a half-dozen grotesque paintings depicting torture, murder, cannibalism, and even necrophilia. Two glittering chandeliers hang from the ceiling, providing more than enough lighting for anyone sprawled on the dozens of cushions strewn about the room to read by.

The Arkona library is small, but well-stocked with a wide variety of books ranging in topic from poetry to philosophy to essays to fiction. Tawdry romances are shelved next to detailed explorations of the nature of conjuration magic in no apparent order. A fair number of the books are written in Vudran and are concerned with topics and themes common to that distant land, yet even these books cover a wide range of subjects.

Treasure: The six paintings on the wall are all Salvators—and among that body of work, these six are among the most stomach-turning and disgusting in

subject matter. As always, the color blue plays a prominent role in the paintings. Each painting is worth 800 gp.

D8. Smoking Den (EL 8)

A long couch and two stuffed chairs sit around an elegant rug on the floor of this room, the walls of which are carved in depictions of air spirits cavorting in the clouds. The scent of strange and exotic smoke lingers in the air, and four bejeweled hookahs sit in the room, two at either end of the couch, and one next to each chair. A flight of stairs leads up to the floor above, and a glass case built into the underside of these stairs displays a wide collection of cigars, pottery jars, and bundles of dried leaves in a range of colors.

The four hookahs are each valuable, but the real treasure in this room is the collection of exotic tobacco and cigars in the case. The case itself is locked (DC 40 Open Lock to pick; Bahor carries the only key), but it's a relatively simple matter to smash the glass to get to the contents.

Trap: This room and the expensive collection in the case are protected by a magical trap triggered by any attempt to damage the glass case or pick its lock. Doing so causes smoke to pour from the walls as two belkers are summoned to defend the chamber. The belkers appear near the 20-foot-high ceiling of the room. Their reach allows them to attack creatures on the floor but prevents most creatures on the floor from attacking them in turn.

HUNGRY SMOKE TRAP CR 8

Type magical; Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** repair

Effect When the glass case is damaged or the lock is attempted with anything other than its proper key, two belkers are summoned into the room. The belkers remain summoned for 2 minutes, after which time they vanish.

BELKERS (2) CR 6

hp 38 each (MM 27)

Treasure: Each of the hookahs is worth 350 gp. A *third eye* bloodstone worth 100 gp has been incorporated into the pipe of the hookah next to the southwestern chair.

The contents of the glass case amount to 10 pounds of exotic cigars, smoking weed, and other relatively minor narcotics. In all, the collection is worth 1,400 gp.

D9. Trophy Hall

Glass cases line the north and south walls of this hallway. To the north is displayed a wide collection of exotic weapons, many of which resemble swords, spears, or starknives, hanging on

the wall around a suit of bright blue leather and ivory armor. To the south is a somewhat gruesome display of a stuffed tiger feeding upon a very realistic sculpture of a dead Vudran man.

Both display cases are locked but not trapped; it's a DC 20 Open Lock check to get to the contents of either case. The tiger was once a real beast, but is now stuffed with sawdust. The human it's depicted as disemboweling looks realistic, but is nothing more than a wax sculpture. The body's exposed heart, though, is in fact a large carved bloodstone, identifiable as such from afar with a DC 20 Appraise check.

Treasure: The bloodstone heart is a *third eye* bloodstone worth 500 gp.

The weapons in the northern display case consist of six masterwork punching daggers, two masterwork sais, two masterwork sianghams, a dozen masterwork daggers, a masterwork falchion, two masterwork spears, and a +1 *ghost touch kama*. The suit of leather is a suit of +2 *light fortification studded leather*.

D10. Statuary

A gracefully curving wall lined with tall windows presents a commanding view of the western palace grounds. The room itself is empty save for three human-sized statues, each depicting a Vudran warrior holding aloft a glittering blue-green javelin with a head carved from bloodstone.

These three statues depict Vudran soldiers, yet another display brought here by the Arkonas to remind them of their homeland. Each of the the statues bears a *magic mouth* spell that activates if any creature draws or carries an unsheathed weapon into the room. Once triggered, the three statues begin to shout highly insulting oaths in Vudran, serving to alert the house guards (particularly those who may still be at rest in area D14 above).

Treasure: All three statues hold javelins that can be removed from the statue with ease (an act that, once the weapon is removed, triggers the statue's magic mouth). All three have bloodstone heads, but only the central statue is a *third eye* bloodstone. Each javelin head is worth 150 gp.

D11. Banquet Hall

A magnificent mahogany table dominates this room, the surface of which is decorated with an immense cover fashioned from the brightly colored skins of various great snakes.

This room is where the Arkonas take most of their meals, feasting on sumptuous banquets prepared by the small army of servants who dwell in the nearby outbuilding—no

servants are allowed in the palace during dinner, as part of a particularly restrictive Vudran custom. Of course, now and then the Arkonas prefer to feed in their natural forms, in which case their meals are much more living and loud and wet. These meals typically take place behind locked doors in the rakshasas' bedchambers (or barracks, in the case of the four guards), with use of prestidigitation to clean up afterwards.

The double doors leading out onto the palace grounds are kept locked (DC 30 Open Lock to unlock), and warded with a *magic mouth* alarm similar to the one in area **D1** save that these doors are not fitted with *third eye* bloodstones.

D12. Upper Balcony

This walkway overlooks the garden on the ground floor 25 feet below, and as such this area is generally warmer than the rest of the building as heated air rises up from the chamber below. The sound of birdcalls and the gentle babble of the fountain trickle up as well.

D13. Washroom

A large mirror hangs on the western wall of this washroom and latrine. The air smells remarkably fresh, and the water-filled seat of ease to the east seems unnecessarily comfortable-looking.

Several minor magical effects in this room keep the air fresh and the toilet clean. Waste placed into the water is immediately transformed into clean water that is then drained away by an ingenious set of pipes that feed into the garden below.

Treasure: The large toilet is something of a marvel, worth 150 gp but weighing nearly 300 pounds, making transport of the treasure both awkward and possibly embarrassing.

D14. Barracks (EL 12)

The floor of this barracks is thickly carpeted and strewn with numerous throw pillows and furs. The walls are carved with erotic depictions of men and women engaged in all manner of sexual acts. The only real furnishings in the room are the four beds against the western wall.

Creatures: This room is the home to four Arkona "cousins"—rakshasas who don't bear an actual blood relation to the Arkonas, having recently come to live here from Vudra. They are presented to Korvosa as distant cousins, and as a result are now generally thought of as members of the nobility. These four rakshasas are each tasked with two roles in the palace—to serve as guards, and to serve an additional role particular to that rakshasa's temperament. Although the rakshasas are careful to

retain their human disguises in public, they generally prefer to lounge in their true forms when they're off duty, often with a beautiful woman or four abducted for their entertainment and feeding. The quarantine has put a kink in their standard hunt, preventing them from gathering new "meals" with ease, and as a result the four rakshasas have grown quite short-tempered with each other. As long as the alarm isn't raised, their arguments and bickering gives them a –5 penalty on Listen checks to hear the alarms in areas **D1**, **D4**, **D10**, or **D11**.

Avishandu is a condor-headed rakshasa. His keen sight and eye for grace makes him ideal for tasks like landscaping and other types of delicate artistic maintenance on the palace. One-eyed Carnochan has an orangutan's head—his knack for knowing the right thing to say makes him an excellent choice as the palace's majordomo and the initial point of contact for visitors. Nudhaali has a lizard's head—his obsession with food makes him ideal for handling the complex task of keeping the kitchen staff in line (and in hiding the fact that much of the meat they prepare for the Arkonas comes from humanoids). And boar-headed Vennashti's knack for security makes him the best nominee to supervise patrol tactics and the overall security of the palace. When the alarm goes off, it's to Vennashti the other three turn to for guidance.

**AVISHANDU, CARNOCHAN, NUDHAALI, AND CR 8
VENNASHTI; ARKONA RAKSHASAS**
hp 52 each (MM 211)

D15. Bath

The air in this chamber is incredibly warm and humid, filled with steam rising from the bubbling oval bath set in the floor to the southeast. The walls, ceiling, and floor are set with polished marble tiles of alternating blues and greens, giving the entire chamber a pervasive aquatic feel. Three lacquered wooden benches sit just north of the bath itself.

The bath's temperature is maintained by several minor magical enhancements, keeping the water hot at all times and preventing the constant moisture from damaging the surrounding structure of the room itself. The temperature of the water can be controlled by the mental command of anyone in the water, ranging from cold to not-quite-scalding. Unlike the toilet in area **D13**, though, this minor magical marvel is not portable, and cannot be looted by greedy intruders.

D16. Leaves of Gold and Glitter (EL 9)

The door to this room appears to be made of ebony, but is in fact made of iron. The chamber beyond is the Arkona's treasury, one of the most secure rooms in the palace. The

door is locked physically (Open Lock DC 40) and magically (via *arcane lock* at CL 15th; Bahor used a powerful scroll to create this effect). The door is also warded by a permanent *alarm* spell—unlike the others in the palace, this one is a silent mental alarm that alerts Bahor if anyone enters the room beyond.

The plain ebony walls of this chamber seem to glisten with moisture. Above, the chamber rises forty feet to a domed ceiling set with eight wedge-shaped windows; to the north, east, and south three additional tall glass windows rise up from floor level to the dome. The room itself is empty, save for a thirty-foot-tall tree with sparkling gold and green leaves, its roots burrowing in and out of the floor. A breeze tickles the branches above, and as the leaves waver, the sound of crystal bells filters through the room.

Bahor spared no expense in building this vault—it’s somewhat ironic that the cost of the chamber itself may even be more than that of the treasures kept inside.

The “moisture” on the walls (and floor, windows, and ceiling) is in fact permanent *walls of force*; the only opening into this room is via the door. Furthermore, the chamber is warded by a *forbiddance* effect (CL 13th, Will DC 21) keyed to lawful evil. The third ward in place in this chamber is the “tree” itself. A DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check correctly identifies it as the Tree of Eternal Dawn, a mythical tree said to grow on a lost island in northern Vudra, whose leaves are reputed to grant eternal life at a terrible cost (variously said to be the loss of all emotions, eternal life without eternal youth, or eternal life only after the seeker is himself turned into a tree in the surrounding grove). The tree in this room is an illusion generated by a persistent *screen* effect that masks the room’s actual contents: a single iron cabinet. A character who interacts with the tree can attempt a DC 23 Will save to see through the illusion.

Treasure: The iron chest in the middle of the room is locked (Open Lock DC 40) but not trapped. Sitting atop the chest is a single *third eye* bloodstone worth 100 gp, placed here so that Bahor can peer into his treasure as needed to secure his paranoia that all is well. The chest contains the majority of the Arkona family’s wealth. Unfortunately for would-be looters, the majority of this wealth consists of oaths of loyalty, debt, and servitude that show just how vast the Arkona’s influence over Korvosa’s crime scene actually is. This is the final level of protection—the Arkonas have effectively spread their fortune through dozens, if not hundreds, of different treasuries throughout the city. Even if their palace were completely cleaned out of valuables, they would be able to call in these various debts to replenish what was stolen with relative ease.

Sifting through these hundreds of documents reveals that the entire roster of the city’s thieves’ guild (the

Cerulean Society) is in the Arkona’s pocket. The most recent bit of correspondence between Glorio Arkona and Guildmaster Boule commands the Cerulean Society to “bottle up” during the quarantine, to let things unfold as they may, so that the citizens will be “properly desperate” when the Arkonas decide to make their move with “the fool seneschal” to usurp the queen and gain control over all of Korvosa. The letter closes with a promise from Glorio to gift all of Old Korvosa to the Cerulean Society to do with as they see fit. Even if the PCs don’t kill every rakshasa in the palace, this stack of papers is enough to politically destroy the Arkona family—once the situation with Queen Ileosa is handled, of course.

There are, nevertheless, some actual items of value kept in the chest, including three leather bags of coins (4,000 sp, 2,000 gp, and 500 pp), 5,500 gp worth of assorted gems and jewels, and a lacquered cherrywood and ivory *+1 holy light crossbow* that a would-be assassin who discovered what the Arkonas actually were once attempted to use on Bahor several decades ago. Bahor knows that the weapon is a danger, but its beauty was too much to bear destroying, so he locked it in here, the most secure of the palace’s rooms, for safekeeping on the theory that if his enemies made it in here, he’d either be long gone or dead already.

D17. Vimanda’s Room

This austere chamber is apparently the sleeping chamber of someone quite orderly. The bed is made, sheets drawn tight against the mattress and pillows arranged perfectly at the head, and a dressing table and chair at the bed’s side are both dust-free and polished to a shine.

This chamber belongs to Vimanda, Bahor’s sister. Publicly, the two play the role of lovers, yet privately, the two have slowly grown to despise each other, each maintaining the veneer of civility and cooperation out of little more than tradition. Vimanda has spent much of the last several years building her own contacts among Korvosa’s underworld in preparation for her takeover of the Arkona family. The death of King Eodred II threw these plans into chaos, and of late, Vimanda’s been spending an increasing amount of time in the dungeons below, venting her frustrations on prisoners.

D18. Bahor’s Room (EL 14)

The crowning glory of this dazzling chamber is, without a doubt, the four-poster canopied bed that takes up a full quarter of the room. Silk sheets, gossamer curtains, ebony bedposts depicting tigers and cobras chasing monkeys in an endless circle, and a half-dozen huge pillows combine to create a resting place fit for a king. Strange and ferocious animal heads are mounted on

the walls, their eyes looking almost alive. A towering redwood cabinet stands against the eastern wall, while to the west sits a massive desk covered with books and scrolls and a large green paperweight the size of an apple. An exotic-looking five-foot-long stringed instrument sits on display on a bronze stand near the desk, and a spherical birdcage containing several brightly colored songbirds hangs from the center of the ceiling above.

This, Bahor's personal quarters, is perhaps the most ostentatious chamber in all of Arkona Palace. The exquisite furniture in here is worth a combined total of 3,000 gp but is quite unwieldy—the more portable treasures in the room are listed below.

The papers on the desk are a combination of astrological charts, maps of the world (including several of Vudra), and various bits of non-incriminating paperwork involving the day-to-day business of running a noble family. The trophies mounted on the wall all bear names identifying them as Vudran animals—a Barakot Peacock, a Ukhrul Wolverine, a Khar Great Skink, a Kothar Great Bat, a Vimerian Tiger and a Johar Long Viper. A DC 25 Knowledge (nature) check is enough to note that these heads seem somehow “off,” and not really like real animal heads at all. A DC 30 Knowledge (the planes) check reveals the truth—these are all preserved rakshasa heads. Bahor enjoys keeping trophies of his predecessors and children (all of whom have, to date, disappointed the rakshasa).

Creature: Bahor has been spending more and more of his time brooding in this chamber, waiting patiently for the quarantine to end so he can get about with the business of displacing Queen Ileosa. News of the failed assassination attempt against her has somewhat rattled the normally confident rakshasa, though, and now his thoughts turn to desperate plans.

Bahor's plans for the PCs are detailed above under “Securing an Audience” and “Bahor's Offer.” If the PCs invade his palace, he patiently waits here in human form for them to confront him, at which point he calmly invites them to listen to his offer. If the PCs instead attack him, he sighs with regret and does his best to put them down. Bahor is a dangerous foe, easily the most dangerous enemy the PCs meet in this adventure—they would be well advised to listen to his offer.

BAHOR (AKA GLORIO ARKONA)

CR 14

Male rakshasa rogue 10

LE Medium outsider (native)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +20, Spot +20

DEFENSE

AC 36, touch 19, flat-footed 30

(+4 armor, +3 deflection, +6 Dex, +9 natural, +4 shield)

hp 168 (17 HD; 7d8+10d6+102)

Fort +14, **Ref** +18, **Will** +8

THIRD EYE

Aura moderate divination;

CL 11th

Slot —; **Price** 20,000 gp;

Weight —

DESCRIPTION

The practice of *third eye* magic has a long-standing tradition among a Vudran mystical organization known as the Daughters of the Blinding Night.

A practitioner of this mysterious sect visited Bahor and Vimanda some years ago to grant them this magic in return for a wealth of magic and secrets the Arkonas stole from the Acadamae.

As part of the process of gaining a *third eye*, the creator grafts an actual eye into the palm of the recipient's hand. Generally human eyes are used, but any eye harvested from a creature the same size as the recipient will do. Once an eye is grafted into a palm, it is undetectable while closed and doesn't hinder the user's manual dexterity in the slightest. When in use, the eye opens.

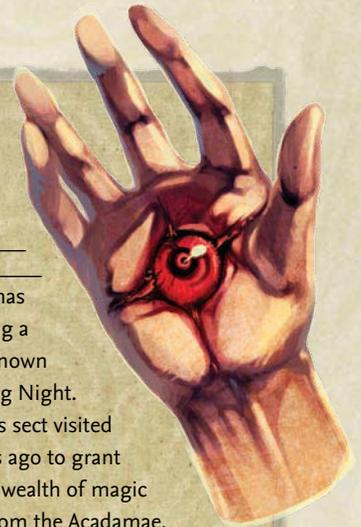
The owner of a *third eye* can use it to see through the donor creature's remaining eye. The *third eye* can also be attuned to specially prepared bloodstones, allowing the user to observe things in that stone's vicinity as if it were an eye as well. Preparing a bloodstone in this manner requires it to soak in a potion of *clairvoyance/clairaudience* for a week, at the end of which the owner drinks the potion and spits the bloodstone into the hand bearing the *third eye*. These bloodstones are often incorporated into magic items like phylacteries, rings, or amulets, allowing the user to gift such items to other creatures and thus gain a new viewpoint. This remote viewing ability functions at any range while on the same plane. It also allows the user to cast *clairaudience/clairvoyance* up to three times per day.

As long as the *third eye* is open in a hand that isn't holding an object, the creature gains all-round vision, granting a +4 bonus on Spot checks and making it impossible to flank them. Rakshasas, whose fingers bend backwards, can use the powers of their *third eyes* while holding an object since the eye effectively looks out of the “back” of their hand.

A *third eye* cannot be transferred between creatures—if removed from the owner's body, the *third eye* is destroyed. A *third eye* that remains in the owner's palm but is damaged or otherwise permanently blinded becomes useless until a *remove blindness* spell is cast upon it.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *clairvoyance/clairaudience*, access to obscure Blinding Night traditions and lore; **Cost** 10,000 gp, 800 XP



Defensive Abilities evasion, improved uncanny dodge, slippery mind, trap sense +3; **DR** 15/good and piercing; **SR** 27

OFFENSE

Spd 40 ft.

Melee +2 kukri +22/+17/+12 (1d4+4/15–20) and claw +15 (1d4+1) and bite +15 (1d6+1)

Special Attacks change shape, detect thoughts (DC 17), sneak attack +5d6

Spells Known (CL 7th, +20 ranged touch)

- 3rd (5/day)—*lightning bolt* (DC 17), *fly*
- 2nd (7/day)—*invisibility*, *scorching ray*, *web* (DC 16)
- 1st (7/day)—*charm person* (DC 15), *mage armor*, *obscuring mist*, *protection from good*, *ray of enfeeblement*
- 0 (6/day)—*acid splash*, *arcane mark*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

TACTICS

Before Combat Bahor casts *mage armor* as soon as the prospect of combat looms (such as hearing his alarms activated). He then uses his *third eye* to check the various rooms in his palace for intruders, using *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, if necessary, to watch them. As soon as his foes seem to be drawing near, he casts *shield* and *protection from good*.

During Combat Bahor favors the use of his spells in combat, since he only reverts to his true form if his enemies know of his true nature. Even then, he only relies on his melee attacks if his spells are exhausted or proving useless.

Morale Bahor has little interest in risking everything on bad luck—if reduced to less than 50 hit points, he attempts to escape by a combination of *invisibility* and his *boots of speed*. If he escapes, he retreats to the Cerulean Society guildhall elsewhere below Old Korvosa to wait things out—he does not return to vex the PCs. Bahor only stays behind to fight to the death if his enemies show that they know of his true nature—allowing anyone to escape his clutches with this knowledge is the thing he fears the most.

Base Statistics AC 32, touch 19, flat-footed 26

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 22, **Con** 22, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +14; **Grp** +16

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (kukri), Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +28 (+32 when reading minds), Concentration +16, Diplomacy +20 (+30 using change shape, +34 when also reading minds), Disguise +28, Intimidate +26, Knowledge (local) +21, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6, Listen +20, Move Silently +26, Sense Motive +10, Spot +20

Languages Common, Infernal, Vudran

SQ trapfinding

Combat Gear *wand of illusory script* (22 charges), *wand of shield* (34 charges); **Other Gear** +2 kukri, *amulet of health* +2, *ring of protection* +3, *boots of speed*, *third eye*, ring of keys (opens all locks in and under Arkona Palace)

Treasure: The bloodstone paperweight on the desk is a *third eye* bloodstone worth 500 gp. The exotic stringed instrument is a Jawassan Sitar. Decorated with gold filigree work depicting crocodiles eating storks, it is worth 350 gp. All of Bahor's other treasures are either carried or kept in his treasury.

Ad Hoc Experience Award: If the PCs negotiate with Bahor and learn from him where Neolandus and Vencarlo are being held without resorting to violence, award them experience as if they had defeated him in combat.

D19. The Hidden Garden (EL 10)

The air in this vast grotto is cool. An iron-framed flight of spiral stairs winds up through a hole in the ceiling in the northwest section of the room from the top of a semicircular ledge. The ledge winds down along the cavern's inner wall to a series of rope bridges that descend even lower from ledge to ledge. The upper ledge, before it reaches the ropes, is a strangely breathtaking beauty—a garden of all manner of strangely colored fungi, lichens, and molds. The fungi have been cultivated, shaped into all manner of symmetrical patterns normally not seen in nature, transforming the ledge into a sort of underground fungal garden. Here and there, flickering torches burn in sconces above the fungi, while from somewhere in the darkness below comes the soft splash of water against an unseen shore.

This is the Arkonas' hidden garden, a natural cave that existed here before they built their palace above. In fact, the location of this cave and its access to the sea was the primary reason the Arkonas chose to live here.

At the point where the stairs lead up to area D4 above, the ledge is a 100-foot drop to the water of area D23 below. At the point where the first rope bridge descends to area D20 from the ledge's southern end, it's a mere 50-foot drop to the water.

The fungi, while colorful, is mostly harmless—the same cannot be said of the guardians that lurk therein.

Creatures: In Vudra, the use of genies is common—they are often bound to the service of kings, queens, or warlords as bodyguards, servants, or (with increasing frequency) as lovers. The majority of these genies are in fact janni, as they are the easiest to bind to servitude. While the Arkonas do not have the magical skill to bind even janni to their will, Bahor's made use of the next best thing. With the aid of several other scholars of all things fungal, he managed to transform four imported janni slaves into faithful guardians—that the janni had to die to create these fungal guardians was unfortunate—almost as unfortunate as the fact that the man responsible for creating them for Bahor, a wizard named Innachi Naven, accidentally discovered the Arkonas' true nature. Bahor turned the one-time ally

over to Senshiir for her entertainment (see area E20), but still wishes he'd kept the man around a bit longer to create a few more of these delightful garden guardians for him. Bahor's experimented now and then with the fungal creatures' ability to create spawn, but these new creatures uniformly lacked the ingrained loyalty to the family and Bahor swiftly gave up on these plans.

The guardians still possess many janni traits, but are at their core little more than masses of fungi that have grown over and through the bodies of their long-dead hosts. The fungus now animates these bodies and has access to their thoughts and memories, yet as part of their creation are bound to the will of the Arkonas. Appearing as fungus-encrusted skeletons with gelid ooze and tufts of mold where flesh once rode, the garden guardians attack anyone they don't recognize as an Arkona.

GARDEN GUARDIANS (3)

CR 7

Fungal creature advanced janni (*Advanced Bestiary* 131, MM 116)

NE Large plant

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +15, Spot +15

Aura info

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18

(+6 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield, -1 size)

hp 85 (9d8+45)

Fort +11, **Ref** +7, **Will** +9

Defensive Abilities elemental endurance; **Immune** plant traits; **Resist** fire 10

OFFENSE

Spd 15 ft., fly 10 ft. (perfect)

Melee scimitar +13/+8 (1d8+6/15-20) and light shield spike +12 (1d6+3)

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

Special Attacks *change size*, create spawn, poison spore cloud

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th)

3/day—*invisibility* (self only), *speak with animals*

1/day—*create food and water* (CL 7th)

TACTICS

Before Combat The garden guardians become invisible as soon as they hear anything approaching this area. Once they determine that the visitors are in fact intruders, they change size to become Large just before they move forth to attack.

During Combat These fungal creatures open combat with their poison spore clouds, following that up with melee attacks.

Morale The fungal janni fight to the death, pursuing foes throughout the entire cavern (but not into area D24 or D25 or the palace above).

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 13, **Con** 20, **Int** 14, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +15

Feats Improved Critical (scimitar), Improved Initiative, Improved Shield Bash, Two Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (scimitar)

Skills Appraise +14, Concentration +17, Craft (armorsmithing) +14, Craft (weaponsmithing) +14, Escape Artist +13, Listen +15, Move Silently +13, Ride +13, Sense Motive +15, Spot +15

Languages Common, Terran, Vudran

SQ fungal metabolism, poisonous blood, rejuvenation, worldbound

Gear +1 chainmail, scimitar, spiked +1 light steel shield

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Create Spawn (Ex) A creature killed by Constitution loss



GARDEN GUARDIANS

from a garden guardian's spore cloud transforms into a fungal creature over the course of a day. *Plant growth* halves the time required, while *diminish plants* doubles it. *Blight* destroys the fungal spores and prevents the corpse's transformation, but spells that remove disease are ineffective against the spores. Once a body transforms into a fungal creature, the dead body from which it grew is completely destroyed. A new fungal creature lacks the class levels and memories of the creature from which it gained its form—if the base creature has 1 or fewer racial HD, use a 1st-level warrior version of it as the base creature.

Fungal Metabolism (Ex) The garden guardians do not breathe, eat, or sleep.

Poison Spore Cloud (Ex) Once per day, a garden guardian can release a 15-foot-radius spread of yellow spores that linger in the air for 10 rounds. This cloud functions as an inhaled poison—any creature that inhales the spores must make a DC 19 Fortitude save or take 1d2 points of Constitution damage and be fatigued for 1 minute, at which point the creature must save again to resist a further 1d2 points of Constitution damage and another minute of fatigue. A creature that continues to inhale the spores must make Fortitude saves each round. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Poisonous Blood (Ex) A garden guardian's blood and flesh function as ingested poison. Any creature that makes a bite attack against a garden guardian, swallows one whole, or otherwise ingests part of one must make a DC 19 Fortitude save or take 1 point of Strength damage and 1 point of Dexterity damage. One minute later, the creature must make a second DC 19 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1 minute and take 1d6 points of Strength damage and 1d6 points of Dexterity damage. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Rejuvenation (Ex) So long as a garden guardian is in contact with moist natural earth, it regains hit points as though it were experiencing complete bed rest and long-term care (3 hit points per HD per day of rest).

Worldbound (Ex) These janni have been bound to the Material Plane by Vudran magic—as a result, they do not have the ability to use *plane shift* or *ethereal jaunt* as spell-like abilities, but their close tie to the Material Plane does increase their health and endurance, granting them a +2 racial bonus on their Constitution scores.

D20. The Cat's Cradle

Three rope ladders descend even deeper into the cave, connecting three progressively lower ledges on the wall until finally reaching a stony protrusion at ground level. This protrusion rises from a rocky beach overlooking the sloshing waters of a sea cave.

Called the “Cat's Cradle” by the Arkonas, this sturdy rope bridge allows easy access between the palace above and the cave below.

D21. Avidexu's Room

This simple chamber contains a single bed and a number of shelves carved into the stone walls. All manner of animal figurines, some crude and carved of wood, others exquisite and sculpted from stone or even metal, decorate these shelves. A heap of raw materials for crafting more of the animals lies against the western wall.

This chamber belongs to the rakshasa Avidexu, the most powerful of the rakshasas who have come all the way from Vudra to join Bahor and Vimanda in their grand experiment in Korvosa. Avidexu has little interest in the politics of this experiment, though, and instead finds the local wildlife to be quite intriguing. He spends a fair amount of his time here, crafting sculptures of various Varisian creatures out of a wide range of local materials, but can currently be found in area **D24** tending to his pets.

Treasure: Although Avidexu carries the majority of his personal wealth, several of his sculptures are skillfully made. The most valuable are a 1-foot-long blue-coral gecko worth 300 gp, an exquisitely crafted firepelt cougar carved from redwood worth 200 gp, and a gold flame drake with tiny pearls for eyes worth 1,200 gp.

D22. Secret Dungeon Entrance

A secret door in the wall (DC 25 Search to locate) opens into a long, winding tunnel that leads 100 feet southeast to the Arkona Dungeons and area **E1**.

D23. Secret Pier (EL 10)

At the bottom of the vast cavern, a single wooden pier extends out into a gently sloshing pool of sea water. A shallow-draft barge is docked at the pier, a single unlit lantern hanging from its bow. Supporting timbers and brickwork line parts of the lower edge of the cave to the west and south, showing where the original sea cave has been artificially expanded. To the north, a twenty-five-foot-wide waterway provides an aquatic exit from the cave—the distant, muted sounds of the surf echo down from that direction.

The Arkonas use this sea cave to move sensitive cargos to and from the palace—cargos most often consisting of unconscious victims stolen off the streets of Korvosa and scheduled for an Arkona feast. The sea water in the pool is 15 feet deep, and winds approximately 120 feet to the northwest before ending at what appears to be a stone wall. This is actually an *illusory wall* (CL 11th) placed there

to mask the entrance from traffic along the Jeggare River. Anyone who interacts with the wall can attempt a DC 16 Will save to realize it's an illusion.

Creature: The sea pool is inhabited by an enormous reefclaw that serves as a guardian for this chamber. The monster was initially charmed by Avidexu, but over the years, the regular offerings of food the Arkonas have given the immense eel-like predator have caused it to adopt the chamber as its territory, and it now lives here and stands guard of its own accord. The reefclaw periodically leaves the cave to swim out to sea to hunt or just to enjoy the open water—the first time the PCs come through this area, the reefclaw is doing just that. If they return to this area, likely after having rescued Vencarlo and Neolandus and eager to effect their escape from Korvosa, the reefclaw has returned to present a final battle for the party.

ENORMOUS REEFCLAW

CR 10

Male elite reefclaw (*Pathfinder* #7 88)

CN Large aberration (aquatic)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +2, Spot +2

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 16

(+3 Dex, +7 natural, –1 size)

hp 136 (16d8+64)

Fort +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +12

Resist cold 5

OFFENSE

Spd 5 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee 2 claws +20 (1d8+8/19–20 plus numbing poison)

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

Special Attacks death frenzy, constrict 2d8+8, improved grab, tenacious grapple

TACTICS

During Combat The reefclaw knows that the barge and pier belong to its Arkona allies, and does its best not to damage them. The same gentle touch is not extended to the PCs—the monster attacks anyone it recognizes as intruders with a ferocious rage.

Morale The enormous reefclaw gives up the fight if reduced to less than 20 hit points, swimming swiftly out to sea to seek new allies. It does not return.

STATISTICS

Str 27, **Dex** 16, **Con** 18, **Int** 6, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +12; **Grp** +32

Feats Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor (3), Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Swim +35

Languages understands Common

SQ amphibious, ferocity

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Amphibious (Ex) Although a reefclaw is aquatic, it can survive

indefinitely on land.

Constrict (Ex) On a successful grapple check, a reefclaw deals 2d8+15 points of damage.

Death Frenzy (Su) When a reefclaw is killed, its body spasms horrifically. Immediately upon dying, the reefclaw makes a full attack action against all creatures it threatens. If more than one creature is within reach, it makes each attack against a random target (even against other reefclaws).

Ferocity (Ex) A reefclaw is such a tenacious combatant that it continues to fight without penalty even while disabled or dying.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a reefclaw must hit a creature of any size with both claw attacks, or a creature of no larger than Medium size with one claw attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Numbing Poison (Ex) Injury, Fortitude DC 22, initial 1d8 Dexterity, secondary 2d8 Dexterity. This reefclaw's venom is much more toxic than its smaller, common kin. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Tenacious Grapple (Ex) A reefclaw gains a +8 racial bonus on grapple checks.

D24. Arkona Temple (EL 10)

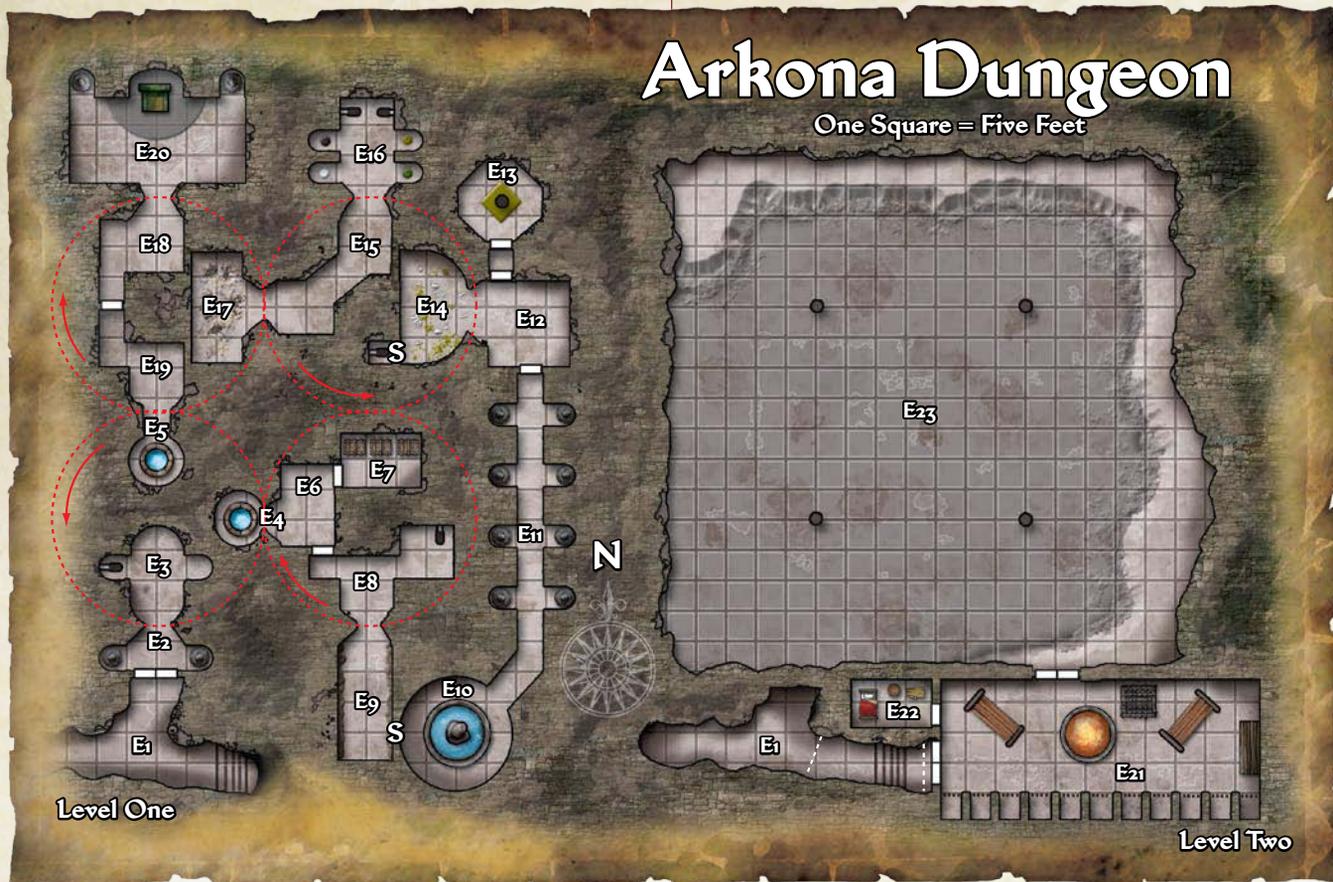
Four lit braziers illuminate this vast chamber, a cathedral-like space made all the more immense by its lack of benches or other concessions to comfort. The floor is polished tan marble, with the walls rising up to form a domed ceiling sixty feet above. Alcoves line these walls, six in all, inside of which stand human-sized statues of a tiger-headed man. To the south, a few steps lead up to a pulpit-like area with three more statues of the same figure—the central one being twice as tall and holding out before him two lances from which hang flags. The left is the flag of Korvosa, while the right bears the coat of arms of the Arkonas.

While this large chamber may look like a temple, the Arkonas themselves do not worship gods. Rather, they (like most rakshasas) see themselves as the ones who should be worshiped. Deep under his palace, this room is a nod to Bahor's suppressed ego and pride—the statues represent him as the god-ruler of Korvosa.

Creatures: The rakshasa Avidexu petitioned to be placed in charge of defending this temple, and Bahor granted him this responsibility even though the eldest Arkona knew Avidexu was really only looking for a place to keep his favorite pets, a pair of immense emperor cobras imported from Vudra at great expense. The two 18-foot-long snakes dwell in this chamber, and Avidexu spends much of his time in here with them, admiring their beauty or watching them hunt and feed on animals

Arkona Dungeon

One Square = Five Feet



and vagrants the rakshasa supplies them with. When the PCs first come to this region, Avidexu can be encountered here—one of the cobras has just finished shedding, and the rakshasa is sharing the shed skin as a meal with his two pets.

AVIDEXU, ARKONA RAKSHASA **CR 8**

hp 52 (MM 211)

TACTICS

Before Combat Avidexu has already cast *mage armor* on himself.

During Combat The rakshasa's first act in combat is to order his snakes to attack the PCs while he becomes invisible.

He then casts *haste*, *bear's endurance*, and *shield* before re-entering combat with his offensive spells.

Morale Avidexu fights to the death.

EMPEROR COBRAS (2) **CR 5**

Eltie dire king cobra (*Gary Gygax's Necropolis 220, Tome of Horrors Revised 387*)

N Large animal

Init +10; **Senses** scent; Listen +6, Spot +11

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 16
(+6 Dex, +7 natural, -1 size)

hp 66 (7d8+35)

Fort +10, **Ref** +11, **Will** +7

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft., climb 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee bite +11 (1d8+9 plus poison)

Ranged spittle +11 (poison)

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

Special Attacks improved grab

TACTICS

During Combat Avidexu trained both cobras to attack creatures at his command. The cobras attack the closest target.

Morale The emperor cobras fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 22, **Con** 20, **Int** 1, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +15

Feats Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Balance +14, Climb +14, Hide +11, Listen +6, Spot +11

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, an emperor cobra must hit a creature smaller than itself with its bite attack. It can then attempt a grapple check as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it establishes a hold, it can make a bite attack against the grappled foe as a free action.

Poison (Ex) Bite or Spittle, Fortitude DC 18, initial and secondary damage 1d8 Con. The Save DC is Constitution-based.

Spittle (Ex) An emperor cobra can spit venom as a ranged attack. In order to be effective, the venom must strike a foe's eyes, mouth, or an open wound—therefore, this is a standard ranged attack for the cobra and not a ranged touch attack. The cobra's spittle has a range of up to 20 feet.

D25. Tunnel to Dungeons

This winding tunnel leads to area E1 to the east.

The Vivified Labyrinth

The climax of this adventure takes place in the Vivified Labyrinth, a deadly obstacle course the Arkonas built for their own entertainment, used at times to train and test new recruits, and at others to punish or torment prisoners (Bahor is particularly fond of sending in a prisoner with a knife and a loincloth, poisoning him with slow-acting venom, and telling him that a pool deep inside the labyrinth can cure the poison if the victim can make it in time—so far, no prisoners have survived this challenge.) Making navigation of the dungeon difficult are the numerous obstacles and guardians bound within its walls. Making navigation even worse is the fact that the layout of the dungeon itself changes.

Four circular areas in the Vivified Labyrinth are actually built inside of giant gears. By activating various switches inside of the labyrinth, these four gears can be rotated in the direction of the arrow shown on the map, one-quarter turn per lever, to alter the labyrinth's layout. There are three levers in the labyrinth (plus a fourth trapped lever)—when one is switched, it locks in place and cannot be used for one minute. A DC 30 Disable Device check (made as a full-round action) unlocks a lever early so it may be used an additional time. The four dungeon sections rotate simultaneously, and take a round to rotate 90°, but openings between sections close very rapidly. A character that's standing in a transitional square between sections must make a DC 15 Reflex save; if he succeeds, he can adjust five feet in either direction to step out of the transitional square. If he fails, the moving walls scissor him, inflicting 10d6

points of damage and forcing him to adjust into a random non-transitional adjacent square. Anyone standing in one of the gear areas of the dungeon while it is rotating must make a DC 10 Balance check to avoid falling prone.

Since the central chambers of the Vivified Labyrinth are mobile, keeping track of what areas of the dungeon are accessible to others can be confusing. The dungeon effectively has four different orientations—the layout given on the map presents the first of these, and the only one where entrance into the dungeon itself is possible from area E2 without resorting to teleportation or other alternate forms of travel.

Vimanda

The second in command of the Arkona family, Vimanda has secret designs on displacing Bahor. Of course, Bahor suspects this, and although he tells Vimanda that he sent the PCs down into the labyrinth to give her a perfect opportunity to ambush and slaughter them, his true hope is that the PCs defeat her. In the ever-complex way that rakshasas work, Vimanda suspects this is her brother's desire, and hopes to show him up by either defeating the PCs or recruiting them to help defeat Bahor.

The true guardian of the labyrinth is the darksphinx Sivit, an outsider bound by tradition and magic to remain loyal to the current patriarch of the house. As such, Vimanda avoids the darksphinx—she doesn't want to involve blind allies of Bahor in her plans.

In her true form, Vimanda is an attractive humanoid woman with the head of a fox. Graceful, elegant, and confident, she exudes a dangerous sensuality that she's not afraid to use to leverage whatever advantage she can in combat or diplomacy—only in rare occasions (such as her current plan to deceive the PCs) does she take anything other than a shapely feminine form.

VIMANDA (AKA MELYIA ARKONA) CR 12

Female rakshasa monk 6

LE Medium outsider (native)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +12, Spot +12

DEFENSE

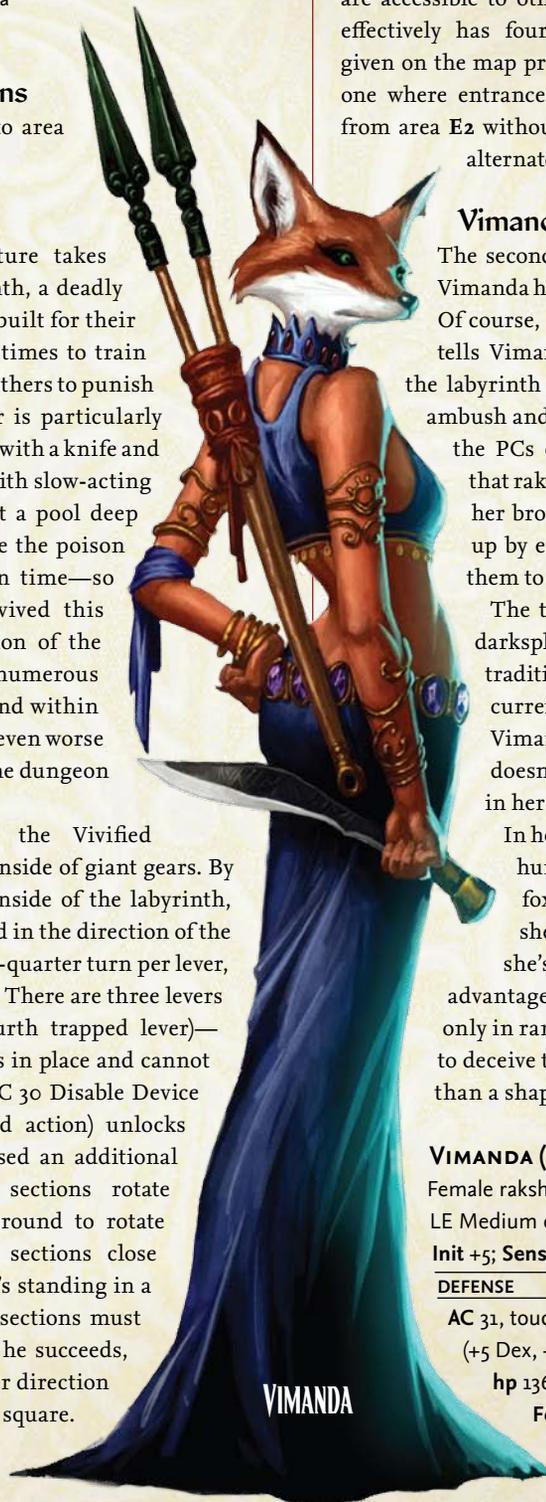
AC 31, touch 17, flat-footed 27

(+5 Dex, +1 monk, +9 natural, +4 shield, +2 Wis)

hp 136 (13d8+78)

Fort +15, **Ref** +15, **Will** +12

Defensive Abilities evasion, slow fall 30 ft., still mind; **DR** 15/good and



VIMANDA

VIMANDA'S RAKTAVARNA

In “Edge of Anarchy,” the PCs may have unwittingly allowed a spy into their midst. The silver dagger in Verik Vancaskerkin’s chamber was in fact a shapechanging minion called a raktavarna that Vimanda created to keep an eye on her dupe. If the raktavarna has managed to remain in the PCs’ possession all this time, it continues to provide its mistress with information about them, giving her an excellent way to track them and prepare for battle. When the PCs finally confront her, Vimanda commands her loyal raktavarna to assume its true form and return to her—the dagger does so at once, attempting to bite its one-time owner at least once before it takes its mistress’s side.

piercing; **Immune** non-magical disease; **SR** 27

OFFENSE

Spd 90 ft.; fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee +1 *ki focus shock kukri* +19/+14/+9 (1d4+4 plus 1d6 electricity) and
claw +15 (1d4+1) and
bite +15 (1d6+1)

Ranged *javelin of lightning* (120 ft. line, 5d6 electricity, Reflex DC 14 half)

Special Attacks change shape, detect thoughts (DC 15), flurry of blows

Spells Known (CL 7th; +17 ranged touch)

3rd (5/day)—*fly*, *suggestion* (DC 13)

2nd (7/day)—*invisibility*, *locate object*, *scorching ray*

1st (7/day)—*charm person* (DC 14), *magic missile*, *expeditious retreat*, *shield*, *ray of enfeeblement*

0 (6/day)—*acid splash*, *detect poison*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

TACTICS

Before Combat Vimanda Arkona begins in area **E13**. As soon as the first rotation occurs, Vimanda dons a ragged suit of tattered leather armor (this ruined armor doesn’t impede her spellcasting, but neither does it grant an armor bonus) and changes shape to disguise herself as Vencarlo Orisini. She then casts *fly*, *invisibility*, *expeditious retreat*, and *shield*. If she knows the PCs carry an object familiar to her, she casts *locate object* on that item to help her track them. She then begins seeking out the PCs, either patrolling the dungeon in a generally clockwise fashion or beelining for them if she has *locate object* active. If she encounters Sivit, she retreats immediately. Vimanda knows that there are several symbols placed throughout the dungeon, and even though they don’t affect her since she’s lawful evil, she may decide to warn the PCs about a few of them in an attempt to gain their trust once she meets them.

During Combat When she first encounters the PCs, disguised as Vencarlo, Vimanda tries to convince them that Bahor

sent them down here to die. She warns them about Sivit, and tries to encourage the PCs to leave the labyrinth to return to the palace above to confront Bahor (she explains her *kukri* and javelins away by saying they’re the only weapons she’s been able to recover in this dungeon). If this works, she hangs back in any fight against Bahor—as soon as Bahor realizes what’s going on (which shouldn’t take long, especially if he successfully reads Vimanda’s mind), he tries to blow her cover to win the PCs back to his side. If, on the other hand, the PCs see through Vimanda’s deception, she snarls and attacks. In combat, she takes to the air and favors her javelins, *scorching rays*, and *magic missiles*. If pushed into melee, she switches to her physical attacks, delivering stunning fists with her *ki focus kukri* on her first attack each round.

Morale Vimanda attempts to flee the Vivified Labyrinth to recover in area **D17** if brought below 10 hit points.

Base Statistics **AC** 27, touch 17, flat-footed 23; **Spd** 60 ft.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 20, **Con** 20, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +12; **Grp** +15

Feats Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows, Improved Critical (*kukri*), Improved Disarm, Multiattack, Stunning Fist, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (*kukri*)

Skills Bluff +17 (+21 when reading minds), Concentration +15, Disguise +17 (+27 when using change shape, +31 when also reading minds), Hide +17, Listen +12, Move Silently +15, Perform (dance) +13, Sense Motive +12, Spot +12, Tumble +17

Languages Common, Infernal, Vudran

SQ *ki strike* (magic)

Gear +1 *ki focus shock kukri*, *javelins of lightning* (3)

Sivit, Lady of the Labyrinth

Bound into the dungeon by Bahor’s rakshasa predecessor via a *binding* spell, Sivit, the infamous Lady of the Labyrinth, is a darksphinx—a dangerous outsider called from one of the deeper circles of Hell. In the Outer Planes, the darksphinxes are keepers of hidden secrets and forbidden knowledge, yet here in the Vivified Labyrinth, she is little more than a guard.

She feels no loyalty toward Vimanda, but if Sivit learns that she’s attempting to betray Bahor (such as if she discovers she’s masquerading as Vencarlo and attempting to lead the PCs back up to the palace), she focuses her attacks on the rakshasa, bound by the same ancient magic that keeps her inside the Vivified Labyrinth to protect her current master. Sivit cannot leave the labyrinth—area **E2** and beyond are forbidden to her as long as the *binding* spell remains in effect. There is no release clause to the *binding*.

SIVIT

Female darksphinx (*Book of Fiends* 156)

LE Large outsider (evil, extraplanar)

CR 10

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +16, Spot +16

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 14, flat-footed 23

(+2 deflection, +3 Dex, +12 natural, -1 size)

hp 76 (9d8+36)

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

DR 10/good; **Immune** poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 22

OFFENSE

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

Melee +1 kukri +13/+8 (1d6+7/15-20) and
+1 kukri +13/+8 (1d6+4/15-20) and
tail slap +9 melee (1d6+3)

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

Special Attacks pounce, rake 1d6+3, *symbol*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th)

3/day—*clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *darkness*, *detect magic*,
poison (DC 19), *read magic*, *see invisibility*

1/day—*comprehend languages*, *desecrate*, *dispel magic*, *legend
lore*, *locate object*, *remove curse*, *unholy blight* (DC 19)

TACTICS

Before Combat Sivit begins in area **E2o**. As soon as the first rotation occurs, she casts *see invisibility* and then *clairaudience/clairvoyance* on area **E8** to observe the PCs. She then casts *locate object* to track one of the character's more unusual items, and the next time either area **E18** or **E19** open up to her chamber, she moves in and begins making her way toward the PCs. Sivit knows the layout of the Vivified Labyrinth quite well, along with the four orientations of the dungeon—she activates rotations now and then to reorient the dungeon to her advantage and to try to split up the party. Sivit has placed multiple *symbols* into various chambers in the Vivified Labyrinth, and tries to time her attack on the PCs for a point where they're dealing with the effects of one of them.

During Combat Sivit opens combat with an *unholy blight*, then roars into melee with her kukris. She saves her *poison* spell-like abilities for spellcasters.

Morale Bound by ancient magic, Sivit has no real choice but to fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 16, **Con** 19, **Int** 22, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 21

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +19

Feats Improved Critical (kukri),

Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills Bluff +17, Climb +18, Concentration +14, Diplomacy +19, Heal +16, Hide +11, Intimidate +19, Jump +22, Knowledge (the planes) +18, Listen +16, Move Silently +15, Sense Motive +16, Spot +16, Survival +16

Languages Celestial, Draconic, Infernal, Sphinx, Vudran

Gear +1 kukris (2), *amulet of health* +4, *ring of protection* +2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Pounce (Ex) If Sivit charges a foe, she can make a full attack, including two rake attacks.

Rake (Ex) Attack bonus +14 melee, damage 1d6+3.

Symbol (Sp) Once each per week, Sivit can create a *symbol of fear*, a *symbol of insanity*, a *symbol of pain*, a *symbol of persuasion*, a *symbol of sleep*, and a *symbol of stunning* (caster level 14th), except that each symbol remains a maximum of one week once scribed.

E1. Dungeon Entrance

The tunnel curves sharply to the north here, ending at a pair of large bronze double doors, each carved with images of tigers chasing other tigers in four adjacent circles. At the center of each circle of tigers, a snarling tiger head looks out.

These doors are kept unlocked and well-maintained; they swing open silently at a touch. The dotted line across the passageway leading east is an *illusory wall* (CL 7th).

A character that





SIVIT'S SYMBOLS

The darksphinx presents an unusual situation for adventure design—her ability to create and maintain up to seven different *symbol* effects at a time, and to do so at CL 18th and relatively high static DCs is pretty ruthless for a CR 10 creature. I've lowered the caster level to 14th to match her other spell-like abilities, and have made the save DCs follow the standard rules for determining spell-like ability save DCs. I've also taken the liberty of removing *symbol of death* from Sivit's available *symbols*; this *symbol* is a bit too over-the-top even for this admittedly already deadly environment. If you'd rather keep this *symbol* on her list, I recommend placing it in the secret room in area E14 so that it triggers once it is seen.

Still, *symbols* can get old fast, especially if there's no one in the party who can dispel them, disable them, or fix the damage they do. Too many *symbols* can start to feel like arbitrary damage and penalties handed out by a lazy GM. You know your group better than I do—if you think that one or two *symbols* (or none at all) are your group's upper limit, you should adjust the number of *symbols* that appear in this part of the adventure.

—James Jacobs

interacts with the wall here can attempt a DC 16 Will save to recognize the illusion for what it truly is.

E2. Labyrinth Entrance

Two statues, each depicting a tiger-headed man, stand in alcoves to either side of the doors. Their arms are wide, as if to usher visitors forward into the room beyond.

A DC 15 Search check is enough to notice the gap in the floor, walls, and ceiling between this room and area E3. The statues both depict Bahor Arkona in his true form, and are thus recognizably the same figure from area D24.

E3. First Lever

Two alcoves adorn either side of this otherwise empty room. In one alcove, a long lever with an ebony handle protrudes from the wall.

This lever is one of the four that trigger a partial rotation of the four central sections of the Vivified Labyrinth.

E4. Corrupted Pool

A five-foot-diameter pool of crystal-clear water nearly fills this small circular room.

Hazard: The “water” in this 10-foot-deep pool is magical—anyone who drinks from the water is affected by a *poison* spell (Fort DC 16, CL 7th). A permanent *magic aura* spell cloaks the pool's aura of conjuration magic. Liquid taken from this pool in a container loses its magical properties immediately, becoming normal water. If combat with Vimanda occurs near this pool, she (knowing full well the pool's properties) might cast *suggestion* on a PC to force them to drink from it.

E5. Refreshing Pool (EL 7)

A five-foot-diameter pool of murky green water nearly fills this small circular room.

Although the water in this 10-foot-deep pool looks fouled, it is in fact enhanced with potent curative effects. Once per day, a creature that drinks from the pool gains the effects of a *heal* spell (CL 11th). Both Vimanda and Sivit know about this pool's properties, and if badly wounded or otherwise harmed, they could try to reach this pool to drink from it. Liquid removed from this pool reverts to nonmagical, gritty, foul-tasting water.

Trap: Sivit has placed a *symbol of fear* on the wall opposite the entrance to this room. The symbol activates as soon as it is looked at.

SYMBOL OF FEAR CR 7

Type spell; Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger sight; Reset no reset

Effect spell (*symbol of fear*; CL 14th, DC 21)

E6. Hall of Pain (EL 6)

Trap: Sivit has placed a *symbol of pain* on the floor of this room. The symbol activates as soon as it is looked at.

SYMBOL OF PAIN CR 6

Type spell; Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30

EFFECTS

Trigger sight; Reset no reset

Effect spell (*symbol of pain*; CL 14th, DC 20)

E7. Three Flavors of Venom (EL 7)

Three large wooden chests, their lids decorated with carvings of cavorting tigers, sit against one wall of this room. Some sort of message seems to be carved on each lid. The wall opposite the chests is carved to depict hundreds of tigers marching in widening circles around a single green gem the size of a fist, set in the wall and itself carved to resemble a tiger's head.

This is one of several rooms Bahor designed to give prisoners put into the Vivified Labyrinth a chance to

provide him a bit more entertainment than simply avoiding Sivit or the various active obstacles. The three chests are identical in appearance except for a short phrase engraved on each lid. This phrase is written in Vudran, a hint from Bahor to at least give some small bit of aid to those who speak his native tongue—of course, since these hints are at a certain level misleading, they're more like threats to those who dare speak his native tongue.

The left chest says, "By gentle caress shall truth be known." The right chest says, "Breathe deep your salvation." The middle chest says, "Life within but Death without."

Creature: Inside the middle chest are several potions (see Treasure) and a relatively cranky blood-red cobra. Bahor periodically feeds the cobra, but not nearly enough to keep it happy. The snake is furious, and immediately attacks the first person it sees.

BLOOD COBRA CR 1
hp 9 (MM 280; see Medium viper)

Trap: The left chest is coated in terinav root venom and is empty. The right chest is air-tight and filled with insanity mist and nothing else—opening it exposes everyone in the room to the effects of the poison. The airborne poison fades after 1 round.

TERINAV ROOT CHEST CR 7
Type mechanical; Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 25

EFFECTS
Trigger touch; Reset no reset
Effect poison (Fort DC 16; 1d6 Dex/2d6 Dex)

INSANITY MIST CHEST CR 6
Type mechanical; Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 25

EFFECTS
Trigger touch (opening chest); Reset no reset
Effect poison cloud (affects all creatures in room; Fort DC 15; 1d4 Wis/2d6 Wis)

Treasure: Bahor generally keeps a helpful item or weapon in the central chest to provide those exploring his dungeon a glimmer of false hope. The middle chest currently contains three *potions of cure serious wounds* and three *potions of lesser restoration* in addition to the cobra.

The gem embedded in the wall is a *third eye* bloodstone worth 750 gp.

E8. Hall of Madness (EL 9)

A lever to rotate the Vivified Labyrinth protrudes from the wall of this room.

Trap: Sivit has placed a *symbol of insanity* on the lever in this room. The symbol activates as soon as anyone triggers the lever.

EVOLVING THE REVOLVING DUNGEON

Running this section of the adventure can be complicated, for not only does the dungeon itself move about, so too do its two primary guardians. The following tips can help make running this dungeon a bit easier.

Tip 1: As the PCs explore the Vivified Labyrinth, have them roll initiative as they trigger the first rotation in area E3. Roll initiatives for Sivit and Vimanda as well, and track their movements through the dungeon secretly on their turns on your copy of the dungeon map.

Tip 2: Before the PCs reach the dungeon, prepare four 8-inch-diameter circles of paper and sketch out a grid on each so that you can place them on your gaming table. As the PCs explore the dungeon, sketch in the map of the dungeon, but since they're on separate pieces of paper, you'll be able to rotate each of them 90° each time the dungeon rotates.

Tip 3: If the PCs get completely trapped in an area where they can't access the levers, have an NPC elsewhere pull one.

Tip 4: Finally, don't be afraid to toss out the rotating gears aspect of the dungeon entirely if you think it'll just frustrate your group. It's an easy thing to attach areas E3 and E4, E14 and E15, and E17 and E18 with tunnels, at which point there's no need for confusing rotating dungeons at all.

SYMBOL OF INSANITY CR 9
Type spell; Search DC 33; Disable Device DC 33

EFFECTS
Trigger touch; Reset no reset
Effect spell (*symbol of insanity* ; CL 14th, DC 23)

E9. The Biting Tigers (EL 7)

Both walls of this twenty-foot-long corridor are decorated with row upon row of tiger heads. Each head appears to be that of an actual, once-living tiger. The heads are remarkably well preserved—their gaping mouths and glaring eyes even appear to be moist.

This room is the first in a series of four rooms that serve as a perilous obstacle course. All four of these chambers were designed and created by Mapras, Bahor's father. Although Mapras died at Bahor's hands, Bahor never rebuilt these four rooms—they remain Mapras's only legacy in the Arkona dungeon, chambers too ingeniously cruel in their creativity for even a murderous son to ignore.

The secret door leading to area E10 can be discovered with a DC 35 Search check. If the biting tigers are slain, they no longer effectively hide this door, and it can be discovered with a DC 15 Search check.

All four of these obstacles can be temporarily deactivated by a hidden bypass switch. A switch is located on the wall

next to each entrance to room E9–E12; locating the switch is a DC 30 Search check. Once pressed, the trap or guardian in that room does not activate for the following 3 rounds—on the 4th round, the trap or guardian reactivates (but may be deactivated by again pressing the hidden bypass switch).

Creature: The tiger heads lining the walls animate and attack one round after the first person sets foot in the chamber, writhing out of the walls on long serpentine necks in a horrific storm of scales, fangs, and fur. Treat the biting tigers as a single Gargantuan animated object that has a speed of 0 feet and hardness 0.

THE BITING TIGERS

EL 7

hp 148 (MM 14—Gargantuan animated object)

E10. The Fangs of Diomazul (EL 8)

A ten-foot-wide, two-foot-tall well rises from the center of this circular room. Inky water fills the well nearly to its rim, obscuring its depths. A stone statue of a rearing snake rises from the center of the well. Along the length of the serpent's body are carved dozens of arms crossed over the creature's belly—each arm grips a long curved blade. The statue's serpentine head rises ten feet above the surface of the water, gazing down coolly to the northeast with amethyst eyes.

A DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the many-armed serpent as a statue of the obscure Vudran deity Diomazul, the Serpent of Eighty Blades, a god noted particularly for its ruthless fury and cruelty in battle.

Trap: The well is in fact a shallow pool; the water is only four inches deep, but is dark enough to hide the fact that the lower section contains the workings of a deadly trap. Two rounds after the first person enters the room, a loud hiss issues from the statue as dozens of curved blades spring out of the well's base and spin furiously around the room, striking anyone standing on the ground within 5 feet of the well. As long as the blades continue spinning, this region around the well is considered difficult terrain.

THE FANGS OF DIOMAZUL

CR 8

Type mechanical; **Bypass** hidden switch (Search DC 30);

Search DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Onset Delay** 2 rounds; **Reset** automatic

Effect falchion blades spin around fountain (all targets on the ground within 5 feet of the room's walls; 8d6 damage per round; Reflex DC 15 negates one round of damage; blades continue spinning for 1 minute)

Treasure: Each of the statue's amethyst eyes can be pried out of the statue as a full-round action; each is worth 500 gp.

E11. The Wailing Maidens (EL 7)

Eight alcoves line this long, narrow hallway. Inside each alcove stands a human-sized upright iron casket, the image of a sobbing woman decorating its lid. The hallway's floor is smeared bright red, a mosaic of tiny red stones giving the appearance that the hall is awash in blood.

Trap: This is a cruel, two-stage trap that activates 3 rounds after someone steps on a square flanked by a pair of the iron maidens. When the trap activates, the five-foot squares not flanked by iron maidens suddenly rise, tipping up to a 45 degree angle that slopes to the south. Any creature on one of these squares slides back into a square between the iron maidens if he fails a DC 12 Balance check. A creature that slides into an occupied square falls prone. At the same time, the western iron maidens begin shrieking and wailing. Any creature adjacent to a wailing maiden must make a DC 15 Fortitude save to avoid being stunned and deafened for 1d4 rounds. On the round after the western maidens wail, the eastern maidens open to reveal an interior lined with spikes. These spikes shoot out on long shafts, nearly reaching the opposing iron maiden and impaling anything in the way. The spikes retract and re-fire once per round for the next 4 rounds, at which point the hall returns to normal. The trap takes 5 rounds to reset, during which time the area is filled with ominous clicking and grinding noises.

WAILING MAIDENS

CR 7

Type mechanical and magical; **Bypass** hidden switch (Search DC 30); **Search** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Onset Delay** 3 rounds; **Reset** automatic (after 5 rounds)

Effect stunning wail (stun and deafened for 1d4 rounds,

Fortitude DC 15 negates); spike barrage (Atk +12 melee, 1d6 spikes per target for 1d6+5 damage each); multiple targets (all targets flanked by iron maidens)

E12. The Stinging Wasps (EL 7)

The walls, floor, and ceiling of this chamber are decorated with a complex mosaic depicting an immense swarm of wasps.

Trap: This trap activates 1 round after someone enters the room. At this point, thousands of 6-inch-long needles stab out of the walls, floor, and ceiling of this room, jabbing in and out of tiny holes several times each round. The needles jab in waves, creating a beautiful rippling effect as they stab and stab. Any creature walking or climbing walls in this room is targeted by the needles. The needles continue stabbing as long as anyone remains

in the room; as long as they're stabbing, this room is difficult terrain. Each time a creature takes damage from these needles, he must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or take 2 points of Dexterity damage as magically generated toxins numb his arms and legs.

STINGING WASPS

CR 7

Type magical and mechanical; **Bypass** hidden switch (Search DC 30); **Search** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Onset Delay** 1 round; **Reset** automatic

Effect numbing needles (Atk +5 melee, 1d6 damage plus 2 Dexterity damage); multiple targets (all creatures in contact with walls, floor, or ceiling)

E13. Meditation Chamber

A six-inch-tall bronze dais on the floor in the middle of this otherwise empty room supports a polished column of black marble. The black stone seems to be vibrating softly, filling the air with a faint hum.

This pillar of black stone is another Vudran import—a large magic item known as a *sonorous stone*. The stone's magic is as much tied to its hexagonal chamber as the stone itself, and once created, requires a year to attune itself to its surroundings, at which point the stone begins to vibrate and hum softly. This vibration is soothing and relaxing—a creature that spends a minute standing within 5 feet of an active *sonorous stone* receives the benefits of a *calm emotions* spell. In addition, a creature that touches an active *sonorous stone* is targeted by a *restoration* spell that also allows him to recall up to three levels of spells he had prepared and then cast—the spells are then prepared again, just as if they had not been cast. A *sonorous stone* can be activated in this manner up to four times per month, after which it becomes dormant for one month while it rebuilds its charge.

E14. Hidden Lever

The floor of this empty room is strewn with bones and patches of mold.

The secret door in this room can be found with a DC 30 Search check. The alcove beyond the door contains a lever to rotate the Vivified Labyrinth's chambers.

E15. Threatening Murals

The walls of this oddly shaped hallway are decorated in a complex mural depicting a jungle brimming with hungry life. Predators of every sort stalk and maim and feed on dozens

of hapless men and women. In the canopy above, monkeys, snakes, and birds seem to chatter and mock the victims below.

Those who examine these murals swiftly find themselves among the victims represented. This relatively minor illusion has no further effect—it was created merely to unsettle and frighten any who view it.

E16. Transport Room

Four alcoves in the walls of this room contain floating spheres of mist, each floating three feet off the ground. Each sphere is a foot in diameter—one is black, one white, one green, and one gold. Just north of the strange floating spheres, two levers protrude from opposite walls.

This chamber serves as a way to relocate to one of four specific areas in the Vivified Labyrinth; to someone who knows the dungeon's pattern, it allows increased mobility, but to characters who don't, it could well trap someone in a room with no exit.

Each of the four spheres are in fact teleporters—merely touching a sphere is enough to send that person (or object thrown into the sphere) into another area of the dungeon, as if by *greater teleport*. The white sphere teleports anyone who touches it to area E2. The black sphere teleports anyone who touches it to area E13. The green sphere teleports anyone who touches it to area E20. The gold sphere teleports anyone who touches it to area E5.

The eastern lever allows for a rotation of the Vivified Labyrinth's chambers, but the western lever alters the destinations of the teleporters. When the western lever is in the up position, the teleporters work as detailed above. When the western lever is in the down position (as it is when the PCs enter the room), all four teleporters instead transport anyone who touches them into a random unoccupied cell in area E21; if there are no unoccupied cells, these teleporters simply won't function when this lever's in the down position.

E17. Disposal Room

The floor of this chamber is covered by a thick layer of rubble, bones, and other debris.

After victims succumb to the Vivified Labyrinth, Sivit generally disposes of the bodies in this room. Some time later, the remains are carried away by the Arkonas—typically for meals. There's currently nothing of interest in this chamber.

E18. Hall of Slumber (EL 6)

Trap: Sivit has placed a *symbol of sleep* on the floor of this room. The symbol activates as soon as it is looked at.

SYMBOL OF SLEEP

CR 6

Type spell; Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30

EFFECTS

Trigger sight; Reset no reset

Effect spell (*symbol of sleep*; CL 14th, DC 20)

E19. Hall of Stunning (EL 8)

Trap: Sivit has placed a *symbol of stunning* on the floor of this room. The symbol activates as soon as it is looked at.

SYMBOL OF SLEEP

CR 8

Type spell; Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32

EFFECTS

Trigger sight; Reset no reset

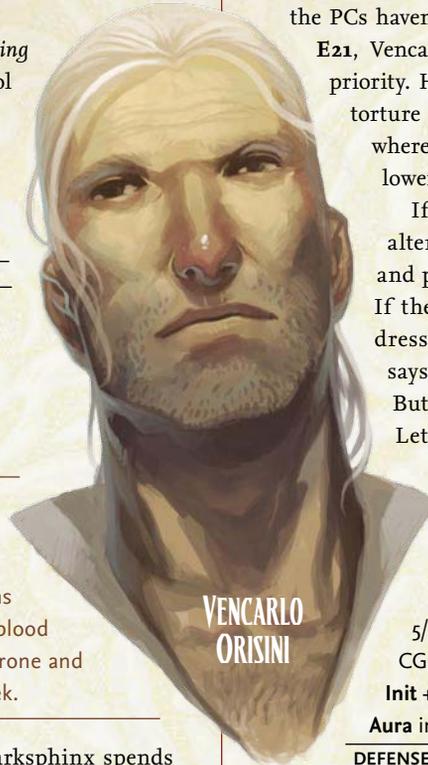
Effect spell (*symbol of stunning*; CL 14th, DC 22)

E20. Sivit's Throne

A great green throne sits atop a dais in the northern end of the room. To either side stand statues of a tiger-headed man—each holds aloft a pair of chains from which manacles dangle. Dried blood spatters the walls, floor, and even the throne and statues, filling the room with its stale reek.

This chamber is where Sivit the darksphinx spends the majority of her time, languishing on her green marble throne and daydreaming about the day she escapes her binding and sees her revenge on the Arkonas. The manacles can be unlocked with a key that Sivit keeps hidden under her throne's well-worn cushion (Search DC 20 to find), or opened with a DC 30 Open Lock check.

Creature: Often when a prisoner is placed in the Vivified Labyrinth, Sivit captures them alive and brings them back here, shackling them to one of the two statues of Bahor. She does her best to keep her playthings alive as long as she can—once they expire, she dumps the bodies in area E17. Her current victim is manacled to the western statue—dressed in tattered rags, his body a display of bruises and partially healed cuts and scrapes, head slumped, Vencarlo Orisini has languished here for days. He is currently unconscious, suffering from starvation and exhaustion, but awakens as soon as anyone heals enough damage. Although beaten and in pain, his expression brightens immediately upon seeing the PCs, and he even manages a smile as he says, "I see you got my note..." He eagerly tells the PCs that the key to his manacles is hidden under the throne's cushion if they haven't discovered this already.



Vencarlo is in a rough state. Badly wounded and without his gear, he is little help in a fight. Yet he still demands to help in every way he can. If the PCs can equip and heal him, he can be a valuable ally in the adventure's remaining fights. While Vencarlo is certainly curious to hear the PCs' story, he knows this isn't the best time to get caught up. If the PCs haven't already rescued Neolandus from area

E21, Vencarlo suggests this should be their first priority. Having spent some time himself in the torture chamber, Vencarlo can show the PCs where illusory walls hide the entrance to the lower level.

If the PCs confront Vencarlo about his alternate identity as Blackjack, he laughs and plays off the concept as if it were a joke. If the PCs present proof (such as by being dressed as Blackjack), he grows serious, then says, "Looks like you caught me—well done. But we don't have time to talk about this. Let's rescue Neolandus and get the hell out of Korvosa first—we'll have plenty of time to talk this over later."

VENCARLO ORISINI

CR 9

Male medium-age human rogue 2/fighter

5/duelist 2

CG Medium humanoid

Init +4; Senses Listen -1, Spot -1

Aura info

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 10

(+2 Dex, +2 Int)

hp 48 (9 HD; 2d6+7d10) (currently at 11 hit points and 43 nonlethal damage)

Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +0

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +10 (1d3-1 nonlethal)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

TACTICS

During Combat Vencarlo's favored melee weapon is the rapier, and his favored ranged weapon are thrown daggers.

In combat, he prefers to fight with Combat Expertise to full effect, both to aid in protecting his own hide and to draw out the thrill of the fight itself.

Morale Vencarlo never abandons an ally in a fight, but if alone, flees to safety if brought below 10 hp.

STATISTICS

Str 9, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 15, Wis 9, Cha 15

Base Atk +8; Grp +7

Feats Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Disarm, Mobility, Skill Focus (bluff), Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier),

Weapon Specialization (rapier)
Skills Balance +11, Bluff +12, Climb +4, Craft (weaponsmith) +7, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +7, Hide +7, Intimidate +9, Jump +8, Knowledge (local) +7, Move Silently +7, Perform (oratory) +7, Profession (teacher) +8, Sense Motive +6, Tumble +11
Languages Common, Elven, Varisian
SQ canny defense, improved reaction, trapfinding

Ad Hoc Experience Award: For rescuing Vencarlo, award PCs experience points as if they had defeated a CR 10 creature.

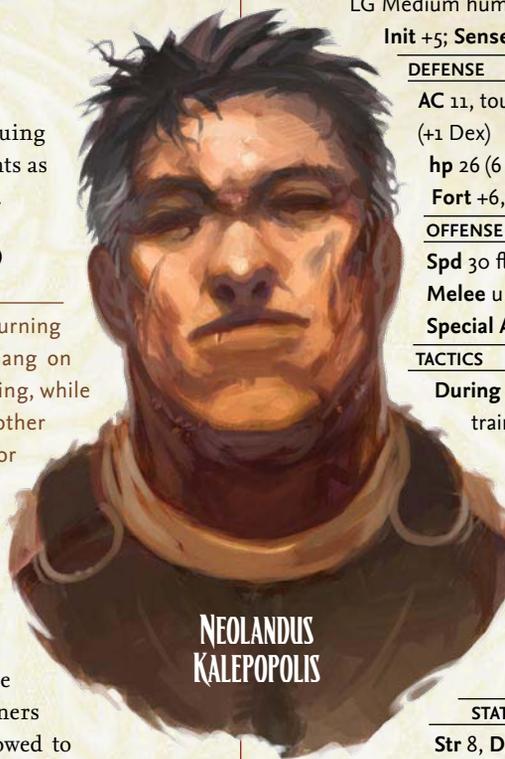
E21. Torture Chamber (EL 9)

This large room is lit by a heartily burning firepit in the room's center. Cages hang on chains dangling from hooks in the ceiling, while racks, strappadoes, gibbets, and other implements of torture fill the floor space. A pair of immense wooden doors stand in the wall to the north, while to the south stand several narrow cells.

Creature: This well-stocked torture chamber is where the majority of the Arkonas' prisoners end up. Although prisoners are allowed to languish for a time in a cell, the chamber's mistress eventually gets around to spending some quality time with each and every prisoner kept here. This being, named Senshiir, is a cruel outsider known as a beatific one.

Senshiir struck a bargain with Bahor several years ago, agreeing to serve him as a torturer as long as he keeps her in a regular supply of fresh victims to work upon. Although the majority of her kind seek enlightenment through brutal combat and mastery of life-ending weaponry, Senshiir has narrowed her focus a bit—she seeks enlightenment through the observation of pain and its effects on the mortal mind. She approaches her role with a sort of detached and emotionless curiosity that only a creature born in Hell could foster.

Currently, Senshiir has only one guest—since the quarantine and the Arkonas' resulting introversion, no new prisoners have come to this chamber. This, combined with Bahor's demand that the current guest not be subjected to any pain, has angered the beatific one, and she has recently decided to try her hand on some torture that doesn't leave any obvious marks on the exterior flesh. As the PCs arrive, she's just finished placing a sobbing Neolandus Kalepopolis into one of the stretching racks, but hasn't quite begun her sadistic work.



NEOLANDUS
KALEPOPOLIS

SENSHIIR, BEATIFIC ONE CR 9
 hp 85 (see page 82)

NEOLANDUS KALEPOPOLIS CR 5
 Male human aristocrat 3/ranger 3
 LG Medium humanoid

Init +5; **Senses** Listen +11, Spot +11

DEFENSE

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

hp 26 (6 HD; 3d6+3d8)

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

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +4 (1d3–1 nonlethal)

Special Attacks favored enemy (giant +2)

TACTICS

During Combat Although Neolandus

trained as a ranger, he realizes his true skills are in diplomacy. As such, he only fights when there is no other choice, in which case he prefers to do so with the longbow.

Morale Neolandus won't abandon an ally, but if alone, flees to safety if brought below 15 hp.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +4

Feats Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Negotiator, Rapid Shot, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Track

Skills Bluff +8, Diplomacy +19, Handle Animal +8, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +8, Listen +11, Ride +9, Sense Motive +10, Spot +11, Survival +11

Languages Common, Shoanti, Varisian

SQ wild empathy +7

Development: If Senshiir is defeated, it's a simple matter to release Neolandus from the rack. He does not recognize the PCs (having been holed up in Old Korvosa during their entire rise to fame), and unless Vencarlo is with the PCs, he avoids revealing his true identity, instead claiming to be a thief named Velak who was captured by the Arkonas for robbing one of the merchants under the family's protection. As Velak, the seneschal begs to be rescued but also tells the PCs "a friend" has been sent to the Vivified Labyrinth, and that before they leave, they must rescue him as well.

Of course, even if the PCs don't know who he is initially, the rags and grime Neolandus wears are not an effective disguise. With a DC 15 Knowledge (local) or Knowledge (nobility & royalty) check, anyone can recognize him for

who he really is. In this case, Neolandus comes clean, but continues to insist that the PCs rescue his friend Vencarlo from the labyrinth. Neolandus offers to help the PCs in any way he can, but can certainly be a greater help if he's first healed and outfitted with gear.

Once Neolandus is sure that the PCs aren't agents of the queen and that they can be trusted, he grows quite excited; here are the exact people he's been hoping to find—heroes who can act on the information he has about Queen Ileosa. Consult "Concluding the Adventure" to see what he can tell the PCs about the true peril facing Korvosa.

Ad Hoc Experience Award: For rescuing Neolandus, award PCs experience points as if they had defeated a CR 10 creature.

E22. Torturer's Home

A narrow bed, stool, and table are this room's sole furnishings—none appear to have been used in some time.

This room once belonged to a vile man who served Bahor's father as a torturer, but he was put to the sword not long after his previous master. The room has gone unused since, with the periodic exception of Senshiir, who sometimes retreats here to meditate on the floor.

E23. The Gizzard (EL 11)

This vast cavern stretches into the shadows, the true extent of its area difficult to discern due to a thick maze of wooden timbers that rises up to support the roof. A ledge winds along the eastern and northern sides of the cave, with the floor dropping away to a depth of thirty feet. Four immense stone pillars support the ceiling ten feet above. Where these pillars connect to the ceiling, a network of wooden braces and timbers radiate out in a wheel shape, forming four forty-foot-wide discs flush against the roof. Dozens of chains hang down from these beams to attach to the pillars themselves, many of which are decorated with rows and rows of bells.

The maze of support timbers is not shown on the map of this room, for the lowest 10 feet of the area are left quite open to give the chamber's denizens plenty of room to toil. Above the 10-foot-mark, though, a creature can move through this room on these tangled wooden beams with a DC 10 Climb check.

Creatures: This room is the source of the Vivified Labyrinth's power—the four pillars are in fact axles attached to the four large gears above—the Gizzard. Each of these pillars is attended by a single horrific beast, undead elephants known as rajput ambaris. Each rajput ambari is chained to a pillar, and as the levers in the Vivified Labyrinth above are triggered, chains affixed to the

labyrinth's workings cause the bells to ring and unlock the four gears, signaling the rajput ambaris to walk a quarter circle around each pillar—and in so doing, causing the immense gears above to grind and rotate. Once a rotation makes a 90-degree turn, the gears lock back into place and the rajput ambaris once again become motionless.

As long as no creatures attempt to damage them or damage the surrounding structure, the rajput ambaris remain passive. Once either of these conditions ends, though, the rajput ambaris trumpet and immediately move to defend the Gizzard. Each rajput ambari can move up to 15 feet from its pillar to attack intruders; as they fight, the chains that attach them to the pillars move and shake, causing the rooms above to shake as well, but as long as the gears remain locked, the rooms above won't shift. If at least two of the rajput ambaris are destroyed, the remaining rajput ambaris are not strong enough to rotate the chambers of the Vivified Labyrinth above and the rooms remain stuck in their current configuration.

RAJPUT AMBARI (4)
hp 104 (see page 84)

CR 7

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Although the order in which the PCs tackle the various situations and encounters in this adventure are quite fluid, the ultimate goal remains the same—rescue Neolandus and Vencarlo and then escape from the city. Even if the PCs haven't made public enemies of themselves and aren't on Queen Ileosa's growing list of "problems to solve," Neolandus certainly is. He can't stay in Korvosa—both he and Vencarlo know this. Vencarlo himself wants out of the city as well, if only to get some time to think things over and plan his next move. His recommendation to the PCs is the same.

Fortunately, Vencarlo has friends in the nearby town of Harse, the same friends to which he sent young Trinia Sabor to stay with at the start of "Seven Days to the Grave." He suggests that he, Neolandus, and the PCs find the fastest route out of the city, likely by stealing the barge in area D23. Once the fight with the enormous reefclaw there is over, this is a relatively safe way to head up the coast a few miles, as long as the PCs take care to do so under the cover of darkness or magic to avoid being spotted. Eventually, Vencarlo suggests they make their way inland to Harse, where they can catch their breath and plan their next moves.

During this voyage, Vencarlo and Neolandus ask the PCs about how they came to Old Korvosa, pumping them for information about what's been happening in the city over the past few days. When they learn about the incident involving Marcus's failed assassination attempt, their eyes grow large and Vencarlo curses under his breath—this is proof positive that Neolandus's fears have, in fact, come true. Queen Ileosa has become something more than



human—she has become the reincarnation of a draconic warlord long thought to be dead. And as long as she retains this power, as long as she wears the *Crown of Fangs*, there may be only one way to defeat her. Neolandus knows who may know the secret of defeating this evil presence and, perhaps, even saving the queen from her fate. For countless years before Chelias came to Varisia, the region known today as Korvosa had been the tribal land of the Shoanti. Although known by few, Neolandus explains that those who dwelt in the shadow of the pyramid that now serves as Castle Korvosa's foundation believed that a great evil was hidden within those ancient stones. Today, the keepers of this knowledge, if they still live, are hidden among the Shoanti tribes of the Cinderlands.

Unfortunately, the keepers of that secret are preparing for war, and Korvosa is their target.

Ileosa's Plans

As this adventure ends, the PCs are expected to flee from Korvosa—their home city is no longer safe for them, and if they hope to save Korvosa from her new tyrant, they must look for answers in the Cinderlands. Yet some PCs may balk at the thought of abandoning their home, and

may even wish to stay in Korvosa to continue the fight against Queen Ileosa there.

Unfortunately, this plan is a poor one at best. Over the days to come, Queen Ileosa's power grows. With Kazavon's tactical genius growing in her mind, she is no longer the petulant aristocrat she was when this campaign began. PCs who seek to directly oppose Queen Ileosa will face a very high-level bard with an artifact that protects her from death and a loyal band of followers who include high-level fighters, devils, and soon, even a black dragon. Things in Korvosa quickly go bad after this adventure. Taxes quickly eclipse the ability of the city's citizens to pay them, and slavery replaces honest work. Martial law enfolds the town, and every day the Gray Maidens grow more violent and brutal in their enforcement of the queen's edicts, which themselves become more and more strange and cruel as her madness grows. Through it all, Field Marshall Cressida Kroft continues to ride the delicate line between rebel and loyalist, and PCs worried about friends and family who they leave behind can rest assured that Cressida will do everything in her power to keep them safe. Yet she cannot do so forever—for as of the next adventure, Korvosa lives on borrowed time.